

# THE STANDARD

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## MEDITATION

### Christ Our Passover

"... for even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us."  
— I Cor. 5:7b

What a contrast! Every detail of this last passover, destined to become the first Holy Supper, must have burned itself in the consciousness of the Saviour. The slaughtered lamb, unblemished and of the first year, the bruised flesh, the wine poured forth in the cup of prayer and the cup of thanksgiving, it must have been agony and untold suffering for Jesus. It told Him of His descend into the pit, of His utter forsakenness of God, of His becoming the Castaway for the sake of His sheep!

The first element of the contrast is the passover. What does it constitute and what is its meaning?

The passover was a Jewish feast. It was exclusively national in character. It reminded the nation that with a strong hand and an outstretched arm the Lord God had delivered the nation from Egypt out of the house of cruel bondage. Moses had bidden them, in the name of the Lord, to slay an unblemished lamb of the first year and to prepare it with bitter sauce and unleavened bread and to eat it in the night in which they departed from the cruel bondage in which they had suffered for many years, standing and with their loins girt about, ready for the journey to the promised land of Canaan.

As such, the feast of the passover, annually observed, looked back. It told the Jews that the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had remembered His covenant and delivered them out of the hand of Pharaoh and his hosts.

This deliverance had progressed on this wise. After plaguing the Egyptians with nine terrible plagues, the Lord had again hardened Pharaoh's heart so that he would not let the people go. Thereupon the Lord had announced terrible vengeance upon him and his nation. The Lord would kill all the firstborn in every house. It was to be the final punishment

for the load of sin and guilt of the godless king and his nation.

But, although Israel was also sinful and guilty, because of the sovereign love and grace of God upon His chosen communion in the Old Testament, He would pass them over in His wrath.

\* \* \*

However, this passing over, this act of indescribable love of God, was to be typified by Israel itself. They had to slay their unspotted, unblemished lambs and strike the blood on the two posts of the doors and the top lintel, so that their outgoing from the typical land of horrors might be through the portals of blood, the blood of the innocent, unblemished, unspotted lamb of God. And there they stood, ready for the journey to the land of promise, eating this sacrificial lamb and drinking the wine of gladness.

This feast, whose inception was in the night of death and destruction of their hated enemies, was to be observed throughout their generations following, so that the remembrance of the great deliverance out of Egypt might live with them in thanksgiving and gratitude forever.

However, this is not all. The feast of the passover, also looked ahead. It looked forward to a better redemption. The passover reminded them of the passing over the houses by the angel that God sent to kill the firstborn in Egypt, but the fulfilment of this passover promised a passing over when the issue would be eternal death and damnation.

Now then, that promised Lamb was typified and prefigured in every observance of the passover feast among the Jews. Throughout all the years that Israel served to typify the people of God of all ages, the sweet story of the love of God was told by the slaying of the sacrificial lambs of the passover.

And this story of God's love was fulfilled in the days of Jesus. When John the Baptist saw Him among the multitude, he cried out: Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. This the sacrificial lambs had never been able to do. No one really lost his burden of sin and guilt through the slaying of an animal. In order to get rid of that load another Lamb had to be slain, Jesus the unblemished, firstbegotten Lamb of the living God.

Yes, He came as the Gift of God, the only effectual Sacrifice for all those given Him of the Father, with the express command, that He lose none of them, but that He would save them to the uttermost from hell and death, and lay the foundation for their eternal happiness and bliss in the bosom of the Father.

And so He came. He journeyed among us for the period of time designated in the eternal counsel, and in the evening of His life, just before the awful spectacle of the cross, we find Him in the upper room, keeping the annual feast of the passover with His inner circle of followers.

He is the real Lamb of God. And this real Lamb of God beholds the sacrificial lamb before Him in the flesh of the lamb on the table. And in the cup of wine on the same table, He sees the fulfilment of the shedding of His heart's blood.

\* \* \*

The earthly typical lamb of the Jewish passover could not save us from death and hell. We must have a better sacrifice than that. God's justice demanded that a Sacrifice be brought which could atone for sin. And that means two things: first, the price must be paid for sin and iniquity, and that is eternal death and damnation and the curse of God. And, secondly, that price must be brought as a gesture of perfect love, the loving obedience of the child who would adore the Father even in His just wrath and burning anger against sin and guilt and corruption.

That I tell you the truth is further evidenced by David. Thinking, on the one hand, of his grievous sins and iniquity, and on the other hand, on the innocent animals that are carried to the altar for sacrifice, he burst out in groaning and sighing, as he says: "Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire; mine ears hast Thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast Thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of Me!" And if you will see the explanation of this Davidic prophecy in Hebrews 10:5-10, you will note that David spoke this of the Christ of God. He comes to the conclusion that, and I quote from the explanation in Hebrews: "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all!"

Now we also understand why Jesus desired with great desire to eat this last passover with His disciples. He wished to show them and declare unto them the great riches of the love of God and its glory in His own death and resurrection. And in the great distance over His own cross and the grave, He would see the eating and drinking in the Home of His Father. There He would drink the new wine of heavenly exaltation and glory. Of all these things the Lord spoke at the table, which was the last passover and the first table of the Holy Supper of the Lord.

And so we see the beauty of Paul's gospel when he said: "For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us!"

No, He is not sacrificed anymore in all manner of ceremonies that were outward and external. We go into the knowledge of God through the suffering, dying and living Christ of God, which knowledge is the eternal life with God blessed forever!

\* \* \*

Yes, we have the central meaning and fulfilment of the Feast of the Passover. God be blessed, He has passed over and will eternally pass us over, where His wrath is burning in nethermost hell. We are saved by the blood of the Lamb. That shall be our song forever.

And here on earth our feasting shall consist in the purging out of the old leaven, namely, the leaven of sin and evil. For we must be in harmony with the Lamb that is slain for us. Paul said: that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. The sourness of the old lump of sinful mankind must be alien to those that are sanctified by the wonderful, loving sacrifice of Jesus the Lord. He left us an example. We are to walk as He walked in loving obedience to the God of our salvation. The new lump is the life of holiness and truth. Listen again to Paul in Hebrews: "Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth!"

And there is only one way where we may arrive at such a blessed estate as to live and to feast in the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. And that way is to look strongly on the Lamb of God. Again I would be instructed by Paul, the inspired apostle of the Lamb of God; and I quote him from Philippians 3:10, 11: "That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His suffering, being made conformable unto His death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead!"

Yes, that is the life which is left for the followers of Jesus, the Lamb of God. To see Him with the eye of God-given faith; to love Him and follow Him wherever He may lead you here on earth. And He takes care that all those that are given Him of the Father shall follow, and love Him. How? He speaks His Word. No, that does not mean the mere preaching of that Word by His servants. Oh no! If no more were done by God and Christ, no flesh would be saved on this earth. Listen carefully, here is a very fundamental point! Jesus speaks His Word such as no mere man can ever speak it. He speaks that Word, under, by and with the Word such as His servants proclaim it throughout the world. And when He speaks His Word in your heart, you will be charmed by it; it shall fascinate you and captivate you unto life eternal. When He speaks that Word of His cross and resurrection in your heart, you are quickened unto a new birth, the birth from above. Through the preaching of His own cross and resurrection. He gives you regeneration; you become a new creature in the very depth of your existence. And He continues to give you His Word in faith

and conversion, listening to the sweet words of His calling voice. When He pictures before the eye of your heart His wonderful sacrifice of the Cross, and how He is your Pass-over, so that the wrath of God is stilled in His blood and suffering and eternal death, then you will listen, listen to Him. God revealed in the flesh, in weakness, suffering, death, the shameful death of the cross, in the resurrection of Him that swallowed death in victory. You will listen for He is your life, your glory, your praises and song of adoration forever!

And I saw and beheld a Lamb in the midst of the throne standing as if slain in the midst of the beasts and the twenty-four elders.

What is left to us, the believers of that Lamb of God?

Ah, it is the singing of a new song unto Jehovah. A song that shall reverberate the heavens unto bliss forever and ever! Amen. G.V.

#### IN MEMORIAM

On Wednesday evening, February 22nd, the Lord suddenly removed from His militant church two of our faithful members,

MR. HESSEL DE JONG

and his sister-in-law

MRS. NELLIE HONDEMA.

The Second Protestant Reformed Church, mourning this loss, nevertheless expresses her gratitude to God for the many evidences this brother and sister evinced of their faith in the service of Him Who is the God of their salvation.

Our prayer is that the bereaved families may continue to experience the all-sufficient grace of our Covenant God, Who has promised to be a husband to the widows and a father to the orphans; and that this experience may serve to energize us all in a more zealous and consecrated service in the battle of faith.

The Consistory  
The Men's Society  
The Ladies' Society  
The Mr. and Mrs. Society  
The Y. P.'s Society  
The Sunday School

#### IN MEMORIAM

The Board of the Hope Protestant Reformed Christian School herewith expresses its sincere sympathy to our fellow board member and secretary, Mr. John Kalsbeek, in the passing of his father

MR. H. DE JONG

Rom. 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose."

The Board

M. Veenstra, President  
D. Lotterman, Vice-Secreary

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## EDITORIALS

### **The Apostates of 1953 and the Three Points**

Before we return to our subject proper as expressed in the heading of this editorial, we wish to offer one more illustration to prove that we did not misinterpret the "Three Points" as Prof. Martin Monsma claims.

This time we refer to the third point and one of the proofs from the Confessions. This third point reads as follows:

"Relative to the third point, which is concerned with the question of civil righteousness as performed by the unregenerate, synod declares that according to Scripture and the Confessions the unregenerate, though incapable of doing saving good, can do civil good. This is evident from the quotations of Scripture and from the Canons of Dordrecht, III, IV, 4, and from the Netherland Confession Art. 36 which teach that God, without renewing the heart, so influences man that he is able to perform civil good."

We wish to check up on only one of the proofs from the Confessions and ask Prof. Monsma whether the synod of 1924 or we misinterpret this so-called proof.

I refer to Canons III, IV, 4. The synod quotes this article as follows:

"There remain, however, in man since the fall the glimmerings of natural light, whereby he retains some knowledge of God, of natural things, and of the difference between good and evil, and discovers some regard for virtue, good order in society, and for maintaining an orderly external deportment."

It is not my purpose, in this connection, to give our entire interpretation of the third point. This may be found in my "History of the Protestant Reformed Churches."

All I wish to do now is to prove that synod misquoted the article from the Canons, and one receives the impression that it did so deliberately. It misquoted the article because it quoted it only in part and left out the part that is so essential that synod could never have maintained its contention that the unregenerate man can do good at all. This last part which the synod failed to quote reads as follows:

"But so far is this light of nature from being sufficient to bring him to a saving knowledge of God, and to true conversion, that he is incapable of using it aright even in things natural and civil. Nay further, this light, such as it is, man in various ways wholly polluted, and holds it in unrighteousness, by doing which he becomes inexcusable before God."

Now, who interprets this part of the Canons erroneously, the synod or we.

We claim that synod, by misquoting the Canons attempted to prove that the unregenerate man do good, though what he does is no saving good. We teach that the natural man cannot even do any civil good, for he is incapable of using the

natural light aright even in things natural and civil. The synod claims that the unregenerate can, by his natural light, really do good by "common grace." We claim that, according to the Canons, he is incapable of doing any good at all, because he renders his natural light wholly polluted in various ways, and that he holds it under in unrighteousness.

To me, this language of the Canons means that, although he knows the difference between good and evil in things natural and civil, though he knows, therefore, what he ought to do, yet he surely does not do it, but corrupts himself and all life.

When the unregenerate or natural man wholly corrupts and pollutes his natural light, even in things natural and civil, he certainly cannot be said, at the same time, to do civil or natural good.

I will not discuss this further at present. All I wish to emphasize is that Prof. Monsma certainly does us an injustice when he claims that we misinterpret the three points. I challenge him to prove his claim.

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But now we return to our subject.

We must still discuss the second fundamental principle on which the apostates of 1953 stand and, on the basis of which, they may just as well adopt the "Three Points" and return to the Christian Reformed Church.

It is the principle expressed in the statement that "our act of conversion is a prerequisite to enter into the kingdom of God."

Bellflower (Doezema) not only takes full responsibility for the statement but also, at once, commits an act of schism, as did the whole of Classis West. For, in the report of Classis West, Sept. 9, 1953, we read that Bellflower (Doezema) judges as follows: "1. That the suspension and deposition of officebearers by the minority group of the consistory of Fuller Ave. congregation cannot be recognized as legal. A minority is not the consistory and cannot suspend from office, nor can it deprive of a vote. 2. That the majority group is the legal 'First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Mich.', until the privilege of appeal is considered and Synod has expressed that the majority group cannot be recognized as such, i. e., as a Protestant Reformed Church."

This statement of Bellflower is full of errors, chiefly based on the errors: 1. That a minority group of a consistory can never suspend or depose a majority group. 2. That it was the minority of the consistory of the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids that did so suspend and depose the majority.

As to the latter statement, Bellflower forgets that on June 15, 1953, the consistory adopted, by majority vote, a resolution to adopt the advice of the classis and to act accordingly. This advice meant that De Wolf and his erring elders should apologize or be suspended and deposed from their office. This was simply executed on June 22, 23. It stands to reason that, by the decision of June 15, the guilty parties

were already deprived of their right to vote in their own case. They refused to apologize and, therefore, they were to be suspended or deposed, according to the decision of the consistory on June 15.

But let that be.

What I wish to emphasize is that Bellflower in the above statement committed an act of schism.

For, in the first place, the act of suspension and deposition by the consistory of the First Church was according to the advice of Classis East, and the same classis later approved this act. And, secondly, Bellflower recognizes the "majority group" as the legal First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, and wants to have the suspended minister and deposed elders function in their office until synod decides on the appeal.

By this act: 1. Bellflower (and Classis West that followed its example) separated themselves from the consistory of the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids and from Classis East, and assumed an authority which they did not possess. 2. Bellflower and Classis West corrupted the "Formula of Subscription" which plainly states the very opposite as follows:

"And further, if at any time the consistory, classis or synod, upon sufficient grounds of suspicion and to preserve the uniformity and purity of doctrine, may deem it proper to require of us a further explanation of our sentiments respecting any particular article of the Confession of Faith, the Catechism, or the explanation of the National Synod, we do hereby promise to be always willing and ready to comply with such requisition under the penalty above mentioned, reserving for ourselves, however, the right of an appeal, whenever we shall believe ourselves aggrieved by the sentence of the consistory, the classis or the synod, and until a decision is made upon such an appeal, we will acquiesce in the determination and judgment already passed."

It is evident that Bellflower corrupts this last part of the Formula of Subscription as if it read: "and until a decision is made upon such an appeal, we shall continue to function in our office."

It is as clear as the sun in the heavens, therefore, that this whole action of Bellflower (and of Classis West) is schismatic. In Sept. 1953 they separated themselves from the Protestant Reformed Churches.

Bellflower also sustains this second basic principle we are now discussing, although it somewhat camouflages it by trying to give it its own interpretation.

It claims that it is misrepresentation "on the part of Classis East and the minority of the consistory" to explain as they do, namely "that the second statement 'teaches that our act of conversion is a prerequisite to enter the kingdom of God, which means that we convert, humble ourselves

before we are translated from the power of darkness into the Kingdom of God's dear Son.'"

And Bellflower attempts to explain this statement as follows:

"This second statement with contextual reference among other things may refer to the requisites of salvation and may give prominence to the idea that these must be in the consciousness of one as fulfilled in Christ before such an one can and may lay hold of the claim of the riches of Christ and His Kingdom. Such a statement also may refer to the progressive entering the kingdom as we are called to a godly walk, and to run the race set before us, to turn from self to Christ . . . This statement may also with contextual reference give prominence to the truth that this prerequisite is fulfilled according to the will of God in Christ Jesus through His Spirit."

What a corruption is revealed here!

For, in the first place, notice the twice repeated "contextual reference."

This means, of course, that Bellflower held correspondence with the condemned author of this statement, that they either asked him for a copy of the sermon in which that statement occurred or that he sent them a copy of his own free will. This is the only meaning of "contextual reference."

It means also that the condemned author, condemned by the consistory of the First Church of Grand Rapids as well as by Classis East, could have furnished Bellflower with any version of the sermon he preached. They certainly did not hear the sermon and could not judge of the statement and its "contextual reference" as the consistory of the First Church and I, personally, heard it. Yet, Bellflower expressed judgment on the statement in its "contextual reference" though they did not know anything about it!

And thirdly, it certainly means that Bellflower (Doezema) were consulting with the condemned minister behind the back of the consistory of the First Church. For they never consulted us at all. They were guilty of backbiting.

What a corruption!

H. H.

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#### IN MEMORIAM

The Martha Ladies' Aid Society of the Hull Protestant Reformed Church herewith expresses its sincere sympathy to one of its members, Mrs. Peter Hoekstra in the loss of her brother,

MR. WALTER DE BOER

Our prayer is that our gracious heavenly Father may comfort her by the assurance that He does all things well and that His grace is sufficient for those who trust in Him.

Rev. John A. Heys, President

Mrs. Nellie Brummel, Secretary.

## BACK IN OUR OWN CHURCH

Following is the decree of the Supreme Court of the State of Michigan which is so clear that it needs no comment.

### STATE OF MICHIGAN SUPREME COURT

#### THE FIRST PROTESTANT REFORMED CHURCH of Grand Rapids, Michigan,

a Michigan corporaton,  
Plaintiff and Appellee,

v.

HUBERT De WOLF, et al.,  
Defendants and Appellants,

HERMAN HOEKSEMA, et al.,  
Cross-Defendants and Appellees.

BEFORE THE ENTIRE BENCH.

Boyles, J.

This case comes here through an appeal by the defendant Hubert DeWolf and several other individuals who are in accord with his claims, seeking to set aside a decree of the superior court of Grand Rapids which holds that the legal and only board of directors of the plaintiff First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, a Michigan ecclesiastical corporation, is the Consistory of said church of which one Herman Hoeksema is president and one Gerrit Stadt is clerk. Hereinafter, for brevity and clarity, the plaintiff may, on occasion, be referred to as the Hoeksema church, and the defendants-appellants as the DeWolf church.

The fundamental question involved is whether the plaintiff Hoeksema church or the defendant DeWolf church owns the church building and other property, and therefore has the right to its possession and control. The decree enjoins the defendants from claiming to be the legal Consistory, of the church, and from interfering with the plaintiff's possession and control over the church property unless they be recognized as members in good standing of the plaintiff church by the legal Consistory of said church, under the ecclesiastical rules adopted for such purpose. The decree also requires the defendants to account to and turn over to the said legal Consistory all money and other property which they now hold for or in the name of said First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids.

In 1926 the plaintiff church was incorporated as an ecclesiastical corporation under the provisions of PA 1921, No. 84.\* The name was changed to its present form by amendment of articles in 1927, at which time the Reverend Hoeksema was president. The plaintiff church was incorporated by Reverend Hoeksema and others following our decision in *Holwerda v. Hoeksema*, 232 Mich. 648, to which reference will be made later herein; and apparently was the

result of a controversy which arose in East Street Christian Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, discussion in said opinion, which had resulted in the suspension of Reverend Hoeksema as minister of that church.

Following the above incorporation, other Protestant Reformed Churches were organized in other cities, becoming 12 in number by 1951.

Under the articles, the constitution and the Church Orders of the plaintiff church, the Consistory, 2 boards of Classis and a church Synod came into existence. By 1951 the church had a large membership and had acquired substantial holdings of real estate, including a church and parsonages. Two of its 3 ministers were Hoeksema, and Hubert De Wolf the appellant herein. The church was governed by the rules and usages declared and authorized by the Classis of said churches, the articles, and the Church Order. Control and possession of the property of the church was thereby placed in the Consistory representing the membership of the church.

In 1951 and 1952 protests were filed with the Consistory complaining that statements made in sermons by the Reverend De Wolf were heretical. In October, 1952, the Consistory condemned these statements as being heretical and requested Reverend De Wolf to apologize. However, Reverend De Wolf advised that he would not conform, whereupon he was first released from duties, but shortly thereafter returned to office. The controversy continued, further protests were filed in 1953, and at meetings of the Classis in April and May, 1953, the protests were considered, the Consistory took action to suspend Reverend De Wolf and to depose others of the elders of the church if they refused to apologize for the alleged heretical statements. They continued to refuse to apologize. Other meetings of the Classis and Consistory were held. Claims are made by the defendants-appellants that some of these meetings were illegal, not properly called or not properly representative, and a claim is made that on one occasion the action was not taken by a majority vote. Claim is further made that some delegates were ineligible to vote. At a meeting held June 23, 1953, these matters, including the action to depose Reverend De Wolf and certain others, were considered, followed by a meeting June 25th, presided over by Reverend Hoeksema. Reverend De Wolf and several elders who supported him were suspended from office or deposed. Two of the deposed elders who supported Reverend De Wolf notified the Consistory of the refusal to recognize what they claimed to be illegal suspensions and depositions. The Consistory was notified by the suspended members that they claimed to be the legal Consistory of the church, entitled to possession and control of the church and other properties.

Then Reverend De Wolf and his supporters took possession of the church, changed the locks on the doors, and excluded the opposing (Hoeksema) faction from its use. The Consistory supporting the Hoeksema faction and that

\* See CL 1948, par. 450.178 (Stat Ann par. 21.179).



part of the church congregation supporting Hoeksema then found another place in which to conduct church services, and have since continued to hold services there. They made no attempt to forcibly re-enter the church.

The controversy having reached this acute stage as the result of differing claims as to the authority of the Hoeksema Consistory, the legality of its meetings and of the action taken by it, the Reverend DeWolf faction continued to hold possession of the property. This was contrary to the action taken by the Consistory, which had been supported by other members under the Church Orders; and also contrary to action taken by the Classis and Synod which had supported the suspension and deposition of the De Wolf faction. Thereupon the plaintiff church filed the instant bill of complaint claiming that the Hoeksema church had the only legal Consistory, and as the legal representative of the church had authority for its acts. The defendants Reverend De Wolf and the deposed elders answered and sought affirmative relief, claiming to be the legal representatives of the church. Issue was joined and several hundred pages of testimony taken by the court, stating the respective claims of each faction as to their construction of the articles, constitution and Church Orders; and their respective views as to the legality of the various meetings and action taken by the Hoeksema Consistory. The record shows that the articles and constitution, and the Church Orders of said First Protestant Reformed Church, and the affiliated Protestant Reformed Churches, are substantially the same as those of the Christian Reformed Churches which preceded the present church organization and out of which it grew. They have been under consideration by this Court in *Borgman v. Bultema*, 213 Mich 685, and *Holwerda v. Hoeksema*, *supra*.

The trial judge hearing the case, and relying upon those decisions, concluded that the plaintiff First Protestant Reformed Church, under its articles and constitution, and the Church Order, was dedicated to the discipline, rules and usages of the Protestant Christian Reformed Churches of the United States as authorized and declared from time to time by the Classis of said churches. The court concluded that the Church Order became the constitution of the church, to which every member subscribed, and that the court was bound to recognize it as controlling the issues.

We are in accord. We decline to hold, with the defendants, that the Hoeksema Consistory had departed from the doctrines and practices of the Protestant Reformed Churches. We have consistently held that the court may not substitute its opinion in lieu of that of the authorized tribunals of the church in ecclesiastical matters. The Consistory is the governing body of the church, in conjunction with the Classis and the Synod. The powers and the functions of the Consistory, the Classis and the Synod are fully set forth and explained in *Borgman v. Bultema* and *Holwerda v. Hoeksema*, *supra*. They need not be repeated here. In said decisions we have settled the question that the articles and the Church Orders are the supreme law and the constitution of

the church, the sole and exclusive authority to settle questions as to who adhere to the confession of faith, and to decide what the confession of faith of the church is or shall be. We have further held that the Synod was a proper body to hear, try and determine whether the action of the defendant Reverend De Wolf and his followers was heretical and in conflict with the confession of the church; and that the decision of the Synod, the Classis and the Consistory in the matter is final and binding upon the court. In *Borgman v. Bultema*, *supra*, we settled the question that where the defendant minister refuses to retract statements thus decided to have been heretical, he subjects himself to being deposed by the Classis under the Church Order, subject to being legally and properly removed. We do not agree with the defendants that there was any substantial infirmity in the steps taken to reach that conclusion, in the instant case.

"Where property is dedicated to the use of a religious denomination it cannot thereafter be diverted to the use of those who depart from that faith, but must remain for the use and benefit of those who still adhere to the faith, though they be a minority.

"The synod, being the proper body to hear, try, and determine whether a certain book of defendant minister of the local church at Muskegon is in conflict with the confession of faith of the church, its decision in the matter is final and binding upon the courts." *Borgman v. Bultema* (syllabi), *supra*.

"The decision of the court below that the classis had jurisdiction to act, did act, and that defendants are bound by its decision excluding them from the denomination without right of stay of proceedings pending appeal to the supreme governing body of the church, *held*, justified by the record." *Holwerda v. Hoeksema* (syllabus), *supra*.

"Civil courts will not enter into a consideration of church doctrine or church discipline nor will they inquire into the regularity of the proceedings of church tribunals having cognizance of such matters, since to do so would be inconsistent with complete and untrammelled religious liberty." *Van Vliet v. Vander Naald* (syllabus), 290 Mich. 365.

"Judicial interference in the purely ecclesiastical affairs of religious organizations is improper.

"In church disputes, courts are concerned with property rights only, and those rights may be protected by court order if occasion requires." *Berry v. Bruce* (syllabi), 317 Mich. 490.

"Civil courts do not interfere in matters of church polity that are purely ecclesiastical, but when property rights are involved they are to be tested in the civil courts by the civil laws." *Holt v. Trone* (syllabus), 341 Mich. 169.

It is obvious that the real dispute in this case between the Hoeksema church group and the De Wolf church group has for its objective the ownership of the church property

and the right to its possession and control. While courts do not interfere in matters of church doctrine, church discipline, or the regularity of the proceedings of church tribunals, and refuse to interfere with the right of religious groups to worship freely as they choose, the question of the property rights of the members is a matter within the jurisdiction of the courts and may be determined by the court.

"While members of a church possess the right to withdraw from it, with or without reason, yet they cannot take with them, for their own purposes, or transfer to any other religious body, the property dedicated to and conveyed for the worship of God under the discipline of the religious association to which said church (a voluntary association) belongs; nor can they prevent the use of such property by those who choose to remain in the church, and who represent the regular church organization." *Fuchs v. Mesel* (syllabus), 102 Mich 357.

"In matters of church polity purely ecclesiastical, civil courts do not interfere, but when property rights are involved they are to be tested in the civil courts by the civil laws." *Calvary Baptist Church of Port Huron v. Shay* (syllabus), 292 Mich 517.

"The judicial determination of property rights as between 2 church groups claiming church property does not constitute an unlawful interference with ecclesiastical affairs of a church.

"While membership in a church organization may be withdrawn with or without reason, such right of withdrawal does not carry with it the right to take the church property away from the regular church organization nor prevent its use for purposes of worship by those who chose to remain in the church." *United Armenian Brethren Evangelical Church v. Kazanjian* (syllabi), 322 Mich 651.

The instant case closely parallels the *Borgman and Holwerda Cases*, *supra*, and is controlled by the decisions therein. Although we hear this chancery case de novo we do not reach a different result than that which was announced by the trial court. We find that the defendants are not entitled to ownership possession or control of the church property, and that the Consistory of the plaintiff church, as constituted with Reverend Hoeksema as president, and Gerrit Stadt as clerk, is legally entitled to the possession and control of the physical properties of the corporation. The decree which grants plaintiff the relief prayed for, and restrains the defendants from interfering with the plaintiff corporation in its use of its property, is affirmed to that extent.

Consideration must be given to the plaintiff-appellee's claim that the decree should be modified to the extent of granting the plaintiff-appellee damages in the nature of rent for the period of time during which the defendants have excluded the plaintiff corporation from the use of its property. In that connection, the decree is silent. However, we find nothing in the record to support such a claim by the

appellee, except some scant testimony as to the probable rental value of the church property. There is no proof of the amount paid by plaintiff for the use of other property, the amounts collected by the De Wolf church, or like issues which might properly have been made a matter of proof for an accounting, at the hearing of this case in the trial court. We find nothing here to justify a finding that the plaintiff should be decreed any specific sum of money as damages to be paid by the defendants-appellants for rental during the period they have occupied the church, or otherwise. Therefore, no such modification will be made here in the decree; but an order will be entered here remanding the case to the trial court for the taking of further testimony, if necessary, as to an accounting, with authority to modify the decree as entered in that respect; and for enforcement thereof. See *Komaryski v. Popovich*, 232 Mich. 88, at p. 100, and *Holwerda v. Hoeksema*, *supra*, at p. 656.

The decree as entered is otherwise affirmed, with costs to appellee.

We publish this decree in order that all our people may read it. It was made by the court unanimously.

But we also publish it for the sake of those that are still in illegal possession of our church property, that they may see the light, and surrender what belongs to us without further litigation.

H. H.

### THE TREE

Some people touch a tree and find

But wood to feed a fire;

Yet, carpenters can feel a floor

Or sense a soaring spire . . .

The sculptor looks upon its trunk

And carvings fill the air,

While others come and see the hearts

Which lovers whittled there . . .

The farmer reaches for its fruit,

The traveler seeks its shade;

The boy can see a raft of logs

On streams of flowing jade . . .

The outdoorsman will think of crafts

To blunt an ocean's rage;

The pharmacist will see its roots,

The publisher, a page . . .

The bird finds one beloved branch;

But mothers see the beds

Wherein at nightfall, they will tuck

Their precious curlyheads . . .

The artist grasps the golden flame

That leaves of autumn toss,

And some, whose souls are deep as Time,

Can see a Savior's cross.

— Frank H. Keith



## THE DAY OF SHADOWS

### The Prophecy of Zechariah

Vision V. The Candlestick with the two Olive Trees.

#### Chapter IV

By the Spirit of Jehovah of Hosts (I-7).

1. *And the angel that talked with me returned, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep.*

2. *And he said unto me, What dost thou see? And I said, I have looked, and, behold, a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and its seven lamps thereon, seven and seven pipes to the lamps, which are upon the top thereof.*

3. *And two olive trees by it, one upon the right of the bowl, and the other upon the left thereof.*

4. *So I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, what are these my Lord?*

5. *And answered the angel that talked with me and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my Lord.*

6. *Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.*

7. *Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone with shoutings, Grace, grace unto it.*

1. *Came again* — The interpreting angel seems to have withdrawn temporarily. But it could not have been for long, seeing that all the visions came in one night. Perhaps “he came and waked me” must be taken to mean “he waked me again,” to see a new vision. Taken in either sense, the statement shows that during the vision the prophet was in a state of wakefulness. He was not in a sleep as when the Lord spoke to His servants in dreams. Still his condition was not that of normal wakefulness. It is best described as a state of wakefulness in which the prophet was so utterly absorbed by the heavenly things of his vision that it was as if he had been removed from the scenes of his daily environment and translated to other spheres bodily. *Waked me* — One way of understanding this is that, as exhausted by what he had seen and also because it was night, the prophet had dropped off to a natural sleep after the previous vision had come and gone. But the meaning may also be that after the first vision the prophet returned to a state of normal wakefulness and that in this state he had remained until aroused by the angel and thereby made to pass into a state of wakefulness that characterized him during the vision. Underlying this interpretation is the idea that in comparison with the prophet’s

condition during his vision his normal wakefulness was a sleep. Favoring this interpretation is the prophet’s testimony, namely that the angel waked him as — mark you, as — a man that is awakened out of his sleep.

2. *And he said unto me, what dost thou see?* — Question calculated to cause the prophet to focus his attention on the vision. *And I said, I have looked, and, behold, a candlestick all of gold* — The candlestick in the tabernacle (Exod. 25:31; I Chron. 4:20) was of gold, but the structure of the candlestick in the vision differed somewhat from its prototype. *With a bowl upon the top of it* — A reservoir for the oil consumed by the lamps. It was not found on the top of the candlestick in the tabernacle. The lamps of that article were daily supplied by the priests. *And its seven lamps thereon* — As appears from the succeeding statement, this must not be taken to mean that the lamps were above the bowl nor that they were immediately fastened to the bowl so as to form with it one piece. *Seven and seven pipes for the lamps* — This is the Hebrew literally. It does not mean fourteen pipes to the seven lamps, that is to each two, but seven pipes to each one of the seven lamps, in all forty-nine. For this there is an exact parallel in I Chron. 20:6. Here it is stated that in Gath there was a man of great stature, whose fingers and toes were four and twenty, six and six, meaning, obviously, six on each of the four members mentioned. It is clear that to each seven of the forty-nine pipes a lamp was affixed and that the pipes were the medium of connection between lamps and bowl. *Which are upon the top thereof* — The pronoun “which” looks to the lamps and the adverb “thereof,” to the candlestick. The meaning is, therefore, that the lamps were above the candlestick yet on a level with the bowl or rather slightly beneath it. This would allow the oil to flow from the bowl through the pipes into the lamps.

3. *And two olive trees by it* — Another feature that was lacking to the tabernacle. One was upon the left and the other upon the right side of the olive bowl. Verse 2 states that they were beside the candlestick which is just as true. According to the same verse, one branch from each of these trees supplied the oil for the lamps. The entire description leaves the impression that the candlestick in the vision was a rather huge structure as compared with the candlestick in the tabernacle.

4. *Not understanding the vision*, the prophet asks the interpreting angel for an explanation. *These* — He inquires after the meaning of the content of the entire vision, candlestick and trees.

5. *And answered the angel . . . Knowest thou not what these be?* — God’s signs as such are mute. Their speech is known only to Him. If, therefore, they are to speak also to His servants, it is necessary that He impose upon them by special revelation the word that sets forth the truth that is symbolized. The question of the angel must not, therefore,

be taken as an expression of surprise elicited by the prophet's ignorance.

6. *This*—The candlestick. It is separately dealt with. Last to be explained are the branches and the olive trees (verses 13, 14). *Is the word of Jehovah*—God's signs are always words. *To Zerubbabel*—The word bore upon Jehovah's house. And seeing that Zerubbabel in obedience to Jehovah had taken upon himself to build this house, the word is especially to him. What is this word, the speech of God uttered by the candlestick, definitely the oil and the burning lamps? It is this: *Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts*—The statement is indefinite. This is owing to the fact that "not by might . . . but by my Spirit" is a combination of three phrases without subject or predicate. But this is not a difficulty. For it's the church that these burning lamps signify. (Rev. 1:20)—the church for what she is in Christ Jesus, namely a new creation. The light of those lamps symbolize her heavenly life, the radiance of her life through all the good works that were ordained for her that she should walk in them. It symbolizes, does the light of these lamps, the spiritual beauty of the church in contrast to all that is of sin and death. It is plain that what is true of the two temples of the Old Dispensation (Solomon's temple and that of Zerubbabel) is true of the seven lamps of Zechariah's vision. In their totality these seven lamps symbolize the church not in the process of being built through the ages but as built and crowned with life in glory.

The oil in the vision symbolizes the Spirit. The Hebrew equivalents for power and might are *chayil* and *koach*. Both words are used for power and might of man of whatever character, and of power and might of God.

Not by power, nor by might. The church is not built by man's military might. The great ones of the earth found and extend their kingdoms by such power—by the power of the sword, brute force, violence, oppressions and the threats thereof. Here rebellion is not cured but crushed. Here obedience is not from love but from fear, at bottom, hatred.

The church is not built by man, whatever his power. And through his inventions he has acquired command over an amazing amount of power. He can literally move mountains. But with all his power—physical power, power of will and of mind, power that comes from knowledge and learning—he cannot deliver a single soul from the clutch of sin and death. Which is but saying that the church is not a thing of his creation.

The church was not founded and she is not being built and her heavenly life sustained by the power and might of God by which He destroys the enemies of His people. The ten plagues of Egypt were a mighty revelation of Jehovah's power. But by such working of God's power no sinner was ever converted. That is not its purpose, but its purpose is the destruction of the wicked that God's people may be delivered from their clutch. God is all along overtaking the nations

of the world with His judgments that in the end of time will be climaxed by the world catastrophe by which the world and all that is out of the world will pass away permanently. And there shall be new heavens and a new earth upon which righteousness shall dwell. However, should the Lord limit Himself to this working there would be no church on hand to inherit that earth. For the church is not gathered by such workings of the might and the power of God. This was a lesson that Elijah still had to learn when he fled for his life at hearing that the wicked queen had vowed that she would make his life as the life of one of the Baal priests whom he had ordered slain. The people of Israel were placing God's gifts on Baal's altars. So the prophet called down upon the land a terrible drought. It rained not upon the earth for a space of three years and six months. But with the exception of the seven thousand that the prophet knew nothing about, the nation continued apostate. It did not seek after God as the prophet must have expected that it would. In his despondency he requested for himself that he might die. And then he was taught his lesson. In obedience to the command of the Lord he took his stand upon the mount before the Lord. And the Lord passed by and there was a great and strong wind and then an earthquake and finally a fire. But the Lord was in none of these, meaning that it is not by such revelations of His might, not by His judgments, that he gathers His people and builds His church.

But then by what? "By my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts," by His Spirit—the Spirit of Christ—breathing in men's hearts—the men of His goodwill—the life of Christ and kindling in their hearts the light of life, so that, if formerly dead in their sins, they now live, and if formerly children of the devil, they are now children of God, and by His Spirit cry Abba, Father. So does the Christ of God by His Spirit build His church. He establishes His kingdom in the hearts of His people and puts His law in their mind, so that here obedience spells perfect liberty. Then, certainly, if there be grace in the heart, the effects also of the judgments of God, the afflictions of life, the sufferings of this present time, are salutary. For then there is contrition of heart in tribulation but also rejoicing and this in the knowledge that tribulations work patience, and patience experience, and experience hope.

"Not by might . . . but by My Spirit." This then was the word of the signs of the oil and the seven lamps. And this was the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel and the covenant people. With this word in their hearts, they will pray, as they must, for the coming of God's kingdom in the hearts of men and in their own hearts as fervently as they pray for the coming of God in judgment over the nations, as He has promised, and as fervently for the latter as for the former. But it is not difficult to see that this word was a source of manifold comfort for Zerubbabel. We must consider his position. He was governor of the covenant people. In obedience to the Lord he had taken it upon himself to build the

Lord's (typical) temple. For that he needed the support and the cooperation of the covenant people. But might they not neglect God's house as in their sinful apathy they had done in the past? And would Zerubbabel then not stand helpless seeing that he had no army to sustain him in commanding them to persevere in the work until it was finished? Was there, therefore, not a danger that the temple might never be completed? Zerubbabel need have no concern. He must remember that the Lord is the builder of His own temple and not he. And He does not operate with violence in building His temple. For He wants a willing people. And, therefore, "Not by might . . . but by My Spirit." This is the Lord's method of working as builder of His house. And He can always put this method into use for He is Lord also of men's hearts. And therefore His house shall be built. For the covenant people shall be willing. "By My Spirit," is a promise.

But more must be said. The promise "By My Spirit" had significance for the covenant people in still another respect. Building the temple was costly, as was also the maintenance of its service. Precious metals and bullocks and rams and lambs for the burnt offerings and moreover, wheat, salt, wine and oil according to the appointment of the priests. And the covenant people were but a small and impoverished community. They were without resources to speak of. But the Lord will provide also in every material need but not by might, nor by power but by His Spirit. Many centuries previous he had delivered His people Israel out of Egyptian bondage by His outstretched arm. What a terrible revelation of his power and might that had been. The Egyptians were terrified. They literally thrust the people of Israel out of their land after having laden them down with jewels of silver and jewels of gold and raiment in their frantic effort to get them to leave. For the Lord had given His people favor in their sight. So had He seen to it that His people left Egypt as bountifully supplied by the enemy with all the materials that were needed for the construction of the tabernacle. But that was not by His Spirit but by the soul-terrifying revelations of His power and might in the ten plagues. But in supplying the post-exilic covenant people with the materials for the service in His house, the Lord uses a different method of working. Not by might but by His Spirit. In the words of Isaiah, Surely the isles shall wait for Jehovah, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring Zion's sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord her God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because He has glorified His people (Isa. 9:9).

7. *Who art thou, O great mountain* — the lofty mountains that surrounded Judea, and in comparison with which Mt. Zion that the Scriptures associate with the church, was but a little hill, symbolized the mighty heathen world-power the final appearance of which will be the anti-Christian world-state, the Babylon of the Book of Revelations. At the time of our prophet, this world-power had taken flesh and blood

in the kings of Persia. To this world-power Zerubbabel and his weak and despised little flock — Zion — was in bondage. The statement, "Who art thou, O great mountain" is more of an exclamation than a question. It means: Who dost thou imagine thyself to be, O great mountain, O world-power, that thou dost exalt thyself against Zion, my people, Zerubbabel! The boasting of the world-power is foolishness. It is too ridiculous for words. In the language of Ps. 2, "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh." Yes, God laughs. The reason is stated in the succeeding sentence (of our prophecy). *Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain* — Before the governor of the covenant people, that is before Christ of whom he was a type, the world-power shall be overthrown over and over through the ages to come and finally be made to pass away forever, and this by the terrible revelations of God's might and power in all manner of dreadful plagues including war and bloodshed. The final passing away of the world will be effected by a world catastrophe. And the purpose of it all is the preservation of the church and her final deliverance that with Christ she may appear in Glory — the church that through the ages of this dispensation of time He, the glorified Christ, is building not by power, nor by might but by His Spirit and His Word. This, of course, is not a new promise that was never before proclaimed. It had been proclaimed over and over only not in this form and by these types and symbols. In substance it has already been published right after the fall. For essentially there is but one promise.

But there is more to the promise as here being proclaimed to Zerubbabel. *And he shall bring forth the head stone thereof with shoutings, Grace, grace unto you* — According to some commentators the head stone of which the text here makes mention is not the head, that is the chief stone of the corner, but the gable stone, that is the top stone completing and crowning the building. The expression "head stone" occurs also in Ps. 118:22, "The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner," "In both these places the same Hebrew word is used, namely *rosh* and meaning head, chief, principal. And the verse from the Psalms states that this head stone is the head of the corner, that is the chief corner stone. This proves that the view according to which it is the top stone is incorrect. Nowhere do the Scriptures speak also of the top stone of the temple. The view is a sheer invention. According to I Peter 2:6, 7, this stone is Christ.

"And he shall bring forth the head stone," mark you, "he shall bring." The tense is future. It is the translation found in our English Bible. But this is in accordance with the Vau cons., seeing that the verb in the original text is a simple past, "hath brought forth." So, if the vau cons. be disregarded, which in this case is permissible, the text here in translation would have to read, "He has brought forth the head stone." Another question is whether the pronoun "he"

(Continued on page 288)

## FROM HOLY WRIT

### Exposition of I Corinthians 1-4

#### 11.

The passage to which we would call your attention, dear reader, is recorded in I Corinthians 2:6-9, and reads as follows: "*Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: but we speak the wisdom of God in Mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God foreordained before the world to our glory; Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory, but as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.*"

We should not make the fatal mistake in studying this passage to study it in the abstract, that is, apart from the concrete situation in the congregation at Corinth, and apart from Paul's pedagogical skill in marshalling the evidence forward, so that the Word of God becomes profitable for instruction, correction, reproof, for the entire pedagogy in the righteousness of the "spiritual man," for the perfection of those who have "the mind of Christ." (voun Christou)

For the purpose of Paul here is not that of a System of Doctrine, but is rather deducing from the deep purpose and plan of God certain directives for the conduct of those who are principally and fundamentally "spiritual man" and who are, therefore, no longer "natural" that is, psychical man! This pedagogy of Paul, therefore, is finding a positive *spiritual* point of contact in these who have the mind of Christ; they can for that reason put spiritual things with spiritual. And when this is properly done, to wit, putting spiritual things with spiritual, the contesting parties in the congregation will have been brought to their spiritual senses, and cease in this horrible business of playing out apostle against apostle, and brother against brother. Then shall they all seek the same thing in Christ their Head, walking in Christ, in the unity of the threefold offices of Christ, as we have tried to point out rather explicitly in a former article in this series.

Such is the eminently practical and *pedagogical* purpose of Paul.

Let those, who would substitute another pedagogical approach, take note of this pedagogy of Paul, which is the architectural pedagogy which every preacher of the Word of God shall have to emulate. And then they will needs have to cease attempting to distill a theology of "faith as pre-requisite condition" out of the fact that God *works* grace through admonitions in those who are called into the fellowship of Christ Jesus!

Admonitions and "conditions" are not homogenous; God's manner of working faith in us, and "pre-requisite conditions" are as far apart as the poles, except in the mind of those who would "speak wisdom in mystery" to the *imperfect*! However, that is wholly excluded by the Mystery of God, and, therefore, finds not part in biblical, confessional pedagogy.

This is a very fine point in this entire section of I Corinthians, which we are now considering. Let no one be fooled by all the talk about *pedagogical approach*, when such talk wishes to justify faith as a pre-requisite condition for entering into the kingdom. Surely, surely, there is a pedagogical approach in Scripture. But it is *pedagogical* approach, which finds a positive point of contact in the spiritual man. This approach says: Since ye are spiritual man, "My people," walk as such saints, and it does not say to "every one," if you will do this, ye shall be saved. Every preacher in his right sense will feel too that that faith as a *means* is not the same as faith as a "condition." Those who try to maintain faith as a "pre-requisite act" will therefore try the slight of hand (Eph. 4:14, 15) the jugglers-act, of trying to defend faith as a *means* under the false pretense that this covers faith as a "pre-requisite."

Let none be fooled by this trickery. It is rather convenient and cheap to hold up the work of the undersigned in the "Majority Report" before the secular courts, but the same preachers dare not defend faith as a pre-requisite for "man" but with *their* backs against the wall they start defending faith as a means overagainst faith as a *fruit*! I wonder whether those who write such nonsense believe their own writings, or whether this is a little face-saving. Undersigned does not need to save his face, since by grace he saved his face loosing his life in confession, when he erred. I can, therefore, only have profound pity for such floundering leadership. For what have I that I have not received! The lines have fallen unto me in pleasant places.

Does any one imagine that a tendency to be "doctrinal" in the preaching and thus, probably, neglecting at times the pedagogical in Scripture and in the preaching, is remedied by stubborn maintainance of indefensible Arminian formulas and pedagogical approaches! But is it not an old trick of the Devil to come as a child of light? At any rate: from the paw we can detect the lion! We are not ignorant of his wiles!

Hence, we shall follow the instruction of Paul here in *his* wonderful, architectural pedagogical approach in this passage.

When we give a little attention to the concept wisdom as Paul here uses it and *defines* it, it will soon become evident what a powerful sword of the Spirit the Word is, in the hand of Paul, to show once and for all, that the conduct of "schism" in God's church is not that of the wisdom of heaven, but that it belongs to the wisdom which is from below, which is *earthly, psychical* (sensual) *demon-*

ical! All such wisdom of this "world" should not be followed by those who are "perfect." For them another form and standard of conduct is fitting. Theirs is not a life and conduct for which a merely *earthly* wisdom should be the rule; a wisdom dealing merely with earthly relationships, the present human existence, in home, school, church and state. The present position of ministers, elders apart from their relationship to heaven, the ages to come, the abiding inheritance of the office of all believers now and in the eternal state the glory to be revealed in us. Then our wisdom is such that we act as if this earthly is the limit of our vision, aspirations and activity—not looking for the better inheritance layed up for us in heaven!

Nor should the wisdom of the world as it is merely *psychical*, be ours. This deals with the purely psychological, the natural in man. It refers to talents, honors, art and culture, in this present earthly world. Yes, here we may fight who is the greatest, who has the greatest talents for preaching, and here we may have all knowledge and speak the tongues of men and of angels, and yet not see the *Spiritual* things of God prepared for those loving Him, the called according to his purpose. With this wisdom we may have a very high Intelligence Quotient, be brilliant students in philosophy and all the liberal arts (not that a study of philosophic history is something to be despised as such, and not useful) and yet not be able to put the very rudiments of spiritual things with spiritual, as they are joined by God in His Wisdom in Mystery!

For all such wisdom which is merely of this earth, and is only psychical in nature, not understanding the very rudiments of heaven's wisdom and plan, shows its root and origin in the father of the lie, the Devil, as he attempts to be a god, a ruler of this world. And all earthly wisdom, psychical engaging in deadly combat, in partisan strife, reveals its origin in hell! That is not only true of the positive adhering to men from the spirit of partisanship, but it is equally true where this is put in reverse—not wanting to acknowledge those whom God has gifted with heaven's wisdom. See I Corinthians 12, "that there be not schism in the body."

As much as we love our soul's salvation we are admonished to free this *wisdom from below*, reject it as not fitting to us the "perfect."

Paul speaks *another* wisdom. It is other in nature, scope and origin. It is a wisdom which is heavenly, all of heaven's glory will reveal what this "wisdom of God" is. And it is a wisdom which is *spiritual*, that is, it is revealed by the Holy Spirit. And, finally, it is a wisdom which is Divine, the expression of God's plan and purpose in all things in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

In Holy Writ the term "wisdom" receives its own content. The term "wisdom" (*sophia*) in classic Greek is used of skill, and especially of fine arts, philosophy, music, poetry, painting, etc. In short, all that would fall under the natural light of man, the glimmerings of natural light, what is some-

times placed in the category of Kuyprian "common grace." However, in Scripture the term "wisdom" is used of the things that pertain to the "mystery of godliness" that is great; it is the Mystery of God revealed in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory. I Tim. 3:16. It is the personified wisdom (*chokmah*) of Proverbs 8, the some total of all of God's plan and purpose in Christ Jesus, the secret counsel and will of God concerning the redemption of the elect, and the glorification of all things in heaven, and the justification of His own righteousness in hell.

Such is the wisdom which Paul refers to here in this Scripture passage.

He mentions the following particulars concerning this "wisdom" here in his polemic against the spirit of partisanship, the appealing to natural rhetorical skill, instead of the simple testimony of the Word of the Cross, in which the Wisdom of God in Mystery is unfolded.

1. It can only be spoken amongst the "perfect"; the imperfect do not understand it. They do not have the mind of Christ.

2. It is a wisdom which never arises in the heart of man, but only in the mind and counsel of God.

3. It was indeed a hidden wisdom, which God has fore-ordained to our glory.

Well may we contemplate this "wisdom" and thus walk as the "perfect."

G.L.

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#### IN MEMORIAM

The societies of the First Protestant Reformed Church of Holland express their sympathy to Rev. and Mrs. James McCollam and family in the death of Mrs. McCollam's mother,

MRS. N. C. STILES

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." Rev. 14:13.

The Ladies Aid Society  
The Men's Society

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#### IN MEMORIAM

The Men's and Ladies' Societies of the Creston Protestant Reformed Church wish to express their sincere sympathy to their fellow members, Mr. and Mrs. Joe King and family in the recent death of their father and grandfather,

MR. SIMON VANDER VEEN.

May our Heavenly Father comfort the bereaved and may we at all times put our trust in Him.

Mr. P. Vanden Engel, President  
Mrs. Jeanette Kunz, Secretary

## IN HIS FEAR

### The Sabbath in His Fear

(6)

"That I, especially on the Sabbath, frequent the church of God to hear His Word, to use the sacraments, publicly to call upon the Lord and contribute to the relief of the poor as becomes a christian."

Thus the Heidelberg Catechism explains the Sabbath in His fear.

In the February 15 issue of the *Standard Bearer* we began to set forth some positive activity and exercises wherewith to fill the day in His fear. We will continue now from where we left off.

We, at that time, suggested preparation before the services of divine worship: that we read the chapter wherein the text is found and concentrate on the text published so as to have it in all its parts in mind when we gather to listen to an exposition of the text. In this way, there can be no doubt, we will benefit far more greatly from the Word which we hear and understand more clearly, more richly and more deeply the truth of the Word of God.

Man is by nature, however, too lazy to take the time for these.

He is too carnal to make use of the moments and hours of the Sabbath for such things!

He lacks sufficient interest in the truth and the gospel of salvation to get up early enough on the only day in the week when he does not need, either figuratively or literally, to "punch a clock" to signify that he has appeared at work on time!

The same holds true for his afternoon service or evening service. No, we have to have our cup of coffee after the morning service, our cup of tea or what have you? The noontide meal must not be overlooked or rushed; a stretch on the davenport or bed for a nap is deemed essential. Time must be given to keeping up with the events of the day and listening to the news cast. We just must know what the weather report is and that in detail. But as much as five minutes to get the particular passage of the Word of God which will be treated before our minds . . . ! Well, that just does not interest us. Let us be honest with ourselves and with our God!

We will take steps to obtain maps of scenic wonders as the Grand Canyon, Yellowstone Park and the like to be sure that we do not miss some little beauty spot while we are there. We will want to know what to look for when there is so much territory to cover. When we attend a concert or the like we will leave our seats to obtain a printed program so that we may enjoy the program as fully as we can.

But the Word of God?

Indeed, we frequent the house of God and speak ill of those we meet on the street who go out for carnal pleasure on the day; but our frequenting is habit and custom, very often, and nothing more. Our lack of interest in a little preparation to enjoy and understand the Word reveals that!

Another thing that reveals that though we frequent that church of God, we still do not live in His fear on that day is that men are inattentive to the preaching and utterly silent in the singing of God's praises. There is nothing so out of place, so pathetic a sight as to have those in the audience who are silent while God's praises are being sung. Those who cannot join in and have not the joy in their hearts to sing God's praises are to be pitied. When we just do not feel like joining in to sing God's praises, there is something wrong. Our Sabbath has certainly begun wrong. Our coming to church has been, most likely, simply routine, custom, habit and little more. O, one may occasionally have a good reason for silence. A very inflamed throat, shortness of breath due to an illness or heart condition and others can be listed. But the silence that is not due to these things and continues Sabbath after Sabbath reveals a wrong approach to the whole Sabbath. Not infrequently it reveals exactly that no advance preparation for worship in God's house was carried out at all. We just went there! And we just came back home! We went to church. But we did not keep the Sabbath in His fear.

We wrote above that there is nothing so pathetic as to see those who cannot have the joy of singing God's praises in services of divine worship. We will alter that a bit. There is one thing more pathetic and that is to see those who delight in physical rest and sleep above hearing the glad tidings of salvation that are being proclaimed. When the Heidelberg Catechism explains that what God demands of us in the Fourth Commandment is that we "diligently frequent the church of God" it means a whole lot more than simply to be present when the services of divine worship begin. For the words are added: "to hear His Word, to use the sacraments, publicly to call upon the Lord."

Here, again, you have one of those things that is good and according to God's law on Monday and is also good and according to God's law on the Sabbath. There is nothing sinful in sleep as such. "He giveth His beloved sleep," the Psalmist declares in Psalm 127:2. God give us that sleep to enjoy also on the Sabbath.

But not in His house!

Not while He has the glad tidings of salvation proclaimed!

Not while He has prepared the day and occasion for us to "hear what the Spirit hath to say unto the churches."

O, there are times when one must fight sleep, due to no failure on his part to prepare for the Sabbath on Saturday. There are mothers whose watchful care of the sick child leaves them exhausted after the night's vigil and who, still desiring to go up to God's house on the Sabbath, (for which



desire they are to be commended and not to be condemned) may yield to a few nods of sleep though they struggled ever so hard to stay awake. But how often is it not to be observed that young and old "get all set" for a good sleep? It might make an interesting book for a minister some day to write all that is to be seen from off the pulpit. Ministers have odd ways of pulpit manners, to be sure. Facial expressions are often comical and other peculiarities are common rather than a rarity. But let it also be understood that what is seen from off the pulpit is not always inspiring either; and many who give the excuse that the warm room temperature brings on their sleep because they are accustomed to the outdoor air often forget that it can be seen that they squirm and twist in their seats to find a place of more comfort before they settle down for that sleep which declares what they understand by the "rest that remaineth for the children of God."

What is worse they forget that God sees it also.

Besides the physical closing of their eyes in sleep, they also close their eyes figuratively to the fact that the Sabbath must be kept in HIS fear. Forget the man on the pulpit. Forget the one who writes these lines. Be sure, however, not to forget the God of the Sabbath Whom in fear we must serve!

To continue, apart from these defects in Sabbath worship, there is also the positive approach to the matter that must be considered. These defects we list under that second category of which we spoke last time: those whereby we choke the word that has been preached by the activity we perform on the Sabbath. What, however, do we who do not sleep, do while the Word is proclaimed? The blank look of "day-dreaming" on the faces of those not asleep; the individual who notices absolutely everything about him or her; hears every noise and is distracted by it, has to turn around to see what caused it; the sudden interest in the length of the fingernails so that they have to be clipped off with their tell tale sound, to mention only a few, are things that indicate that we are present only in body.

After such a Sabbath, we can say we had an enjoyable day?

Positively there are things that we can do besides even the listening to the proclamation of God's Word. We can follow the preaching as well as the reading of God's Word in our own Bibles. It used to be a beautiful sight to see children walking to church with a Bible in their hands. Nothing could be more appropriate today. Our modern methods of convenience however, have tacked a book rack on the back of the seats so that we can always find a Bible there for our use; but far more beautiful and proper is the picture of God's people *taking* a Bible along to church. We lose so easily the idea that we go there to hear God's Word. Our children also grow up in an age when the beauty of going up to God's house is all but gone. "Going to church" soon gets to be an opportunity to show off a new dress, a

new hairdo or a new car. We much prefer the old practice of coming to church with the Bible and a song book; that before we even leave home the idea and purpose of our going up to God's house is before our minds and before the minds of our children.

Let us then use these Bibles when we get there!

Even when they are all furnished and within arm's length or at least within reach, not seldom is it to see those who let it gather dust while the Word is read in church. A little hint, however, that is important. The Law or the Creed is not read in order to give you time to look up the passage to be read. That also ought to be done before the service begins and either a book mark of some kind used to mark it or else some other way devised so that the passage can be found quickly and quietly. These Bibles should be used; and if they are not furnished and to be found in the book rack, they should be brought along! It is a sad state of affairs in the spiritual life of that family that never forgets to take its "peppermints" along but can easily forget to take along a Bible. Before such a family leaves home it knows that it will want something sweet to chew on but does not know for what purpose services of divine worship are instituted. How easily we teach our children what to expect in God's house. Expect peppermints. They are essential. Leave your Bibles home, the reading out of them is merely incidental. Rather would we insist that ALL, young and old, follow the reading of God's Word that we may derive benefit from the reading as such and that through it we may be prepared for the particular message out of it that God has prepared for us. After all, God's Word is the best means to introduce to us God's Word in the preaching.

Then, leave your Bible open after you have followed the reading of the text (or questions and answers of the Lord's Day in the Heidelberg Catechism) and refer to it when parts of it are referred to or the context is referred to in the preaching. Never have any fear that the minister will consider you to be a critic who is trying to check up as to whether he speaks the truth. O, if he is not faithful in his work and does not prepare fully and tries to uphold a pet theory of his own, he will resent it that you look repeatedly at the text and context of which he speaks. But if he prepares faithfully and conscientiously, he will delight in showing you mysteries and beauties of God's Word he has been given to see in the week gone by and will be happy to see you follow him and to see you enjoy the truth with him. It is his joy to see you enjoy the truth.

J.A.H.

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Something for Thee! Yet if for me  
 It is a useless, cripple hand,  
 Let perfect patience mark my way:  
 Since they who silently obey  
 Are doing as Thy wisdom planned,  
 Something for Thee!

## Contending For The Faith

### The Church and the Sacraments

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

#### BAPTISM (1).

In our discussion of the early views of the Sacrament of Baptism as entertained by the Church during the first three centuries of the New Dispensation, we have observed that this sacrament was held in high esteem. It was not merely considered a rite, but as a sacrament it was deemed efficacious. Although one might easily receive the impression from some expressions of the early Church Fathers that they attributed efficacy to the external rite of Baptism as such (such as the power of regeneration, cleansing from sin, sanctification), these allegorical expressions may easily be interpreted without attributing to them the view that the water of Baptism as such is efficacious unto salvation. And Origin, although also attaching great significance to this sacrament, makes a clear distinction between the symbol of Baptism and the thing signified by the symbol.

In regard to the question of the baptism of infants, we may remark that the general references that are sometimes thought to be found in some of the early writings of the Church Fathers with respect to infant-baptism are admittedly vague. Tertullian was strongly opposed to the baptism of infants. However, one may certainly conclude from his strong opposition to the baptism of infants that the practice must have been general in his day. Origin definitely states that infant baptism is a usage derived from the apostles. And Cyprian maintains that baptism should be administered as early as possible; it should not even be delayed until the eighth day as some in the African Church would have it upon the basis of a comparison with the rite of circumcision in the Old Dispensation.

Other questions also arose in connection with this sacrament during this early period of the Church of God in the New Dispensation. It was generally held that the Church only could baptize, although Tertullian maintained that in case of emergency any layman could administer the sacrament. And, in close connection with this question, the question arose whether heretics should be re-baptized if they should return into the Catholic Church (not to be confused, we understand, with the Roman Catholic Church of today). Many held that they should be re-baptized. The Roman Church, however (the church as established in the city of Rome), considered any baptism valid as long as it was properly administered. This is still the generally accepted view. We may conclude these introductory remarks, introducing our discussion of Baptism as entertained by the Church during the Second Period (300-750 A.D.) with the

observation that objections were raised by heretics to any form of Baptism.

#### *Great Significance Attached to Baptism.*

That great significance was attached to this sacrament was already apparent from the manner in which it was administered. The favorite times for baptism for adults were Easter and Pentecost, and in the East also Epiphany (Epiphany was the festival celebrated on the sixth day of January, the twelfth day after Christmas, in commemoration of the appearance of Christ to the Magi or philosophers of the East who came to adore Him with presents, or, as others maintain, to commemorate the appearance of the star to the Magi or the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles. The Greek fathers used the word for the appearance of Christ in the world, the sense in which the apostle, Paul, uses the word). In the fourth century, when the mass of the population of the Roman empire went over from heathenism to Christianity, the baptisteries were thronged with proselytes on those high festivals, and the baptism of such masses had often a very imposing and solemn character. Children were usually incorporated into the church by baptism soon after their birth. Immersion continued to be the usual form of baptism, especially in the East; and the threefold immersion in the name of the Trinity was in effect. Yet Gregory the Great permitted also the single immersion, which was customary in Spain as a testimony against the Arian polytheism. From this we see, at the same time, that even in infant baptism immersion was custom. Yet, in the nature of the case, sprinkling, at least of sick or weak children, especially in northern climates, came early into use.

Continuing with the administration of this sacrament, we are informed that several preparatory and accompanying ceremonies, some of them as early as the second and third centuries, were connected with it. These ceremonies, although significant, certainly obscured the original simplicity of the sacrament. These were exorcism or the expulsion of the devil; breathing upon the candidates as a sign of the communication of the Holy Spirit, according to John 20:22, where we read of Jesus that He breathed on His disciples and said unto them, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit;" the touching of the ears, with the exclamation: "Ephphatha!", according to Mark 7:34 (Jesus performs this symbolism upon the man who was deaf and had an impediment in his speech), for the opening of the spiritual understanding; the sign of the cross made upon the forehead and breast, as the mark of the soldier of Christ; and, at least in Africa, the giving of salt, as the emblem of the Divine word, according to Mark 9:50, Matthew 5:13, and Col. 4:6. Proselytes generally took also a new name, according to Rev. 2:17.

In the act of baptism itself, the candidate, first with his face toward the west, renounced Satan and all his pomp and service; then, facing the east, he vowed fidelity to Christ and confessed his faith in the Triune God, either by rehearsing the Creed, or in answer to questions. Thereupon followed

the threefold or the single immersion in the name of the Triune God, with the calling of the name of the candidate, the deacons and deaconesses assisting. After the second anointing with the consecrated oil (confirmation), the veil was removed with which the heads of catechumens, in token of their spiritual minority, were covered during Divine worship, and the baptized person was clothed in white garments, representing the state of regeneration, purity and freedom. In the Western church the baptized person received at the same time a mixture of milk and honey, as a symbol of childlike innocence and as a foretaste of Communion. It is evident from this description of the administration of the sacrament of baptism that this sacrament was held in tremendously high esteem during the early centuries of the Church of God in the New Dispensation.

The sacrament of baptism was understood to remove both the original and actual sins (before baptism). The first who developed a really dogmatic theory of Baptism was Augustine, under the stress of his controversy with the Donatists. The views of the ante-Nicene (after the Council of Nicea) concerning baptism and baptismal regeneration were in this period more copiously expressed in rhetorical style by Basil the Great and the two Gregories, who wrote treatises on this sacrament, and were more clearly and logically developed by Augustine. The patristic (pertaining to the fathers of the early Christian church or to their writings) and Roman Catholic view on regeneration, however, differs considerably from the one which now prevails among the most Protestant denominations, especially those of the more Puritanic type, in that it signifies not so much a subjective change of heart, which is more properly called conversion, but a change in the objective condition and relation of the sinner, namely his translation from the kingdom of Satan into the Kingdom of Christ.

Gregory Nazianzen (one of the leading theologians of the Eastern Church, who was probably born in 329 and who probably died about 390), sees in baptism all blessings of Christianity combined, especially the forgiveness of sins, the new birth, and the restoration of the Divine image. To children it is a seal of grace and a consecration to the service of God. According to Gregory of Nyssa (another leading Greek theologian of the fourth century and younger brother of Basil the Great and who died after 394), the child by baptism is instated in the paradise from which Adam was thrust out. The Greek fathers had no clear knowledge of original sin. According to a certain pelagian writer Chrysostom must have taught: "We baptize children, though they are not stained with sin, in order that holiness, righteousness, sonship, inheritance, and brotherhood may be imparted to them, through Christ." However, this passage is not found in the writings of Chrysostom, although Augustine, while trying to explain it away, does not dispute the citation. We can easily understand why a pelagian, denying original sin, should present such a quotation. Pelagianism, we un-

derstand, denies the Scriptural truth of original guilt and original pollution. They deny that every child is born into this world with the sin and corruption of Adam in his heart and soul; they deny that we are conceived dead in sins and trespasses. It is therefore not difficult to understand why a pelagian, denying original guilt and original pollution, should be delighted with a quotation from a renowned church father which declares that children are not baptized because they are stained with sin. Hence, the purpose of baptism is not to remove sin but simply, positively, to impart holiness and righteousness.

Augustine brought the operation of baptism into connection with his more complete doctrine of original sin. Baptism delivers from the guilt of original sin, and takes away the sinful character of the concupiscence of the flesh, while for the adult it at the same time effects the forgiveness of all actual transgressions before baptism. Like Ambrose and other fathers, Augustine taught the necessity of baptism for entrance into the kingdom of heaven, on the ground of John 3:5, and deduced therefrom, in logical consistency, the terrible doctrine of damnation of all unbaptized children (it is Philip Schaff who calls this a "terrible" doctrine), though he assigned to them the mildest grade of perdition.

The council of Carthage, in 318, did the same (namely, to declare for the damnation of all unbaptized children), and in its second canon rejected the notion of a happy middle state for unbaptized children (there were some who advocated this view). It is remarkable, however, that this addition to the second canon does not appear in all copies of the Acts of the council and was perhaps out of some horror omitted. This passage in question reads as follows: "Whoever says that there is in the kingdom of heaven or elsewhere a certain middle state, where children who die without baptism live happy, while yet they cannot without baptism enter the kingdom of heaven, that is, into eternal life, let him be anathema." It is understandable that a passage of this nature, because of its severe language which is so repulsive to many, should be omitted from these acts of this council.

The Lord willing, we will begin our following article with a quotation from Augustine in connection with his views on this subject. As we may expect this learned Church Father also expressed himself on the subject of the sacrament of Baptism.

H.V.

#### IN MEMORIAM

The consistory of the Hope Protestant Reformed Church herewith expresses its sympathy to our fellow office-bearer, Mr. John Kalsbeek, in the loss of his father,

MR. HESSEL DE JONGE

May the God of all grace comfort him in the assurance that this is but a passing through to that better land, which is our hope, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Rev. H. Hanko, President  
John Lanning, Clerk

## The Voice of Our Fathers

### The Canons of Dordrecht

#### PART TWO

#### EXPOSITION OF THE CANONS

#### SECOND HEAD OF DOCTRINE

#### OF THE DEATH OF CHRIST, AND THE REDEMPTION OF MEN THEREBY

Article 7. But as many as truly believe, and are delivered and saved from sin and destruction through the death of Christ, are indebted for this benefit solely to the grace of God, given them in Christ from everlasting, and not to any merit of their own.

It is again a matter of regret that in this article the English translation, while it adheres to the idea of the original Latin, does not adhere more strictly to the language of the original, which is more forceful. Since the article is not long, we will take space to quote the Latin and to present a more literal translation.

The Latin reads as follows:

*Quotquot autem vere credunt, et per mortem Christi a peccatis, et interitu liberantur ac servantur, illis hoc beneficium, ex sola Dei gratia, quam nemini debet, ab aeterno ipsis in Christo data, obtingit.*

And a more literal translation would be:

But as many as truly believe, and through the death of Christ from their sins, and destruction are liberated and rescued to those this benefit falls (*obtingo*-to fall to one's lot, happen, befall) out of grace that is of God alone (literally: out of the only-of-God grace), which he owes to no one, which has been given them in Christ from eternity.

For a correct understanding of this article, it is necessary to understand its setting.

And then we must note, in the first place, that this article falls not under the subject of "Divine Predestination," but under that of "The Death of Christ, and the Redemption of Men Thereby." Hence, we deal here not directly with the decrees of God, but with certain historic facts, namely, the death of Christ, the preaching of Christ crucified together with the command of faith and repentance, the disobedience to that command on the part of many (Article 6), and the obedience to that command of repentance and faith on the part of those who believe (Article 7). While it is true, therefore, that the article mentions the fact that the grace of God is "given them from eternity," the main point of the article is the fact that it is *mere grace* that as many as truly believe are delivered and saved from sin and destruction, and, more specifically still, that it is mere grace that they do believe. In this connection, we may note, in the second place, that this 7th article is the counterpart of the 6th article: they are complementary. These articles together deal with certain facts concerning the redemption of men through the death

of Christ, facts which are the same for both the Arminians and those of Reformed persuasion. These facts are:

1) The gospel must be and is preached promiscuously and without distinction to all nations and to all persons whom it reaches.

2.) When that gospel is preached, there is, on the part of many, an unbelieving reaction against it, and these many who do not believe perish. This is simply a fact, which neither the Reformed man nor the Arminian can deny. It has always been the case, also in Biblical times, and is the case still today.

3) When that gospel is promiscuously proclaimed, there is, on the part of some, a believing reaction, and these who believe are saved. This is also a simple fact for both the Arminian and the Reformed man.

The question is, however: what is the explanation of these facts? The Arminian charges, of course, that the Reformed man has no explanation for these facts, and that his Reformed position does not agree with the facts. And the Remonstrant maintains that these facts can be explained only from this position: 1) That Christ died for all and for every man, thus accomplishing the *possibility* of redemption for men in general. 2) That, however, the matter of the believing or unbelieving reaction to this possibility of salvation in Christ, and therefore the effectualness or inefficiency of that death of Christ, is solely up to man. Furthermore, the Arminian bends every effort in his opposition to the Reformed position in order to show by "hook or crook" that one *must come* to the theory of general atonement.

It was in this connection that we noted in our discussion of Article 6 that the Arminian forces the Reformed man to attribute the guilt of unbelief to man, by charging that the truth of limited atonement means that the sacrifice of Christ is defective and insufficient: His sacrifice was not valuable enough to save those that do not believe. And therefore, so the Arminian continued, that poor sinner cannot be blamed for his unbelief and is not responsible for his own perdition, for he never had an opportunity to be saved: it was a priori established that there was no blood to cover his sins, no redemption for his guilt, no salvation for his soul. Rather, the Arminian said, we must maintain that Christ's sacrifice covered all sinners. Then it can never be said that His sacrifice was defective or insufficient, and then only can it be maintained that the unbeliever is himself to be blamed for his unbelief and consequent perdition. It was over against this argument, we have seen, that the fathers maintained: 1) That it is not necessary to teach a general atonement in order to maintain the guilt of the lost unbeliever. 2) That while they insist on the truth of particular atonement, they nevertheless also insist that the guilt of unbelief and the blame of unbelievers' perdition is in no wise to be ascribed to a defect in the sacrifice of Christ, but is wholly the sinner's. 3) That this guilt accrues to them when in the general proclamation of the gospel Christ crucified is evidently

held before them, and they are confronted with the command to repent and believe, but are not obedient to said command. But now — and this is what leads to Article 7 — the Arminian thinks he has trapped his Reformed opponent in his own position. Again, he aims at forcing him to concede that atonement must be general, and that the effect of that atonement is dependent upon the will of the sinner. His argument is that if the *blame* of unbelief and perdition is to be ascribed to the sinner who does not believe, then it follows that the *credit* for faith and salvation must also be ascribed to the sinner who does believe. In other words, the Arminian claims that the same spiritual, ethical relationship obtains between the unbeliever, his unbelief, and his perdition, on the one hand, and between the believer, his faith, and his salvation, on the other hand.

To this the fathers reply in Article 7: *non sequitur*, it does not follow. Let us briefly analyze their reply.

First of all, they maintain the relation between faith and salvation: faith is indeed the way and the means to salvation. It is, as they maintained already in Article 5, those that believe in Christ crucified that are delivered and saved from sin and destruction through the death of Christ. The fathers are always careful to maintain this, since the Arminians always charge them with denying it. And especially here they are careful to abide by the facts. Remember, the fact facing both the Arminian and the Reformed man in this phase of the controversy is: some believe and are saved. The fathers are quite content to grant that plain fact. It surely is not thus, that God chose some, that Christ died for them, and that now they are simply saved, *nolens-volens*, and that faith nowhere enters into the picture. No, "as many as believe, and are delivered and saved from sin and destruction," — they are the subject of discussion in this article. In fact, the fathers stress this fact by inserting the word "truly." Faith is by no means a non-essential in the process of salvation, and therefore it must indeed be a genuine faith also. It is by no means impossible that there is at the same time in that word "truly" a barb for the shadow and superficial Arminian conception of believing in Christ. At any rate, the subject is those who truly believe, that is, those who come to Christ as poor, lost, damnable sinners in themselves, who apprehend in Christ and His benefits the fulness of their emptiness, who embrace Him with the certain knowledge and hearty confidence of faith. They are delivered and rescued from sin and destruction. They are translated from the darkness to God's marvelous light. Christ has died for them. He has paid their debt of guilt. And they are liberated from sin not only; but also from its consequences, death and hell, they are rescued. And let no one charge the Reformed faith with denying that those who truly believe are saved. Nor let the Reformed man be afraid to proclaim it. Let him emphasize even that faith must be genuine.

But then let him speak of faith, not works.

And that means that he will speak of grace, nor merit.

For the question is: whence is that faith and that salvation? Faith and salvation indeed belong together. They cannot be separated. They are, in fact, according to the language of this article, one benefit: ". . . are indebted for this benefit. . ."

And here we have the main point of this article. The source of this benefit is only the grace of God. And again, the article emphasizes that this is the source. It tells us that this benefit is "*ex sola Dei gratia, out of the grace of God solely.*" Hence, the source of this benefit of salvation through faith is not the mind and will and heart of the sinner to whom the gospel is proclaimed, but the grace of God. What does grace mean? Grace means a free gift. God's grace is His favor, according to which He wills to make the object of that grace blessed with Himself. It is the divine power also whereby that will is carried out, whereby the object of His grace is actually blessed. That divine grace, as the attitude of God and as the power of God, is the source, then, of this benefit. It is the source not only of the salvation and liberation from sin and destruction, but also of the faith and the act of believing. That grace is *free*. And it is the very opposite of works: "And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work." Rom. 11:6. Hence, there is no merit in our salvation whatsoever. While the guilt of unbelief is wholly the sinner's, the credit of salvation through faith is not at all the sinner's, but wholly God's.

This truth the *Canons* emphasize by a three-fold qualification of this grace: 1) It is literally, according to the original, a grace that is only of God. In no wise is that grace or the reception of that grace to be explained as having its reason in the sinner. 2) It is grace which God owes to no one. No one, unbeliever or believer, can ever say he has a claim upon the grace of God. If grace were ever a matter of the worthiness of its objects, sinners, then there would be no grace for any sinner. God's grace is absolutely undeserved, forfeited. But even apart from the matter of sin, no *creature*, — just because of the fact that he is a *creature*, — could ever have any claim upon divine grace. It is free, sovereign, independent. Otherwise grace is no more grace! 3) And finally, the fathers allude in this article to something they did not mention in Article 6: God's eternal decree. To seal the true character of that grace, and to rule out any possible credit to the sinner, they emphasize that this grace was given us from eternity in Christ. When you and I were not there, when we could not possibly have done anything to merit or to forfeit that grace, long before we were ever born, in the mysterious depths of eternity, God's attitude of favor and His will to bless us in Christ were there, and were upon us who believe in time. In other words, God's grace was always, eternally, upon us. It had no beginning; and therefore it could never be due to us, who are creatures of time. *Soli Deo gloria!*

H. C. H.

## DECENCY and ORDER

### Family Visitation

(Continued)

#### E. Method

Perhaps one of the most difficult aspects of the work of family visiting is the selection of the proper and most effective method. On the one hand, careful attention must be given that there is some definite system and order followed in this work with a view to attaining its spiritual objective. Unless this is done the work, haphazardly done, will prove to be fruitless. On the other hand, however, the same caution must be taken to avoid making this work a matter of formal routine. The members of the family are then simply confronted with a list of prepared questions; answers are hastily heard and the visit is considered completed. Such formal legalism, however systematic it may be, affords little spiritual benefit. This method is no improvement over the complete lack of system. Both are extremely dangerous and must be scrupulously avoided in selecting a proper method for the performance of this work. To find a method that is entirely free from both errors is not the simplest matter.

Although it is important that there be some definite plan and arrangement followed in performing this work, it is quite impossible to lay down a specific and inviolable rule governing the method of procedure to be followed. The work itself is spiritual and, therefore, the selection of a method will to a great extent have to be determined by the spiritual condition and circumstances of each family visited. It may be very advisable that the visitors alter their method of approach according to these circumstances. Because of this, whatever method is selected will necessarily demand a certain amount of precursory preparation on the part of those called to do this work. Without this preparation, the best method will prove ineffective and the most persuasive labors will be fruitless. To this preparation belongs especially two things:

(1) Since this work is spiritual, it can be fruitfully accomplished only in the strength and power of "the wisdom that is from above which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." (James 3:17) Let those then who are called of God to look after the souls of His sheep enter the sanctuary of God before each visit and on bended knees "ask this wisdom of God Who giveth to all liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." (James 1:5) This is the best possible preparation for the task, fundamentally important and an excellent safeguard against all "tyranny, lording and misuse of Christ's authority."

(2) Since this work is essentially "ministering the Word

of God," those engaged in it should be somewhat acquainted with the families to be visited and must be well versed in the Scriptures in order that the Word may be effectually ministered according to the particular need and circumstances. This knowledge should not be difficult to acquire if one is faithful in respect to the general task of "watching over the Lord's heritage."

Thereupon one is equipped to call upon the people of God to inquire after their spiritual well-being, to comfort, assist and instruct them in the truth of the Word and to exhort and admonish in love as the need may require. As is stated on p. 71 of "Taking Heed To The Flock," "The elders will not be able to decide before hand just what they shall say and do. A detailed plan of procedure would be of value only if we could predict with reasonable accuracy how the members of the congregation react under certain circumstances. Since the depths of the heart are known to God alone and only some small part is revealed at any time, we will have to rely upon the Holy Spirit for wisdom and guidance in approaching the needs of the people."

With respect to the manner in which to conduct the actual visit we wish to pass on to our readers the following "Notes" by the Rev. G. M. Ophoff which we feel contain some valuable suggestions and directives which will be helpful in keeping family visiting in the right spiritual channels. This any method selected must do or the very purpose of the work is defeated. We then quote:

"Each visit should be opened with prayer. It is the proper way to begin a visit. Through prayer, the pastor and the sheep visited enter the sanctuary of God consciously. That is where the pastor and his sheep must be during the hour of visit. Then the visit is certain to bear good fruit. Opening with prayer, the pastor avoids the pitfall of being directed in his conversation, and this at the very outset, by the members visited into purely secular paths of thought; thus in paths that lead, the longer they are pursued, further and further away from the things on which he and his sheep should concentrate. To get back to these things he must take a tremendously big step which is very difficult. The opening prayer must be brief and to the point. In this opening prayer, the pastor must limit himself to asking for what is needful for the task of the hour with respect to himself and those visited. In the closing prayer, the pastor or elder remembers the family, parents and children, before God's throne. He invokes the blessing of Christ upon them but always, of course, in connection with the circumstances, conditions, joys and sorrows, trials and temptations peculiar to that family group and to each of its members.

There is the question whether the opening prayer should be followed by a brief passage from the Scriptures. This is an absolute requirement for the task of the pastor is to administer the Word of God to each family group. He is the preacher of the Word as a visitor of the individual families as truly as he is the preacher of the Word on the meet-



ings for public worship. The pastor and those visited should understand this. They should be given to understand that family visiting is precisely a meeting for private worship. Because it is this, the Scriptures must be read and the verses read should be used as a lead in counselling, instructing, admonishing, exhorting, comforting, rebuking if need be, the family and its members. This of course does not mean that the pastor is obligated to limit himself to the teachings and admonitions, etc., contained in the particular Scripture that was read. He may turn to other texts, to as many as he needs. But the point is that those visited must be able to perceive that the Word is actually being administered to them; that the pastor in instructing and admonishing very actually comes to them with the Word of God. The pastor should know His Bible. He should be able to turn with ease to its cardinal sections or verses, be able to explain them and administer the truth contained in them to those visited.

It simply cannot be proper to begin family visiting with asking questions; inquiring after the condition of spiritual life, for then the pastor begins with the members while he should begin with the Word of God.

Family visiting, of course, consists in something more than preaching the Word, as this is done on the meetings of public worship. On these meetings the minister is the sole speaker. The congregation listens in silence. There can be no opportunity for asking questions. But on the meeting for private worship, members too must speak and then their speech reveals themselves to the pastor and the conditions and circumstances and trials peculiar to them so that the Word of God may be administered accordingly. And this is certainly the purpose of family visitation and the sole reason that the pastor asks questions is to encourage the sheep to reveal themselves in relation to Christ and all things that concern them personally."

Thus far we note that the procedure concerns an effective method of applying impressively to the individual the truths of the Word of God. From this principle the practice of family visiting then broadens out so that directly or indirectly the Word is applied to every phase of life. Then there are so many matters for consideration that an hour's time is inadequate even in the smallest families so that careful selection must be made according to circumstances. The most necessary and urgent matters are not to be evaded but rather considered first. To make this work spiritually effective the healing balm of the Word must be applied to the sorest wounds. Of course it is natural that this makes the work itself the more difficult. Concerning these other matters, Rev. Ophof continues:

"In stating the matters that should be investigated, the purpose is not to provide the family visitors with a body of rules according to which the investigation always must be conducted. This would be impossible. That is a phase of

the work that should be tended to by the consistory. *The only purpose is to make suggestions!*

Family visiting should lay hold of the whole of life — civil, economic, family and church life, and personal religious life. If it is well with a man's soul, all is well. But it is not advisable to begin family visiting with personal spiritual life; to set out, for example, with questions such as these: 'Are you assured that you are a child of God? Are you a Christian? Do you believe you are? and if the answer be in the affirmative to continue with a question of this character: Why do you believe you are a child of God?' These are difficult questions and often prove confusing and they should be reserved. The conversation should lead up to them. The thing to do is to put those visited at ease by natural, easy, spiritual conversation. The confidence of the sheep must be first won. It must be made easy for them to speak about themselves and matters that concern them personally. The pastor must make it easy for the sheep to open their hearts to him. He must remove the distance that separates their hearts from him. He must truly draw nigh unto them and they to him in order that there may be actual spiritual contact between pastor and sheep. To be sure, much depends on the pastor in the achievement of this purpose.

Matters upon which the pastor must dwell are the following: (1) Civil and social life — The Scriptures require that in every department of life and every relation, the believer lives from the principle of regeneration in following his daily and earthly pursuits of life: In all the contacts and transactions he makes in doing so. Here is a large field. Of course, the questions will vary according to the kind of work in which the believer is engaged.

If he be a common laborer and employee, questions such as the following are proper: (a) Just what is the character of your work? (b) Do you find it so physically taxing that it interferes with your pursuit of the spiritual? (c) Are you rightly disposed to your employer? Are you constantly aware that your real employer is the Lord and that you must be faithful to your earthly employer for His sake? (d) Do you know then that the true reward of your toil you receive of Him, which is the reward of grace? (e) Standing in this faith, do you find joy and satisfaction in your work even though when your human employer is hard and exacts the unreasonable?

If the sheep is an employer of men, questions such as these are in order: (a) Can the people who work for you know that you are a christian? (b) Are you considerate of your employees? (c) Your employees are your neighbors whom you are required in God's law to love. Do you do that?

For a business man: (a) Can you conduct your business honestly and with a good conscience before God in this evil

(Continued on page 288)

## ALL AROUND US

*Nova Scotia Pastor Understands the Truth.*

We promised with this issue to give our readers excerpts from the writings of the Rev. Malcolm R. MacKay of Nova Scotia in which he reflects on the doctrine of common grace as set forth by the Christian Reformed Church in 1924, as well as his agreement with the writings of the Rev. Herman Hoeksema in *The Triple Breach* in which the latter criticizes *The Three Points of Common Grace* and sets forth the truth.

There will be no need for me to quote again the brief quotation Rev. Hoeksema made in the January 1st issue of the S. B. which quotation was from the same paper I am quoting from, namely, *The Contender*. Our readers may refer to that issue of the S. B. for Hoeksema's quotation.

Rev. MacKay writes concerning *The Three Points of Kalamazoo* as follows: "The declaration of the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church is in the form of three doctrinal points which were allegedly drawn up, not to modify, change or add to the Church's Reformed confessional standards, but merely to 'explain' or 'amplify' them. However, it is difficult to see how this can be maintained. The three points are not vague, but emphatic, in what they declare. They do not explain the Church's standards but bring in another teaching which contradicts them. The historic Reformed doctrinal standards, whether of the Scottish or of the Dutch church, teach that the love and mercy of God is *particular* and manifested to the elect only. However, the Kalamazoo declaration may be summed up by saying that it would *universalize* the love and mercy of God, declaring that it is manifested to the non-elect (in this life) as well as to the elect. This is not an explanation of the Reformed standards but a contradiction of them. It is a thoroughly anti-Biblical and Arminian conception of the love and mercy of God. This paves the way for the denial of the truths of God's sovereign election and reprobation which cannot be maintained if the love of God is universalized and made indiscriminate. If, according to the Arminian doctrine, God's love allows for no distinction among men but is 'waiting, waiting, waiting' for all men to make up their (corrupt) minds to choose Him, then there is no place for the doctrines of election and reprobation. So then the Synod's declaration has laid the foundation for the denial of the heart of the Biblical and Reformed faith, — the sovereignty of God and unconditional election. However, when men begin to attack the great doctrines of the Bible, Satan uses every means at his disposal to prevent the issues from being fought on an open battlefield where all can see what is really taking place. Instead, Satan always tries to blur or confuse the issues at stake. He throws a smoke screen over the battlefield. And in the case of the Kalamazoo declaration, this is what was

done. The Synod, at the same time as it drew up the three universalizing points, asserted that it still adhered unchangingly to the particularistic Reformed standards of the Church. Thus, the Synod put itself in the impossible position of declaring itself *for and against* the same thing at the same time. Thus Satan gained a tremendous advantage against the Christian Reformed Church. His real aim was to get the Synod to adopt the Arminianizing three points, — and it succeeded. But in order to prevent the real significance of what had taken place from being generally recognized, Satan spared no pains to get the Synod to declare that it still adhered unchangingly to the particularistic doctrines of its historic Reformed creedal standards. Hence, the Arminian-minded ministers who engineered the three points, and their supporters, have been able technically to keep on calling themselves Reformed by the simple expedient of saying that the Church still adheres to its original Reformed standards. However, as the old saying is, 'The truth will out!'

"It soon became indisputably evident that the *real power* in the Church was not its historic Reformed standards, but the Synod's declaration. Instead of the declaration being regarded as an 'explanation' or 'amplification' of the Reformed standards, as was claimed by the Synod, it took on the character of a judge, and those who did not accept or meekly submit to the Synod's declaration were expelled from the Christian Reformed Church. Thus, Arminianism gained the upper hand, in practice as well as in theory. However, God gave discernment to some who saw the real issue and took their stand for the truth and against the insidious, double-faced position into which the Synod had manoeuvred itself. Under the leadership of the Rev. Herman Hoeksema and Rev. George Ophoff, these people having been expelled from the Christian Reformed Church, established the Protestant Reformed Church which sought to carry on the Reformed witness which, in reality, had been abandoned by the Synod of Kalamazoo."

Rev. MacKay then proceeds to discuss the pamphlet 'A Triple Breach', written by Rev. H. Hoeksema. Here is what he has to say about it in general:

"The Rev. Herman Hoeksema has written an 87-page booklet which states and analyzes the three points of the Synod's declaration. The full title of this work is: 'A Triple Breach in the Foundation of the Reformed Truth.' Below the title, on the cover, it is stated that this is 'A Critical Treatise on the Three Points, adopted by the Synod of the Christian Reformed Churches in 1924.' Certainly *A Triple Breach* is a thorough discussion of the subject written from the heart as well as with the mind. The present writer considers that this treatise throws a full, steady and greatly needed light upon the present state of the Reformed faith in regard to the heavy and constant pressure exerted against it by the universalism and equalism of Arminianism and modernism. It has had the over-all effect of coordinating and integrating (in our thinking) a number of seemingly

contradictory facts and very unsatisfactory attitudes that have long been evident among many Reformed ministers, and explaining why these things are so. For example, *A Triple Breach* explains why many men who profess to hold the Reformed faith are not only at peace with Arminianism but also are praising out-and-out Arminians as 'fine, earnest Christians' and co-operating with them in various ways. It explains why these Reformed men are quite satisfactory to the Arminians and accepted by them as really one with them. *A Triple Breach* also explains the unwillingness or reluctance of Reformed ministers to take up the struggle against Arminianism and its ever-increasing encroachments upon the people and property of the Reformed faith. *A Triple Breach* shows that the so-called 'Reformed' men who take such an attitude have actually departed from the Reformed position, and accepted the doctrines of Arminianism as they are expressed in the three points. This is the case with not only many ministers in the Christian Reformed Church but also with ministers in many other Presbyterian and Reformed denominations. *A Triple Breach* also shows that these Reformed men are professing to adhere to one position while actually holding to the opposite. In this connection Rev. Hoeksema uses the illustration of the ancient two-faced god of the Romans who was called Janus."

Then after stating briefly The Three Points, the Reverend continues speaking particularly about them as follows:

"It ought to be evident to those who know and love the Word of God that the doctrines taught in the above three points try to bridge the great gulf which is fixed by the predestinating counsel of God between the elect and the non-elect. These are not the doctrines of eternal and unchanging mercy upon the elect, and eternal and unchanging wrath upon the non-elect. God had one great purpose, and only one, in the creation of mankind, namely, to manifest forth His eternal glory. God uses both the elect and the non-elect to accomplish this single purpose,—the elect manifesting His mercy and the non-elect His justice. And it is here and now in this present world that God puts into effect, or works out, His eternal decrees of predestination and reprobation whereby the elect are effectually called unto life eternal and the non-elect are effectually hardened and turned over to death eternal. This work of God is constantly going on in this life,—always, in every generation, the elect are being prepared by the grace of God for heaven just as the wheat is being ripened for the garner. And, at the same time as the wheat is growing and ripening, the tares are growing and ripening also for the time when they will be burned. This is, according to the parable of Jesus in Matt. 13:24-30, and its interpretation in verses 36-43 . . .

"Christ's parable of the wheat and tares is a perfect rebuttal to the false doctrines taught in the three points. In fact, this parable, whose meaning Christ makes perfectly clear in Matt. 13:36-43, shows up these Arminian doctrines as positively foolish."

Then, comparing the doctrine of The Three Points with the teaching of Christ in the parable of the wheat and the tares, he concludes with the following

"In verses 28 and 29 Christ teaches us that it is *for the sake of the wheat* (elect) that the tares (non-elect) are permitted to grow undisturbed . . . . Notice, the tares are permitted to grow *undisturbed* . . . . The Arminianizing three points take this state of being undisturbed as God's blessing upon the wicked, or His 'common grace' or 'favour' to them . . . . It is a great mistake to think that the undisturbed, or prosperous, or successful state of non-elect people in this world means that God's favour is upon them. This is the mistake that the 'common grace' or 'favourable attitude' theologians are making.

"The three points teach not only God's favour to the non-elect, but also an inner restraint, and ethical and moral improvement wrought upon their hearts by the Holy Spirit. We have shown that the parable proves that there is no favour of God upon the non-elect (tares) . . . . The fact that there is (1) no restraint (as alleged in Point II of Kalamazoo) is proved by verse 30 where the householder says to his servants, 'Let both (wheat and tares) grow together until the harvest.' . . . . The fact that there is (2) no improvement (as alleged in Point III of Kalamazoo) is also proved by the same 30th verse and also by verses 38 and 39 . . . . But the Kalamazoo declaration not only speaks of a gracious improvement wrought by God upon the hearts of the non-elect, but also good works done by them, in particular, 'civic righteousness.' Where is the 'good' that is supposed to be found in the tares, or done by them, called here 'the children of the wicked one'? We cannot find one bit of good of any description in the tares of the parable. Yet the Kalamazoo declaration speaks not only of good, but also of a very considerable amount of good done in this life by the non-elect. Thus, it can easily be seen from this clear-as-crystal and outstanding parable of Christ, how far off base the three points are. The only way the common grace or favourable attitude theologians can support their theory is by a great deal of philosophical speculation spun out of their own minds."

I am sorry that I have to stop here with our quotations because the Rev. MacKay has much more to say. So, the Lord willing, we will devote just one more issue to this matter. I am sure that our Protestant Reformed people will see that the Rev. MacKay speaks our language, and that he clearly understands the truth.

M.S.

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Into my closet fleeing, as the dove  
Doth homeward flee,  
I haste away to ponder o'er thy love  
Alone with Thee!

IN MEMORIAM

The Hope Protestant Reformed Men's Society hereby expresses its sincere sympathy to one of its fellow members, Mr. John Kalsbeek and family in the recent death of their father and grandfather,

MR. HESSEL DE JONG

and also their aunt

MRS. NELLIE HONDEMA

May the bereaved find comfort in the words of Ps. 34:22, "Jehovah redeemeth the soul of his servants; and none of them that take refuge in him shall be condemned."

Rev. H. Hanko, President

Mr. J. Dykstra, Secretary

CHILDLIKE TRUST

"Now I lay me" — say it, darling;

"Lay me," lisped the tiny lips  
Of my daughter, kneeling, bending,  
O'er her folded finger tips.

"Down to sleep" — "to sleep," she murmured,  
And the curly head drooped low;

"I pray the Lord," I gently added,  
"You can say it all, I know."

"Pray the Lord" — the words came faintly,  
Fainter still — "My soul to keep,"  
Then the tired head fairly nodded,  
And the child was fast asleep.

But the dewy eyes half opened  
When I clasped her to my breast,  
And the dear voice softly whispered,  
"Mamma, God knows all the rest."

Oh the trusting, sweet confiding  
Of the child-heart! Would that I  
Thus might trust my Heavenly Father,  
He who hears my feeblest cry.

DECENCY AND ORDER

(Continued from page 285)

world? (b) Do you feel the peculiar temptations to which you, in your position, are exposed? (c) Does the Lord give you grace to resist these temptations?

If a farmer: (a) Do you live in the consciousness that the earth and its fulness is God's? (b) Do you cultivate your farm merely for crops? (c) Do you murmur and rebel when God in His Providence destroys your crop?"

(to be continued)

THE DAY OF SHADOWS

(Continued from page 275)

denotes Jehovah or Zerubbabel. In view of the context and because the verb is *to bring forth* as in 3:8, I think it best to translate here: For He, Jehovah, will bring forth the head stone. What we have here then is a reiteration of the promise set forth in 2:8, "For behold, I Jehovah, will bring forth Branch. It is the same promise with this difference that here Christ is presented to view under the figure of a branch, while in 4:7, He is the chief corner stone. Jehovah brings Him forth. For the explanation of this thought see on 3:8.

Jehovah shall bring forth the Christ amidst shouts crying, "Grace, grace unto Him," that is grace be unto the headstone and the house of God that is built upon this stone. God Who brought him forth graced Him by His Spirit. And so He was full of grace and truth. Indeed He received the Spirit without measure. And therefore also the angels graced Him, And His people graced Him, And as the Spirit filled head stone He removed all the iniquities of His people on the great day of atonement at Golgotha, swallowing up unto victory all their enemies. And therefore, "the great mountain" shall surely be made a plain before Zerubbabel.

G.M.O.

Announcement

CALL TO ASPIRANTS TO THE MINISTRY.

All young men desiring to study for the Ministry of the Word kindly appear at the next meeting of the Theological School Committee which will be held D.V., on Thursday evening, May 10th, at 7:30 P. M. in the Hudsonville Prot. Ref. Church, Hudsonville, Michigan.

The qualifications requisite to enrollment in our Seminary are the following:

1. You must be a graduate from High School and have a knowledge of the following College subjects: Latin, Greek, Philosophy, Psychology, History General and Church History.

2. You must have a certificate from your local Consistory signifying that you are upright in walk and pure in doctrine.

3. You must have a certificate of health signed by a reputable physician.

All correspondence relative to the above announcement should be sent to the undersigned.

Secretary of The Theol. School Comm.  
Rev. M. Schipper,  
1636 Martindale Ave., S. W.,  
Grand Rapids 9, Michigan.