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19

MEDITATION

THE ADVENT OF CHRIST'S MISSIONARIES

"Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city:

That upon you may come all the unrighteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, all these things shall come upon this generation."

Matt. 23:34-46

It is difficult to understand where the modern church finds the picture of that meek Jesus who serves humanity as some Santa Claus, always being ready to bless anyone at all, standing at the door of everyone's heart, knocking, knocking, if haply they may let Him in, so that He may save them from sin and death.

Difficult, for I do not find such a picture in the Bible.

Attend to the context of my text, and shudder!

But

But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!

And such language is repeated a dozen times within the confines of one chapter. And the last such condemnation uses the following language: "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can you escape the damnation of hell?"

Jesus spoke this language because He knew their hearts, and because His very name is the Truth. He never minces words.

And my text is part of the conclusion of this address to the wicked church leaders of His day. He shall tell them of a more terrible condemnation. He is going to send good men to them. He will set upon their pathway prophets, wise men, and scribes, good scribes. And that will be terrible for the Pharisee, for they will kill those good missionaries of Christ.

And so they will fill up the measure of their wickedness. For they will destroy the missionaries of Christ.

It were better for them if they had not been born.

Or if born, that they were cast into the sea, rather than to put their filthy hands on the beloved of Christ.

* * * *

Behold, I send unto you prophets!

What are they?

Prophets are men who are so completely full of God and Christ, and the things of God's Covenant, that they must speak.

To be a prophet means that you boil over of the things of God.

Whenever we hear the name prophet, we think of men who tell us what is going to happen in the future.

And yet that is only the smallest part of their work.

To be a prophet means that you speak about God and Christ and salvation. That's the reason why the historical books of the Old Testament were reckoned with the prophets in the O. T. canon of the Jews. The things of God and His Son, whether they still lie in the future, or whether they have already happened, and are now history, are prophecy.

And so, if you speak of God from the heart that fears and loved Him, you are prophesying.

Such men Christ would send to this evil generation of Pharisees and scribes.

And that sending by Christ is the meaning of the word "apostle."

And, indeed, He did send the twelve to that evil generation. And excepting John, they all were killed and destroyed by the wicked.

But in the most general sense, all God's people of all the ages are apostles of the Lord, sent as missionaries to an evil generation, in order that the elect might listen to them and be saved, and that the wicked might ultimately take and destroy them, kill them and scourge them.

And the church is always singing the song of David in Psalm 44: For Thy sake are we killed all the day long!

Moreover, these same men are also wise men. A prophet is also wise.

And to be a wise man means that you walk on the right way and use the right means unto the attainment of the highest and best purpose.

He that does that is a wise man.
That purpose is the glory of God.
God always does that.

All that happens on earth, in heaven and in hell are the ways and the means which God uses unto the attainment of the highest and the only purpose of the whole Universe, namely the glory of His name.

And since Jesus Christ is the center of all these things and ways and means, therefore His name is The Wisdom of God.

And every child of God receives of that wisdom.

In the same measure that he lives from that principle of wisdom, such a man, woman or child seeks the glory of God.

Such men are sent to the wicked.

And they also are the scribes of my text. They are the good scribes. Among the wicked generation of Jesus' day there were also scribes, in fact, Jesus addressed the scribes, and said: I will send scribes unto you. And the same word is used in the original.

The meaning is that these good men would also use the written word for the purpose they pursued. They would write the age-old story of God and Christ and salvation.

And so we have the Word of God in the narrowest sense of the word.

But there are also the books of the missionaries of Christ of all the ages. We have writings of the fathers, and of the Reformers, and of all the good men whom Jesus sent to His church. And so they speak to us, even after they are dead.

All these good men are sent by Christ to the wicked and apostate church.

* * * *

Now, dear reader, what is their reception and lot?
Well, what would you expect?

You know that their identity and task is wonderful. They are good men, and they are sent in order to speak and to write and to live the beautiful Word of God. And then we hear an echo: How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings!

Yes, we would expect that humanity would bear them up on arms of love.

But they did not. The reverse is true.

According to Jesus, they would be killed, crucified, scourged and persecuted.

Think on Stephen, Peter, Paul and James. Yes, and in connection with that scourging, listen to Paul: "Of the Jews five times I received forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned.

And they were persecuted from city to city.

And this treatment they received in all the ages.

And if you ask if that is true in our day, then the answer is yes.

For we are hated all the day long for Christ's sake, and hatred is the root of all the terrible treatment of my text.

What may be the reason for such treatment. Why is it, that the most wonderful men the world has ever seen are treated in such cruel manner?

The answer is easy.

First, because these missionaries of Christ are good. And the world is bad. And a bad man cannot stand the sight of a good man. They call them "spoil sports." For a good man to be in the proximity of a bad lot is torture for the latter. In Revelation we read that the two witnesses of God tortured the wicked. That's what I mean in this connection.

Second, because the world is bad. And they are totally bad. There is no good in them. And they never reveal their badness more than when you place them in the proximity of the good church of Christ.

Third, because they hate God and Christ. And since God and Christ dwell in the church, they kill and crucify and scourge the church. Look what they did to Jesus Himself!

Fourth, because they must work out their own damnation. Look at the text: "that upon you may come all the unrighteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar." Note here that the race of the wicked are viewed by our God as a unity. For they were not around when Abel and Barachias were killed. But they and their fathers, as well as their children, are an ever growing sore, until the man of sin, Anti-Christ himself, shall be revealed. And they work out their own doom.

And all this according to the wise counsel of God.

Positively, we should add that through all this Golgotha of the ages the Church is gathered. The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church. And God is both glorified and justified in this terrible spectacle.

* * * *

It will not do to sit down and cry at the carnage of the people of God.

Barachias did not. Abel had no opportunity.

Barachias said: Why transgress ye the commandment of the Lord, that ye cannot prosper? And when they killed him, he said: The Lord look upon it and require it!

And when Abel could not talk anymore, the Lord said: The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto Me from the ground.

And when the saints of all the ages arrive in the New Jerusalem, they cry to Him: How long, o Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?

Oh, no, for God has seen the carnage and shall surely require it.

In a sense He does already require it now. You cannot slay the righteous and enjoy your life. Oh no, even now, at this side of the great Judgment Day you pay in a burdened heart and conscience. Unless you are one of the few who

have committed the unpardonable sin, so that your conscience is seared shut with an iron.

And presently He shall require all this precious blood at the hand of those who shed it. And it is not necessary to shed actual blood of God's people in order to share the punishment in that day. No, just hate those that reveal the Godhead, and you are in the miserable throng of those who are addressed by Jesus in my text.

And the victims need not, should not weep.

Their crown is waiting.

Of grace it was given to them to believe.

But of grace it was also given to all of us to suffer because of the righteousness of Christ.

Suffering for Christ's sake has a hallowing effect. It makes the soul and the heart better.

It brings us closer to God.

And to be near unto God is unspeakable blessedness.

For it is of the essence of heaven.

G. Vos.

Announcements

The Synod of the Protestant Reformed Churches has decided that each congregation be requested to take two collections a year for Foreign Missions.

Will the consistories please consider this an official announcement to them.

Please send to: Mr. Arthur H. Haan, Breton Road, S. E., Grand Rapids, Michigan.

G. Lubbers, Stated Clerk

The Synod of the Protestant Reformed Churches, convened in South Holland, Illinois, on June 5th, 1956, has extended the Candidacy of brother Marvin Koerner for a period of three (3) years in which he will be eligible to receive a call from one of our churches.

G. Lubbers, Stated Clerk of Synod

Note: Due to an oversight on the part of the Stated Clerk this announcement did not appear in the July 1st issue of the *Standard Bearer*. We offer the brother our apologies.

G.L.

TRIO

The Creston Protestant Reformed Church has made the following trio:

Rev. G. Lanting

Rev. G. Vanden Berg

Cand. G. Van Baren

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EDITORIALS

Election and Arbitrariness

In his book on the Election of God, Dr. Berkouwer has one chapter on "Verkiezing en Willekeur," i.e. "Election and Arbitrariness or Capriciousness." In it he means to demonstrate that the will of God concerning election is never arbitrary but always well motivated and consistent, has a definite purpose in view.

This, of course, no Reformed man will ever deny.

The will of God is never arbitrary simply because God is not arbitrary. Election and Reprobation do not represent a blind and capricious power but are motivated by all the virtues of God, His righteousness and mercy, His justice and grace, His sovereign power and His sovereign love, and whatever other virtues there are revealed of God in Holy Writ. God is one and His virtues are one and even for that reason it is impossible to speak of arbitrariness in God. Moreover, all Scripture clearly testifies that there is never any unrighteousness in God, that He loves the righteous and hates the wicked every day. His love is not arbitrary but is a righteous love, His grace and mercy are not capricious but are a just grace and mercy. There is no common grace in God.

But the question is: what is first? Is man first or God? When the Scriptures so strongly emphasize that God loves the righteous and hates the wicked, does that mean that God simply finds righteous and wicked in the world and that His attitude is determined accordingly? The Scriptures teach plainly that, if the wicked turn from his evil ways and repent, he shall surely live, for God has no pleasure that the wicked should die but that he repent and live. But the question that concerns us in this connection is whether the impenitence of the wicked has ultimately its cause or source in God's reprobation, the decree "to leave him in his sin," while, on the other hand, the penitence of the sinner has its deepest cause in God's sovereign election, the eternal decree to redeem and deliver him from sin and give him eternal life. This is the Reformed position. All the rest is Arminianism and synergism: man cooperates with God in his own salvation.

That this is, indeed, the Reformed position and that all other views are rejected is plain from the Canons of Dordrecht which teach in I, 6:

"That some receive the gift of faith from God and, others do not receive it, proceeds from God's eternal decree, 'For known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.' Acts 15:18. 'Who worketh all things after the counsel of his will.' Eph. 1:11. According to which decree, he graciously softens the hearts of the elect, however obstinate, and inclines them to believe; while he leaves the non-

elect in his just judgment to their own wickedness and obduracy. And herein is especially displayed the profound, the merciful, and at the same time the righteous discrimination between men equally involved in ruin; or that decree of election and reprobation revealed in the Word of God, which though men of perverse, impure, and unstable minds wrest to their own destruction, yet to holy and pious souls affords unspeakable consolation."

Let us notice that the Canons here ascribe the deepest cause of faith and unbelief to God's eternal counsel of election and reprobation even though the article is thoroughly infralapsarian. Let us notice, too, that the article is far from ascribing any capriciousness or arbitrariness to God in respect to His decree of election and reprobation. On the contrary, this decree displays the profound, the merciful and righteous discrimination between men. And it is in his just judgment that he leaves the non-elect to their own wickedness and obduracy. How this can be true the Canons do not attempt to explain.

The same is true of I, 7 of the Canons which describes the decree of election as follows:

"Election is the unchangeable purpose of God, whereby, before the foundation of the world, he hath out of mere grace, according to the sovereign good pleasure of his own will, chosen from the whole human race, which had fallen through their own fault, from their primitive state of rectitude, into sin and destruction, a certain number of persons to redemption in Christ, whom he from eternity appointed the Mediator and Head of the elect, and the foundation of their salvation.

"This elect number, though by nature neither better nor more deserving than others, but with them involved in one common misery, God hath decreed to give to Christ, to be saved by him, and effectually to call and draw to his communion by his Word and Spirit, to bestow upon them true faith, justification and sanctification; and having powerfully preserved them in the fellowship of his Son, finally, to glorify them for the demonstration of his mercy, and for the praise of the riches of his glorious grace; as it is written, etc."

Here again election is presented as the sole cause of the salvation of men. Besides, this election is also realized in time by God Himself through His Word and Spirit. Nor is this election to be ascribed to any arbitrariness in God. God has a definite purpose, and even that purpose is not man, but the demonstration of his mercy and the praise of the riches of his glorious grace.

Now what is Berkouwer's solution of this problem, if problem it is? In his book I find the same tendency to compromise in regard to the doctrine of election which I noticed before. He never states clearly that all the blessings of salvation are absolutely and only the work of God and the fruit of election, but only states that believers can consider themselves elect. This is true in itself, but, neverthe-

less, leaves the impression, whether so intended or not, that God chose those that believe, which is not Reformed but Arminian.

Offering an interpretation of Rom. 9 (with which I do not agree), he writes first of all as follows (I translate, H. H.):

"He refutes this 'possibility' (the possibility that the word of God hath taken none effect, H. H.) by an expression, which always drew special attention: 'for they are not all Israel, which are of Israel, neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children.' More than once one has, at the occasion of this word, thought of a threat or limitation of God's historical covenant- and promise-word from the viewpoint of election, and all sorts of tensions in the history of the doctrine of election may be brought into connection with the exegesis of this word of Paul. In that case a deep shadow descends upon that Word, this promise of God, because one must first know about 'election', before one can consider himself as addressed by this promise-word of God. It is, however, clear that Paul is not thinking of such a devaluation of the Word of God. It is much more his intention to show, that it was not at all the intention of the *nature* and the *purpose* of the promise-word of God, that one could automatically and apart from faith draw the conclusion from this word in this sense: seed of Abraham and therefore real Israel! The Jews may have considered this conclusion a simple matter of fact, but therewith they have misunderstood the promise and election. One construed the promise as an 'Anspruch' (address, claim, H. H.) and thereby denied that there is an Israel according to the flesh and an Israel according to the Spirit. Against this 'Anspruch' Paul directs his protest. God's election is not a threat against a believing listening to the promise of God, but indeed a menace to the faithless 'Anspruch.' For this reason, Rom. 9 can make mention of 'not all,' and can display its tremendous warning power. In order to point out the 'not having effect' of the Word of God Paul calls attention to the divine 'ekloge' (election, H. H.), and then it becomes evident that this 'ekloge' does not contradict and cross through God's own word of promise, but that the sense and contents of the 'ekloge' throw light upon the paths of Israel's history. He shows according to which 'ekloge' God acts. It appears not to be an 'ekloge'—as realization of the purpose of God—of a dark arbitrariness, accidental and irrational, changeable and inaccessible, but an 'ekloge' which, indeed, rests in God's freedom and sovereignty, but then in this way that it has a clear and incontestable and non-exceptional content and definiteness." pp. 73-75.

We remark the following:

1. This is surely no exegesis of Rom. 9: "Not as though the Word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel. Neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but in Isaac shall they seed be called. That is, They which are the children

of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." Remember that in these verses the apostle speaks of the Israelites, his brethren according to the flesh. Of these the apostle had written in the preceding verses that to them pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises, and of whom Christ came according to the flesh. And now not only was the nation of Israel rejected, but thousands upon thousands of individual Israelites were excluded from the Kingdom of God. How must this be explained? Merely from the fact that many of them did not believe and were not "believing listeners to the promise of God"? Was the promise of God for all and did the promise fail because of the unbelief of thousands upon thousands of Jews? The apostle answers in the negative. The Word of God did not fail, can never fail. It is absolutely realized. But what then? The answer is: The Word of God has not fallen out, but that word of promise never meant all the Jews, all the descendants of Abraham, but only the children of the promise are counted for the seed. Only these are true Israelites, and only these are children of God. It is not a question of faith and unbelief, however true it may be that only the children of the promise ever come to faith, but of sovereign election according to which some are born of the promise in distinction from others, the reprobate, that are not born thus.

What is meant by the term "children of the promise"? Does the expression mean the same as if the apostle had written: *the promised children*, as some would have it? Or does it mean: *Children to whom the promise pertains*? The expression, no doubt, has a far deeper meaning. We all know that Scripture frequently speaks of the promise, sometimes in the plural and often in the singular. The promise is God's revealed and sworn purpose of eternal salvation through Jesus Christ for His people, the elect. It is the promise, not of man, but of God. Hence, the divine Word of promise is powerful to perform whatever it declares. And children of the promise are those that are brought forth by the power of the promise. The promise is, as it were their mother. Hence, they are those in whom God has realized the promise through His Spirit and Word. That this is, indeed, the meaning of the expression is evident from Gal. 4:23, 28, 29, to which we refer the reader. By nature, we are children of the flesh. But by the power of the promise of God, we are born after the Spirit. And, therefore, children of the promise are spiritual children in whom God wrought and realized the power of the promise of salvation. Not man is first, not faith is first, not a "believing listening to the promise-word" is first, but always God is first and that, too, according to the apostle in Rom. 9, according to the eternal counsel of election.

Hence, in the same passage, the apostle calls the children of the promise the children of God. For he writes in vs. 8: "That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are

counted for the seed." The implication is, evidently, that the children of the promise are God's children. They are those whom God adopted as His children from before the foundation of the world, for whom Christ died that they might have the right of sonship, whom He regenerates, in whose hearts He implants the power of faith, and in whom He thus realized the adoption by the Spirit of grace.

2. I will not say that Berkouwer would deny all this, but his exposition of Rom. 9:6-8 certainly implies such a denial. His words, which I quoted above leave a bad, un-Reformed impression. When I consider that Dr. De Jong had his instruction from Berkouwer, I can understand that he could write his very un-Reformed thesis. Consider that he writes in the paragraph which I quoted above: "More than once one has, at the occasion of this word, thought of a threat or limitation of God's historical covenant- and promise-word from the viewpoint of election." This Berkouwer denies. But this is exactly what the apostle intends to do and does. That the Word of God's promise has not fallen out, even though thousands upon thousands of historical Israel were lost, is only because the promise was never meant for all, but only the children of the promise are counted for the seed, and these are none other than the elect. I challenge Berkouwer to deny this.

Again he writes: "In that case a deep shadow falls upon that Word, this promise of God, because one must know about 'election,' before one can consider himself addressed by this promise-word of God." This is a bad sentence which no man that is Reformed at heart would ever write. In the first place, if "in that case" a deep shadow descends upon the promise of God, the shadow is caused by none other than the apostle Paul. It is he that limits the Word of God to the "children of the promise," that is the elect, not we. For only the children of the promise are counted for the seed. In the second place, what Reformed man would ever write that one must first know about 'election' before he can consider himself as addressed by this promise-word of God? This is a very unspiritual and erroneous way of expressing the matter. It certainly is not true. The truth is that God first realizes His promise in the hearts of the elect by His Spirit and Word, then the "children of the promise" know that the promise is for them, and only thus they realize that they are elect and they rejoice in that truth.

Again Berkouwer, after he has emphasized that God's election is not a threat against a believing listening to the promise of God but the faithless listener, he writes that election does not contradict or cross through God's promise but throws light upon the paths of Israel's history. Now, that God's election is not a threat to the believer but to the unbeliever, no Reformed man will ever deny. But, and this is the point I wish to make, neither will any Arminian. They, too, believe in the election of the believer. And in these words, Berkouwer may be either Reformed or Arminian. This is true all the more because in Rom. 9 the apostle does not speak of faith and of a believing listening to the

promise of God, but only of God's sovereign election and reprobation. However, when he writes that election does not contradict or cross through the promise of God, I must disagree with him, or rather, the entire chapter of Rom. 9 condemns that statement. He, evidently, thinks of the promise as general and as meant for all. And taken in this sense, election would surely contradict and cross through the promise. But fact is that the Word of God has not fallen out simply because the promise of God was never meant for all, but only for the children of the promise, that is, for the elect.

What Berkouwer means with the last sentence we quoted is rather difficult to understand. There he writes that God's election is not characterized by a dark arbitrariness, but an election "which, indeed, rests in God's freedom and sovereignty, but then in this way that it has a clear and incontestable and non-exceptional content and definiteness." I wish that I could ask Berkouwer to explain his own words here, for they certainly need explanation. Election "non-exceptional"? To me that means God, in His eternal counsel of election makes no exception among men. To me it signifies that, as far as God's election is concerned, all men may be saved. To me, that is not Reformed but Arminian and, perhaps, Barthian. For also Barth, although he denies the accusation that he teaches the *apokastasis pantoön*, the restoration and salvation of all, yet in his *Kirchliche Dogmatik*, II, 2, clearly suggests it, to say the least. But I do not care to ascribe a meaning to the words of Berkouwer which he himself did not intend them to survey. Hence, I wish that he would explain what he means by an election which is non-exceptional in its content.

H.H.

A DUTCH ENCYCLOPAEDIA

The first volume of the second edition of the "Christelijke Encyclopedie" was sent to me by J. H. Kok, Kampen, the Netherlands. The price for one volume is twenty-eight guilders and fifty cents or about seven dollars, while the whole set as it is still to be published costs twenty-five guilders or a little over six dollars per volume.

Mr. Kok sent me a letter in which he asks that I do not simply offer a mere book review of this first volume but a more extensive discussion of it in *The Standard Bearer*.

This I propose to do, although it is rather difficult to discuss an encyclopaedia and all its various articles. Nevertheless, I will attempt to comply with Kok's request, in the hope that he will send me the rest of the volumes too. I will do so by first offering a general survey of the book as well as general characterization of this first volume in order, then, to discuss some of the separate articles.

H. H.

AS TO BOOKS

Leer en Leven (Doctrine and Life) by Rev. J. G. Feenstra. Published by J. H. Kok, N.V., Kampen, the Netherlands. Price f 9.75.

This book is really brief dogmatics. It follows the six loci of Dogmatics: theology, anthropology, christology, soteriology, ecclesiology, eschatology. The last part, the doctrine of the last things, is treated very briefly. In fact, of the more than three hundred pages it covers only seven. This is, to my mind, a weakness of the book, for, especially in our time, the doctrine of the last things is very important and of great interest. Why the author chose as the title of his book "Doctrine and Life" I fail to understand, for, except for a few introductory remarks, the book is all doctrine.

I heartily recommend this brief dogmatics to all who are interested in the Reformed truth and who still can read Dutch. Needless to say that this recommendation does not mean that I subscribe to every detail in the book. But it does mean that I regard the book as representing, in general, the Reformed truth of a conservative type. Moreover, it is very clearly written, so that it is easily within reach of everyone that can read the Holland language. H.H.

Als Lichtende Sterren. (As Bright Stars), by Nelly Van Dijk-Has. Published by J. H. Kok, N.V., Kampen, the Netherlands. Price f 3.95.

Are you interested in a very interesting, beautifully written Christian novel? Then I recommend to you the above mentioned story. It is, chiefly, a love-story. The chief characters are Loeki, Gerard and Hans. Early in life, both Hans and Gerard are in love with Loeki. Then comes the war of 1939. After the war

But why should I tell you the story? Read it for yourself. You will like it. I did. H.H.

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

Again I received a few volumes of this Bible commentary by Charles Simeon. It is, of course, impossible to discuss a work like this in detail. But, in general, I will say, as I did before, that these outlines on the Bible are excellent. The last two volumes are on the Psalms, and I would like to quote some passages to give you a taste of its contents. But space forbids. I would advise you to procure this set of outlines for yourself. Even though you naturally will not subscribe to all of the author's views, you will not be sorry.

On a wrapper around the last two volumes I notice that, if you order the entire set before Dec. 31, 1956, you can save ten dollars. H.H.

OUR DOCTRINE

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

CHAPTER II

Salutation and Blessing. Rev. 1:4-8.

He was in death, and went through death, and He now lives as never one lived before. And what is more, as He passed through death, He left the way open! By faith we behold Him there, on the other side of death, and looking at His glory from our present darkness, we know by that very token that there is a way out! As a man groping in the black and fearful darkness of a deep cave, in the distance beholds the glimmer of glorious sunlight and takes courage to continue his way in the one direction of that light-spot in the distance, assured that there lies his deliverance; so the believer groping in the darkness of the shadow of his present death, beholding by faith the glory of the Risen Lord, knows that there is a way out of death into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For, mark you well, He is not merely risen, He is the first begotten of the dead! And the firstborn is he that "openeth the womb" and prepares the way for all his brethren. Thus Christ was in the womb of death, was born from death, opened the womb of death for all the Father gave Him. And it is He, standing in that spot of glorious light you see from your present darkness, Who calls to you: "Grace and peace to you!"

No power is able to deprive God's people of that blessing or to prevent the ultimate realization of the peace that is promised them in the day of Christ. For He is Lord. He is Prince, too, of the kings of the earth. This does not mean that Jesus Christ is King also of the State in the sense that worldly magistrates rule by His grace. For in the book of Revelation the kings of the earth are the antichristian world rulers. They acknowledge not the Christ of the Scriptures as their Lord. They do not delight in doing His will and ruling in harmony with it. On the contrary, they are the rulers that are pictured in the second Psalm, who set themselves, and take counsel together against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying: "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us," vss. 2, 3. But He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh and have them in derision. For, He hath anointed His king and set Him upon His holy hill of Sion. And this king shall rule the antichristian powers with a rod of iron and break them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Ps. 2:7-9; Rev. 2:27. Christ is the Prince of the rulers of the earth! Though they may rave against Him, yet must they do His will. Even the Nero's and Calligula's and Domitians, the Hitlers and Mussolini's are His servants in spite of themselves. The Church is perfectly safe; her salvation and final victory is sure. "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." John 16:33. "Grace unto you and peace."

Already the Church receives this blessing of grace and peace. And she responds in joyful adoration to the pronouncement of this benediction. She confesses this Christ, even now, even in the midst of this world and its antichristian rulers, and to Him alone she ascribes all glory and dominion for ever and ever. This is the meaning of the doxology that now follows in the text: "Unto him that loved us (or "loveth" us, as the Revised Version has it), and washed us (or "loosed us" according to the reading of the Revised Version) from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests (or "a kingdom and priests," R.V.) unto God and his father (or "unto his God and Father," R.V.); to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

Jesus loved us, or if the reading of the Revised Version is the more correct, He loveth us. Essentially there is no difference between these two readings. If we read the past tense, the emphasis falls on the historic fact of the death of Christ on the cross, where He manifested His love once for all; if the present tense is taken as the better reading, the thought of His present and enduring love for us is stressed. But if He loved us on the cross, will he not love us still and forever? And if He loves us now, is it not because He loved us on the accursed tree? The same may be said of the two readings: "washed" and "loosed" us from our sins in His own blood. Principally there is no difference between the two. They imply that the blood of Jesus is atoning blood, because by His death He fully satisfied for all our sins. They mean that He not merely shed His blood for us on the accursed tree, but that He also applies its atoning power to us. They signify that by the application of that atoning blood to us we are liberated not only from the guilt of sin, but also from its dominion and corruption: the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made us free from the law of sin and death. And thus He made us kings and priests unto God and His Father, or a kingdom and priests unto His God and Father. Christ makes us a royal priesthood or a priestly kingdom. The ideas of priesthood and royalty belong together and are inseparable. One that is not a priest unto God can never be king: the antichristian rulers of this world are mere usurpers and will surely be dethroned. For the deepest notion of priesthood is that of perfect consecration to and love of God, manifested in perfect obedience and willing service. A priest consecrates himself and all things to God. And the idea of the kingly office is that of reign and dominion. A priestly king is a servant-king, a kingdom of priests is a kingdom in which all submit themselves to the living God and reign in His name and under Him over all the works of His hands. Such a royal priesthood Christ makes us through the marvellous power of His grace. By the power of sin we became slaves of the devil, rebel kings, that proposed to rule over God's works apart from Him, against Him. Such is the awful folly of sin. But through the atoning blood of the cross we have been forgiven that folly, we have been perfectly justified, we have obtained the right to be delivered from the slavery of sin and the dominion of the devil, the

right to be received into the blessed service of God once more and in that service to reign over all things. And through the grace of the Lord Jesus, by His indwelling Spirit, we are actually delivered, translated out of darkness into the marvellous light of God, and formed into a kingdom of priests. For, indeed, God's people are a kingdom, and not merely a multitude of kings. They are a unity, a kingdom over which Christ rules as the chief Servant of Jehovah, the High Priest according to the order of Melchisedec, Who has a name above all names; and in which His brethren reign with Him, each in his own position and all serving the purpose of the whole, that all may be to the glory of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Such a kingdom of priests the Church is even now, for by faith they partake of the victory and royal dominion of their Lord. But not until the day of Christ, when the eternal kingdom of glory shall be ushered in, when all the elect shall have been gathered and the Body of the Lord shall be complete, when also our humiliated bodies shall be made like unto His most glorious body, and when all things shall be made new and the tabernacle of God shall be with men in the new heavens and the new earth, shall this kingdom of priests be fully realized.

In the consciousness, then, of this great love wherewith the Lord loved and still loves us, and of the marvellous grace whereby He hath liberated them from the power of sin and death, and formed them into a royal priesthood, the believers ascribe glory unto their Lord: "to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." Glory is the radiation of infinite, of divine goodness and perfection. God alone is glorious. The creature can only reflect His glory, can never possess any glory of its own. Whatever glory may be seen in creation has its source in God. The highest and fullest revelation of that glory is in Christ. All the divine perfections shine forth through and in Him. For it was the Father's good pleasure that in Him all the fulness should dwell, Col. 1:19. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature, Col. 1:15. And in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, Col. 2:9. In the days of His flesh this glory was hid by His humiliated body; only occasionally it flashed through when He spoke with authority or revealed His power in the miracles He performed. And on the mount of transfiguration the apostles beheld His glory for a moment. But through His resurrection and exaltation at the right hand of God, Christ is glorified with the glory which He had with the Father before the world was, John 17:5. All the divine goodness shines forth through Him, radiates from Him. This is possible, of course, only because He is the very Son of God in human nature. No mere man could possess this glory; and to ascribe this glory to any other than the exalted Christ, would be idolatry and blasphemy. But the Church knows that He is the Son of God, the final and highest revelation of God the Father, worthy of all glory and honor. She ascribes glory to Him in this doxology. And she also is taught here to acknowledge Him as the One that has dominion. Of course, He has

dominion, i.e. authority and power to reign, to declare His will and demand obedience, to judge and to execute judgment, in the absolute sense of the word as the Son of God. As God He is sovereign. But the reference in the text is to the dominion, to the power and authority He received from God as the glorified Christ, in His human nature. All power is given unto Him in heaven and on earth. Christ stands at the pinnacle of all created things. He has received a name which is above all names, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father, Phil. 2:9-11. He has dominion over the Church whose King He is; and He has dominion over all things, even over the powers of darkness, which He has overcome and that cannot move against His will. In the Church this dominion is a reign by grace through His Spirit and Word: His people are gladly His, and it is their delight to acknowledge His authority and to do His will. Hence, in the words of our text they ascribe this dominion to Him. And in the world and over the powers of darkness He rules by His might, in spite of themselves. And also these, when they shall have been put down finally, and cast into outer darkness, shall acknowledge this dominion and every tongue shall have to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord! Not Satan, not the servant of the devil, but the Servant of Jehovah alone is Lord forever, that God may be all in all!

Forever shall this dominion be. Glory and dominion are His even now, and Church acknowledges this in her doxology according to the text. She means to say: "glory and dominion is Thine now; let it be ascribed to Thee." But this glory, and also this dominion will be His forever. Christ will never abdicate. By some it is argued that the royal power and dominion Christ now has at the right hand of God will terminate when He shall have finished His work and His kingdom shall have been completed. The present power and dominion He possesses in order that He may be able to perfect His kingdom. When that shall have been accomplished, He shall reign no more, but be in subjection to the Father. The eternal and sovereign God will then reign directly without being represented by Christ. This conception is based chiefly on the statement in I Cor. 15:25, 28: "For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet . . . And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." But with this view we cannot agree. The text just quoted from I Cor. 15 does not teach that Christ shall ever cease to reign. That He now reigns *until* He hath put all enemies under His feet, merely expresses that this complete subjection of all enemies under His feet is the purpose of His reign, the end that must be attained. And that, when this end shall have been attained and all things shall have been subdued under Him, He Himself will also be subject unto the Father, does not mean that He will reign no more, but merely that He will reign as the

Servant of God forever, reign under Him. All things shall forever be subject to Christ; with all things Christ shall be subject to the Father; and thus God will be all in all! For, all Scripture teaches that Christ's dominion will never cease, that He will reign forever. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, Dan. 7:14. And the doxology that is put into the mouth of the Church in the text we are discussing ascribes glory and dominion to Him forever!

The passage closes with a solemn assurance of the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which was to come, the Almighty." We say that this is a *solemn* assurance, in the first place, because special attention is called to the fact of Christ's coming by the introductory word: *behold*; it is as if the Word of God here would have the Church conceive of this coming as a present fact; always the Church must have the eyes of hope fixed upon that final event. Constantly she must stand in the attitude of expectancy and longing, the attitude of the bride looking for the coming of the Bridegroom, with the prayer on her lips: "Come, Lord Jesus!" And, secondly, this is a solemn assurance, because of the double corroboration: "Even so, Amen!" The word *Amen* is a Hebrew word. It means: it is firm, established, immoveable; it shall surely be! Let the Church never doubt, never grow faint, the Lord will surely come! The time may seem long, but He cometh. The suffering of the waiting Church may be severe, and it may seem sometimes as if the Lord were slack concerning His promise, but He is surely coming. The promise is sealed with a double oath: Even so, Amen!

The words refer to the final coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, His literal and personal and visible return, the parousia, that will mark the end of all history and usher in the eternal state of heavenly glory in the new creation. For, the history of this world will not reach its consummation by way of a gradual process of development, but by a catastrophe, a final Wonder: the appearance in glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. To this final coming the text refers. It is true, that the Bible does speak of His coming with the clouds of heaven all through the ages of this dispensation. Did not the Lord Himself thus testify before the high priest in the hour of His condemnation: "Henceforth (R.V.) ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven?" All through the ages He is coming. Ever since His exaltation at the right hand of God, He has been coming. For, He reigns supreme and so directs all the events of this present time, that they must lead up to and end in His final coming. He is coming in the sense that He is on the way. And He is hastening! The Lord is not slack concerning His promise.

H.H.

THE DAY OF SHADOWS

The Prophecy of Zechariah

The Question regarding the Fast.

Chapter VII

The question stated and the Lord's rebuke.

1. *And it came to pass in the fourth year of Darius the king, that the word of Jehovah came to Zechariah on the fourth day of the ninth month, in Kislev, 2. when Bethel sent Shalzezer and Regem-melech and his men to beseech the face of Jehovah, 3. to speak to the priests who were at the house of Jehovah of Hosts, and to the prophets, saying, Shall I weep in the fifth month, separating myself, as I have done so many years?*

4. *And came the word of Jehovah of hosts unto me, saying, 5. Speak to all the people of the land, and to the priests, saying, When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth (month) and in the seventh, and that for seventy years, did ye fast at all to me, to me? 6. And when ye eat and when ye drink, is it not ye that eat and ye that drink? 7. (Know ye not) the words which Jehovah cried by the hand of the former prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited and at peace, and her cities round about her, and the South and the Plain were inhabited?*

8. *And the word of Jehovah came to Zechariah, saying, 9. Thus spake Jehovah of hosts saying, The judgment of truth judge, and kindness and compassions show every man to his brother. 10. And widow and orphan, and stranger poor man do not oppress; and evil against his brother let none of you conceive in his heart. 11. But they refused to listen and offered a rebellious shoulder, and made their ears too heavy to hear. 12. And their heart they made an adamant, that they might not hear the law and the words which Jehovah sent by His Spirit, by the hand of the former prophets; and there was great wrath from Jehovah of hosts. 13. And it came to pass, that as he cried and they did not hear, so they call and I hear not, saith Jehovah of hosts; 14. And I whirled them over the nations whom they knew not. And the land was made desolate behind them, so that no one goes out or comes in. And (so) they made the land of desire a desolation.*

Vers. 1-3. At the time indicated in the text — nearly two years after the occurrence of the night visions recorded in the previous chapters — a deputation came to Jerusalem sent by Bethel and inquiring of the priests and the prophets whether the fast that had been instituted seventy years previous to commemorate the destruction of the Holy City had still to be observed. *Kislev* was not a place but the ninth month in the Jewish calendar and answered to part of November and part of December. Though meaning *house*

of God, "Bethel" must not be translated and regarded as used of the temple. The context requires that it be taken as the name of the well-known town of the Northern kingdom about ten miles north of Jerusalem to which some of the exiles had returned (Ezra 2:1, 28). And it is nominative and, therefore, we must translate "Bethel sent" and not "sent to Bethel." This, too, is plain from the context. Jehovah dwelt in Zion and not in Bethel and it was Jehovah whom the deputies were seeking. There is also the reading that takes the names of the two deputies to be in opposition with Bethel, "And they of Bethel, even Shalzezer and Regem-melech, sent, etc." But this is not necessary. The Bethelites sent two of their number to inquire of the priests and the prophets. Regem-melech came with his men who were either his servants or men temporarily placed under his leadership. It suggests that he was a Bethelite of some prominence in his community.

The delegates came to entreat Jehovah, to enquire of His servants in the Holy City. For there was a question that weighed heavily on their souls. Certainly the exile of Judah and the destruction of the temple had been a cause of unspeakable sorrow to the true Israel. By the rivers of Babylon they sat down and wept when they remembered Zion. They hanged their harps upon the willows in the midst thereof (Ps. 137). But there were those among them who wanted everybody to weep, not always but at least once a year. So there was ordained at the beginning of the exile an annual fast to be observed in the fifth month. The requirement was that on a certain day of this month everybody, abstaining from food and separating themselves from the ordinary occupations of life, raise their voice and weep before the face of Jehovah. The true believers among the exiles could do so. For they were genuinely sorry for their sins and they truly loved Zion. Hence they wept not only in the fifth month but in every month and on every day of the month. They wept continuously. But as to the carnal Israel, it could cry with the voice, but it could not truly weep. It could not weep spiritually. Yet, the fathers had ordained — the fathers, not the Lord — that everyone should weep. And so it was done. In the fifth month there was much lamenting among the exiles. Everybody was crying. This went on during all the seventy years.

However, these years were now drawing to a close. The prayers of God's believing people were being heard. The Lord had turned their captivity. The walls of Jerusalem were being repaired and the temple was nearing completion. And He would fill it with glory and its glory would be greater than the former. And in this place He would give peace. So had He promised. The true Israel, therefore, was glad. There was rejoicing among the saints. Weeping had given way to laughter, lamentation to the singing of songs of praise to Jehovah. And so the deputies speak to the priests and the prophets, counseling with them, "Shall I weep in the fifth month, separating myself, as I have done so many years?" The pronoun *I* is collective. It includes

the weepers in the whole land. The speaker asks for them all.

Shall we weep? The deputies have need of knowing. If it is the Lord's will, they will weep, though they will have to press the tears from their eyes.

The matter was truly of vital importance. Basically it was a question of sacrifice or obedience, of essence or form, of worshipping in spirit and in truth or with the lips.

Shall I weep? Surely yes, said the Pharisee in the post-exilic community. And so he wept, because he thought thereby to establish his own righteousness before God or because he wanted to appear righteous before men while plundering the houses of the widows. He wept, therefore, and brought sacrifices unto the Lord; burnt-offering of rams, the fat of fed beasts, the blood of bullocks, lambs and he-goats; appeared before the Lord, tread his courts, brought oblations, burnt incense, kept the new moons and the sabbaths, called assemblies and solemn meetings, observed the appointed feasts, spread forth his hands and made many prayers, compassed sea and land to make one proselyte, swore by the altar, payed tithes and mint and anise and cummin, builded the tombs of the prophets, and garnished the sepulchres of the righteous and said that if he had been in the days of the fathers he would not have been partaker with them in the blood of the prophets.

But the entire worship was form without essence, spirit, truth. It was form put to the evil use of cloaking a life of sin. For when the Lord came and sought fruit on him, this pharisee and his spiritual kin — fruit worthy of repentance — He found none. Instead of faith He found unbelief; instead of love, hatred; instead of humbleness, pride; instead of mercy, cruelty, extortions, excesses. With all his praying, church-going and Bible-reading, he was found to be a hypocrite, devouring widows' houses and shutting up the kingdom of heaven against men, a child of the devil, a blind guide, a fool, outwardly righteous and within full of hypocrisy and iniquity (Is. 1:11-15; Matt. 5). And, therefore, also, needless to say, the Lord loathed his entire worship — his praying, and sacrificing and church-going. It was an abomination to Him, iniquity. He could not away with it. It was a trouble to Him. When this hypocrite prayed, the Lord hid His eyes from him (Isa. 1). Form without essence, worship but no truth in the inward parts.

Shall I weep? It was not a question for the priests to answer. They were doubtless bound by tradition and, therefore, would have said: Weep, surely yes. The fast must be observed. The fathers have so ordained. And so it was. The fast as an institution, this weeping at stated times, in the fifth month or in any other month, in commemoration of calamities in the history of the nation, was not of God but of man. No mention is made of it in the law. It was a human institution. As to the question of the deputies, it was one for the Lord to answer. And He hastened to reply (vers 4-7) through Zechariah as His organ. To him alone came the word of the Lord directly. He must speak the Lord's com-

munication to all the people of the land and particularly to the priests. It indicates that they especially needed the instruction thus given. Doubtless the fast had been instituted by their authority and was still being observed under their pressure.

The reply of the Lord is significant. He reminds them that they have fasted and mourned in the fifth month and in the seventh (in the seventh to commemorate the murder of Gedaliah and his friends, Jer. 12:1ff) for seventy years. We sense the reproof hidden in this reminder. Surely they had not actually during all those years shed copious tears annually in the months specified as truly and greatly distressed in their souls by the recollection of the calamities in their history that they were still commemorating by their fasts. The vast majority of these weepers had still to be born at the time of the occurrence of those disasters. So their weeping was forced, artificial. Their grief was feigned. Fasting and weeping was good in times that by their character provoked those feelings. But when fasting was made to recur statedly and for years after the occasions that called forth the practice, as was here the case, it was bound to degenerate into sheer form and self-deception. It did so here. And, therefore, they had not been fasting "to me, to me," that is to the Lord, He went on to tell them in the form of a question; and when, having spent the day in fasting and weeping, they would again eat and drink, it was *they* who ate and drank. The repetition of the phrase "to me" emphasizes the ethical worthlessness of their fasting in the sight of God. Not done out of faith and under the impulse of love of God but done simply under the stress of custom and tradition and done in the imagining that it was a work that nevertheless merited with God and done, finally, with the weepers, the carnal Israel, in the meantime oppressing widows, orphans and strangers (see the following verses), it, their fasting and weeping was an abomination in His eyes. And as they fasted and wept, so they also ate and drank, namely to themselves. There is, indeed, a fasting and a weeping that is precious in God's sight. It is weeping on account of one's sins. But they were not concerned about their sins but were in its service, that is the carnal Israel.

The true requirement of Jehovah, 7-14

Are not these the words which the Lord cried by the hand of the former prophets . . . ? — The Hebrew has no verb. The English versions supply, "Should ye not hear" the words, etc. But the other reading is closer to the Hebrew text. The words are given in verses 9 and 10. The former prophets were all the predecessors of Zechariah that wrought before the exile when Jerusalem and the cities round about her were inhabited and at peace, and the South and the Plain, two of the three divisions of Judah (Josh. 15:21, 33) were inhabited. That verse 8, "And the word of Jehovah came to Zechariah," is a repetition of verse 4 can be no

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FROM HOLY WRIT

Exposition of I Corinthians 1-4

17.

(I Corinthians 3:3-9)

An attentive and sympathetic reader called my attention to the fact it might be advantageous to the average reader that I always clearly indicate the passage which I am discussing in a given article by giving it in full. I believe that his remark has merit. Wherefore I will comply.

Here follows the text of this article on "From Holy Writ." It reads in full as follows: *"For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul: and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? Who is then Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor. For we are laborers together with God; ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building."*

We must, at the very outset, call attention to a matter of translation of the King James' Version of the text. We refer to the translation in verse 9. There we read, "For we are laborers together *with* God . . ." We have italicised the objectionable element in the translation. The Greek text literally has: "For of God we are co-laborers . . ." We believe that the translation here in the King James Version is not only faulty, but also rests upon an erroneous conception of the relationship between the work of laborers in God's kingdom and the work of God Himself in His kingdom.

Permit us to explain.

The translation above cited, as given by the King James Version, makes man and God partners in this labor in the church. We labor "with God."

Against this translation we have some very basic and solid exegetical objections to offer.

Our first objection is that it is against the very wording of the text in the original Greek. If words have meaning than by not stretch of the imagination can the Greek text be translated as does the King James Version, and still have the sense of the text retained. The "with" (sun) in the text must not be read as with "God" but rather as a composite noun modified by the subject "we," referring to Paul and Apollos. The resultant implication is that Paul and Apollos are the "co-workers" and not Paul and Apollos are co-workers *with* God! The genitive (tou Theou) of God

then means that God possesses these two ministers of His: Paul and Apollos!

So much for this translation with its resultant sense.

Our next objection is that in the entire New Testament Scriptures the term "co-workers" (sunergoi) never is employed by Paul or any other writer as referring to a synergism of activity between man and God. The term always refers to the human co-workers. It always has reference to Paul and those Apostles and evangelists and helpers working with him. We refer the reader to Rom. 16:3, 9, 21; Phil. 2:24; 4:3; I Thess. 3:2, etc.

There is one passage in Holy Writ which seems to teach a certain synergism between the Apostles and God. We refer to Mark 16:20, where we read, "And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord *working with them*, and confirming the word with signs following." In the Greek original we have here the participial phrase (genitive absolute): tou Kuriou sunergountos. The Lord co-operating. This might be quoted to show that God does co-operate with man. We grant this from a formal viewpoint. However, then the nature of this co-operation must still be carefully determined. We cannot go into this in great detail. Let the following suffice:

1. That we do not read here at all of the Apostle co-operating with God. God does all the co-operating here. And this is clearly indicated in the text. It simply means that except the Lord build the city vainly do the laborers build. God is the "all in all" in this activity.

2. This co-operating was certainly the efficacious calling by the Spirit by means of the preaching of the Apostles in all the world. He went with them in His Divine power and efficacious saving grace. The *evidence* of His presence, so that with His Godhead, Spirit and grace he was never absent from them, we have in the notice in the text in Mark 16:20 "and confirming the word with signs following."

This all is a far cry from our being co-workers *with* God.

Besides, the metaphors employed by Paul clear the point in a different direction than that of the translation of the King James version. (Incidentally we may notice in passing that the Dutch translation correctly renders the original Greek, "Wij zijn Gods medearbeiders"! Thus also the German translates, "Denn wir sind Gottes Mitarbeiter"!) And these translations agree with the entire context as well as with the metaphors employed by Paul in the text.

Such was indeed the very point in the polemic of Paul. Paul and Apollos have absolutely no quarrel in this matter. That Paul employs his own name and that of Apollos in this case is only to make this matter clear by way of example. He makes, as it were, a "case study" of it. Thus Paul writes in Chapter 4:6, "and these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no man of you be puffed up for one against the other." In this particular case of Paul and

Apollos as here given by Paul we are dealing with the proper attitude required in all such cases in the church. And Paul explicitly states that such is his purpose in so speaking here in his metaphors.

Besides, that, Apollos will not in anyway become involved in this insane business of playing out Paul and Apollos overagainst each other, is evident from I Corinthians 16:12, where we read, "As touching our brother Apollos, I greatly desired him to come unto you with the brethren: but his will was not to come at all this time; but he will come when he shall have convenient time."

Writes A. T. Robertson in his W. P., "Apollos had left Corinth in disgust over the strife which involved him and Paul (I Cor. 1-4). He had had enough of partisan strife over preachers."

From this appears that Paul does not wish to emphasize the unity of action *between* God and himself in this passage, but rather the unity between himself and Apollos. *They are* co-laborers. And as such both belong to God; howbeit each in his own place and calling.

What was this calling of each?

Paul's had been the task of being the first preacher in Corinth. As such his work can be compared to the task of a *sower* in the field. He had expounded the Scriptures concerning Jesus Christ as the fulfilment of the promises of God. And for this place God had chosen him. That is his boast. He will not build upon another man's foundation. compare Rom. 15:20, "Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation!"

Is there any disagreement with Apollos in Paul's thus having preached?

None whatsoever!

Apollos came later to Corinth. And he came to continue the labors of God in Corinth as they had been begun by Paul. Thus we read in Acts 18:27, 28, "and when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him (Apollos): who, when he was come, *helped them much* which had believed through grace: for he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ."

Thus Apollos' labors in Corinth may be likened to one who irrigates the land. He nurtures the plants along to a more stable growth. He builds *upon the foundation* that has been laid.

They are indeed *co-laborers*!

Paul and Apollos.

Each has his own assigned place and calling in the church as a laborer called of God!

Thus they are co-laborers of God. To Him alone is each accountable and not to each other. This is a profound and sublime truth which is laid down in Article 84 of the Church Order, "No Church shall in any way lord it over other

Churches, no *Minister* over other Ministers, no elder or deacon over other elders or deacons." And on this principle Paul writes in Chapter 4:4b, "but he that judgeth me is the Lord"!

And what is the iron clad logic of the fact that Paul planted and Apollos watered? What is the iron clad implication, but that *God alone* gives the growth in the Church. He causes the growth by the Holy Spirit. Should anyone therefore ever boast except in God, the Lord?

Who is Paul? Who is Apollos? Calvin, Luther, Kuyper, Lubbers, Hoeksema, Ophoff — who are they? Each in their own place? Co-laborers of God. Each as it was *given* to him. So then these are nothing as Paul says: "So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God who giveth the increase!"

Is it then not sinful carnality in the church when men will plead for one minister of God against the other? Is such not sinfully being puffed up? Must those, who engaged in this sinful business, not be addressed as being *children* in the Lord, immature in faith and godliness, and as such which must be demoted from their imaginary status of teachers in God's church to that of children, who once more must pass through the Kindergarten where the *first principles* are taught: the laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection from the dead and eternal judgment!

Paul says such are carnal.

They walk not after God but they walk as men. The things of God have not yet really become a part of their life of faith and conversion. They have in this matter not yet learned to see God in His exaltedness and man in his nothingness.

Talking about the one preacher in preference to the other they forget that God is using both to build them, to cause them to grow.

What a pity!

Here is folly prating in the name of wisdom.

How can such be instructed in the sublime truths of the Mystery of God in Christ?

Just an ounce of this proper consciousness of the place of each minister as co-laborer with others under God will be a pound of prevention of much sin of party-strife in God's church.

Thus it will be with the ministers themselves. They will feel blessed in their littleness before God which is their greatness as ministers. God causes the church to believe through their labors. Weakest means fulfil His purpose.

His strength supplied in our weakness.

What a glory in the Ministry of the Word; a glory which both ministers and congregations must honor.

Thus alone God is all in all!

G. L.

IN HIS FEAR

Praying in His Fear

(3)

A prayer is a request.

It must be a request for that to which we have a right.

But it is and must be a request.

That it must be a request for that to which we have a right is expressed in the phrase to which we already called your attention: "For Jesus' sake." For His sake we have a right to the things for which we pray. And let us understand that for His sake there are definite rights to definite blessings for definite individuals.

He went to Calvary not for salvation in some general sense but for salvation for a definite number of people personally designated by God from before the foundation of the world in sovereign predestination and for definite blessings of salvation for each one of these persons. God is a God of order.

In prayer, therefore, we ask for that which God has promised to give to us because for Jesus' sake we have a right to it. All that which we shall receive through prayer has already been laid away for us. All the blessings of salvation are "earmarked" for definite individuals. That is a fundamental principle that is usually denied or ignored in prayer. Yet it is as true as it is true that Jehovah is the I Am, The Changeless One. Prayer must not be an attempt to make Him change His mind. You cannot do it. Try it and your request ceases to be a prayer.

The heavenly storehouse is not a large warehouse full of blessings which are dealt out as we persuade God to give them to us. Neither is the heavenly storehouse run on the principle of "first come, first served." The blessings of heaven are not dealt out "from the front of the shelf to the back of the shelf" as is done in a grocery store when a certain item is repeatedly requested by customers. Those blessings are all "earmarked" for certain individuals and reserved "on the shelf" for them to be given when they pray for them; to be given when they request them in prayer.

God is, indeed, a Changeless God of order.

This does not take away the fact that one's prayer is a request for that which has been "earmarked" for that particular individual.

In prayer we come boldly to the throne of grace. In the measure that we are strong in our faith we will come boldly to the throne of grace to make our requests.

But we must not confuse boldness with pride.

The proud God sees afar off; but he has respect unto the humble. The boldness of the believer is a humble boldness. Bold he is because by faith he has taken hold of the

promises of God for Jesus' sake. Humble he is because by that same faith he understands that the right to the things promised is his for Jesus' sake. The believer can be and is bold in his prayer and yet is also and can be humble in that prayer. In that "for Jesus' sake" lies his boldness, that is, in his faith in that truth lies his boldness, his courage, his assurance that the things for which he asks are really his; and in that "for Jesus' sake" lies also his humility, for therein he expresses that it is not of his own works or worthiness but of the mercy of God in Christ.

In boldness, then, he pleads and asks things of the Unchangeable God.

For his boldness is his confidence in Christ, yea his faith in Christ. As we read in Hebrews 10:19-22, "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus . . . let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." Or again in Hebrews 4:16, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." And again in I John 4:17, 18, "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is so are we in the world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear; because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love." You will note that in all this speech of boldness before God, even in the day of judgment, is contained not one smallest suggestion of pride. Always the boldness is linked up with faith in the works of Christ. We must in prayer *dare* to come before God's face. That we pray in His fear does not mean that we have not or have hardly the courage to come to Him with our petitions. The whole Roman Catholic philosophy that we have need of the intermediate work of Mary and may not have the "audacity" to come to Christ Himself directly is exactly in the service of *not* praying in His fear. The whole idea that we may not come directly to Christ with boldness and confidence ignores, or still worse, deliberately rules out the element of faith in Christ. Such an one who dares not pray for the blessings of Christ's kingdom lacks this boldness in the measure that he lacks faith in the works of Christ, yea in his place in the body of Christ. Perfect love casteth out fear. There is no fear in love. Therefore it is also true that in the measure we are confident (believe) that God loves us in Christ, in that measure we have boldness to ask for all the blessings of salvation. In the measure we can say in sincerity "I am not my own but belong to my faithful Saviour," in that measure we will come boldly to this Saviour (not to His earthly mother) and ask Him for that which He has laid up for us in the heavenly storehouse.

That we come hanging our heads in shame because of our sin and guilt as the Publican who smote his breast in contrition of heart and cry out for the mercy of God does not in any way or to any degree rule out that element of

boldness of faith. The Publican came to the temple, did he not? He dared to come and seek forgiveness. He dared to call to God and use His name and indicate that he was making his petition to God.

So, beautifully, we see that humility and boldness of faith also in that Canaanitish woman who came to Jesus seeking salvation for her daughter who was possessed of an evil spirit. She is ready in her humility to admit that she and her daughter are dogs. But in boldness of faith she keeps on seeking deliverance for her child. First Jesus pays no attention to her at all. When the disciples suggest that He send her away, Jesus said in her hearing, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Upon hearing this the mother of this tormented child cries out her prayer more loudly and vigorously than before, "Lord, help me." Jesus tells her that it is not meet to give the bread of the children to the dogs. In the boldness of faith she hesitates not a moment and answers, "Truth, Lord, yet the dogs eat the crumbs which fall from the master's table."

Did Jesus say to her, "Woman, you are much too bold"?

Nay, He declared to her, "Woman, great is thy faith."

To come boldly before the throne of grace is not a sin. It is to come in faith when that boldness is based on the confidence that these things are ours for Jesus' sake.

The Canaanitish woman when told that the bread is for the lost sheep of the house of Israel conceded that point and was not bold to demand of Christ that He take the bread away from them. Any request that God do unrighteously can never be a prayer in His fear. That is not boldness of faith. It is sinful pride and conceit! But the boldness of faith is seen in the request of this woman for those blessings *as a dog*. Her boldness, being one of faith, displayed that humility that she was ready to confess being only a dog in herself, but then a dog that was deeply desirous of the blessings which the sheep and the children enjoy.

This humility of those that pray in His fear will manifest itself not only in the phrase, "For Jesus' sake" but also in that other phrase that one hears rather frequently (and properly so) in prayers, "Not my will but Thy will be done," or its shorter variation, "If it please Thee," or "If it be according to Thy will."

With those who pray in His fear this is not some pious phrase that is used to soothe one's conscience after uttering many requests which one realizes one should not have made. He who prays in His fear means just exactly what he says in that phrase: he submits to God's will and declares that, should the thing for which he has prayed be that which has not been promised him for Jesus' sake and therefore is not according to God's good pleasure, he does not want God to fulfill that petition.

We must remember when we use these phrases, "Thy will be done; If it pleases Thee; If it be in harmony with Thy will" we actually pray that it is our desire NOT to have our request fulfilled if God's will is otherwise.

How often is not our grumbling and complaining when God sends us the opposite from what we requested of Him that the addition in our prayers, "If it be Thy will," was not sincere, that we really wanted right along our will and were waiting for it to be realized. But that is not praying in His fear.

He who prays in His fear means what he says.

Of course, he does not add this to every petition.

To add the words "If it be Thy will" to some petitions would be to reveal either an extremely weak faith or other wise even unbelief. Surely we do not add the phrase to that petition for a thing which God has promised to give unto us for Jesus' sake. We do not, for example, pray, "Lord forgive me my many sins, if it be Thy will." We know and surely do believe that it is God's will to forgive the sins of His people. And when we come to Him in prayer we come as those who believe that they belong to that people whose sins have been blotted out by the blood of Christ. Jesus teaches us to pray, "Our Father Who art in heaven." Now, surely, if we are to approach Him as our Father we confess thereby that we believe that we are His children. And we know that it is His will to forgive the sins of His children.

We use the expression when we pray for that which God does not condemn in His word as an improper thing for which to pray and which has also not been specifically designated by God as the thing for which the individual should pray. There are things which God promises to the Church but not yet to every individual in the Church. There are things which it pleases Him to give to one individual and not to the other without indicating in His word which individual may have such a thing.

Some God calls to the ministry of the gospel; but every parent may not pray for this for his son as a thing promised by God. If he seriously and deeply desires it, he prays it for his son if it be God's will.

That belongs to praying in His fear.

And then he means exactly that: he prays for God's will, not for his own.

He has the fear of the Lord which is the principle of all wisdom.

J.A.H.

IN MEMORIAM

The Martha Ladies' Aid Society of the Hull Protestant Reformed Church hereby wishes to express its sincere sympathy to one of its members, Mrs. Peter Hoekstra, in the loss of her sister,

MRS. A. REITSMA

May the rich promise of God's word comfort and sustain the bereaved in their sorrow.

Rev. John A. Heys, President
Mrs. Nellie Brummel, Secretary

Contending For The Faith

The Church and the Sacraments

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

THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Eucharist by Philip Schaff.

The Eucharist is both a sacrament wherein God conveys to us a certain blessing, and a sacrifice which man offers to God. As a sacrament, or the communion, it stands at the head of all sacred rites; as a sacrifice it stands alone. The celebration of it under this twofold character forms the holy of holies of the Christian cultus in the ancient church, and in the greater part of Christendom at this day (the reader may recall, having read these articles on the development and history of doctrine throughout the ages, that mention has been made in the past that the Fathers viewed the sacrament of the Lord's Supper as a sacrifice which man or the church offers to the Lord. They did not use the word "sacrifice" in the sense in which the Roman Catholic Church uses it today. It was *our* sacrifice to the Lord. That the word "sacrifice" was used in this sense is confirmed by Philip Schaff in this paragraph. — H.V. Schaff, when writing that the Eucharist, as a sacrament, stands alone and at the head of all sacred rites, quotes the following interesting statement, and I quote: "Freemen says to the Eucharist, not without justice, from a historical and theological point of view: 'It was confessedly through long ages of the church, and is by the vast majority of the Christian world at this hour, conceived to be . . . no less than the highest line of contact and region of commingling between heaven and earth known to us, or provided for us; — a borderland of mystery, where, by gradations baffling sight and thought, the material truly blends with the spiritual, and the visible shades off into the unseen; a thing, therefore, which of all events or gifts in this world most nearly answers to the highest aspirations and deepest yearnings of our wonderfully compounded being; while in some ages and climes of the church it has been elevated into something yet more awful and mysterious.'")

We consider first the doctrine of the Eucharist as a sacrament, then the doctrine of the Eucharist as a sacrifice, and finally the celebration of the eucharistic communion and eucharistic sacrifice.

The doctrine of the sacrament of the Eucharist was not a subject of theological controversy and ecclesiastical action till the time of Paschasius Radbert, in the ninth century; whereas since then this feast of the Saviour's dying love has been the innocent cause of the most bitter disputes, especially in the age of the Reformation, between Papists and Protestants, and among Lutherans, Zwinglians, and Calvinists. Hence the doctrine of the ancient church on this point lacks

the clearness and definiteness which the Nicene dogma of the Trinity, the Chalcedonian Christology (that the two natures, in Christ, are united in one Divine Person, unchanged, unmixed, undivided, and without separation — H.V.), and the Augustinian anthropology and soteriology acquired from the controversies preceding them. In the doctrine of baptism also we have a much better right to speak of a *consensus patrum* (consensus, agreement between the fathers — H.V.), than in the doctrine of the holy Supper.

In general, this period, following the representatives of the mystic theory in the previous one, was already very strongly inclined toward the doctrine of transubstantiation and toward the Greek and Roman sacrifice of the mass, which are inseparable in so far as a real sacrifice requires the real presence of the victim. But the kind and mode of this presence are not yet particularly defined, and amidst very different views: Christ may be conceived as really present either in and with the elements (consubstantiation, impanation), or under the illusive appearance of the changed elements (transubstantiation), or only dynamically and spiritually.

In the previous period we distinguish three views: the mystic view of Ignatius, Justin Martyr, and Irenaeus; the symbolical view of Tertullian and Cyprian; and the allegorical or spiritualistic view of Clement of Alexandria and Origen. In the present the first view, which best answered the mystic and superstitious tendency of the time, preponderated, but the second also was represented by considerable authorities.

I. The realistic and mystic view is represented by several fathers and the early liturgies, whose testimony we shall further cite below. They speak in enthusiastic and extravagant terms of the sacrament and sacrifice of the altar. They teach a real presence of the body and blood of Christ, which is included in the very idea of a real sacrifice, and they see in the mystical union of it with the sensible elements a sort of repetition of the incarnation of the Logos. With the act of consecration a change accordingly takes place in the elements, whereby they become vehicles and organs of the life of Christ, although by no means necessarily changed into another substance. To denote this change very strong expressions are used, like *metabolee*, *metaballein*, *metaballesthai*, *metastoeixiousthai*, *metapoiesthai*, *mutatio*, *translatio*, *transfiguratio*, *transformatio*; illustrated by the miraculous transformation of water into wine, the assimilation of food, and the pervasive power of leaven.

Cyril of Jerusalem goes farther in this direction than any of the fathers. He plainly teaches some sort of supernatural connection between the body of Christ and the elements, though not necessarily a transubstantiation of the latter. Let us hear the principal passages. "Then follows," he says in describing the celebration of the Eucharist, "the invocation of God, for the sending of his Spirit to make the bread the body of Christ, the wine the blood of Christ. For what the Holy Ghost touches is sanctified and transformed." "Under the type of the bread is given to thee the body, under

the type of the wine is given to thee the blood, that thou mayest be a partaker of the body and blood of Christ, and be of one body and blood with him." "After the invocation of the Holy Ghost the bread of the Eucharist is no longer bread, but the body of Christ." "Consider, therefore, the bread and the wine not as empty elements, for they are, according to the declaration of the Lord, the body and blood of Christ." In support of this change Cyril refers at one time to the wedding feast at Cana, which indicates the Roman theory of change of substance; but at another to the consecration of the chrism, wherein the substance is unchanged. He was not clear and consistent with himself. His opinion probably was, that the eucharistic elements lost by consecration not so much their earthly substance, as their earthly purpose.

Gregory of Nyssa, though in general a very faithful disciple of the spiritualistic Origen, is on this point entirely realistic. He calls the Eucharistic a food of immortality, and speaks of a miraculous transformation of the nature of the elements into the glorified body of Christ by virtue of the priestly blessing.

Chrysostom likewise, though only incidentally in his homilies, and not in the strain of sober logic and theology, but of glowing rhetoric, speaks several times of a union of our whole nature with the body of Christ in the Eucharist, and even of a *manducatio oralis*.

Of the Latin fathers, Hilary, Ambrose, and Gaudentius (dies in 410) come nearest to the later dogma of transubstantiation. The latter says: "The Creator and Lord of nature, who produces bread from the earth, prepares out of bread his own body, makes of wine his own blood."

But closely as these and similar expressions verge upon the Roman doctrine of transubstantiation, they seem to contain at most a *dynamic*, not a substantial, change of the elements into the body and blood of Christ. For, in the first place, it must be remembered there is a great difference between the half-poetic, enthusiastic, glowing language of devotion, in which the fathers, and especially the liturgies, speak of the eucharistic sacrifice, and the clear, calm, and cool language of logic and doctrinal definition. In the second place, the same fathers apply the same or quite similar terms to the baptismal water and the chrism of confirmation, without intending to teach a proper change of the substance of these material elements into the Holy Ghost. On the other hand, they not rarely use, concerning the bread and wine, *tupos*, *antitupa*, *figura*, *signum*, and like expressions, which denote rather a symbolical than a metabological relation of them to the body and blood of the Lord. Finally, the favorite comparison of the mysterious transformation with the incarnation of the Logos, which, in fact, was not an annihilation of the human nature, but an assumption of it into unity with the divine, is of itself in favor of the continuance of the substance of the elements; else it would abet the Eutychian heresy (Eutychianism was a Christological heresy of the fifth century, taking its name from Eutyches, an ascetic, of strict monastic train-

ing, for thirty years superior of a monastery near Constantinople — H.V.).

II. The symbolical view, though on a realistic basis, is represented first by Eusebius, who calls the Supper a commemoration of Christ by the symbols of his body and blood, and takes the flesh and blood of Christ in the sixth chapter of John to mean the words of Christ, which are spirit and life, the true food of the soul, to believers. Here appears the influence of his venerated Origen, whose views in regard to the sacraments aspect of the Eucharist he substantially repeats.

But it is striking that even Athanasius, "the father of orthodoxy," recognized only a *spiritual* participation, a self-communication of the nourishing divine virtue of the Logos, in the symbols of the bread and wine, and incidentally evinces a doctrine of the Eucharist wholly foreign to the Catholic, and very like the older Alexandrian or Origenistic, and the Calvinistic, though by no means identical with the latter. By the flesh and blood in the mysterious discourse of Jesus in the sixth chapter of John, which he refers to the Lord's Supper, he understands not the earthly, human, but the heavenly, divine manifestation of Jesus, a spiritual nutriment coming down from above, which the Logos through the Holy Ghost communicates to believers (but not to a Judas, nor to the unbelieving). With this view accords his extending of the participation of the eucharistic food to believers in heaven, and even to the angels, who, on account of their incorporeal nature, are incapable of a corporeal participation of Christ.

Gregory Nazianzen sees in the Eucharist a type of the incarnation, and calls the consecrated elements symbols and antitypes of the great mysteries, but ascribes to them a saving virtue.

St. Basil, likewise, in explaining the words of Christ, "I live by the Father" (John 6:57), against the Arians who inferred from it that Christ was a creature, incidentally gives a spiritual meaning to the fruition of the eucharistic elements. "We eat the flesh of Christ," he says, "and drink His blood, if we, through His incarnation and human life, become partakers of the Logos and wisdom."

H.V.

Notice for Classis West

Classis West of the Protestant Reformed Churches will meet, the Lord willing, in Oak Lawn, Illinois, Wednesday, September 19, 1956. The consistories are reminded of the rule that all matters for the classical agenda must be in the hands of the stated clerk thirty days before the meeting of Classis.

Rev. H. Veldman, Stated 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

REJECTION OF ERRORS

Article V. Who teach: That all men have been accepted unto the state of reconciliation and unto the grace of the covenant, so that no one is worthy of condemnation on account of original sin, and that no one shall be condemned because of it, but that all are free from the guilt of original sin. For this opinion is repugnant to Scripture which teaches that we are by nature children of wrath. Eph. 2:3.

When one thinks his way into the various ramifications of the Arminian error as it is presented and condemned in the above article, he stands aghast at its implications. The article is very brief in its presentation of the error not only, but also in its answer. And undoubtedly the fathers give expression to the essential fault of the Arminian presentation when they state that it is repugnant to the Scriptural teaching that we are by nature children of wrath. But let none be deceived by the brevity of this answer. At first glance it may even seem that the fathers by this answer fail to answer, fail actually to meet the Arminian argument. Nevertheless, it is exactly the case that the Arminians deny that there is anywhere in this world a person who is by nature a child of wrath. They so wrest the Scriptures that children of wrath are simply non-existent, theoretical abstractions. And they remove completely any possibility that anyone can ever in true contrition and repentance confess that he personally is a child of wrath by nature. It becomes increasingly evident that the Remonstrants so twist the Scriptures that they empty the Scriptural terms of all their true meaning, pour their own heretical content into these terms, and thus present a teaching that is entirely divergent from the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. They leave no stone unturned in their effort to overthrow the truth. The Reformed faith and the Arminian heresy are not merely divergent in some respects. They differ not in emphasis merely. But they are utterly divergent. At no point do they agree as to the gospel of our salvation. You cannot find back the Reformed faith in the Arminian presentation. This the fathers understood. And this all lovers of the Reformed faith ought to see, in order that they may avoid all attempts to compromise and to cooperate with Arminian false teachers.

Let us, first of all, investigate the teaching of the Arminians as it is here presented.

All men have been accepted unto the state of reconciliation. This is their first proposition. It follows, let us note, from the proposition that Christ died for all and for every man. The Arminians felt, of course, the compulsion of their own heresy. Regardless now of the fact that they have already emptied that death of Christ of its true meaning, and regardless of the fact that Christ went to His death without a definite purpose either on His part or on the part of His Father to save any, they felt that if they taught that Christ died for all men and for every man, they were compelled also to maintain that all men have been accepted (by God, of course) unto the state of reconciliation. After all, the gospel is a ministry of *reconciliation*. God hath *reconciled* us unto Himself by Jesus Christ. God was in Christ *reconciling* the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. II Cor. 5:18, 19. And, it pleased the Father, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by Him to *reconcile* all things unto himself. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he *reconciled* in the body of his flesh through death. Colossians 1:19-22. Hence, the Arminian, if he wanted to maintain a semblance of agreement with Scripture, had to recognize this association between reconciliation and the death of Christ, and he was compelled to accept the consequence of his error and also teach that all men have been accepted unto the state of reconciliation. Notice, in the second place, that this proposition is completely general. It includes every member of the human race, Christian and non-Christian, believer and unbeliever, those who have heard the gospel and those who never came into contact with the gospel, elect and reprobate,—all men. Notice, in the third place, that already at this juncture the Arminian is craftily cautious in his language, although we may admit that if there were not a cloud in the sky, one could not find fault with this expression. They “have been accepted unto the state of reconciliation.” This is camouflage. Notice he speaks of the “state” of reconciliation. What does he mean? Are they excluded perhaps from the actual reconciliation. Notice, he speaks of “have been accepted.” What does he mean? Does he mean to leave room for the possibility that while they have been accepted, they will not accept? Scripture certainly does not employ this language. It presents reconciliation as an accomplished fact in the cross of Christ. It simply presents the elect as reconciled by and to God in Christ. All this becomes the more noteworthy when, in the fourth place, we consider what reconciliation implies. It presupposes an already existent relationship of friendship between those who are reconciled. Even among men, strangers are not reconciled. You speak of reconciliation where there is a bond of love, of friendship. An estranged husband and wife may be reconciled. Estranged friends may be reconciled. And so it is also spiritually. Hence, the Arminian position implies a relation of friendship on God’s part toward all men. This, of course, is quite in harmony with the whole Arminian position in regard to God and His decrees.

It is quite the spirit of contemporary Arminianism also. God is a God of love, not a God of wrath. He loves all men. And in His general love He accepts all men unto the state of reconciliation. Secondly, reconciliation implies that this relationship is violated by sin, so that it cannot function. And thirdly, reconciliation means that the cause of estrangement, sin, is removed, so that those who were the objects of wrath are now the objects of divine favor and blessing. Now put the two together: *reconciliation* and *all men*. It is small wonder that the Arminian had to camouflage his view, and speak of *being accepted* unto the *state* of reconciliation. He had to be very crafty, lest his heresy became too obvious.

That brings us to the second proposition of the Remonstrants in this article, namely, *that all men have also been accepted unto the grace of the covenant*. This, of course, in turn follows upon reconciliation. The Arminian can never avoid this. Those who are reconciled are also received unto the grace of the covenant. In that covenant God and man stand in a renewed relation of friendship through reconciliation. God is the God of His covenant people, and they are His people. Mark you well, this applies, according to the Arminian, to all men! Notice, by the way, what a similarity there is between this view and that which holds that all children of believers, head for head, are heirs of the covenant of grace and of God's promise. There is no principal difference. But again the Arminian is compelled to empty the term *grace of the covenant* of its true meaning, and substitute for it his own philosophy. For it is obvious that if all men were actually received unto the grace of the covenant (taking that term now in its Scriptural sense), then all men would be saved; but this the Arminian cannot maintain. Hence, we must remember that the covenant is in the Arminian view not a covenant of grace at all, but a covenant of works. And the grace of that covenant of works is not grace at all, but simply a subtle application of the old principle of work-righteousness. It is a sort of half-way grace, a grace too that even in so far as it could ever be called grace could still be frustrated and made vain by man. For the Arminians teaches: 1. That Christ acquired for the Father the mere right to establish with man such a covenant as he might please, whether of grace or of works. 2. That Christ merited for the Father the authority or the perfect will to deal again with man, and to prescribe new conditions as he might desire, obedience to which conditions depended on the free will of man. 3. That God substituted the condition of faith and the obedience of faith for the condition of the perfect obedience of the law. 4. And that this substitution is the element of grace in this covenant,—the substitution of less stringent conditions of eternal life. This is the grace of the covenant from the objective viewpoint.

With this the Arminian cannot be satisfied, however, for he still has a man who cannot even meet these new conditions. If obedience to these conditions is to depend on the free will of man, he needs just a little more grace. But it must not be sovereign and irresistible grace. It must be a

helping grace. Hence, his third proposition is that man is received to the state of reconciliation and the grace of the covenant *in such a way that he is free from original guilt*. Once again, this applies to all men! And this is so strong, that the Arminian claims that *no man* is worthy of condemnation or shall be condemned on account of original sin. In other words, God wipes the slate clean *up to the moment of his birth*. It is the old Pelagian view of the *tabula rasa*. With such a clean slate to begin with, and with much less stringent conditions of eternal life besides, God makes it as easy as possible for man to be saved. In parentheses we may remark that it is on this basis that the Arminian explains the salvation of all children who die in infancy; they have no original guilt, and they have not yet acquired any actual guilt, and therefore they are innocent. And now it follows, of course, that the Arminian also denies original corruption. Original guilt is the judicial ground of our original corruption. If the former is gone, we can no more be held under the dominion of sin. It may be that man retains a certain tendency toward the evil, an aptitude for sin, but he has no corrupt nature. He has a free will. And if only he uses his free will aright, then that grace of the covenant will not be frustrated, and he will be saved.

Without further comment and explanation it ought to be very clear that by this view the reality of the "children of wrath by nature" of Ephesians 2:3 is entirely gone. There never enters the world a single babe that is a child of wrath. There is none that is the object of God's wrath. There is none that is guilty in Adam ere ever it is born. There is none that enters this world under the wrath of God, so that it is born in the sphere of sin and death. There simply is no such thing as one who is a child of wrath by nature. Principally the answer of the fathers is quite sufficient therefore. But in connection with this answer we may point out too that the Arminian view is guilty of the following: 1) It is individualistic. It denies any covenant relationship, either to Adam or to Christ, when it denies original guilt and when it presents the matter of salvation as though every man stands or falls his own master. 2) It makes separation between original guilt and actual guilt, and, in fact, between original corruption and actual sin in a way that is untenable. For in the first place, actual sin and actual guilt, while they must be distinguished from original sin, are nevertheless inconceivable apart from original sin. From whence would they spring if it were not for original sin? And in the second place, a reconciliation that frees us only from original guilt is no reconciliation at all: our actual guilt would still stand in the way of the favor of God.

Hence, the Arminian has no covenant, no reconciliation, no grace, no sin, no salvation,—nothing at all in the Scriptural sense. He has the false doctrine of human philosophy. And the Reformed Christian rejects this heresy with all his heart.

H.C.H.

THE PROPER USE OF THE TERM "CONDITION"

When we speak of the proper use of the term "condition," we cannot appeal to the use of the term in Scripture, since it never appears there. In that sense it is not a Scriptural term. That does not yet imply that it is contrary to the Scriptures, for there are numerous accepted terms among us, such as "attribute," "sacrament," and "providence," which are not found in the Bible, but do express the truth of Scripture. When we use such terms, we always make sure that the church of the past has given, and that we give a Scriptural connotation to them, so that there can be no misunderstanding. But we cannot appeal to the Scriptures to find out how Scripture uses the term.

Nor can we appeal to the Confessions for the proper use of the term "condition." Not as if it does not appear there, for we find it used repeatedly in the Canons of Dordrecht. But whenever the Canons use the term, they always, without exception, refer to it as employed by the Arminian. They only point out its improper use.

But that can be of aid to us in our present discussion.

Let us notice, first of all, the First Head of Doctrine, article 9, "This election was not founded upon foreseen faith, and the obedience of faith, holiness, or any other good quality or disposition in man, as the *pre-requisite*, *cause* or *condition* on which it depended; but men are chosen to faith and to the obedience of faith, holiness, etc., therefore election is the fountain of every saving good; from which proceed faith, holiness, and the other gifts of salvation, and finally eternal life itself, as its fruits and effects, according to that of the apostle: 'He hath chosen us (not because we were) but that we should be holy, and without blame, before Him in love.'" Ph. 1:4.

This article teaches that:

1. The term "condition" is synonymous with the term "cause," and therefore implies a pre-requisite. A condition, as the Confession speaks of it, is something that is required beforehand, so that something else is contingent or dependent upon it.

2. Faith, obedience of faith, holiness, or any other disposition of man, are not the pre-requisite cause or condition of election and salvation. This is said in refutation of the Arminian.

3. On the contrary, election is the fountain of every saving good. Therefore election is also the fountain, or source of faith. But then faith is no more a condition.

4. Faith, obedience of faith, holiness, or the like, are *fruits* that proceed from election, rather than conditions unto election. Since they are fruits, they can not be conditions.

You will find a very similar language under this same Head of Doctrine, in the section of rejection of errors, articles IV, V, and VII, which we shall not quote here for want of space. If you are interested, see also Head of Doctrine V, Rejection of Errors I.

The next article we refer to is found in the First Head of Doctrine, article 10, which declares, "The good pleasure of God is the sole cause of this gracious election; which doth not consist herein, that out of all possible qualities and actions of men God has chosen some as a *condition* of salvation; but that He was pleased out of the common mass of sinners to adopt some certain persons as a peculiar people to Himself, as it is written," etc.

1. Here the fathers refute the idea that it was the good pleasure of God to choose certain gifts and actions of men as conditions of salvation. God did not choose "gifts and actions of men," but He chose "persons as a peculiar people to Himself."

2. The term "condition" is employed here to refer to certain pre-requisites which God has set up from eternity, to which man must conform in order to be included in God's election, and thus to be saved.

3. See in this connection also, Head of Doctrine II, Rejection of Errors, III.

Those among us who felt a strong need for the use of the term "condition," and defended a conditional promise and a conditional gospel, raised the argument that the Canons speak of "arminian conditions," while they wanted to maintain "reformed conditions." Arminian conditions, so it was said, are conditions unto election, but "reformed conditions" are conditions unto salvation. Although they would maintain, on the one hand, that God's election is sovereign and unconditional, yet, on the other hand, there are also conditions unto our salvation. Although it is true, that conversion, faith, obedience and perseverance are gifts of grace, they are also, particularly before our consciousness, conditions that we must fulfill to be saved.

But our Confessions do not know that language.

1. The Canons speak of "conditions" as synonymous with "cause" and "contingency."

2. They know of but one cause of our salvation, namely, election. That is the fountain out of which the stream of grace flows. And God determines sovereignly and unconditionally upon whom it shall flow, when it shall flow upon them, and how much they shall receive at any given time.

3. Moreover, they never speak of salvation as something that is only finally attained in heaven. But they include conversion, faith, obedience and sanctification, with all the other gifts of grace as a part of our salvation. God is even now the sole Cause, Who supplies the necessary means, and Who produces the fruits of faith, etc., in the hearts of the believer. It is in this confidence that the believer can be fully assured of his ultimate victory and eternal perfection. Instead of using the term "condition," the Canons speak of "Fountain," "cause," "gifts," "means," and "fruits."

That is Scripture, according to the Confessions.

Those who contend that the term "condition," in a "reformed" sense, is necessary in order to have a full-orbed gospel, will appeal to the fact, that although the Scriptures do not use the term as such, they do express the conditional

thought by the numerous "if clauses." And therefore, to express this idea of the "if clauses" the term "condition" is proper and essential to Reformed Theology.

But let us view these "if clauses" for a moment in the light of the Confessions quoted above.

We notice, first of all, that many, in fact, most of the "if clauses" in Scripture have the significance of "since." There is no contingency expressed in them at all, but appeal is made to an established fact. I refer to but two examples:

Gal. 5:25, "If we live in the spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit."

Col. 3:1, "If we then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God."

Notice in this connection the beautiful thought of James 4:8, "Draw nigh to God, and (since, in that way) He will draw nigh to you."

Reference is made to numerous passages in the Old Testament in which God's blessing is assured to Israel if they will keep His commandments, but His curse awaits them if they fail to do so. Here, so it is said, we meet with a true conditionality, a contingency depending upon man's response to God's law. If . . . this; if not . . . that.

To quote one example, we refer to Deut. 28:1, 2, 15: "And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth; and all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou wilt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God. But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee."

But, as is plain from many other passages of Deuteronomy, this is nothing less than a prediction, which history has borne out. Spiritual Israel, by the grace of God, did hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord their God, to observe and do all His commandments which He commanded them, and they are set on high above all the nations of the earth eternally. While, on the other hand, carnal Israel did not observe to do all His commandments and His statutes, so that all His curses did come upon them, and overtake them eternally. This served as a sound pedagogy for spiritual Israel, for in as far as they were unfaithful the Lord caused them to suffer His chastisement to bring them to repentance. But the word of the Lord was confirmed among them: *Those who* hearken to His voice experience His blessing, but *those who* do not hearken experience His curse.

It is likewise evident that the passage in Psalm 132:12 cannot be interpreted as a condition which is dependent upon man for its fulfillment, but must be interpreted in connection with Psalm 89:20, 28-35. Also here the sound rule

applies, that Scripture must be compared with and interpreted in the light of Scripture.

Psalm 132:12 reads: "If thy children will keep my covenant and my testimony that I shall teach them, their children shall also sit upon thy throne for evermore."

While Psalm 89:20, 28-35 teaches us: "I have found David (Christ) my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him . . . My mercy will I keep for him forevermore. and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven. If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David."

But an appeal is also made to the fact that the reformed fathers of the period in which the Confessions were composed did use the term "condition" in their writings, even when they were aware of the arminian implications of the term. This we readily grant. But it must also be granted that they employed the term loosely, almost, we might say, thoughtlessly, without attaching any doctrinal implications to it. In that sense many of the early reformed fathers spoke of "common grace," (which was also found on the lips of the Arminians and condemned in the Canons), and "offer of salvation," without any intention of attaching any special significance to the terms. But as soon as any doctrinal implications are drawn from the use of a term, or any special significance is attached to it, the church may well review the "accepted use and the significance of the term in history."

That still leaves the question whether the term "condition" does not express better and more concisely certain relationships in the "Order of Salvation" than any other term could possibly express them. It is obvious that certain gifts of grace precede others, that one follows out of the other, and that our final salvation is only possible as a result of all these gifts of grace bestowed upon us during this present time.

For example, regeneration is necessarily first, for "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3). Regeneration is like the acorn, for essentially all other gifts are included in this one gift.

Likewise, conversion must precede the enjoyment of conscious faith.

Faith is the divine means unto our justification.

Only in the way of sanctification do we experience God's approval.

Only those who receive the grace to persevere unto the end will receive the crown of life.

Even in regard to affairs of our present earthly existence we learn to say: "If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that." (James 4:15)

(Continued on page 456)

ALL AROUND US

Stereotyped Theology.

On this subject the Rev. H. De Wolf wrote editorially in the Reformed *Guardian* of June 25, 1956. In this editorial he tells his readers how happy he is that he is no longer in our Protestant Reformed Churches where he claims he had been subjected to a one-man rule and a one-man theology. He derides our name and repudiates our doctrine.

His article is too long to quote in its entirety, nor is this necessary to show how he disdains our churches and how ungrateful he is towards the instructor from whom he received the little knowledge of theology he had before he became addicted to heretical doctrines.

He begins his editorial with a play on our name. He tells his readers that at the beginning of our history we "boasted of being *Reformed*." This we did overagainst the Christian Reformed Churches whom we accused of adopting the Arminian *Three Points*. Later, so he writes, we laid emphasis on the name *Protestant*. We did this to distinguish our denomination from the Christian Reformed to identify ourselves before the church-world. Still later in our history, when we felt it was necessary to show that we were the only Reformed denomination in the world, we insisted that we were *distinctively* Protestant Reformed. This became necessary, according to De Wolf, when we began to suspicion some of our ministers and people of being inclined to heretical doctrines. He claims that this suspicion was entirely without basis and proof.

I was a little amused the other day when a brother, who also read De Wolf's editorial, said to me: "De Wolf did not go far enough in talking about the name. He should have called the attention of his readers to the fact that the De Wolf group went still a step farther in the development of the name when they assumed the name *Orthodox Protestant Reformed*." I agree with the brother.

Since De Wolf wanted to talk about names it might have been instructive to his readers if he had explained to them just why his group chose the name Orthodox Protestant Reformed Church. Certainly they are not *Reformed* because they sustain the heresy of De Wolf. Surely they are not *Protestant Reformed* because they separated from our Protestant Reformed Churches, refusing to abide by the doctrine and Church Order of our Churches. And they are not *Orthodox* either if I understand the meaning of that expression. The only name they could have assumed that had Protestant Reformed in it that makes sense would be Heterodox Protestant Reformed Church. De Wolf will never be able to appreciate how thankful we are to God that we were enough distinctively Protestant Reformed to be able to detect his heresy and purge our churches of an element that was fast making us lose our Reformed heritage. Yes, De Wolf, after you and your supporters left us we became truly distinctively

Protestant Reformed. Of this I shall never be ashamed. I'm sure that even the leaders of the Chr. Ref. Church believe this of us, though they do not agree with us. That they do not see anything that is distinctively Reformed in your group is evidenced in their acceptance of the Rev. James Van Weelden into the ministry of their churches.

De Wolf writes that there was no justifiable reason for suspicion and distrust when he and his supporters were still with us. All our suspicions were based on ungrounded subjective reasonings. I want to point out to him that there was nothing subjective in our reasonings, nor were they ungrounded when our churches condemned those two doctrinal statements of his. Our judgment of them was based entirely on the Word of God and our Reformed Confessions. This is black and white in the minute book of Classis East that condemned those statements, a copy of which was presented to De Wolf and his elders by a committee of Classis as De Wolf well remembers. Though I would agree that it is difficult to remain objective when you see the very foundations of one's church threatened, De Wolf should never say that we were merely subjective in our reasonings and that they were wholly ungrounded.

But De Wolf's main objection is against stereotyped theology. In fact he maintains that all of our suspicions and actions were controlled by a one-man rule and a one-man theology. He writes: "To be distinctively P. R. meant, therefore, to be unconditionally and unreservedly in complete agreement with the opinions of the Rev. Hoeksema Let anyone disagree with a theological opinion of this one man and he was informed in no uncertain terms that he was not P. R. Today we laugh at such child's play, but there was a time when this accusation struck fear in one's heart. I am thankful to God that He has delivered us from all of this."

I just want to remind De Wolf that these thoughts never came up in his heart until the sinful desire arose within him to become bigger than the one man whose theology he claims we are "unconditionally and unreservedly in agreement with." I do not think I miss by much when I say that De Wolf is very much like another minister of his group who said: "Rev. Hoeksema forgets that we (ministers) have grown up and no longer wear knee breeches." They fail to gratefully acknowledge and give thanks to God for the gifts and talents He has given to the church in Rev. Hoeksema. They forget that in the historical development of doctrine God is pleased to raise up men to whom He gives special gifts of knowledge and leadership. Calvin, whom De Wolf quotes without reference, was one of them. H. De Cock and A. Kuyper were others.

De Wolf felt that he said too much, for he interjects: "But is the theology of one man to be condemned, then, simply because it is the theology of one man? Of course not. That is not my contention in the least Although, therefore, a one-man theology is not be condemned simply because it is the theology of one man, it is, nevertheless, very dangerous to exalt a certain theologian above all his contemporaries and

predecessors To presume, as we have in the past and as those who have taken issue with us still do in the present, that one man is qualified to speak authoritatively on all theological issues, to correct all theologians of the past, to censure all opinions of present theologians and to discard theological terminology which has been a part of the Reformed vocabulary for hundreds of years, is tantamount to elevating such a man to the virtual position of pope. This is what the Roman Catholic Church does in very fact. The result is a stereotyped theology."

What De Wolf really meant to say was: "I have no objection to following the theology of one man, but that man must not be Rev. Hoeksema." And why does De Wolf say this? Simply because there was no other man in all our churches who so thoroughly undressed him with Scripture and the Confessions to lay bare the heresy he was and still is promoting. O, how this man is hated for his clear insight into the Scriptures and his keen ability to detect whatever smells of being un-Reformed!

De Wolf gives his readers two or three examples to show how our theology became stereotyped, and how we became subjected to it. He writes: "Our people are afraid of the word 'offer' because in their thinking that word has received a definite connotation due to the exclusive definition which this stereotyped theology has ascribed to it" Is it De Wolf's contention that Rev. Hoeksema has made us afraid of the word "offer" in the sense in which the Christian Reformed Church uses it in the first of the Three Points? Did he never read what Rev. De Boer, who is now schismatic with him, wrote in the *Standard Bearer* some nineteen years ago about this word and how we and the Chr. Ref. Church differ in its use? Did De Boer get his conception from Hoeksema or Calvin? Or, does De Wolf also condemn what De Boer wrote then? Or, is this De Wolf's way of telling the Chr. Ref. Church how much he would like to sit down with them and talk about the term "offer"? I'm beginning to believe that De Wolf was stereotyped, not our theology.

Another example of our stereotyped theology, according to De Wolf, is our conception of the covenant. And a third example he uses is our understanding of the word "condition." I do not have the space to comment on these examples but suffice it to say that he does not want our conception of the covenant and surely not our criticism of the word "condition" which he and his group love so well.

Frankly, I declare to all who will read this that there is no theologian living or dead who has developed the conception of the Covenant of God as has the Rev. H. Hoeksema. De Wolf knows this too if he would only admit it. Or, does De Wolf now know of another theologian or group of theologians who have developed a better conception, one that is more Reformed and Scriptural? I am sure that he cannot mention one, beginning from the time of Calvin to the present. It is rather amusing to hear one who has had such little

theological training and back-ground make such sweeping statements as De Wolf makes in his editorial.

It is only natural that he does not like what Hoeksema says about the term "condition." It was especially De Wolf's error that he defended and still does this term which our Reformed fathers put in the mouth of the Arminian.

Just a word or two in closing. My dictionary defines the word "stereotype" in its figurative use as meaning: to fix firmly or unalterably. When De Wolf applied this to our theology it meant that our theology is fixed firmly or unalterably. Will De Wolf show us from Scripture and our Confessions how our theology must be cast aside or changed? I, for one, would be pleased to have him show me. But I must have nothing of his evil aspersions, nor of his philosophy.

It is rather revealing when De Wolf charges a man with "weakness and sin" without once mentioning his weakness and sin, but instead casting evil aspersions on his theology. No man addicted to stereotyped theology, least of all the stereotyper, can be hurt by this kind of criticism. But De Wolf is independent now. He does not belong to a church which has any set doctrine or Church Order. So I suppose he may think and write as he pleases, and no one will do anything about it.

M.S.

IN MEMORIAM

Our Society extends its sincere sympathy to Mrs. Isaac Korhorn in the death of her sister,

MRS. FLORENCE KORHORN

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

The Ruth Ladies' Aid Society of the
Hope Prot. Ref. Church,

Rev. H. Hanko, President
Mrs. A. Engelsma, Vice-Secretary

AS THOU, O LORD, HAST MADE ME STRONG

As Thou, O Lord, hast made me strong
To overcome my mighty foe,
So now to fight against the wrong
And conquer in Thy Name I go.

Jehovah lives, and blest is He,
My rock, my refuge and defense,
My Savior who delivers me,
And will the wicked recompense.

To David, His anointed king
And to his sons upon his throne,
The Lord will great salvation bring
And ever make His mercy known.

Psalm 18: 1, 3, 5

THE DAY OF SHADOWS

(Continued from page 442)

ground for omitting it. Verse 9, "Thus spake Jehovah of hosts saying," introduces the words that were spoken by the former prophets to past generations. And the words are these, "*The judgment of truth judge, and kindness and compassion show every man to his brother: and widow and orphan and stranger and poor man do not oppress; and evil against his brother let none of you conceive in his heart.*" These are the requirements of the Lord. In a word, they shall love one another. Such has been the word of the Lord to all the generation of the past. Love one another. It is the second of the two commandments on which hang all the law and the prophets. For how shall they refrain from oppressing the defenceless members of their community, such as the widow and the orphan, if they do not love? And how shall they refrain from planning evil each against his brother, if they do not love?

But they—the fathers—refused to hearken. Like the ox that refuses to have the yoke put on his neck, they offered a rebellious shoulder. They made heavy their ears and their heart like an adamant stone, so that no impression could be made, that they might not hear the law, the instruction and words of Jehovah sent by His Spirit and the former prophets. Then came great wrath which was revealed in judgments. And when the fathers cried for help and deliverance Jehovah would not hear them seeing that they did not hear, when He had cried. And he whirled them among the nations whom they knew not—the Assyrians and the Chaldeans, who, as strangers, had no compassion. After they were scattered the land became desolate. The country became so waste that no traveler ventured to pass through it. And so they made the land of desire a desolation—they, not the enemies but the inhabitant, the fathers through their disobedience and rebellion.

These verses teach that the present generation will be overtaken by identical judgments, if they take a similar attitude. They shall love one another. But how shall they love except they be born again from above? In other words, how shall they love, except the love of the Father be in them?

And shall they weep, they the born-again men in the community, the Israel according to the election of grace? They do weep and will continue to weep as long as they find themselves chained to the body of this death from which they fain would be delivered. For their desire is to live perfectly according to all God's commandments. But what they would they do not and what they hate that they do. And therefore they weep. But they also rejoice in the certain knowledge that all their sins are forgiven them of God for Christ's sake and that when He appears they shall appear with Him in glory.

There is a weeping that is indeed precious in God's sight.
G.M.O.

THE PROPER USE OF THE TERM "CONDITION"

(Continued from page 452)

If we were to speak of "conditions" at all, it would necessarily be in that sense, placing the conditionality or contingency *solely in God*. God is the absolute Sovereign, and we are utterly dependent upon Him, even in every conceivable way. Every cause, condition, pre-requisite or contingency rest entirely in Him. He must grant regeneration, conversion, faith, justification, sanctification, preservation, joy, peace, blessedness, and every other gift. And through all those gifts He must bestow upon us our final glorification.

But again it must be granted, that to express all this the Canons felt no need to employ the term "condition." Nor can it be said that the term "condition" expresses this truth better and more comprehensively than such terms as the Canons employs, namely, cause, gifts, means, or fruits. We certainly lose nothing in the preaching by avoiding it. To say that God is the sole cause, and election is the fountain of our salvation, is a truth of inestimable comfort to the believer. To say that God's gifts are His sovereign means to our final perfection is our constant peace. To say that He Who works the fruits of grace in us will also finish all that He has begun, does not make anyone careless and profane, but affords perfect assurance for the believer.

And since the Arminian so sorely needs, and so freely uses the term to bolster and propagate his error also in our day, we are safe and avoid all misunderstanding by simply refusing to use it in connection with all that pertains to our salvation.
C.H.

THE HEAVENS DECLARE THY GLORY

The spacious heavens declare
The glory of our God,
The firmament displays
His handiwork abroad;
Day unto day proclaims His might,
And night His wisdom tells to night.

Aloud they do not speak,
They utter forth no word,
Nor into language break,
Their voice is never heard;
Yet thro' the world the truth they bear
And their Creator's power declare.

The clouds of heaven are spread,
A tent to hold the sun,
And like a bridegroom fair
Comes forth the mighty one,
Rejoicing in his strength and grace
To run his wondrous daily race.

Psalms 19:1-3