

THE STANDARD

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MEDITATION

A QUESTING OFFSPRING

"And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean you by this service? that ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of Jehovah's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when He smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped. And the children of Israel went and did so; as Jehovah had commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they. Exodus 12:26-28.

Today I would like to say something about the children of the church.

The children's part in the church of our Lord is very important.

The greatest part of the church at any time are the children.

The children are the confessing church of tomorrow.

As we treat them now will determine their estate tomorrow.

They compose more than 55% of the church at any time, with the two exceptions of the period when Adam and Eve were childless, and also when eight souls were saved by water at the time of the deluge.

* * * *

Israel stood at the threshold of their deliverance out of the house of bondage.

And together with the sacrifice of the passover, the Lord gave a message concerning the children, who stood more than a million strong roundabout their parents, their loins girded, their shoes on their feet, and their staff in their hand, eating the passover lamb in haste.

God knew the questioning in the heart of more than one million children.

And He gave commandment regarding this questing offspring.

God knew that the great question in the heart of the children, more often than not, unspoken: What is the meaning of all this?

And the answer is given in our text.

* * * *

This offspring is very peculiar.

First of all, from all eternity.

God determined and saw the church of all the ages as a unity, composed of men, women *and children*.

He called Himself often the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The one is father and grandfather, the other is son and father, the third is the son and grandson.

That's the way God saw His church at any time in history.

Therefore we hear often that God speaks of My children which you have born unto Me!

They are very peculiar children also subjectively, for the Lord gives them usually the grace and Holy Spirit of Christ in their earliest infancy, and brings them in contact with His Word as soon as they can hear with their natural hearing. They hear the Bible read and spoken about when they are very little. Long before they go to school they see their parents take a little piece of bread, and a sip of wine; they see little babies baptized in the church . . . and wonder.

At the time of my text, the children heard father make the tally of the souls of the family. In some instances they heard the parents talk to the neighbour: will you share with me in the sacrificial lamb? We are too few for a lamb.

Today we do no longer sacrifice the lambs, either of the sheep or the goats. But we have the service of the Word and the sacraments.

It is striking that the Lord speaks of this questioning in the heart of the child at the occasion of the passover. Striking, because it is the very heart of all religion both for time and eternity. The bleeding Lamb shall stand in the midst of the throne of God for all eternity. And also today it is true that we determine to know nothing but Christ crucified.

The occasion of my text is the heart of all religion and service of God.

And also the fulfilment of my text is the heart of our religion, that is, the cross of Jesus Christ.

I can see in my mind the questioning look of these thousands and thousands of children. They look on the roasted lamb, the bitter sauce, the herbs, the wine. They wonder about this haste, and this apparel of the traveler and sojourner.

Some of them speak: What mean you with this service?

* * * *

The same thing happens today, and at every age.

No, we do not slaughter animals. The shedding of blood came to an end when Jesus' heart broke, and His blood was shed for our sins.

But we act very peculiarly, just as Israel did in that night of their exodus.

And the children see and hear this peculiar deportment on our part. Not only because of our actions as such, but especially as an antithesis to the deportment of the majority of the sons and daughters of Adam.

Egypt killed no lamb; neither did they strike the blood of the sacrifice on the posts of the doors.

Egypt was entirely satisfied to stay in Egypt. They were not going to be strangers and sojourners to some beautiful land flowing with milk and honey.

So also today.

Our children see at an early age that the majority of people do not go to church, do not pray to God, do not have their eyes raised to heaven. Instead they hear them cursing the name which father and mother love and revere.

And there is more.

They see many different church denominations.

Father and mother go to a little despised church, traveling sometimes miles and miles past the very doors of other churches.

Father, mother, what mean you with this strange behaviour?

Why are we Protestant Reformed? Why must we travel so far to Hope school? Why don't we attend the school right near our door?

Why do you stress election and reprobation? Your speech, father, is different from the usual sounds around us. We notice that many, many people smile at our behaviour. They think we are rather foolish.

* * * *

It is in the nature of a child to question.

In fact, a child is a walking question mark.

That's true whether you are a heathen or a Christian. All children wonder about the things of the Universe.

They also do about your and my behaviour. As Protestant Reformed people.

The answer is education.

God wants the confessing church always to be busy answering the baptized church.

And God be thanked, He has supplied the answer.

And the answer holds for all the ages. All we have to do is to take our text and put it in the New Testament garb.

* * * *

You must give and you do give the answer.

You answer the questioning heart and soul of your children whether you speak or whether you give the right or the wrong answer.

And you are responsible to God for your answer too.

Your answer includes the Christian School, the catechism, the societies, the friends and companions, and the church worship. They are all *your answer*. Basically they are your answer. Such is the office of the believer.

That is very plain.

You determine where you live, where you worship, and where your children attend school, go to catechism, etc. You, and only you determine that.

You give the answer, always.

It grows "benauwd."

* * * *

Dear reader, God has prepared the adequate answer for you.

It is in my text.

And it is striking that the God-given answer is exactly what our fathers called the "heart of the church": election and reprobation.

Study the answer, and you will see that I am correct.

God said: when your children ask you and say: What mean you with this bleeding lamb, and your haste to travel east and north? It is the sacrifice of Jehovah's passover!

There is more, but this is the heart of all religion, worship, service of God!

Jehovah sacrifices! Jehovah is the Only One who ever sacrificed!

All those bleeding lambs, evoking the questions of the children, are pictures of God and His blood that is shed on the cross of Golgotha.

All that haste to travel to heaven, excuse me, to Canaan, is the urge of God, of the Holy Ghost in the hearts of the fathers and the mothers of Israel.

The sacrifice of the passover!

That name PASSOVER has a charm that makes the heart sing forever and ever. He passed over the houses. Because of the blood. Because of the bleeding lamb.

I ask you in all sincerity: where is man's part? Where is Israel's part? Where are the conditions? Where are the works that brings Canaan as a land to dwell in?

Later, but not much later, we listen to Moses who grasped the heavenly answer: Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord!

Very much later we hear Paul's echo: But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

* * * *

Give that answer to your children always.

Tell them that God did a wonderful work when we were the slaves of Egypt and of Pharaoh, when we were black with bondage, when there was no way out.

Tell them that the sacrifice of the Lord's passover is Jesus.

Tell them that this work of God is twofold: He smote the Egyptians, but delivered our houses. It is the Old Testament version of reprobation and election. Can anyone deny it?

And by the grace of Almighty God the people will bow the head and worship.

Oh, even that bowing of the head and that worshipping, that doing what Moses and Aaron commanded is of the Lord.

For we are rebellious people. God have mercy! Amen.
G.V.

Notice of Annual Meeting

The Annual Membership meeting of the REFORMED FREE PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION will be held Thursday evening, Sept. 26th, in our First Prot. Ref. Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

* * *

We urge all our brethren who cherish the welfare of The Standard Bearer to attend this important meeting. In addition to a pleasant opportunity thus offered for an evening of fellowship with your brethren who love our Protestant Reformed truth, come out this last Thursday of the month to hear our beloved Reverend Herman Hoeksema speak on the subject, "The Standard Bearer and the Years Ahead."

* * *

Also the annual reports will be heard. Election of three brethren to serve a term on the board will occur from the following nomination: Messrs. R. Bloem, H. Brands, Jr., G. E. Bylsma, A. Langerak, J. F. Timmer, H. Veldhouse.

Refreshments will be served!

* * *

Don't miss this 8 o'clock meeting, September 26th.

—BOARD OF THE R. F. P. A.
Albert Heemstra, Secretary

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EDITORIALS

The Free Offer

Are the gifts bestowed by God, in this present time, a revelation of His love and mercy to them?

Such is the contention of Murray and Stonehouse in their pamphlet "The Free Offer." We were busy examining, in the light of Scripture, whether this is the truth according to God's own revelation or whether this is merely their own philosophy. This discussion we will now continue.

Practically all the psalms, and not only the few references to which we called your attention in our last article, give the lie to the contention that in the gifts which God bestows on the ungodly in the present world He reveals an attitude of lovingkindness and mercy to them. I dare say that the psalms are always antithetical: they express that God loves the righteous and hates the ungodly. Nor does the prosperity of the wicked signify that, at least for the present, God means to reveal to them His favor. The very opposite is true: by the very gifts the Lord bestows upon the ungodly He intends to lead them to destruction. This is the teaching of all the psalms.

No less, however, is this the case with the book of Proverbs.

If the psalms of Scripture may be said to be antithetical throughout, the proverbs in the Bible are no less so. In fact, we may even express this more strongly and maintain that these proverbs are intentionally and very emphatically put in antithetical form so that they very clearly express that God loves the righteous and causes all things to work together for their good and that He hates the wicked even when He bestows upon them the things of this present time.

Just a few passages from this book of Proverbs will be sufficient to prove this.

In Prov. 3:32, 33 we read: "For the froward is abomination to the Lord: but his secret is with the righteous. The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked: but he blesseth the habitation of the just." Notice the contrast in both these verses: the froward, who is stubborn in his wickedness, and the righteous, who loves the precepts of the Lord; abomination, so that is an abominable thing in the sight of the Lord, a thing which he abhors, and the secret, which means that the Lord dwells with the righteous and has secret or familiar intercourse with him. Again, in verse 33, the house of the wicked, a mere building in which the Lord does not dwell; and the habitation of the righteous, because the Lord dwells there with His fellowship, His grace and blessing; in the house of the wicked, who must have nothing

of God and His precepts, God is with His curse, no matter how that house may be full of riches and things of this present time; but the habitation of the righteous He blesses be that habitation ever so poor and humble.

Such is evidently, the meaning of this passage. And I challenge Murray and Stonehouse to show how in that house of the wicked the blessing and favor of the Lord can dwell together with His curse.

In Prov. 10:2, 3, we read: "Treasures of wickedness profit nothing: but righteousness delivereth from death. The Lord will not suffer the soul of the righteous to famish: but he casteth away the substance of wicked." I ask: those treasures of wickedness, which are undoubtedly great and rich, and which the wicked enjoy for the present time, are they a proof of the favor of God, even though, as the rest of the text plainly shows, it is in the way of death that the wicked enjoy them? And again, when the Lord finally casts away the substance of the wicked so that he perishes, does He do this after He first bestowed this substance upon the wicked in His favor and lovingkindness? Is the Lord changeable? It is evident that these two verses teach the very opposite.

The same truth is taught in vs. 24-32 of the same chapter: "The fear of the wicked, it shall come upon him: but the desire of the righteous shall be granted. As the whirlwind passeth so is the wicked no more: but the righteous is an everlasting foundation. As vinegar to the teeth, and as smoke to the eyes, so is the sluggard to them that send him. The fear of the Lord longeth days; but the years of the wicked shall be shortened. The hope of the righteous shall be gladness: but the expectation of the wicked shall perish. The way of the Lord is strength to the upright: but destruction shall be to the workers of iniquity. The righteous shall never be removed: but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth. The mouth of the just bringeth forth wisdom: But the froward tongue shall be cut out. The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable: but the mouth of the wicked speaketh frowardness." Also in these verses there is always the same contrast between the righteous and the wicked. Also there is the same constant attitude of God expressed in these verses: He favors and blesses the righteous only, but He hates the wicked and sends him to destruction.

The same note is sounded throughout the book of Proverbs.

Just let me quote a few more passages.

First of all this: "A naughty person, a wicked man, walketh with a froward mouth. He winketh with his eyes, he speaketh with his feet, he teacheth with his fingers; frowardness is in his heart, he deviseth mischief continually; he soweth discord continually." 6:12-15.

Now, according to the authors of "The Free Offer" the Lord assumes an attitude of favor and lovingkindness to

such a wicked person in this present life. But that this is false is evident from what follows in the same text: "Therefore shall his calamity come suddenly; suddenly shall he be broken without remedy." This implies, of course, that the Lord hates this wicked person during his entire life and walk in this present time; and that He allows him to walk in his wicked way, without grace, until he is ripe for final destruction.

The same is true of what follows immediately: "These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: a proud look, a lying tongue and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among his brethren." 6:16-19.

Would even the authors of "The Free Offer" dare to maintain that the Lord looks with favor upon such a proud man, such a liar and murderer, whose is filled with wicked imaginations, such as always runs to evil, that offers false testimony in court and disrupts the relation among his brethren? O, it is easy to speak in a general and abstract way of the wicked and depraved sinner and then to teach the false philosophy that God looks down with favor upon the ungodly. But the moment you picture him concretely as Scripture does here, you feel that this is impossible.

Yet, this is the whole truth. The natural man, the man that stands outside of the grace of God in Christ, is exactly as he is concretely described in the above verses. For this reason, I claim that there is no grace, favor or lovingkindness of God outside of Christ.

Let me quote a few more passages from this same book of Proverbs.

"Treasurers of wickedness profit nothing: but righteousness delivereth from death. The Lord will not suffer the soul of righteous to famish: but he casteth away the substance of the wicked. He becometh poor that dealeth a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich . . . Blessings are upon the head of the just: but violence covereth the mouth of the wicked." 10:2-6.

Also the following:

"The fear of the Lord prolongeth days: but the years of the wicked shall be shortened. The hope of the righteous shall be gladness: but the expectation of the wicked shall perish. The way of the Lord is strength to the upright: but destruction shall be to the workers of iniquity. The righteous shall never be removed: but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth. The mouth of the just bringeth forth wisdom: but the froward tongue shall be cut out. The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable: but the mouth of the wicked speaketh frowardness." 10:27-32.

In all these verses the contrast between the righteous and the wicked, the just and the unjust, the wise and the froward is very sharply drawn. It is also very clear what is the attitude of the Lord over against them both: the former are the objects of His favor and lovingkindness and they are blessed; the latter are to Him an abomination and they are cursed. Now, who are these righteous and just; and who are these wicked? The former are those that are the objects of God's sovereign grace. They are not in the first place the objects of the favor of God because they are righteous and walk in righteousness before God although is true, of course. But, principally, it is just the other way: they are the objects of God's favor and lovingkindness and grace sovereignly, from all eternity. They are those, and those only, whom God beheld and always beholds in Christ Jesus. Who died for their sins and rose for their justification. They are those whom God, in time, ingrafts in Christ Jesus, so that they live in and from Him. Thus they become and are actually righteous. All their righteousness, legal and spiritual-ethical, is in and from Him alone. These are the only righteous there are. They are the righteous that are always meant in Scripture, also in the book of Proverbs. And who are the unjust and wicked? All men that are outside of Christ. For by nature they are all totally depraved. No man is good and the object of God's favor in himself.

This, too, is the plain testimony of Holy Writ. For thus we read in Rom. 3:9-18:

"What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles that they are all under sin: As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are altogether become unprofitable: there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes."

Such is the testimony of Scripture throughout.

All men, without exception are unrighteous and wicked, both Jews and Gentiles.

Our conclusion, therefore, is, on the basis of Scripture: 1. That God favors and loves the righteous and hates the wicked and that, too, in time and eternity. 2. That the righteous are those that are in Christ Jesus, and they only. 3. That all the rest of men, all that are outside of Christ, are wicked and cannot be the objects of His favor.

We have still more proof from Scripture. But this must wait till our next issue.

H.H.

OUR DOCTRINE

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

CHAPTER XII

THE VISION OF THE SEALED BOOK

Revelation 5

So then, the Lamb is found worthy to open the book. That means that Christ received all power to develop and to complete the kingdom, and to control all forces that rise against it in this present dispensation. Is it a wonder that the entire new economy of things as they are pictured in heaven breaks out in praise and adoration of Him that sits on the throne and of the Lamb? "And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." The creatures and the elders, that is, the representatives of the church and of the redeemed creation, take the lead in this heavenly choir. They come to acknowledge the dominion of Christ Jesus and the worthiness on His part to open the book, to bring the kingdom of God to perfection. They do so, in the first place, by falling down before Him. Just as the elders fell down before Him that sits upon the throne in the preceding chapter, in order to acknowledge that He is absolutely sovereign and that they had no independent dominion, so now the representatives of the church and of all the redeemed world acknowledge that Christ is King by falling down before Him because He has taken the book. They come and fall down before the Lamb, having harps and golden bowls of incense, representing the prayers of the saints. The harp in Scripture is the instrument which is symbolical of the prophetic office. In I Samuel 10:5 we read that Samuel informs Saul that he will meet a band of prophets carrying harps. When, in II Kings 3, we are told about the request of the kings of Israel, Judah, and Edom, warring against the Moabites, that Elisha the prophet may give them counsel, we read that the prophet calls for a minstrel to play for him. In I Chronicles 25:1-3 we read that David set apart the sons of Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun, who should prophesy with the harp and other instruments. And in Psalm 49:4 we read: "I will open my dark sayings upon the harp." The harp, therefore, is symbolic of the prophetic office in the highest sense of the word, namely, to adore and glorify God Almighty with our lips. The golden bowls of incense are explained by the text itself. Incense is

the symbol of the priestly office. It was the priest that above all burned incense before Jehovah on the altar of incense and when he appeared in the holy place. This is again in full harmony with the symbolical significance of the incense. It symbolizes the prayers of the saints, to present which was the office of the priests. And these prayers are, of course, especially the expression of devotion and consecration to God. The highest purpose and the highest idea of prayer is not that it is an expression of our needs, but rather in the highest sense of the word it is the expression of our devotion and consecration to the Lord our God, — the laying of ourselves in love upon His altar, even as sweet incense, pleasing unto Him. So these creatures and so these elders come here to acknowledge the kingly dominion of Christ. And therefore they fall down and glorify His name with their lips. Hence, they each have a harp; and they come to express their consecration to Him. And for the same reason they have golden bowls of incense, filled with the prayers of the saints.

And they sing a new song. This song is new because it is different in kind from any song ever sung before. Its subject is different. The object of its adoration is different. The original song of creation sang the glory of God Triune because He had made all things and was worthy to receive the honor and glory and the power forever. But this song is new. It is also a song of adoration, but not to God immediately and directly, but to the Lamb, and through the Lamb to Him. The Lamb that has been slain, now holds the book with its seven seals. It means, therefore, that He will do battle and that He will have the ultimate victory, to establish the kingdom of God in glory. For this all creation gives Him glory and honor. They sing: "Thou art worthy to open the book." What a contrast! A moment ago all creation was silent, and John lay weeping because no one could open the book. Here the Lamb is praised and glorified, for He is found worthy to open the book. Thus it is in reality. The world in all its struggles, outside of the Lamb that was slain, is bound to suffer defeat, and will ultimately have to acknowledge that the Lamb only has the victory. A new song, therefore, this is, for the object of adoration is the Lamb. But a new song it is also because of the contents. It does not merely speak of creation; it speaks of glorious redemption: "For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." It is the song that glorifies the Lamb for His work of redemption. But at the same time, and through this glorification of the Lamb, it adores the incomprehensible grace of God, Who gave His only begotten Son that He might bear our sins on the accursed tree. It is a song of victory. For it mentions that the Lamb has made the saints to be kings and priests unto God, and that they reign upon the earth. Now they are already a kingdom in principle, for the kingdom of God has been established spiritually even in this dispensation. But the completion of the kingdom is assured. For the book has been taken out of the hand of

Him that sitteth on the throne. When that book shall be opened by Him that is worthy, the kingdom shall be perfected. And therefore, after the book has been taken and the future of the kingdom secured, after it has been ascertained that the Lamb shall bring the kingdom to final perfection, these creatures and elders speak as if the whole were already accomplished. Once more, it is the picture of the perfected creation which we see here. Already Christ has made them priests and a kingdom. Already they reign with Him on the earth.

But this song resounds and rebounds through creation, so that more and still more creatures appear to give glory to Christ Jesus. They are myriads of angels, ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands. And they also join in the song of the creatures and elders. And with seven-fold glory adoring the Lamb, they sing: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." Seven-fold is this adoration. The Lamb is worthy to receive all the power and the glory of the kingdom over which He shall reign forevermore. But even this is not all. Finally all creation joins together. No creature can keep silence at this glorious occasion, now that the victory is assured and the coming of the kingdom safely rests in the hand of the Lion of Judah's tribe. Wider and wider the circles become, and the voices and shouts and music, all of adoration, join together and blend into one great harmonious song, the song of the new creation, the new song glorifying God and the Lamb, and saying: "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." Glory to God and the Lamb! Such is the contents of the new song. For we are of Christ, and Christ is God's. God shall be all and in all through the Lamb that was slain. God through the Lamb shall in the eternal and glorious future, when the book shall have been completely opened to its last leaf and seal, be the song of creation. Because the Lamb was slain, and in the slain Lamb the eternal and incomprehensible grace, holiness, and righteousness of Him that sitteth upon the throne was revealed in the highest sense of the word, God and the Lamb, — God through the Lamb, — is therefore the subject of this new song. At this song all the creatures represented by the four living creatures shall say, "Amen, even so." And at this song the elders shall fall down, and all the redeemed of God shall worship. Such is the picture, a picture of overwhelming beauty and glory. It is a picture which we can but very inadequately represent in words. But it is a picture the reality of which will still surpass our boldest expectation. That kingdom shall surely come. Seal after seal shall be broken, till the kingdom shall have been perfected. But it will come only through the power of the Lamb that has been slain. In the church, therefore, only the crucified Jesus will be known and recognized, and only those that believe in Him shall never be ashamed.

CHAPTER 13

THE FOUR HORSEMEN

Revelation 6:1-8

1. *And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.*
2. *And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering and to conquer.*
3. *And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see.*
4. *And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.*
5. *And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.*
6. *And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.*
7. *And when he had opened the fourth seal. I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see.*
8. *And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.*

Now the Lamb is in possession of the book with its seven seals, and commences to open it, breaking the seals one after another. In the opening of the seven seals we have approached the discussion of the things that were designated in the first chapter of the book as "the things that must come to pass hereafter." We are perhaps aware of the fact that the phenomenon of the seven seals and the record of their being opened by the Lamb constitutes at the same time all that is contained in the rest of the Book of Revelation, except for the fact that we meet with several interludes that have been inserted for various reasons. We are also perhaps acquainted with the further fact that the seven seals do not retain throughout their character as seals, but that the seventh seal is revealed a seven trumpets, the seventh of which later again dissolves and becomes manifest as the seven vials of the wrath of God.

H.H.

THE DAY OF SHADOWS

The Prophecy of Isaiah

Chapter 9:10b-13

And he shall speak peace to the nations, and his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth. 11. As for thee also, for the sake of thy covenant blood, I send forth thy prisoners from the pit wherein is no water. 12. Return to the stronghold, O prisoners of hope, Even today I declare I will pay double for you. 13. For I bend for me Judah, fill the bow with Ephraim, and stir up thy sons, O Javan, and make thee like the sword of a hero.

10b, Zion's king shall speak peace to the heathen. This is not the only place in which mention is made of proclaiming peace to the heathen. The first of Moses' final addresses to the people of Israel encamped in the plains of Moab contains this passage, "When thou comest nigh unto a (heathen) city to fight against it, then proclaim peace unto it. And it shall be, if it make thee answer of peace, and open unto thee, then it shall be that all the people that is found therein shall be tributaries unto thee, and they shall serve thee. And if they will make no peace with thee, but will make war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it: and when the Lord thou God shall deliver it into thy hands, thou shalt smite every man thereof with the edge of the sword. But the women and the little ones and the cattle and all that is in the city, even all the spoil therein, shalt thou take unto thyself; and thou shalt eat the spoil of thine enemies, which the Lord thy God hath given thee. Thus shalt thou do unto all the cities which are far off from thee, which are not of the cities of these nations" (Deut. 20:10-15).

The cities of which this passage makes mention were inhabited by heathen. To these peoples peace had to be proclaimed. Just what had the message of peace to them to be? The above-cited passage makes it clear that it had to be a mandate to the effect that they believe Israel's God and serve His people in order that they might live and not be destroyed.

But on the other hand, there is also this word of God to Moses in the plains of Moab by Jordan near Jericho, "Speak unto the children of Israel and say unto them, When ye pass over Jordan into the land of Canaan, then ye shall drive out the inhabitants of the land before you" (Num. 30). So in Deut. 7:2, "And when the Lord thy God shall deliver them before thee, thou shalt smite them and utterly destroy them," and finally in Deut. 20:16, 17, "But of the cities of these people that the Lord thy God doth give thee for an inheritance, thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth; but shalt utterly destroy them as the Lord thy God commanded thee: that they teach you not to do after all their abominations, which they have done unto their gods; so shall ye sin against the Lord your God."

In these passages not a word is said of proclaiming peace unto the heathen. The mandate is simply that they be utterly destroyed. But in Deut. 20:10-15 the instructions are that peace be proclaimed unto them, and that, if they make answer of peace, they be saved alive.

This disagreement falls away in the light of the following consideration. First the difference between Canaan's so-called ideal boundaries and the actual limits of the holy land. The Canaan that was divided among the twelve tribes was comparatively small. Its approximate length was but 160 miles, and its breadth but 50, which did not include the territory occupied by the two and a half tribes east of the Jordan. This was Israel's proper inheritance. In this small strip of land the Lord planted His people. When the people of Israel under the leadership of Joshua were standing at the border of this land, it was infested by races of men — the Canaanites — that through the previous four centuries had been filling up their measure of iniquity. And so, being now ripe for judgment they had to be utterly destroyed. Such was the Lord's mandate to His people as recorded in the passages quoted above. As a people the Canaanites were reprobated and therefore no peace might be proclaimed unto them. Nor did they desire peace. Not one of their cities made peace with the children of Israel save the inhabitants of Gibeon. So we are told at Joshua 2:19. The sacred writer continues, "For it was of the Lord to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them, as the Lord commanded Moses."

Canaan typified the new earth. And so the extirpation of its doomed inhabitants was preindicative of the final judgment, when this whole earth will be cleansed from the race of men that now corrupt it; and, as so cleansed and glorified it will be given to the meek of the earth, Abraham and His chosen seed.

This brings us to the Canaan of the so-called ideal boundaries. It was much larger by far than Canaan proper. According to the Scriptures, it was an immense region that extended to the Euphrates on the east and to the river Nile on the West and thus included the whole of Arabia. But let us quote here, "In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abraham, saying, Unto thee have I given this land from the river of Egypt (the Nile) to the great river (Euphrates)" (Gen. 15:18). And afterwards to Moses, "And I will set thy bounds from the Red Sea even to the sea of the Philistines (Mediterranean) and from the Arabian desert unto the River (Euphrates)" (Ex. 23:31). And still later, "Every place whereupon the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours, from the wilderness of Lebanon, from the river (Euphrates) even unto the uttermost sea (Mediterranean) shall your coast be" (Deut. 2:24). And finally to Joshua, "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given you, as I said to Moses. From your wilderness to this Lebanon even to the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and the great

sea (Mediterranean) toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast" (Joshua 2:3, 4).

Such were the boundaries of Israel's inheritance. Boundaries they were that included immense regions surrounding the little strip of land, Canaan proper, inhabited by the twelve tribes of Israel. All these vast regions together with the heathen tribes that dwelt therein the Lord by promise had given to Abraham and his seed. So the above-cited scriptures tell us. Nations they were that represented and typified "all the nations of the earth" blessed in Abraham. Not under the ban of God, as were the Canaanites, peace had to be proclaimed unto them. They had to be mandated, exhorted by Israel's armies, when come to their cities, to open to Israel the gates of their cities in the willingness to serve Israel's God in the paying of tribute, that doing so, all would be well with them, but that, disobeying, they would be destroyed.

Such was the instruction of the Lord to Israel with respect to the nations not under the ban of God in the greater Canaan. Peace had to be proclaimed unto their cities. Only if they made answer of war in their unwillingness to be tributary to Israel, had they to be destroyed. Yet it was not the Lord's will that His people initiate war against these heathen, destroying their cities, only because they refused to serve Israel in the paying of tribute. These nations had to offend in another respect. They first had to make war against Israel, which they did in every instance. For they were wicked. There was no fear of God before their eyes. They hated God and were bent on the destruction of His people. Yet, when in their warfare with these heathen in the greater Canaan, Israel drew nigh unto their cities, to fight against them, Israel had first to proclaim peace unto them, commanding and exhorting the inhabitants of their cities to lay down their arms and stop making war against the Lord, in order that they might live and not perish. Such was the law of God for Israel in their warfare with the afore-said nations. Whether this law was always obeyed, is a different question. But whether obeyed or not, it was God's revealed will. It may be supposed that this law was obeyed by David, the Lord's anointed in the holy hill of Zion, in his warfare with these heathen. How many of their cities made to him answer of peace, is not revealed. We do read that, when he had fought his warfare, all his vanquished enemies paid him tribute. But this could be expected, seeing that in his warfare with them, he had broken them in pieces and shattered them like a potter's vessel.

But coming to Solomon, we behold a wonderful thing. Though he waged no war with the heathen, all their cities and kings paid him tribute and served him. He reigned over all the kingdoms from the Euphrates unto the land of the Philistines. The hearts of kings and people were turned of God to serve Solomon, yet not so that this mass of heathen are to be regarded as formed of men reborn. We deal here with types and shadows. David in his throne was type of

Christ and so, too, Solomon. To Christ God said, and eternally said, "Ask of me and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth as thy possession" (Ps. 2:8). This is descriptive of the extent of Christ's kingdom. The boundaries of the typical kingdom of David and Solomon were those of the greater Canaan. This kingdom reached only to the Euphrates river and on the west to the Mediterranean sea. Besides the twelve tribes of Israel it included the nations only in that part of the earth. But Christ's kingdom, of which David's and Solomon's kingdom was type, extends to the four corners of all the earth and includes all nations. So also our prophet tells us. Speaking of Zion's king he says, "And his dominion shall be even from sea to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth" (verse 10).

Such then was the promise to Christ. Accordingly, when through His obedience unto death He had paid for all our sins—the sins of all the nations, heathen from the vantage point of our prophet—God raised him up from the dead and set Him at His own right hand. And what is He now doing in this exalted position? Our prophet tells us. He speaks peace unto the heathen. In the light of what has been presented above this statement can now be fully understood. Through His servants He speaks to the heathen the Gospel of God. This implies, briefly stated, the following. First, that He set before the heathen one and all without exception the salvation that God prepared through Him for His chosen people. Second, that He calls the heathen one and all to repentance, mandating them to forsake their abominations and turn to Christ and be saved. Third, that He promises to all such heathen, who by the power of His redeeming grace come to Him, the forgiveness of all their sins and life everlasting and thereby implanting in their hearts a living hope and the peace that passes all understanding. The peace of which this verse makes mention, as identified with the promises of God, is spoken of Christ only to these penitent and hopeful ones, namely the church of the elect the true Israel.

II. *Even thou,—by thy covenant blood I have sent forth thy prisoners from the pit wherein there is no water.*

The versions have *as for thee*, but the pronoun in the Hebrew is in the masculine singular. Denoted is the church that in verse 9 bears the name *daughter of Zion* and in verse 10 the names *Ephraim* and *Judah*. The verse speaks of a covenant. Denoted is the covenant instituted with Abraham and later with Israel at mount Sinai. For the latter as well as the former was a covenant of grace. As to the phrase *by the blood of thy covenant*, the Hebrew allows also the rendering *in the blood of thy covenant, as sprinkled with it, with the sign and seal of the covenant in thy flesh*. As to the prisoners, they are true sons of the covenant. For in the succeeding verse they are called *prisoners of hope*. Their plight is desperate and great is their distress. For they are captives in a foreign land where they find themselves in

waterless pits. But here, too, our prophet deals in types and shadows. That pit is death, physical, spiritual and eternal death. That pit is hell. It is the place of outer darkness and everlasting torment where all that can be heard is weeping and gnashing of teeth and where the worm never dies. But there is here a promise given, stated as a fact seeing that it is as good as done, "I have freed thy prisoners from the pit." For the sake of His covenant with them; because with the blood of the covenant, which is the blood of Christ, they are sprinkled and thereby baptized into Christ; because He swore by Himself and cannot lie, He shall deliver them from the prison-house of their death. He shall send them forth. It's a promise implying that as yet they still find themselves in the pit only as men saved in principle. But they have the promise and by it they live. And therefore they are not in despair but they hope. And the ingredients of hope are faith, longing, desire and joy.

Verse 12, *Return to the stronghold, O ye prisoners of hope, even today I declare, I will repay you double.*

This exhortation comes not to men dead in sin but to prisoners of hope, to living saints in whom the Lord perpetually works both to will and to do according to His good pleasure and thereby empowers to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, which they do by laying off sin and putting on Christ, by asking that they may receive and seeking that they may find or in the language of this verse, by continually coming out of the pit of sin and death and despair, from which in principle they have been delivered, and returning to the stronghold, the city of God, the new Jerusalem, where Christ is at the right hand of God and where therefore are to be found the things above that these prisoners must be always seeking. It is called a stronghold because God is the walls thereof. It is therefore as strong as God, the Father of Christ, is mighty to save, protect and preserve. Here therefore the prisoners of hope safely dwell seeing that here the thieves cannot break through. Returning to the stronghold today and every day without ceasing they will find that God repays them double. Find they will that where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. Find they will that the sufferings of this present time are not to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us, that thus proportionately the great good that God has in store for His people far surpasses the pain, the agony and all the distress that had to be endured on account of sin. And let there be no doubt about this, for the Lord, Himself, declares it.

The double that the church shall receive at Christ's coming is set forth as a reward. The merit is Christ's, the reward merited a gift of grace to His people.

13. *When I bend for me Judah, fill the bow with Ephraim, and stir up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Javan, and make thee like the sword of a hero.*

The connection between this verse and the foregoing is obvious. The promise that the Lord will reward His people

can only be realized in the way of the destruction of the wicked, of all such who make answer of war to the proclamation of peace to the heathen. There is therefore a fight to be fought, the good warfare of faith that Zion's King, the Christ of God, wages through His church as His organ toward the victory that He merited for her and that is hers in Him. In this and the succeeding verses this victorious warfare is described in a figure bold and beautiful. Judah is the bended bow, Ephraim the arrow that the Lord shoots at the foe, and Zion the sword with which He cuts the foe down. The meaning of the verse is, Judah and Ephraim in this warfare are bow and arrow in the hand of the Lord and Zion the sword. It means that there is but one warrior and that this warrior is the Lord. Judah, Ephraim and Zion — the church — are but implements of war that He has prepared for Himself and handles. There is no power in them. He bends the bow. The arrow flies not of itself but because He shoots it. The warfare is His as is also the victory. His alone is the power and therefore also the glory.

However the church is not a dead thing like a literal sword of iron but a body of living saints mightily stirred up by the Lord against the sons of Javan. Javan is the Hebrew word for Greece, which at that time was a formidable secular power, the Macedonian monarchy, especially in its successor Syria, the Seleucidae. Doubtless therefore the description in the first instance is that of the determined resistance of the believing Jews in Judea to the mad attempt of the maniac Antiochus Epiphanes, the type of the antichrist of this present age, to destroy the faith of the church and impose the abominable and idolatrous worship of the Greeks. It was in these days that the "good report of faith" of which the epistle to the Hebrews speaks (11:36-39) was obtained by many who were tortured, mocked, scourged and even sawn assunder, not accepting deliverance that they might obtain a better resurrection.

But the words of our prophet are descriptive not alone of this one struggle of the church but of her entire warfare of this present age. And this warfare she wages as now armed solely with spiritual weapons — truth as girt about her loins, righteousness as the breastplate, the preparation of the Gospel of peace as the shoes, faith as the shield, salvation as the helmet and the word of God as the sword — and not also as armed with the material implements of war such as literal swords and lances, bows and arrows as was the case in the Old Dispensation, it being the dispensation of shadows. For when Zion's king was exalted at the right hand of the throne, and God poured out of His Spirit upon all flesh, and Zion's king made a commencement of speaking peace unto the heathen, the typical things of the law, including those material implements of war, as weapons of Israel's warfare, waved old and vanished away. The sword of the church is now solely the word of God.

G.M.O.

FROM HOLY WRIT

Exposition of I Corinthians 12-14

X.

(I Corinthians 14:20-22)

In the verses 1-19 Paul has clearly shown that all speaking "with tongues" means absolutely nothing toward the edification of the church when divorced from "prophesying," that is, from the clearly enunciated Word of God, spoken in understandable prose in the church.

Such is the case when the "gift" of speaking with tongues is bonafide in the church. Then it is a gift which the Holy Spirit works in the several members in the church as He wills.

Thus Paul instructed in the first major section of this Chapter.

He will now discuss the entire question of "speaking with tongues" from a more basic standpoint. He will give the rule and standard of all true preaching of the Word in distinction of the mere gibberish of those, who speak a "tongue," which is without the content of the Word of the Cross.

This particular portion reads as follows: "*Brethren, be not children in mind: yet in malice be ye babes, but in mind be men* (of full age). *In the law it is written, by men of strange tongues and by lips of strangers will I speak unto this people; and not even thus will they hear, saith the Lord. Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to the unbelieving: but prophesying is not to the unbelieving, but to them that believe . . .*"

There certainly was something in this entire striving of everyone in Corinth after the gift of "speaking with tongues" which has all the earmarks of spiritual immaturity in the things of God. There was here much of the "flesh." The flesh never has any good in it. And it certainly contained nothing good in regard to the speaking with tongues. The flesh here certainly does all it can to be an obstacle in the way of the preaching of Jesus Christ and Him crucified. For if tongues are not a vehicle of the Holy Spirit then they are simply the fleshly means of imaginary self-exaltation. It only serves unbelief; it cannot possibly serve the working of faith as a full-orbed fruit of the grace of the Holy Spirit.

Hence, Paul says: Cease being "children," that is, those who lack the *matured* understanding of the design and duration of the "spiritual gifts" in the church. Don't be past-masters in "malice." The term "malice" is the english rendering of the greek "Kakia." Kakia is the evil of intending to hurt the brother or sister. To hurt his feelings, to make him envious, to excite unto rivalry, to corrupt the very purpose and intent of the charismata in the church, namely, the benefit of all the members of Christ. These Corinthians

were becoming quite adept at this rivalry. Was there not a rivalry concerning Paul, Apollos, Cephas and even Christ. And was this rivalry concerning gifts not after the same pattern as that of striving about persons, who were preachers of the Word?

All their "mind" (phreen), their intellect, their disposition, their feelings must be that of the adult, to the perfect man in Christ. This means the crucifixion of the flesh with the lusts and desires thereof.

When such is the case their life will be according to the "law." Says Paul "In the *law* it is written." This "law" is not simply the decalogue, the Ten Commandments, but refers to the Old Testament Scriptures. And these Scriptures are profitable to instruction, reproof, correction in righteousness that the man of God be thoroughly furnished unto every good work. Fact is, that we have an instance here in which the term "law" refers to the prophecy of Isaiah. This prophecy too is the norm of life and faith in this world. It is the *regula fidei*. For only those works are good which proceed from a true faith, are performed according to God's law, and are thus performed to the glory of God, and not such as are founded upon the mere childish institutions and attempts of men. To the law and to the prophets, otherwise there shall be no dawn to them, saith the Lord!

Paul will handle the sword of the Spirit!

All the childish imitations of men will be shown up for what they really are!

For the question arises when we read the serious word of the law, namely, "Wherefore tongues are a sign, not to them that believe, but to the unbelieving . . ." whether Paul is not waging a polemic against a fraudulent counterfeit of the true speaking with tongues. This is wholly possible.

For a proper understanding of this entire evil in the church at Corinth we should bear in mind that there was, indeed, a bonafide "speaking with tongues" in the church. On the other hand, there would also come a time, and that not very late after the apostolic age," when the speaking with tongues "shall cease" (13:7). Hence, the question arises whether the "speaking with tongues" in the church at Corinth was bonafide or whether it was mere gibberish.

It should be clearly understood, on the one hand, that there are the explicit references in the Chapters 12-14 from which it is clear that in "the church," the body of Christ, there was such "speaking with tongues." And, therefore, it is wholly conceivable in the abstract, that there was also such speaking with tongues in Corinth. We refer to the following notices from the pen of the Apostle:

1. The speaking with "tongues" is by Paul explicitly placed in the category of "Spiritual Gifts" (charismata) in the church. And these were really and truly "gifts" from heaven, from the Head of the Church, Christ and wrought through the Spirit. "These all worketh that one and the

self-same Spirit, dividing severally to each as He wills" (12:11).

2. Fact is that Paul speaks of "diverse kinds of tongues." There was no uniformity in the "tongues." The Holy Spirit gave to utter each time as *He willed*. It will not do for us to try to establish this speaking. It was certainly not in our languages. It was a unique phenomena. Says R. T. Robertson, "There were variety of tongues—but the gift was essentially an estatic utterance of highly wrought emotion that edified the speaker (14:4) and was intelligible to God (14:2, 28) "And we believe that as to the *content* of this speaking with tongues, it was no different from content of the written word, contained in Holy Scriptures. It was simply an added "sign." Did not God accompany the ministry of the Apostles with signs and wonders? Well, then, such a "sign" must never be "mute" but must be of a *corroborative* nature.

3. Then, too, the fact that these tongues "shall cease" implies that it was a gift, which *as such* was wrought by the Holy Spirit, from the one Lord and one God. It, therefore, certainly had divine sanction. It was always such—this glossology—that it confessed: Jesus is Lord. Only when it served the proclamation of this Christ was it bonafide and not human pretention.

However, when we read this passage attentively, and take notice of Paul's instruction, the conviction grows that not all speaking in Corinth was real and genuine. It did not serve the ministry of the Word whereby faith is wrought into the hearts. It gave the impression rather to the outsider as if these speakers with tongues are raving mad!

Let us notice a few particulars.

1. First of all, we should not overlook the fact, that Paul is still occupied with answering what was a question of some member or members of the congregation in Corinth. They evidently had more in mind when asking this question than a purely academic one. It dealt with a concrete situation. And those, who asked the question were, evidently, not the ones guilty of these abuses. The latter were in no state of mind to ask such information from Paul. It may have been from the house of Chloe. (See 1:11). Confer also Chapter 12:1.

2. The fact that Paul says that gifts "shall cease," simply cease, implies that it is wholly possible that the incident in Corinth shows that such was very really happening in Corinth; that all this excitement in Corinth was simply a human attempt at perpetuating what only God in Christ through the Holy Spirit can possible maintain. When God "ceases" to give such "tongues" they simply are no more. From here on all "tongues" must needs be empty and foolish gibberish, voluble and foolish talk.

3. Then too it should be noticed, that although Paul does not explicitly say so, the impression is certainly left in the entire section, that the amount of real "interpretation" of tongues is nihil in Corinth. To be sure, were the speaking

with tongues a real phenomena of the Spirit, then certainly there would also be an interpretation. For *both* are of God, in Christ the Lord and by the Spirit. God Himself would not give a message in an unknown tongue *in the church* and not give an interpretation with it. For there is also an interpretation of tongues. Otherwise how can the spirit of prophets be subject to prophets in their case?

If the latter be the correct conclusion (it veritably seems to be) then the evil in Corinth on this score was indeed sore, and it requires a rebuke from the "law"!

"It is written" has the precedent over all this gibberish nonsense! For what "is written" is canonical. It contains the rule, the standard of doctrine, life and usages in the church.

Upon a first glance the particular passage in Isaiah 28:11 seems a bit far-fetched. We are inclined to say: true enough, if Paul were speaking to "unbelievers." But he is here speaking to those who are "babes in understanding." However, we will proceed with the prejudice of faith that Paul certainly was writing under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, when he quotes this passage. And, also, that the meaning of the "Spirit" in Isaiah 28 is here interpreted and applied to the situation in Corinth as a "threat and warning." For God confers grace through admonitions. Did not Paul write in I Cor. 10:11, "Now these things happened unto them by way of example; and they were written for *our admonition*, upon whom the ends of the ages are come." And does Paul here not add explicitly, "Wherefore let him that thinketh that he standeth take heed lest he fall." (Verse 12).

With this pedagogical purpose of the "law" in mind, let us pay a bit closer attention to this most interesting and important passage, as quoted from Isaiah 28:11, which speaks of the Lord speaking to "this people" with a strange language and with other lips.

However, this will needs have to wait till the next issue of *The Standard Bearer*.

Meanwhile I suggest to the attentive reader that he take his Bible and read attentively and prayerfully Isaiah 28.

G.L.

Announcement

Classis East of the Protestant Reformed Churches will meet, D.V., Wednesday, October 2, 1957 at 9 A. M. in the Fourth Prot. Ref. Church of Grand Rapids. Delegates of the various churches in this classis will please take note.

M. Schipper, Stated Clerk

IN MEMORIAM

On August 21, 1957, the Lord took unto Himself in glory everlasting our beloved brother

SIMON KOOISTRA

at the age of seventy-one years.

Although our hearts are grieving, we know that the Lord does all things well and that our loss is his gain.

The Kooistra Family.

IN HIS FEAR

Showing the Coming Generation God's Praises

Another summer has quickly passed into history.

Your children are once again attending school.

The State demands of you that, until they reach a certain age, they must continue to receive instruction in reading, writing, arithmetic and its related subjects.

The Living God also has a demand in regard to your children's education which He has made known. He does not in His word declare that you must teach your child to read, to write and to learn to handle figures correctly in addition, subtraction and division as well as in multiplication. But He does insist on the way in which these things — and for that matter, all things that are taught them — shall be presented to your children.

From Genesis through Revelation God's Word makes plain what the calling of the Church is over against its youth in the matter of instruction. A text that expresses it beautifully as a confession of a covenant-conscious member of the Church of Jesus Christ is found in Psalm 78:4. The psalmist is speaking of the truths concerning God which had been taught him as a child by his father. When yet there was no written Word of God that could be possessed by every family and could be referred to for instruction, the Church received that Word orally as handed down from generation to generation. And the psalmist, who had received it as his father handed it down to him in the relating of God's works among His people together with the promises which He gave unto them, breaks forth into a confession of what he and other covenant parents would by God's grace do. He writes, "We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and His strength, and His wonderful works that He hath done."

We will not hide them!

That is strong language; and the implication is that there surely are those who do hide them from their children. There are those *in the Church* that do that. The Psalmist is an Israelite, a member of the Old Testament Church. And he knows full well that there were many in that Old Testament Church who did hide these things from their children. He would not be like them. But he vows unto God that by His grace he will not hide them but instead show them to the generations to come.

There are three things that he declares he will not hide. He will not hide God's praises, His strength and His wonderful works. These are not three unrelated elements con-

cerning the Living God. Instead there is an inner relationship between them. By His strength God performs His wonderful works and so manifests His praises.

His praises!

These must be shown to our children. And His praises are His virtues. They are those goodnesses of God for which He must be praised. A man is praised only for great and good deeds. He is rebuked and blamed for his evil works. For good deeds he is praised. So it is with God; and if we speak the truth concerning Him we will praise Him for *everything* that He does. For He is good and always does good. All His works call for praise.

In the realm of creation all things speak His praise. "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament sheweth forth His handiwork," the psalmist declares in Psalm 19:1. All that we see is brought forth by His strength. All this wide creation and all it contains is one wonderful work of God for which He ought to be praised.

Is that shown to your child? Or is all this creation and that which it contains ascribed to some evolutionistic process by an atheistic, foolish philosophy that goes into detail to explain how all this evolved from an original cell and realizes its own inability to explain from where that original cell came. All this theorizing and philosophizing is rooted in a sinful pride that denies God, His praises. Or even, if your child is not taught this atheistic philosophy of Evolution, are God's praises shown to him? It is not simply a question as to whether in so many words the lie is taught, the question is, Does your child have the truth shown unto him? Perhaps your child is not taught the praises of man in the bluntest form. But are God's praises taught Him? Are all things presented to your children as HIS wonderful works? Are ALL things ascribed to His strength; or is there implied in the silence given to this truth that there is a power beside Him?

Still more — for that is what the Psalmist has in mind — are the praises of God shown your child in that wonderful work of salvation which He has realized in the almighty power of His omnipotent strength? No, no, the question is not whether there is a little scripture reading and maybe an opening and closing prayer in the classroom. It is not at all impossible or difficult to be religious and yet not be christian. It is quite a common thing in our land to add a little religion to education and still not provide a christian education. That which deliberately ignores, minimizes and avoids the wonderful work of God in the cross of His Son and gives instruction apart from it is not christian. All christian instruction centers in and revolves around the truth of God in Christ.

Your child who received the sign and seal of God's covenant in baptism, does he receive instruction day after day,

week after week that sings this praise to God?, "Christ shall have dominion Over land and sea, Earth's remotest regions Shall His empire be; They that wilds inhabit Shall their worship bring, Kings shall render tribute, Nations serve our King." Do not say that history, civics, science, geography, agriculture or for that matter any subject can be taught in ignorance of Him. The moment He is left out of any education, it ceases to be christian education and at that moment sets itself up in the service of the antichrist. For in its essence it is antichristian. It opposes Christ. Whatever does not say and proceed forth from the Scriptural truth that all things are His (Christ's) and that Psalm 72 has already been realized in that God has raised Him to His right hand and crowned Him Lord of lords and King of kings with glory and honor over all things does not praise God but insults Him. It does not show His strength but denies it. It does not display His wonderful works of salvation but hides them from the coming generations. To hide these things is to oppose the Living God Who alone deserves praise and *demands* it.

And if Israel had many wonderful works of God's strength to relate to their children, what more abundant wealth of truth do we not have? The Psalmist speaks of God's works in Egypt. "Marvellous things did He in the sight of their fathers, in the land of Egypt, in the field of Zoan. He divided the sea and caused them to pass through . . ." Psalm 18, verses 12 and 13. He speaks of the water which He brought forth out of the rock. He gave them bread and flesh to eat in the dry and uninhabitable desert. He drove out the heathen and gave His people their land. All these wonderful works were the work of salvation in Christ. It all was His wonderwork of fulfilling all His covenant promises. These were not simply works in the realm of creation. All these were works in the covenant sphere of salvation.

And we? We have the wonderwork of Bethlehem. We have the power of God in the cross and the resurrection. We have that praise of God to relate of Christ now having dominion over land and sea. We have the glorious truth of the ever faithful Covenant God as He gathers His Church from the beginning to the end of the world out of the whole human race.

We will not hide these things from our children!

You say, I send them to Church. I make them learn their catechism lessons and do my best to explain these wonderful works to them. I do not hide them from my children.

Well and good.

But do you put up an iron curtain between their knowledge of God and instruction concerning His works of salvation in Christ and between their knowledge of the world in

which God placed them and to which He sent His Christ with salvation? Is Christ, in your way of thinking, actually put outside of this world after all? The world can have a purpose apart from Him? When it pleased God, as Paul writes to the Ephesians, to set Christ, "Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. And hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the Church." (Ephesians 1:21, 22), can you find a sphere of life wherein He does not play an important part? If — and if here means, since it is so — God HAS put all things under His feet and given Him to be the head over ALL things to the Church, can we dare to tell Him that there is a sphere of our life — be it even such a thing as reading, writing and arithmetic — wherein He can be and may be ignored. Must we not rather conclude that all ability to read, to write and to work in the field of mathematics must be in the service of His coming back again? Should not ALL instruction and education given to the children of that Church to whom God has given Him to be the head over all things ever be taught in all things to look for that wonderwork of His strength when this Christ shall come again? May we ever let our children receive any instruction that does not reckon with that fact? Are we to teach them to live only for this life?

O, it is to be conceded that the possibility exists that the schools of the world in your locality are better trained and more capable of giving your child a training that according to the standards of this world make him wiser in the ways of the world. Intellectually they may become more brilliant than those who are sent to a Christian school.

But you have hid from them the things that really count.

They are *not* to be taught to live for this life and to forget that Christ is the head over all things *to the Church*. What they are taught on Sunday must not be opposed on Monday. The Christ they are taught to worship on Sunday must be held before them also on Monday through Friday.

You send them to Church and to catechism. Well and good.

Yet unless you send them to a Christian School on Monday through Friday — unless before God this is impossible — you are hiding these things from them. The Psalmist literally says, "We will not cut them off from the praises of the Lord."

You cut them off from these when these things are taught in a school where your children could attend and you send them elsewhere for a carnal, earthly reason.

Say it, say it before God, "We will *not* hide them from our children."

And put these words into practice.

J.A.H.

Contending For The Faith

The Church and the Sacraments

VIEWS DURING THE THIRD PERIOD (750-1517 A.D.)

THE SUPREMACY OF THE POPE

GREGORY VII AND THE PAPACY (continued).

Henry demanded from the pope the ban over the robber of his crown, but in vain. He refused him the promised safe-conduct to Germany, acted as king, crossed the Alps, and defeated Rudolf in a battle at Lerrichstadt in Franconia, Aug. 7, 1078, but was defeated by him near Muhlheim in Thuringa, Jan. 27, 1080, in a decisive battle, which Rudolf regarded as a divine decision, and which inclined the pope in his favor.

After long hesitation, Gregory, in a Synod of Rome, March 7, 1080, ventured upon the most extraordinary act even for a man in the highest position. Invoking the aid of St. Peter and St. Paul, he fulminated a second and severer ban against Henry and his adherents, deprived him again of his kingdoms of Germany and Italy, forbade all the faithful to obey him, and bestowed the crown of Germany (not of Italy) on Rudolf. The address was at once a prayer, a narrative, and a judgment, and combined cool reflection with religious fervor. It rests on the conviction that the pope, as the representative of Peter and Paul, was clothed with supreme authority over the world as well as the Church (what was known as the Holy Roman Empire, embracing both Italy and Germany, did not come unto an end until Napoleon made an end of it in 1806 — H.V.).

Gregory hazarded a prophecy, which was falsified by history, that before the day of St. Peter and St. Paul (June 29), Henry would either lose his life or his throne (The Roman Catholic Church regards this day, together with Saint Paul's day on June 30, as one of the leading annual festivals. This festival, on June 29, commemorates the interment of the remains of Peter and Paul, said to have taken place under consuls, Tuscus and Bassus in 258. — H.V.). After the close of the synod, he sent to Rudolf (instead of the iron crown of Charlemagne, which was in possession of Henry) a diadem with the characteristic inscription: "Petra dedit Petro, Petrus diadema Rudolpho," which, translated, reads: "The Rock gave the crown to Peter and Peter gives it to Rudolf."

A reconciliation was now impossible. Henry replied to the papal ban by the election of an anti-pope. A council of about thirty German and Italian bishops met at Brixen in the Tyrol, June 26, 1080, and deposed Gregory on the frivolous charges of ambition, avarice, simony, sorcery, and the Berengarian heresy. Cardinal Hugo Candidus and twenty-seven bishops (of Brixen, Bamberg, Coire, Freisingen,

Lausanne, etc.) signed the document. At the same time they elected the excommunicated Archbishop Wilbert of Ravenna pope, under the name of Clement III. He was a man of talent, dignity, and unblemished character, but fell into the hands of simonists and the enemies of reform. Henry acknowledged him by the usual genuflexion, and promised to visit Rome in the following spring, that he might receive from him the imperial crown. Wilbert returned to Ravenna with the papal insignia and great pomp.

This was the beginning of a double civil war between rival popes and rival kings, with all its horrors. Gregory counted on the Saxons in Germany, Countess Matilda in Northern Italy, and the Normans in Southern Italy (is it not perfectly clear from all this history that the power and authority of the pope to enthrone and dethrone kings and emperors did not lie in the Christ. Whom he was supposed to represent on earth, but only in the power of arms? His first excommunication of Henry IV, which came to an end at Canossa, was of force and brought the youthful emperor to his knees only because the people of Germany favored the pope and not him, and he was therefore on the verge of losing his crown, not because of the pope but because of the people, his subjects. — H.V.).

Henry was defeated Oct. 15, 1080, on the banks of the Elster, near Naumburg; but Rudolf was mortally wounded by Godfrey of Bouillon, the hero of Jerusalem, and lost his right hand by another enemy. He died the same evening, exclaiming, as the story goes: "This is the hand with which I swore fidelity to my lord, King Henry." But, according to another report, he said, when he heard of the victory of his troops: "Now I suffer willingly what the Lord has decreed for me." His body with the severed hand was deposited in the cathedral at Merseburg.

Rudolf's death turned his victory into a defeat. It was regarded in that age as a judgment of God against him and the anti-pope. His friends could not agree upon a successor till the following summer, when they elected Count Hermann of Luxemburg, who proved incompetent. In the spring of 1081 Henry crossed the Alps with a small army to depose Gregory, whose absolution he had sought a few years before as a penitent at Canossa. He was welcomed in Lombardy, defeated the troops of Matilda, and appeared at the gates of Rome before Pentecost, May 21. Gregory, surrounded by danger, stood firm as a rock and refused every compromise. At his last Lenten synod (end of February, 1081) he had renewed his anathemas, and suspended those bishops who disobeyed the summons. Nothing else is known of this synod but sentences of punishment. In his letter of March 15, 1081, to Hermann, bishop of Metz, he justified his conduct towards Henry, and on April 8 he warned the Venetians against any communication with him and his adherents. "I am not afraid," he said, "of the threats of the wicked, and would rather sacrifice my life than consent to evil."

Henry, not being permitted by the Romans to enter their city, as he had hoped, and not being prepared for a siege, spent the summer in Upper Italy, but returned to Rome in Lent, 1082, and again with a large force at Easter, 1083, and conquered the city and the Church of St. Peter in June. Gregory was intrenched in the Castle of St. Angelo, and fulminated anew his anathema upon Henry and his followers (June 24). Henry answered by causing Wilbert to be enthroned in St. Peter's (June 28), but soon left Rome with Wilbert (July 1), promising to return. He had probably come to a secret understanding with the Roman nobility to effect a peaceful compromise with Gregory; but the pope was inexorable. In the spring of 1084 Henry returned and called a synod, which deposed and excommunicated Gregory. Wilbert was consecrated on Palm Sunday as Pope Clement III, in the Lateran, by two excommunicated bishops of Modena and Arezzo (instead of the bishops of Ostia, Albano, and Porto). Henry and his wife, Bertha, received from him the imperial crown in St. Peter's at Easter, March 31, 1084. He left Rome with Wilbert (May 21), leaving the defence of the city in the hands of the Romans. He never returned.

In the meantime Gregory called to his aid the Norman chief, Robert Guiscard, or Wiscard. This bold adventurer approached from the south with a motley force of Normans, Lombards, Apulians, and Saracens, amounting to thirty thousand foot and six thousand horse, arrived in Rome, May 27, 1084, liberated the pope, and entered with him the Lateran. He now began such a pillage and slaughter as even the barbarians had not committed. Half the city was reduced to ruins; many churches were demolished, others turned into forts; women and maidens, even nuns, were outraged and several thousand citizens sold into slavery. The survivors cursed the pope and his deliverer. In the words of a contemporary, the cruelty of the Normans gained more hearts for the emperor than a hundred thousand pieces of gold. Rome was a ghost of her former self. When Hildebert of Tours visited her more than ten years later, he saw only ruins of her greatness. This was, indeed, a fearful judgment, but very different from the one which Gregory a few years had invoked upon Henry.

Many confused reports were circulated about the fate of Gregory VII. His faithful friend, the Countess of Tuscany, assembled troops, sent emissaries in all directions, and stirred up distrust and hatred against Henry in Germany. The following letter remains as evidence of her zeal for Gregory: — "Matilda, such as she is by the grace of God, if she be anything, to all the faithful residing in the Teutonic kingdom, greeting. We would have you know that Henry, the false king, has stolen the seal of the Lord Pope Gregory. Wherefore, if ye are told anything contrary to the words of our envoys, hold it false, and believe not Henry's lies. Further, he has carried away with him the Bishop of Porto, because that man was once familiar with the Lord Pope. If by his help he should attempt anything with you or against

you, be sure this bishop is a false witness, and give no credit to those who shall tell you to the contrary. Know that the Lord Pope has already conquered Sutri and Nepi; Barabbas the robber, that is to say, Henry's pope, has fled like himself. Farewell. Beware of the snares of Henry."

Death of Gregory VII.

Gregory was again in possession of the Lateran, but he left the scene of melancholy desolation, accompanied by Guiscard and a few cardinals and Roman nobles. He went first to Monte Cassino and then to Salerno. The descent from Canossa to Salerno was truly a *via dolorosa*. But the old pope, broken in body, was unbroken in spirit.

He renewed the ban against Henry and the anti-pope at the close of 1084, and sent a letter to the faithful in Germany, stating that the words of the Psalmist, *Quare fremuerunt gentes* (Ps. 2:1, 2), were fulfilled, that the kings of the earth have rebelled against Christ and his apostle Peter to destroy the Christian religion, but could not reduce those who trusted in God. He called upon them to come to the rescue of the Church if they wished to gain the remission of sins and eternal salvation. This is his last written document.

His mind remained clear and firm to the end. He recommended Cardinal Desiderius of Monte Cassino (Victor III) as his successor, and next to him Otto, bishop of Ostia (Urban II). He absolved all his enemies, except Henry and Wilbert, "the usurper of the apostolic see." He died, May 25, 1085, with the words which best express the meaning of his public life and character: "I have loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore I die in exile." "Nay," said one of the bishops, "in exile thou canst not die, who, as the vicar of Christ and his Apostles, hast received all the nations for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession" (Ps. 2:8).

Robert Guiscard, his protector, died a few weeks afterwards (July 17, 1085).

The body of Gregory, clad in the pontifical vestments, was buried in the church of St. Matthew of Salerno, which he had consecrated shortly before. A plain stone marked his grave till John of Procida — although a zealous Ghibelline — erected a sumptuous chapel over it. His name was inserted in the Calendar on the 25th of May, 1584, by Gregory XIII, without a formal canonization; Paul V ordered a festival, in 1609, for the new saint; and Benedict XIII, in 1728, ordered its general observance. The emperor of Germany, the king of France, and other sovereigns opposed the celebration; but if ever a pope deserved canonization for devotion to the papal theocracy, it was Hildebrand. The eighth centenary of his death was celebrated in the Roman Church, May 25, 1885.

When Gregory VII died in exile his enemies spread the false report that he repented of the controversy which he had excited. (Whatever one may say of his views with

(Continued on page 501)

The Voice of Our Fathers

The Canons of Dordrecht

PART TWO

EXPOSITION OF THE CANONS

THIRD AND FOURTH HEADS OF DOCTRINE

OF THE CORRUPTION OF MAN, HIS CONVERSION TO GOD, AND THE MANNER THEREOF

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

The above translation takes liberties with the original Latin that can scarcely be accounted for. They are as follows:

1) Our English version has: "Faith is therefore to be considered . . ." The original has: "Thus therefore faith is the gift of God . . ."

2) Our English version has: ". . . not on account of its being offered by God to man, to be accepted or rejected at his pleasure." This is nothing but an extended commentary on the original, and in my opinion a weakening of the sense of the original instead of an elucidation. The original has simply: ". . . not because it is offered by God to the will of man." The sense is that faith is not something that is offered by God to the will of man at all. There is therefore not even a question, not even a possibility, of his accepting or rejecting it. One who views faith in this way does not understand the nature of saving faith. It simply is not something that is offered, presented, to the will of man. That this is indeed the meaning and intention of the fathers is to my mind confirmed by the positive statement that follows, namely: ". . . but because it is itself conferred, breathed, and infused into the man."

3) Our English version has: "or even because God bestows the power or ability to believe, and then expects that man should by the exercise of his own free will, consent to the terms of salvation, and actually believe in Christ." Again this is an extended commentary, as will be plain from a comparison with the Latin: "*Non etiam quod Deus potentiam credendi tantum conferat, consensum vero seu actum credendi ab hominis deinde arbitrio expectet.*" This should be translated: "Not even because God confers only the power of believing, and then expects (awaits) the consent or indeed the act of believing from the will of man."

4) And finally, there is a less serious misplacement of the phrase "in man." Our English version has: "but because he who works in man both to will and to do, and indeed

all things in all, produces both the will to believe, and the act of believing also." The correct translation would be: "but because he, who worketh both to will and to do, and indeed worketh all things in all, effects in man both the will to believe and the act of believing (or: the believing itself)."

As is plain from the introductory words of this article, "Thus therefore . . .", we have here a conclusion, a summary, based upon the preceding articles (10-12), concerning the subject of faith.

And it must also be plain that the fathers are here combatting the Arminian view of faith. They deal here with some more of the "cunning craftiness" of the Arminians. That faith is the gift of God also the Arminians had to admit, simply because it is a Scriptural statement. "By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God", Eph. 2:8. As we said before, it makes principally no difference whether you refer the "it is the gift of God", simply to "faith," or to the whole idea, "by-grace-are-ye-saved-through-faith." In either case faith is the gift of God. And the Arminians had to face this fact.

But how did they face it?

With cunning craftiness they promptly began to play "hocus-pocus." On the one hand, they averred: "O, yes: faith is indeed the gift of God. That is Scripture. We believe that too. Never would we deny it." But on the other hand, they so explained that gift of God that they explained it away. They played hocus-pocus with words. They poured into the idea of "gift of God" their own Pelagian philosophy. And the result was that faith was not a gift of God any more, according to their view, but an act of man pure and simple. And they did this very craftily, as is plain from the negative propositions of the article we are considering.

At the risk of going off on a tangent for a moment, I want to emphasize this cunning craftiness of the Arminians. It is wilful deceit. It is not a mistake. It is not because they do not know better. How do I know? Because they were not only confronted with the truth by our Reformed fathers, but they were, — many of them, at least, — brought up in the Reformed truth, and received Reformed theological training as well. And still they insisted on their corrupt views. Their purpose is to draw men away from the truth of the Word of God. And we must beware of them and their crafty and cunning presentations of the lie. And therefore we must understand their view, and know wherein they err.

What, first of all, is the basic error in this Arminian view of faith as the gift of God?

It is this: all the emphasis in the Pelagian-Arminian view is always upon the act, the deed. The original goodness of man consisted only in his actions, deeds. Sin is only a matter of the evil deed. And faith is also solely a matter of the deed. Hence, they teach:

1) That to begin with, the spiritual gifts or the good qualities and virtues, such as goodness, holiness, righteousness, could not belong to the will of man when he was first

created, and that these, therefore, could not have been separated therefrom in the fall.

2) That, in the second place, in spiritual death the spiritual gifts are not separate from the will of man, since the will in itself has never been corrupted, but only hindered through the darkness of the understanding and the irregularity of the affections; and that, these hindrances having been removed, the will can then bring into operation its native powers, that is, that the will of itself is able to will and to choose, or not to will and not to choose, all manner of good which may be presented to it.

3) Thence it follows, in the third place, that the unregenerate man is not really nor utterly dead in sin, nor destitute of all powers unto spiritual good, but that he can yet hunger and thirst after righteousness and life.

4) And therefore it also follows that in the true conversion of man no new qualities, powers or gifts can be infused by God into the will, and that therefore faith through which we are first converted, and because of which we are called believers, is not a quality or gift infused by God, but only an act of man, and that it can not be said to be a gift, except in respect of the power to attain to this faith. *Canons*, III, IV, Rejection of Errors, 2, 3, 4, 6.

The position of the Arminian, then, is that faith is not a gift of God, but an act of man. And if then you still want to insist that it is a gift of God according to Scripture, the Arminian will grant this only in the sense that the gift is the power to attain to this faith. Hence, the Arminian position is that faith is a gift of God, but faith is also not a gift of God. You object that this is absurd and contradictory. And this is certainly true. But remember that the intent and also the end result of this Arminian hocus-pocus is the denial that faith is the gift of God. They choose devious and deceptive ways to reach that end; but they reach it nevertheless. Faith is the act of man, — that is the Arminian position.

And that is why our fathers insist that faith is the gift of God, *not because it is offered, presented, by God to the will of man*. It is contrary to the very nature of faith to say this. The basic idea here is that faith is an act only. And God presents this faith-as-an-act to man's will. In that sense, so says the Arminian, faith is a gift. And now it is left to that will, which has never been corrupted really, and which is able to will and to choose, or not to will and not to choose, all manner of good (which includes faith-as-an-act) which may be presented to it. Now the fathers do not here criticize the Arminian idea of a free will as such, as our English translation would have us believe. But they criticize the Arminian idea of faith. Faith, they say, is not such that it is offered, presented to the will. You cannot speak of faith in that sense. On the contrary, rather than being presented to the will, to be acted upon by the will, faith is a gift, a quality, a power, that is infused into, conferred upon, breathed into that will itself.

But, you say, the Arminian also teaches that faith is a gift in the sense that God bestows the power to come to that faith-as-an-act. The Arminian also believes that the power to believe is from God.

Here, however, is some more hocus-pocus of Arminianism. The Arminian does not believe this at all in the sense that the Reformed man does. We frequently make a perfectly proper distinction between the power of faith and the act of faith. Just as in the natural sense of the word, an infant may have the talent to be a musician, but does not yet make music; so also spiritually, one may be ingrafted into Christ and may have the power to believe, but does not yet actually believe, does not actively know and actively confide in Christ. But when the Holy Spirit operates in such a man through the preaching of the gospel, then that power of faith goes into action also, and he believes, has the living, spiritual knowledge of God which is life eternal, and puts his trust in God through Christ for all his salvation. That, I say, is a perfectly correct distinction to make. But this is not what the Arminian believes. For he teaches, remember, that the will of man in itself has never been corrupted. That will in itself is therefore still capable of believing. There is however the darkness of the understanding and the irregularity of the affections; and these constitute a hindrance for the will. And to the Arminian the gift of faith may mean that God will assist him to believe, in that He will remove those hindrances. But then it is still left to man's will to believe or not to believe.

Hence, once more, according to the Arminian conception, it all comes down to the proposition that *faith is a deed of man*, never anything else.

And therefore, our fathers emphasize, in the second place, that it is not true that God merely bestows the power of believing, and that He then expects the consent or act of believing from man's will. Notice: the fathers do not speak of the *power of faith* here, but of the *power of believing*. It is Reformed to speak of the power of faith, *potentia fidei*. Then you mean faith as a new spiritual quality that is infused into the will itself. It is Arminian to speak merely of the power of believing, *potentia credendi*. Then you mean merely a power to come to the act of believing, but not any new quality bestowed upon the will itself. Then you can still maintain that the consent to believe or the act of believing must come from the will of man itself.

And over against this the fathers state the Reformed position:

1) God is the One Who worketh both to will and to do, yea, all things in all.

2) As such, God effects, produces, brings to pass, both the will to believe and the believing itself in man.

If we maintain the latter, namely, that God effects both the will to believe and the believing itself, there is not much room left for the Arminian corruption.

H.C.H.

ALL AROUND US

More Interesting Quotations.

In the last issue the reader will recall we presented several quotations of ministers who left us, who are responsible for the letter sent to the 1957 synod of the Christian Reformed Church, and who gave evidence in their writings of the past which plainly revealed that they have no need for further light on or clearer interpretation of the Three Points of 1924. This time I wish to conclude this search into the past by presenting a few quotations of others of these ministers, especially those of the Reverends M. Gritters and B. Kok.

A brother who read my last article sent me a photographic copy of a newspaper clipping which the Rev. B. Kok had published in an Edgerton, Minnesota, paper at the time he served our churches in that community as Home Missionary. The clipping shows very plainly how boldly the Rev. Kok defended our views in the controversy between the Protestant Reformed and Christian Reformed Churches. At that time he needed no further interpretation of the Three Points, and he challenged the Christian Reformed leaders with the statement that the Three Points are "extra-confessional, contra-confessional and anti-scriptural." Here follows the copy of the newspaper article:

AN OPEN LETTER

to the Theological Professors and Leading
Ministers of the Christian Reformed Churches

Esteemed and Worthy Brethren:

Whereas you in your synodical assembly of 1924 have accepted three points of doctrine, which were not only extra-confessional, but contra confessional and anti-scriptural,

And whereas you have thrown out of your churches those that maintained the Reformed truth of sovereign and particular grace, over against those that advocated common and general grace, those that maintained the Reformed truth of total depravity, over against them that would ascribe to the natural man the ability to do good,

And whereas the Rev. H. Hoeksema will be at Edgerton, Minnesota, from Wednesday, April 6 to Wednesday, April 13 to inform all the lovers of the Reformed truth in this community about these greatly to be regretted facts, both in speech and personal contact,

And whereas we are accused of misleading and misinforming the people in regards to these things,

Therefore the best able among you are hereby

urgently requested to be present on any of these dates and openly to refute in public debate the truth of these charges,

Respectfully submitted,

Bernard Kok.

The reader should note from the above quotation that the Rev. Kok at that time understood very well that the Three Points of 1924 were not to be found in the Reformed confessions, that they militated against the doctrines set forth in these confessions, and that they were opposed to all the Word of God teaches. It is also to be noted that he understood the difference between sovereign, particular grace and common, general grace. He also saw clearly how the Three Points were a denial of the doctrine of total depravity. Not only did he understand at that time the Reformed conception of the truth, but he had preached it. He experienced the opposition of those who subscribe to the Three Points who had charged him with misleading and misinforming the people. He gives evidence in the above quotation that he is in perfect agreement with the Rev. H. Hoeksema and considers the latter as the great defender of the truth over against the lie of common grace. He is convinced that the Christian Reformed Church had wickedly thrown out of her midst men who had maintained the Reformed truth, implying that the Christian Reformed Church embraced the lie of Arminianism. This is what Rev. Kok believed and vigorously preached as he went from place to place serving our churches in the office of Home Missionary.

I also have before me another Open Letter written by the Rev. B. Kok March 1, 1941, copy of which appeared in "Our Church News" of March 14, 1941, a letter directed to the Rev. Jabaay, minister of the Christian Reformed Church at that time serving a church in Zeeland, Michigan. In that letter the Rev. Kok takes Jabaay to task for un-Reformed statements the latter uttered in a sermon Kok heard of him. He had no scruples about telling Jabaay what was Reformed or un-Reformed in that sermon. Fact is when one reads these old publications of the Rev. Kok he finds that Kok is very fond of writing Open Letters especially to the leaders of the Christian Reformed Church in which he upbraids them, criticizing and condemning their doctrinal position in the matter of common grace and the Three Points.

Now the Kok of 1957, when he realizes that his separate existence has no promise for the future, when the cause he now defends, namely, conditional theology, seems hopeless so long as his schismatic churches cannot be united with churches of like doctrine, concludes that there is a possibility he has been in error regarding his position over against the Three Points. After all these years it suddenly dawns upon him that the Christian Reformed Church may have been right after all. So he, along with others, is asking that church to once more please explain the Three Points. And if this can be done in such a way that Kok can understand that the

Christian Reformed Church still believes in total depravity, and does not deny the doctrine of election then he is willing to say peccavi, and ask for admission in that church. With the Rev. H. Hoeksema I also believe that the Christian Reformed Church will have no difficulty in removing his fears and the fears of those who are with him.

What we have written so far respecting the Revs. A. Cammenga, De Boer and Kok also applies to the Rev. M. Gritters. The latter, besides having filled a column in *Concordia* entitled "Hearth and Belfry," also for some time wrote a column entitled "Lest We Forget." The editor of *Concordia*, A. Cammenga, in the February 6, 1947 issue introduces the writer of the new department. In this introduction he stresses how necessary it is that those interested in the cause of our Protestant Reformed Churches should be reminded of the origin of our churches and the cause they represent. Writes he, "it is a very deplorable fact that time also tends to wear away definite principles and sharp distinctions and ultimately heal breaches in a very unhealthful manner . . . by the erosion of time, we can eventually forget the origin and purpose of our existence as Protestant Reformed Churches. And much as we would like to have seen the breach of 1924 healed in a very healthy as well as healthful way it would be ruinous to the cause of the Truth that what appeared to be a healing of the breach was nothing more than dangerous adhesions due to unhealthy spiritual conditions. And, as we pointed out some time ago in one of our editorials, many attempts are being made from the side of the camp of the enemy to belittle that which distinguishes us as churches. Therefore, just a little forgetfulness on our part, with a bit of persistent and cunning tactics on the part of the opposition will cause the present generation to wonder what it was all about, politely bury the dreaded hatchet and make peace at the expense of the truth of the Word of God and the blessed treasure of the doctrine of His sovereign grace." (When we read these words we could hardly suppress the thought: How is the gold become dim!)

Cammenga then introduces Gritters as the one suitable to show our people the significance of our past history.

In this same issue of *Concordia* the Rev. M. Gritters began his series of articles, which appear in question and answer form. Here follows some of the questions he raises and answers: (I number the questions exactly as he did)

"21. When did the separation between us and the Christian Reformed Churches take place? We usually place it in the year 1924 because at that time the Christian Reformed Churches adopted the Three Points and they were the immediate cause of the separation.

22. Did the Three Points cause the separation? Yes, if I understand your question right.

23. I mean, if the Christian Reformed Churches had not made the Three Points, wouldn't we still have been together?

Yes, the Three Points caused the rupture. But we may also say that in these Three Points the disagreement which existed about a so-called theory of Common Grace came to a head. We must not forget that these churches were already in general preaching and teaching a Common Grace theory before 1924. It was when Revs. Hoeksema and Danhof especially began to warn the churches against this theory that the conflict began.

24. What is Common Grace and what are the Three Points? Be patient. Let's discuss that a little bit later. I'd rather follow the history of this thing for a little while at present.

25. Well, did Hoeksema and Danhof make the Three Points? By no means. The continually argued that the Three Points were out of line with Scripture and the Confessions. The Synod of the Christian Reformed Church of July of 1924 made the Three Points.

32. Is the difference between us and the Christian Reformed Churches THIS that they believe in Common Grace and we do not? Yes, in general we might say it that way.

33. Is that difference enough to separate us? That is not the question first of all. You must remember that we did not separate, we were put out. The Christian Reformed Churches in 1924 made themselves guilty of adding something to the Confessions, and on the basis of what they added, we were put out of the churches. We were not put out because we no longer stayed on the Reformed line as Scripture and Confessions teach it, but we were put out because we did not agree with what they added to the Confessions.

34. But have these churches, then, put out of their fellowship people who follow the Reformed line? Yes. We are sorry that we must say this, but such is the truth, and the only means we can use to bring her back from this error is to continue saying this. We do not say this in anger or in vengeance, but we believe that we can best serve the cause of the Truth by continuing to protest against these churches, with the hope that they might come back from their error."

Much more did the Rev. Gritters write. In fact there were a 100 questions which he answered relative to the difference between us and the Chr. Ref. Church.

But what a far cry that letter was which he and his schismatic brethren sent to the synod of the Christian Reformed Church from the continual protest against these churches of which he speaks in question 34. All in all he also proves clearly that he does not need a further interpretation of the Three Points of 1924. He understood them well, and all their implications. But Gritters et al have changed. They have forsaken the truth for which they stood when still with us. They wish now to embrace that which they formerly condemned, not unwittingly but with sound understanding. Again I say their plea to the Chr. Ref. Church is only camouflage.

M.S.

CONTRIBUTIONS

B. J. Meelker
126 S. Buena Vista
Redlands, Calif.

Sept. 6, 1957

Rev. H. Hoeksema
1139 Franklin St., S. E.
Grand Rapids 7, Mich.

Dear Rev. Hoeksema,

Will you please place this letter in *The Standard Bearer* in answer to Mr. T. Feenstra?

First. In the letter written by Mr. Feenstra in *The Standard Bearer* of Sept. 1, 1957 he accuses me of writing an untruth when I wrote, "In my letter to you I did not mention a case, I asked a question."

Let Mr. Feenstra prove from my letter in the Feb. 15, 1957 issue of *The Standard Bearer* that I did mention a case and not ask a question. Otherwise let him apologize for his accusation.

Secondly. Mr. Feenstra writes that he does not believe that I highly value Rev. Hoeksema's opinion. I certainly mean what I wrote. I have always highly valued Rev. Hoeksema's opinion. I still do. I care very little whether Mr. Feenstra believes this or not.

Thirdly. As to his challenge. The question to which he refers was answered in *The Standard Bearer* of July 1, 1957.

Your brother in the Lord,

B. J. Meelker.

THE CHURCH AND THE SACRAMENTS

(Continued from page 496)

respect to the absolute authority of the pope, the chair of St. Peter, one thing is sure: Gregory VII was surely devoted to this principle and was not afraid to maintain it, as over against the emperor, Henry IV. And he is surely known in history as one of the greatest of all the Roman popes, taking his rightful place beside other great Roman Catholic popes, such as Gregory the Great, 590-604, and Innocent III, pope from 1198 to 1216, under whom the Church rose to its greatest height of power. — H.V.).

H.V.

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