

THE STANDARD

Beaver

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

VOLUME XXXIII

SEPTEMBER 1, 1957 — GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

NUMBER 20

MEDITATION

BREVITY AND LONGEVITY

"... for it is soon cut off, and we fly away."
Psalm 90:10b
"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life."
John 3:36a
"... and when he had said this, he fell asleep."
Acts 7:60b
"... because man goeth to his long home ..."
Eccl. 12:5

Moses, the man of God, had climbed upon the mountain of faith, and had seen God.

That view had given him great wisdom. He looked back over the ages that had gone before and saw the generations of the people of God which had trusted in Him; and found in Him their dwellingplace. He saw them: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but also Noah, Lamech and Adam, and counted them blessed.

And his view went farther back and saw God the Creator: he saw the bringing forth of the mountains and the forming of the earth and the world.

But even there his eyes did not rest: he tried to penetrate the wakes of the eternity which was before the earth sank its foundation. But he failed to see farther. It is not given to mere man to penetrate eternity. Beyond the knowledge that it is there we do not know anymore. All he could say after his view into the mighty beyond was this: "even from everlasting to everlasting. Thou art God!" And to see and to believe this is grace. Beautiful grace!

And then his view returned again. Again he saw the generations of the people of God. But he sang in a minor key. It almost sounds like a dirge.

He saw the generations melt away in the howling winds of the wrath of God. As with a flood he saw the generations carried away by God. Oh, it might seem in the morning of life as though they would amount to something, but when he returned in his gazing, and saw them in the afternoon

and evening of life, they were as cut down and withering grass, brown and seared by God's anger and wrath.

And why this troubling wrath and anger?

God set our iniquities before Him, our secret sins in the light of His countenance.

And so he came to this conclusion: "For all our days are passed away in Thy wrath: we spend our years as a tale that is told."

Indeed, our age, our life time is as a sorry tale, and its telling does not take too much time.

In general, it is 70 years. And if you are strong, it is 80 years.

And the best of those years, that is to say our PRIDE, the days and hours which we treasure, are nothing but labour and sorrow.

Well, that is a sorry tale at best.

Take the most wonderful man or woman of the children of God, and run a talkie-movie of the life they led, as God saw it from the heart, and I assure you that the audience would go home quiet and still. They had seen a dream.

It was soon cut off, and he or she flew away!

Life on this earth is a sorry spectacle, and it is very brief. It is brief not only in its entirety, but it is brief from the cradle to the grave. There is a hurry, a hastening from the beginning to the sorry end. We fly away even from the cradle.

What a mess we make of life!

A miserable brevity!

* * * *

Especially the end is miserable!

If you wish for a commentary on the experience of old age, then go to Solomon, or, rather, to the Holy Ghost in Ecclesiastes 12:1-5.

What a picture of weakness, decrepitude, senility, dotage!

A picture of trembling, bowing down, darkness, and fear, yes, even fear of the chirping of a little bird. I remem-

ber travelling in my car with an old man: his continually asking for slower and slower speed saw me travelling at twenty miles per hour. And even at that speed he was glad to get home, and to be at what he called rest. That was the man who in his youth had won the first prize in "hardrijden" in the Netherlands.

At the age of fourscore years and ten, or at the age of the very strong "desire shall fail and the grasshopper shall be a burden."

Oh yes, from the cradle to the grave we fly away! And the tempo is fast. Miserably fast. And I mean that the whole journey, the fast journey is a journey of great misery, a misery that mushrooms as we approach the final gust that brings us to our long home.

And it takes wisdom to see this and to agree with this.

The fool walks amid the old and aged, and does not apply his heart unto wisdom. He does not *number his days!* That is, he does not see his days in the proper perspective of God and His wrath.

But soon he, in his turn, walks down the street "voetje voor voetje." He carefully walks around that stone: he might stumble over it. There was a day when he would laugh at rocks and boulders. But not anymore. He is old, decrepit, senile. His lamp is almost burned out.

The worst is when you see a number of such wrecks together. You need not see them, you can hear them blindfolded. They have their own peculiar sounds.

Today you saw and heard them; but tomorrow you were told that he is dead, and she is passed away. You stood still a moment, but then hurried on again, on the way to your own days of rheumy tears and faltering steps.

Brief, oh so brief is life — and miserable!

Reduced rations, pills, plasters, none of this and none of that, careful, grandpa, walk this way!

And we fly away!

* * * *

And yet!

I read of the end of some men and women that make me jealous.

Especially of Stephen. He also came to the end of his hurried day. But after he had said some words that are precious as the diamond, *he fell asleep*. And let us not forget the majestic dying of Jacob. In the midst of the blessing of his stalwart sons that stood around his bed, and without any transition at all, he cried out: "I have waited for Thy salvation, O Lord!"

And God says of some people: "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace!" Psalm 37:37.

And there is the testimony that God ". . . satisfieth thy

mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's." Psalm 103:5.

And, finally, there is the assurance for someone or for some people that "With long life will I satisfy him, and show him My salvation."

Summing it all up, we hear of a people whose life is long, and whose end is peace, for they see the salvation of God.

So there is a generation of men and women and children who partake of the conclusion of the fifth commandment: "that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

After all is said and done, there must be a people who do not partake of the miserable brevity of life, but who partake of the longevity that is precious and blessed.

John clinches the issue when he testifies by the Holy Spirit that: "He that believeth on the Son *hath everlasting life!*" In other words, there is a people who not only will receive eternal life at some future date, but who now already, in their life span of seventy or eighty years, partake of the everlasting life with God.

They have blessed longevity here on earth. They have eternity with God through Jesus Christ now already.

* * * *

Yes, we have to end with Jesus again, as always. And, properly speaking, we really end with the God of our salvation.

There was a tree in Paradise which is called the Tree of Life. While Adam and Eve ate of that tree they lived with God in covenant fellowship. And they were very happy on this earth.

I agree: it was not for long, but they did.

And eating of that tree was the same thing as obedience to God.

You all know how that happy period ended: they ate of the forbidden tree and died.

And the result was death, misery, damnation. And they were the result of the wrath of God.

But God remembered His eternal covenant. And that means that He remembered that His chosen people had to go to heaven, no matter how, but they must receive the bounties He had determined to give them in His counsel.

You can say it in still another way: He determined to glorify Himself through Jesus Christ in the people of His everlasting love.

You will kindly remember how I pictured to you the brevity, and misery of the life of man on earth because of the anger and the wrath of God which like a flood bore all the sons away. How God thunders from age to age: Return, ye children of men, to destruction?

Well, God chose Himself a Man among men. His Name is the Son of man.

He is Jehovah Himself in our human nature.

The name which God chose for Him was Jesus Christ. And that means: Jehovah Saves! And: the Anointed One! The first stresses that the God of our salvation saves us from His wrath and anger, and the second one stresses that in order to do that He must do two things: He must suffer the wrath of God because of our sins and guilt, and also that He must work the work which the elect of God should have worked, and in our stead.

Well, He came.

And His appearance among the sons of men was terrible. For a description of that appearance read Isaiah 53, among other places.

So terrible was the vision that many were astonished at Him; His visage was marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of man. Isaiah 52:14.

Who shall declare His generation? for He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of God's people was He stricken.

All the sourness and darkness, multiplied a million times millions, came upon His defenseless head. He lived His brief life in the midst of an everlasting tornado, an indescribable earthquake, a howling wilderness. He trembled and faltered and stumbled as no other man or devil.

I often see old men walking alone, forsaken: who would choose them for a boon companion? One of the miseries of old age is forsakenness.

But what shall I say of Jesus?

Let Him say, no, cry it: My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?

The horrible brevity of Jesus' life: cut off from among the living.

* * * *

Dear reader, have you that Jesus in your heart?

Then, you may be old, feeble, miserable.

But in the midst of your sorrows you rejoice, you eternally rejoice.

You see, Jesus was sought out by His God. He came and found Him in the garden of Joseph and endowed Him with eternal life.

And everyone who has this Jesus in His heart is *at heart* young: his youth is renewed. Here on earth he begins to live the eternal Sabbath.

And all for Jesus', for God's sake! Amen.

G.V.

THE STANDARD BEARER

Semi-monthly, except monthly during June, July and August

Published by the REFORMED FREE PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION
P. O. Box 881, Madison Square Station, Grand Rapids 7, Mich.

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Grand Rapids 7, Mich.

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G. Pipe, 1463 Ardmere St., S. E., Grand Rapids 7, Mich.

Announcements and Obituaries must be mailed to the above
address and will be published at a fee of \$1.00 for each notice.

RENEWAL: Unless a definite request for discontinuance is received it is assumed that the subscriber wishes the subscription to continue without the formality of a renewal order.

Subscription price: \$4.00 per year

Entered as Second Class matter at Grand Rapids, Michigan

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EDITORIALS

The Free Offer

Our discussion of the pamphlet "The Free Offer" by Murray and Stonehouse was interrupted, but we will now continue it.

The last time we were discussing the contention of the authors of "The Free Offer" that the gifts bestowed by God in this present time upon the ungodly reveals that there is, in God, a disposition of lovingkindness and mercy toward the ungodly as such that is not conditioned upon the penitent attitude of those that receive the gifts. It is a revelation of love and mercy in God to all the ungodly without exception.

We might ask here, of course, whether all the suffering of this present time ending inevitably in death and, for the impenitent ungodly, in eternal death and hell, are not the expression of the wrath and hatred and of the curse of God and whether, therefore, there is in God a mixture of love and hatred toward the same impenitent ungodly.

But, for the moment, we will not go into this.

In the last issue of *The Standard Bearer* in which we were discussing this matter we were beginning to prove from Scripture that it teaches the very opposite of what Murray and Stonehouse present as the truth about the attitude of God toward the ungodly. Cf. S. B. June 1, 1957.

This we will now continue.

We must needs limit ourselves for proof from the Bible that the attitude of God toward the reprobate ungodly is not one of love and lovingkindness but of hatred and displeasure is so abundant that we may well regard it as the current teaching of Scripture.

First of all, we wish to quote a few more passages from the psalms.

Of the ungodly we read in Ps. 52:1-7: "Why boastest thou thyself in mischief, O mighty man? the goodness of God endureth continually. Thy tongue deviseth mischiefs; like a sharp razor, working deceitfully. Thou lovest evil more than good; and lying rather than to speak righteousness. Thou lovest all devouring words, O thou deceitful tongue. God shall likewise destroy thee for ever, he shall take thee away, and pluck thee out of thy dwelling place, and root thee out of the land of the living. The righteous shall see and fear, and shall laugh at him: Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength; but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness."

Notice that Scripture here describes the concretely existing ungodly man: he boasts in his mischief, he has a very evil tongue, he loves evil and lying and all devouring

words. And notice two facts. First of all, that God certainly does not assume an attitude of love and favor toward him but, on the contrary, that of hatred: He leads him in the way of destruction and roots him out of the land of living. And secondly, note, too, that the righteous rejoice at this attitude of God against of the wicked. This is a psalm that may be sung by the church on the sabbath!

The same note is heard in Ps. 58:1ff.: "Do ye indeed speak righteousness, O congregation? do ye judge uprightly, O ye sons of men? Yea, in heart ye work wickedness; ye weigh the violence of your hands in the earth. The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies. Their poison is like the poison of a serpent; they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear; which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely." In these verses again the concretely existing wicked are described as they are and act in the world of this present time. Now, what is the attitude of God toward these wicked men as it is also reflected in the attitude of the church. Is it an attitude of lovingkindness and must the same position be held by the people of God, as Murray and Stonehouse would have us believe? The very contrary is true as is evident from what follows in the psalm. We read: "Break their teeth, O God, in their mouth: break out the great teeth of the young lions, O Lord. Let them melt away as waters which run continually: when he bendeth his bow to shoot his arrows, let them be as cut in pieces. As a snail which melteth, let every one of them pass away; like the untimely birth of a woman, that they not see the sun. Before your pots can feel the thorns, he shall take them away as with a whirlwind, both living and in his wrath." Thus the congregation of God may and does still sing on the sabbath when they gather for worship. But this is quite impossible if the philosophy of a so-called "common grace" is taught in the church, and it is maintained that God assumes an attitude of lovingkindness toward the wicked.

This note is struck throughout the psalms. However, we will still call attention to two of them, viz. Psalm 73 and Psalm 92.

Asaph is the author of Psalm 73 as we all know. In the first part of this psalm, the author describes how he was troubled at the prosperity of the wicked. He was almost inclined to believe, with Murray and Stonehouse, that God, indeed, is filled with love toward the wicked. Writes he: "But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped. For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For there are no bands in their death; but their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men. Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment. Their eyes stand out with fatness; they have more than heart could wish. They are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning oppression: they

speaking loftily. They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth." Again we say that in these words the ungodly are described, not in the abstract, but as they concretely exist and act, and as they live and reveal themselves in the present world. No wonder that Asaph, at first, and for a time, was envious at the wicked.

Moreover, also the people of God assume this attitude of folly as they consider the prosperity of the wicked and their own suffering of this present time. Listen: "Therefore his people return hither: and waters of a full cup are wrung out to them. And they say, How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the most High? Behold, these are the ungodly who prosper in the world; they increase in riches. Verily, I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency. For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning." Thus was the complaint of the people of God. They surely saw no common grace, but they only imagined that God, in this present time, only favored the wicked as was evident from their earthly prosperity.

Now, the author realized that this was wrong and that he might not speak thus. In his deepest heart he knew very well that God did not and does not love the wicked but the righteous only. If, therefore, he would speak thus he would offend against the generation of the children of God. Nevertheless, he could not understand and when he attempted to know this, it was too painful for him. Until he went into the sanctuary of God and began to see these same earthly things in the light of God's own revelation. Then the whole situation changed radically.

Then he clearly sees that even the earthly prosperity of the wicked is meant for their destruction. For he writes: "Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction. How are they brought into desolation as in a moment, they are utterly consumed with terrors. As a dream when one awaketh; so, O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image." Is this to be interpreted as the lovingkindness of the Lord toward the wicked? We know better. All the things of this present time, all the prosperity of the wicked, all the so-called blessings which the wicked receive are nothing but slippery places on which the Lord casts them down into destruction.

And the end of it all, both for the wicked and for the righteous, in vss. 27 and 28 of this psalm is expressed as follows: "For, lo, they that are far from thee shall perish; thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from thee. But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord God, that I may declare all thy works." Indeed, God loveth the righteous, but He hates all the workers of iniquity! There is nothing common in God. There is no common grace or lovingkindness for the righteous and the wicked alike.

Briefly we must also consider psalm 92, particularly verses 4-7.

This psalm is particularly designed to be sung by the congregation of the people of God on the sabbath day.

The psalmist begins by saying that it is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord and to sing praises to the name of the most High, to extol the lovingkindness of our God in the morning and His faithfulness every night, and to do so upon the harp and the psaltery with a solemn sound.

Thereupon he declares that his heart has been gladdened through the work of the Lord, and that in those works of His God he will triumph.

The reason for this is, on the one hand, particularly expressed in the passage to which we wish to call your attention in this connection, vss. 5-7: "O Lord, how great are thy works! and thy thoughts are very deep. A brutish man knoweth not; neither doth a fool understand this. When the wicked spring as the grass and all the workers of iniquity do flourish; it is that they shall be destroyed for ever."

Note:

1. The psalmist is speaking of the great works of the Lord and His very deep thoughts. The meaning is, of course, that the very deep thoughts of God are revealed in His great works. The deep thoughts of the Lord are His eternal counsel and purpose with regard to all things in time, and those thoughts He Himself realizes and executes in the world. They are deep, because they cannot be discerned on the surface of things. Superficially considered, it might seem as if the Lord blesses and is gracious to everybody, wicked and righteous alike, for they all receive the good things of this present time. In fact, it would almost appear as if the Lord favors the wicked more than the righteous, for they receive more of the things of this present time.

2. However, the psalmist, who has learned to know the deep thoughts of the Lord and to understand His great works, realizes that this is not the case. It is not true that the Lord is favorable to all men in the things of this present time; it is still less true that He favors the wicked more than the righteous. The very contrary is true. God makes the wicked spring as the grass, and He causes all the workers of iniquity in order that, by these means, they may become great in iniquity and ripe for everlasting destruction. Such are the deep thoughts of God. He loves the righteous and hates all the workers of iniquity.

3. It is only the brutish man and the fool that does not understand this. But he to whom the Lord reveals His great works and deep thoughts, understands and loves this truth.

H.H.

QUESTION BOX

Grand Rapids, Michigan

August 12, 1957

Rev. H. Hoeksema
1139 Franklin St., S. E.

Esteemed editor :

Since being in the Consistory, I have often wondered about the meaning and the advisability of some of the questions asked in Church Visitation, and after talking with others including some of our ministers concerning these things, I find that there are many others who are not sure as to the meaning of these questions, and therefore take it upon myself to ask you to answer them in *The Standard Bearer*.

In the questions to the full consistory, question 15 reads, "Is the Congregation busy in the extension of God's Kingdom, especially in the promotion of missions, to the best of its ability? Does this simply mean, meeting its classical assessments? If so, is it not rather superfluous? If there is another meaning would it not be wise to make it clear in the question itself. I mean by Synodical Decision?"

Then also I would like to know why must there be questions asked in the absence of the Pastor, Elders, or Deacons? If the Pastor is guilty of negligence in any of the matters asked by the church visitors, would it not be proper that the Elders would speak to the Pastor, rather than the Church Visitors, and if this has been done, and the offense remained would it not be the duty of the consistory to place him under censure? Or even if not, to place him under censure, but to place it before the Church Visitors why should he not be present? Certainly if I have spoken to the Pastor or Elder or Deacon, whatever the case may be, I should have no fear of speaking to the Church Visitors in his presence.

These are the questions I submit to you for your consideration, realizing that our fathers certainly had a purpose in them and their order, and therefore await your answer in *The Standard Bearer*.

Your brother in Christ,

Joe King

Answer :

1. I do not believe that question 15 simply refers to the fact that the congregation pays its classical assessments. In the first place, it may mean that, in larger congregations, the church may have a missionary of its own and supports him both financially and spiritually, in its prayers and means of encouragements. However, this cannot be done by many of our congregations because they are too small. Nevertheless, the fact remains that our churches have a missionary. And the question, therefore, implies that the consistory knows whether or not the congregation, including, of course, the

consistory, reveals a lively interest in his work, prays for him, not only from the pulpit, but also in private prayer, and supports him, not only financially but also in an ethical, spiritual manner. Besides, we have other means to extend the kingdom of God as we, as Protestant Reformed Churches, represent it. Do we talk to others about the truth, and about the errors of 1924? Do we study *The Standard Bearer* and let others read it or gain subscriptions for it? And do not forget the radio. The consistory ought to know all this and more and should be able to answer the question.

2. As to the second question, I fully agree with the sentiments expressed by Mr. King. I, too, fail to understand why the pastor, the elders and the deacons must, in turn, absent themselves from the meeting in order that they may be discussed. I never agreed with this method. Personally, I feel that whatever one has to say about me, whether it be good or evil, he may say in my presence, and otherwise he better keep still.

But, perhaps, it would not be a bad idea if Creston's consistory would bring the whole matter to the classis and, through classis, to our synod.

H.H.

IN MEMORIAM

The Mary-Martha Society of the Manhattan Protestant Reformed Church, hereby wishes to express its sincere sympathy to Mrs. Menn'o Flikkema and family in the loss of her father,

MR. GEORGE VRIELING

May the Lord sustain and comfort them with the assurance that there remaineth a rest for the people of God and that all things work together for good to them that love God.

P. Vis, President

Mrs. Andrew H. Leep, Secretary

IN MEMORIAM

The Consistory of the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, expresses its sympathy to our fellow members, Elder G. Yonker and Deacon G. Yonker, Jr., in the loss of their wife and mother,

MRS. MAUDE YONKER

May the God of all grace comfort the bereaved and sustain them in their sorrow. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Rom. 8:28.

Rev. C. Hanko, President

P. Decker, Secretary

IN MEMORIAM

The Consistory of the Protestant Reformed Church of South Holland, Illinois, expresses its heartfelt sympathy to our brother elder, Peter S. Poortinga, and family, in the death of his mother,

MRS. JOHANNA POORTINGA

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord . . ." Rev. 14:13.

H. C. Hoeksema, President

J. Van Baren, Clerk

OUR DOCTRINE

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

CHAPTER XII

THE VISION OF THE SEALED BOOK

Revelation 5

The Lion of Juda's tribe is at the same time the Root of David. But this symbol pictures in unmistakable language the unity of the old and the new dispensations. The kingdom of David from its spiritual side is no other than the kingdom of Christ in the new dispensation. The one kingdom is in its outward manifestation only typical of the other. In essence it was the same. For that same Root that sprouted and brought forth a shoot that will develop into the new and everlasting kingdom of Christ Jesus was present also in the loins of David. Israel and the congregation, the old and the new kingdom, are not two, but one.

Of Him the elder says that He has overcome to open the book. The opening of the book, we remember, is the bringing and completion of the kingdom through the breaking of the seven seals. And therefore, that the Lion has overcome to open the book implies that He has already gained that particular victory that was required to complete the kingdom of God. In what capacity He has gained this victory becomes clear when He Himself appears on the scene before the wondering eyes of John.

"And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." Thus we read in the text. Also in regard to this wonderful Lamb interpreters have exhausted their ingenuity to picture to their minds its image, and artists have tried to the utmost of their creative genius to present its picture on canvas, but with little result. Evidently if you read the text, it seems quite impossible to picture a Lamb with seven horns and seven eyes. And even though this were possible, so that a plastic presentation might be given of that Lamb, certainly the fact that the Lamb stands as though it had been slain can never be concretely represented. Neither is this at all essential to the interpretation of the symbolism. Rather than this, we should pay attention to all the details that are mentioned, in order to obtain a true interpretation. We note, therefore, in the first place, what also John must have noticed with surprise, that here stands a Lamb. The one that would be able to take and open the book had been announced as a Lion. But if John now also expects that he will see a Lion in all his royal majesty appearing before his vision, he is utterly mistaken. And yet it is perfectly in order that the Savior should appear in the vision as the Lamb, though He

had been announced as the Lion of Juda's tribe. You see, the assurance has been given that the Lion has overcome. But the question that is now answered by the appearance of this Lion is: how and in what capacity has He overcome? Has he gone forth like a roaring Lion, to conquer the enemy by His royal power? No, the answer to this question is: the Lion of Juda's tribe has overcome in the capacity of a Lamb. In fact, he has done so in the capacity of a Lamb for the slaughter. Perhaps if it had required the mere power of the Lion, the creature could have fought the battle that would make him worthy to open the book. But it required something far different. And that something is pictured in the symbolism of the Lamb. The Lamb in Scripture is the symbol of most perfect submission, and therefore of absolute obedience. As we read in Isaiah 53: "As a lamb that is led to the slaughter, so he opened not his mouth." And for that reason it is the symbol of the most perfect sacrifice to God, brought in absolute submission and obedience, without rebellion or murmuring. In the second place, note that the Lamb stands as though He had been slain. That means, of course, that the Lamb bears the marks of having been led to the slaughter, of having been sacrificed. But it also brings out very forcibly that this Lamb did not succumb, but stands even after it had been slain. Although it was already sacrificed, yet it stands and lives. Thirdly, we note about this Lamb that it has seven eyes, which the text interprets as being the Seven Spirits of God. The Lamb has received the Spirit of God in all its fulness. And that Spirit dwells in Him, but is also sent forth into all the kingdom, so that it is the life of that kingdom. Then too, note that the Lamb also has seven horns. The horn is the symbol of royal power and dominion in Scripture. Seven is the number of completeness with a view to the kingdom of God. Especially is this the case when it is compared with the power of the beast. The beast receives ten horns, and therefore he also possesses a complete dominion. But the dominion of the beast is limited by the decree of God and therefore his number is ten. Whenever you see the beast appear with the mark of ten, you may depend on it that it is the kingdom of the devil. Even though he tries to imitate this number seven, you must never believe him. This indeed is what he tries to do: he continually makes an attempt to change the number of his horns, as Daniel tells us. When he receives ten, he destroys three of them, and tries to appear, therefore, under the symbol of the number seven. But never believe him! Seven is the number of the Lamb. And this number seven you find only there, where the marks of the Lamb that has been slain also appear. If therefore the devil appears with beautiful imitations of the kingdom of Christ, and tries to have us enlist in the service of his kingdom, ask immediately for his marks of sacrifice. It is the only thing which he cannot show. The Lamb has seven horns, and therefore he is King over the entire kingdom, and King everlasting. Finally, note too that this Lamb stands in the midst of the throne and of the four living

creatures and of the four and twenty elders. He is the life and center of them all, and His seven Spirits pervade them all.

It is not difficult to understand the meaning of it all. This Lamb is Christ Jesus, and that in His humiliation and exaltation. It shows how he has overcome, and that He has overcome, to open the book. He has overcome like a Lamb, that is, as the Servant of God, ready to perform the will of the Father to perfection. He was ready to bear His wrath. He was ready to suffer under that wrath. He was ready to walk the dark and difficult way of the cross. He was ready to give His life and to fulfill all the righteousness of God. There is only one way in which the kingdom of God can ever be established. It is the way of obedience even unto death. Hence, if one can be found that is able to bear the wrath of God and the penalty of sin, able to suffer and die, and that can satisfy the unchangeable righteousness of God. He, and He only, will be worthy and able to open the book. That Lamb is Christ. But not only in His humiliation, also in His exaltation He stands there. He stands there, and therefore He lives. He died, but He arose, and lives forever. He stands there, but only as the victor. He has already received His glory and possesses the power of the kingdom. He possesses the Spirit that dwells in Him and that must complete the kingdom for the Father. In a word, that Lamb is Christ crucified; but at the same time it is Christ glorified.

This Lamb, then, takes the book: "And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne." We need not dwell on this at great length any more, after all that has been said. The general meaning of this action is perfectly clear. Only a few words we must add to this. We are here almost immediately reminded of that beautiful portion in the Book of Daniel where he describes how the one like unto the son of man approaches the Ancient of days, that sitteth on the throne. There we read, Daniel 7:13, 14: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." In principle we have the same vision here in the Book of Revelation. Of course, in harmony with the difference in point of view, Daniel sees the transaction in a little different light than John. In Daniel's time none of these things were yet fulfilled; in John's time they had principally become reality. In Daniel's time the prophet could not realize the distinction between the first and the second advent of the Messiah; John plainly realized this distinction. Therefore, Daniel sees the entire transaction all in one vision. He sees the approach of the Son of Man to the Ancient of days; that is, in vision he sees the Christ approach the Father along the path of humiliation and exaltation, along the way

of obedience. He sees that this Son of Man receives the power and the kingdom, the authority to bring and realize the kingdom. But he also sees that this kingdom is actually given Him and completed, so that all nations bow before Him. The first of these had already been realized, so that John merely beholds the Lamb as standing as though it had been slain. The third of these must still be realized in the future, so that John does not as yet see the completion of the dominion. What John here beholds is that second element, namely, that the power and authority is given to Christ to bring the kingdom of God. The Lamb takes the book. It does not say that the book is given Him: He takes it, in answer to the challenge. He waits till all creation acknowledges that it cannot bring the kingdom, that it is not worthy to receive the book from Him that sitteth on the throne. Then He steps forward, silently, majestically, fully conscious of His being worthy to open the book and its seven seals, and takes it out of the hand of Him that sitteth upon the throne.

We may ask: when was this realized? When did Christ receive the book from the hand of Him that sits on the throne? In order to understand this, we must be careful, and not bring the time element into the vision. The Lamb receives the book not at the time when John sees it, in the last decade of the first century. Nor can it be said that the Lamb receives the book after He has received what is symbolized by the horns and the eyes. On the contrary, the whole is symbolic, to picture to us forcibly that Christ Jesus has received all power in heaven and on earth and in hell. After He has been slain and is risen from the dead, after He has ascended to the Father, He is exalted to the highest position, and that in the capacity of the Lamb that has been slain. Exalted He is to the right hand of God. And this being seated at the right hand of God simply means that to Him all dominion is given in principle, that all power in heaven and on earth is surrendered into His hands. Christ rules His church and His kingdom as it has been spiritually established on earth in the new dispensation. Christ rules the world also, — the world, that is, from its evil point of view. He controls all history in the name of Him that sitteth on the throne. And therefore it is literally true that the Almighty has given to the Lamb the decree that is powerful to its own fulfillment. Christ now controls all history. He is busy in the preaching of the gospel, busy in wars and bloodshed of the world, busy in pestilence and famine, busy in all the social relations of our time. And through them all He works out the decree. He breaks seal after seal, as we shall see, and brings to pass all that must come to pass in this present dispensation, and all this with a view to the bringing of the glorious kingdom of God. When that kingdom shall have been completed, and the power of opposition shall have been broken, then He shall surrender His absolute power, and subject Himself, and reign over the completed kingdom under God forever and ever.

H.H.

THE DAY OF SHADOWS

The Prophecy of Zechariah

The coming of Zion's king.

Chapter 9:9, 10

9. *Rejoice greatly, daughter of Zion, shout, daughter of Jerusalem, behold thy king cometh unto thee, just is he and saved, meek and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt, the she-asses foal.* 10. *And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off; 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.*

In the foregoing verses (chapter 9:1-8) the prophet foretells the overthrow of the world powers and the deliverance and preservation of the chosen remnant by the unseen power of God. That in the verses now to be considered our prophet rather abruptly introduces Zion's King can only mean that with His appearance the salvation of the church is inseparately connected.

In verse 9 Zion is called upon to hail the King. *Rejoice greatly . . . shout* — Not a mere repetition. Zion could rejoice without shouting. Then were her joy unexpressed. But she must also shout, make a joyful sound. She must let shine her light, that men may see her good works. The expressions are prophecy that the Lord only can fulfil, which He does by causing the hearts of His people to overflow with heavenly gladness so that by His mercy they shout with joy. *The daughter of Zion . . . Jerusalem* — The two expressions are synonymous. Denoted is the church as represented in that day by the earthly Jerusalem and the Israelite commonwealth. Though the Lord had turned the captivity of Judah, His people were still under the dominion of heathen rulers. The bulk of them were scattered abroad **in every province of what was then the civilized world.** And many of them were wasting away in the dungeons of the adversaries. Surely from a human standpoint Zion's plight is hopeless. The Lord must come to the rescue, and He does so. He brings in Zion's King. *Thy king cometh unto thee.* He is not just another king like unto the kings that had sat in David's throne before it was fallen but He is only. And He is Zion's King not because Zion had chosen Him, but because God had chosen Zion in Him. And He exists and reigns and His people know Him and look forward to His coming. For the Lord has announced His coming through all the ages of the past as far back as the days of the first paradise. In the Protevangel of Gen. 3:15 He is presented to view as the seed that shall crush the head of the serpent. In the book of Isaiah He is the child born and the son given us, upon whose shoulder the government shall be and

of whose government and peace there shall be no end (Isa. 9:6ff). He was the theme of all the prophets — He, His person and works and mighty achievements as King of Zion.

Who then is this King but the Son of God in His office of Mediator, who in the fulness of time assumed the flesh and blood of His brethren and became thereby Son of God incarnate, our Lord Jesus Christ. There cannot be the least bit of doubt about this. For just before His crucifixion He literally comes to Jerusalem riding upon an ass, the colt of she-asses. And there was a multitude that went before. And they shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David . . ." And He did not forbid them (Matt. 21:1ff). And His answer to the request of the Pharisees that He rebuke His disciples was, "I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out" (Luke 19:40). And the comment of Matthew is that all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by our prophet (Matt. 21:4).

Marvellous things are said about Zion's king again in the verses under consideration. Let us concentrate on each of them.

Zion's King is just. He is righteous. That it is of greatest significance that He is just the inhabitants of Jerusalem well know from their experience with all the kings that had reigned in Jerusalem. The just kings in this long line of rulers had been a blessing to their subjects, the unjust a curse. Zion's king is just. He judges not after the sight of His eyes, but with righteousness He judges the poor and argues with equity for the meek of the earth. And righteousness is the girdle of His loins, and faithfulness the girdle of His reins (Isa. 9:3ff). He makes a right separation between the sheep and the goats, and to the pretenders in His kingdom He says, "Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, for I never knew thee." Truly Zion's king is just. He is righteous. In the law of the Lord is His whole delight. In His law He meditates day and night. His heart is perfect with the Lord. Besides the Lord He has no one and desires no one. To do the will of His God is verily His meat and drink. The best of the just and righteous kings who had reigned in Jerusalem, such as David and Hezekiah, were but weak and sinful men often bringing grief upon Jerusalem through their follies and lapses into sin. For they were but shadow. But not so Zion's king. He is the body. Though made sin for His brethren, whose flesh He assumes, He knows no sin. As Zion's king He is without one moral flaw.

Zion's King is saved of God. He saves Himself He is Saviour. In this context the Hebrew (Nephal participle from the root *yasha* to save) has these three meanings.

Zion's King is saved of God. Here the thought, taken in its widest sense, is that during all the time that He bears the burden of God's wrath against the sin of His brethren God helps and succours Him, sustains and supports Him by His Spirit resting upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, making Him quick of

understanding in the fear of the Lord (Isa. 11:2ff). But the thought in its more restricted sense is, that when He has done with our sin, God delivers Him out of all His troubles and crowns Him with greatest and heavenly glory, and that He does so by raising Him up from the dead and setting Him at the right hand of the throne far above all heavens, that He might fill all things (Eph. 5:10). If God thus saves Zion's King, also He, this King, saves Himself. Said He not, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because *I* lay down my life, that *I* might take it up again" (John 10:17). Speaking here is the incarnate Son of God, Zion's King. And what He tells us is that, being very God as well as very man, He, in His assumed humanity, will die and live again by a power that, though given Him of the Father, is yet His very own. Being thus saved of God and of Himself He is *the* Savior having salvation for Zion. This King — just and righteous and therefore Savior and o how mighty to save — Zion.

Zion's king is afflicted. Matthew, quoting this verse (21:5) has meek. The Hebrew (*ani* from the root *anah* to be afflicted and in its secondary signification, to be bowed down, meek, lowly, patient) has both these meanings.

Zion's king is afflicted. God afflicts Him. Men afflict Him, for their works are evil and His works are righteous. But when He is reviled, He reviles not again. He suffers and he threatens not. He is brought to the slaughter, and opens not His mouth. He forbids His followers to fight for Him. But as hiding himself in God in the firm knowledge that He must suffer these things to come into His kingdom, He endures. This is what it means that He is the meek one. As trusting in God He endures these sorrows for the sake of His Father's kingdom. He endures because this kingdom He loves and because this kingdom He seeks. He endures because the citizens of this kingdom are by nature under the curse owing to their sins. He endures in the certain and joyful confidence that when He has done with sin, has by His afflictions and death satisfied the righteousness of His God and met all the demands of His law, His God will raise Him up and place this kingdom into His actual possession. As making God all His confidence, He humbles Himself and is obedient unto death, even unto the death of the cross. This is His meekness. Some trust in chariots and some in horses. For the kingdoms they seek are of this earth. And God is not in all their thoughts. And therefore they have great use for chariots and horses and battleships and bombs and followers who fight for them. But it is different with Zion's king and the kingdom that He seeks. It is not of this earth but is spiritual and heavenly as to its character. And it can be established only by Zion's king pouring out His soul in death. And it is God's own conception and gift. Zion's king therefore has no need of horses and chariots. He considers that a horse is a vain thing to trust in (Ps. 33:17), and that at the rebuke of God both the chariot and the horse are cast down (Ps. 76:6). As so considering, He remembers the name of the Lord His God (Ps. 20:7) and in token thereof

comes to Zion riding upon the colt of asses, and not as mounted upon a horse at the head of an army equipped with horses and chariots. As compared with the horse, that is the stallion, the ass is a lowly creature. It is smaller and cannot run as fast. It hasn't the stateliness and beauty and the nervous energy of the horse. The people of Israel were forbidden of the Lord to multiply unto themselves horses. In the faith that the victory is the Lord's and that He fights for His people, they had to do without horses and chariots in their warfare with the heathen. Asses were allowed them, but not the horse. But the people of Israel were seldom capable of the exercise of such faith. But not so Zion's king. God is all His confidence. From Him He expects all His salvation. So, in His battle with Zion's enemies, He rides upon the colt of asses. And His faith is His victory.

Truly, Zion's king is the meek One. Opposed to true meekness is unbelief and sinful pride, the vile imagining of man that he is lord supreme and that God is His footstool. But Zion's king is meek. He is servant — servant of God and therefore Zion's king. And He comes riding upon the colt of asses. Thereby Zion knows that it is her King who comes unto her. And that He comes unto her means not alone that by His nameless afflictions He prepares salvation for Zion, but also that, as King exalted, He actually saves her. The house of David that is fallen He raises up. Its breaches He closes. Its ruins He raises up. And He builds it as in the days of old (Amos 9:2). By His Spirit of which He poured out upon all flesh when the day of Pentecost was fully come, He gathers and builds His church by nature dead in sin and under the curse, imparts His life unto His chosen people in all the nations, sheds abroad in their hearts the love of the Father. And as thus saved they are built up as living stones a spiritual house, an holy priesthood. And they say with our prophet, "Rejoice greatly O Zion, make a joyful sound, for thy King cometh unto thee. Also this latter action of Zion's King, His actually saving Zion, belongs to the picture that our prophet here hangs up before us of the workings of Zion's King. And He will continue so to come to Zion until she is clothed of Him with life in glory. Not until then shall He come to rest.

So then, He who comes to Zion is Zion's King. And this is the kind of King He is. And in this way and manner does He come unto Zion. He comes to Her a King, the King, Zion's king, obliterating by His sufferings and death all her sins, with the right therefore to save her. He comes to her a King who can save her, seeing that to His power to save there is no limit. He comes to her a King who actually saves her. He comes, in a word, a King victorious, triumphant, irresistible. For He comes unto Zion a King just and saved and afflicted and meek, riding upon the colt of asses.

And this is God's Gospel to Zion. It is His Gospel to Zion in all the days of the past. It is His Gospel to Zion at the present time. It is His Gospel to Zion in all the days to come as long as the world endureth. It is the only Gospel

there is, the Gospel of Christ and of God. Another Gospel there is not. And He proclaims this Gospel through His servants, the human preachers of the Word. And He, Himself, speaks this Gospel in the heart of Zion. And He will not hold His peace and will not rest until Zion's righteousness goes forth as brightness and her salvation as a lamp that burns (Isa. 62:1).

As was observed, Christ came to Jerusalem literally riding upon the colt of an ass, in fulfilment of prophecy. The doing of the Saviour has no significance beyond that of pointing to his meekness. According to many the trait indicated is His poverty, and according to still others the peaceable character of His kingdom. Although these ideas need not be excluded, yet doubtless the principal characteristic indicated is the meekness of Christ, and His implicit, trust in God as God's servant. In all His afflictions He hid Himself in God in the unshakable conviction that, in the way of His expiating the sins of His people by His suffering and death, God would reward Him by raising Him up and giving Him the kingdom. That Matthew has *meek* and not *poor* is conclusive, even though He had before him the Hebrew as translated by the LXX.

I explained these verses in the light of all the Scriptures. It is the only proper way of dealing with any of its sections. What meaning could we derive from the one verse, if in explaining it, we were to hold ourselves strictly to it, and looked not beyond.

10. The Lord will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the horse from Jerusalem and the battle bow shall He cut off.

In this verse Ephraim is the Israel of the ten tribes and Jerusalem is Judah. Indicated in the first instance is the kingdom of Judah as including the ten northern tribes, second the church of this new Dispensation of the world as including both Jews and Gentiles and with the Jerusalem which is above as its capitol, and finally the kingdom of Christ in glory. The chariot and the horse and the bow represent doubtless the enemies of the church, the world-powers with Satan as their prince to which must be added sin, death and hell. Looking at this prophecy from our vantage point, then we say that Zion's king, the Christ of God, overcame them one and all by His suffering and death upon the cross. And His victory was His trust in God—a trust that was symbolized by His coming to Jerusalem as riding upon the colt of asses. As Zion's King exalted at the right hand of the throne He reigns in the midst of His enemies. The kings of the earth He rules with a rod of iron and breaks them in pieces like a potter's vessel (Ps. 2). The saints of God see it before their eyes in the perpetual rise and fall of the kingdoms of this earth, thus in the continuous passing away of this world in preparation of the appearance of Christ's kingdom in glory. So is He now always engaged in cutting off from Jerusalem the enemies. At the same time He gathers His church by His Spirit and

His word, speaks His gospel of peace in the hearts of the heathen, of all such among the heathen chosen in Him unto eternal life. He establishes His kingdom in their hearts. In the words of this verse, He speaks peace unto the heathen. And His kingdom extends to the ends of the earth. It is thus universal as to its character. And as to its citizens, their lives are hidden with Him in God and therefore they shall also appear with Him in glory at His second coming.

G.M.O.

NOTICE!

Delegates to the fall session of Classis West in need of lodging should write to: Mr. John Van Baren, Route 1, Box 208-B, Glenwood-Lansing Road, Chicago Heights, Illinois.

Notice of Annual Meeting

The Annual Membership meeting of the REFORMED 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."

* * *

8:00 . . . Thursday Evening . . . September 26th

* * *

See further announcement in next issue.

THE BOARD

THE FOLLY OF UNBELIEF

Fools in their heart have said,
There is no God of might;
Corrupt are they and base their deeds,
In evil they delight.

God looked from heaven above
On all the human race,
To see if any understood,
If any sought His face.

They all are gone aside,
Corruption doth abound;
There is not one that doeth good,
Not even one is found.

These men of evil deeds,
Will they no knowledge gain,
Who feed upon my people's woes,
And prayer to God disdain?

Psalms 53:1-4

FROM HOLY WRIT

Exposition of I Corinthians 12-14

IX.

(I Cor. 14:1-19)

We now come to the final discussion of Paul on the relative value of the spiritual gifts of "speaking with tongues" and of the greater gift of "prophesying" in the church.

It will be of benefit to us to follow the reasoning of Paul step by step. In so doing we should observe that Paul ends this discussion of spiritual gifts in a very conclusive manner. There are three phases to this final argument of the apostle.

First there is the argument, the basic position, that even though "love" excels all other gifts, both in character and in duration, this does not mean that the Corinthians should now fall into the extreme of casting away all spiritual gifts in the church. For these gifts are meant not for selfish display in the church, but they are most definitely meant for our edification. Such is the argument in the verses 1-19.

Then Paul presses the matter further and argues the more basic consideration of the meaning of "speaking with tongues" as such, in the light of the Scriptures. He quotes Isaiah 28:11 in so doing. And this Scriptural principle he brings to bear upon the actual situation in the congregation, demonstrating concretely what serious and evil consequences it has in practical life when this principal meaning of the "speaking with tongues" is not clearly and maturely understood. This is the argument in verses 20-25.

Finally, Paul gives some positive directives, applying what he has said in the former argument, in which he tells the congregation how they are to conduct a congregational worship service. This is not flattering for the Corinthians to thus be instructed. However, it is time that they cease acting the part of children, and that they quit themselves like men with matured understanding. Certainly they are not to act as if either wisdom had its origin in them (went forth from them) or that it ended with them, (came to them only). Rather each should be willing to learn from the other. The spirit of the prophets are subject to the prophets. Thus Paul ends this discussion in the verses 26-40.

Let us try to follow the argument of Paul in each of these three phases a little more in detail.

In this essay we would call your attention to the verses 1-19 of this fourteenth chapter of I Corinthians.

Writes Paul in verse 1 as follows: "Follow after love: yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy."

We are, says the apostle, to follow after love as if it were a veritable chase. All our actions are to be controlled by this love. Without this love we are nothing! Hence, all our affections are to be after a life in the congregation which is motivated by love. Then will our life be one of faith and hope. This trilogy is inseparable. The opposite trilogy is: doubt, despair and hatred! Horrible to even contemplate. Hence, for our very life's sake we are to pursue love in the church. And to this rule there are no exceptions, neither is anyone exempt from this rule.

As we have stated before more than once, it should be noted that love does not put to nought the spiritual gifts in the church, but rather brings each gift to its own rank and place in the divine economy. Thus only will the entire church grow toward Christ their head, and will each member be truly profited. Without this love one must needs walk in hatred toward the brother. Such a one walks in darkness and knows not really whither he is going. Surely he is like the foolish man, who hears the word and does it not. He is like the man who builds his house upon the sand. And great will be the fall of such a one.

Hence while pursuing love — earnestly desire spiritual gifts. They are all wonderful gifts from God in the church. Yet, not all the gifts are to be equally desired. There are especially two gifts which Paul will compare rather in detail to demonstrate this point that we should desire most earnestly to prophesy.

They are the gifts of "speaking with tongues" and that of "prophesying."

To make his point clear in this matter Paul points out the very, very limited *use* and *profit* of "speaking with tongues" when compared with "prophesying." And the argument proceeds from the assumption, that, that which is more for the "profit of all," is the greater gift. It proceeds from the assumption that any office-bearer in the church is first of all a brother in the midst of the brethren, a living member in the church of Christ, and, therefore one who will surely exercise the communion of the saints. No one is lord and master in the church, even when he teaches. One is Lord. He is the Head of the Church, our Lord, Jesus Christ. A teacher may be an "eye" in the body. But he is not an "eye" by itself, but only in and for the profit of the body!

With this in mind let us attend to the instruction of the apostle on this point.

It is so true what Paul writes in the verses 2-4 of this Chapter. We read, "*For he that speaketh in a tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God; for no man understandeth; but in the spirit he speaketh mysteries. But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men edification, and exhortation and consolation. He that speaketh in a tongue edifieth (builds up) himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth a church . . .*"

Now certainly God is not a *member* in the body of Christ.

He is not in need of edification. True, these gifts are in the church for God's purpose but they are not in the church for the *benefit* of God. He is not in *need* of them for his well-being. But the church is in need of the benefit of these gifts. She must be built up in the most holy faith! And she is thus *built up* not by "speaking with tongues." Such speaking indeed has as its content the *mysteries* of the Kingdom of heaven. However, the Holy Spirit cannot by these "tongues" bring the content of these "mysteries" to the believing and saving knowledge of the church.

Such can only be done by *prophesying*!

Prophesying is performed in the language understood by all. In clear prose. Only thus does the Holy Spirit work edification, cheer, and spiritual incentive to the believers. Only thus can the church as "mother of believers" come to her own purpose in this present dispensation, where we see in part and know in part. And that role each member must strive to perform. He must know it his duty cheerfully to employ his gifts for the benefit and advantage of his fellow-member in Christ.

Paul surely does not frown upon the "speaking with tongues." Does he not speak with tongues more than anyone else? Hence, he writes, "*Now I would have you all speak with tongues, but rather that ye should prophesy.*" However, if the "church receive edifying" is to be the chief consideration. Surely, this is a principle which every minister is to bear in mind! It is not first of all a question whether a minister can display his natural gifts. The question is: are the sheep fed with the bread and water of life! Do they really receive the instruction unto godliness and faith which they need! Are the people of God really comforted in this vale of tears! Truly, no one can rest on his laurels as though he had already attained. Surely such ministry requires an intense love for the sheep of Christ's pasture; one must, indeed, be consumed with the zeal of *God's* house!

It is really a very homely illustration which Paul employs to make this point clear that "prophecy" excels over "speaking with tongues." He employs the examples of an inanimate thing such as a musical instrument. Even this must follow the rules of music, of tone, beat and measure, and proper enunciation of a distinctive "sound." Such a sound for calling to the battle is quite distinct from the doleful tones of the funeral procession. And it ought to be. How much more the vox humana! For it was the eternal good pleasure to use this human voice to proclaim the word to others. It is the medium par excellence to bring the message of the mysteries of God in Christ. Hence, our preaching should be "easy to be understood." Such exalted purpose is not best served by speaking with tongues. And it is not really served unless there be "prophesying." Hence Paul writes "*If I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be to him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh will be a barbarian unto me.*"

Shall one then earnestly seek the "best gifts" this must be done prayerfully. If a man receive the gift to speak with tongues, let him pray that he may interpret. Such is Paul's admonition to the Corinthians in that day. And well may every minister apply this to his daily prayer. For that is his calling in the church. For every word of Scripture is profitable for *teaching* first of all. The minister must be a teacher first and last. Then in his teaching there must also be correction and reproof, that the man of God be thoroughly furnished unto every good work.

It is not a question of how "long" one's sermon is. And how "long" the congregational prayer is. Better to speak "five words" unto edification both in preaching and in prayer, than to speak ten thousand words and not be understood. Did not Jesus say: Think not that you shall be heard because of the "abundance of words?"

I think it is a serious mistake to "try to fill the hour" rather than to use as much of it as is needed for "edification!" It surely is an able preacher who knows when to say "amen" to his own sermon, and this is no less the case with the prayer!

These are simply, first rudiments in the church of which Paul is here speaking. They may be repeated, however. And we shall try to live up to this even in writing this brief essay.

This is simply the expression of childlike simplicity.

Of this we shall have more to say in the next essay, D.V.

G.L.

Notice for Classis West

Classis West of the Protestant Reformed Churches will meet, the Lord willing, in South Holland, Illinois, Wednesday, September 18, 1957. The consistories are reminded of the rule that all matters for the classical agenda must be in the hands of the stated clerk thirty days before the meeting of Classis.

Rev. H. Veldman, Stated Clerk

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On September 9, 1957, the Lord willing, our dear parents,

REV. AND MRS. HERMAN VELDMAN

hope to commemorate their 25th wedding anniversary.

We thank our God that He has given them to us and that He may continue to bless them as He has done in the past is the prayer of their grateful children.

Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius Den Ouden
Elaine
Joanne
One grandson.

IN HIS FEAR

Living As the Lord Wills

(2)

We certainly must.

We always do live and die as the Lord wills. Whether we live or whether we die depends entirely upon His will. That we considered last time.

But it is equally true that we *must* live as the Lord wills.

It is our calling always to submit to His will. Always must we so live, that is, so conduct our lives, that we are inwardly in agreement with His will with us.

As to the actual outcome and fruit of our works we never oppose His determinative will. No man can do that, for the simple reason that all things, even our thinking and willing are constantly governed by His will of decree. See for example Romans 9:19, "... Who hath resisted His will?"

Never can a creature as much as delay the execution of God's decree. Never is God hindered in any way or to any degree in the execution of that which He with His sovereign will has decreed from before the foundation of the world. All the human race together, Satan and all his host, the anti-christ with the whole world behind him cannot in the slightest degree as much as make it hard or harder for God to do the things which He wills to do. All these are always and entirely subject to His will to do as He wills.

Before we say anything more about this let us first point out that we are considering the fact that we must live as the Lord *wills*. Even when we speak of His eternal will, the decree which He had in Himself in His eternal heart and mind, we do not say that we live as He *willed* but as He *wills*. True what happens today was His will when only Adam and Eve stood upon this earth, yea was His will before He created the worlds. And yet we say, Living as the Lord wills. For His will never changes. Listen to the word of God in Malachi 3:6, "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Or again to Hebrews 13:8, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today and forever." His will never changes and nothing and no one can possibly change that will. What He *willed* in the past He *sittl* continues to *will* today.

Of Judas who betrayed God's Beloved Son we read in Luke 22:22, "The Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom He is betrayed." Judas did not frustrate the will of God. He did not make it hard (or harder) for God to realize our salvation. He did not cause the Kingdom of Heaven to be delayed somewhat in its coming. He did not cause God to change His plans and to save us in spite of the cross, in spite of the wicked hands of men

and in spite of fierce and evil opposition. O no! Listen to Acts 2:23, "Him being delivered by the determinate will and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." The Son of God came into our flesh, suffered and died according to the determinate will of God. Our salvation—and all things—is realized as the Lord wills it to be realized. Wicked men He used; but the actual outcome of their works, their wicked, rebellious works, never frustrated His will. They opposed His will only in the sense that as far as their intentions and desires were concerned their wills were divergent from God's will. They did what He *willed* that they should do, and yet they hated Him and the things He performed through them. Ethically and spiritually they opposed His will.

That brings us to the point: that we may not do! We must will what the Lord wills. We must so live that inwardly and outwardly we are in harmony with His will with us. The inner activity of our lives, the will and the mind should never entertain thoughts and harbor desires that go contrary to the Lord's will but should always be in perfect harmony with His will. We should be ready to drop our will and our plans as soon as the Lord makes plain that it is not His will and plan with us.

What is more, we must live in the consciousness of the fact that we live only as He wills. It is one thing to yield to His will when He leads us in a way in which we did not intend to walk. It takes grace to do that. And it is a thing that is demanded of us, for He is the Lord. By His grace we will do that and say, "Not my will but Thy will be done," when He touches us sorely and takes from us what we hold dear and precious. But there is another thing that is demanded of us, and that is, that we always live in the consciousness of that fact that we live only as He wills and that all our planning and charting of our course is done with that in mind.

We must not live as though He and His will do not exist until He makes His almighty presence known by the works of His hands. It must be said of us as it was said in the last world war, "There are no atheists in the foxholes." We must not live as atheists until we get into trouble and then begin to think of Him and of His will. We surely must think of Him in calamities and see these calamities as coming by His will. But we must also think of Him while the sailing is smooth.

Living as the Lord wills means that we live in the consciousness that what He wills we shall receive and that we are to be humble and submissive before that will. It also means that we think, plan and will with His sovereign will in mind.

James has a word to say about this in his epistle.

We read in James 4:13-15, "Go to now ye that say, today or tomorrow we will go into such a city and continue

there a year, and buy and sell and get gain; Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life: It is even as a vapour, that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live and do this or that."

Leaving out the element of buying and selling and of going to a certain city for these things how often is it not that the picture James draws here is of our behaviour? How often do we not make plans with little or no thought of Him and His sovereign unchangeable will? We do remember that we live by His will after our will is brushed aside by God and our plans are shown to be nothing more than wishes. But do we have Him in our minds when we make our plans? Do we say, as James does, If the Lord wills we shall do this or that?

It certainly is a fundamental element of the fear of the Lord that we remember Him, have Him in our thoughts and make all our plans before His face. And before His face we surely have Him in mind as the Lord Who rules us and sovereignly charts our whole course through life. Plan all in His fear and you live as the Lord wills. Your whole life will show it.

The world, those that have not the fear of God in their hearts, is quite accustomed to say, "We will be back tomorrow at this same time with the latest news. Listen tomorrow again at this same time and you will again hear . . ." Go to, James says to all who so speak and think. That is not living as the Lord wills. It is ignoring His will and ruling Him out of His Own creation. And we? Are we any otherwise in our ways and actions? It is certain that in our conversation with one another we very seldom mention His will when we speak of our plans. It is a rather rare thing, outside perhaps of ecclesiastical publications — and often so rarely even there — that the D.V. (*Deo Volente* — the Lord willing) is to be heard or seen in print. But is it as much, even, as in our thoughts? The tongue usually utters what is in the heart. The hypocrite may say with his lips that which his heart does not mean. And there are times when our lips do not say what is in the heart. We do find it difficult to reveal our faith and our thoughts of God by the words of our mouths. Confession publicly we often find hard even though we do believe. Therefore we ask, Is that the will of God as much as in our thoughts when we make our plans and speak of them? If it does make its appearance in our thoughts, we may as well be honest about it, that is usually an afterthought. We first make our plans and then when we become fearful of not having them materialize we have that fear because we did not begin with the consideration of God's will but of our own.

No, we are not advocating, nor does Scripture advocate a certain fatalism. We are not forbidden the activity of planning, looking into the future and providing for that which

appears to be a need unto us. The sluggard is admonished to go to the ant who provides food for its future needs. The man who does not sit down and carefully consider the cost before he begins to build his house is considered, in Scripture, to be a fool. He that sows sparingly is told that he must not expect to reap abundantly. And nowhere in Scripture is a man told that he may not go and sow his seed with a view to a future harvest. James does not forbid a man to go to such and such a city to buy, and sell and get gain. He is not condemning all thought for the future. No, for he says, "For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live and do this or that." We may plan but in subservience to God's will to give us life and to cause our plans to materialize.

God reaches down and makes a loved one desperately sick. Death seems to be very near. A squeal of brakes and a sudden sickening thud of colliding automobiles! Ghastly bruised bodies and bloody injuries! It is not in His fear to say, "The Lord willed death through these works of his. Call no ambulance, seek no skilled services of surgeon and physician." He has willed to lead man in the development of life-saving surgery and discovery of powerful antibiotics that destroy the death-dealing germs that invade our bodies. And we may use and seek these provided we put our trust not in men but in God and humbly commit our loved ones to His care, confessing that only His will to restore and heal can do so.

Did Jesus rebuke those who brought their sick children to Him and tell them that they were not living as the Lord wills? Not at all. Once He stopped a funeral procession to raise a widow's son without her plea. He went along with Jairus, heeding his pleas and raised his daughter from the dead. He went to Bethany to raise Lazarus from the dead. We may be concerned. We must be concerned with the physical wellbeing of our loved ones and of all men. We may seek recovery for them when it wills God to make them ill, provided we leave their recovery to His will and do not mean by our efforts to seek recovery to dethrone Him and try to make Him live as we will.

When He makes His will known to us we must change our will and make His will to be ours.

Unless we will His determinative will and live in the consciousness that we are constantly bound to His determinative will, we violate and oppose also His ethical will.

He is God. And unless we in deed as well as in word love His will with us, we deny Him His divinity.

That is not in His fear.

In His fear we reverence Him as God.

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).

The stern old pope, as hard as a rock and as cold as the snow, refused admittance, notwithstanding the earnest entreaties of Matilda and Hugo, till he was satisfied that the cup of humiliation was drained to the dregs, or that further resistance would be impolitic. He first exacted from Henry, as a condition of absolution, the promise to submit to his decision at the approaching meeting of the German nobles under the presidency of the pope as arbiter, and to grant him and his deputies protection on their journey to the north. In the meantime he was to abstain from exercising the functions of royalty. This last point is omitted by a certain Berthold, but expressly mentioned by Lambert of Hersfeld, and confirmed by Gregory, who says in his account of the Canossa event to the German prelates and princes, that he received Henry only into the communion of the Church, without reinstating him in his reign, and without binding the faithful to their oath of allegiance, reserving this to future decision. The same view he expresses in the sentence of the second excommunication.

The king made the promise, and two bishops and several nobles, in his behalf, swore upon sacred relics that he would keep it. Hugo, being a monk, could not swear, but pledged his word before the all-seeing God. Hugo, the bishops, nobles, and the Countess Matilda and Adelheid signed the written agreement, which still exists.

After these preliminaries, the inner gate was opened. The king, in the prime of life, the heir of many crowned monarchs, and a man of tall and noble presence, threw himself at the feet of the gray-haired pope, a man of low origin and of small and unimpressive stature, who by his word had disarmed an empire. He burst into tears, and cried, "Spare me, holy father, spare me." The company was moved to tears; even the iron pope showed signs of tender compassion. He heard the confession of Henry, raised him up, gave him absolution and his apostolic blessing, conducted him to the chapel, and sealed the reconciliation by the celebration of the sacrifice of the mass.

Some chroniclers add the following incident, which has often been repeated, but is very improbable. Gregory, before partaking of the sacrament, called upon God to strike him dead if he were guilty of the crimes charged on him, and, after eating one-half of the consecrated wafer unharmed, he offered the other half to Henry, requesting him to submit to the same awful ordeal! but the king declined it, and referred

the whole question to the decision of a general council. This story, however, is discredited by the Catholic historians. The pope had no need to protest his innocence, and had referred the charges against the king to a German tribunal; the king had previously promised him to appear before this tribunal; his present purpose was simply to get rid of the interdict, so as to be free to act. By declining the ordeal he would have confessed his guilt and justified the pope, and superseded the action of the German tribunal.

After mass, the pope entertained the king courteously at dinner and dismissed him with some fatherly warnings and counsels, and with his renewed apostolic blessing.

Henry gained his object, but at the sacrifice of his royal dignity. He confessed by his act of humiliation that the pope had a right to depose a king and heir of the imperial crown, and to absolve subjects from the oath of allegiance. The head of the State acknowledged the temporal supremacy of the Church. Canossa marks the deepest humiliation of the State and the highest exaltation of the Church,—we mean the political papal Church of Rome, not the spiritual Church of Christ, who wore a crown of thorns in this world and who prayed on the cross for his murderers.

Gregory acted on this occasion in the sole interest of the hierarchy. His own friends, as we learn from his official account to the Germans, deemed his conduct to be "tyrannical cruelty, rather than apostolic severity." He saw in Henry the embodiment of the secular power in opposition to the ecclesiastical power, and he achieved a signal triumph, but only for a short time. He overshot his mark, and was at last expelled from Rome by the very man against whom he had closed the gate. (However, the question may well be asked: "Did the pope, after all, gain such a signal triumph over Henry IV, even at Canossa? We must remember that a meeting held Oct. 16, 1076, at Tribur, near Mainz, had demanded of Henry that he should submit to the pope, seek absolution from him within twelve months from the date of excommunication, at the risk of forfeiting the crown. The people of Germany were generally in sympathy with the pope because they resented the iron hand with which Henry had ruled over Germany. And this meeting, Oct. 16, 1076, also decided that Henry should appear at a diet to be held at Augsburg on Feb. 2, 1077, under the presidency of the pope, where the king could present his grievances and where his fate would be decided. Had the king appeared at this meeting, Feb. 2, 1077, while yet under excommunication, he would surely have suffered a shameful defeat and lost his crown. Hence, the king went to Canossa to regain admittance into the church and therefore be able to attend the meeting at Augsburg as in the good graces of the pope. Henry went to Canossa while the pope was on his way to Germany and to Augsburg. In fact, the pope retired into the castle at Canossa, because he had heard that Henry was approaching Italy with a large company of men. When Henry appeared

finally, not with a great military company, but as a penitent, the pope was really put on the spot. Absolution must always be given to the penitent. That is the command of Christ. But the pope was torn between his duty to give absolution and the fear that, from a political viewpoint, it might be unwise to give the king absolution and thereby give him the opportunity to retain his crown. This is probably the reason why he kept the youthful monarch waiting in the cold and snow for three days before granting him an interview. The real struggle was going on in the soul of Gregory. In the end Henry really wrung absolution from the pope and therewith the restoration of his kingdom. The king had humbled himself before the pope and thereby gained a great victory over the German nobles who now no longer had a good reason to resist his occupancy of the throne. Henry had humbled himself to keep his crown. In this he had succeeded. — H. V.)

Gregory's relation to Matilda was political and ecclesiastical. The charge of his enemies that he entertained carnal intimacy with her is monstrous and incredible, considering his advanced age and unrelenting war against priestly concubinage. The best modern historians, Protestant as well as Catholic, reject this charge. The countess was the most powerful princess in Northern Italy, and afforded to the pope the best protection against a possible invasion of a Northern army. She was devoted to Hildebrand as the visible head of the Church, and felt proud and happy to aid him. In 1077 she made a reversionary grant of her dominion to the patrimony of Peter ("patrimony" refers to an inheritance from a father or an ancestor; also, any inheritance; an endowment, as of a church — H.V.), and thus increased the fatal gift of Constantine, from which Dante derives the evils of the Church. She continued the war with Henry, and aided Conrad and Henry V in the rebellion against their father. In the political interest of the papacy she contracted, in her fifty-fifth year, a second marriage with Guelph, a youth of eighteen, the son of the Duke of Bavaria, the most powerful enemy of Henry IV (1089), but the marriage, it seems, was never consummated, and was dissolved a few years afterwards (1095). She died, 1115. It is supposed by many that Dante's Matilda, who carried him over the river Lethe to Beatrice, is the famous countess; but Dante never mentions Gregory VII, probably on account of his quarrel with the emperor.

Canossa has become a proverbial name for the triumph of priestcraft over kingcraft. Some seek to make out that Henry's act at Canossa was regarded by his age as an act of humility and not of humiliation. The contemporary writers speak of it as an act of unheard of and wonderful humility. In view of the profound reverence for the Church which prevailed it may be taken as certain that the people looked upon it as an act of humble piety. But for Henry it was a different thing. As a certain Mirbt agrees, the king was not moved by deep religious concern but by a desire to

hold on to his crown. For him Canossa was a humiliation and before the bar of historic judgment the act wherein the State prostrated itself at the feet of the pope must be regarded as a humiliation. Streams of blood have been shed to wipe out the disgrace of Henry's humiliation before Hildebrand. The memory of that scene was revived in the *Culturkampf* between the State of Prussia and the Vatican from 1870 to 1887. At the beginning of the conflict, Prince Bismarck declared in the Prussian Chambers that "he would never go to Canossa"; but ten years afterwards he found it politic to move in that direction, and to make a compromise with Leo XIII, who proved his equal as a master of diplomacy. The anti-papal May-laws were repealed, one by one, till nothing is left of them except the technical *Anzeigepflicht*, a modern term for investiture. The Roman Church gained new strength in Prussia and Germany from legal persecution, and enjoys now more freedom and independence than ever, and much more than the Protestant Church, which has innocently from the operation from the May-laws.

Renewal of the Conflict. Two Kings and Two Popes.

The result of Canossa was civil war in Germany and Italy: king against king, pope against pope, nobles against nobles, bishops against bishops, father against son, and son against father. It lasted several years. Gregory and Henry died in exile. Gregory was defeated by Henry, Henry by his rebellious son. The long wars of the Guelphs and the Ghibellines originated in that period. The Duke Guelph IV of Bavaria was present at Forchheim when Henry was deposed, and took up arms against him. The popes sided with the Guelphs against the Hohenstaufen emperor and the Ghibellines.

The friends and supporters of Henry in Lombardy and Germany were dissatisfied, and regarded his humiliation as an act of cowardice, and the pope's conduct as an insult to the German nation and the royal crown. His enemies, a small number of Saxon and Swabian nobles and bishops, assembled at Forchheim, March 18, 1077, and, in the presence of two legates of the pope, but without his express authority, offered the crown of Germany to Rudolf, Duke of Swabia, Henry's brother-in-law, but on two important conditions (which may be traced to the influence of the pope's legates), namely, that he should denounce a hereditary claim to the throne, and guarantee the freedom of ecclesiastical appointments. He was crowned March 26, at Mainz, by Archbishop Siegfried, but under bad omens: the consecrated oil ran short, the Gospel was read by a simoniacal deacon, the citizens raised a tumult, and Rudolf had to make his escape by night with Siegfried, who never returned. He found little support in Southern Germany, and went to Henry's enemies in Saxony. Henry, therefore, we can easily understand, regarded this Rudolf as the robber of his crown. But we will continue with Schaff's description of this in our following article.

H.V.

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 13. The manner of this operation cannot be fully comprehended by believers in this life. Notwithstanding which, they rest satisfied with knowing and experiencing that by this grace of God they are enabled to believe with the heart, and love their Savior.

The above translation is not correct in that it draws an adversative relationship between the two realities stated in this article, — something which neither the original Latin, which uses the word *interim*, nor the official Dutch translation, which uses the word *ondertusschen*, does. We prefer the following rendition: "The manner of this operation believers are not able in this life fully to comprehend; meanwhile they rest satisfied in this, that they know and experience that by this grace of God they believe with the heart and love their Savior." The reader will observe in this translation that we make one more, rather important, correction when we eliminate the term *are enabled*. The latter term does not belong in the translation either according to the language or the intent of the fathers. Believers do not merely rest satisfied in this, that they are enabled to believe with the heart and to love their Savior. But they rest satisfied in this, that they do actually believe with the heart and do actually love their Savior.

The appearance of this little article in our *Canons* may leave the impression upon the reader as being rather sudden and inexplicable. Why, after the rather thorough treatment of the incapability of the natural man to convert himself, and after the thoroughgoing description of the work of efficacious calling and regeneration, — why should our fathers insert in a confessional statement the proposition that believers cannot in this life fully comprehend the manner of this operation of God? What they refer to when they speak of "the manner of this operation" must be quite evident. They have in mind the operation just referred to, and denominated "a new creation, a resurrection from the dead, a making alive." It is the work of regeneration (conceived of now in its broader sense) to which they refer, and concerning which they state that its manner is not to be fully understood in this life. But why particularly concerning this work do the fathers make a point of stating that it cannot be fully understood in this life? After all, is it not quite in order to make the same statement concerning all the works of God? Is it possible

to comprehend fully in this life the work of creation or of the resurrection? Is it possible fully to understand the work of justification? Besides, why do the fathers hasten to add that in the meantime believers are not spiritually disturbed by this inability fully to understand the manner of God's operation? Why do they add that they rest satisfied in this, that they know and experience that by this grace of God they believe with the heart and love their Savior?

I believe that the answer to these questions is to be sought in more than one direction.

First of all, let us notice that the article itself calls attention to a very sound reason for its being inserted at this point in the *Canons*. For when it states that the "manner of this operation cannot be fully comprehended by believers in this life," we may infer that perhaps the impression might be left in the preceding paragraphs that this was now the full and complete explanation of this work of God, that there was nothing more to be said about it, and that the fathers had expounded this operation of God down to its very last detail. And the present paragraph of the *Canons* removes the possibility of any such impression.

Let us observe that the fathers here speak not simply of this operation of God, but of "the manner of this operation." Besides, they do not say that the manner of this operation cannot be known and understood at all, but that it cannot be fully comprehended in this life, — not even by believers.

What does this mean?

It implies, in the first place, that there is much that can be understood and said concerning the manner of this operation. It means not only that in the light of Scripture we may know that there is such an operation of God; but we may also know something about this operation of God. And notice that it is exactly about the *manner* of this operation that the fathers have been speaking in the preceding paragraphs. All that they have written there we may know concerning it. In brief, they have been emphasizing that the manner of this operation is *efficacious*. That certainly belongs to what may be known concerning the work of calling and regeneration. We may know also that the manner of this operation is such that it results in a complete and radical spiritual, ethical change, — the change from a sinner to a saint. The fathers give us to understand too that this operation of God takes place in such a way that it does not leave the regenerated Christian passive and inactive, but that the renewed will, being actuated and influenced by God becomes itself active, so that man is himself rightly said to believe and repent by virtue of the grace received.

But if, in the light of Holy Writ, much can be said concerning this work of God and its manner, it is equally true, in the second place, that there is much that we cannot comprehend concerning that same work. On the one hand, even that which we do know and, to an extent, understand, we cannot *fully comprehend*. We may say many things *about* this work of God, but we can never fully comprehend it,

grasp it in its very essence, so that we can exactly define it. Even when we offer a formal definition of regeneration or of the calling, we must never forget that in a sense it is not more than a "working definition." If we could comprehend God's works, we could fathom God Himself. But this is ever impossible. Thus, for example, we may, according to Scripture, compare this work of God to other works. The new birth is like a new creation; it is like a resurrection from the dead. Or we may use the Scriptural example of the sprouting of a seed, or of the grafting of a branch. But even then the fact remains that one incomprehensible reality is compared with another, and both remain equally incomprehensible. **These examples**, — and they are given us by Scripture itself, — certainly are of great value in aiding us to know and understand God's work. But never do they enable us fully to comprehend. And on the other hand, there are many things concerning this work which we cannot say at all. Just exactly how the Spirit regenerates us we cannot say. We cannot say what is taking place in our inmost heart. We may know and experience the result of His work. We may judge the "before" and "after" of a man in whom this work **is wrought**. But we cannot say what takes place. We cannot say either just exactly when this work takes place, cannot determine the exact moment of our rebirth, so that, for example, we can say, "Right now I am being regenerated." Besides, we cannot say just how it is possible that this work of God is efficacious, — or, if you will, irresistible, — and yet is such that man is not a stock and block. The fact of this we may apprehend, so that we state with Article 12: "Whereupon the will thus renewed, is not only actuated and influenced by God, but in consequence of this influence, becomes itself active." Or we may even state that God works in such a way that He never interferes between the will and its activity. But when all is said that is possible to say, then the fact remains that we do not fully comprehend.

And although our fathers add the phrase "in this life," we must not forget that never shall we be able to comprehend God and His works. Certainly it is true that here we "know in part," and that presently we shall know perfectly, "know even as also we are known." But our knowledge shall forever be a creaturely knowledge, and shall forever fall short of full comprehension. And while in glory we shall undoubtedly know and understand far better than we do now, the fact remains that neither now nor then shall believers fully comprehend.

All this leads us to a second reason for the insertion of this little paragraph in our *Canons*. The Arminians were ever wont to accuse our fathers of "prying into the deep things of God" and of acting as though they were able to expound the mysteries of God down to their very last detail. And they would try to capitalize on this evil accusation by pointing to the so-called intricate and involved Reformed view in comparison with the so-called simple Arminian gospel. And they would love to hold up the beautiful Reformed

truth to mockery with the false claim that one had to understand fully the work of God before he could actually know whether he was regenerated. Over against this they would present their own so-called simple gospel of "Believe and repent. Just come to Jesus. Only accept Christ."

Hence, the fathers calmly state, in the first place, that the manner of this operation cannot be fully comprehended by believers in this life. And they want all to understand that they do not make the claim that this work of God can be fully comprehended, though they insist that this operation of God can be known and that its manner can be understood, — at least understood in so far that it may be clearly apprehended as a unique work of God.

And therefore believers need not be and are not disturbed, spiritually upset, by the fact that they cannot fully comprehend God's work in them.

You see, it is not thus that one first fully comprehends God's work and then experiences and identifies that work of God in himself. It is never thus in the work of salvation. Fact is that the order is the very opposite. One first apprehends the work of God in himself, and apprehends indeed that it is the work of God; and then he begins to comprehend that work of God in as far as that is possible in the light of Scripture.

How does he apprehend, know and experience that work of God in himself? By its fruit. What is its fruit? First of all, that he believes with the heart, that is, he engages in that spiritual activity whereby as a confessed sinner he cleaves to Christ with his whole soul and puts all his trust in Him for his righteousness before God. And secondly, by the fruit of love toward his Savior. For the activity of faith is never to be separated from the activity of love. And that love is not natural, but spiritual; it is not a mere sentiment, but an act of the will which reveals itself in keeping Christ's commandments. Hereby we know that we abide in Him, and He in us: if we believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and keep His commandments. In this activity of faith and love of the Savior Jesus Christ, which are the fruits of regeneration, we know and experience the regenerating grace of God.

And in this the believers rest satisfied. To be sure, when they believe with the heart and love their Savior, they want to know all that it is possible to know concerning the wonderful work of God's sovereign grace in their hearts. You can see this too in a covenant child as he grows up. To begin with, he does not at all comprehend the work of God in him. But even as a child he knows and experiences that grace of God, for he believes with the heart and loves his Savior. And as he grows up, he strives diligently to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But even though the believer never fully comprehends the marvelous manner of God's work in him, he knows and experiences the grace of God in his heart. For it is not a question of comprehension. And therefore, believing with the heart and loving his Savior, he has the peace which passeth all understanding. H.C.H.

THE ALTAR OF INCENSE

Anyone standing in the outer court of the tabernacle in the old dispensation and looking into the Holy Place, where only the priest might enter, would immediately have his attention focused on the square piece of furniture standing immediately in front of the veil that separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies. This was the altar of incense, from which sweet and pleasant odors of incense arose which filled both apartments of the house of God. At the wall to the right stood the table of shewbread, and to the left the golden candlestick.

In Exodus 30:1-10 we are told that this altar was made of shittim wood, also known as acacia, a fine grained, very hard and durable wood, exactly suited for this purpose. It stood two cubits (approximately three feet) high, and was a cubit (approximately eighteen inches) square. The entire altar was overlaid with gold, with a wreath about the top and horns on the four corners. Below this wreath were rings for the staves which served for carrying while Israel was on their journeys.

This original altar made by Moses was later superceded by the one made by Solomon. The latter was made of cedar wood and was overlaid with gold. Sometimes it was referred to as the golden altar.

It is interesting to note that this altar was carried away with the other furniture of the temple to Babylon at the time of the invasion of Nebuchadnezzar, but was restored again after the captivity. The book of the Maccabees relates that Antiochus Epiphanes removed this altar, and that it was restored by Judas Maccabaeus. We know that the altar of incense stood at its appointed place at the time when the angel appeared to Zacharias at the right of the altar to announce the birth of John the Baptist.

In passing it may be well to mention that Ezekiel also sees an altar of incense in his vision of the temple. But in this case the altar is larger, for the height is three cubits and its breadth and depth two cubits. It also appears in the book of Revelation, particularly in chapter 8, in connection with the opening of the seventh seal, where we read that an angel came and offered incense upon the altar before the throne of God.

We shall have occasion to return to these references later, but for the moment we are interested in the use of the altar in the old dispensation. In Exodus 30:7, 8 we are told, "And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it. And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the Lord throughout your generations." From this it becomes evident that this is no altar in the ordinary sense of the word, since no sacrifice was ever brought upon it. God had strictly forbidden the use of this altar for any kind of sacrifice whatever. Once a year, on the great day of atonement, the blood of the sacri-

fice was placed on the horns of the altar to purge even this altar from the sins of the people, but no sacrifice might be laid upon it. It was used only to burn incense.

Every morning and every evening the officiating priest brought coals from the altar of burnt offering (no strange fire might be brought on this altar, as the sons of Aaron had done, for which they were punished by death) and incense was laid upon these coals of fire. According to some, the altar served as a stand for the pot containing the live coals and the incense, which was replaced every morning and every evening. According to others, and this seems more likely to us, golden censers in the shape of spoons, were laid upon the altar with live coals in them, and the incense was laid upon these censers.

The incense was a composition formed of four kinds of sweet spices, stacte, onycha, galbarnum and pure frankincense. The composition was made with the view of yielding the most fragrant and appealing odor. The people were expressly forbidden to use it at any time, and the priests were restricted in the use of it only for this purpose. It was said to be "salted, pure, and holy." The smoke of the incense constantly arose before the face of God as a sweet smelling odor as He dwelt within the Holy of Holies. Typically, there was never a moment that the Lord did not have this smoke of the incense filling His nostrils.

This already accounts for the peculiar position of the altar of incense immediately before the veil in the Holy Place.

Our attention is, first of all, called to the fact that this altar stands in a direct line between the altar of burnt offering and laver, which stood in the Outer Court, and the ark of the covenant, which stood in the Holy of Holies. The symbolism of this position is obviously that for spiritual Israel access to God was through the altar of burnt offering and the altar of incense. God has prepared the only possible channel of access to His presence through the blood of atonement and the incense of prayer. Or, to express it in language of the new dispensation, God prepared the way of intimate covenant fellowship with Him through the cross of Christ and by the operation of the Spirit arousing response in the hearts of the believers.

But there is, in the second place, something far more remarkable about the position of the altar of incense before the veil. It cannot escape us that Scripture always associates this altar with the furnishings of the Most Holy Place. Already in Exodus we read that Aaron shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the Lord throughout the generations of Israel. So this incense was always before the Lord, as if it arose within the Holy of Holies, where the Lord dwelt in the lighted cloud. In the account of the construction of the temple in Solomon's time, the golden altar is mentioned in connection with the Most Holy Place, as one of its furnishings. Hebrews 9:4 speaks as if the golden censer was actually behind the veil, in that "which is called

the Holiest of all." In that light we can understand Lev. 16:18, which speaks of this altar as the "altar that is before the Lord."

This can only mean one thing. The altar of incense actually belonged within the veil. It stood in most intimate relationship to the mercy seat and the ark of the covenant, where God's presence was symbolized by the lighted cloud. Even in its position immediately before the veil, as close to the Holy of Holies as possible, the smoke of the incense could arise and enter into the Most Holy Place as a perpetual incense before God's face.

The only reason why this altar was not within the innermost sanctuary was that the veil still separated the people from God. The way into the sanctuary had not yet been opened by the blood of atonement. When Christ died on the cross the veil of the temple rent from the top to the bottom, opening the way for the saints into the innermost sanctuary of God. At that moment, so to speak, the altar came into its proper place, every sin and hindrance had been removed, so that we now have free access to God through the new and living way of His flesh. Of course, we hasten to add, that this actually marked the end of the old dispensation and opened the way for the outpouring of the Spirit, so that we no more serve the Lord through type and shadow, but in Spirit and in truth.

From all that has been said the significance of this altar of incense is very obvious.

The psalmist expresses it by saying (Psalm 141:2), "Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense." The implication is that prayer is in the reality what incense is in the symbol. Sanctified by the blood of atonement and renewed by the Spirit in our hearts, our Spirit-inspired prayers are continually before Him as pleasing unto Him as the smoke of incense arising from the altar.

Also Isaiah 6 is significant in this connection. The prophet sees a vision of the Lord sitting upon an exalted throne in the temple, with worshipping seraphim round about Him raising their voices in adoration. Then we read, "And the house was filled with smoke." What else could this smoke refer to but the smoke from the altar of incense? And since this is mentioned in connection with the call of Isaiah to the office of prophet in the midst of God's covenant people, it undoubtedly means that the prayers of the saints have arisen before God's face as a sweet smelling sacrifice, and that in answer of these prayers the Lord is calling and mandating Isaiah unto the salvation of His people.

Previously we had occasion to refer to Luke 1, where we read that the rare privilege had fallen upon Zacharias to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. Significantly it is added that "the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of (morning) incense." Thus the time of incense is associated with the prayers of the people, and it is exactly at this time that the angel Gabriel, in answer to the prayers of the whole church of the old dis-

persation, steps as it were out of the Most Holy Place to inform Zacharias of the birth of John the Baptist. Therefore the angel can also assure Zacharias, "Fear not, for thy prayer is heard." The very prayers that were symbolized by the incense of the altar were pleasing to the Lord and were also heard in the coming of John the Baptist as forerunner of the Christ.

Also in the book of Revelation the prayers of the saints are associated with the sacrifice of incense. In chapter 8, verses 3 and 4, we read, "And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand." Here is described an occasion very similar to the one when the people were praying and the priest was laying the incense upon the altar for the morning sacrifice, for the first verse mentions that there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. Twice in this short passage the prayers of the saints are associated with the smoke of the incense that ascended up before God. Nor must it escape us that they are not the prayers of the people as they are by nature, or even the people in general, but the prayers of the saints. These saints are redeemed by the blood of the cross and sanctified by the Spirit Who applies the cleansing and renewing power of the blood to the hearts of God's elect. Their prayers are always as a sweet smelling savor in the nostrils of the Lord. And these prayers are also heard, for we read in verse 5, "And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake." The church had prayed that God's will may be done on earth as in heaven, and in the same breath had added, "Come, Lord Jesus." In answer to that prayer the Lord sends His judgments upon the earth, saying, "Behold, I come quickly."

In conclusion we see that,

First, the Lord has prepared the only possible access unto covenant fellowship with Him by the blood of the cross and the altar of incense, that is, through Christ who brings us into covenant fellowship with God in prayer by the operation of His Spirit in our hearts. Prayer is communion with God.

Second, this fellowship is very real for we have the assurance that the prayers of the saints are as a sweet and pleasant incense before the face of God.

Thirdly, these prayers are pleasing to God because they are the prayers of the saints, who pray in perfect harmony with His holy will, even as we are taught to pray by our Lord, "Hallowed by thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." This forms the basis for all our personal petitions, which can be summed up in

(Continued on page 480)

ALL AROUND US

Interesting Quotations and Interesting Changes.

Recently a brother sent me a bundle of old "Church News" and "Concordias" in which appear writings of some of the ministers who left us in the schism of 1953. These are the ministers who are responsible for the letter which was sent to the synod of the Christian Reformed Church of 1957, a copy of which appeared in the last issue of *The Standard Bearer*. As those who read the letter well know, those responsible for writing and sending it ask the Christian Reformed Church to interpret the Three Points of 1924 which they confess they may have misinterpreted. They express the hope that a satisfactory interpretation will be given them that will remove all their fears and open the way for unity with the Christian Reformed Church.

When I read the articles above referred to, I agreed with the brother who sent them to me that they make interesting reading in the light of the letter they sent to the Christian Reformed synod. We offer our readers a few quotations from these writings which clearly indicate interesting changes in those who wrote them. It will become very apparent that at one time they understood very well what they now declare they may have misinterpreted.

We take our first quotation from an editorial which appeared in *Concordia* of December 12, 1946, and written by Rev. A. Cammenga. The editorial is entitled "Three Little Foxes." He begins his article by telling his readers that Solomon was aware of the little foxes that destroy the vine, and he points out that "in the vineyard of the Protestant Reformed Churches seemingly insignificant little foxes have crept in, not exactly unawares, but at least rather unmolested. Compared with the so-called big bad fox of some years ago they naturally seem rather harmless. However, we ought to remember that the little foxes are related to the big one and have the same nature and the same intent. We ought to remember also that these little foxes do not wait with their mischievous work until they can attack the higher branches of the vine, but from the very start they prey on the tender little grapes, and we ought to be on the alert and snare them early."

He continues, "The little foxes to which we have reference in this article are three in number, possibly we might name them: Emphasis, Trivial and Obstinate."

"Emphasis is an offspring of old mother 'Controversy' who, back in 1924 was fierce and vicious, and we feared that she might uproot the whole vineyard. Boldly she came out of hiding and attacked the truth of the Word of God we held dear . . . Emphasis is that rather new philosophy that the only difference between the Protestant Reformed and

the Christian Reformed Churches is simply a matter of EMPHASIS. The position is taken that both churches actually believe the very same truth, they uphold and defend the same doctrine, but with this exception: the Protestant Reformed Churches emphasize this truth much more than the Christian Reformed Churches. Therefore there is essentially no difference. And the little fox does his work, especially to the young and tender grapes, namely, the one church is as good and pure doctrinally as the other. Hence, to leave or join the Protestant Reformed Churches or those of the Christian Reformed is nothing more than a matter of choice and not principle. And, there is nothing to debate about, nothing to get excited about, let by-gones be by-gones, let us forgive and forget.

"However, there, is one thing we ought not forget: if this little fox 'Emphasis' is a correct interpretation of 1924 then its mother of 1924 becomes still more fierce and vile and very mysterious. For then the fact remains that the Christian Reformed Churches expelled believers from their midst who were not ashamed of the truth but emphasized it. And that sounds rather bad in the face of what our Confessions say in Article 29, namely, that it is the false church which persecutes those who live holily according to the Word of God. Therefore if the only difference is a matter of emphasis how could the Christian Reformed Churches expell us from their midst?"

Cammenga goes on to write along the same line of thought about the two other little foxes 'Trivial' and 'Obstinate.' And he concludes his editorial with the following:

"Now we do not write these things with the purpose of rethreshing old straw, but it seems as if during the last while these little foxes persistently show themselves in the vineyard of the church and each one ought to realize the seriousness of the matter. From the Christian Reformed side it ought to be realized that by resorting to the devastating power of these little foxes they certainly are not putting their church in a better light, in fact, 1924 becomes even more scandalous. From the Protestant Reformed side it ought to be realized that these little foxes are much more dangerous than we realize, especially so for the younger element of the church and for the cause of our mission endeavors. These tactics are intended to belittle the entire issue and to make it appear that our whole cause is unjustifiable.

"With this in view we must seek to keep the issue of the truth, which God has entrusted to us, alive. And our young people ought to be drilled in the why and the wherefore of our Protestant Reformed Churches. And together we must be convinced and grow in the conviction that the issue of 1924 and of today is a matter of the truth of the Word of God, a matter of principle which we may not let slip neither belittle.

"The year 1924 was the beginning of a reformatory period and we must do our utmost to effectively repel the little mischievous foxes within the vineyard lest the reformation of 1924 suffer deformation in the present and coming generations."

The reader can draw his own conclusions from the above quotation as compared with the letter Rev. Cammenga was instrumental in bringing to the synod of the Christian Reformed Church. My conclusion is that the letter is a big lie, and Cammenga gives plenty of evidence in the above quotation that he needs no interpretation of the Three Points. He understood them well with all their implications when he wrote that editorial.

But read what Rev. P. De Boer wrote in the July 22, 1948 issue of *Concordia*. The title of his article was "Before 'Three Points' Again." Writes he, "The following item appeared in a recent issue of *The Banner* (June 25), under the caption 'Synod At a Glance.' We quote,

'Eighteen protesting members of the Grace Church in Kalamazoo, including Rev. H. Danhof, must meet three requirements for the continued recognition of their membership, one of these being an expression of adherence to the doctrinal position of the Christian Reformed Church.'

"A few observations on our part at this time, though at present we know nothing more of the matter than the above item states.

"1. Again the Rev. Danhof is before 'three points,' only this time they are at once three requirements. In 1924 it was three points, but it was Classis West of 1925 that made them three requirements. Now the Synod requires at once.

"2. In 1925 Classis West deposed him from office as minister, which official standing in the churches of the Christian Reformed denomination was not restored even after Danhof's congregation a few years ago really bowed to the hierarchical yoke they once rejected in '25. Now he must meet 'three requirements' even to maintain his membership as a common member. He and eighteen other protesting members. What a sad commentary on a sad history growing out of his refusal to remain in the Protestant Reformed Churches, in whose midst he doctrinally belonged and of which he was historically a part and in whose midst he might have played a positive role had he so willed.

"3. No, I do not know whether the doctrinal issue now involved as one of the points has anything to do with 'The Three Points.' We only know what we read, and that is that one of these three requirements for the continued recognition of the membership of Rev. Danhof and the other protesting members is 'an expression of adherence to the doctrinal position of the Christian Reformed Church.' And certainly since '24 the doctrinal position of the Christian Reformed Church means also The Three Points. An expression of adherence to the doctrinal position of the Christian

Reformed Church in regard to these Three Points we are assured the Rev. Danhof cannot in honesty before God make. Nor do we expect that he will.

"What a sad situation. Now in the days of his retirement. Sad though it remains true that he brought it upon himself by leading his church away from the Protestant Reformed Churches where they doctrinally belonged, and finally leading his church back into the Christian Reformed Churches where he and his church did not doctrinally belong!

"How tragic for himself all this is! How pitiable! But also how natural — *in* the Christian Reformed denomination it is demanded that one be Christian Reformed!"

When I read the above I could not help but repeat the words of De Boer, only now with respect to him. Indeed, how tragic for De Boer, and those with him, all that has transpired between him and us, and now between him and the Christian Reformed Church. How pitiable! But also how natural! When you subscribe to the two statements of De Wolf, you are ready also to be Christian Reformed in the Christian Reformed denomination.

But again, cannot the reader see that also De Boer needs no further interpretation of the Three Points as he claims he needs in the letter sent to the synod of the Christian Reformed Church for which he is also responsible? It's as plain as the sun in the heavens that he fully understands the Three Points and all their implications. He was so sure that the late Rev. Danhof would not adhere to the doctrinal position of the Christian Reformed Church in regard to these Three Points. How sure is he of himself? I am not so sure anymore that he would not subscribe to them.

There are other quotations of the Revs. Kok and Gritters which I would like to give our readers, but there is not enough space in this issue. Perhaps we will do this the next time, D.V.

I have been told that those who are responsible for the letter sent to the synod of the Christian Reformed Church do not mean to lead their following back to those churches, but their purpose is to arouse the better element in the Christian Reformed Church to consider uniting with them. This I can hardly believe. And surely by no stretch of the imagination can one draw this conclusion from the letter they sent. Rather, I conclude that that letter was an earnest attempt on their part to camouflage their past history and to entice the Christian Reformed Church to recognize them for what they are, namely, Christian Reformed in doctrine and in heart.

I could not blame the Christian Reformed Church, however, if they would demand evidence of sincere repentance for the things they have said and written as they appear in the quotations from their writings out of the past.

M.S.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Dear Editor:

While taking a short trip in the Western part of Michigan a few weeks ago, we noticed an attractive roadside sign near the highway on the outskirts of a small village where one of our churches is located. Printed on the sign, for all who drove by to see, was the following message, "The Baptist — Reformed — Christian Reformed — Congregational churches of — Welcome You."

Thoughtfully, we continued on our way. "We Welcome You" said the sign. We wondered, as we drove along, why the name Protestant Reformed was not listed on the sign. Of course all our members know that we maintain a Protestant Reformed church in that village. Perhaps that was the reason our name was not added to the list. Still, we mused, members of the other denominations listed certainly knew that they also maintained a church in that village.

Perhaps our church was not contacted when the idea of the sign was conceived. That was possible, although surely when members of our church heard of the sign they would naturally take steps to add our "Welcome" also. It was apparent that the message was plainly meant for the stranger who might be passing through and who could then, if he so desired, get in contact with one of the churches listed. It is possible that the sign could be the means of interesting someone in the Truth which we so proudly uphold.

Could it be, we thought, that the addition of our name to this sign would mean that we were compromising the Truth with the other denominations whose preaching we hold to be a departure from the Truth? No, we thought, this could not be the reason either. For how could the name of our church on a sign be a compromise?

Then, we are ashamed to admit, we thought perhaps our church does not wish to welcome strangers and passersby. Maybe we do not want anyone to know that we have a church in that small village and that we maintain services and society life there. Thinking a bit further, we remembered that as far as we knew, none of our churches have ever attempted to let anyone, not even their own members, know where they are located.

We remembered, from our days in the service of our country, that the young men of our denomination had a difficult time, when they happened to be near one of our churches, in finding exactly where it was located. We remembered being told that the church directories so prominently displayed in most of the Army camps and USO centers, did not list our churches. We remembered that even today one can pick up the telephone directory and find practically every

denomination except ours, plainly listed. The Grand Rapids phone book for example has almost three solid pages of church listings.

Yes, we wondered about the roadside sign. "We Welcome You" — Do we?

Ken Ezinga

To the Editor of *The Standard Bearer*: Rev. H. Hoeksema.

Dear brother: Will you be so kind as to please place the following in *The Standard Bearer*?

LET US HAVE THINGS STRAIGHT

In regard to a letter written to you by brother B. Meelker, which was published by you in *The Standard Bearer* of July 1, I wish to make the following remarks:

1. Although it is true that Mr. B. Meelker did not have a case with the Consistory, it is not true when B. Meelker wrote to you "that in my letter to you I did not mention a case. I asked a question." When brother Meelker asked that question he had a concrete case in mind . . . and that of his own Consistory.

2. I do not believe that Mr. B. Meelker highly values your opinion, as he writes. He writes he had hoped you would give proof from Scripture or the Church Order, which according to Mr. B. Meelker, you did not produce.

3. I would like to have Mr. B. Meelker answer your question in *The Standard Bearer* of April 1, since it is not his own case, namely, How does he, Mr. Meelker, know so much about this private case? Brother Meelker has not answered that question and I hereby challenge him to do so.

Thys Feenstra

THE ALTAR OF INCENSE

(Continued from page 477)

the prayer: "Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

Fourth, these prayers are also heard. For the prayer of a righteous man availeth much, as is evident from all the signs of Christ's coming, as well as all the blessings of grace experienced by the believers.

Finally, types and shadows have disappeared, but they still express in symbol the realities that we experience by the Spirit in our hearts. We also add our voice to the cry of David, "Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice." We do so in the confidence that God's "is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever."

C. Hanko.