

THE STANDARD

Bearers

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MEDITATION

GENUINENESS

"... and have not charity, I am nothing." — 1 Cor. 13:2b

"... give Me thine heart . . ." — Prov. 23:26b

There is so much sham in the world, the church, the lives and ways of man!

You cannot trust anyone, but God.

This is a bitter pill to swallow, but it is true nevertheless. We read of Jesus that He "did not commit Himself unto them, because He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man: for He knew what was in man." John 2:24, 25.

And Jehovah taught us to sing: "put no confidence in princes, nor for help on man depend!"

That is bad generally, but it is worse when we confront such horror in the church of Christ.

And there we find it also.

There are many, many texts which I could quote, for we find it throughout Holy Scripture.

One of the most striking is the picture of Isaiah 1.

God found a multitude of sacrifices, burntofferings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts, the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats. The people of Israel and Judah appeared before His face, and they tread His courts. They brought oblations and much incense. On the new moons and the assemblies, as well as the solemn meetings they lifted their faces to God. There were also the appointed feasts when Israel and Judah called on the name of God.

Look at them: they spread forth their hands and made many prayers.

Here you have a picture of worship, of worship of Jehovah. And to all appearances it is beautiful indeed.

But what did God say of it?

It was to no purpose at all: He was satiated with it; it was a vain show; it was abomination to His Holy Being; He calls it iniquity; His Soul hated the whole miserable show.

And, pray, why?

The answer can be made in but a few words. And these words are of the Holy Ghost. So you can trust it implicitly.

Here it is: "Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near Me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour Me, but have removed their heart far from Me, and their fear toward Me is taught by the precept of men." Isa. 29:13.

There is the answer.

It was a sham, and no more.

And everyone of you know the New Testament equivalent.

First, there is the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican. To all appearances the Pharisee is the true worshipper, and the publican ought to be thrown from the holy House of God.

But wait! Jesus condemns the "holy" fraud, and embraces the miserable publican. Harlots and publicans precede the so-called holy men.

But why?

The publican came to God with his heart, and the Pharisee kept his heart far from God. The publican saw the Holy and Righteous God, and cried. The Pharisee prayed with and to himself, and boasted.

Second, there is the testimony of Paul in Colossians 2:20-23. And there we find this sobering judgment of God with respect to some worship: "Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, Touch not; taste not; handle not; which all perish with the using; after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honor to the satisfying of the flesh."

What abominations!

And so deceiving: wisdom, worship and humility, going hand in hand with a certain neglecting of the body. Who would not have reverence for such holy people?

But wait: God says: not in any honour, and to the satisfying of the flesh!

Again: the heart was never turned to God in penitence or in adoration.

* * * *

Even the world hails I Corinthians 13 as one of the most beautiful chapters in the Bible.

But the poor people do not see or feel the two-edged sword in that chapter. If any text of God's Word, here you have an example of the two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Of such is I Cor. 13. Beautiful? Yes. But also very terrible.

I am inclined to ask in despair: But, o my God! what is there left? I hear of the enumeration of angelic speech, of prophecy, of the understanding of all mysteries, and all knowledge, of all faith that even is able to remove mountains. I hear of a philanthropy that bestows all the goods of a mans house to feed the poor. I hear of the poor martyr whose body is burned in cruel fire. And then my God tells me that I can have all that, and go to hell. For without charity as the driving motive of my life, I became as sounding brass, as a tinkling cymbal. I am still nothing, and am without profit with all my good works.

The one element which was lacking is charity, properly, love, the love of God.

I was not genuine. I was a fraud, a sham.

God hates the sham, the fraud, more than the open sinner. It shall be more tolerable for the gangster in Chicago than for the pharisee in Gods House.

Worse yet: this gangster shall arise in the judgment day, and condemn him.

* * * *

Oh, I can understand that Jesus was hated.

He knew all their hearts and the secrets within.

He saw them: walking solemnly through the chambers of the Temple. Their faces were drawn in solemn lines; they breathed unction and piety; their words were sweet as honey. Behold them: they spread forth their hands in long prayers; they felt deeply into their money bags, and everyone saw their liberalities to the poor and needy. The trumpets were sounded in the streets of Jerusalem; and everyone went home, sighing: oh, to be a saint like father Rueben, or Rabbi Simon!

But God said: I curse you, and your religion!

And Jesus?

Well, He came to declare the Father. And so, when He saw all such abomination, said: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees!"

Jesus saw all their shining works. Yes, but He saw also the filthy interior. He saw men who were robed with the soft, woolly sheeps clothing, but underneath they were ravening wolves. Outside they looked beautiful to men, but inside they were full of abomination and uncleanness. Outside they were as whited sepulchers, but inside they were as foul effluvium.

But when a poor woman who was a sinner prayed and worshipped Christ with tears and without words, He said: Woman, thy sins are forgiven thee: go in peace!

Here is the difference: She prayed from the heart, with sincerity and truth.

And therefore He was hated.

And therefore He was crucified.

Two reasons: first, He bared the abomination of the hypocrite who went to God, yes, but not with the heart. Second, because He rewarded the true worshipper, be he but a publican.

* * * *

And so God, even our own God, says to us: My son, give Me thy heart!

And that is the same thing as speaking with angels' voices, prophesying, believing, doing good works, but — prompted by the love of God.

Oh, the boon of a new heart!

As long as we speak and act and think with our old heart, we are abomination to God, even though we stand in front of the church. There is really not much difference between the publican and the Pharisee, the dominee and the gangster. And if there is a difference, and there is, then the difference is all to the good of the gangster. He is honestly wicked. I know, I know, this sounds like a paradox, but it is true nevertheless. The gangster will be stricken too, but the stripes of the wicked Pharisee are manifold, and the stripes of the gangster are fewer. He did not add to his sins the sin of hypocrisy.

But the boon of a new heart is refreshing and also beautiful.

Note that when a man with a new heart is stricken because of what he sees of his life, and consequently weeps in great bitterness and penitence, the very angels of God return to heaven and sing. And singing they go to Jesus and report to Him: Oh, Christ of God, another sinner is bowing in the dust! We saw him in dust and ashes. We heard his heart rending cry: Oh God! be merciful to me, the sinner!

Then Jesus will turn to His Father and say: Father!
A sinner is calling on Thy name! For My Sake!

And God will say: I hear him!

* * * *

And so this little meditation brings me to a conclusion.

O God! give us truth within!

O God! renew within me a true spirit!

O God! let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of
my heart, be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my strength,
and my Redeemer!

Let our worship, o God, be true worship, from the heart
and with the burning love of God!

Then I will sleep and awake, and Thou shalt be with me!

G.V.

IN MEMORIAM

The Mr. and Mrs. Society of the Hudsonville Protestant Reformed Church herewith wishes to express its sympathy with four of its members, Mr. and Mrs. Gordon VanOverloop and Mr. and Mrs. Harold VanOverloop in the loss of their Father

JOHN VANOVERLOOP

May the God of all grace comfort the hearts of the bereaved, and point them to the beautiful future for the children of God.

The Mr. and Mrs. Society
Hudsonville, Mich.
Rev. Gerrit Vos, President
Mrs. Jay Lubbers, Secretary

IN MEMORIAM

Our Federation herewith express our sympathy with our fellow Board member, Mr. Gordon VanOverloop in the loss of his Father

JOHN VANOVERLOOP

May our God comfort the hearts of the bereaved is our prayer.

The Federation of Prot. Ref. Christian School Societies
Sec'y Tom Van Eenenaam
Pres. Gerrit Stadt

DEVOUT LONGINGS

O send Thou forth Thy light and truth,
Let them be guides to me,
And bring me to Thy holy hill,
Thy dwelling-place to see.

Then will I to God's altar go,
To God, my boundless joy;
Yea, God, my God Thy Name to praise
My harp I will employ.

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EDITORIALS

Committing Our Way Unto The Lord

This is what Scripture admonishes us to do in many different ways and in more than one passage. Directly, as you may surmise, I am thinking of the passage in Ps. 37:5: "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass." You may also surmise that, in referring to this passage, I am thinking, not so much of our individual way, as of the way of our churches.

We are living in troublous times.

Not as if we have any spiritual trouble as Protestant Reformed Churches, for the very opposite is true. We have the truth and that truth no one can ever take away from us. And because we have the truth, confess the truth and walk in its way, there is in our churches spiritual prosperity, peace and harmony.

But because of the decision of the Supreme Court of the State of Michigan in the case of our Second Church we are in trouble in respect to our material possessions, the properties of our churches. In the light of that decision, our enemies, evidently, conceive of the possibility of laying hold on all our church properties, even of the First Church of Grand Rapids, in spite of the fact that in 1956 the Supreme Court assigned that property to us.

It is with a view to all this that I repeat that we as churches live in troublous times, but also that we must heed the exhortation of Scripture that we commit our way unto the Lord trusting that He will bring it to pass.

We may do so because as churches we have the truth and we walk in the way of the Lord. If that were not the case, it would be impossible to commit our way unto the Lord and to put our confidence in Him. For that reason, our enemies, those that oppose us and now try to deprive us of our church properties, cannot commit their way unto the Lord for the Lord condemns the way of the wicked. They have departed from the truth as it is confessed and maintained in the Protestant Reformed Churches. Already they are inclined to subscribe to the Three Points of 1924 and to join the Christian Reformed Church.

You know the history. Yet I may briefly review it especially with a view to the decision of the Supreme Court in the case of the Second Church.

De Wolf, who at the time was minister of the First Church, was suspended and several of his elders that supported him were deposed from office. This was done because of certain heretical statements which he made from the pulpit and which several of his elders condoned or approved. The matter was brought to Classis East and the classis, too, con-

demned the statements and advised that De Wolf should apologize or be suspended from office. He refused to apologize. Hence, he was suspended from office. And the elders that followed him and agreed with his heretical statements were deposed.

This was done legally according to the Church Order.

In cases of discipline, according to our Church Order, the consistory has the sole right of censure over the members of the congregation. Again, according to the Church Order, the consistory has the sole right to depose its own elders or deacons as well as to suspend its minister. Whether the latter shall be entirely deposed from office is subject to the decision of the classis with the advice of the synodical delegates mentioned in article 11 of the Church Order. All such disciplined members, deposed elders and deacons, and suspended ministers have, of course, the right to appeal to classis and synod. However, in the meantime, they must submit to the censure, deposition or suspension. If they do not appeal, their discipline stands. And again, unless they appeal, the synod, the broadest gathering of church, has absolutely no right to discuss the matter of their discipline, deposition or suspension, still less to ignore or remove it.

Such is the law of our churches according to the Church Order as I hope to show presently.

Hence, De Wolf was legally suspended from his office of minister in the Protestant Reformed Churches, and some of his elders were legally deposed. The Superior Court of Grand Rapids as well as the Supreme Court of the State of Michigan recognized this and set its seal of approval on the suspension of De Wolf. They clearly recognized that in the case of the suspension of De Wolf no action on the part of the synod was required or even possible. Legally De Wolf was outside of the Protestant Reformed Churches.

No synod could ever receive him or recognize him as minister of the Protestant Reformed Churches.

The synod is not above but under the Church Order, just as the government in Washington is under the Constitution of the United States.

It is alleged sometimes that the synod has the right to interpret the Church Order. This we may grant in a general sense. But, in the first place, if the Church Order is in need of interpretation, such attempt of interpretation must come in the way of an overture from a consistory to classis to synod. In the second place, the articles of the Church Order that refer to the suspension and deposition of office-bearers are so clear that they need no interpretation. In the third place, those that still support De Wolf did not even attempt to interpret the Church Order but wilfully and knowingly acted contrary to it and violated all law and order.

Hence, I insist that the Supreme Court, supporting the decree of Judge Taylor when it decreed that the suspension of De Wolf and his being put outside of the Protestant Reformed Churches was legal, for the Church Order forbids the synod to judge in the case of a suspension of a minister, unless the latter appeals to synod. I am willing to submit this to

the judgment of the entire Reformed Church world, and perfectly confident they agree.

But let me now prove the above contentions from the Church Order.

First of all, I wish to show that the deposition of elders and the suspension of a minister is, according to the Church Order, a matter that belongs entirely to the jurisdiction of the consistory. For we read in Art. 79:

“When ministers of the divine Word, elders or deacons, have committed a public gross sin which is a disgrace to the church or worthy of punishment by the authorities, the elders and deacons shall immediately by preceding sentence of the consistory thereof and by the nearest church, be suspended or expelled from their office, but the ministers shall only be suspended. Whether these shall be entirely deposed from their office, shall be subject to the judgment of the classis, with the advice of the delegates from the synod mentioned in Art. 11.”

This was done. In the presence of the consistory of Fourth Church, elders were deposed and De Wolf was suspended. Among the gross sins for which elders and deacons may be deposed and ministers may be suspended, heresy is mentioned in Art. 80 of the Church Order. Of this De Wolf was found guilty by the consistory of the First Church as well as by Classis East. The latter, moreover, advised that De Wolf should retract or be suspended from office, as we have already mentioned. Again we wish to emphasize two things: 1. That this suspension had nothing to do with the synod. The latter had no authority in the matter. It was entirely under the jurisdiction of the consistory. Only by way of appeal could the matter be brought before synod. 2. That the Supreme Court recognizing this and taking note of the fact that De Wolf had not appealed, determined that the property of the First Church belonged to the congregation and congregation and consistory of which Hanco and Hoeksema were presidents and Gerrit Stadt was clerk.

From that moment on De Wolf was no longer minister of the First Protestant Church of Grand Rapids, Mich.

This is the Church Order, to which consistory, classis and synod have to submit, and the court did and still has to recognize this.

Did, perhaps, De Wolf and his deposed elders appeal? They did not.

First of all, let us notice that they, De Wolf and his deposed elders simply ignored their suspension and deposition, and continued in their office as if nothing had happened. They even excluded the legal consistory and their congregation from the church building. The consistory, not willing to create disturbance and commotion on the sabbath, simply sought and found a new auditorium in which they could meet. By all these actions, De Wolf and his deposed elders lost all right of appeal. This is evident from the Formula of Subscription to which every officebearer in the Protestant Reformed Churches subscribes:

“And further, if at any time the consistory, classis or

synod, upon sufficient ground of suspicion and to preserve the uniformity and purity of doctrine, may deem it proper to require of us a further explanation of our sentiments of the Confession of faith, the Catechism, or the explanation of the National Synod, we do hereby promise to be always willing and ready to comply with such requisition, under the penalty above mentioned (suspension, H.H.), reserving for ourselves however the right of appeal, whenever we shall feel ourselves aggrieved by the sentence of the consistory, classis, or synod, and until a decision is made upon such an appeal, we will acquiesce in the determination and judgment already passed.”

De Wolf and his deposed elders never did submit to the judgment of the consistory and classis. They violated all law and order. Hence, they lost all right of appeal. When the so-called synod of the schismatics, in June 1954, simply received him as one of their members and seated him as a legal delegate, they violated the Church Order and lost the right to be called the synod of the Protestant Reformed Churches. By his own act De Wolf had placed himself outside of the Protestant Reformed Churches and could not legally be received as a delegate to synod.

Besides, De Wolf never even attempted to appeal his case. He simply continued as a suspended minister. If he had appealed he should have notified the consistory of First Church as well as Classis East. This is in accord with a decision added to Art. 31 of the Church Order which reads as follows:

“Appeal to a major gathering against the decision of an ecclesiastical body must be made upon the immediately following meeting of the body to which the appeal is directed, at the same time giving notification to the secretary of the body by whose decision he is aggrieved. Of every judgment rendered in the case, those concerned shall receive a notification.” Also this De Wolf did not do.

Hence, according to all church law he is outside of the denomination of the Protestant Reformed Churches. This is in harmony with the decision in our case in 1956. And this is in accord with the Church Order to which all ecclesiastical assemblies are subject.

But I will not close this editorial by reminding you of all this miserable history.

Rather would I call your attention once more to the text from Ps. 37:5 you find at the beginning of this article: “Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.” This text occurs in the midst of verses that speak of evildoers who prosper in the way. “Fret not thyself because of evil doers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity . . . fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.” vs. 1, 7. Instead of being envious against the prospering wicked, we must rather commit our way unto the Lord, by faith, and put our confidence in Him. The fruit is not that the wicked cease to prosper in the world and that we shall prosper instead of them. But

the result is that we have the peace that passeth all understanding which is better than all the prosperity of the wicked.

Besides, then we trust in the promise of God.

The wicked may prosper for a time, but they shall be cut off and the righteous shall prosper forever.

For this is the promise of the Most High in the same psalm and throughout the Word of God: "And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday . . . those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth . . . the meek shall inherit the earth; and they shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." vs. 6, 9, 11.

Hence, the conclusion of the whole matter is: wait on the Lord. H.H.

Correspondence

We received the following missive from the De Wolf faction:

December 19, 1957

Consistory, Rev. H. Hoeksema, Pres., P. Decker, Secretary.

Brethren:

It has been some time since the Michigan Supreme Court opinion was rendered in re the Second Church case and we had hoped that you would have communicated with us concerning the rightful ownership of the property you are now occupying. However, in this expectation we have been disappointed.

After careful examination of the Supreme Court opinion and after having received legal advice, we are convinced that we are the rightful owners of all assets belonging to the First Protestant Reformed Church.

Brethren, we ask you to carefully consider the following:

1. Are we not correct when we say that the Supreme Court has judged that the Synod, convened in First Church building on the second Wednesday of March 1954, was the legal Synod of the Protestant Reformed Churches?

2. Are we not correct when we say that the Supreme Court has judged that each succeeding Synod originating from the meeting mentioned above is the only legal Synod of the Protestant Reformed Churches?

3. Are we not correct when we say that Classis East, of which we are members, is the true and only Classis East of the Protestant Reformed Churches according to the Supreme Court opinion?

4. Are we not correct when we say that, when you separated yourself from the Classis East, recognized by the legal Synod of the Prot. Ref. Churches, you thereby forfeited

all legal right to the ownership of all assets that are in the name of the Protestant Reformed Church?

5. Are we not correct when we say that we have been recognized as the First Prot. Ref. Church by the legal Classis East, which in turn was acknowledged by the legal Synod, and are therefore legally entitled to all assets held in name of said Church?

6. Do you not feel, brethren, that the name First Prot. Ref. Church is rightfully ours and, as you have stated in writing, the name cannot be separated from the properties; the two legally belong together?

In view of the above, we come to you with the request that you negotiate with us for a settlement of this matter. We have seen in the past that court action is not conducive to spiritual welfare and we sincerely desire that you accede to our request for arbitration and ask that you inform us in writing of your decision on or before Jan. 1, 1958.

With Christian greetings,

Consistory of First Ortho. Prot. Ref. Church
w/s H. De Wolf, Pres.

J. Bouwman, Sec.

Here follows our reply:

December 31, 1957

Consistory of the First
Ortho. Prot. Ref. Church
Grand Rapids, Michigan
Mr. J. Bouwman, Clerk.

Gentlemen:

In answer to your letter the following:

First of all, we feel it our duty to call you to repentance for your denial of the truth as well as for all your evil deeds which you have committed against God and us. Repent, confess, and return before you appear before Him Who judges righteously.

Secondly, we are still considering the legal aspect as pertaining to the property, with a view to calling a congregational meeting in the near future. Since we are not ready to act and need more time, we will inform you of our decision as soon as possible.

Yours truly,

Consistory of the First
Protestant Ref. Church

w/s Rev. C. Hanko, Pres.

P. Decker, Sec.

No comment necessary.

H.H.

OUR DOCTRINE

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

CHAPTER XV

The Shake-up of the Physical Universe

Revelation 6:12-17

12 And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;

13 And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.

14 And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

15 And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;

16 And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:

17 For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

The fifth and sixth seals belong together. They are closely related although there is also a significant difference between the two. The difference is that while the fifth seal deals with men, particularly with the suffering saints in the world, the sixth seal differs in this respect, that it does not deal directly with the world of men, but with the physical universe. And in as far as it does mention men, it refers only to the effect of the shake-up of the world upon the unrighteous. But these seals are alike in this respect, that they both will be most fully revealed and realized in the time immediately preceding the end of this age. And the order is that the tribulation of the saints, which is mentioned in the fifth seal, is first; and the shake-up of the physical universe follows. This order is not only apparent in the Book of Revelation, but also in the sermons of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. There too we frequently find the same order in picturing things to come. First there is the great tribulation; immediately after come the signs in the heavens and on the earth. For instance, in Matthew 24:29 we read the clear statement: "But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken." The same order may be observed in Luke 21, where Jesus first speaks of these signs and wonders in heaven, vs. 11, and then continues and says: "But before all these things they shall lay their hands on you and persecute you." vs. 12. Thus it is also the order in the chapter we are now discussing. The seals which we have thus far discussed all liberated powers upon the world of men. All the four horses and their riders had their field of action among men in the world. The first horse had reference to their spiritual life and their relation to the kingdom of heaven. The second horse had reference to their

political and national life and the attitude of nation over against nation. The third horse had respect to the social life of men in the world and to their relation to things material. And the fourth horse had reference to their physical life and their passing away from the scene of history at the proper time in death. All had this in common, that they applied directly to the world of men only. This, as we have seen, was also true of the fifth seal. For this seal revealed to us the souls under the altar crying out for vengeance upon those that lived on the earth because their blood had been shed for the holiness and truth of the Lord, for the Word of God and for the testimony which they held. The wickedness of the world as such and its rebellion against the Anointed of God must be fully revealed; and this becomes manifest when that world rises against the testimony of His Word and the witness of His name. For this reason the tribulation and persecution of the saints must in the future become still more general, and must become universal in its character, and involve all the historic world. That world must attack the church of Christ in the full consciousness that it makes an attack upon the holiness and truth of the Master. From all these five seals the sixth differs, as we said, in this respect, that it does not deal with the world of men directly, but rather with the shake-up of the physical universe. Of this, therefore, we must treat in the present chapter.

The text speaks indeed of tremendous and terrible things. In the vision John feels a tremendous earthquake, causing the very foundations of the entire earth to tremble, and wiping mountains and islands out of existence. At the same time, he beholds wonders in heaven. The sun is darkened as sackcloth of hair, and the moon spreads a weird light, flooding the earth with a color that speaks of blood, while the stars fall from heaven to the earth, and the firmament seems to pass away and roll together as a book. The question that arises, in the first place, is, of course: how must this all be interpreted? Must the text be explained in the literal sense of the word, so that it refers here to physical reality? Does heaven refer to the firmament as we see it? And does star refer to the luminous body in heaven? Is a mountain literally a mountain, and an island an island in this passage? Or must all this be understood in the symbolical sense of the word? There are indeed many interpreters that do not understand the text literally, but rather symbolically. They argue that the entire Book of Revelation is symbolic. For instance, in chapter 1 a star is not one of the luminous bodies in the firmament, but has reference to the angel of the church, as the Lord Himself explains. Besides, the Lord informs us Himself in that same first chapter that all things written in the Book of Revelation are "signified," that is, given in signs and symbols. And therefore also the things mentioned in the text we are now discussing must not be understood as representing reality, but as being signs and symbols of other events in the history of this present dispensation.

H.H.

THE DAY OF SHADOWS

The Prophecy of Zechariah

Israel's conflict and preservation

Chapter 12:1-9

7. This verse states that Jehovah will save the tents of Judah first in order that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem may not be magnified over Judah. Here a distinction is again made between Jerusalem and Judah. As was stated, in the old dispensation Jerusalem was the visible city of God. It was this as the center of the typical-symbolical revelation of the kingdom of God on earth. The holy city is now in heaven having been set there with Christ its king at the time of His ascension into heaven and His sitting at the right hand of the throne of glory.

But Jerusalem has many citizens that are still on this earth. But as their conversation is in heaven, and seeing that they confess the name of Jerusalem's King, condemn the world by their witness and seek a heavenly country (see on verse 5), they must surely be included in Jerusalem's inhabitants. Only they still find themselves on this earth fighting the good fight as having the victory in Christ. They are the church militant, the visible Jerusalem in the midst of a hostile world.

In this verse a distinction is made between the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the house of David and Judah. In the Old dispensation the house of David was the ruling family and this family was not identical neither with the inhabitants of Jerusalem, nor with the tribe of Judah. But it being now the dispensation of the Gospel the distinction no longer holds. Now the inhabitants of Jerusalem are the house of David and the latter is Judah, so that in each instance it is the church, the whole body of elect of which this verse is speaking.

The verse speaks further of the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem and of the glory of the house of David, in a word, of the glory of the church. And with reason. The church is a new creature in Christ Jesus. She is a spiritual house, and holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Christ Jesus. This is her glory. But the church must still appear with Christ in glory, not alone the church on earth but the church in heaven as well, be it that she is formed of men made perfect seeing that they have been freed from the body of this death to which they were chained in this life. As viewed from this angle it is correct to say that also the church in heaven must still be saved. What now may be the promise set forth by this verse? Doubtless it is this, namely, that God will wait with glory-

ifying His church until He has saved all His elect in order that all His people may be glorified together. Quoting Paul here, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God. And the dead in Christ shall first rise. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. And so shall we ever be with the Lord." I Thess. 4:16-18. When this takes place the whole church will have been gathered. And then the saints in their totality will go forth to meet the Lord in the glorious body of the resurrection. Quoting Paul once more, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the first trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (I Cor. 15:51, 52).

This then is the purpose of God in order that in the words of our prophet there may be no reason for the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem to be exalted above Judah, which there would be, such is the implication, were the church now in heaven, let us say, thus favored, which of course is inconceivable in the light of the Scriptures, and at the end of time at the appearing of Christ the church that is still to be gathered.

8. In that day will Jehovah defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem. The reference is particularly to this Gospel period. And the stumbling among them in that day shall be as David, a man of great courage and implicit faith in God. There were more such men in that day. The writer of the Hebrews mentions several of them by name. The first name to appear in his list is that of Abel. The last name mentioned is that of Samuel. Mentioned are also the prophets. Through faith they subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of aliens etc. In their totality they formed a cloud of witnesses by which we are compassed round about. Though the church was never without them, yet their number at anytime was small. The majority were what the prophet calls stumblers, not cowards but men weak in faith or with no faith at all. For it was the dispensation of shadows. The Spirit was not yet seeing that Christ had not yet died. But in that day it will be different. The stumbling ones among the inhabitants will be like David. There will not be a stumbler in his house. And the house of David shall be as God, that is as the angel of the Lord before them. This angel is now the incarnate Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ. Having become like unto His brethren in all things, sin excepted, He can now make His brethren like Him in spiritual excellence, in courage, in faith in Him and through Him in God.

9. And in that day the Lord will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

G.M.O.

The Temptation of Man

“And said Jehovah God to the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And said the woman, The serpent deceived me and I ate,” Gen. 3:16.

The Lord now turns to the woman and puts to her the question, What is this that thou hast done? The question of the Lord looks directly to that of which Adam had accused his wife, namely, “The woman that thou gavest me, she gave to me from the tree, and I did eat.” In other words, I did not take of the tree, the woman that thou gavest me did so. And she gave to me, and I did eat.” This is the thrust of Adam’s reply in his attempt to excuse himself. He meant to be telling God that he ate because the woman gave to him.

It raises the question whether what the man meant to be telling God is that at the time he did not know that the fruit had come from the forbidden tree, so that he had eaten in his innocence. Our answer would seem to depend on whether Adam had heard the temptation of Satan, whether he had been present to hear it. It would seem not in the light of I Tim. 2:14, “And Adam was not deceived but the woman being deceived was in transgression.” How could the apostle say that Adam was not deceived, if he had heard satan’s temptation? And if he had not heard the temptation, is it not possible then that he had eaten in his innocence? The latter is not possible. For he, too, died as well as the woman. What is more, the Lord holds him guilty. He curses the ground for man’s sake. Adam must have known therefore that the fruit had come from the forbidden tree. If he was not present, Eve must have told him. Or he may have observed with his own eyes being close enough to the tree. For it is not likely that Eve was in one part of the garden and Adam in another. They must have kept close together.

Now back to the Lord’s question to the woman. The woman is asked to give account of herself, first why she took from the forbidden tree and ate, and second why she gave to her husband, but primarily why she had taken from the forbidden tree and eaten.

Let us concentrate a moment on that question of the Lord and get it before us as to its full significance and purpose. The question is exclamatory. It registers surprise, amazement. *What* is this that thou hast done! The question has this in it: 1. Thou hast sinned a great sin; 2. O my children, what have I done unto thee. Testify against me. I did thee only well. How couldst thou thus sin against my love?

The Lord always talks to His people this way in the crises, when they fall into deep sin. We have several examples of that in the Scriptures. Micah 6:3, “O my people, what have I done unto thee? And wherein have I wearied thee? Testify against me. I brought thee up out of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of servants.” This is what the prophet in the preceding verse calls the Lord’s strife with His people. A notable example of this strife of God with His

beloved people is the word of God that came to David shortly after his adulteries and murder, II Sam. 12. Said the Lord to David by the prophet, “I anointed thee king over Israel and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul and I gave thee thy master’s house and I moreover would have given unto thee such and such things, in other words, I did thee well only, in my love I lavished upon thee my favors. And then the Lord puts this question, “wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord . . .” In other words, “What is this that thou hast done?”

This is God’s strife with His people, His elect only. It is a strife that He wages with them in His love. And the purpose of this strife of the Lord with His people is to bring them under the conviction of sin, to work in their hearts true repentance, to bring them to confession of sin, and thus to prepare them for the reception of His Gospel of forgiveness and salvation, of His good message that, however ill-deserving they may be, He loves them still, pardons all their sins and will surely save them from His wrath for Christ’s sake.

So God strives here with our first parents, definitely with the woman, in their fall. They were His elect. The church of the elect was in their loins.

What is this that thou hast done? It was but another way of saying to them, “Come now, let us reason together saith the Lord, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.”

The Lord does not thus reason with the serpent. He does not put to the serpent the question, “what is this that thou hast done?” He simply curses the serpent and announces his doom.

The reply of the woman. She replies because the Lord gives her opportunity. He draws her out. In a sense He encourages her. There is something reassuring in the very fact that He allows her to give account of her doing, to explain it.

As the man throws the blame on His wife, so she throws the blame on the serpent. But there was a good side to this. Her reply does not breathe defence. Rather it betokens regret, shame, remorse. If so, the life of Christ has already been implanted in her soul.

Let us examine her answer. She said, the serpent deceived me and I ate.

We translate here *deceive*. This is correct as can be shown with the Scriptures. The Hebrew text uses a word that means *to cause to err* and *to mislead, deceive*. According to all the passages in the Scriptures that shed light on the matter at hand, the serpent deceived the woman and the woman was deceived, deceived thoroughly, led astray.

In the Scriptures Satan is always presented to view as the great deceiver of men. So in Rev. 12:9, where we read, “And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, which de-

ceiveth the whole world." Here the verb used in the original means to lead astray, to wander, to deceive.

c. Christ presents to view Satan as the father of the lie, John 8:44. The passage reads, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lust of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie he speaketh of himself, for he is the father of it."

Here it is stated that there is no truth in the devil, that he is the father of the lie not man, meaning that Satan and not man originated it. Further that he is a murderer from the beginning. This refers, must refer also to His tempting Eve. He murdered her, and since he always lies, it means that he murdered her by his lie, and this is but another way of saying, that he imparted his lie to her, implanted it in her mind, and that he got her to believe his lie, which means that he deceived her by his lie and that she was deceived.

The sole weapon of Satan is always the lie. As armed with his lie, deceit he always goes about seeking whom he by his lie may deceive, murder devour.

c. The Bible over and over presents to our view sin, sinful lust, sinful pride as a deceiver. In the passage already quoted from the Romans, "For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me."

The godless unprincipled men are always presented to us in the Scriptures as men wanting to deceive by their false doctrine, vain philosophies, example. According to the Scriptures the essential characteristic of satan, sin, sinful lust, sinful pride, ungodly men is that they are always bent on deceiving. To deny this is to deny the sinfulness of sin, of satan, of sinful lust, sinful men. It is to close our eyes exactly to that which makes Satan, sin, our sinful lust and false prophets so exceedingly dangerous. It removes the basic reason why the believers must always be on their guard against Satan, sin, false prophets, their own sinful lust and pride. They are so utterly and amazingly deceitful that, if the believers are not alert, if they are unspiritual and carnal, they are certain to be deceived as was Eve. Take our present controversy. Certainly the opposition has succeeded in deceiving several of the true believers.

Certainly we must take our stand on the ground of the view that Satan by his lie did deceive Eve, and then we must try to understand the psychology of this thing. We must face questions such as these: What was satan's deceit? Wherein did it consist? What was its essential character? Why did he succeed in deceiving the woman? Why was she deceived. Wherein did her being deceived consist? We must answer these questions with the Scriptures. Having done so, we will have deepened greatly our insight into the Scriptures and into human nature.

Eve was deceived and on this account she herself too was terribly guilty. A person can be deceived in his innocency so

that his being deceived involves him in no guilt whatsoever. Here is an example. A man, who is a total stranger in the community, wants to go to the city of Holland. He thinks he is on the way. All the signs by the wayside read: to Holland. To make sure he even inquires of several persons on the way if the way leads to Holland. They tell him yes. But the man arrives in Detroit. He has been deceived. But all the blame lies on the side of his deceivers and he is guiltless. But this was not the case with Eve. All the blame did not lie on the side of Satan. Eve, too, was terribly guilty. A man who is tempted by satan and succumbs always has great fault. Why? Because he is tempted by satan always in collaboration with his sinful lusts, in other words, because the tempter finds him in a state of mind and heart that the Scriptures describe as willing ignorance. That was Eve's trouble. She was willingly ignorant. She knew the truth. The Lord had spoken plainly. The day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. She knew the truth therefore. Yet, she was ignorant. But her ignorance was not intellectual but spiritual, oral. Her mind was warped by her own lusts, darkened, blinded,—lusts that she refused to crucify but for which she willingly made room. The text brings this clearly out, "And the woman saw that it was a tree to be desired to make wise." So it seemed to her. But it was a lie, the devil's lie that in her lust she had embraced and as a result had been deceived, carried away by it. The fault of her succumbing to the devil's temptation was hers not the devil's. Let us quote James here. This passage, "But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lusts, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:14, 15). Eve, too, was drawn away of her own lusts and enticed. Then when her lust had conceived, that is, when the womb of her lust had been fructified by the devil's lie, it brought forth sin, the act of eating. And sin, when it was finished, brought forth death. She died spiritually, became totally depraved. The only way therefore to fortify ourselves against the devil's lies, against heresy and false doctrine, is to crucify our members which are upon the earth. The more we do that, the more immune we become to the devil's lies and the more susceptible we become to God's truth of the Scriptures, thus the less danger there is that we will be deceived by the lie.

How a man reasons, what a man thinks, what he pronounces truth, what he holds to be lie is subjectively determined by the state of man's heart as the ethical center of his being. The man whose heart is corrupt, and who is swayed by his lusts, believes the lie. For he has argued the case in his mind and has convinced himself by a reasoning that from the point of view of formal logic is flawless that the truth is a lie and that the lie is the truth. In other words, he has succeeded to his own satisfaction in rationalizing the lie.

(Continued on page 188)

FROM HOLY WRIT

Exposition of I Corinthians 7

III.

(I Corinthians 7:8-11)

Twice we have called attention to the teaching of Paul in I Corinthians 7, where Paul answers certain questions directed to him in regard to the matters of marriage, celibacy, the error of putting away one's wife and related matters.

In our last essay we called attention to the fact that the statement of Paul that it is "good" not to touch a woman, must be taken not as an absolute statement as if the state of celibacy were more holy than that of holy wedlock! Paul only teaches that to live the life of a christian outside of the marriage state is "good," that is honorable and compatible with a walk of thankfulness. One need not necessarily be married to live out of faith, according to God's law and unto His glory! In so speaking he does not disparage the institution of marriage, the first institution of God on earth. He rather wishes to concede that under given circumstances one is honorable in not entering into the marriage state. For some, however, marriage is a duty. When one has not the gift (!) of continence he or she should enter into the marriage state. For marriage too is honorable. He that marrieth let him do it in the Lord, and he that marrieth not let him not be married — only in the Lord!

Now Paul turns with a word to the "unmarried" and to the "widows" as well as to those who are in holy wedlock, applying the general principles laid down in the verses 1-7, to the matters at hand in the verses 8-11.

In these verses we read, "*I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn. And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband. But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife.*"

We should notice in the passage under consideration, that Paul is here really addressing two different classes of people. Those who are no longer in the marriage state, *unmarried* and *widows*, and those who are lawfully and before the face of the Lord in the marriage state, those *married*.

For each of these two classes Paul has a distinctive word of admonition in the Lord, so that they may walk in a good and quiet conscience.

Concerning the first class Paul has no expressed word from Jesus. He cannot quote explicitly from the exact words of Christ as he can in regard to those who are married. The question, therefore, arises whether what Paul teaches concerning the "unmarried" and "widows" has normative value for life and faith, that is, whether it is the Word of

God in Christ, or whether it is simply some kindly and good advice from Paul. We believe that also this word of Paul to the "unmarried" and to the "widows" is an exhortation which fully follows from two considerations. The first of these considerations is the calling of every man to walk worthily of the calling wherewith he has been called in Christ Jesus! God says: Be ye holy, for I, the Lord, who hath called you, am holy! Hence every man is to walk in holy fear and trembling, knowing that he has not been called with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood as of a lamb without spot or blemish. Of this calling for the "unmarried" and the "widows" there can be no doubt! Wherefore when Paul here sets forth the calling of the widows and the unmarried he is according to the wisdom given him, applying these general principles of the life of thankfulness and sanctification to the particular problem at hand. And, in so doing, he builds upon the chief-cornerstone, Christ Jesus, our Lord!

What he says to the unmarried and widows is thus very normative in the church. Does Paul not write in verse 17, "And so I ordain in all churches"? And, again, in verse 40 Paul writes, "And I think also that I have the Spirit of God."

Let us, therefore, the more give earnest heed to what he writes concerning the "unmarried" and the "widows."

It should be noted that when Paul speaks of the "unwed" he quite likely has in mind "widowers." The reason for our thus interpreting the term "agamois" (unwed) is that the case ending is masculine since this is the natural sense when contrasted with "tais cheerais" (widows). Then also it should not be overlooked that Paul has a special word for the "virgins" in the verses 25-40. Were the term "agamois" neuter, this would also refer to the virgins. To take the term "unmarried" as referring to all unmarried classes, and then to interpret "widows" as the class especially intended seems too forced and unnatural an interpretation.

Hence, Paul here addresses a class of men and woman in the church, who once had been married, but whose respective wives and husbands had died. Each is alone in the world.

The question comes up, therefore, concerning a *second* marriage. Since marriage is honorable and the bed undefiled, and since a woman is bound to her husband by the law of the husband, only as long as he liveth, there can be no principle reason *per se*, why such individuals cannot remarry! However, all that is lawful is for that reason not yet convenient!

There may be a very good reason for some individuals not to remarry. Fact is: he that does not remarry does "well." He does well if he remains in this unmarried state till he or she dies. The reason? Evidently such widows are widows indeed. They belong to the class spoken of by Paul in I Tim. 5:5-7, "Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day. But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth. And these things give in charge that

they may be blameless." These is a younger class of widows. These should not attempt to play the roll of "widows indeed," for, if they are under three score years old, they will wax wanton and will marry. This is no sin as such. These should marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully. (See I Tim. 5:14).

In line with this teaching of Paul in I Timothy 5 is what he gives as the exception to the rule in I Corinthians 7:9, "But if they cannot contain let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn." Certainly this exception is not for those who are widows indeed past the age of three score, who are, night and day, asking God for help in their loneliness. Paul looks at marriage for such as a duty because of fornication. Such widowers and widows should again seek marriage. Remarriage is better for such to fight the battle of faith lest the adversary reproach the church because of the walk of her members. Also here no man must presume to be stronger or more spiritually minded than he is. It is good to know one's self and to clearly see our own personal spiritual limitations, due to the weakness of the flesh! It is true, we shall make no provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof; (Rom. 13:14) yet, if such is our constitution that we would be in a constant state of burning — then we should seek remarriage. For it is better to marry than to burn!

That it is better to marry than to burn the world has ever so corrupted as to turn it to their own destruction. Yet, the spiritual minded man will use this to his profit. He will not see in marriage an end in itself from a purely fleshly motive of carnal pleasures, but will see in it a means to an end — for fornications sake. He will then see it his duty to possess his vessel in holiness. And what holds for a widower holds also for a widow!

Such is Paul's admonition based upon the Christian's calling in the world.

However, where one is married, whether man or wife, such one falls under the express teaching of Jesus concerning the inviolableness of the marriage tie. Here Paul does not need to draw legitimate conclusions from specific teaching of Jesus, but he can quote the very words of the Lord Jesus.

There are two alternatives here postulated by Paul.

The first is that the wife separates herself from her husband. In such a case it must be remembered that mere "separation" (choorizoo) does not at all constitute annulment before the Lord of the marriage-tie. This is evident from the following:

1. That, according to the text, it is not so that such must be remarried, but rather they must *be reconciled*. The difficulty that had intervened between them must be resolved in Christian love and confession on the part of the offender and by forgiveness on the part of the other. Generally speaking no two people have so much to forgive in one another as husband and wife. Hence, separation is not divorce *per se*.

2. That, according to the word of the Lord, to which Paul refers, the marriage-state as "from the beginning" is unbreakable, except by the death of either party. What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. It is true that, according to Deut. 24:1-4, Moses *permitted* men to put away their wives. But that was the limitation of the "law" which perfected nothing. But the bringing in of a better covenant did. Then the law is written in our hearts, our sins are remembered no more. And Christ came to take away the "hardness of our hearts" and to give us a heart that is pure. And this pure heart needs no permissive ordinance to put away a wife. The law is for transgressors. They need concessions. But not those who walk in thankfulness for the great redemption in Christ Jesus. They have also the law of the desire to keep the marriage-vow written in their hearts. In them is a small beginning of the new obedience, yet so that they begin to live *not only according to some*, but according to *all* of God's commandments!

3. Since such is the case, the word in the church is such, that a wife who leaves her husband has but two choices:

a. She is first of all to remain unmarried. She cannot marry another man without committing adultery. Why? Because the original tie in marriage stands. The *avenues* of reconciliation must remain open. Any course of remarriage makes this impossible. Hence, Paul first insists that such a wife remain unmarried. And that, too, even though a legal divorce had been obtained. Such is the rule, not of Paul, but of Christ in the church.

b. That she be reconciled to her husband. That is the way of the Lord. It is based on the reconciliation which we have in Christ Jesus. He loved us. Therefore we ought to love each other in the Lord, also as husbands and wives not with a silly fleshly love, but with the love of the profound depths which will seek and find the guilty in confession and pardon.

Naturally, this implies that a husband do not put away his wife. He simply causes her to commit adultery, and he that marrieth her commits adultery.

The word of Christ stands: What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder!

G.L.

IN MEMORIAM

The Board of the Hope Protestant Reformed Christian School Society, hereby wishes to express its sincere sympathy to one of its fellow board members, Mr. Gordon VanOverloop, in the loss of his father,

MR. JOE VANOVERLOOP

May the Lord strengthen and comfort him with the blessed assurance that His work is perfect and always done in love to His children.

Ted Engelsma, President
John Kalsbeek, Secretary

IN HIS FEAR

Spiritually Sensitive

(5)

It was not our original intention to write very extensively concerning the dangers and evils that are made so much more tempting and easy to obtain by the television set.

It was even less our intention to say as much as we did concerning the movie. We had intended only to introduce this matter to show that the same godless people whose entertainment on the movie screen we are not to seek are not to be sought for their entertainment on the television screen either.

But since we did devote so much time already and the airing of one evil often leads to the need of treating more extensively other evils, we decided to say something more about the movie.

We are moved by the same fear that was the Rev. Veldman's when in his pamphlet on *The Movie* he wrote on page 13, "But, you ask, are there not good movies? If so, may we not patronize them? Our answer is an unequivocal: No! To be sure, some movies are less evil, less obnoxious than others. 'There is some bread in the garbage cans less moldy than the rest.' Even so, how must we find out which are the good ones to attend? Usually the information must come from those who are so carnal themselves that they have lost all spiritual discernment. I have asked a number of covenant young people, who attend only 'good' movies, this question: What percentage of all movies would you place in this category? The estimates ranged from two to ten percent. The average estimate was five percent. Granting for the moment that this is true, that five percent of all movies are 'good,' is this not in itself abundant reason to condemn the whole industry *and avoid everything that even resembles a movie?* (The italics are ours and we would have you apply that once to the television programs of the world's entertainment. J.A.H.) Will not the five percent become the stepping-stone to the other ninety-five percent? Besides, how are we going to know which belong to the five and which to the ninety-five percent? Must our judgment be based on the titles of the films? (Also of television programs, J.A.H.) That is obviously impossible. Must we be informed by those who simply pick their 'shows' at random? But such people, we agree, are not qualified to judge. Besides, what earnest Christian, who is really concerned about walking in the way of the Lord will patronize an institution that is ninety-five percent corrupt? Would you permit your child to go swimming in a certain lake if you knew beforehand that the odds were nineteen to one in favor of your child drowning in that place? You may be certain, however, that five percent of the movies are not good, even from the viewpoint of their

contents. They, too, would be unable to survive the test of the law and Word of God.

Looked at, however, from the viewpoint of its deepest principle, it is impossible that there be any good in the movie at all. The very principle of the thing is evil. In the movies life is played, played for amusement's sake, and life is too serious to be played by any one. Sin, which is so terrible in the sight of the holy and righteous God, that He will damn it forever in hell; sin, which unless graciously forgiven in the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, must forever bar us from the kingdom of God: murder, theft, divorce, adultery, disobedience, etc. — shall it be played, and that for mere carnal amusement of ungodly men? And shall we, Christians, find our pleasure in that which is so terrible in the sight of our God?"

The Rev. Veldman has more to say about this, and again we urge you to read the whole pamphlet. But the point we wish to make at this moment is that our people are confronted with the temptation and the argument that there are those good movies that portray a spiritual thought and teach a Scriptural principle. There are — as was made mention at the beginning of this pamphlet on *The Movie* — such movies as the one on the life of Martin Luther. And more recently there was also that devilish work of the carnally minded haters of God which was designed to snare the people of God, the movie, *The Ten Commandments*. Indeed, several publications in the Church world have praised it and encouraged confessing members in the Church of Christ to go and see this great wickedness. The argument raised was that by seeing the picture one could visualize much better the historical event recorded in the book of Exodus. We would be able to appreciate much more what actually happened there on Mt. Sinai. The whole Scriptural account would live for us and we would for a long time have before our mind's eye the incident of which God speaks to us in His Word.

Pure nonsense!

And a tempting argument out of hell!

We must not pretend to be wiser than God. He could have led man to discover the movie camera and film in the day of Moses, had He so wished. In fact today man still does not know how to build pyramids such as those in Egypt. With all our modern machines, hoists, derricks and the like, could we build them today? And were it essential for our faith in what He does by and in Christ His Son, would He not have preserved it for us on film instead of on parchment? Did He perform this great work at Mt. Sinai too soon? Would He have done it better and differently, if He could do it over again? What sheer nonsense and blasphemy!

Or listen even to the world itself. It knows better and in that respect shows more sense and wisdom than the flesh of the Church that hankers after the fleshpots of Egypt and the immorality of Hollywood. The *Time* magazine of December 12, 1956, has nothing good to say about this "good"

movie. We quote a few lines from the article, "*The Ten Commandments* . . . is in some respects perhaps the most vulgar movie ever made . . . It is difficult to find another instance in which so large a golden calf has been set up without objection from religious leaders. With insuperable piety, Cinemogul De Mille claims that he has tried 'to translate the Bible back to its original form,' the form in which it lived. Yet what he has really done is to throw sex and sand into the movie goer's eyes for almost twice as long as anybody else has ever dared to . . . There are moments, in fact, when it seems that the Seventh Commandment is the only one De Mille is really interested in; to the point where the Exodus itself seems almost a Sexodus—the result of Moses' unhappy (and purely fictional) love life.

"Is this blasphemy? Technically not; but it is sometimes hard to determine where the fine line between bad taste and sacrilege is to be drawn . . . At such moments it is impossible to avoid the impression that the moviemaker, no doubt without intending to, has taken the name of the Lord in vain."

The above speaks for itself. And that last sentence surely is not the language of Scripture. We may be sure that moviemakers do intend to take the name of the Lord in vain. They care not one whit for it. How could they ever produce such a piece of devilry as the one described above if they had any concern at all for His name? Yea, rather, if they can make a dollar by doing so, they will play with His name, His law, His Word, and all the things holy. And if He would stand before them in our flesh—as He did some nineteen hundred years ago—they would kill Him even as they did then. As Paul writes in Romans 14:23c, "For whatsoever is not of faith is sin." And again we read in Hebrews 11:6, "But without faith it is impossible to please Him."

In producing their movies, even when it centers around an event recorded in Scripture or around events in the life of the Church of God, men are not moved by faith. And they sin. But when they study carefully a passage of God's Word such as the account in the book of Exodus of Israel's departure out of Egypt and reception of the Decalogue at Mt. Sinai and then produce so devilish a piece of work that the world even calls it a Sexodus, then we do not hesitate to state that this is deliberate taking of God's name in vain.

Shall we, then, turn to such for entertainment? Shall we let our children gather at the feet of such men—and that in our own living room?—to be taught principles, morals, ethics and to be entertained by their godlessness?

How can we ever dare to argue that this or that is a good movie when it must pass the approval of men with such godless minds before it is considered to be a successful movie and fit for release to the public? What moves such men to approve and release for entertainment is not the principle of what will edify and encourage unto a walk in His fear but what will draw the biggest audience because it satisfies the carnal cravings of unregenerated men and consequently will

bring the greatest rewards to their own pockets of the filthy lucre of this world.

We are not stretching the point one bit when we quote the words of the Apostle Paul in II Corinthians 6:14-18 in connection with this matter. Listen once to the testimony of the Spirit of God Who knows the deep things of God, "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers (also in seeking entertainment, J.A.H.): for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel (in the realm of entertainment, J.A.H.). And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye a separate people, saith the Lord, and touch not (with eyes and ears and minds, J.A.H.) the unclean thing: and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord."

To live in His fear we will have to avoid the spiritually unclean things. And we will do so because it hurts us to come in contact with these evil things. He who is spiritually sensitive loves God and consequently is inwardly pained when he sees mockery of the things of God and when wickedness and filth are displayed with relish by the ungodly world in which we live.

Walk in His fear in the field of entertainment.

By reason of use have your senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

J.A.H.

A PILGRIM'S PRAYER

O teach Thou us to count our days
And set our hearts on wisdom's ways;
Turn, Lord, to us in our distress,
In pity now Thy servants bless;
Let mercy's dawn dispel our night,
And all our day with joy be bright,

O send the day of joy and light,
For long has been our sorrow's night;
Afflicted through the weary years,
We wait until Thy help appears;
With us and with our sons abide,
In us let God be glorified.

So let there be on us bestowed
The beauty of the Lord our God;
The work accomplished by our hand
Establish Thou, and make it stand;
Yea, let our hopeful labor be
Established evermore by Thee.

Psalm 90

Contending For The Faith

The Church and the Sacraments

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

THE SUPREMACY OF THE POPE

THE PAPACY FROM THE DEATH OF INNOCENT III
TO BONIFACE VIII. 1216-1294.

The Papal Conflict with Frederick II Begun.

Between the death of Innocent III and the election of Boniface VIII, a period of eighty years, sixteen popes sat on the throne, several of whom were worthy successors of the greatest of the pontiffs. The earlier half of the period, 1216-1250, was filled with the gigantic struggle between the papacy and Frederick II, emperor of Germany and king of Sicily. The latter half, 1250-1294, was marked by the establishment of peace between the papacy and empire, and the dominance of the French, or Norman, influence over the papacy.

Scarcely was Innocent in his grave when Frederick II began to play his distinguished role, and to engage the papacy in its last great struggle with the empire—a desperate struggle, as it proved to be, in which the empire was at last completely humbled. The struggle kept Europe in turmoil for nearly forty years, and was waged with three popes,—Honorius III, Gregory IX, and Innocent IV, the last two, men of notable ability. During all this time Frederick was the most conspicuous figure in Christendom. The struggle was carried on not only in the usual ways of diplomacy and arms, but by written appeals to the court of European opinion.

Frederick II, the grandson of Frederick Barbarossa, was born near Ancona, 1194. His father, Henry VI, had joined Sicily to the empire by his marriage with the Norman princess Constance, through whom Frederick inherited the warm blood of the South. By preference and training, as well as birth, he was a thorough Italian. He tarried on German soil only long enough to insure his crown and to put down the rebellion of his son. Ranke calls him a foreigner on German soil. He preferred to hold his court at Palermo, which in his letters he called "the Happy City." The Romans elected him king in 1196, and at his father's death a year later he became king of Sicily. The mother soon followed, and by her will "the child of Apulia," as Frederick was called, a boy then in his fourth year, passed under the guardian care of Innocent III. After Otto's star had set, he was crowned king at Frankfurt, 1212, and at Aachen, 1215. Frederick was not twenty when Innocent's career came to an

end. We will recall from preceding articles the might and power to which this Innocent III had attained.

Honorius III, 1216-1227, was without the ambition or genius of his predecessor Innocent III. He confirmed the rules and witnessed the extraordinary growth of the two great mendicant orders of St. Francis and St. Dominic. He crowned Peter of Courtenay, emperor of Byzantium, the only Byzantine emperor to receive his crown in Rome. The coronation took place outside the walls of the city. Peter died in prison on his way to Constantinople. The pope's one passion was the deliverance of Jerusalem. To accomplish this, he was forced to look to Frederick. To induce him to fulfill the vow made at his coronation, in 1215, to lead a crusade, was the main effort of his pontificate. The year 1217, the date set for the crusade to start, passed by. Honorius fixed date after date with Frederick, but the emperor had other plans and found excuses for delay. In 1220 he and his wife Constantia received the imperial crown at the hands of the pope in Rome. The coronation ceremonies passed off amidst the general good will of the Roman populace and were interrupted by a single disturbance, a dispute over a dog between the ambassadors of Florence and Pisa which ultimately involved the cities in war. For the second time Frederick took the cross. He also seemed to give proof of piety by ratifying the privileges of the Church, announcing his determination to suppress heresy, and exempting all churches and clerics from taxation. In the meantime his son Henry had been elected king of the Romans, and by that act and the pope's subsequent ratification the very thing was accomplished which it had been Innocent's shrewd policy to prevent; namely, the renewal of the union of the empire and the kingdom of Sicily in one hand. The pope was always apprehensive of too much power passing into the hand of the emperor, we understand—H.V. Frederick was pursuing his own course, but to appease Honorius he renewed the pledge whereby Sicily was to remain a fief of the papal see.

The fall of Damietta (Damietta, an important harbor in Egypt, had been chosen by the crusaders as their base of operations against Jerusalem and the point from which Jerusalem was to be reached. We can readily understand this if we look up the position of this Damietta, or Dumyet, as it is known today—H.V.), in 1221, was adapted to fire a sincere crusader's zeal; but Frederick was too much engaged in pleasure and absorbed in his scheme for extending his power in Italy to give much attention to the rescue of the holy places. In hope of inflaming his zeal and hastening the departure of the crusade, Honorius encouraged the emperor's marriage with Iolanthe, daughter of John of Brienne, king of Jerusalem, and heiress of the crown, this on the ground that Iolanthe was immediate heir to the crown through her mother (all this is surely a far cry from conducting himself as the representative of the Christ upon the earth. It is difficult to harmonize this political conniving and maneuvering with the spiritual character of the Kingdom of Heaven

and its exalted and glorified Lord.—H.V.). The nuptials were no sooner celebrated than Frederick assumed the title of king of Jerusalem; but he continued to show no sign of making haste. His aggravating delays were enough to wear out a more amiable disposition than even Honorius possessed. A final agreement was made between them in 1225, which gave the emperor a respite of two years more, and he swore upon penalty of excommunication to set forth October, 1227. Four months before the date appointed for the crusade Honorius died.

The last year of Honorius' reign, Frederick entered openly upon the policy which involved him in repeated wars with the papacy and the towns of Northern Italy. He renewed the imperial claims to the Lombard cities. Upon these claims the Apostolic see could not look with complacency, for, if realized, they would have made Frederick the sovereign of Italy and cramped the temporal power of the papacy within a limited and at best an uncertain area.

Gregory IX and Frederick II. 1227-1241.

An antagonist of different metal was Gregory IX, 1227-1241. Innocent III, whose nephew he was, seemed to have risen again from the grave in him. Although in years he was more than twice as old as the emperor (His exact age is not known. Some say that at the time of his death he was almost a centenarian), Gregory was clearly his match in vigor of mind and dauntless bravery, and greatly his superior in moral purpose. In asserting the exorbitant claims of the papacy he was not excelled by any of the popes. He was famed for eloquence and was an expert in the canon law.

Setting aside Frederick's spurious pretexts for delaying the crusade, Gregory in the first days of his pontificate insisted upon his fulfilling his double pledge made at his coronation in 1215 and his coronation as emperor in Rome, 1220 (Frederick had received the cross at his coronation in Rome from the hand of Gregory, then Cardinal Ugolino). Frederick at last seemed ready to comply. The crusaders assembled at Brindisi, and Frederick actually set off to sea accompanied by the pope's prayers. Within three days of leaving port the expedition returned, driven back by an epidemic, as Frederick asserted, or by Frederick's love of pleasure, as Gregory maintained.

The pope's disappointment knew no bounds. He pronounced against Frederick the excommunication threatened by Honorius (The English chronicler, speaking of the pope's act, uses his favorite expression, "that he might not be like a dog unable to bark."). As the sentence was being read in the church at Anagni, the clergy dashed their lighted tapers to the floor to indicate the emperor's going out into darkness. Gregory justified his action in a letter to the Christian princes, and spoke of Frederick as "one whom the Holy See had educated with much care, suckled at its breast, carried on its shoulders, and whom it has frequently rescued from the

hands of those seeking his life, whom it has brought up to perfect manhood at much trouble and expense, exalted to the honors of kingly dignity, and finally advanced to the summit of the imperial station, trusting to have him as a wand of defence and the staff of our old age." He declared the plea of the epidemic a frivolous pretence and charged Frederick with evading his promises, casting aside all fear of God, having no respect for Jesus Christ. Heedless of the censures of the Church, and enticed away to the usual pleasures of his kingdom, he had abandoned the Christian army and left the Holy Land exposed to the infidels.

In a vigorous counter appeal to Christendom, Frederick made a bold protest against the unbearable assumption of the papacy, and pointed to the case of John of England as a warning to princes of what they might expect. "She who calls herself my mother," he wrote, "treats me like a step-mother." He denounced the secularization of the Church, and called upon the bishops and clergy to cultivate the self-denial of the Apostles.

In 1228 the excommunication was repeated and places put under the interdict where the emperor might be. Gregory was not without his own troubles at Rome, from which he was compelled to flee and seek refuge at Perugia.

The same year, as if to show his independence of papal dictation and at the same time the sincerity of his crusading purpose, the emperor actually started upon a crusade, usually called the Fifth Crusade. On being informed of the expedition, the pope excommunicated him for the third time and inhibited the patriarch of Jerusalem and the Military Orders from giving him aid. The expedition was successful in spite of the papal malediction, and entering Jerusalem Frederick crowned himself king in the church of the Holy Sepulchre. Thus we have the singular spectacle of the chief monarch of Christendom conducting a crusade in fulfilment of a vow to two popes while resting under the solemn ban of a third. Yea, the second crusader who entered the Holy City as a conqueror, and the last to do so, was at the time not only resting under a triple ban, but was excommunicated a fourth time on his return from his expedition to Europe. He was excommunicated for not going, he was excommunicated for going, and he was excommunicated on coming back, though it was not in disgrace but in triumph. (Besides, how could the emperor's mission to the holy city possibly be a success without the blessing of the pope resting upon it? The king was under the ban and nevertheless successful in his undertaking.—H.V.)

The emperor's troops bearing the cross were met on their return to Europe by the papal army whose banners were inscribed with the keys. Frederick's army was victorious. Diplomacy, however, prevailed, and emperor and pope dined together at Anagni (Sept. 1, 1230) and arranged a treaty.

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

REJECTION OF ERRORS

Introductory Remarks

The necessity of this Rejection of Errors is, of course, fundamentally the same in this chapter as in the other chapters of our *Canons*. That necessity is, in the first place, a matter of principle: to every positive there is a negative. And it is, in the second place, a matter of history: the Arminians and their errors were a matter of historical fact, and it was incumbent upon the Reformed churches to maintain and defend the truth antithetically, that is, with rejection of error.

However, this is emphatically true in regard to the present chapter of the *Canons*, and especially with regard to the first subject of this chapter, namely, the corruption of man. For do not forget that the Arminians had in the third of the *Five Arminian Articles* of 1610 given a rather good account of themselves. And even though, as we have remarked before, that third article is not all that a sound Reformed man today would desire in the way of an exact statement concerning the depravity of man, nevertheless, taken by itself, that article cannot be criticized. And therefore, if you would compare the third article of the Arminians with the first part of the Third and Fourth Heads of Doctrine of the *Canons*, you would come to the conclusion that there was no real conflict, that the fathers were fighting imaginary opponents, and that it was entirely unnecessary for them to go into such lengthy detail in regard to the fall and corruption of man. But first of all, as we also pointed out previously, the Arminians principally denied and contradicted their third article by stating in their fourth article that the mode of the operation of God's grace is *not irresistible*. And secondly, in much of their teaching and writing they proved abundantly that they after all did not believe what they seem to state in their third article. They undoubtedly tried in their *Five Articles* to leave the best possible impression upon the people, while in their actual writings and teaching they many times contradicted and opposed the Reformed doctrine of the corruption of man. And therefore it was especially necessary in the present chapter of the *Canons* that the fathers quote directly from the Arminians, in order to show what they really taught, and that they then would gainsay these Arminian errors by quoting the Scriptures.

As far as the order of this Rejection of Errors is concerned, we may remark that it is the same as in the positive part of this chapter. The first five articles deal with errors concerning the corruption of man, while the remaining articles (6-9) deal with errors concerning the conversion of the sinner.

The true doctrine having been explained, the Synod rejects the errors of those:

I. Who teach: That it cannot properly be said, that original sin in itself suffices to condemn the whole human race, or to deserve temporal and eternal punishment. For these contradict the Apostle, who declares: "Therefore as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned," Rom. 5:12. And: "The judgment came of one unto condemnation," Rom. 5:16. And: "The wages of sin is death," Rom. 6:23.

The above translation is correct. However, it would be more proper, I think, that in an English translation the Scriptural passages would be quoted from the King James Version of the Bible.

This article deals with the very important subject of original sin. We call it a very important subject, because if one goes astray in regard to original sin, the result must needs be that his entire conception of sin and depravity is awry. A denial of the true doctrine of original sin makes it impossible to maintain the truth of total depravity. For this reason it is also very important that Reformed believers and their seed be well-founded in this truth. And it is indeed a sad sign when this truth of original sin is neglected and despised as being "just so much abstract doctrine."

Now, first of all, exactly what is the error that is rejected in this paragraph? The Arminians are cited as teaching here: "That it cannot properly be said, that original sin in itself suffices to condemn the whole human race, or to deserve temporal and eternal punishment."

Concerning this teaching of the Arminians we may note:

1) That it is concerned especially with that aspect of original sin that is called "original guilt." As you know, we distinguish original sin as original guilt and original corruption. The former is the doctrine that the entire human race is guilty through the one sin of Adam, and therefore liable to temporal and eternal punishment. The latter is the doctrine that as a result of the one sin of Adam the entire race, through the process of generation and birth, inherits the corruption and pollution of sin. And it is with the former, original guilt, that we have to do in this article. This is plain from the language of the article itself. It deals with the question of condemnation, with the question of whether one is deserving, through original sin, of temporal and eternal punishment. This is a legal question, a question not of corruption and pollution, not of the spiritual, moral condition of the race, but a question of guilt, of liability to punishment, a question of the legal state of the race before the bar of God's justice.

While the Arminians admitted a kind of original corruption, though never in separation from the actual sin of the natural man and though never in the real sense of the corruption of man's *nature*, they denied original guilt as the ground of the condemnation of the whole race, and denied therefore that original sin in itself is deserving of temporal and eternal punishment.

2) That the emphasis in this statement is on the phrase "in itself." This is typical Arminian phraseology. They did not want to leave the impression of denying original sin. That would be far too obvious and blunt. No, they had to deceive people. And therefore they had to speak of original sin, but they had to cunningly and deceitfully qualify their doctrine of original sin in such a way that, on the one hand, they left the impression of being orthodox, and on the other hand, they at the same time smuggled their denial of original sin into the church. Hence, they taught that original sin *in itself* is not sufficient to condemn the whole human race. In other words, original sin *plus* actual sin forms the only sufficient ground for condemnation and for temporal and eternal punishment. But original sin without the actual deed of sin can never be deserving of temporal and eternal punishment. We deal here again, therefore, with the fundamental position of the Arminians and Pelagians with respect to sin, namely: sin is in the *act*. From this it is but a step, of course, to two other positions which those of the Arminian ilk often assumed and still assume today. The first is that since original sin in itself is an insufficient ground for condemnation, therefore infants, who have committed no actual sin, are not subject to condemnation. And the second is that the heathen, who have not come into contact with the gospel, have never therefore had the opportunity to believe, and are not guilty of the sin of unbelief, cannot be subject to condemnation. Original sin *in itself* is not sufficient ground to condemn the whole human race. And it is well known, of course, how Arminians delight in picturing as a horrible and monstrous doctrine the truth that original sin *is* by itself a sufficient ground of condemnation.

3) That this apparently partial denial of original sin nevertheless constitutes a fundamental and complete denial of original sin. In the first place, it must be rather obvious that this is not a relative question. That little phrase "in itself" is deceitful. Either original sin is a sufficient ground of condemnation, or it is not. It is not a question of "in itself." It is a question of original sin (period), or of original sin *plus*. It is not a question of sufficient ground of condemnation or insufficient ground in the sense of partial ground. Either there is ground for condemnation or there is not ground for condemnation. Either there is sin, or there is not sin. Either there is guilt, or there is not guilt. Where there is guilt, there is liability to punishment. And where, before God, there is liability to punishment, that punishment is always the only punishment of sin that there is, temporal and eternal, namely death, — death in its full sense, in all its im-

plications. God's "justice requires, that sin which is committed against the most high majesty of God, be also punished with extreme, that is, with everlasting punishment of body and soul." *Heidelberg Catechism*, Qu. 11. In the second place, however, it must be noted that the Arminians deny original sin in its key aspect. For we must bear in mind that original corruption and pollution is but one aspect of death. It is spiritual death. And death is the punishment of sin. But if original sin is not sufficient ground for condemnation and is not deserving of temporal and everlasting punishment, where then is the ground for that punishment of death, including that aspect which we call spiritual death? There is none. The great fact of sin and corruption must be reduced completely and solely to a matter of the *act*. This is not only the logical consequence of the Arminian error. It is exactly what the Arminian teaches and wants to teach, even though he at times tries to cover it up. Fundamentally, the Arminian denies original sin; and because he denies original sin, he must deny that sin is in any real sense a matter of man's nature, and must maintain that sin is solely a matter of the sinful act. And this is, of course, at the same time the only basis upon which he can maintain the error of free-willism and resistible grace.

Over against this error the fathers quote, first of all, from the important passage in Romans 5:12-18. As is plain from the two brief quotations made from this passage, the emphasis is entirely legal. It is upon the legal solidarity of the human race with Adam, and therefore upon the legal solidarity of the human race with Adam's sin. The line of thought is as follows: a) Death reigns over all men. b) Death is punishment for sin. c) Death reigns over all because all have sinned. d) All are said to have sinned (even those who did not sin after the likeness of Adam's transgression, even those who did not have the law, even those who had no special commandment to keep or violate as did Adam, even infants in the cradle) — all are said to have sinned in and through the sin of the one man Adam. Through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death passed upon all men. This is confirmed by the quotation from vs. 16: the judgment (a legal term: in judgment one is faced by the question of guilt or righteousness) came by one (Adam, our representative head) to condemnation.

The second quotation, from Romans 6:23 evidently intends to point out that the wages of sin, whatever kind of sin that may be, whether original or actual, is death, and that therefore also when original sin is considered *by itself*, this rule must be applied, and that therefore original sin is indeed in itself sufficient ground to condemn the whole human race. Its wages is death.

A lot of doctrine, you say? Yes, but it is one of the key doctrines of the Word of God. Without it you can understand neither the corruption of the natural man nor the wonder of his conversion to God. And therefore the believer must reject every error repugnant thereto. H.C.H.

DECENCY and ORDER

Article 31

G. Status of the Decision Until Such Time As The Matter of Appeal Has Been Resolved.

In this paragraph we are concerned with the matter of how a decision, taken by a minor ecclesiastical assembly and subjected to an appeal, is to be regarded until such time as the appeal is heard. For example, let us say that a Consistory makes a certain decision by majority vote. However, one of the minority members, being dissatisfied, informs the Consistory that he will bring the matter in the form of an appeal to the Classis and, if necessary, perhaps even to the Synod. Classis will not meet for another two or three months and the next meeting of the Synod is almost a year away. What happens to this particular decision in this interim? Must the Consistory hold the execution of the decision in abeyance until the appeal is heard? May she proceed to execute the decision immediately and perhaps become involved in many complex difficulties in the event the appellant's position is upheld later by the majority body?

Although this matter is not directly treated in Article 31 of our Church Order, it is nevertheless involved. The article sets forth the principle involved in the right of appeal and out of this principle evolve several practical problems of which this is one. The church order does not enter into all of these practical questions for if it were to do so it would become a rather cumbersome document. There would be room, it seems to us, for the Synod to deal with some of these more important questions and to incorporate their decisions into the church order in the form of appendages and interpretations. To date, however, this has not been done with respect to the problem stated and the result is that there are differences of opinion with regard to the question asked.

The Church Order Commentary by Monsma and Van Dellen gives us little satisfaction here. In considering the question: "Should decisions of minor assemblies await execution pending an appeal?", a two-fold answer is given. First it is stated, "We answer in the affirmative" but a bit later it is added, "If and when possible, action on appeals should be awaited" with this addition, "Sometimes, however, this is not possible, or not advisable." The authors keenly sensed the difficulty in making a hard and fast rule to govern every instance and the result is that very little is said to solve the problem. To answer, "Yes, No, sometimes, not always, if possible, if advisable" doesn't help a great deal when one is confronted with the actual difficulty. But let us quote the "Commentary" in full on this question:

"The question is often asked: Should decisions of minor assemblies await execution pending an appeal? We would

answer in the affirmative. If at all possible no assembly must begin to execute a decision the correctness of which is to be judged by a major assembly. To illustrate, supposing some one objects to the installation of a certain brother as Elder, and that his objection is over ruled, and that he appeals to Classis; then if the Consistory would proceed with the installation, and after a few weeks (or months . . . G.V.) Classis should sustain the appellant, such a Consistory would find itself in a very difficult position.

"If and when possible, action on appeals should be awaited. Sometimes, however, this is not possible, or not advisable. Thus in the illustration at hand, if the appellant were not sustained by Classis he might appeal to Synod. This would mean a long extended delay as to the brother's installation (if synodical decision were awaited), which would be unfair to both the Church concerned and the Elder-elect concerned. The rule should be one appeal. And during that appeal, in all possible cases, action on the appeal should be awaited. If an appellant feels burdened to such an extent that he cannot submit after the first appeal, then let him proceed. But as a rule he should not ask or expect the minor assembly to suspend action."

It seems that another approach to the question is possible. First of all, account must be taken of the decision which is in question. All ecclesiastical decisions are not the same in nature nor in importance. When, therefore, a decision is called in question, the determination of an immediate or a postponed execution of that decision would, in our opinion, depend primarily on the nature of the decision. For example, we might cite here the decision of Classis East in October, 1953, regarding the seating of delegates from the First Protestant Reformed Church. This was strictly a matter of roll-call and when a decision was reached by majority vote, that decision had to be executed at once. Even though a minority disagreed with the decision, it could not in the very nature of the case be postponed until an appeal was heard. The matter of roll-call had to be determined before Classis could possibly proceed with its work. Irregardless of whether or not that decision would be later overruled or reversed by Synod, it became a valid and binding decision from the moment it was taken in Classis East. The nature of the decision demanded an immediate execution. Such would be the case with all matters of roll-call.

Hence, an attempt might be made to classify all ecclesiastical decisions under several broad headings and then a rule made with respect to the matter in question that would apply to each group of decisions. We do not say that this would prove one hundred per cent possible but it may be worthy of an attempt. We might suggest as a beginning a classification such as the following to which other headings might be added as the need required. For example:

1. *Decisions involving Principles and Doctrines.*
2. *Decisions regarding matters of Administration.*

3. *Decision respecting matters of Procedure.*
4. *Decisions concerning the Legality of issues, delegates, etc.*
5. *Decisions of Discipline and Censure.*
6. *Matters dealing with Installation of Office Bearers.*

If then a division of this order were followed, it might be ruled that all decisions falling under the first heading must also be executed at once. They become settled and binding immediately. However, those under the second heading may conceivably be held in abeyance for some time after they are made if there is an appeal regarding them pending. Let us illustrate. Suppose that the orthodoxy of an elder or minister is questioned and that the Consistory, by majority vote, finds him guilty of heresy. One of the minority, however, appeals the decision. This cannot mean that the deposition or suspension of the guilty office-bearer be temporarily postponed. The decision must be enforced at once. On the other hand, let us suppose that a consistory decides to black-top the church's parking lot out of funds available to them. A minority objects insisting that these funds can be put to better use in another way. They will, if necessary, appeal the matter. In such a case, it would certainly be the course of wisdom to hold the execution of the decision in abeyance even though the majority has every legal right to proceed with the black-topping of the church yard. All things that are lawful are not always expedient. And so we might continue with respect to these different kinds of decisions. The point we wish to make is that the time of executing a decision is to be determined to a large extent by the nature of the decision as well as the circumstances surrounding it. But irrespective of when the decision is actually put into effect, the mere fact that it is being appealed does not nullify it or make it temporarily illegal but it remains "settled and binding" until such time as it is changed by a major ecclesiastical body.

H. Status of Appellant During The Interim

This is quite naturally closely related to the foregoing. It should be evident that if a decision loses its binding force by virtue of an appeal, the appellant is not bound by it until his appeal is heard and treated. If, on the other hand, a decision remains in force until the appeal is heard, the appellant must also be bound by it and submit to it or lose his right to appeal.

It is on this point that a great deal of unnecessary conflict has arisen. Some claim that an appellant cannot be bound for conscience sake. Others insist that the appellant must be bound or a state of anarchism results and that may never be tolerated in the church. The question then is: "What is the appellant's status?"

This matter, it seems to me, can be easily resolved with a little understanding and clarification. First of all then, we

should distinguish between being bound by the decision as such and recognizing the decision and being bound to or by that recognition. To illustrate with a matter where the conscience would be definitely involved, let us presume that the church of which I am a member decrees that "Christ died for all men and that the promise of salvation in Christ is for all on the condition of faith." With this I cannot agree and resolve to appeal. But the appeal will not be heard for almost a year. The decision is settled and binding. Does this mean that I am bound in my conscience to believe this heresy for a year? Of course not, but I am bound to recognize and acknowledge that this is the official doctrine of the church of which I am a member by virtue of this decision and that unless I can succeed in persuading the churches that they err, I have no choice other than to personally accept and defend this doctrine or leave the fellowship of said churches. As long as I choose to retain my membership, I am bound by the decisions that are legally taken.

In the second place, much of what we wrote in the foregoing also applies here. It is conceivable that many decisions are made with which I cannot agree but to which I nevertheless can submit myself while my appeal is being heard and without abusing my conscience. For example, I may belong to a congregation which adopts what I believe is an unreasonable budget. I decide to appeal and show cause why that budget is wrong. In the meantime, I contribute to the needs of the church, not according to my own standard but according to my ability and the needs as determined by the congregation. And so there are many things but let it be noted in conclusion that oft times much of the quibbling about "binding conscience" is occasioned by the attempt to be loosed from the binding authority of the Word of Christ and His Church and to justify one's self in mutiny and rebellion. Which of these, before God, is the greater sin?

G.V.D.B.

THE DAY OF SHADOWS

(Continued from page 178)

Satan's guilt, too was great. And his guilt was that he implanted in Eve's mind his lie whereby her pride was inflamed so that she was deceived by the lie. The devil's attempt to deceive the woman was successful because she adopted, made her own, his rationalization of the lie. His reasoning was this: It's foolish to suppose that you will die as a result of eating of the forbidden tree. All the other trees of the garden are good for food are they not? Likewise the fruit of this one tree. Thou shalt not die eating of its fruit. So there can be but one reason why God forbade thee. He knows that the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt be like Him. That He wills to prevent. He is bent on keeping thee low at the expense of thine supreme happiness. He does not have your interests at heart.

G.M.O.

ALL AROUND US

Dr. Daane Again Under Scrutiny.

Dr. James Daane, minister in the Christian Reformed Church of Los Angeles, California, a writer for the Reformed Journal, and author of the book titled *Theology Of Grace*, has become a target of criticism from several quarters. Not only have Dr. C. Van Til and Rev. H. Hoeksema taken Daane to task for emasculating their views on the common grace question, not only has the Rev. Hoeksema severely condemned Daane's evaluation of Hoeksema's view on the sovereignty of God in the relation of election and reprobation to which the editor of *The Standard Bearer* gave utterance in recent issues of this periodical, nor is it enough that Dr. Ridderbos of the Reformed Church in the Netherlands has expressed himself rather critically of the argument of Daane reviewed in his book *Theology Of Grace*, but there is much criticism of a serious nature rising against him in his own church.

The last two issues of *Torch and Trumpet* contain rather lengthy contributions written with a view to acquaint the readers of this paper with the fact that in the opinion of these writers Daane has said too much in criticism of the theology of his own church.

In the December, 1957, *Torch and Trumpet*, Rev. Edward Heerema, minister of a Christian Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, and member of the editorial committee of *Torch and Trumpet*, accuses Dr. Daane of having a bad case of astigmatism. It is conceded that Daane sees something wrong with Christian Reformed theology, but because Daane sees with wrong theological glasses, all he sees is distorted.

Moreover, the Rev. Joseph A. Hill, minister of the Reformed Presbyterian Church and teacher of Bible in the Unity Christian High School at Hudsonville, Michigan, writing in the January, 1958, issue of *Torch and Trumpet* goes so far as to accuse Dr. Daane of neo-orthodoxy, being afflicted with the rationalism of Barth and Kierkegaard. Daane, so the writer contends, wants a reformulation of Reformed theology. Daane's critic concedes that a Reformed Church should keep on reforming, but he insists, and correctly so, that true reformation "must be a reformation within the bounds of Scripture, not a reformation beyond Scripture."

Both of Daane's critics referred to immediately above are reflecting on an article which Dr. Daane wrote in the Reformed Journal of September, 1957, under the title, "The State of Theology in the Church."

That the reader may know a little of what the argument is about, we quote a little from the article of Joseph A. Hill where the latter restates the position of Dr. Daane.

"The Christian Reformed Church, he says, is theologically

orthodox but theologically dead. Her theology is 'correct' but has not been a corrective factor in her life. Theology in the church has grown stale, stagnant, and lifeless. Evidence of this, says Daane, is her indifference to the vigorous, challenging religious movements of recent times. The Christian Reformed Church has been largely unmoved and untouched by the current renaissance of biblical and theological studies that has been stimulated by such scholars as Barth, Brunner, Tillich, and others. Daane laments the fact that the Christian Reformed Church, with all her emphasis on theology, 'has made no mentionable contribution to this resurgence of theology, and has done nothing to determine its direction.' Accordingly, her theology lacks contemporaneity and her preaching often lacks relevancy to the great issues of our times.

"What can be done about this state of affairs? Daane replies that 'our theological plight calls for a fresh reformulation of the theological task and the creation and utilization of a new theological approach achieved in the light of the present and with the aid of what we have learned in the past.' To be sure, this progress must be based on Scripture. It must be a theology of the Word. 'Our theology must stand again in the direct light of the Scripture in order to see new light and in order continually to appraise the truth of her formulations.' Thus it would appear that Daane seeks to reform Reformed theology by pointing the way beyond the old orthodoxy toward a new and better orthodoxy.

"Daane contends that the progress of theology in the church has been hindered by the study of theology itself. The Christian Reformed Church has been engaged in the study of theology for theology's sake and accordingly has given a larger place to systematic Theology than to Biblical Theology. This emphasis on a system of theology, says Daane, is particularly evident in the attempt to 'centralize' theology by positing *divine sovereignty* as the master concept around which all other truth is arranged and to which all other truths are adjusted. The theological task, thus circumscribed, is limited in potential and has been long since finished. When theology is conceived of in terms of a fixed system of truth, it tends to become 'static.' Further development of theology is impossible once theology is regarded as a finished system of truth. Thus theology in the Christian Reformed Church cannot advance beyond itself because it is conceived of abstractly as a closed system."

Rev. Hill further asserts "In keeping with his objection to theology as a system of truth, Daane also objects to the emphasis in Reformed Theology on the idea of a plan of God for history according to which God controls everything that comes to pass. 'Theological self-reflection upon the accepted central doctrine' (the sovereignty of God) determined the manner in which the counsel of God was defined by the church. 'The method which made sovereignty as such the explanation of sin and reprobation, as well as of election, was applied to the counsel of God. Sovereignty *per se* was now

made the explanation of everything, of 'whatsoever comes to pass.' Just as sovereignty was reduced to a philosophical concept of causality which made God as sovereign the Ultimate Cause of sin and reprobation, as well as of election, so divine sovereignty was made the Ultimate Cause of whatsoever comes to pass, and whatsoever comes to pass became the Ultimate Expression of God's Ultimate Will.'"

To quote no more of Rev. Hill's article because of limited space, briefly it is Rev. Hill's conclusion from Daane's argument that the latter, for fear of determinism which he concluded may be derived from the Reformed Theological system re the sovereignty of God in His counsel, wants to go in the direction of rejecting God's counsel as the determining factor in whatsoever comes to pass in history. Rev. Hill believes that Daane, who received his doctorate at Princeton, has imbibed too much of the liberal theological dishes served up at that institution, and he has relished the Existentialism of Kierkegaard and the dialectical theology of Barth. It is Rev. Hill's conclusion that Daane's 'new theological approach' would lead the Christian Reformed Church not in the direction of orthodoxy but of neo-orthodoxy.

Also Rev. Heerema, as already indicated, has not much good to say about Daane's new approach. He points up especially three areas in which Daane's theological vision is distorted. The first is "in his charge that sovereign election has not been sufficiently expressed 'in terms of Christ as Lord in whom our election takes place, but in terms of God's sovereignty as expressed in terms of both an election and reprobation apart from Christ.'" Heerema is amazed at how Daane misinterprets the writings of the late professor Berkhof in his Systematic Theology, and accuses Daane of generalizations and of "putting far too much freight on a point, a point seen in distortion in the first place."

The second area, according to Heerema, where Daane's vision is distorted is in regard to his conception of the antithesis. Writes he, Daane's notions as to the 'antithesis' are puzzling. He charges that there is present in the Christian Reformed Church an 'abstract and static conception' of the antithesis. And this means that 'the world is eternally divided into eternally warring halves engaged in an eternal conflict in which there is no victory because no decisive battle is ever waged. This conception of the antithesis is wholly static because it is defined apart from Christ and His victorious death and resurrection. Indeed, in this view Christ is merely the executive of this antithesis, not the Savior of the world who abolishes death, sets the devil at naught, and takes away the sins of the world.'

"One hardly knows what to make of such a statement, characterized as it is by reckless language." Rev. Heerema then proceeds to show wherein Daane uses reckless language and the gist of his remarks comes down to this that Daane is not really criticizing the Christian Reformed conception of the antithesis, but only Daane's distorted conception of that conception.

Concerning the third distorted area of Daane's vision, Rev. Heerema writes, "Daane's distorting vision is nowhere more obvious than it is in his description of the concept of the 'sovereignty of God' as related particularly to election and reprobation. This concept, so precious to the Christian of sound Reformed persuasion, is seen in distortion by Daane as follows: 'Yet it was not always observed that a sovereignty which *in and of and by itself* explains both sin and righteousness, election and reprobation, is a sovereignty without any essential ethical character. Such sovereignty is an unqualified, naked power, a brute fact.'"

It is at this point that Heerema remarks, "It is to be noted that Daane finds such a notion of God's sovereignty in the thinking of Van Til and Hoeksema." Heerema is inclined to believe that Daane has also read Van Til with distorted vision, but as to Hoeksema he writes "we are not minded to enter into his evaluation of Hoeksema, even though Daane's remarks on the precise point in question would seem to have a measure of validity." Heerema drops the subject here because he insists that he is interested only in Daane's criticism of the Christian Reformed theology. But it would be interesting to know more of what Heerema thinks of Hoeksema's theology on this point. Perhaps the editor of *The Standard Bearer* when he reads this will not let this pass either without asking for further comment. Heerema doesn't like sweeping statements, but we don't either. It were better that Rev. Heerema had not left that statement hanging in the air, and that he had gone right on to show how Daane's vision of Hoeksema's theology on this point was 20 - 20.

Heerema concludes this part of his article with the following paragraph: "Daane's casting of the teaching of the sovereignty of God in an extreme supralapsarian mold is a gross distortion of Christian Reformed Theology. Our God is unspeakably and unceasingly holy. Never at any point is that glorious fact forgotten or ignored in Reformed theology. What ever problems or question arise in our theological reflections, God is always God in the totality of his holy perfections."

And he concludes his entire article with the words: "A person can't help wondering: just where did Daane get those spectacles?" Rev. H. J. Kuiper who from his past writings shows that he does not love Dr. Daane's conceptions very much either, places a foot-note at the bottom of the above question which tells the reader that the answer is to be found in the article of Rev. Hill above referred to and appearing in the January issue of *Torch and Trumpet*. The answer, as we have seen, according to Rev. Hill, is that Daane got those spectacles at Princeton Theological Seminary.

What Daane will do with all this criticism we do not know. But if he is going to answer it he will have plenty to do for a long time to come.

OUR FUTURE

*Speech delivered by Rev. H. Veldman, Nov. 15, 1957
in Doon, at our annual meeting of our
Protestant Reformed Action Society.*

(Concluded)

Wherefore also, man is himself rightly said to believe and repent by virtue of that grace received. Faith is therefore to be considered as the gift of God, not on account of its being offered by God to man, to be accepted or rejected at his pleasure; but because it is in reality conferred, breathed, and infused into him; or even because God bestows the power or ability to believe, and then expects that man should be the exercise of his own free will, consent to the terms of salvation, and actually believe in Christ; but because he who works in man both to will and to do, and indeed all things in all, produces both the will to believe, and the act of believing also." We ask again: what is truth? This is truth: the grace of God is sovereignly irresistible. And this we preach and teach.

What is truth? This is truth: the perseverance of the saints. We need not quote the passages which we have already quoted. We refer to John 6:37-39 and Phil. 1:6. And this truth is also Confessional. We read in Canons V, A, 8: "Thus, it is not in consequence of their own merits, or strength, but of God's free mercy, that they do not totally fall from faith and grace, nor continue and perish finally in their backslidings; which, with respect to themselves, is not only possible, but would undoubtedly happen; but with respect to God, *it is utterly impossible*, since His counsel cannot be changed, nor His promise fail, neither can the call according to His purpose be revoked, nor the merit, intercession and preservation of Christ be rendered ineffectual, nor the sealing of the Holy Spirit be frustrated or obliterated." Again we repeat: what is truth? This is truth: the perseverance of the saints is sure. And this, too, we preach and teach.

And notice, please, how this is in perfect harmony with Christ's calling of His sheep. He calls *His* sheep, does He not? Hence He knows them — this is sovereign election and reprobation. He calls His sheep upon the basis of His own meritorious work upon the cross. He is the Good Shepherd, is He not, Who lays down His life for His sheep — this is particular atonement. He calls His sheep, seeks and finds what is lost — this is total depravity. He *calls* His sheep — this is irresistible grace. And He calls His sheep and therefore their salvation is sure — this is the perseverance of the saints. Surely, we maintain the truth.

Secondly, we have a future because we maintained the truth and are therefore small. And therefore we exist as Protestant Reformed Churches. This is true as far as the history of 1924 is concerned. We must never forget this

history. We did not leave the Christian Reformed Church; we were cast out of their fellowship. We did not subscribe to heresy; we were declared by the Synod of 1924 to be fundamentally reformed. Did you ever hear of a heretic who was fundamentally reformed? True, the same synod also declared of us that we were characterized by an inclination to one-sidedness. But, was not the opposition also one-sided, leaning toward Common Grace and arminianism? We are one-sided? This we deny. But, even so, then we are one-sided to the truth that God is God alone. I do not mind being accused of this one-sidedness, do you? We were cast out, and of this it must be recorded that we were never given an opportunity to defend ourselves. The only time we were permitted to speak in public in 1924 was because we had promised that, given the opportunity to speak, we would not ask for the privilege again. Imagine: does not a defendant have a right to defend himself to the utmost? Never were we convicted of heresy. And today, some 33 years later, we believe as we did in 1924. A heretic is always characterized, is he not, by retrogression? When, I ask you, was a heretic ever cast out because he believed, exclusively, in the Five Points of Calvinism? I ask you: do we stand and have we proceeded upon the path of heresy and departure from the truth? Or have we adhered to the Scriptural and Confessional teachings that the Lord is God alone? Who, I ask you, has departed from the fundamental truth that the Lord is God alone? Who has departed from the path of Christian discipline? Who has departed from the Church's calling to walk antithetically in the midst of the world?

We may also apply this to 1953. O, the schism of 1953 in our midst was not caused by the question whether the word "condition" can be properly used or not. The schism was caused by two statements which do not contain the word "condition," but which do declare that the promise is conditional and that our entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven is preceded by our act of conversion. You say: they do not mean it that way? First, how easy it would have been to retract what they did not mean. And, secondly, failure to retract what they said surely means that they meant exactly what they said.

Do we have a future? We have a future as long as God pleases to have His truth proclaimed, and this will continue until the day when all struggle will be over, and we shall see face to face, know as we are known, and live forever unto the glory of God's sovereign grace and love.

III. *Its Calling*

To be sure, meetings of this nature are good. I can see that an organization of this nature can exert a wholesome influence. How strange, before the split in 1953, that many of those who were of us should oppose this society of Protestant Reformed action. This society can exert a wholesome influence by sponsoring lectures and also by the printing and distribution of Protestant Reformed literature. Besides, this

propaganda element is undoubtedly the basic purpose of this society for Protestant Reformed action.

However, we can and do more. I did not mention the matter to which I am about to call attention in my Reformation Day speech here because I intended to mention it tonight. We must be a Protestant Reformed Action society, and this also implies that everyone of us must be active. It is a good thing to sponsor a lecture or publish a book or brochure, and thereby place the load of this action in someone else's lap. But we ourselves can be active, have confidence in our future, and now I refer to the sphere of Christian instruction. We lament the sad state of our local Christian schools. In this we all agree. Now, we can do three things. We can regard these schools as the best we have and support them to the utmost of our ability. This, by the way, is the least we can do. We can condemn our local schools, withdraw our children from them, and send them to the public schools. This is the worst we can do. This is not Protestant Reformed action, but complete inaction; this is capitulation, surrender, the laying aside of our uniform, the giving up of the fight, the joining of our forces with the world, the throwing in of the sponge. This is the worst we can do; it constitutes a violation of our baptismal pledge and of the Scriptures that teach that Israel shall never permit the world to instruct its children. Or, we can also work together for our own school. This is the best we can do, and the best is always the least we may do. We cannot do it? How do we evaluate our children and the instruction we give them? What value do we place upon it? We cannot afford it? We can afford television sets and instruct our children that way? We can pay for all kinds of modern appliances and conveniences? We usually pay for a thing what we think it is worth. Are we earthly and carnal? We cannot do it? How do you know? Shall we consider it, desire it, pray for it, long for it. Do we long and pray for this? Protestant Reformed action? We have a future? Let us walk that way. Thank you.

CONTRIBUTIONS

January 2, 1958

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

Dear Rev. Hoeksema:

In regard to the article in *The Standard Bearer* of Nov. 1, 1957, under the heading "Our Conception of Churches," I wish to make the following remarks.

Our confessions, (Art. 29 of the Belgic Confessions) speak of two churches, true (not purest) and false, (not less

pure) and that these two churches are easily known and distinguished from each other; namely where the *pure* doctrine of the gospel is preached, there the *true* church is. Now if according to Rev. Kuiper it is true that the Chr. Ref. Church is not the false church, she must be the true church, (it is either or) and preaches the pure doctrine of the gospel.

Whereas no one has a right to withdraw himself from the true church, we have no right of separate existence according to this conception. Christ is not divided.

Your brother in the Lord,

Kryn Feenstra

819 Sylvan Blvd., Redlands, Calif.

P.S. In 1924 we did not withdraw ourselves from the Christian Reformed Church. But we were expelled. H.H.

LESSONS FROM THE PAST

My people give ear, attend to my word,
In parables new deep truths shall be heard;
The wonderful story our fathers made known
To children succeeding by us must be shown.

Instructing our sons we gladly record
The praises, the works, the might of the Lord,
For He hath commanded that what he hath done
Be passed in tradition from father to son.

Let children thus learn from history's light
To hope in our God and walk in His sight,
The God of their fathers to fear and obey,
And ne'er like their fathers to turn from His way.

The story be told, to warn and restrain,
Of hearts that were hard, rebellious, and vain,
Of soldiers who faltered when battle was near,
Who kept not God's covenant nor walked in His fear.

God's wonderful works to them He had shown,
His marvelous deeds their fathers had known;
He made for their pathway the waters divide,
His glorious pillar of cloud was their guide.

He gave them to drink, relieving their thirst,
And forth from the rock caused water to burst;
Yet faithless they tempted their God, and they said,
Can He Who gave water supply us with bread?

Jehovah was wroth because they forgot
To hope in their God, and trusted Him not;
Yet gracious, He opened the doors of the sky
And rained down the manna in richest supply.

They thought not of how, their freedom to gain,
In Egypt's abodes the first-born were slain,
And how all God's people were led forth like sheep,
The flock He delighted in safety to keep.

Psalm 78:1-7, 15