

# THE STANDARD

*Bearer*

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## MEDITATION

### HE SHALL LIVE FOREVER!

*"Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living Bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."*

JOHN 6:49-51

The occasion for this speech of Jesus was the miracle of the five loaves of barley bread and the two small fishes with which Jesus fed 5000, while they gathered twelve baskets of fragments that were left.

That the Jews understood.

Listen to the multitude: "This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world!"

A king who simply supplies the natural needs of man miraculously.

And they set about to make Jesus king.

But Jesus disappeared into a mountain alone.

And when these men saw Him the next day, and inquired about His disappearance, Jesus said: "Ye seek Me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled."

And He continues: "Labour not for the meat which perishes, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for Him hath God the Father sealed."

There you have the context of my text.

Jesus did miracles in order to show the truth.

Jesus laboured in the things of this earth, in order to show the people the things of heaven. Every miracle was a sermon by Jesus.

But, alas, they did not understand.

Time and time again the Lord pointed from the barley

loaves which they had eaten to the Bread which cometh down from heaven, namely, Himself!

And they further confuse the story, after hearing Him speak of bread which came down from heaven, by bringing up the story of Manna which came to Israel by Moses!

The Jews always boasted in Moses and all he did.

And then Jesus takes His cue from that Moses and that Manna, and discounts it.

Listen to Him: "Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead!"

But — here is a better Bread for you: I am the Bread of life. Eat Me, and you will live forever!

\* \* \* \*

Jesus is the Bread which came down from heaven.

Well, that is strong and vivid language. Everyone understands the figure of bread. Do we not talk about our "daily bread"?

Bread is the means unto earthly life. Eat and you live. Do without and you die. As simple as that.

But here is the point: Jesus had done the miracle of the barley loaves in order to direct the attention of the people to its spiritual counterpart.

And so it is today.

You eat quite often. Every day you have at least three meals.

Yes, and every time you set yourself close to that table and look upon the bread, God is talking to you about the greatest need of your heart and life: the Bread that came down from heaven, or, simply, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Why, it was even so with Israel in the desert. Why do you think God rained manna from heaven. You answer: to feed Israel in the desert. Yes, but that does not conclude the story. Remember that Moses also said: Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth from God's mouth shall man live! That's the full story. In other words, the manna in the wilderness also pointed to the coming of Jesus.

You say: bread is the means unto life on earth.

And Jesus is the Bread that came down from heaven so that we might eat Him and live, but then forever.

Jesus said: I am the Bread of Life (vs. 50); and: I am the living Bread of Life (vs. 51a); and: the bread that I will give is My flesh (vs. 51b).

In the last quotation you have the right cue: My Flesh! But about that later.

Bread (and also water) is the means for earthly life. Jesus is the Bread that came down from heaven, and it signifies that He is the means unto Life Eternal.

O what wondrous feeding power is in that spiritual Bread!

Eat earthly bread, and you will surely die. But you say: we live. Just go on, eating your earthly bread, and you will surely die.

Eat your miraculous bread in the desert with Israel, and you will surely die.

But eat and drink Jesus Christ, and you will live forever!

O how we need this spiritual bread, which is Jesus Christ.

In ourselves, by nature, we are dead in sins and trespasses. We are sinful, guilty before God, condemnable. Now we are in terrible want, and on the way to an eternal famine. Now we are drugged by sin, but presently conscious of this awful state. In one word: man must have God in order to live. That is, to be supremely happy, full, all our real needs fulfilled.

Now all that is in Christ.

Christ is the very Face of God. God reveals Himself in Jesus. You may even say that Jesus of Nazareth is Jehovah God, but then, revealed in the flesh.

Christ could say: He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father. In Jesus dwells all the fulness of all God's virtues bodily.

So that we may say, that if you have Christ, you have God: your deepest needs are fulfilled and satisfied. And you are blest.

Why?

Because your sins are forgiven; your guilt is removed, your heart and life are renewed, and you are on the way to eternal life and joy and peace.

\* \* \* \*

Now there is one thing I want to stress in this connection.

Much has been said and written about the perseverance of the saints.

But attend to this:

1) Christ says in my text: "This is the Bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and *not die*." There you have the assurance of your perseverance. If you once eat and drink Christ, and that means, of course, that you believe on Him, you will never die!

2) Christ also says in my text: "if any man eat of this Bread, *he shall live forever*"! What glorious Gospel! The very character of the spiritual life you receive with your regeneration is eternal. And you can never die again.

You know, as a child I remember distinctly that I thought by myself alone: But suppose that another devil would fall in the future eternity (?). And suppose further that this second devil would invade the new paradise of God and tempt us again? What then? In other words, who gives me the assurance that we shall never fall again, even as Adam and Eve did?

Then this is the answer: if you eat and drink Jesus Christ, that is, if you believe on and in Him, you have eternal life. Or in the words of my text: You shall live forever!

What glorious rest in these words!

We can travel safely to eternity.

\* \* \* \*

So, now we understand Jesus.

He is the living Bread and the living Water for the life of His world. We must eat His flesh and drink His blood in order to live forever. And that Jesus speaks of His flesh and blood in the context, surely signifies that He will die the eternal death in order to pay for the sin of His elect world.

But here is the tragedy.

No one wants to eat this Bread.

And why?

Because we are completely self-satisfied.

And Jesus is too utterly beautiful and good and righteous.

There you have the twofold reason.

We rather eat the dross of the world than to come and eat Jesus.

We are enmity against God. That is our name. That expresses our essence.

There is no one in all the history of the world who came and took Jesus.

That is true of the 4000 years before His advent, and that is true since He came into the world.

We are altogether too evil and filthy to have any taste organs in order to appreciate the loveliness of the Christ. We like to eat and to taste and to relish sin, transgression, corruption. We are dead and we eat ourselves to more death, until we arrive in eternal death.

That's the story of the whole world, of all history and of all climes. That's the story both of the elect and of the reprobate. There is no difference. We, like the others, are children of wrath.

And so God has to give Himself.

First of all, Jesus is given of the Father to His elect world from all eternity. Our names are written in the book of life from the foundation of the world. And Jesus said in the Highpriestly prayer: Thine they were and Thou hast given them unto Me!

Second, Jesus gave Himself in the fulness of time. No one sought for Him, and no one asked for Him to come. He came, and how did He find us? Business as usual. And how did we treat this Bread of Life when He came to our door? There was no room for Him in the inn. That event signified a program. In the end we nailed Him to the accursed tree. That's what we did with Jesus.

Third, the Holy Spirit prepared Him a place in the womb of Mary, and, later, prepared Him a place in our heart.

Jesus, the Bread of heaven, is the unspeakable Gift.

\* \* \* \*

And, oh, when this Jesus comes into our heart. Then we do not care overmuch for the barley loaves or the two small fishes, nor for their multiplication.

That is, we do not care for them unduly.

They are good for the life on earth.

They are also good as a sermon to lead us upward and higher.

But we do care for Jesus, the Bread of life.

We love Him, eat and drink Him, and we live forever!  
Even now. Amen.

G.V.

## Notice

### NEXT EASTERN LADIES' LEAGUE MEETING

*Speaker:* REV. G. VANDEN BERG

*Topic:* *How to Teach Our Children to Pray*

*Place:* First Church

*Time:* Thursday evening, April 16, at 8:00 o'clock

Mrs. Jacob Kuiper, Ass't Sec'y

### IN MEMORIAM

The Ladies' Society of the Protestant Reformed Church at South Holland, Ill., expresses sincere sympathy to one of its members Mrs. Raymond Bruinsma, in the loss of her brother,

MR. JAKE BEUGEL

May the God of all grace comfort the bereaved, and give them the assurance that to die in Christ is gain.

President, Rev. H. C. Hoeksema  
Secretary, Mrs. P. S. Poortinga

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## EDITORIALS

### Evolution, Long Periods, or Days

In our articles on the above named subject we have emphasized repeatedly that we cannot take so-called science for our guide and for the source of our information, but only the Holy Scriptures, which are, we firmly believe, the infallible Word of God.

Those who believe in evolution or in what is called "theistic evolution" (which is only another name for the same thing since it denies the separate creation of the species) which is also taught in Calvin College, prefer the opposite method: science so-called is the source of their information and the Bible is either ignored or an attempt is made to show that it can be brought into harmony with their unbelieving philosophy. And the latter is impossible.

Under the caption: "What Is Happening in the Christian Reformed Church?" Henry J. Kuiper writes the following paragraph on the question of theistic evolution:

"First of all, we point out the sympathy for theistic evolution (i.e. in the Christian Reformed Church, H.H.) — a theory which implies that the doctrine of creation can be harmonized with that of a gradual development, under divine guidance, of lower into higher forms of life, from plants to animals, and from animals to man. There are men of prominence in the Reformed Church of the Netherlands and in our own Church who advocate this theory and do not hesitate to assert that some day it may be demonstrated that man has descended from some ape-like ancestors. And that in the face of the biblical teaching that the first man was a direct divine creation, a perfect human being made in the image of God, in righteousness, holiness, and knowledge of the truth!

"To our amazement the Ecumenical Synod of Potchefstroom, which met last summer, adopted a report on Creation and Evolution, signed by five Dutch professors (A. Lever, Polman, Jonker, Oostendorp, and Gispén), which leaves room for the theory of theistic evolution. It made light of the objections which our Synod of 1953 raised against certain statements in an earlier report and declares: 'Seen in this light the Reformed Ecumenical Synod wisely did not pronounce an opinion on the idea of so-called theistic evolution.' It also stated blandly that 'the church should leave it to a Christian science to come to a well considered and fundamentally sound view in connection with this theory.' The Ecumenical Synod adopting the report of the Dutch committee, did not even make the statement that even if it could be proved that many species of plants and animals were evolutions from lower forms of life, this should not be posited of man! It had nothing to say in explanation or defense of the teaching of Genesis 1 but simply left the decision to the sacred cow of science!"

My question is: what are Kuiper and others going to do about this as well as about the question of the infallibility of

Scripture and other questions. It is very well to write about the questions, but, in the meantime, all these errors are being taught in the churches and especially in Calvin College, as Kuiper well knows. Is it not high time that, instead of writing about all these things some very definite action were taken?

\* \* \* \*

But now I must continue my discussion of the creation narrative in Genesis.

On the sixth day God created not only the animals but also man, the crown of the earthly creation.

Of this we read, first of all in Gen. 1:26-28: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowls of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."

And in the second chapter of Genesis we read a more detailed description of man: "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life: and man became a living soul," v. 7. And of the creation of the woman we read in vv. 20-23: "And Adam gave names to all the cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field: but for Adam there was not found a help meet for him. And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh thereof; And the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man."

It is not our purpose to enter into a detailed interpretation of these passages. My purpose is simply to show that, if you believe that the narrative in Gen. 1 and 2 about the creation of man is the Word of God, it is impossible to believe the theory of evolution, according to which man descended from the ape or some other animal; nor in the theory of long periods of millions of years. Notice:

1. That God created man on the sixth day. And that this sixth day was not a long period of millions or even billions of years is once more emphatically asserted in the end of the chapter where we read: "And the evening and the morning were the sixth day." Remember that the whole creation was now finished, so that it is certain that the evening was determined by the setting of the sun and the morning by the rising of the same. The sixth day, therefore, was an ordinary day as we know it. Hence, those that maintain that man evolved from some lower animal during a long period of time, cannot possibly accept the account of Gen. 1.

2. That God created man in His own image and likeness.

That was his unique distinction from all the rest of the creatures God had made. Those who maintain the theory of so-called theistic evolution or of long periods cannot accept this. The image of God consists, according to Scripture, in true knowledge of God, righteousness, and holiness. Is it possible or even conceivable that one of the higher animals, such as an ape, gradually developed into a rational-moral creature, endowed with the image of God, so that He knew God and loved Him with all his heart and mind and soul and strength? And having gradually developed into such a distinctive creature, did he lose that image all of a sudden?

H.H.

### About The Three Points

We are discussing the "Second Point."

It is evident that, according to this second of the three points, there is in man, through the restraint of sin, some good left: he is not as morally evil as he would be if the power of sin were not restrained in his heart and nature. In other words, though through the fall man would have become totally depraved, in actual fact there is no totally depraved man in the world until the end of this age when the restraint of sin will be withdrawn.

It is true that it is only through "special grace" that man is regenerated so that he can hear the Word of God and believe in Christ. Only then can he perform what is called "spiritual good." But by the restraint of sin and without being regenerated or, if you wish, through the power of "common grace" he can do much "natural good." And this "natural good" includes many elements according to one of the originators of the "Three Points." It refers to external righteousness, i.e. a walk in the way of righteousness in an external sense, receptivity for moral persuasion and for the truth, a will that is susceptible to good motives, a conscience that is receptive for good influences, and good inclinations and desires. All these remnants of so-called natural good remained in man after the fall. How this must be explained the Synod of 1924 did not say. But the chief exponent of the theory of common grace, Dr. A. Kuiper, offered an explanation. According to him, the power of common grace, with its restraining influence upon sin, operated immediately after the fall. If there had not been such a restraining influence and operation of common grace upon man after the fall, he would have become a devil, he would have sunk into eternal desolation and the development of the human race would have become impossible. He would have eternal death. But man did not fully die. And this can be explained only from the restraining influence of the Holy Spirit immediately after the fall. Because of this operation of the Spirit of God man did not become wholly corrupt, but he retained so life and light and a remnant of his original goodness. And this remnant of natural goodness is preserved in mankind throughout its development in history.

Virtually this is also the teaching of the second point. For it implies not only that there is a remnant of good left in man

after the fall, but also that this remnant is constantly preserved in man and in the human race through the restraining influence of the Holy Spirit. This is literally expressed as follows: the Confessions teach "that God by the general operations of His Spirit, without renewing the heart of man, restrains the unimpeded breaking out of sin, by which human life in society remains possible." Hence, according to the "Second Point," the original good that is left in man since the fall is continuously preserved in man by the Holy Spirit. The remnant of original good is the capital with which the Holy Spirit works. Were there no good left in man after the fall there could be no further restraint. The corruption of man would then have been complete from the beginning. But even the good that is left in man would have been corrupted long ago if it were not for the continued restraint of sin by the Spirit of God.

The fruit of the theory of "common grace" as expressed in the Second Point of 1924 is evident. It is a denial of the antithesis between sin and grace, between Christ and the devil, between the Church and the world. It leads us right into the world. I am convinced that Dr. Kuyper Sr., who is the chief exponent of this theory, needed this theory when he entered into the world of politics and formed all sorts of alliances. If the natural man is, after all, not totally depraved but morally sound, though he is not regenerated, we can, to be sure, not receive him as a member of the Church, but we can surely cooperate with him in the different spheres of the life of this world, in labor and industry, in politics and even in education. Then we can join labor unions and associations and, perhaps, even the lodge. Then there is no fundamental reason for our separate Christian Schools but it is, principally, much sounder to cooperate with the public schools of our land and try to improve them as much as possible. This is the principal reason why I combatted the theory of "common grace" long before 1924, as editor of the rubric "Our Doctrine" in *The Banner*. That is the reason why I refused to sign the "Three Points" in 1924 or even to promise that I would keep still about them. That is the reason, principally, why I was cast out of the Christian Reformed Church. And that, in my conviction, is also the reason why the Christian Reformed Church, in spite of all its show of beautiful buildings and fast outward expansion, is going on the rocks.

No longer does that Church dare to take a stand on many fundamental questions such as union membership, divorce, the mixed theological training in Nigeria, theistic evolution, the infallibility of Scripture.

You ask perhaps, with a shrug of the shoulder: is all this due to the adoption of the theory of "common grace" and of the "Three Points" in 1924?

My answer is: principally Yes.

When the Christian Reformed Church adopted that theory, it placed itself on a slippery downward road on which it cannot stop. For the theory of "common grace" is a denial of the antithesis and, therefore, leads us right into the world.

H.H.

## OUR DOCTRINE

### THE BOOK OF REVELATION

#### PART TWO

#### CHAPTER VII

#### *The Measuring of the Temple*

Revelation 11:1, 2

On the contrary, entering this temple from the right, as worshippers were wont to do, we would find ourselves first of all in a wide, open space, a large square, seven hundred fifty feet each way — the court of the temple. It was called the court of the Gentiles, for the reason that it was open to all, Jew and Gentile, and one needed not enter here for the purpose of worshipping. It is in the midst of this court, the court of the Gentiles, or the outer court, that the temple building proper stood in all its splendor, the sanctuary of Jehovah, with its court of the women, its court of the priests and of Israel, its holy and most holy place, its altars and its throng of worshippers. There was the place for real worship. There was the altar of burnt offering, as well as the altar of incense. There were the chests or trumpets, where the worshippers might drop their gifts to the Lord. There was the place of atonement and of the worship of our God. And therefore we must distinguish between three things: 1) Jerusalem was as a whole the city of God, known as such over the earth, the city of God in contrast with the city of Babylon. 2) But in this holy city the Lord dwelt in a special place, the temple on Mt. Zion. 3) And even in that temple we must again distinguish between the outer court and the sanctuary proper, in which latter the Lord dwelt in the literal sense of the word.

But now all this outward show has disappeared in the new dispensation. The temple and the holy city still exist, but no more as a city and a temple built of wood and stone. There is no more such a temple. There is no more such a city. There is no more such an altar built with hands. But the temple is the church, or, in the broader sense, the temple and Jerusalem constitute the church of the living God. And Christ Jesus is our altar of atonement and reconciliation in that city of our God. But — and this is exactly what we must remember with regard to the New Testament church — although the outward form of wood and stone is no more, the distinction between Jerusalem, the outer court, and the temple proper still exists and holds good. And it is on the basis of that truth that we must explain the words of our text. Jerusalem in its broadest sense is the representation of the New Testament manifestation of the entire church, of all Christianity, of all that are baptized, of the entire Christian world, of all nominal Christians. Just as all the citizens of Jerusalem were nominally inhabitants of the city

of God in the old dispensation, so also all the so-called Christians belong nominally to the church of God, the spiritual Jerusalem of the new dispensation. But within this great city of the Christian world one must distinguish between three different classes. In the first place, in this nominally Christian world there is the false church, the church that has openly cast away her Christian garment, that has openly renounced the great truths of sin and guilt, of atonement and redemption, of the divinity of Christ, and the vicarious atonement and sacrifice of our Lord. This false church still calls itself Christian, yea, what is more, still calls itself a church. It lays stress even on Christianity in our time, and it demands that the church shall be up and doing, shall perform all kinds of Christian labors and shall redeem all humanity. It cries out that the church must bring the kingdom of God. But it denies the Christ as the Savior of His people and thereby denies her own character as church of Christ Jesus. It is the false church, the church that still insists that it is a church, but that has openly cast aside even the semblance of the church of Christ. It is Jerusalem sacrificing to Moloch, filled with abomination, the city of God serving the devil. In the second place, there is also in the New Testament church the outer court. It represents the show-church, that part of Jerusalem that outwardly pretends to belong to the true church, subscribes to her confession, feigns to believe in the great truths of atonement and redemption, but is inwardly hypocritical. They are the tares among the wheat. They go with God's people to His temple for worship, but they never enter the spiritual sanctuary of the fellowship of God. They remain in the outer court. Also they are in the church, as our Lord Himself has so plainly indicated in His parable of the tares. And finally, there are the real, spiritual people of God, the invisible church, the body of Christ, the real temple and sanctuary proper, where God dwells and the people worship over the altar of Christ in Spirit and in truth. They are represented by the temple which John must measure. Three distinctions, therefore, in old Jerusalem: the city of Jerusalem proper, the outer court, and finally the temple. So there are also three distinctions in the spiritual Jerusalem of the New Testament day: the Christian world, or the false church, the show-church, and the true church of God, the spiritual people of the Lord. It is to these that our text refers plainly.

But now we must still answer the question: What is the meaning of what John is commissioned to do? We read that a reed is given unto him and that the reed looked like a rod. Now a reed is merely a measuring instrument, a stick to measure the dimensions of something. But evidently the purpose is not that John shall ascertain the size of Jerusalem and of the outer court, nor of the temple. But it is said with special mention that the reed looked like a rod. Now the rod is in Scripture a symbol of royal dominion and power. It is equivalent to a royal scepter, with this difference, that the rod at the same time symbolizes physical power to execute authority. Thus we read in Psalm 2:9: "Thou shalt



break them with a rod of iron." And again, in Rev. 2:26, 27 we read: "He that overcometh, to him will I give authority over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron." And therefore, the idea that is implied in this measuring is not merely that of ascertaining the size, but also that of dominion and authority. He must measure indeed, and therefore answer the question, "How large?" And in the second place, he must measure, touch with a rod, and therefore use the symbol of dominion. And thus we conclude that by this measuring John must answer the question: how large is the real, spiritual dominion of the Lord Jesus in the holy city as it appears in this dispensation?

And then we find that this act of measuring results at the same time in separation. If John had proceeded on his own account, he would probably have measured all of Jerusalem and claimed the whole city for the Lord Jesus Christ. Or, if he would not have done this, he would at least have laid the rod of dominion over the outer court and claimed that all that was within belonged to the Lord of all. But he is directed differently. He must not measure Jerusalem. He must not measure the outer court. But he must simply confine himself to the temple proper, to the sanctuary building that stands within the court. That part of the temple where the altar is, and the true worshippers, must be touched as belonging to the dominion of Christ. All the rest cannot be claimed. And therefore, if the question is asked, "What is the size of Christ's true, spiritual dominion here upon earth?" the answer is: the size of the temple building proper, and that only. And if the question is asked again, "How many are the spiritual subjects of Christ in this dispensation?" the answer is again: as many as worship within the sanctuary of God over the altar of reconciliation. But one more thing we must notice. While the temple is separated thus from Jerusalem and even from the outer court, the court and the city are identified. For so we read: the outer court, together with the city, shall be given to the Gentiles to be trampled under foot. The court, that seems so closely connected with the temple, is separated from it and is identified with the city and is surrendered to the Gentiles.

If now we turn away from the symbolism and ask ourselves the question, "What is the meaning of all this?" the answer is ready. We are taught here in symbolic language not only what is the essential condition of the church in the new dispensation, but also what shall be her outward manifestation towards the end, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. As we have seen, in the church in the broader sense of the word are false Christians. There is the false church, that even denies the real Christ. In the church are, in the second place, the outward worshippers, the hypocrites, that do not spiritually belong to the church. And finally, in the church are the real people of God. All this is pictured to us in the words of our text. By commissioning John to measure with his rod of dominion the Lord reminds us that we must not expect that all Christianity belongs to Christ in the real sense of the word, that not even all the seeming, outward

Christians, the show-Christians, belong to His dominion, and that many of whom we believe that they belong to the spiritual body of Christ will not enter in. That, in the first place. But still more is indicated here. Although essentially both the false Christians and the hypocrites always are separated from God's people, always are enemies of Christ, always defile with their presence the holy city and trample it under foot, yet the time shall come when they shall do so openly. It is now the time of the seventh trumpet. And those that still profess to be Christians, but are not, whether they have been hypocrites, of whom we thought they were faithful, or whether they were openly deniers of the Christ though coming with a show of outward Christianity and good works, they shall reveal themselves as enemies of the true church and of Christ. Also this is indicated in these words. The hypocrites shall identify themselves with the open unbelievers, and all together shall form the enemy of the church, that shall trample the holy city under foot.

As to the forty-two months that are mentioned in our text, I shall have occasion to refer to this again. Be it sufficient now to call your attention to the fact that forty-two months, twelve hundred sixty days, a time and times and a half time mentioned by Daniel—three and a half years—are all the same. And if we ask as to what period is represented by these forty-two months or twelve hundred sixty days, then I think we find the key to this explanation in the twelfth chapter of this book, where we are told that the church is in the wilderness twelve hundred sixty days. There it is very plain that the church is in the wilderness from the time of the exaltation of Christ to the time of His return in the clouds. And therefore twelve hundred sixty days are symbolic of the entire period of the present dispensation. This is also true of the forty-two months. All during this dispensation the church shall conceal in its bosom the false church and the show-church. All through this dispensation, as John already tells us in his epistles, the Antichrist shall be there in principle, only with this difference, that toward the end he shall openly reveal himself and intentionally trample under foot the holy city, as secretly he had done all the time. So it is also in the seventh chapter of the book of Daniel, where we are told that the time of the fourth beast shall be time, times, and a half, or three and a half times. And if we remember that seven is the period of the completion of God's plan with regard to His kingdom, covering the entire period from the creation of the world to the final restoration of all things, remember that three and a half is half of seven, we shall all the more understand clearly that it is the time indicated between the first and second coming of Christ that is here meant. And as far as the forty-two is concerned, we will notice that it is employed every time of the power of the Antichrist, both here and in chapter 13. The time he has is indicated by the number forty-two. Seven is the number of completion of the kingdom of God. Six is the number of the beast, the number of man. Six times seven indicates that the power of evil shall attempt to destroy the kingdom of God

and thus finish his work. But at the same time it indicates that he shall fail. He shall come to the six times seven but shall not reach the seven times seven, shall not accomplish his own kingdom.

And this is at the same time the great lesson of this portion of the book of Revelation. The text tells us that there are in the bosom of Christianity the false church, the show-church, and the true church. Hence, we must never expect that all Christianity is Israel in the true sense of the word. In the end many shall fall away openly and identify themselves with the false church, from which Antichrist shall come. But at the same time the true children of God must not be afraid, neither be amazed. If they should find that in the end many should fall away from the church, from the holy city, nay, from the temple proper, and add themselves to Antichrist, they must not fear. For all these things must needs come to pass. Christ rules. The power of Antichrist can come only to the number forty-two. Seven times seven it cannot reach. And as we shall see, before the darkest darkness of night Christ shall take His church to heaven and the temple of God shall be perfected in eternal glory.

#### CHAPTER VIII

##### *The Two Witnesses*

Revelation 11:3, 4

3. And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.
4. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.

The portion from the book of Revelation which we are now discussing speaks of the famous two witnesses. And of these the chapter tells us who they are, what they must do, who rises against them, and what finally becomes of them. First of all, then, we must answer the question: who are these two witnesses? This is important, for it determines to an extent our answer to the other questions concerning them.

The text has it: "And I will give unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days." There can be little question but that it is Christ Who is here speaking. In the first place, the close connection of this chapter with the preceding, where the mighty angel with his feet on the earth and on the sea was the speaker, leads us to this conclusion. But above all, the fact that the voice speaks not of two witnesses but definitely of "my two witnesses" makes it plain beyond a possibility of error that the Christ is speaking. And the meaning of the peculiar Hebraistic construction of the text is: "I will give that my two witnesses shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days. I will give unto my two witnesses all that they need so that they may not keep silence, but witness for me and my cause in the midst of the world that has no knowledge of me and of my cause."

Numerous are the answers given to the question as to who these two witnesses are. In fact, you can hardly conceive of a question with a greater variety of answers than this. All the ingenuity of man has sometimes been brought into play in order to find an answer to this question. Now it must undoubtedly be admitted that this is one of the most difficult questions in the Apocalypse and that it behoves us to start out with the confession that without the aid of the entire Word of God and the enlightening power of the Holy Spirit we shall never be able to find certainty and satisfaction in regard to it. But on the other hand, our faith that the book of Revelation must be explained by the rest of the Word of God and that the Holy Spirit will indeed enlighten our minds if we will diligently seek aid from Him is also in this case by no means disappointing. It will be well that we pause for a moment to find out what answers have been given to the question by different interpreters throughout the history of the church.

There are, in the first place, a number of interpreters that take this chapter to refer to the literal destruction of Jerusalem, but then as being an ideal picture of the judgment in the last days. But we do not have to pause very long to discuss this interpretation, seeing that it is an established fact that at the time John received this revelation Jerusalem and the temple were already destroyed. Nor can one easily understand how this could be a picture of the destruction of Jerusalem in the year 70 A.D., since nothing that is depicted in the chapter before us was realized at that time. Not only a tenth part of the city was destroyed, but the whole of it. Nor was it thus, that only the city and the outer court were trampled under foot, but the temple proper was destroyed as well. Besides, where in this time do we find even an approximation to the two witnesses that are here mentioned in that awful destruction. And therefore we may safely conclude that this interpretation is surely not the true one.

On the other hand, there have been a large number of interpreters that have found in this chapter a reference to the period preceding the Protestant Reformation. The two witnesses are the Bible, the Old and New Testaments. The thousand two hundred and threescore days must be taken in the prophetic sense of the word, a day standing for a year, and therefore referring to a period of twelve hundred sixty years. And this period is found realized in the years of struggle preceding the Reformation. Jerusalem is the city of God, but represented by papal Rome. For a long time the witnesses of the Old and New Testament sound their testimony against the gradually growing corruption of the Roman Catholic Church, but it is all in vain. The corruption grows and develops, till finally it reaches its climax a few years before the Reformation. The testimony is actually silenced for a time, and the two witnesses are killed. In the year 1513 a papal bull is issued that apparently finishes all opposition to the Romish Church and silences every voice of truth. But three and a half days, that is, exactly three years and a half later, in the fall of 1517 Luther nails his theses to



the church of Wittenberg, and the witnesses are raised from the dead, while, at the same time, they are taken to heaven, that is, placed in a sphere of safety, so that the enemy can silence them no more. This interpretation naturally finds its origin in the reformers, who had to fight such a hard battle and were so bitterly oppressed and persecuted by the power of the Roman Catholic Church. It is the favorite explanation of all who see in the pope the Antichrist and in the Roman Catholic Church his power. Now we must not be too hasty in condemning this view. There is undoubtedly an element of truth in it. Throughout the history of this dispensation, as we know from the Word of God, Antichrist exists. Already John tells his contemporaries that Antichrist is in the world. He is not a power that arises all of a sudden while it has not been in the world before, but a power that always is in the world, always opposes the church and the development of the kingdom, always sneaks behind the heel of the seed of the woman, and gradually develops in power, till in the latter days it shall display a power as never before manifested. And so we may safely admit that in the days of the Reformation the pope and the papacy was one of the manifestations of the beast of the abyss at that time. The Roman Catholic Church was indeed the false church of the time, and those that stood openly by the truth indeed were the two witnesses at that period. But the error of this interpretation is exactly that it limits itself to that one period. It is not true that the pope is the only manifestation of the Antichrist. Nor is it true that he finds his power only in the Roman Catholic Church. This is indeed a dangerous view to maintain. Also now the Antichrist is in the world. Yet it must not be maintained that he appears most vividly in the Roman Catholic Church of today. Also the false church is in the world. Yet we would deceive ourselves and please the devil if to find it we would merely look at the Romish Church. And therefore, although there is an element of truth in such an interpretation, nevertheless its limitation to one period of the history of this dispensation is at the same time its condemnation.

The early church fathers and also many interpreters of today who follow them explain the two witnesses as referring to Enoch and Elijah, who shall return to earth in the literal sense of the word. Those who hold this view maintain that the text speaks very definitely of two individuals, persons, not indefinitely to be spiritualized into either powers or institutions. Christ says very definitely "my two witnesses," and therefore speaks of witnesses which He already has, of witnesses that are well-known and that shall come to earth to bear testimony of His name. And no two known individuals of Scripture better fit the requirements than Enoch and Elijah. The Scriptural references on which this interpretation is based are found both in the Old and in the New Testament. In the prophecy of Malachi, 4:5, we read: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come." And in the New Testament we find repeated reference to Elijah and his coming. The

people of Israel, the scribes especially, clearly expected his return. And in Matthew 17:10, 11 we read that the disciples come to the Lord with the question, "Why then say the scribes that Elijah must first come?" And the Lord answered: "Elijah indeed cometh and shall restore all things." And therefore it would seem plain that Scripture actually teaches a literal return of Elijah to the earth and that in this portion we have that return pictured to us. True, we do not read of the return of Enoch. But, in the first place, there are many sources outside of Scripture that express the expectation of the return of Enoch as well. And in the second place, there is but one person that in the days of the old dispensation was like Elijah and shows all the characteristics of these two witnesses. Both Enoch and Elijah were witnesses in a time of general apostasy. Both Enoch and Elijah spoke of judgment and evidently did terrible things. Both Enoch and Elijah escaped death and were taken into heaven. And so these interpreters have it that both these great witnesses will return to the earth bodily, that they will once more witness of the name of the Most High in a time of great apostasy, that they, however, shall finally be killed by Antichrist, shall be raised from the dead, and shall ascend to heaven — all in the literal sense of the word. Again I would say that there is an element of truth also in this interpretation. I think that in Enoch and Elijah we have clear types of these two witnesses and what shall happen to them. But the mistake also in this interpretation is exactly that it is limited to these men in the literal sense of the word. This limitation makes the interpretation, in the first place, in the highest degree improbable.

H.H.

### You Tell Me I Am Getting Old . . .

You tell me I am getting old.

I tell you that's not so!

The "house" I live in is worn out, and that, of course, I know. It's been in use a long, long while; it's weathered many a gale; I'm really not surprised you think it's getting somewhat frail.

The color changing on the roof, the windows getting dim,  
The walls a bit transparent and looking rather thin,  
The foundation not so steady as once it used to be —  
My "house" is getting shaky, but my "house" isn't ME!

My few short years can't make me old. I feel I'm in my youth.  
Eternity lies just ahead, a life of joy and truth.  
I'm going to live forever, there; life will go on — it's grand!  
You tell me I am getting old? You just don't understand.

The dweller in my little "house" is young and bright and gay;  
Just starting on a life to last throughout eternal day.  
You only see the outside, which is all that most folks see.  
You tell me I am getting old?  
You've mixed my "house" with ME!

— by *Dora Johnson* (88 years young)

## A CLOUD OF WITNESSES

### Isaac's Family Divided By Sin

*"And it came to pass, that when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see, he called Esau his eldest son, and said unto him, My son: and he said unto him, Behold, here am I.*

*And he said, Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death:*

*Now therefore, take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take me some venison;*

*And make me savory meat, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless thee before I die."*

GEN. 27:1-4

Sin is a pernicious evil; it can bring even a child of God into the depths of misery and grief; it can divide the unity of a covenant home, setting husband against wife, son against father, mother against child, and brother against brother. Such is what actually happened in the household of Isaac, the promised son of Abraham.

The sin?—it was the carnal walk of Esau who despised the covenant of God. He disdained his covenant instruction; he bargained with his right as the eldest son; he hated his Godfearing brother; he mingled and married among the heathen. Yet, perhaps, it was not so much the sin of Esau that divided the family as the response of his father Isaac to that sin, or the lack of his response against it. That Esau's life was that of a man hardened in the way of sin was evident. Moreover, it could have been known beforehand from the oracle of God which had said that Esau would not receive the pre-eminence. But this all Isaac refused to receive. He liked Esau. He liked the seemingly kind consideration that brought delicious cuts of venison to his table. He liked the bravery, cunning, and boldness that procured the meat in the first place. He was well-disposed toward Esau, refusing to recognize Esau's sins and wanting to bestow upon him the headship of the family. By so doing he refused the oracle of God, stumbled at the Word, and became himself guilty of a very great evil. It was a sin that disrupted the life of his family.

Isaac was 137 years old. He had arrived at the age at which his half-brother, Ishmael, had died. His eyes had become dim, and he felt the infirmities of age impressing themselves upon him. Isaac's thoughts began to turn toward his own death; but there was one thing he was determined to do before that time should come. For a long time he had had a preference for his son Esau; he was determined to give to this eldest son the birthright blessing. Rebekah had often warned him against it. Repeatedly she had told him of the oracle of God concerning their two sons. But this only served to set his determination more firmly. In fact, so long had this been a point of dissension between them that he no longer confided in her concerning his intention.

It is difficult to understand the subsequent actions of Isaac in this affair if we do not take into consideration that he was a man laboring under a guilty conscience. Isaac knew what it was that he wanted to do. He preferred Esau and he was determined to bless him. But Isaac was a child of God and down in his heart he knew that what he wanted to do was wrong. It meant that he was a man that was fighting with himself. His sanctified heart and his natural desires were at odds with each other. In determining to follow the flesh he had to suppress the spiritual faith of his heart. The result was that he lived spiritually in fear and isolation.

He was isolated in the first place from his son, his son Jacob. There was much which he had in common with Jacob. There were many reasons why they should have lived in close communion. They both had the same basic, spiritual principle of life. They both loved the same God, the same covenant, the same truth. They were both men of faith. But Isaac had always showed preference for Esau because of his greater strength, his greater cunning, his greater boldness. He found it easier to respond to the earthly excellency of Esau than the spiritual excellency of Jacob. The result was that as Jacob matured he found less and less occasion to stand in the presence of his father. So close to each other in principle, they were far removed from each other in reality. They were separated as the result of sin.

Isaac was isolated also from his wife. It had been with joy that Isaac had received Rebekah, a wife appointed him by God. Together they had shared their concerns and prayers for the first twenty years of their childless marriage. With united thanksgiving they had received their two sons accompanied by a divine prophecy from heaven. But as the two children grew, Isaac refused to rely upon that prophecy. This separated them from each other. The older the children grew the more marked the dissension became. Their spiritual unity almost ceased to exist.

Most severe of all was his isolation from his God. It was the Word of God which he opposed. He no doubt refused to admit that this was really so. There is always some excuse which can be found why God's Word does not actually apply. But deep in his heart Isaac knew it was true. He dared not to call upon God to uphold him in his determination. There is no sadder picture in all history than that of a true child of the covenant, such as Isaac, separated from his God.

There was still a certain communion which he had with Esau, but yet, not really. He could talk to Esau about the pleasures of the field and the hunt. He could share with Esau the delicious cuts of venison. But for that which really troubled his soul Esau had no feeling. He could not admit to Esau that he was troubled about the prophecy which had been spoken to Rebekah so many years before. He realized that Esau would not understand that it mattered.

It is a sad picture which we receive of Isaac sitting alone in his tent. He was alone and he was afraid. He hardly dared to go ahead, but pride prevented him from recanting and giving the blessing to Jacob. Confused and troubled in heart

he counted his years, noted his blindness, and, although there was much strength in his body, he decided that he was soon to die. Almost as though to rid himself of his problem he called Esau to his tent with the intention of blessing him. But his heart was not in it. Remembering that he had always been best disposed to Esau when he ate of the venison Esau had prepared he said, "Take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take me some venison; And make me savory meat, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless thee before I die."

With considerable joy Esau received these words. Long before he had disdained the birthright blessing, even selling it for bread and pottage. The spiritual aspect of the promise meant very little to him. But now he too saw the time approaching when his father would die. The possessions and wealth of his father were considerable. It would be no mean attainment to gain the rule over it all. Even more sweet would it be because it would give him a victory and authority over his brother Jacob. His heart still smarted when he remembered the way Jacob had tricked him into selling his right to the blessing for nothing more than a pottage made from lentiles. Indeed it had been a proper transaction and by rights should still be observed. Even more there was the word of God reported by his mother that assigned the blessing to his brother. But these things were known of his father. If those things could be ignored by Isaac surely he, Esau, was not one to stop at technicalities. With eager anticipation he went out to stalk his game.

As Esau departed, one other figure left the presence of Isaac unbeknown to him. Within the household of Isaac his wife, Rebekah, being removed from his confidence felt constrained to spy secretly upon her husband. The sin of Isaac became the cause of sin also in the other members of his household. Although Rebekah had defended the truth of the Word of God overagainst her husband, she did not have the strength of faith to rely upon it completely herself. Her love for Jacob was not a love founded completely upon spiritual evaluations. As Isaac's nature responded to the character of Esau, so her nature responded to the character of Jacob. With a concern for her youngest son which was only partially spiritual, Rebekah's care for him was also more than spiritual. She was not ready to leave the matter in the hands of the Lord, confident that what He had promised to do He was able also to perform. She set herself as the defender of God's promise to Jacob. Thus it was that she planted herself so as to overhear the conversation between Isaac and Esau. No sooner had she heard of Isaac's intentions than her mind quickly devised a plan whereby this intention could be prevented from being realized.

Calling Jacob to her, Rebekah laid before him her plan. He was to bring food in to his father and impersonate his brother Esau. Jacob was understandably hesitant. But Rebekah was urgent, almost with a spirit of desperation. The plan of Isaac had to be prevented from coming to realization.

There was no time to hesitate. There was no time to look for some other plan. So urgent was Rebekah that she offered to take upon herself full responsibility should Jacob's deception be discovered. She would rather that a curse should come upon her than that no attempt should be made to save the blessing for Jacob.

Jacob did not have the moral strength to resist his mother. In principle he was in agreement with her. He wanted the blessing for himself as badly as she wanted him to have it. His objections did not arise from a moral repulsion to being deceptive; then he might have had the strength to resist. But he too felt that somehow it was dependent upon their action if the desired result was to be obtained. His only reservations were practical. He questioned whether they could be successful in deceiving his father. With only these objections he soon succumbed to the urgings of his mother.

We may well take a warning from this chapter in the history of Isaac and Jacob. Sin is a dangerous thing and its effects most pernicious. Isaac called in question the Word of God. He gave more weight to his own judgment than he did to divine revelation. His sin became a cancer that destroyed the peace of his family. While he fell behind not trusting the oracle of God, his wife and son were moved to think that somehow they had to make it right. Isaac thought that he did not have to rely upon God; Rebekah and Jacob thought that God had to rely upon them. We can only speculate how different things might have been had one of them had the moral strength to live by faith alone. Had Isaac had the strength to put aside his earthly desires for the sake of the revealed will of God, had Rebekah or Jacob had the faith to wait on God to make it right, then there would have been in this event a ray of light. As it is we have only a dismal portrayal of the stumbling, faltering way of God's people in the midst of a world of sin.

Yet we can not be angry with them. We look back now and clearly we see how foolish was their way. They ought to have done so much better. But when we see the principle of the sins which they committed, we can not help but note also how frequently those same sins are repeated in our own lives. How often do not we, like Isaac, falter and hesitate to receive a truth that God has clearly revealed? How often do we not, like Rebekah and Jacob, think that somehow God is dependent upon us and our ingenuity for the realization of His purposes? Then we can only marvel at a God whose grace is sufficient to love such creatures as we.

B.W.

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### Teacher Needed

Hope Protestant Reformed Christian School, 1545 Wilson Ave., S. W., Grand Rapids, Michigan, needs a teacher for the third grade. If interested, please apply by contacting David Meulenberg, 1743 Moelker Ave., S.W., Grand Rapids, Michigan, Phone AR 6-4589.

## FROM HOLY WRIT

### Exposition of I Corinthians 15:50-57

We have just one more article to write on the series of Matthew 24 and 25. That will need to wait, D.V., till a later issue of *The Standard Bearer*. This time we would write a little exposition on I Corinthians 15:50-57. We believe that this passage from Scripture is very instructive and revealing, and that it is also timely as a post-resurrection essay.

This passage we find in Paul's beautiful instructive polemic against the sceptics who deny the resurrection of the dead. That Paul wields the mighty pen of the sword of the Spirit is thoroughly understandable. For if Christ be not raised (in a present perfected state of being risen) then the Gospel is empty, the preaching of the Cross is indeed not a power of God unto salvation, the preacher the greatest liar afoot, our faith and hope is vain and we are of all men most miserable!

Hence, in the verses 1-34 of this chapter Paul established the *fact* of the resurrection itself as an article of our undoubted Christian faith. However, in the verses 35-57 he teaches the *manner* of the resurrection of the "saints" and the *nature* of the body with which they shall be clothed through the resurrection. Paul introduces this very carefully and clearly in verse 35. They are two questions, distinct from each other, yet very closely interrelated. Writes he: "But someone will say: *How* are the dead raised and with what *manner* of body shall they be."

Paul distinguishes a twofold aspect of the resurrection. The first is the purely *earthly* aspect as it shall be "changed" into the heavenly. The second is the *corruptible* and *mortal* aspect of the present body as it shall be "changed" into the incorruptible and immortal!

These two should be closely noted by us.

There have been all kinds of theological construction centered about this truth. Especially the proponents of the Federal Theology, who teach a "Covenant of Works." We shall not refute this view explicitly. Rather we shall bear it in mind and simply attempt to draw a positive line of interpretation. After all the Bible was not written simply for scientific Theology, but has in mind "sanctification" which proceeds from a living faith and hope in the risen and victorious Lord, our Lord Jesus Christ!

The passage to which we call attention too dwells upon this twofold aspect of the "change," as effected principally in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and as consummated in the final resurrection and "change" of all the saints.

We read in this passage under consideration: "*Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the king-*

*dom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."* I Cor. 15:50-57.

The *key-term* in this passage seems to be the term "shall be changed."

Let us take a look at the *idea* and *content* of this term.

As to the idea of this term it should be underscored that the term to "be changed" (allageesometha) is not the same notion as *resurrection* but rather presents to us a certain *aspect* of the resurrection! The term "to be raised" presupposes that actual physical death has taken place, that we have been buried amongst the dead actually (there has been a funeral), and that, therefore, the pious have "fallen asleep" in the Lord, and now are actually aroused from this sleep of death. This term emphasizes a *transition* from death to life, noting that we are taken from the grave into life eternal! However, the term "to be changed" shows us something more of the resurrection, which is not necessarily included in the term "resurrection."

What is this specific notion of the term "to be changed"?

The term in its current usage in Scripture refers to that act of the wonder of God's grace in Christ Jesus where one *state of being* or *thing* is caused to be changed into another state of being. It affects the very created constitution of all things. This latter is sometimes called the "re-establishment of all things." Such "re-establishment" must never be presented as simply the removal of the effects of sin and the curse upon creation, restoring to us the paradise that is lost, but rather it refers to the "changing" of all things *earthly* into the *heavenly*.

An interesting usage of the term "change" we find in Acts 6:14 where we read: "For we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall *change* the customs which Moses delivered us." In this passage the "change" effected refers to Christ's work in his death and resurrection, where the shadows and types are removed and the reality, the body is ushered in. The promises are now realized and so the "customs" of Moses are changed. Something new and different has come into its stead; however, it is still the same reality in different form. It is "change" *within* the same *identity*!

Another passage which is of interest in connection with

the conception "change" is what we read in Hebrews 1:12: "And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall *be changed*: for thou art the same and thy years shall not fail." Here the writer to the Hebrews refers to the new constitution of all things in the new heaven and the new earth! The heavenly shall be brought in. Presently all things shall be shaken to bring in an unmovable inheritance. Heb. 12:27, 28.

In our passage it is quite emphatically stated that "*we* shall be changed." This is a radical change which can never be equated with a gradual, natural process. It does not come forth out of the human race, and the first Adamic race. It can only be explained as a wonder of God's grace in Jesus Christ our Lord. It belongs to the sufferings that shall come upon him and the glories to follow in the new creation. For this change of all things is no less glorious than the creation of the world. It is a *changing* of the earthy into the heavenly and the corruptible into the incorruptible!

It is for that reason that we are here taught as a fundamental principle and truth that "flesh and blood *cannot* inherit a kingdom of God." And, again, "neither can the corruption inherit *the* incorruption."

Paul is here speaking of what is not "possible." He is speaking of what is a "created impossibility"! The *nature* of the heavenly, and the nature of a kingdom of God is such that it precludes the possibility of "flesh and blood" to inherit it! Hence, God will effect the necessary change in the final resurrection.

What is "flesh and blood"? It is the *natural* (psychical) body! It has in it the vegetative and the reproductive. Here men are married and given in marriage. Here the entire human race comes forth from one man. Here men bear the image of the earthy. And this earthy is *such* that it cannot possibly inherit the heavenly! The *impossibility* does not lie in the almight of God being limited in its potentiality, but rather in the limitation of the earthy by virtue of the decree and ordinance of God. The earthy is, indeed, first. Afterwards the heavenly. But there must be a change. Adam cannot go to heaven—except he be "changed." And this change cannot take place, according to the divine Decree, except there be a "last Adam," the life-giving Spirit.

Such is the clear teaching here in this passage.

There is in the resurrection not *simply a necessity because* of *sin* and *death*, corruption and mortality. Rather there is first of all the necessity rooted in the fact that in and through the Christ of God, God will change the earthy into the heavenly.

The church is heavenly in origin. Jerusalem *above*, the heavenly Jerusalem is the mother of us all. In the abiding, mature and final realization the church will in no sense be earthy. Fact is, that the former things shall be remembered no more.

The first man was made a living soul; he was of the earth and earthy!

The second man ("mensh" not "man") is the Lord *out of heaven*!

And even as we have borne the image of *the earthy* so shall we also bear the image of *the heavenly*!

It is for this reason that we are told and most solemnly assured of this "change" in the final resurrection.

However, there is also the element of sin, guilt, death! This too must be changed. This corruptible must *put on* incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality. This is also a radical change. But this change is really an "accidental" change, that is, it does *as such* not effect that change from the earthy to the heavenly. If Adam would have lost these effects of sin and nothing more would have happened he would be back in the earthly Paradise. I know, that this is hardly conceivable in the light of the world of the entire human race. But such would be the case nonetheless. But this change from the *effects* of sin too must be brought about.

And this change from the corruptible to the incorruptible *must* be realized.

Why?

For the simple reason (did I write "simple"?) that Christ died according to the Scriptures and that he was raised according to the same Scriptures. The "sting of death" was removed. Death has lost its power to kill. The right to kill us was removed from the law—which law otherwise is the strength of sin! But the justice of God was satisfied. *We* satisfied the justice of God by another. And we are free. And death and hell, the grave and corruption have no power nor authority over us any more!

And the justice of God therefore demands that this corruptible put on incorruption. Yes, it is sown in dishonor but it is raised up in glory. It is sown a natural body but it is raised a spiritual body. For in Christ death is swallowed up in victory!

Since God's wisdom designed it all and Christ's death and resurrection realized it; shall it not all be manifested in that day when the last Trumpet shall sound to call to the great day of serving God in His temple day and night!

Let the mockers scoff and unbelievers raise their sceptic eyebrows. But we will believe that except the wheat be sown and die it cannot live. All things are possible with God.

He is the Creator and also the Redeemer of all things.

It is His glory to be faithful to His own and raise them again in the last hour!

G.L.

### Notice

The Free Christian School at Edgerton, is in need of 2 teachers for our next school term. If interested please write Paul Buys, Sec., Edgerton, Minn.

## IN HIS FEAR

### Sincere Sorrow Or Polite Platitude

"I'm sorry."

There is nothing difficult about saying that.

The smallest child who has learned to express his thoughts and make known his desires by the use of words can form his lips to say, "I'm sorry." At first it may sound more like "I'm torry" than "I'm sorry"; and yet it does not take too long before he can say it as you and I do.

Simple it is to express these words compared with many others that continue to trouble us even in later life. Many a family even in our day with its small percentage of illiteracy finds in its Bible-reading names and words in the Scripture which give trouble. And in our everyday reading of newspaper and magazine we come across so many strange names, names of men in foreign countries that "stump" us. With our modern means of communication by which our world has become so small we are brought so close to men on the other side of our globe; and we find the need of striving to pronounce their names as we speak with one another of national and international affairs. It is not at all strange to hear different news commentators referring to the same persons and places by means of different pronunciation of the names of these persons and places. Nothing strange then that we have difficulty putting the stress in the right place and giving the vowels their proper sound. Many of us with our "Dutch" names have to grin and bear it that those of different extraction give a strange sound to our names. And we learn to answer to these "corruptions" of the proper pronunciation of our names.

But with that little expression, "I'm sorry," it is the other way around. We have no difficulty in pronouncing it correctly. We can say it with ease. But when we say it, do we express a sincere sorrow for sin? Or is it for us nothing but a polite platitude, a flat, trite or weak statement which we utter to men? Do we by this expression declare before God and unto God that we are sorry because we have offended His majesty? Or is it nothing more than a polite admission of a foolish act before men?

We are far more interested, our own experiences will teach us, in being polite before men than to be pleasing to God. That we have hurt men's feelings is to us a more real injury than that we have rebelled against the living God. The neighbour we see. His reactions to our deeds are plainly written on his face or in no uncertain terms expressed by his lips. Accidentally we jostle him, stick our elbow into his ribs in a crowd, step on his toes, bump into him around a corner or trouble him in the middle of the night by getting the wrong phone number. Before we know it, the expression

falls off our lips: I'm sorry. That is the polite thing to do. Indeed, sometimes it is also the wisest thing. The black looks, the clenched fist we see suggests a quick apology. But that is the trouble of it. That is the sad part of it all. It is only an apology to man. It is nothing more than a worldly wise way of getting out of a dangerous or awkward position.

We teach our children that same thing.

In the home and in the school our children are so easily taught to be polite rather than to be taught to be spiritual. The naughty child is punished by making him stay after school to "write lines." One hundred times he must write, "I did wrong. I am sorry." Mrs. Next-door Neighbour calls up to tell you that your son or daughter has been running through her flower garden and that she stopped him or her to give a scolding. And your son or daughter gave a "sassy" reply. Your child comes home and is confronted with the misdemeanor. You tell him that he has done wrong and that you are ashamed of his behaviour. And then you send him back to Mrs. Next-door Neighbour to tell her that he is sorry for his evil speech.

But, did you make him go back and tell a lie?

Are you sure that he is not simply telling his neighbour what YOU think of his deeds rather than giving a sincere expression of what resides in his own soul? What impression have you left in the mind of your child as to the idea of sorrow for sin? He will go and tell the neighbour that he is sorry because you told him to do so. But the very grudging way in which he does it reveals that he does not mean a word of it. And on his way home after saying, "I'm sorry" he may deliberately run through that same flower bed just to get even with this neighbour who tattled on him. Is that not human nature? But meanwhile he has received a strange idea of what sorrow for sin is.

It was done in stubbornness—and no doubt also with malice if not to be "fresh"—and yet an incident related to us some time ago illustrates this point of training our children to say what they really do not mean. In one of the immigrant families now living in Canada it was the custom that the children at bed time recite a little prayer that was easy to remember because it was set in rhyme. It began with the words, "I am sleepy; I am tired." The father told us that when his wife was gone to attend the Ladies' Society meeting, it was his duty to put the children to bed and hear them recite their prayers. The boy refused when it was his turn. His father insisted. The boy replied that he could not pray. His father became furious. Such a young child and already claiming that he could not pray! He asked his child why he could not pray. The reply was very simple: he was not sleepy and tired! The child, we say again, was trying to be "fresh" and was not sincere either in his refusal to pray. But it illustrates rather vividly the truth that you can teach your child to speak the lie when you have other intentions in mind. When we teach our children to say "I'm sorry"



after an evil deed, we may not mean to rob this phrase of its beauty and meaning in the lives of our children. We may not mean to teach them to say things which they do not mean and to tell a lie. But all too often we do exactly that. For the child the expression becomes a polite platitude rather than the expression of a sincere sorrow. We use the expression very thoughtlessly ourselves at times. It falls off from our lips as easily as "Thank you" does when our hearts are not at all grateful. We do it because it is the polite thing. We do not want men to think that we are like the uncivilized heathen. And "Thank you" and "I'm sorry" are nothing more than handy devices to appear polished and refined in a world that knows not God but knows "culture" and "civilization." What is it in your life? Do you have sincere sorrow for sin or do you merely speak polite platitudes?

To be sure you cannot make your child sincerely sorrowful for his evil deeds. You can speak to him and must speak to him. You must make as plain as you can that he has sinned against God. That surely belongs to bringing him up in the fear of the Lord. It must be in His fear and not in fear of the rod alone or of your wrath. And you do well to send him back to the neighbour against whom he has wagged his tongue to speak disrespectfully. We would be the last to condemn such a practice. And we feel that this is done only too seldom. In this day and age parents are so quick to defend their children in sin and say that the neighbour had it coming to her. We cannot go along with that! The sins and weaknesses of man never are excuses for sins of other men. "Vengeance is mine, I will recompense, saith the Lord," Hebrews 10:30.

And we must also train our children in the grace of being sorry for sin. We teach them to pray and to say things in their prayers that they do not at all understand in the tender ages of their childhood. Very, very early we teach them to cover their eyes with their hands and say "Amen" after our prayers. That in itself is a tremendous thing! To say "Amen" after we have poured out our hearts before God means that we agree with the prayer and make it ours. A little child, just beginning to lisp a few words from our world of language, cannot understand our prayers and sincerely say "Amen" to them. Yet we teach them and train them very early to do so. Nor do we advocate any other procedure. They must be taught to pray; and we must formulate for them their prayers at the very beginning of their prayer life. So, too, we do not mean that we should not send them to the neighbour to express sorrow for misdeeds.

But we must always remember that we cannot legislate sorrow. We cannot force one into sorrow. Godly sorrow, sincere sorrow is sorrow that comes to us as a gift of God's grace. And He gives it to our regenerated children also. You and I cannot procure it for them. We cannot impart it to them. They are not born with it and do not inherit it. They, too, must be reborn unto it. The most you and I can do is

to pray God that He will give it. That we can do, and that we must do.

But there is one more thing that we must do and can do in regard to this sincere sorrow before God. We are too busy with worldly things to take the time. But we ought to drop our work, take the child aside and point out to him his error in the light of God's Word. One does not become sorry without seeing the evil of one's ways. Sorrow that pleases God is sorrow for sin. And unless a man sees his sin, the sorrow for it that pleases God is never forthcoming. Jesus asked Simon the Pharisee which man loved his master the more, the one forgiven a small debt or the one forgiven an enormous debt? Simon replied, "I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most," Luke 7:43. Jesus then told him that he had answered correctly.

So it is with sorrow. We must know our debt and know it as a debt before God, if we are to be sorry. And though only He can work that sorrow in our hearts, He uses means to do so. And the means He uses is His Word. He applies it by His Spirit. But He demands of you and me that we bring it into the natural ear and into the natural mind of our children. More than that we cannot do. But that much we must do! And apart from that Word He never works in any man either sorrow for sin or faith in salvation through the blood of Christ. Recall how the word of God spoken through the prophet Nathan, "Thou art the man," I Samuel 12:7, resulted in the penitent plea of Psalm 51. Indeed, God gave the sorrow; but He did so through the word spoken by Nathan the prophet.

Do that to your child before you send him to confess his sorrow before his neighbour and yours. The point is that he must be sincerely sorry before God, if he is to be sorry before man. Do not send him merely to express a trite statement which he very plainly does not mean. Never mind doing the polite thing if it is not the spiritual thing. Never mind being concerned with the feelings of man when you are not concerned with the majesty and holiness of God. He delights only in a sincerely sorrowful heart, one that knows sin before HIM and hates it. In such He sees His Own work of redemption through the Spirit and blood of His Son. And to such He gives peace and forgiveness.

J.A.H.

### Announcement

Attention, all deacons, present and former. Deacons' Conference to be held April 17 at Hope Prot. Ref. Church.

Topic: "*Is it the duty of the deacons to look for the poor?*" Speaker: The Rev. H. Hanko.

Ministers are invited also.

Jay Bomers

Sec. Diaconate Hope Prot. Ref. Church

## Contending For The Faith

### The Church and the Sacraments

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

THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS.

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DOCTRINE OF  
TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

(Continued)

In our preceding article we called attention to the Roman Catholic doctrine of Transubstantiation by quoting from the Council of Trent, and we quoted from that council as it positively set forth that doctrine. Now we will quote the Canons of that council, those articles in which they set forth the errors of those who oppose this doctrine. These articles in which these heresies are set forth are called canons.

CANON I. — If any one saith, that in the mass a true and proper sacrifice is not offered to God; or, that to be offered is nothing else but that Christ is given us to eat: let him be anathema.

CANON II. — If any one saith, that by those words, *Do this for the commemoration of me* (Luke 22:19), Christ did not institute the apostles priests; or, did not ordain that they and other priests should offer his own body and blood: let him be anathema.

CANON III. — If any one saith, that the sacrifice of the mass is only a sacrifice of praise and of thanksgiving; or, that it is a bare commemoration of the sacrifice consummated on the cross, but not a propitiatory sacrifice; or, that it profits him only who receives; and that it ought not to be offered for the living and the dead for sins, pains, satisfactions, and other necessities: let him be anathema.

CANON IV. — If any one saith, that, by the sacrifice of the mass, a blasphemy is cast upon the most holy sacrifice of Christ consummated on the cross; or, that it is thereby derogated from: let him be anathema.

CANON V. — If any one saith, that it is an imposture to celebrate masses in honor of the saints, and for obtaining their intercession with God, as the Church intends: let him be anathema.

CANON VI. — If any one saith, that the canon of the mass contains errors, and is therefore to be abrogated: let him be anathema.

CANON VII. — If any one saith, that the ceremonies, vestments, and outward signs, which the Catholic Church makes use of in the celebration of masses, are incentives to impiety, rather than offices of piety; let him be anathema.

CANON VIII. — If any one saith, that masses, wherein the priest alone communicates sacramentally, are unlawful,

and are, therefore, to be abrogated: let him be anathema.

CANON IX. — If any one saith, that the rite of the Roman Church, according to which a part of the canon and the words of consecration are pronounced in a low tone, is to be condemned; or, that the mass ought to be celebrated in the vulgar tongue only; or, that water ought not to be mixed with the wine that is to be offered in the chalice, for that it is contrary to the institution of Christ: let him be anathema.

In reviewing these articles on the doctrine of the Romish Mass as set forth by the Roman Catholic Church of Trent, we may observe the following.

First, it is evident from these articles (the positive articles which set forth the doctrine as such and also the "Canons" which anathematize those who deny them) that according to the Church of Rome, the eucharist is a real, propitiatory sacrifice, for the expiation of sins, for reconciliation with God, and for securing providential and gracious blessings from His hands. Rome simply anathematizes those who deny that the mass is a true and proper sacrifice offered to God, or who merely teach that to be offered merely means that Christ is given to us. We understand, of course, that the Protestant and Reformed conception of the Lord's Supper surely declares that we receive Christ Who is bestowed upon His people through the symbols of the bread and wine.

Secondly, that what is offered, in this Romish eucharist because of the sacrifice which has been performed, is Christ, His body and soul and divinity, all of which are present under the form of bread and wine. The decree of the Council of Trent, concerning the most holy eucharist, declares in chapter 1 that "In the first place, the holy Synod teaches, and openly and simply professes, that, in the august sacrament of the holy Eucharist, after the consecration of the bread and wine, our Lord Jesus Christ, true God and man, is truly, really, and substantially contained under the species of those sensible things." The victim, we read in these articles, is one and the same, the same now offering himself on the cross, who then offered himself on the cross, the manner alone of offering being different. The sacrifice of the mass, therefore, is the same as the sacrifice upon the cross; the former is a constant reminder of the latter. The only difference between them is that the sacrifice upon the cross is a bloody sacrifice, whereas the sacrifice in the mass is an unbloody sacrifice. "That same Christ is contained and immolated" (sacrificed, killed, slain as in a sacrifice — H.V.), we read, "in an unbloody manner who once offered himself in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross; the holy Synod teaches, that this sacrifice is truly propitiatory, and that by means thereof this is effected, that we obtain mercy, and find grace in *seasonable aid*, if we draw nigh unto God, contrite and penitent, with a sincere heart and upright faith, with fear and reverence."

Thirdly, as the sacrifice is the same, so also is the priest. Christ offered Himself once on the cross and He offers Him-

self daily in the mass. According to the Council of Trent, Chapter 1 on the institution of the most holy Sacrifice of the Mass, "He, therefore, our God and Lord, though he was about to offer himself once on the altar of the cross unto God the Father, *by means of His death*, there to operate *an eternal redemption*; nevertheless, because that his priesthood was not to be extinguished by his death, in the Last Supper on the night in which he was betrayed . . . declaring himself constituted *a priest forever, according to the order of Melchisedech*, he offered up to God the Father his own body and blood under the species of bread and wine; and, under the symbols of those same things, he delivered (his own body and blood) to be received by the apostles whom he then constituted priests of the New Testament; and by those words, *Do this in commemoration of me*, he commanded them and their successors in the priesthood to offer (them). For, having celebrated the ancient Passover, which the multitude of the children of Israel immolated in the memory of their going out of Egypt, he instituted the new Passover (to wit) himself to be immolated, under visible signs, by the Church through (the ministry) priests." Of this Hodge writes as follows (Vol. 3, page 687, of his Systematic Theology): "On this statement it may be remarked in passing, that if the ministers are not the real offerers, they are not real priests. A priest is one appointed to offer sacrifices. But according to the theory, the officiating minister in the service of the mass, does not offer the sacrifice. He is a supernumerary (one that is superfluous — H.V.). He has no function. There is no reason why without his intervention, Christ should not when His people meet to commemorate his death, offer Himself anew to God. The Roman theory in this, as in many other points, is not self-consistent. Romanists represent ministers as true priests; mediators between God and the people, without whose intervention no sinner can have access to God or obtain pardon or acceptance. They are not only invested with priestly authority and prerogatives, but imbued with supernatural power. The words of consecration pronounced by other sacerdotal lips, are inoperative. The mass unless performed by a priest is no sacrifice. All this supposes that their office is a reality, that ministers are really priests; but according to the passage just quoted, they are not priests at all. According to the common mode of representation, however, the minister in the mass as truly offers the body and blood of Christ, as the priests under the Old Testament offered the blood of lambs or of goats. Cardinal Gousset, for example, says: "According to the faith of the Catholic Church, the mass is a sacrifice of the new law, in which the priest offers to God the body and blood of Jesus Christ under the form of bread and wine. The mass is a true sacrifice instituted by Jesus Christ." "A sacrifice, from its nature, is an act of supreme worship, due to God alone. Hence, when a mass is celebrated in the name of a saint, it is not to be believed that the sacrifice is offered to the saint; but simply in his memory, to implore his protection, and to secure his intercession. It is a sacrifice in which is offered the body and

blood of Christ. Jesus Christ, whose body and blood are present under the forms of bread and wine, is Himself the victim. Finally, the eucharistic sacrifice is made by the hands of the priest, but Jesus Christ is the principal minister; He is at once priest and victim, offering himself to God the Father by the ministry of his priests." — end of quote from Hodge.

It is, of course, understandable why the Roman Catholic Church should maintain this function of the Romish priesthood in the sacrament of the eucharist, and particularly in the celebration of the Popish mass. It is very natural for man to appropriate power unto himself. It is flattering to him to be indispensable as he is in the Romish conception of this sacrament. It is true that the priest does not offer the sacrifice, but it is also true that the offering of the sacrifice, who is Christ, is impossible without him. He certainly plays a most important and indispensable role in the celebration of the sacrament.

Fourthly, the Romish mass is propitiatory for the living and also the dead. "Wherefore," we read in Chapter II, "not only for the sins, punishments, satisfactions, and other necessities of the faithful, who are living, but also those who are departed in Christ, and who are not as yet fully purified, is it rightly offered, agreeably to a tradition of the apostles." It has ever been found that men at the approach of death, or the affectionate relatives of the departed, are willing to appropriate money at their command, to pay for masses for their benefit. This has proved to be an inexhaustible mine of wealth to the Church.

Hodge, in his Systematic Theology, Vol. III, pages 688-692, criticizes this Roman Catholic doctrine of the Mass as follows, and we quote: "No doctrine of the Church of Rome is more portentous or more fruitful of evil consequences than this doctrine of the mass; and no doctrine of that Church is more entirely destitute of even a semblance of Scriptural support. The words of Christ, 'This do in remembrance of me,' are made to mean, 'Offer the sacrifice which I myself have just offered.' These words constituted the Apostles and all their successors priests. The Council of Trent even anathematizes all who do not put that preposterous interpretation on those simple words. Romanists also appeal to the fact that Christ is said to be priest forever after the order of Melchizedek, from which they infer that He continually repeats the sacrifice once offered on the cross." We will continue with this quote in our following article.

H.V.

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A gem from Randolph's bulletin: "Money will buy: a bed, but not sleep; a house, but not a home; medicine, but not health; luxuries, but not culture; amusements, but not pleasure; a crucifix, but not a savior; a church pew, but not heaven."

## The Voice of Our Fathers

### The Canons of Dordrecht

#### PART TWO

#### EXPOSITION OF THE CANONS

#### FIFTH HEAD OF DOCTRINE

#### OF THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

*Article 9. Of this preservation of the elect to salvation, and of their perseverance in the faith, true believers for themselves may and do obtain assurance according to the measure of their faith, whereby they arrive at the certain persuasion, that they ever will continue true and living members of the church; and that they experience the forgiveness of sins, and will at last inherit eternal life.*

The above translation is far from correct. It omits some elements of the original and embellishes others. How this translation was arrived at I do not know. But it evinces a certain lack of understanding of the very truth which the article intends to set forth, and it agrees with neither the Latin nor the Dutch versions. Because this article is very brief — briefer, in fact, than the above translation — we can very well make all our corrections by furnishing a new translation of the entire paragraph. We would translate the article as follows:

*Of this keeping of the elect unto salvation, and of the perseverance of the true believers in faith, the believers themselves are able to be certain, and are certain according to the measure of faith, by which they certainly believe that they are and always shall remain true and living members of the Church, that they have the remission of sins and life eternal.*

This article begins the treatment of the second main aspect of the perseverance of the saints. The first eight paragraphs of this chapter have dealt with the subject of perseverance and preservation as such. From Article 9 to Article 13 the subject of the knowledge and assurance of perseverance is treated. Article 9 speaks of the possibility and the fact of this assurance. Article 10 speaks of the way in which this assurance is attained. Article 11 deals with the subject of carnal doubts and temptations in relation to this assurance. Articles 12 and 13 speak of the effects of this assurance upon the believers. Hence, we shall be busy with this subject for some time to come.

Let us first attempt clearly to understand the subject.

Abstractly considered, it would be possible that God would preserve His elect and that the elect would persevere to the end, but that they would have no assurance of their perseverance. I say "abstractly considered," because when we consider the truth of perseverance concretely, as contained in the Scriptures and developed in the preceding articles, it

would certainly be impossible to maintain the doctrine of perseverance without the doctrine of the assurance of perseverance. But for the sake of distinguishing our present subject clearly let us consider this abstraction for a moment. In such a case the objective truth would be that God surely preserves every last one of the elect unto the day of Jesus Christ and that they surely persevere to the very end. That by itself would be a very precious truth. For, you understand, even if there were no assurance of perseverance, even if the elect would know nothing of God's sure preservation and their sure perseverance, that preservation and perseverance would surely take place nevertheless. The knowledge or lack of a knowledge of a certain fact does not change the reality of that fact. Whether or not I know that Christ died for my sins 1900 years ago on Calvary's cross does not change the reality of the fact that at the cross all my sins were forever blotted out. And so also, whether or not I know that God will surely preserve me to the very end and that I shall persevere to the end does not change the fact that God shall indeed preserve me and that I shall surely persevere to the end. The fact stands. In such a case, it might be that I never obtain the knowledge of that wonderful work of preservation until the whole process is finished and I arrive in the eternal state. Then I would say: "God in His wonderful grace has kept me safe all the way." But now the question treated in this article is: can the believers themselves also be certain that they shall persevere in faith even unto the end? Can and may they know it? May they say it? May and can they have the trust and confidence that they shall persevere to the end? Can and may they depend upon it, derive comfort and security from it, that they shall surely persevere and obtain the final victory?

The Reformed faith maintains not only the truth of the sure preservation and perseverance of the saints, but also the truth that the believers can and do obtain the assurance of perseverance.

The Arminian heresy denies both.

The latter stands to reason. If the Arminian maintains the doctrine of the falling away of the saints, he cannot possibly maintain, but must necessarily deny, the doctrine of the assurance of perseverance. And this, in fact, the Arminian also did. He taught that without a special revelation we can have no certainty of future perseverance in this life. Cf. V, B, 5. In other words, if God foresaw that a certain man would by his own free will persevere to the end, and then would by a special and direct revelation inform that man of what He foresaw, then that man could have the assurance of perseverance. But all this is pure fiction and imagination. Our fathers have maintained that the real implication of the Arminian doctrine is that no one would ever persevere if left to himself. The Arminian possibility of the falling away of the saints has in it the absolute necessity of the falling away of all saints. But if this be true, then all assurance is out of the picture.

And this brings us to our second observation, which we made also in connection with our discussion of the assurance of election, namely, that assurance must be based upon objective fact and reality. If the assurance of perseverance is not based upon sure perseverance, it is false and worthless. This relationship is beautifully expressed in the article we are now studying. Notice that the article does not begin with the perseverance of the true believers. It does not merely say: "Of the perseverance of the true believers in faith the believers themselves are able to be certain, and are certain according to the measure of faith . . ." Such a statement is true, but it does not express the whole truth of the matter. It leaves out the solid rock of the foundation upon which such assurance must be based. It leaves out God and His work. The term "perseverance" looks at this truth from the viewpoint of the activity of the believers. And that perseverance in itself can never explain the assurance, can never form the basis of assurance. In fact, if I consider my own activity of persevering as an imperfect saint, the result must necessarily be doubt, not assurance. Hence, there must be something objective, something firm and solid and sure, to which assurance clings. And it is at that point that the article begins: "*Of this keeping of the elect unto salvation*, and of the perseverance of the true believers in faith, the believers themselves are able to be certain, and are certain according to the measure of faith . . ." We may notice in this connection, therefore:

1) That the article mentions both: God's keeping and the perseverance of the true believers.

2) That God's keeping of His elect is mentioned first, and the perseverance of the believers second. This is important. It is not thus, that the believers persevere in faith and that God then preserves them. The opposite is true. God keeps the elect unto salvation, and therefore the true believers persevere in faith. Hence, it is God's keeping of the elect unto salvation that is the ground of the assurance of perseverance because that divine keeping is the cause and only possibility of the perseverance itself.

3) That the article very properly and carefully distinguishes between "this keeping of the *elect*" and "the perseverance of the *true believers*." It is elect that are kept; it is believers that persevere. Our fathers are careful to keep the relationships in good order. In the first place, this serves to emphasize once more the truth that election is the key to the whole truth of perseverance. Whom does God keep? His own elect, chosen from before the foundation of the world in Christ according to His good pleasure. Why does God keep them? Because He has chosen them according to His own good pleasure. The ultimate ground, therefore, of all assurance, including the assurance of perseverance, is sovereign election. In the second place, we must remember that the terms "elect" and "true believers" are co-extensive. The article certainly does not mean to posit a relation of

contrast between the keeping of the elect and the perseverance of the true believers, as though it meant to say: "God keeps the elect, but of those elect only the true believers persevere." No, they are the same, and their election is the cause of their being true believers. The true believers who persevere are the elect who are kept, and their election is the fountain and cause of the blessings of faith and perseverance. Nevertheless, it is only in their capacity of true believers, or, if you will, by faith, that the elect persevere. And it is only by faith, therefore, that the assurance of perseverance is possible.

Our third observation concerning this article is that it teaches not only the possibility, but the reality of the assurance of perseverance on the part of the true believers. Also this is important. The article says: "The believers themselves are able to be certain, and *are certain* . . ." This means that for believers assurance is not the rare exception, but the rule without exception. Assurance is not to be depicted as an elusive pot of spiritual gold at the foot of a mystical rainbow. It is not something possible but rarely attained. It is not thus, that there are only a certain holy few among all the true believers that ever obtain this assurance. On the contrary, our fathers teach that true believers not only *can*, but also do indeed obtain the assurance of perseverance. This was also their teaching in regard to the assurance of election. Cf. I, A, 12. Hence, doubt is not normal for a child of God. Assurance is normal for believers.

In the fourth place, the article calls attention to the fact that the measure of assurance is not the same in all. "The believers themselves are certain *according to the measure of faith* . . ." This implies, first of all, the fact that in various children of God not only, but also in the same child of God at various times, the measure of assurance is not the same. This is also experience. The children of God are not always at those heights of faith where with defiant challenge they firmly and confidently assert in the very face of the enemy that "nothing can separate them from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." This implies, in the second place, that there is a very definite and constant proportion between the measure of assurance and the measure of faith. Believers are certain of their perseverance *according to* the measure of faith. Where the measure of faith is large, there the measure of assurance is large; where it is small, there the measure of assurance is proportionately small. And in the third place, this implies already that our present assurance cannot be based upon our past assurance. Principally, it is true, once assured is always assured. But this by no means implies that our former assurance is the basis of our assurance in the present moment. Assurance is a continuing process.

To the nature of this assurance we will call attention in a following article.

H.C.H.

## DECENCY and ORDER

### Classical Jurisdiction

(Continued)

We made a statement last time to the effect that the Classis in 1924 assumed jurisdiction over the Synod by going beyond the decision of the Synod in attempting to bind upon the consistory and its pastor what Synod had not intended and had even refused to do.

If this is true, it is evident that Classis violated the rule of Article 36 of the Church Order, dealing with the matter of proper jurisdiction of ecclesiastical bodies.

This, therefore, we must now further determine.

The Synod of 1924 disposed of the various protests that were lodged against the Eastern Avenue consistory and pastor and that had to do with the common grace question. It is unnecessary to cite the entire decision of the Synod since much of it has no direct bearing upon the matter of jurisdiction with which we are at presently concerned. We may limit ourselves to those parts particularly that deal with Synod's treatment of the accused involved since the question is whether or not the Classis later had the right to demand of the consistory that they impose censure upon the pastor for refusing to answer directly to various questions concerning the Three Points as advanced by the Classis? And, further, whether Classis had the right to depose from the office when these demands were refused?

The Synod, as is customary, was advised by a committee of pre-advice. This committee advised Synod as follows:

*"(1) To seriously admonish the brethren with respect to their departures and demand of them the promise that in the future they will abide by the Three Points declared by Synod.*

*"(2) To urge the brethren Danhof and Hoeksema that they refrain from making propaganda for their dissenting views regarding the three points, in the churches.*

*"(3) To point out to the brethren, that if it should appear either now or in the future, that they will not abide by the decisions of Synod, the latter to its profound regret will have to make the case pending with the consistories."*

Strikingly this advice of the committee was rejected by the Synod and instead, in the final decision of Synod we find the following:

*"Synod expresses that several statements in the writings of the Reverends H. Danhof and H. Hoeksema cannot very well be harmonized with what Scripture and the Confession teach us regarding the above mentioned three points. Synod also judges that the pastors referred to, in their writings, use some strong expressions, from which it is evident that in their presentation of the truth they do not sufficiently adhere to the way in which our Confessions express themselves, especially Point I of the Utrecht Conclusions.*

*"On the other hand, synod declares that these ministers in their writings, according to their own repeated declarations, do not intend or purpose anything else than to teach and maintain our Reformed doctrine, the doctrine of Scripture and the Confessions; and it cannot be denied that they are Reformed in respect to the fundamental truths as they are formulated in the Confessions even though it be with an inclination to one-sidedness."*

Apart now from the contradiction and untruth in this decision of the Synod, it should be plain that especially the last part is far removed from the position that one must express agreement with the Three Points or be deposed from office. Synod did not even take that position with a view to a still later part of its decision. There it declared:

*"With a view to the deviating sentiments of the Reverends H. Danhof and H. Hoeksema regarding the above mentioned Three Points, and with a view to the controversy that arose in our Church regarding the doctrine of Common or General Grace, synod admonishes the two brethren to abide in their teaching and writing by the standpoint of our Confession regarding the Three Points that were discussed, and at the same time she admonishes the brethren and the Churches in general to refrain from all onesidedness in the presentation of the truth, and to express themselves carefully and with sobriety and modesty.*

*"On the other hand, in as far as the pastors H. Danhof and H. Hoeksema in their writings warn against worldly mindedness, synod judges that there is, indeed, reason for such warning with a view to a possible misuse of the doctrine of Common Grace and therefore, synod considers it its calling to send the following testimony to the churches."*

From all this, as well as from the final decree of Synod concerning the matter of common grace itself, it is evident that the Synod intended no disciplinary action against the brethren Danhof and Hoeksema. Classis Grand Rapids East acted in direct conflict with the decision of the Synod. They over ruled the Synod. They assumed a greater prerogative than the Synod and proceeded to act in the matter that Synod had rejected. This was a serious violation of Church Order, particularly Article 36, in deposing a consistory and suspending its minister for refusing to maintain decrees of the Synod which the latter never made.

The final decree of the Synod was the adoption of the following interesting resolution.

"In connection with the overtures that would urge Synod to express itself on the doctrine of common grace as such, or to appoint a committee to study the matter, Synod decides as follows:

"a. At the present to formulate no statement relative to the standpoint of the Church regarding the doctrine of general or common grace in every detail and all its implications. Such a statement would presuppose that this doctrine had already been thoroughly considered and developed in all its



details, which certainly is least of all the case. Preparatory study, necessary to this purpose, is almost entirely wanting as yet. Consequently, there is in the Reformed Churches as yet no consensus of opinion at all in this case.

"b. Neither to appoint a committee to devote itself to the study of this matter, *in order to reach the formulation of a dogma concerning this matter, which eventually may be received as part of the Confession (Overture Muskegon).*

"1. Because dogmas are not made but are born out of the conflict of opinions, and, therefore, it is desirable that the establishment of a certain dogma be preceded by a lengthy exchange of opinions. Participation in such a discussion must be as general as possible and must not be limited to a single group of churches;

"2. Because a certain truth must live clearly in the consciousness of the Church in general, or in the consciousness of a particular group of churches, before the Church is able to profess such a truth in her Confessions. It cannot be said, that this indispensable condition exists at present or will exist after two or four years.

"c. But to urge the leaders of our people, both ministers and professors, to make further study of the doctrine of Common Grace; that they give themselves account carefully of the problems that present themselves in connection with this matter, in sermons, lectures and publications. It is very desirable that not a single individual or a small number of persons accomplish this task, but that many take part in it: Grounds:

"1. This will be most naturally conducive to a fruitful discussion of the question of Common Grace, and such an exchange of thoughts is the indispensable condition for the development of this truth.

"2. It will be instrumental to concentrate the attention of our people upon this doctrine, will serve to elucidate their conception of it and to cause them to feel its significance, so that they become increasingly conscious of this part of the contents of their faith.

"3. It will, undoubtedly, in the course of a few years, lead to a consensus of opinion in this matter, and thus it will gradually prepare the way in our churches for a united confession concerning Common Grace."

That these decrees of the Synod of 1924 are not above criticism is plain to all who can intelligently read them. We do not enter that aspect of the question but only present them in order to have before us the background of the Classical hierarchy.

Another revealing aspect of the treatment of this matter by the Classis is the fact that the consistory of Eastern Avenue, after presenting in a lengthy document all its reasons why it could not acquiesce in the demands of the Classis, it informed Classis that it would appeal its interpretation of the decisions of 1924 to the Synod of 1926 and, further,

urged the Classis to defer any and all action which it might contemplate against the consistory until such time as Synod shall have acted upon the appeal and rendered a final decision in the matter. This was completely ignored by the Classis. Instead they attempted to do what they had demanded of the consistory, viz., place Rev. Hoeksema before the two questions we have mentioned before. Against this action the consistory of course protested. Nothing ever came of this protest, however; Classis never treated it. At the same time, Rev. Hoeksema, under protest and reserving his right to appeal to Synod, submitted to Classis a written answer to its questions. That answer was as follows (pertinent part):

"a. *Considering that the Synod of 1924 interpreted our Confessions in such a manner, that no one needs to agree with the Three Points adopted by Synod 1924 (cf. Acts of Synod 1924, p. 145 ff.) in order to be fundamentally Reformed in the basic truths as formulated in our Confessions, therefore, undersigned hereby declares that he always was and still is in harmony with the Confessions as interpreted by Synod 1924;*

"b. *Considering that Synod admonishes the leaders of our Churches to make serious study of the problems recently brought to the foreground, in preaching, lectures and writings, undersigned promises that he especially will heed this admonition of Synod and will co-operate in brotherly spirit in order to reach a solution of the afore-mentioned problems.*

"c. *Undersigned, as long as he is an office bearer in the Christian Reformed Churches, submits himself gladly to any decision of the Synod of these Churches.*

*Respectfully submitted,*

*H. HOEKSEMA."*

How, in the light of all this, a Classis, under the name of Reformed Church Polity, could proceed to depose a Consistory and suspend its minister, will remain an unanswered question. But, more important is the fact that even apart from the doctrinal issues of 1924, these facts clearly justify the origin and existence of the Protestant Reformed Churches in America, notwithstanding the contention of a few malcontents and schismatics to the contrary!

G.V.D.B.

## THE VICTORIES OF JESUS CHRIST

Seas with all your fulness thunder,  
All earth's peoples now rejoice;  
Floods and hills in praise uniting  
To the Lord lift up your voice.  
For, behold, Jehovah cometh,  
Robed in justice and in might;  
He alone will judge the nations,  
And His judgment shall be right.

## ALL AROUND US

*Editor Voices Alarm Over His Church.*

The church is the Christian Reformed Church of America. The editor is the Reverend H. J. Kuiper. And the medium through which he voices his alarm is the April edition of *Torch and Trumpet*. In the department, *Timely Topics*, the Rev. H. J. Kuiper writes under the title, What Is Happening to the Christian Reformed Church?

In our opinion this is a courageous, forthright attempt to bring to the attention, especially of the members of his church, what he conceives to be dangerous tendencies which have far-reaching implications. What makes his lament the more pathetic is the fact that the writer is now aware that his church has lost real leadership in the right direction. This last factor is not only his observation, but one which has been expressed to us privately by several others of the members of his church. One of these poured out his heart to me a short while ago when I was drawn into conversation with him about the problems confronting his church. He, too, had publicly criticized his church in one of the church papers. When we commented on his boldness, he replied, "But it's all for nought. The church is so far gone that it's hopeless to think there will be any amendment." That is, indeed, a sad situation, and one that can only sadden also our hearts. For the Christian Reformed Church is also our mother, and still the object of our affection even though she would not allow us to live in her house. We can only hope and pray that these voices of complaint and protest will continue until there is repentance and amendment and a return to the old paths.

We would like to quote every word written by the Rev. H. J. Kuiper because they are weighted with meaning, but our allotted space will not allow this. We shall, however, give our readers sufficient quotation to give them the sense of Kuiper's article. We will quote the introduction in its entirety because it is important.

"To say that we have hesitated to write this article would be an understatement. There is so much good in the Church we love that an inward struggle preceded the resolution to publish the thoughts that are here expressed since they reveal the conviction that serious faults and dangerous trends are coming to the surface in the Church which has the love of our heart. We can give no other reason for following this course than that we cannot remain silent and feel persuaded that we have acted conscientiously. Let us add that the misgivings and anxious questions which we voice are agitating the minds and hearts of many of our people.

"Something unusual is happening in the Christian Reformed Church. Doctrines and policies that have always been accepted by all of us are now being questioned or even contradicted. There appears to be a tendency among us not

only to set aside important traditions which so far have been regarded as essential to our orthodoxy but also a certain hankering for 'advanced' conceptions and a growing impulse to follow the methods of denominations round about us — methods which were generally regarded as basically unsound.

"We can no longer hide the fact that the leadership of the Christian Reformed Church is divided. There is a widening and deepening rift between our ministers, professors, teachers, and well-informed laymen. We are not so narrow as to believe that there is no room for differences of opinion in our Church even on relatively important issues. But the differences we have in mind are rooted in attitudes that have far-reaching implications."

There are especially four areas in which Kuiper believes his church is going astray, and these he briefly touches upon in succession. The first that Kuiper mentions is also one the editor-in-chief of *The Standard Bearer* has been giving considerable attention to in recent issues of this periodical. It deals with the matter of Theistic Evolution. Writes Rev. Kuiper:

"First of all, we point to the sympathy for theistic evolution — a theory which implies that the doctrine of creation can be harmonized with that of a gradual development, under divine guidance, of lower into higher forms of life, from plants to animals and from animals to man. There are men of prominence in the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands and in our own Church who advocate this theory and do not hesitate to assert that some day it may be demonstrated that man has descended from ape-like ancestors. And that in the face of the biblical teaching that the first man was a direct divine creation, a perfect human being made in the image of God, in righteousness, holiness, and knowledge of the truth!

"To our amazement, the Ecumenical Synod of Potchefstroom, which met last summer, adopted a report on Creation and Evolution, signed by five Dutch professors (A. Lever, Polman, Jonker, Oostendorp, and Gispen), which leaves room for the theory of theistic evolution. It made light of the objections which our Synod of 1953 raised against certain statements in an earlier report on the subject and declares: 'Seen in this light the Reformed Ecumenical Synod wisely did not pronounce an opinion on the idea of the so-called theistic evolution.' It also stated blandly that 'the church should leave it to a Christian science (Christelijke wetenschap) to come to a well considered and fundamentally sound view in connection with this theory.' The Ecumenical Synod, adopting the report of the Dutch committee, did not even make the statement that even if it could be proved that many species of plants and animals were evolutions from lower forms of life, this should not be posited of man! It had nothing to say in explanation or defense of the teaching of Genesis 1 but simply left the decision to the sacred cow of an infallible science!

"As far as we can judge, the Christian Reformed delegates

all voted in favor of this report; at least nothing is said in the Acts about any one registering his objections against the conclusions. And that is the same Synod which adopted such an eminently sound report on the inspiration and infallibility of the Scriptures!

"Will our Synod approve the conclusions of the Ecumenical Synod on Creation and Evolution? We trust it will not only withhold approval but register a resounding protest against it."

The second matter concerning which Rev. Kuiper calls to the attention of his readers has to do with the denial of the infallibility of the Scriptures. Sometime ago we reflected on another article of the same author on this subject where he took to task a Calvin seminarian who boldly criticized the doctrine of infallibility in the Seminary paper *Stromata*. Now Rev. Kuiper tells us that "We learned later that the President of the Seminary had authorized its publication. This makes the situation far more serious than it first appeared to be." Rev. Kuiper does not believe this was done by the student or the President intentionally and wittingly. Nevertheless he points out that they have violated the Formula of Subscription and the vows made in public profession of faith where they have publicly taught or allowed to be taught doctrine contrary to the Confessions. And he concludes this section with:

"Something strange is happening to the Christian Reformed Church when one of its basic teachings can be publicly questioned and denied. The Board of Trustees of Calvin College and Seminary considered this matter at its February meeting. We shall wait for the official statements by the secretary of the Board in our church papers. But we do wish to say at the present time that the churches have a right to know exactly what action the Board has taken with reference to the *Stromata* articles concerned; also where the President, who approved the publication of the Hoogland article, stands on the important issue involved in the matter. The Seminary is the school of the entire church and every member has the right to know its stand and the stand of every teacher and every prospective minister on important fundamental issues."

Rev. Kuiper then calls attention to other tendencies in the wrong direction evidenced in his church. He has in mind those who are undermining denominational loyalty by openly challenging the right of his church to separate from the Reformed Church under the guidance of Dr. Van Raalte. Even the stand of the church which conceives of membership in the Masonic Order and in the church as incompatible is being questioned. Apparently there are those who in their evangelistic and mission zeal want to take these lodge members first into the church and then instruct them in regard to their error. Writes Kuiper: "That strange and, to us, inexplicable stand rests on a peculiar approach to the question what must be required of those who wish to join a Christian Reformed Church. Nothing more can be demanded, we are told, than a confession of personal faith in the Lord Jesus

Christ — no knowledge of distinctive teachings of the Reformed faith and no declaration of agreement with our doctrinal standards." With this Kuiper does not at all agree. He sees, and correctly so, that eventually the church will be Reformed only in name, and doctrinal distinctiveness will be lost.

Finally, Rev. Kuiper once more calls attention to the Nigerian problem. We have revealed to our readers on another occasion Kuiper's views on this subject and therefore will not do it again. There are some in his church that want to collaborate with other denominations, some of Arminian and Modernistic background, in the establishment of a Seminary in Africa. This Kuiper and others in his church strenuously oppose. Kuiper now tells us "It is not at all accidental that there are among some of those who are in favor of the T.C.N.N. not a little sympathy for the World Council of Churches and for closer contact with that Council on the part of the Christian Reformed Church." This, in our judgment, is a clear mark of deterioration.

Though we highly commend Rev. Kuiper for his bold exposure of the faults of his church as he sees them, we feel that he could easily write another article and point out more that is wrong in his church. Sometimes one standing on the outside looking in can see more than the one standing in the middle of things. Rev. Kuiper will not listen to us when we tell him that basically all the departures he mentions stem from that departure from the truth which his church made in 1924 when that church decided to build a bridge between the world and to use that bridge. Kuiper certainly knows enough of church history to know that when a church once departs from the straight line of the truth it never comes back to that line. He ought, therefore, to ask himself concerning all the departures he mentions, Where exactly did we make our initial departure? Our answer, as was said, is, at the synod of Kalamazoo in 1924 and in Chicago in 1926. Since that time, Rev. Kuiper, your church has been going in the wrong direction. Look back and see for yourself if this is not true. For over thirty years *The Standard Bearer* has been telling you this, but you won't believe what we tell you. And we are sorry to say this, but unless your church repents of the error you adopted then you must expect only further deterioration.

Rev. Kuiper closes his article by stipulating two reasons for his great concern. "The first is the rather nonchalant attitude of some that the Christian Reformed Church is immune to heresy." "The second . . . is that one of the worst obstacles to theological and ecclesiastical *progress* is the propagation of unsound doctrine."

Kuiper, in his concluding remarks, makes this significant statement: "No church may be satisfied with its past attainments. There are doctrines that need further clarification." I would say "Amen" to this. But then let's start at the beginning and take all of the doctrines, including the common grace doctrine you have added to your Confessions.

M.S.

## NEWS FROM OUR CHURCHES

*"All the saints salute thee . . ." PHIL. 4:21*

April 5, 1959

Rev. Vanden Berg has declined the call to Redlands, and the new trio includes Revs. R. Harbach, G. Van Baren and H. Veldman.

*Did you know that,*

Randolph has a Prot. Ref. Chr. School Society.

Randolph's church services for March 15 were not conducted because of the severe blizzard that raged through Wisconsin. And, the classical delegates from Randolph were also prevented from attending Classis West that week due to the weather and its hazardous driving.

A "coffee" was held at First Church for the benefit of the Christian Foundation for Handicapped Children. Friends and neighbors came for a coffee kletz in the church parlors instead of their homes, and incidentally contributed over \$300.00 for the Foundation which covers the cost of but two days' expense of the thirteen station wagons used to transport the children.

Rev. and Mrs. H. Hanko rejoice in the birth of their fourth son.

Some topics under discussion in the last few weeks:

Holland Y.P. Society heard a paper on "money" by Bob Windemuller. The "Three Points of Common Grace" were explained by Terry Elzinga of Holland, at South East church in joint session of Young People's societies. The "Order of Worship" is currently under discussion in South Holland's Men's Society. And at Oak Lawn, Bob Rutgers and Grace Ipema led an informal discussion of the question "Should we Prot. Ref. date people from other denominations?"

The following events scheduled for the latter part of March have become history:

The Sunday School Teachers held their Spring Inspirational meeting March 20th. While the Fall meeting tends to "inspire" the teachers for the season ahead, this meeting served the purpose of renewing the jaded teachers at the season's close. The Rev. G. Vos was the speaker, and in his inimitable way inspired the teachers with a talk on the injunction given by our Lord when He said, "Suffer little children to come unto me."

March 30th was the date of the Men's League meeting at Hudsonville. Seminarian J. Kortering addressed the large gathering with a lecture on the difficult portion of Scripture found in I Peter 3:19, 20, regarding the preaching of Christ

to the spirits in prison. The speaker ably defended the position that the "Preacher" was the exalted Christ Who preached by the Spirit of Christ; that the "preaching" was a heralding of His victory over sin and death, its theme being "Victory Through Suffering"; that the "spirits" were the demons and the spirits of reprobate men, especially those of Noah's time who were representative of all reprobates who persecute the Church; that the "prison" was the place of torment where the wicked are reserved for the Day of Judgment; and, that the preaching served to vindicate Noah and all of God's persecuted people.

The Office Bearer's Conference was held at Creston, March 31st. Rev. M. Schipper spoke to an attentive audience on "The Liturgical Order of Divine Worship." The speaker stressed the fact that divine worship was not for the benefit of the worshipers but is a service of God wherein God is worshiped; and that our order of worship should be conducive to that end, and should therefore be as beautiful, yet as simple as possible.

Loveland had a reading service in the morning of March 15 and heard a tape recording in the evening. Both sermons were by the Rev. H. Hoeksema. These services were necessary because Rev. Kuiper was in Pella on a classical appointment while traveling to the Classis West meeting in Illinois.

The Hope Prot. Ref. School Society sponsored a Family Night in the Hudsonville church April 3rd. The sale of baked goods, sewn articles and refreshments was the means to provide an extra "lift" to the heavy budget of the school society.

Rev. H. Hoeksema's Wednesday evening Bible Class has recessed for the season. The "Dominee" was remembered with a gift in appreciation for his work leading the class in the study of "The Doctrine of the Last Things." Mr. P. Bykerk expressed the sentiment of the entire class when he said, "We do not know the Lord's will concerning your way, but it is our desire that He may spare you that you may again teach us during the next season." Rev. Hoeksema, having recently celebrated his 73rd birthday, asserted that the preaching of the Word is still his greatest joy.

Mr. and Mrs. Jason Redder of Hudsonville came home for a short leave and used that opportunity to present their baby for the Sacrament of Baptism.

*Do you agree* — with A. W. Pink quoted in Lynden's bulletin, "It is a mistake to say that faith is a condition of salvation in the sense that my paying for an article is a condition of obtaining the same. Every condition to the right of salvation has been fulfilled for us by Christ. Faith is rather the connection between the soul and God's salvation in Christ, and that connection is made by the Holy Ghost."

. . . see you in church.

J.M.F.