

The
Standard
Bearer

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

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-A Critical Study (3)**

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THE STANDARD BEARER

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ANNOUNCEMENT

Classis East of the Protestant Reformed Churches will hold its next session on April 5, 1967 at 9 a.m. in the Southeast Protestant Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan. Consistories will please take note of this announcement in the appointment of their delegates.

M. Schipper, S.C.

MEDITATION—

Hearts Transformed By The Living Lord

by Rev. J. Kortering

"And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk and are sad and they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scripture And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread."

Luke 24:17, 32, 35

Burdened hearts!

Burning hearts!

Bountiful hearts!

The living Lord effects such a transformation. He alone is able.

Let us join the travelers to Emmaus and behold the power of the resurrection.

Two men plod homeward. Strange as it may seem

they are returning home from the feast in despair. No, they do not sulk. Cleopas and his friend have learned that pent up frustration eventually erupts into the volcanic torrents of bitterness and rejection. They are talking together, giving vent to their sorrowing and burdened hearts.

It had been a strange Passover. Cleopas and his friend had traveled the meager six or seven miles to

Jerusalem in answer to the mandatory statute of the law that all within a radius of fifteen miles of Jerusalem should assemble for the feast once a year. They too had exchanged excited greetings with fellow celebrants anticipating the presence of Him Who had caused such a stir in all Jewry. From time to time they had assembled with the multitude to hear Him speak with authority and not as the Scribes. They had witnessed His divine power in the healing of the sick. They had been moved to believe that without question He was the promised One Who shall redeem Israel.

How the events of this feast had dealt them a crushing blow. Instead of sitting at His feet while He taught in the temple, they stood afar off and beheld Him in suffering and shame. From His lips came not the majestic, "I am the light of the world;" rather the piercing cry from the darkness of hell, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me". The response of the multitude was not, "Hosanna! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord;" rather, "Crucify Him, crucify Him, His blood be upon us and our children."

The reverse was stunning!

Travelling home, Cleopas and his friend couldn't understand it. In burning indignation they pointed accusing fingers at their chief priests and rulers. How could they have done it! Jesus was no criminal; He had tenderly healed the sick and delivered untold thousands from their misery. They had discerned a depth in his teaching, so totally lacking in the leaders of the Jews. If His subject was too profound, He would tell a story or give an illustration that would immediately clarify the point. He didn't waver on any interpretation by claiming there were two points to every issue. When He considered the leaders of the people to err, He told them in no uncertain terms. He had been a refreshing breeze upon the stagnant ecclesiastical waters of their day. Was He not Israel's redeemer?

Now He was dead. Crucified as a criminal, of all things!

Burdened hearts.

To make matters even worse, that very morning they had heard rumors that defied the imagination. Some of the women had gone to His tomb very early and found it empty. They saw a vision of angels which declared that He was alive! To confirm this, some of the disciples had gone from the upper room to the grave; and their report was affirmative, the grave was empty. Had the disciples of Jesus come by night and stolen the body, as some had claimed? Was He alive? To their knowledge no one had seen Him.

Perturbed, confused, and sad they tried to find peace for their burdened hearts. Why did Jesus have to die?

These travellers to Emmaus are in a class all by themselves. They did not reject the cross; they simply could not understand it. Surely, there are many who view the cross as a stone of stumbling and as a rock of offense. They wholeheartedly despise the cross, hate it, and forthwith conclude that any gospel that preaches salvation through the blood of atonement must be rejected. To such the cross was a tragedy; and the only way to overcome its terrible loss is to make Christ

a martyr and thus turn the loss into gain by heralding forth the principles for which Christ lived and for which He even died. By following this Christ and living in the brotherhood for which He died, *we* resurrect Him from the dead and enable Him to continue influencing mankind.

We may not place these travellers in such a category of blasphemers. Cleopas and his brother according to the faith simply did not understand. If Christ was to be Israel's redeemer and free them from the bondage of their enemies and restore peace and prosperity to Jerusalem, why did He die?

Those burdened hearts must now begin to burn.

Jesus draws up along side them. What are you talking about? Foolish question. You a stranger in Jerusalem? Shame on you, don't you know anything about the most important question that is being discussed in all Jerusalem? What kind of a Jew are you?

The great Pedagogue must lead them on, for hearts must be unburdened before they can burn. What things?

Then the flood gates of their wretched hearts are opened. The whole story now gushes forth one wave after another.

O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken, ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?

As the flame of the Spirit began to penetrate, their hearts began to burn. That burning was not hatred, nor offense at what Jesus said. Christ could call them foolish ones and slow of faith, but that didn't make them angry. On the contrary, it made them eager to hear more. Suddenly they began to realize that this Man spoke with authority. They didn't know it was Jesus for their eyes were holden. Nevertheless they began to understand that this "stranger" was well versed in the Scriptures and had insights that they didn't possess. How quickly their sojourn of so few miles must have passed as Jesus began to "expound unto them from Moses and all the prophets the things concerning himself."

The Prophet preached to these travellers. The theme of His sermon was, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" Taking them through the portico of the "mother promise" He unveiled before their eyes the basic unity of Scripture. Christ was to come as the seed of the woman to destroy the seed of the serpent and redeem Israel from all their iniquity through the sacrifice of His own flesh upon the cross. The blood of the lambs cried unto God for the fulfillment. The tabernacle and the temple were earthly signs of God dwelling in the hearts of His people as they dwelt under the covering of blood. That veil must needs be rent! The feasts of the people had no significance in themselves, they pointed to a better day when the joy of the heart would be manifest not in waving palm branches and dancing, but in the triumphant song and worshipful praise as all creatures blend their voices in singing, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain." Abraham by faith looked for that day, David sang about it, the prophets expounded

it. The hope of Israel was to be found at the foot of the cross.

Here we find Christ Himself emphasizing the centrality of the cross. Christ *must* suffer and enter into glory! The cross was not a tragic mistake. Neither was the Son of Man a victim. It was necessary that He die; it was the only *way* to glory. That necessity lay in the very purpose of His coming. He came to redeem Israel. A price had to be paid for the release of His captive saints. The righteous God as Judge of heaven and earth had pronounced judgment upon the sinner, "The day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The curse of death had to be carried away by a man that was more than a man, yea, very God. That Jesus had done. His Father had sent Him to represent His own and accomplish this necessary work. That was now past. These travellers to Emmaus may have been eyewitnesses to the events.

Once that price of redemption was paid, there was only one thing left: glory! As the righteousness of God was satisfied for all His own, Christ must needs manifest Himself as the complete redeemer. Death in all its horror was swallowed up in victory. The wrath of hell was overcome, for He drank the bitter dregs; the caverns of death are free from all pitfalls, for He made it a passage way unto life; the grave with its naked fear has been clothed with immortality. All this is summed up in one word, glory! The glory of our Lord Jesus Christ!

No wonder their hearts burned! This was good news. A new light was cast upon the dark past. The blurred and confused feast now took on even greater meaning than usual. This was a feast of all feasts. For not only was it typical, but they had just witnessed its fulfillment.

The gospel of the Living Lord is exactly the necessity of the cross as the way unto glory. It is only this word that can bring burdened hearts to the burning stage. Change that word of the cross as it is being done today, and no wonder you have a dead "christianity". If Christ is a good example, a proof of universal love and brotherhood, one whom man has to resurrect from the dead by accepting the things for

which He died, then *He* is not alive to preach. If Christ be dead, ye are yet in your sins, and of all men most miserable.

May the Word of Christ cause our hearts to burn.

That word drew these travellers to Christ. Even though they did not know it was He, yet they did not want to be separated. Christ pretended He would travel beyond Emmaus, but Cleopas and his friend constrained Him to stay. Jesus knew that they had need of further revelation; for in the breaking of bread their eyes were opened, and they knew it was Jesus.

That did it! Suddenly their eyes focused upon Him who is the resurrection and the life. Jesus met them in their very need. They could not understand why He had to suffer and die, now He had told them. Now they could understand more fully the glory that followed. The Redeemer of Israel came not to establish an earthly kingdom, but a far more glorious Kingdom in the everlasting portals of peace with His Father in heaven.

He disappeared. And thus it should be. For His glory is beyond our earthly comprehension.

Bountiful hearts!

It was too quiet and lonely in Emmaus that evening. There awaited many a troubled heart in Jerusalem that would flutter with joy to hear that Jesus was alive and victorious. They must needs return with all haste to tell the disciples.

One joyful cry greets them, "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared unto Simon."

Bountiful hearts cannot keep silent. A transformation took place that must needs be heralded. The Lord of life had unburdened their hearts through His burning process. Glory to His name!

Without this revelation Calvary would be unspeakably black. A hopeless sinner could never find peace. But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first-fruits of them that slept.

Death is swallowed up in victory!

May our hearts undergo this transformation, and may our lips show forth the praises of His glory from this time forward and forever more.

There are, indeed, Christians that always live in doubt as to their own salvation. They are concerned about their final salvation. They live in constant fear and trembling that they are lost. They cannot surrender themselves with wholehearted confidence to Christ. They never once lift up their heads in the joy of faith to sing songs of redemption to the glory of God's grace in the Beloved. Such Christians should honestly examine their own hearts and lives to discover what is wrong, and what is the cause of this abnormal and sinful fear and doubt.

- H. Hoeksema, "The Wonder of Grace," p. 87

EDITORIALS—

"Report of the Doctrinal Committee"**A Critical Study****The Committee and the "Offer"***by Prof. H. C. Hoeksema***THE COMMITTEE'S VIEW OF HISTORY**

It was to be expected, in the light of the background of the Dekker Case and in the light of the Committee's mandate, that the Study Committee would pay no little attention to 1924. Not only does the Committee give its attention to the doctrine of the Three Points, but they present an analysis of the history of the Christian Reformed Church after 1924. Already here, however, the committee goes astray. This becomes evident in their "introductory analysis" (Acts, 1966, p. 439):

....But it may be argued, and perhaps with some justification, that in our reaction to the Rev. H. Hoeksema's attacks upon 1924 we may have been inclined to be somewhat afraid of being too evangelical in our missionary approach. This may have accounted for our apparent lack of zeal in witnessing to the world outside, especially during the first decade after 1924. We must confess that oftentimes our evangelistic efforts were feeble and sporadic. For example, only in a few places did we carry on extensive evangelistic programs, and even these were almost completely institutionalized and did not challenge the active participation of the rank and file of our church members. Even today, although we have made much progress in our missionary outreach, we still have to admit that more of our church members ought to be personally involved in evangelism. But especially in the first years after 1924 many of our people lacked the evangelistic fervor and zeal that should have characterized them.

Now one might, perhaps, with some justification, be somewhat inclined to overlook the fact that the committee seems to be somewhat afraid of making a forthright judgment and apparently is very much inclined toward qualified and overly cautious statements. But I nevertheless am very curious as to why the committee loads a statement like this with such qualifications. Note: "...it *may be* argued, and *perhaps* with *some* justification,....that we *may have been* inclined to be *somewhat* afraid of being *too* evangelical" Moreover, I am very eager to know what the committee understands by "too evangelical." If being "evangelical" is something good (for example, being agreeable to the gospel, — cf. Webster), then how is it possible to be *too* evangelical? And if, on the other hand, it is something evil (for example, being inclined to conduct mission work of an Arminian, revivalist type), then is not any degree of being evangelical "*too*

evangelical?" There are other questions. Does the committee contend that the position represented in "the Rev. H. Hoeksema's attacks upon 1924" leads to a "lack of zeal in witnessing to the world outside?" Then I challenge them to prove this. For I maintain that a proper Christian "witness to the world outside" can only be made on the basis of and from the position of the antithesis, and that when once you abandon the absolute antithesis (as was principally done when the Three Points were adopted), you can no longer effectively witness. How can one witness against those with whom he stands on common ground? Or does the committee understand by "witnessing" the proclaiming of a general, well-meant offer of salvation to all men? But then the committee is accusing the Christian Reformed Church of being deterred from consistently following up the position of the First Point by the attacks, mind you, of one whom they had been bold enough and strong enough to cast out as a heretic?

But I would suggest that the committee's explanation of the history after 1924 is negative and reactionary.

Mark you well, I would be the last to contend that "the Rev. H. Hoeksema's attacks upon 1924" did not act as a check upon the tendency toward Arminianism and the tendency toward world-conformity in the Christian Reformed Churches since 1924. I believe that these "attacks" as well as his (and others', — in fact, the entire witness of our Protestant Reformed Churches) positive maintenance of the Reformed line has been a definite restraint upon the Christian Reformed Church's becoming "too" un-Reformed.

But the real explanation of the history of the CRC is to be found in the following factors:

1. "*Beginselen werken door.*" Principles work through. The principle in this case is the two-fold principle of common grace and of general grace in the First Point of 1924.

2. However, as leaven (or yeast) in a lump, it required time for a principle, such as that of the First Point, to work through into the practice of the Christian Reformed Church.

3. There was also present in the Christian Reformed Church, — especially in the generation of 1924, — a Reformed principle and a Reformed sense. This was a principle and a sense diametrically the opposite of that of the First Point.

4. The attacks and warnings of the Rev. H. Hoeksema and the testimony of the Protestant Reformed Churches appealed to the Reformed principle and the Reformed sensitivities of the Christian Reformed Church, and thus acted as a restraint upon the working through of the leaven of the First Point.

5. But: principles work through! And it was inevitable, therefore, that eventually the Arminian principle of the First Point should work through and leaven the entire witness of the Christian Reformed Church. This is due to the fact that historically the Arminian principle has always proved to be more popular than the Reformed principle. And in the Dekker Case the Christian Reformed Church is simply experiencing the realization of the axiom that "*beginselen werken door*."

In this connection, it should draw the attention of the serious-minded and concerned Christian Reformed brethren, those who are truly minded to be Reformed, that all this was predicted. Let me give but one example of such a prediction. I quote from Rev. H. Hoeksema's "The Triple Knowledge, An Exposition of the Heidelberg Catechism," Volume III, p. 112. This prediction was published in 1946; but in essence it was made many times ever since 1924:

And this also holds for the camouflaged Arminianism that professes to believe in sovereign election, and in particular atonement, but presents the gospel as a well-

meaning offer of salvation on the part of God to all men without distinction. God's well-meaning "offer" of salvation cannot possibly be wider in scope than the objective satisfaction and justification of the cross of Christ (Thus: limited atonement, H.C.H.). And those that preach a well-meaning offer of God to all men, must and will ultimately embrace the doctrine of universal atonement also.

Hence, what has taken place in the Dekker Case is the literal fulfillment of the above prediction. Prof. Dekker has consistently followed the line of the First Point to the consequence of universal atonement.

I say this not to gloat, nor in any sense to rejoice about the fact that this prediction proved true. This is not a cause for joy, but for grief.

I say it as another warning to the earnest-minded in the Christian Reformed Church who do not really want to go in the direction of Arminianism and who are frightened by the prospect of the doctrine of universal atonement.

This prediction has been fulfilled before your very eyes! It is embodied in the position of Prof. Dekker!

Ought this not to be viewed as concrete historical proof that the First Point of 1924 and its well-meant offer was wrong, and that the Protestant Reformed Churches were right in their opposition to that First Point?

Think on these things!

The Banner, The Offer, and Limited Atonement

by Prof. H. C. Hoeksema

The February 24 issue of *The Banner* (cf. Henry Peterson's "The Sincere Offer of the Gospel" on pp. 16, 17) presents a concrete example of the point made in my editorial in this issue about the Report of the Doctrinal Committee.

It is not my intention to give a detailed account and criticism of this article. The article is full of confusion and half-truth. Moreover, while it purports to be an exposition of Canons III, IV, 6-9, it bears about as little resemblance to the teachings of the Canons in these articles as black to white. In fact, it seems to me that any thinking reader of *The Banner* who takes the trouble to read these very clear articles of the Canons will detect this. The Rev. Peterson is not actually writing about the Canons here, but he is attempting a defense of the First Point of 1924.

My purpose is to illustrate the utter inconsistency between the idea of the general, well-meant offer of salvation and the Reformed doctrine of limited atonement. This article is a case in point.

Mr. Peterson makes the following points by quoting with approval from various writings of Prof. John Murray, the late Ned B. Stonehouse, and the late R. B. Kuiper:

1. This general offer is an offer of grace. (Let the Dekker Case committee take note of this!) "The whole gamut of redemptive grace is included" in Christ's offering Himself. "Salvation is all of its aspects and in the furthest reaches of glory consummated is the overture."

2. God desires the salvation of all men, and the preacher must declare this. He must declare that "God does not desire the death of any but the salvation of all."

Now take note of the following facts that are indubitable on the basis of Scripture and our Reformed confessions:

1. The gospel is the gospel of the cross, of Christ crucified. And the preaching of the gospel is the proclamation of Christ crucified.

2. Moreover, Christ crucified is the revelation and realization of God's desire and purpose to save.

3. But Christ crucified is Christ crucified for the elect, and for them only. He is the Christ of limited atonement.

4. How, then, can it properly be said that in the gospel of Christ crucified for the elect only there is declared God's desire for the salvation of all men?

The Rev. Peterson calls this a seeming contradiction, or paradox.

It is perfectly obvious, however, that this is not a *seeming* contradiction, but a *real* contradiction.

Here you have an illustration of the attempt to maintain the doctrine of limited atonement in Canons II, and at the same time, when one speaks of Canons

III, IV and projects that doctrine of the atonement into the actual preaching of the gospel, nevertheless to delimit the atonement and make it universal.

Prof. Dekker did this; and he openly came out for universal atonement.

The Rev. Peterson apparently does not want to do the latter, and he seeks refuge in the "seeming contradiction" or paradox.

Prof. Dekker, — on the basis of the First Point, — is consistent.

And Peterson, to be consistent, must inevitably come to the same position.

The alternative is: let go of the First Point.

The alternative is the better way. For it is Reformed!

Thus Spake John Calvin!

by Prof. H. C. Hoeksema

In connection with the Rev. Peterson's writings on God's desiring the salvation of all men reference is made to several Scripture passages. As might be expected, one of these is the well-known and oft-quoted Ezekiel 33:11: "Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?"

Ever since 1924, of course, this text has frequently been misused in order to show that God does not desire the death of any, but the salvation of all. The defenders of the First Point cited this text and explained it in this way. And they have been followed in this by many others.

The claim has even been made that John Calvin supports this explanation.

Now it may be granted that Calvin is not always entirely clear in his explanation of this passage. I am not saying that Calvin adopts the Arminian explanation, but rather that it is sometimes a bit difficult to see clearly that he does not believe that this text teaches that God desires the salvation of the reprobate.

Recently, however, my attention was drawn to a passage in the "Institutes" in which Calvin speaks very plain language on this score. I pass it on to the reader, not because John Calvin is the end of all argument, but in order to show that his support cannot be claimed for an Arminian interpretation of Ezekiel 33:11. The quotation is from Book III, Chapter XXIV, Paragraph XV (the Allen translation):

"But as objections are frequently raised from some passages of Scripture, in which God seems to deny that the destruction of the wicked is caused by his decree,

but that, in opposition to his remonstrances, they voluntarily bring ruin upon themselves, — let us show by a brief explication that they are not at all inconsistent with the foregoing doctrine (of reprobation, H.C.H.) A passage is produced from Ezekiel, where God says, 'I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live.' If this is to be extended to all mankind, why does he not urge many to repentance, whose minds are more flexible to obedience than those of others, who grow more and more callous to his daily invitations? Among the inhabitants of Nineveh and Sodom, Christ himself declares that his evangelical preaching and miracles would have brought forth more fruit than in Judea. How is it, then, if God will have all men to be saved, that he opens not the gate of repentance to those miserable men who would be more ready to receive the favour? *Hence we perceive it to be a violent perversion of the passage, if the will of God mentioned by the prophet, be set in opposition to his eternal counsel, by which he has distinguished the elect from the reprobate.* Now, if we inquire the genuine sense of the prophet, his only meaning is to inspire the penitent with hopes of pardon. And this is the sum, that it is beyond a doubt that God is ready to pardon sinners immediately on their conversion. Therefore he wills not their death, inasmuch as he wills their repentance. But experience teaches, that he does not will the repentance of those whom he externally calls, in such a manner as to affect all their hearts. Nor should he on this account be charged with acting deceitfully; for, though his external call only renders those who hear without obeying it inexcusable, yet it is justly esteemed the testimony of God's grace, by which he reconciles men to himself. Let us observe,

therefore, the design of the prophet in saying that God has no pleasure in the death of a sinner; it is to assure the pious of God's readiness to pardon them immediately upon their repentance, and to show the impious the aggravation of their sin in rejecting such great compassion and kindness of God. Repentance, therefore, will

always be met by Divine mercy; but on whom repentance is bestowed, we are clearly taught by Ezekiel himself, as well as by all the prophets and apostles." (italics mine, H.C.H.)

This is "Calvinistic."

Editor's Notes

by Prof. H. C. Hoeksema

This first note is for those who send in contributions. I cannot always discern from letters sent to me as editor whether such letters are intended for publication or not. I do not wish to slight anyone who intends a letter for publication; nor do I wish to embarrass anyone who does not intend his letter for publication. It would be helpful, therefore, if letters to the editor would include a note to clarify this matter.

* * *

This second note is for my fellow staff members. It has been happening recently that occasionally I receive correspondence, questions, and other extra copy which makes it necessary to delay publication of one of the regular department contributions. Usually this entails only a delay of one or two issues, and only rarely the skipping of a regularly scheduled turn for a department. Hence, please do not interpret the fact

that your department does not appear as scheduled as a signal not to send in your scheduled copy. In order to keep the wheels of publication running smoothly I must receive all scheduled copy. Please observe your schedule unless you receive explicit notice to the contrary.

* * *

This third item will be of general interest. A recent issue of *Christianity Today* carried special notice of "Reformed Dogmatics" in its "Reading for Perspective" department, along with a miniature picture of the volume. We appreciate this publicity, especially because of the comparatively large circulation of this magazine. Incidentally, we will keep our readers informed of various book reviews which appear in the near future on a number of review copies which were sent out.

A CLOUD OF WITNESSES—

David In Flight

by Rev. B. Woudenberg

The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.

The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.

Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.

Psalms 34:17-19

For a few days David had felt himself sustained by the faith of Jonathan. As Jonathan spoke to him, it seemed that God came close to him again in love. Even Jonathan's parting words had held their thrill when he said, "Go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the LORD, saying, The LORD be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed for ever." But no sooner did he turn away from this

dear friend than David felt the darkness closing in again. He was alone, all alone in the world, and didn't know where he could turn. Where could he go? He had tried Samuel in Ramah, and that hadn't worked. He had appealed to his friend Jonathan, and all that Jonathan was able to do was to commit him to the keeping of God. Now what was left? There was only one place that David could think of, the tabernacle presently

staked out at Nob near Jerusalem. He didn't really know why he should go there. It had nothing very concrete to offer to a fugitive from the king. It was just that there was no other place to go either. This was the only place left which somehow in his mind identified itself with safety and promise. In some manner David gave notification to his personal servants to come with him, and then, slowly, almost half-heartedly, he made his way toward Nob.

David had entered one of the most critical testing periods of his life. Before this he had always lived in comparative security. It was true that he had often been exposed to the dangers of battle, but this had not frightened him and he had always had friends and admirers to whom he could return for assurance and encouragement. Even when Saul had first turned against him it had not been like this. It had pained and troubled him to taste the dissatisfaction of the king; but he had been able to read in the eyes of almost everyone that their sympathies were with him, and he had really believed that, if only he would persevere in the right, this evil also could be overcome. But it hadn't worked out that way. The harder he had tried to do the right, the more hopeless it had seemed to become; and now it had reached the point where he was about to give up. Even his determination to follow the right had dimmed. Already there had been something unnaturally desperate about his statement to Jonathan when first meeting him, "There is but a step between me and death." Jonathan had felt this, and even he had not dared to refuse to go along with David's plan to feel out his father by means of a lie. And now that the meeting with Jonathan had not really helped to drive away his gloom, David's usual determination to do the right was even weaker still.

It had to be this way. This was God's testing-time for David. God's will for David was not that he should be a mere warrior in Israel's army; he was ordained to be king, a leader in Israel who would go forth in the name of the Lord. But for this one lesson had to be learned — namely, that he who leads in the name of the Lord has to go on alone with no one to strengthen him but His God. There can be no returning to the comfort of admirers and friends; there can be no reliance upon the encouragement of any fellow man; he who leads in righteousness can only trust in God. This David had to learn. It was a hard lesson; and, because David was but a man, there was sure to be faltering on the way. But, even while he felt so much alone in this hour of darkness, the grace of God was with him, bringing him slowly to the light.

David himself, of course, realized nothing of this at the time. He felt only completely alone and forsaken. It seemed that he had no one to rely upon but himself and his own ingenuity, and it was not enough.

In this state of discouragement, David approached the tabernacle at Nob, while in his heart there remained only a faint hope that somehow here he might find some guidance or at least some encouragement to go on. Always he had found welcome in the tabernacle, and surely here in the house of God some safety could be found, at least until he had opportunity to rest and think

the situation through. Leaving his servants outside, David entered the court of the tabernacle alone, and, no sooner had he done so than it was evident that there was no welcome even here for him any longer. In the court stood Abimelech the priest, and over his face a look of shock, even dismay, at the appearance of David.

Abimelech, of course, was not unfamiliar with the deteriorating relationship between David and Saul. Everyone knew, it was the talk of the day. And, if David was now coming in flight from Saul as he had come to Ramah before, it foreboded no good for the tabernacle and the priest; for the king in his anger would not be far behind. Moreover, the fact that David was standing there now all alone in itself seem to indicate that everything was not right. David was no stranger to the tabernacle; he came there often. But that was usually with a group of soldiers for prayer before a battle or for thanksgiving and cleansing after one; and now for him to stand there all alone was strangely out of place. It frightened the priest, and his face showed it. Even more was this so because at the very time Doeg, the Edomite and favored servant of Saul was there also. He shouldn't have been, to be sure. As an Edomite he had no place in the tabernacle of Saul. But he was an intimate of the king, and Saul liked all of his friends to take part in the ceremonies of Israel often without regard to the details of the law. The priest had not the courage to refuse him. But now he could be sure that Doeg would be watching closely every action of the priest with regard to David, and it would not be long before all would be repeated in the ears of the king. Anxiously he queried David, "Why art thou alone, and no man with thee?"

David sensed the situation almost immediately. The question of the priest pierced into his heart like a cruel taunt. As welcomed as he had been in the past, even here in the house of God no one was going to go out of his way to help him. It was as though the last outpost of righteousness had turned against him; and, with a feeling of almost reckless abandonment, he decided that the only thing he could do was to try to lie his way out of the predicament. Quickly he turned to Abimelech and said, "The king hath commanded me a business, and hath said unto me, Let no man know any thing of the business whereabout I send thee, and what I have commanded thee: and I have appointed my servants to such and such a place. Now therefore what is under thine hand? give me five loaves of bread in mine hand, or what there is present."

Abimelech was relieved; for he knew David well and in his mind it was quite unimaginable that anything that David said would not be absolutely true. He answered, "There is no common bread under mine hand, but there is hallowed bread; if the young men have kept themselves at least from women." In another day, such as with the Jews of Jesus time (Matt. 12:3,4) this would have been thought quite unthinkable. But this was another day and the details of ceremonial law were not pressed that closely. The priest was satisfied if only David and his men were ceremonially clean.

To this David was quick to agree by answering, "Of a truth women have been kept from us about these three

days, since I came out, and the vessels of the young men are holy, and the bread is in a manner common, yea, though it were sanctified this day in the vessel." The exact line of reasoning here is rather difficult to follow; but the general idea appears to have been that because of the need of the occasion and the worthiness of their need, it was quite proper to bypass the strict demands of the ceremonial law — a line of reasoning of which Jesus later approved (Matt. 12).

Accordingly the bread was given David, and yet David had another need which had to be filled. So he went on to ask further, "And is there not here under thine hand spear or sword? for I have neither brought my sword nor my weapons with me, because the king's business required haste." Since the time that he had escaped from the window of his own home, David had traveled alone and without weapons; but now it was become evident that there was no safety for him any longer in Israel. He would have to leave the country and shift for himself.

As David perhaps had expected, Abimelech replied, "The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom thou slewest in the valley of Elah, behold, it is here wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod; if thou wilt take that, take it; for there is no other save that here."

This sword was undoubtedly large and awkward for a normal man to handle. But David was a man also of exceptional strength and evidently considered himself able to use it, for he replied, "There is none like that; give it me." And with that, David left the tabernacle.

Never had David felt so completely forsaken as now. No matter where he turned no one could or would help him. In his own nation, among his own friends, amid those for whom he had so often endangered his own life, there was no place of safety to be found. Slowly the bitterness seeped into his soul until he determined that he would be better off in the hands of his enemies than of his friends. He would go and give himself into the

hands of the Philistines just to demonstrate for all to see that they would treat him better than did his own people.

So it was that David presented himself at the gate of Achish the king of Gath. The people were confounded, for there is an unwritten supposition among almost all peoples that a person who presents himself peaceably should not be molested. But this was David; and even as he was brought before Achish, he could hear them saying, "Is not this David the king of the land? did they not sing one to another of him in dances, saying, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands?" It appeared that even the Philistines had deducted already that he was ordained to become the next king of Israel, and surely then his life was not safe either. Once again he felt the need of falling back on subterfuge to keep himself safe. To make it appear as though he had lost his reason, he began to scratch at the door and let spittle fall from his mouth as though he were mad.

Achish, however, would not take David seriously. It was almost as though he saw through David's pretense and sarcastically answered, "Lo, ye see the man is mad; wherefore then have ye brought him to me? Have I need of mad men, that ye have brought this fellow to play the mad man in my presence? shall this fellow come into my house?" He saw that David's madness was only a pretense; but he also scorned taking him captive under such circumstances and drove him out of the city.

David was left no place to go but into the wilderness to dwell among the caves of the rocks. There he went and found the cave of Adullam in which he could live, and where he could spend many days and weeks thinking upon the way of the Lord. There once again he learned to call upon the Lord and slowly but surely came to the light; for it was there, we are told, that he wrote the words of Psalm 34:17, "The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles...."

TRYING THE SPIRITS—

Dispensationalism On Israel And The Church

by Rev. R. C. Harbach

Continuing our examination of dispensationalism, we again call attention to Christ's words, "I will build My church," and, this time, to the fact that they amount to the charter of the Christian church. For the charter of the old covenant church we have in the first promise of Genesis 3:15, "I will put enmity between thee and

the woman, between thy seed and her seed; He shall crush thy head, and thou shalt crush His heel." The old covenant people were a body of believers, a congregation (Ps. 22:22), founded on that charter. Then they were founded on Christ. There is only one foundation, and only one building on that foundation. In this

connection, it is highly recommended to dispensationalists that they give Matthew Henry's commentary a close perusal. He was a biblically-minded man, who hewed rather consistently and closely to Holy Writ, certainly far more so than they who claim to "rightly divide the Word of truth" as these age-theorists do. He on this text said, "Christ...signed and published this royal, this divine charter, by which that body politic is incorporated...God had a church in the world from the beginning, and it was built upon the rock of the promised Seed, Gen. 3:15. But now that promised Seed being come, it was requisite that the church should have a new charter, as Christian, and standing in relation to a Christ already come. Now here we have that charter." No *new* church was chartered by the Lord, but the same church with a new charter. That church certainly was to be found in the old dispensation. Although denied by dispensationalists, the very word for "church" is found in that era. For the N.T. word which Jesus used for "church", *ekklesia*, is the word used to translate the O.T. word for "church," *qahal*, in the "*congregation* of the Lord." (Ps. 22:22 with Heb. 2:12) The point is, a *qahal* is a *church*. If there was a *qahal* in that day, there was a *church* then. When Jesus referred to the building of His church, He spoke of "his own *house*, whose *house* are we." (Heb. 3:6) This "house" of God was not some wholly new thing which began at Pentecost. For it is the same house Moses was a member of (cp. Heb. 3:2-6 with Nu. 12:7) and of which the psalmist was a member when he said, "Except the Lord build the *house*, they labor in vain that build it." (Ps. 127:1) That gracious declaration certainly applies to our house of the present dispensation, as Prov. 9:1, Song 2:4 and Matt. 10:25 will show. If the reader will take the time to carefully examine these texts he will see the devastating effect they have on dispensationalism.

The idea that the church of N.T. saints is a wholly new thing limited to this Christian dispensation, and not found in the old dispensation is proved erroneous by the teaching of Heb. 12:22, 23. It is not true that the O.T. Jews only had Moses and the law, while they of the new dispensation have Christ and the gospel. For the old covenant Israel had Abraham and the promises in which they embraced *Christ*. (cp. Jn. 8:56 with Heb. 11:13, 26) Mount Zion, the city of the living God, is the city Abraham looked for (Heb. 11:10), which was prepared for *all* (v. 13) the O.T. saints, which they desired (v. 16), and which we of the Christian dispensation also seek (13:14). In contrast to "the new Jerusalem," the heavenly Jerusalem is "the above Jerusalem" (Gal. 4:26, Gk.), which is the mother of us all, i.e., of all the children of the promise, including believers of the O.T., as the following quotation (v. 27) from Isaiah indicates. It only takes a comparison of Heb. 11:10 with 12:22 to learn that the O.T. saints looked for the *heavenly* Jerusalem! The "general assembly" in the O.T. was called "the assembly of the saints" (Ps. 89:7) or the "assembly of the upright." (111:1) In the N.T. it is seen to be the entire Election of Grace, as is evident from the added, "which are written in heaven." (cp. Isa. 4:3; Dn. 12:1) But whether Zion, the city of

the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, the general assembly or the church of the firstborn, it is all one and the same body seen from different viewpoints.

A text sometimes appealed to as teaching that the church had its beginning at Pentecost is I Cor. 1:13, "For by one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles..." But this does not mean that we were all so baptized *at the same time*, as no corporate action is in view, for on that day *Gentiles* were not baptized by the Spirit. Paul means by "all... in one body" the *members* of the *body* of Christ, the same body and members from Adam and Abel onward, whom we saw mentioned in Ps. 35:10; 40:5; 69:5; 81:5; 84:8, 9; 139:15, 16 and many other passages. By "baptized" (by the Spirit) Paul refers plainly to nothing other than to being "regenerated." It is regeneration which makes a man a member of the body of Christ.

It has been argued by dispensationalists that Eph. 1:19-23 proves there was no church before Pentecost. God gave Christ to be the "Head over all things to the church which is His body" *after* the ascension, it is pointed out. This is no reasoning. One may as well argue that no sins were remitted until *after* Christ made atonement on the cross. Or that none were regenerated until after Christ was made a "life-giving Spirit" at His resurrection. It would be just as valid argument to say that Christ could not make intercession for His people until after He sat down at God's right hand. But this is refuted by Zech. 1:12, 13 (3:1, 2)! Christ was Mediator "set up (anointed) from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." (Prov. 8:23) We must be able to see Christ as the pre-incarnate Head of His people from the beginning, because "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," as well as Christ the incarnate Head in history after His birth, death, resurrection and ascension. Otherwise we cannot "rightly divide the Word of truth," much less "cut a straight line through the truth."

In the Book of Daniel it is revealed that "the saints of the Most High shall *take* the kingdom and *possess* the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever." (7:18) This kingdom is none other than the "everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (II Pet. 1:11) In the 1909 edition of the Scofield Reference Bible the editor inserted the marginal note, "That these are church saints seems clear from Acts 16:17; Rom. 8:17; II Tim. 2:10-12; I Pet. 2:9; Rev. 1:6, etc." But in the 1917 edition this note was changed to read, "That church-saints will also *share* in the rule seems clear from Acts 16:17, etc." (ital. added) The note as it now stands means that through eternity the church will have a place subservient to Israel! But the meaning is, if anything, that the *church* will not merely share in the kingdom, but *take* it and *possess* it for ever! It is also of interest that the phrase, "the saints of the most High" may also be translated "the saints of the highest places," which parallels Eph. 1:3; 2:6. That Daniel wrote of *New Testament* saints is plain from a comparison of 7:27 with Luke 12:32. *Paul* referred to what could only be *Old Testament* saints when he wrote of Gentiles being "fellow-citizens *with* the *saints*."

These saints included the "prophets" of the O.T. and the "apostles" of the N.T. (Eph. 2:19-22). They being "fitly framed *together*" and "builded *together*" refers to the saints of all ages as members of the same body, the same household. That household is "the household of faith." (Gal. 6:10) The O.T. saints were members of that household according to Hebrews 11, verse 39. But the would-be "right-dividers" have wrongly divided the household of God, have not maintained "the unity of the Spirit," and in effect have made God the author of confusion. For the inseparable unity of O. and N.T. saints is seen in the New Jerusalem which bears not only the names of the twelve apostles on its foundations, but also the names of the twelve tribes of Israel on its gates! (Rev. 21:12)

The writer in his dispensationalist days moved in circles where it was loudly insisted that "Jew" meant "Jew" and not Christian, and that "Israel" meant "Israel" and not Church. It was commonly held that Israel was an earthly people. It never occurred to the writer then that such a statement ought to be adjudged inane! Granted they were an earthly people, — what else could they be? certainly not a lunar people, dwelling on earth's satellite, nor a marine people, inhabiting Atlantis or Aquatania. The Canaanites and the Edomites were also an earthly people. Christians here below are an earthly people, for in body and soul they are still this side of heaven. If the dispensationalists explain that what is intended by this language is that Israel's was an *earthly inheritance*, we must ask, Did the patriarchs have an earthly inheritance? It ought to be plainly evident by now in this series that Hebrews 11 proves otherwise. (14-16) Why contend that Moses had an earthly inheritance in the face of Heb. 11:26? Do not assign such an inheritance to David, for he claimed to be "a *stranger* in the earth."

(Ps. 39:12; 119:19) Scripture distinguishes between one who is a Jew outwardly and the Jew inwardly, between a carnal Israel and the spiritual Israel. There is an Israel within Israel, the Israel of God. According to Romans 2:28, 29, all God's regenerated people are true Jews.

Keeping this distinction in mind, attend to the words of Asaph. "Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart." (Ps. 73:1) What is the meaning of "Israel" in this place? Certainly not the nation of Israel nor the natural Jews living at that time, for it could not be said that *they*, as such, had "clean hearts." "O Lord, be Thou my Helper true, for just and godly men are few; the faithful who can find?" (Ps. 12:1) A "clean heart" is not found in the natural man, Jew or Gentile, for all the descendants of Adam are born with a heart consummately deceitful and desperately wicked. A clean heart is the product of regeneration through the sprinkling of (baptism of) the blood of Jesus Christ (Heb. 10:22), a purifying act of God through faith (Acts 15:9). Thus the Israel mentioned in the text is the regenerated, the *spiritual* Israel. The text obviously excludes carnal Israel.

Jesus so distinguished. "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" (Jn. 1:47) By "Israelite" He meant more than a mere natural descendant of Jacob. He meant a *true* Israelite. When He said, "If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples *indeed*," (8:31) He meant disciples in fact, not in name only. Jesus was saying that Nathanael was a regenerated person, "in whom is no guile," which added the confirmation that Nathanael was a saved and spiritual man, like the man described in Ps. 32:2, "Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit is no guile."

FROM HOLY WRIT—

The Book of Hebrews

by Rev. G. Lubbers

THE "ALL THINGS" OF PSALM 8 AS INTERPRETED IN HEBREWS 2:8, 9 (Continued)

The world to come is indeed subjected to Jesus, and, in Him, to man. That is the objective status as spoken of in Psalm 8; and thus it is also taught us in Hebrews 2:5, where we have the fact tense "has subjected"! However, we do not yet now see that the all things ("*ta panta*") are in a permanent and abiding

state subjected to men. ("*upotetagmena*") We do not yet see the new heavens and the new earth of which Psalm 8 speaks, and which will be the realization of the glory of Christ over all things. (Ephesians 1:9, 10; Colossians 1:16-18) We do not yet *see* this new order of things as a permanent and continual possession. That we will experience by sight when all of creation shall share in the glory of the sons of God. Then we shall see God face to face; we shall then see Him as

He is. The term to see here is "*horoomen*", that is, the continuous exercise of sight. (Compare Hebrews 11:27; I John 3:2) Now we are saved in hope and await the final manifestation of man, the sons of glory with patience. This is a point which the readers, the Hebrew Christians, do well to remember. We live by faith now, and not by sight.

Nevertheless, the glorification of Christ as set over all things is for us a reality of experience in faith and hope. In faith and hope we see Jesus crowned with glory and honor. The term "crowned" in the Greek refers to a victory crown. The verb form in the Greek is the perfect passive participle: "*estefanoomenon*". It refers to a crowning which is completed up to the present moment, and which Christ underwent from the Father as the fruit of His labors. The man Jesus did not crown Himself, but He was given the victory crown, to wit, a name and position above every name. Even though our present eyes do not yet experience all things subjected to Him, we know that one day this shall be fully realized by the exalted Jesus!

FOR THE SUFFERING OF DEATH CROWNED WITH GLORY AND HONOR - Hebrews 2:9

Jesus was not crowned with glory and honor because He was made a little lower than the angels; on the contrary, He was crowned with glory and honor because of, on the basis of His suffering of death. Here we touch upon the very crux of the question of man's exaltation as he is remembered by God and visited in love. Only thus will Psalm 8 have any meaning. The Psalm is, indeed, very Christological. Only when we see the Cross of Christ in that Psalm will we see that the glory of God is set above the heavens in the exaltation of man!

The term "death" in the Greek is "*thanatos*". It is the key-word here throughout. Through one man sin entered into the world, and through that sin and transgression death entered. It is well to notice that in this section of Hebrews 2, which we are considering, the term *death* occurs five times. In verse 9 twice we read the term death, and twice in verse 14 and once in verse 15. And in each case the term does not simply refer to physical death, but refers to death as the wages of sin which came into the world through the transgression of one man. (Romans 5:12, 14; 6:23) Death refers to the death penalty which God announced to Adam in paradise as the verdict of God upon his eating of the forbidden tree. It refers to temporal death, spiritual death, and to eternal death; to death in all its compass as the consequence of sin in the righteous judgment of God. It is not the death which the righteous die in the Lord and by which they pass into the portals of glory, but it is raw death, the death which is the bearing of the eternal wrath of God against sin, the curse of the sinner, and eternal banishment from God's sight!

This death the Christ must suffer. He must suffer the wrath of God against sin. He must suffer death, taste death, and conquer death, swallow up death unto victory. He must fulfill all righteousness of the law until He has fully finished it. That Christ has accomplished on the Cross of Calvary.

We see Jesus crowned with glory and honor. He is in a permanent state of victory over death; He is the last Adam, the one man through whom is the resurrection and the victory. And we can see, in His glorious exaltation, the proof and evidence that His was a victory over death. And thus the glory of God's grace in Him is set far above all the heavens. The "glory" with which He is crowned is the actual high estate above the angels at God's own right hand. It is the glory of God in the Son, in which the Father is glorified in the Son. (John 13:31, 32; 14:13; 17:1, 4, 5, 10) The ascription of "honor" to the crowned man, Christ, refers to the recognition of His glory by all creatures in heaven and on earth. (John 5:23, 8:49; 12:26) Man has no honor or glory apart from this exaltation of Christ because of His suffering of death.

No, we do not now yet see all things subjected to Christ. It seems that all things are rather subjected to sin, death, vanity. But in faith and hope we see this Jesus when we give earnest heed to the word which was spoken to us by the Lord himself, and confirmed by the apostles and accompanied by the signs and wonders of God's Spirit as He wills to administer His grace of life.

A LITTLE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS - Hebrews 2:9

In the interpretation of this verse here in Hebrews 2:9 we encounter a difficulty concerning the meaning of the phrase "Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels". This part of the text here is a quotation from Psalm 8:6 "*wathechassreehu meath meelohim*", that is, "made a little less than God". Our text in Hebrews 2:9 quotes from the Septuagint translation which translates "elomim" not "God" but "angels". This translation is followed by the KJV, the Holland translation, and the German as well. The difficulty is in part one of translation, and in part one of exegesis and conception.

At the outset we may observe that the term "elohim", that is "gods" is allowed by Christ himself in John 10:34 in quoting from Psalm 82:6 "I said ye are gods, and all of you sons of the most high." Here "gods" refers to the great men in Israel who are in authority, and clothed with the divine dignity of office, they are those who are to judge the poor and fatherless and to do justice to the afflicted and destitute. Such are called "gods", clothed with divine dignity. We have the same conception in Psalm 138:1b, "Before the *gods* will I sing praises unto thee." The reason for this is evidently that God is greater than the great of the earth, and the Psalmist is not afraid to acknowledge the Great before the great.

It is evidently along this line that the translators in the Septuagint thought of the angels about the throne of God. These angels are high in royal dignity; they are such as always before the face of the Father, singing the *trisagion* before God. Being clothed with such dignity they are called "gods" in the Hebrew in Psalm 8:6.

The term a "little" in the Hebrew is made to refer not to time, a little while, but is made to refer to *degree* of dignity. Thus it is in Psalm 8. However,

interpreters, Calvin included, would make it refer in Hebrews 2:9 to the short while of Christ's state of humiliation. Christ was then for a little while lower than the angels in the state of humiliation, but because of the suffering of death is exalted above the angels. It was not because of the fact that Christ suffered that he became of lower dignity in relationship to God's throne than the angels, but because He was man, real man assuming the flesh and blood of the children. And this interpretation apparently squares pretty well with the general teaching of Scripture as well as that of the teaching here in Hebrews 2.

The first man was indeed made a king. However, he fell and lost his dignity and honor. Now the Psalmist sees man exalted as in the counsel and purpose of God, in Messianic prophecy. He sees man exalted a little lower than God, that is, with divine dignity. He is well-nigh made God. He is a little lower. This intended dignity of him, who was seen as a little lower than God in the prophetic perspective, is realized in Jesus as He is crowned with glory and honor, and that, too, because of the suffering of death. He to whom God said in the decree: thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee, is here presented as having come to this position of glory because of the suffering of death. Seeing this Jesus glorified we see man exalted a little lower than God, yet above the angels. The glorification of man according to Psalm 8 is not in the first Adam, taken from the earth and created in God's image, but rather in the last Adam, the Lord from heaven. He that is seen in the Psalm as a little lower than God, is realized in Christ's death and resurrection to such royal dignity above the angels. And truly all things are subjected to this Christ, and nothing is omitted in heaven or on earth.

THE ONLY WAY TO GLORY:

THE SUFFERING OF DEATH - Hebrews 2:9, 10

The divine motive and purpose for exalting the Son, and in Him exalting man, is that God would show forth His grace. God would manifest the glory of His grace in Jesus Christ. Writes the Hebrews epistle

here: "in order that by the grace of God he might taste death in behalf of all." It is quite evident that this grace here is God's grace to those for whom Christ must taste death. This is God's saving grace whereby the sinner is brought all the way from death to life, and from sin and guilt to righteousness and glory. The question is: who are the "all" here in the text? Does this teach general atonement? It ought to be clear to the believing students of the Bible that "all" is ever limited by the context and its teaching. And, then, when we read verse 11, we notice that the "all" are "all" who are sanctified in Christ. Besides, we read in verse 10 of the "many sons" which are to be brought to glory. These are the many sons of Abraham, which are as the sand upon the seashore and as the stars in the heavens in multitude. These are all the children of God, the sons according to election, whom Jesus calls brethren unashamedly. For all of these sons of God, these brethren, Christ must taste death on the Cross. And thus the grace of God is for us; thus too the manhood in Christ is truly made a little lower than God, well-nigh divine, partakers of the divine nature. It is the motif of grace which makes the Cross necessary!

However, there is still another reason why the suffering of death is necessary, why man is raised through glory through the sufferings and death of Christ. This is the deep and profound theological reason. It befitted God thus to do so! It was and is in keeping with God's greatness and His relationship to all things. All things are for Him and all things are by Him. In all of the inhabitable world there is nothing that is a reality apart from God. All is caused by Him and all has God as its end and goal. Now it befits God in bringing many sons to glory, and in giving them a place in "all things" to do so in the way of Christ's suffering. That is the theological ground and reason for the Cross of Christ.

Besides, there is also a divinely appointed legal and juridical necessity for the Cross. The just demand of God must be satisfied. And this demands the death of the Son of God. This implies that since we are saved from God's wrath through Christ's death, we shall be much more saved through his life to glory.

LADIES' LEAGUE MEETING

The Eastern Ladies' League will hold its Spring meeting, Thursday evening, April 27, at Hudsonville Protestant Reformed Church at 8 o'clock. Rev. Herman Veldman will speak on "The New Morality". Ladies, you are invited to meet with us for an evening of Christian fellowship.

E. Kuiper, Asst. Secretary

ATTENTION: YOUNG PEOPLE

Reminder: the scholarship application forms for the '67 - '68 term must be submitted by May 1, 1967. Complete details and application forms may be obtained from your society secretary.

Wilma Haveman, Secretary

IN HIS FEAR—

Virgins For Christ's Sake

(Continued)

by Rev. J. A. Heys

There is in the world a continuous development of sin.

The force of that statement is felt when we consider the fact that all the sin in the world today grew out of just one sin in paradise.

From an external point of view that sin does not even appear to be so bad. It was nothing more than eating a piece of forbidden fruit. It injured no one. It did no social injustice. It shed no blood and robbed no one of his possessions. But if we see it in its true nature, if we see it as God sees it, we will understand that it was nothing less than rebellion against God! Nothing more than eating a piece of fruit, and yet nothing less than defying the living God! Let those who busy themselves on their pulpits with a "social gospel" take heed to the root of all the evils in this world and of all the violations of the second table of the law! It is so easy to strain at a gnat and swallow a camel today. And you are not going to kill a poison sumac tree by plucking a few leaves off now and then. You better get at the root of the tree. And until the love of God is once again in man's heart, he can only hate his brother and commit what are called social injustices and crime.

From that one sin of Adam came all the sins of today. From a rebellious and God-defying position man went ahead to all the violence, cruelty and filth of today as well as to all the idolatry, image worship, blasphemy and Sabbath desecration. That one sin led to many forms of rebellion, in fact to rebellion in every sphere of man's life. And not only has that one sin developed into all the evils condemned literally in the ten commandments, but there has been a steady and continuous development of each and every one of these sins. And, since we are now dealing with the seventh commandment and the immorality and filth that is in the world today, we intend to speak about those sins that go beyond the literal adultery of the seventh commandment and about those evils unto which that sin has developed.

After all is said, Adam could not even have committed the sin of the seventh commandment in the way it is committed today. All sin, of course, is spiritual adultery. It is this in that whenever we sin, we are adding the foreign element into our covenant relationship to God that we think and will and act after the

mind and will of Satan. Sin is always spiritual intercourse with the devil and, as we already stated, rebellion against the living God. Sin is taking to our bosoms and embracing in love the corrupt thoughts and desires of The Wicked One and rejecting and fleeing from the Holy God Who made us and Whose we are. Whenever we sin, we are spiritual harlots and no longer virgins for Christ's sake. And a very close connection between this spiritual adultery and actual physical adultery is evident in that as soon as they had played the harlot with Satan, Adam and Eve knew that they were naked. Their pure minds and dedicated wills were not shocked or disturbed by such a fact. But once having committed spiritual adultery, they saw the whole field of immorality before them and realized that something should be done. And in defence of our position above that not only has sin developed into all kinds of sins and that each sin develops with its increasingly devilish variations, let it be pointed out that the pendulum has swung so far today that the forces that would tear those fig leaves away and invite and encourage what was loathsome even to Adam and Eve are multiplying and gaining power. As one commentator said, "With the topless bathing suit the bottom fell out!" Indeed there is hardly a bottom any more, and surely there is no ceiling anymore either. With the introduction of The Pill, the sky is the limit. And let no one deceive you into thinking that The Pill was discovered because man was so concerned about the population explosion that he fears a shortage of food within a few generations. Let him then turn his "scientific" mind to ways and means of producing more food, and teach man how to avoid all the waste of food in the processing methods not only but also in the home. Let him spend his money on irrigation systems, and let him no longer continue in the folly that is so evident in this local area: tearing up rich farmland for housing projects.

But to return to Adam, divorce of Eve and the remarrying of another was quite impossible in the years shortly after the fall of man. And he could surely find no occasion to divorce Eve on the grounds of adultery. They undoubtedly soon saw this sin in their children, even as they saw murder in their family. And they surely understood that this was the fruit of their own sin. How they must have watched the conduct of

their children! At first they looked innocent enough, even as ours do. These little newborn babes do not look like rebels. But lest we fall into the folly of the worldly philosophy that they sin only by imitation, let it be borne in mind that Cain never had an example of murder to follow and imitate. The beasts of the field killed each other, and Adam killed a lamb for a sacrifice. But Cain in killing Abel was not imitating these acts, but developing in the rebellion of his father against God and His law. Was he also imitating the beasts when he buried his brother's body?

And so in process of time adultery did appear in the children of Adam and Eve. There was faithlessness between man and wife. There were those who eyed and captured the wives and husbands of others. And when the violator is unmarried, it is not adultery, but fornication. Paul says of fornication: "Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body." We do well to bear that in mind. He sinneth with his body, but also against it, because he has a calling to be a virgin for Christ's sake.

Fornication is losing one's virginity illegally. The married lose their virginity legally. For they are now before God one flesh. And therein God gives them the right and does not consider it fornication when they live together as man and wife. Here there is no adding of a foreign element as in adultery; and here is no rebellion against the living God and no defying of Him in His law. Fornication is a nasty thing! Marriage is a beautiful gift of the living God. Let it be remembered that God designed our bodies and fashioned us to be what we are. He made man and woman to be physical, spiritual, and psychical counterparts. And he gave them the right as well as the power to propagate the human race. No, let us go back to paradise: He gave Adam and Eve and in them the entire Church the right and power to bring forth the covenant seed. Man fell and now brings forth nothing but enemies of God. But the right and power to reproduce its kind in the cause of God's kingdom was there in Adam and Eve before they fell. After the fall God did not take this power and this right away, but sinful man corrupts it and commits spiritual adultery even when he lives one life with one life's companion. But fornication is the misuse by the unmarried of the faculties and powers which God has given them to employ to the glory of His name and for the cause of the bringing forth of the covenant seed. God made man and wife for the sake of His Church. In the angel world no such condition exists, and there is neither adultery nor fornication among them. They were able to rebel, and a host of them did rebel against God; but not in the way of adultery and fornication as it is practiced among men.

Fornication is a grievous sin!

In the Old Testament dispensation it called for stoning. Leviticus 20:10-21 contains a whole series of condemnations of violations of the seventh commandment together with the death penalty upon them. That the sin is agreeable and enjoyable to both parties does not change the fact that it is rebellion against God. That is the seriousness of the evil! It is but recently

that the unbeliever — be he a professor of Theology as far as his title is concerned — became bold enough to say that God is dead. But every act of sin on our part is a matter of living from the principle that He is dead. (And lest you feel constrained to rush back in protest that we may not call a member in the church here below and who teaches Theology an unbeliever, ask yourself the question, Does one believe in a dead God? If one does not believe that a certain person exists, is that faith in this Person? Is not a believer exactly one who believes in God?) There is so little of this *Coram Deo*, that is, living before the face of God and acting in the consciousness of His command. Of course, if our standard is only what will be approved of by men, then when the unmarried agree to defile themselves with the help of The Pill or its forerunners and cousins, no "harm" has been done. But that is not what Leviticus 20 teaches us, or for that matter any portion of the Word of God. The law in one word is love to God. And our covenant young women do well to remember that. Our covenant young men as well, of course. But the point we wish to make at the moment concerns the covenant young woman who is asked to prove her love. Worldly counsellors and newspaper column advisers in purely worldly wisdom suggest that the challenge be returned to the young man that he prove his love by refraining from his demands or pleas. The covenant young woman has a far more powerful weapon in the very Word of God: *Prove your love to God!* And the covenant young man or young woman (and for that matter also the older man and woman) who loves God will want to be a virgin for Christ's sake. He will be with all his life and with all his powers dedicated unto the living God and will pass his pilgrimage here below waiting for The Bridegroom to come. There is only one way to prove love to God, and that is to walk in the way of His commandments.

Unto our young people, therefore, we would give advice that they may live in His fear. First of all, do not put yourself in a position where you invite being unequally yoked with an unbeliever. And that means no dates of any kind at any time with one whom you know as an unbeliever or of whose faith you have no knowledge. If we do not frequent places where we will meet such, we do not tempt ourselves to be approached or to approach them. If we deliberately go looking for such, we are asking for trouble and have already inwardly failed to be virgins for Christ's sake. In our complex age it is so easy to meet them anyway at work or on the way to work. And therefore we must be on our guard that we are not controlled by the flesh. That it be established without a shadow of a doubt that the young man or young woman loves God before any social connections with him or her are established is the safest rule not only, but a solemn calling before God. Even as young people we are not here to have a good time but to serve a sovereign and holy God. Whatever good time we may have and may seek must be one that revolves around and centers in the service of God with all our heart and soul and mind and strength, with our bodies and all their faculties and powers. We have them for no other reason than for His service.

The unbeliever, the man or woman that does not love God cannot help us in our service and worship of God. To them you can never say, "Prove your love to God!" And rather than to be an help meet, that is, fit, suitable, to the covenant young man or young woman, the unbelieving husband or wife will be a detriment and will hamper the believer in his spiritual life and that of the children God may give them. Our young people as a rule do not look so far ahead, but let them remember that children of parents who are spiritually unequally yoked will be attracted to the spiritually weaker and not to the stronger of the parents.

Dating the unbeliever in the vain hope that he might become a believer in years to come is playing with fire. Going outside of the Church to find a friend means that you have to enjoy his friendship outside of the Church. It is not in His fear. It is not living as a virgin for Christ's sake. And it makes impossible one life that lives with an eye to the marriage feast of The Lamb. All too soon the flesh falls in love with flesh, and the spirit, though it is still willing, is unable to resist the cry of the flesh. Young people: Do not ask and seek for spiritual incompatibility!

ALL AROUND US—

The Federal Control of State Aid Ecumenical News Items

by Prof. H. Hanko

THE FEDERAL CONTROL OF STATE AID

A reproduction of an article appearing originally in *The Houston Post* of March 31, 1966 recently came to my desk. It is one of a series of articles discussing the question of federal aid and federal control. It vividly describes how federal and state aid to public schools has been followed by rigid controls from which there is no escape.

The article discusses what has happened in the Aldine school district, one of 22 school districts within a county. This particular school district has 15,500 students, is receiving \$3.4 million from the state while raising \$1.4 million in local taxes.

For this \$3.4 million what does the state control? Here is a partial list:

It tells Aldine how many college credit hours its teachers must have. It dictates the number of hours in the particular field a teacher instructs. It says how many and what kind of hours the librarian must have.

It tells the district how many students a teacher can teach....

An auditor can walk into the Aldine Administration Building any day and audit the record of any or all teachers.

It can do the same on students. Districts must keep accurate attendance records for one of three state sources of aid is based upon average daily attendance.

In the field of transportation the state does this:

It will not allow Aldine to buy its own buses. They have to be ordered through the State Board of Control. The district can specify the size of the bus, but not the manufacturer.

Then the state tells the district where it may pick up students — none within two miles of the school they are to attend if the district wants to get paid.

It says how many students can ride a bus.

It individually approves each and every bus route.

It can have an auditor walk in, demand the map of bus routes and go out and drive over them to see if district transportation reports are true.

The state says how many teachers of which it will pay the minimum state required salaries. It says how many principals a district may have, and how many assistant principals, counselors etc.

The state pays salaries for specific positions, and if a person is used for something else the salary can be eliminated.

The state, to a degree, picks the books Aldine can use.

Its textbook committee reviews texts from all over the country, decides on five and then submits these five to Aldine for its textbook committee to pick from. The district can pick one book in each subject, or a combination of one or more (as long as the number in combination equals what a single selection would have.)

The state grants or withholds accreditation from a district like Aldine. It can suspend this accreditation, or threaten to, if a serious effort is not made to meet standards it has set up.

The Texas Education Agency — the state's public school district regulatory and financial agent — sets up course requirements. It specifies just how many minutes a day or week a student must spend in such things as health, science, history and American government.

There is a minimum standard set up for buildings, libraries, teaching supplies and other things.

The superintendent of this district is quoted as saying:

School districts today are not the same as they were fifteen years ago and I suspect that they are not what they will be 10 years from now.

State control goes into every area of a school district. It includes the whole ball of wax.

The article goes on to say

(The school district superintendent) is not critical of the state controls although he says the massive volume of record keeping and red tape gets irritating at times.

The state's objective, however limiting it is towards local control, is to increase educational standards....

The state, in general, tries to help districts do things they would do for themselves if they had had the money.... Because of this, most school administrators take an understanding viewpoint of the situation.

Those who dream of state aid to christian schools without the clutching fingers of state control are engaging in wishful thinking. This article too clearly demonstrates what happens when money comes to a school from the state or federal government.

If it be objected that this article speaks of a public school system, then let it be remembered that even the public school districts were once independent organizations. Besides, many school districts long resisted the enticements of state aid, but have only recently succumbed to these allurements. What has happened in these public schools can and will happen to the Christian schools which are tempted to accept government largesse.

A note of warning is therefore in order. It may become increasingly difficult to support our own schools. It may be unjust to be forced to pay local taxes to support the public school systems as well as to support our own schools. But we shall have to do it or lose our schools.

ECUMENICAL NEWS ITEMS

Since ecumenism is so much in the headlines of the ecclesiastical press these days, a month's reading of various religious periodicals produces an abundance of notes on ecumenical progress. We offer the following as a sampling of what a single month has brought. It is illustrative of how rapidly the tides of ecumenism are moving and into what areas they are penetrating.

-Another denomination has joined the Consultation on Church Union (COCU) which already embraces nine denominations: The United Presbyterians, the Methodists, the Episcopalians, The Evangelical United Brethren Church, The Presbyterian Church U.S. (which is engaged in its own merger talks with the Reformed Church of America), the Disciples of Christ, and the United Church of Christ. This denomination is the 500,000-member Christian Methodist Episcopal Church.

-This denomination is itself holding merger talks with the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.

-The National Council of Churches reveals again that it has become an instrument for the distribution of government funds. In the recent reports of funds being channeled through various organizations by the Central Intelligence Agency (the CIA, the government's spying bureau) it is revealed that the National Council

of Churches also received funds from the CIA, although the amounts were small.

-While for many years the Masonic Lodge and the Knights of Columbus were the bitterest of enemies, leaders from both recently met and joined in a "co-operative pledge" in which they expressed agreement on basic beliefs in the brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of God; and in which they agreed to labor together for social and moral reform. The Knights of Columbus is a Roman Catholic Lodge and the extent of the bitterness between them is evident from the fact that membership in the Masonic Lodge by a Roman Catholic means excommunication from the church. But it is now hoped that Canon Law will be changed so that the two lodges will be able to work more closely together; and perhaps even merge.

-The National Council of Churches continues to meddle in political affairs; this time passing a resolution which urges the government to change its draft laws so that anyone conscientiously opposing a particular war for any reason be exempt from the draft. This is only one policy statement which the NCC has made advising the government of its opinion on the Viet Nam War.

-A professor of New Testament Exegetical theology at Concordia Lutheran Seminary, has accepted an appointment for one year to teach at the Jesuit-operated University of San Francisco. This exchange of professors in church-operated colleges, universities and seminaries is becoming increasingly common.

-In 1965 the Roman Catholic Church agreed to a proposal from the World Council of Churches to set up a "Joint Working Group" which would discuss the possibilities of dialogue and collaboration between the WCC and the Roman Catholic Church. The committee has issued its first report and listed the main areas of possible cooperation between these two organizations. It has also proposed a "Joint Theological Commission" to study various problems now dividing Protestants and Roman Catholics.

-Interreligious services are becoming increasingly popular. Rev. H. C. Hoeksema reported in the editorial column of our paper an interreligious service held in Grand Rapids at which Dr. John Kromminga of Calvin Seminary participated. These services are being held throughout the country and the world embracing every denomination.

-From the RES Newsletter we quote the following

Reformed and Presbyterian Churches are sitting at over 30 church union conference tables with more than 90 partners in the quest for unity. The figure includes only formal union negotiations between Churches; it omits discussions like those between Lutheran and Reformed theologians in North America and Europe.

The church union movement is most active in Africa, where Reformed and Presbyterian Churches are involved in nine separate sets of negotiations. Europe is second with eight, six of which are in the British Isles. On the continent, talks are going on only between Reformed and Lutheran Churches in France, and in the framework of the Netherlands Ecumenical Council. WARC member Churches are in five negotia-

tions in North America, four in Asia, three in Australasia, and one in Latin America.

Anglicans, Methodists, Congregationalists and other Reformed bodies appear most frequently as partners in union talks with Reformed Churches....

Four intra-Reformed unions are contemplated: Presbyterian Church U.S. and Reformed Church in America; Cumberland Presbyterian Church and Second Cumberland Presbyterian Church (USA); Presbyterian Church in West Cameroon, *Eglise evangelique du Cameroun* and *Eglise presbyterienne camerounaise*; Pres-

byterian Church in Southern Africa, Tsonga Presbyterian Church, and Bantu Presbyterian Church (South Africa). The three South African Churches are also in talks with Anglicans, however, and the Presbyterian Church U.S. this year joined the COCU talks....

And so it goes on. This is one month's news. You can readily imagine how rapidly the church world is moving towards union—towards the realization of its dream to place all denominations (and all religions) under one ecclesiastical roof.

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH—

The Providence of God

Miracles

by Rev. H. Veldman

Of the Wonder of the grace of God the center is Immanuel, God with us, in Jesus Christ, our Lord. And we concluded our preceding article by calling attention to the fact that He is Himself, centrally, this Wonder of Divine grace. We now conclude our articles on the miracles of Holy Writ.

This Immanuel is also centrally the Wonder of Divine grace in His death and resurrection. He descends into the depths of the curse of God for all His own. He suffers the agonies and torments of everlasting hell. He endures the unfathomable agony of being forsaken of God, the experiencing of the wrath of God, not as upon Himself, but upon all the sins of those whom the Father has given Him from before the foundation of the world. And He rises from the dead! He ascends into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father! He receives the Spirit beyond measure. The glory of God's everlasting kingdom and covenant is realized in Him! The breaking through of the grace of God, through sin and death and hell into heavenly glory and immortality, is realized in Him! He is, therefore, centrally the Wonder of the grace of God. He receives the Spirit and power to realize His glory in all His elect. He is the mighty Shiloh, Divinely equipped to call His own out of darkness into light, out of death into life; He has the power to give sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, speaking to the dumb, walking to the lame, to call us into God's everlasting covenant and kingdom.

Finally, of this wonder of the grace of God, operating in us of and through our Lord Jesus Christ, all miracles are signs and symbols. We are not surprised, of course, that the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ in our flesh and blood should be accompanied by a host of miracles. Neither does it surprise us that the prince of the powers of the air should congregate and assemble all his forces, apparently, in the land of Palestine

while Christ was among us in our flesh and blood. Indeed, what a multitude of sick people! Besides, we do well to take note of the character of these sick people! They are blind and deaf and dumb and lame and leprous and devil-possessed. To be blind means that we cannot see, to be deaf that we cannot hear, to be lame that we cannot walk, to be dumb that we cannot speak. All these sicknesses, we understand, are symbols of the power of sin. The power of sin is so absolute! We are blind and cannot see, deaf and cannot hear, lame and cannot walk, dumb and cannot speak. We are spiritually dead and there is no life in us. Indeed, the power of sin is so absolute! Whenever we see a miracle we see a symbol of the power of the grace of God. In every miracle we see the power of God's grace breaking through our night of sin and death. When Christ causes the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak and the lame to walk, we see a picture of what the grace of God accomplishes in the dead sinner. This is the essence of the miracle: it is a symbol of the power of God's grace. The world may deny these miracles, do all within their power to remove their effect. But the child of God believes in them, has no difficulty accepting them, because he himself has experienced within himself the wonderful power of the grace of God.

THE DOCTRINE OF SIN

The Lord willing, we will not call attention to the history of the doctrine of sin as developed in the church of God throughout the ages of the New Dispensation. The subject of sin is a very wide field and of the greatest significance. It affects, very vitally, the reality and the possibility of our salvation. But it is also directly related to the glory of the living God. The reality of sin, that we are conceived and born dead in sins and in trespasses, helplessly and hopelessly lost in our

iniquity, incapable of doing any good and inclined to all evil, lives so really and vividly in the soul and consciousness of the redeemed and saved child and church of God! How is it possible for a church to confess anything less than this; in fact, how is it possible for a church to deny the truth of man's utter depravity, as did the Christian Reformed Church in 1924, when they formulated their Three Points which include the heresy that the natural man, without the regeneration of the heart, is able to do that, in things civil, which is good in the sight of the Lord. Besides, how necessary is this Scriptural doctrine of sin as far as our consciousness of the need of the Redeemer is concerned! Parts I and II of our Heidelberg Catechism are so inseparably connected. People that are whole need not a physician. Only they that are sick contact the doctor. Our consciousness of the need of the Christ is inseparably connected with our consciousness of sin and guilt. Finally, this doctrine of sin is also a doctrine that concerns the glory of God. A true conception of God's holiness and righteousness, that He is God and He alone, can never lead a sinner to any other conclusion than that he is so hopelessly corrupt that he is incapable of any good and inclined to all evil. Then he must confess that he is evil, born in sin, enmity against God and the neighbor, never subject to the law of God and never able to be subject to it.

The doctrine of sin is also a very wide field. Historically, it also embraces the pelagian and arminian controversies. Treating this subject, we will discuss the history of this doctrine, the Lord willing, as it was developed in successive periods throughout the New Dispensation. We will begin, therefore, with the period 80 - 250 A.D. That this period begins at approximately 80 A.D. is because this period begins at the conclusion of the apostolic era. We realize, of course, that heretical conceptions and tendencies were already in existence during the time of the apostles. The apostles, however, being Divinely inspired, were, of course, the last and final word. They, too, we understand, opposed heresy. This is evident from their epistles. Nevertheless, heretical departures from the truth remained more or less subdued while the apostles lived. This explains why the first era to which we call attention begins at approximately 80 A.D. This period, 80 - 250, is also known as the Age of Apologetics. It was the era of fierce persecution, although this trying time for the church of Christ did extend beyond 250 A.D., coming to a close with the rise of Constantine the Great, under whose power and influence the church was granted external rest and became honored instead of being an object of reproach. It was through him that the church of Christ received equal status before the law with all the other religions in the midst of the world.

THE FIRST PERIOD, 80 - 250 A.D.

Concerning this period, Hagenbach writes as follows:

However much the primitive church was inclined, as we have already seen, to look with a free and clear vision at the bright side of man (his ideal nature), yet it did not endeavor to conceal the dark side by a false idealism. Though it can not be said that the conscious-

ness of human depravity was the exclusive and fundamental principle upon which the entire theology of that time was founded, yet every Christian conscience was convinced of the opposition between the ideal and the real, and the effects of sin in destroying the harmony of life; and this, too, in proportion to the strictness of claims set up for human freedom.

Our Reformed Confessions do not give us a concise definition of sin. However, this does not mean that they do not have anything to say on this subject. The Heidelberg Catechism calls attention to the subject of sin in Part I which deals with man's misery. In Question 9 of Lord's Day IV the question is asked: "Doth not God then do injustice to man, by requiring from him in His law, that which he cannot perform?" And the answer follows: "Not at all; for God made man capable of performing it; but man, by the instigation of the devil, and his own wilful disobedience, deprived himself and all his posterity of those divine gifts." God, therefore, demands of the sinner the impossible. What the Lord demands of the sinner in His law is clearly set forth in Lord's Day II, where we read that the law of God demands that we love the Lord our God with all our heart and soul and mind and strength, and our neighbors as ourselves. This law of God we cannot perform. We are incapable of any good and inclined to all evil. This means that we do not love God and the neighbor, but, on the contrary, we hate Him and the neighbor. And in Question and Answer V we are told that we are prone by nature to hate God and our neighbor. This implies that sin, according to the Heidelberg Catechism, is not merely a matter of the deed, of what we do, but that it is a matter of our nature, of what we are. We are not corrupt as we will to be corrupt (pelagianism), but we walk in ways of corruption because we are corrupt.

In our Confession of Faith, the Belgic Confession, we read in Art. XIV the following:

We believe that God created man out of the dust of the earth, and made and formed him after His own image and likeness, good, righteous, and holy, capable in all things to will, agreeably to the will of God. But being in honor, he understood it not, neither knew his excellency, but wilfully subjected himself to sin, and consequently to death, and the curse, giving ear to the words of the devil. For the commandment of life, which he had received, he transgressed; and by sin separated himself from God, who was his true life, having corrupted his whole nature; whereby he made himself liable to corporal and spiritual death. And being thus become wicked, perverse, and corrupt in all his ways, he hath lost all his excellent gifts, which he had received from God, and only retained a few remains (tracks, traces, — H.V.) thereof, which, however, are sufficient to leave man without excuse; for all the light which is in us is changed into darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not: where St. John calleth men darkness. Therefore we reject all that is taught repugnant to this, concerning the free will of man, since man is but a slave of sin; and has nothing of himself, unless it is given him from heaven.

And in Art. XV of the same Confession we read the following:

We believe that, through the disobedience of Adam, original sin is extended to all mankind; which is a

corruption of the whole nature, and an hereditary disease, wherewith infants themselves are infected even in their mother's womb, and which produceth in man all sorts of sin, being in him as a root thereof; and therefore is so vile and abominable in the sight of God, that it is sufficient to condemn all mankind. Nor is it by any means abolished or done away by baptism; since sin always issues forth from this woeful source, as water from a fountain; notwithstanding it is not imputed to the children of God unto condemnation, but by His grace and mercy is forgiven them.

In these articles of our Belgic Confession, XIV and XV, the same truth is held before us as in our Heidel-

berg Catechism. Sin is a matter of our nature. Man has become wholly corrupt and he has lost all his excellent gifts, retaining only traces of them. This does not mean that he retained remnants of these original gifts of holiness and righteousness, but only traces of them which means that he once possessed them but no longer possesses them. Sin, therefore, is not merely ignorance; the evil is not merely lack of that which is good; it is a corruption of the entire nature of man, a wilful refusal to walk in the commandments of the Lord. And the same language characterizes also the Canons of Dordt.

CONTRIBUTION

by Prof. H. C. Hoeksema

Prof. H. C. Hoeksema
Grand Rapids, Michigan

Dear Brother in Christ:

I call your attention to the statement you made in your reply to my article in the Standard Bearer, February 15, 1967: "For my part this recommendation will stand." The fact is that it is being ignored. The Edgerton school board took a contrary stand in 1953 when the De Wolf element tried to introduce hymns into our school. Do you see how you cause confusion and discord with your recommendation?(1)

We cannot show all diligence in observing our Church Order, Article 86 and at the same time recommend hymns in our schools. It is good reasoning to sing the same songs in our schools as we sing in our churches. (2)

Our Psalter is the best song book there is and we must only recommend the best. The hymns need not be recommended. They are very common — you can listen to them around the clock if you desire. Psalter numbers are rarely heard. (3)

The Psalms are the best remedy for a sin sick soul. They give peace and comfort to the sick and dying. What a privilege for God's elect church to sing these Psalms through the use of our precious Psalter. (4)

History teaches us that singing hymns and departure from the truth go hand in hand. Churches that introduced hymns soon forsook the Psalter. These churches now sing the same songs as the churches who are busy with mer-

gers. Their goal is one big church all singing the same songs — but not those songs given to the church by God. (5)

It frightens me and makes me very sad that one of our professors, who says he has great love for our Psalter at the same time recommends hymns in our schools. (6)

In closing I quote Rev. H. Hoeksema from the Standard Bearer, Vol. 4, pp. 317-319, also found in Acts of Synod, 1960, pp. 115: "There is no need for hymns next to the Psalms of David, which are presented to us in Holy Scripture. There is in the Psalms a spiritual wealth wherein also the heart of the New Testament church is able to express itself perfectly, provided one learns to understand those Psalms well." (7)

Fraternally yours,
Henry Huiskens
Edgerton, Minnesota

REPLY

My reply, — and this will be the last word on the specific matter of my qualified recommendation of a specific song-book, unless something *new* is presented, — follows the order of the reference numbers which I have inserted in brother Huiskens's letter:

1) It is in the nature of a recommendation that anyone has the right either to follow it or ignore it. Edgerton's school board could, however, hardly take a contrary stand in 1953 to a recommendation which was not made until 1966. Nor do I see how I cause confusion and discord with my

recommendation; at least, I certainly know of none that I have caused.

2) Diligence in observing Article 69 of our Church Order has nothing to do with our schools. If, however, brother Huiskens thinks I am in violation of Article 86 of the Church Order, he is welcome to prove this before the proper ecclesiastical instances. I agree that it is good reasoning to sing the same songs in our schools as we sing in our churches, but *not exclusively*. I prefer to state it this way: It is good to sing "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" in our schools, "singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."

3) Brother Huiskens seems to forget that I did not recommend hymns in general, nor all hymns, but that I made a qualified recommendation of a specific song-book, — a book, by the way, in which there are also several excellent psalm-versifications from the Genevan Psalter. I wish the brother would take the trouble to study the book recommended.

4) Fully agreed.

5) This is an unproved generalization. Besides: a) I believe it is more accurate to say that singing of shallow and corrupt hymns and departure from the truth go hand in hand. b) You are now writing about churches that introduce hymns; I have not pleaded for the introduction of hymns in our churches. c) I am afraid that lurking in this paragraph is the underlying idea that all hymns and hymn-singing are principally wrong.

6) Your fears are ungrounded, and

your sadness is unwarranted. For: a) Love for the Psalter and love of some hymns are not mutually exclusive. b) I did not in general recommend hymns, but I made a limited recommendation of a specific book, and not for use in the churches.

7) You must not try to use the late Rev. H. Hoeksema in support of your position. For: a) Your quotation is taken entirely out of context: read the whole article, which, by the way, was originally written in Dutch. It will appear that Rev. Hoeksema had no objection to hymns as such, to say the least; and it will also appear that he was dealing with a specific proposal in the Christian Reformed Church at that time. b) It is well known that only a few years ago the Rev. Hoeksema was in favor of a change in Article 69 of the Church Order. c) It is well known that Rev. Hoeksema even composed some suggested hymns. d) It is well known that Rev. Hoeksema had some favorite hymns which he loved to sing and also to quote in sermons. One was Isaac Watts' "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross."

Again, for my part, the recommendation will stand. And, anyone is free to regard or disregard it. I merely gave my opinion and advice about a book sent me for review.

H.C.H.

Professor H. C. Hoeksema
Editor, The Standard Bearer

Dear Brother in Christ:

As a new subscriber to your excellent magazine, I find it not only interesting but most informative. Am particularly pleased with the way you uphold the standards of our Reformed faith, pointing out the dangerous defections which are manifesting themselves among erstwhile conservative churches ostensibly committed to our Calvinistic creeds. May the Lord bless you in your valiant fight for truth!

On page 223 of your February 15 issue under Question Box, attention is called to a quotation from Dr. Thomas Smyth to the effect that immersion is not a Scriptural mode for the administration of baptism. I am disappointed that this truth was not high lighted more effectively. It has long been a matter of deep concern to me that for the sake of placating certain baptist oriented individuals the

words "the dipping in" were ever inserted in the "Form for the Administration of Baptism". This type of concession tends to cut away the ground for infant baptism inasmuch as immersion is obviously not suitable for application to infants. This in turn undercuts the doctrine of the covenant and paves the way for the entire false philosophy of baptist theology.

How much better to agree with Dr. Smyth that Scripture is and must be the sole basis for the doctrine and theology of baptism! Here the facts are clear and unmistakable. From Genesis to Revelation there is no immersion in the Bible and not one single Scripture text can be adduced to prove it. The score is 41 to 0 in favor of sprinkling and pouring! This is because immersion runs counter to the symbolism of Scripture. All through the Bible the elements of water, oil, blood and Spirit are always applied to the person, never the person to the element! God applies His blessings to us. As helpless sinners we cannot apply these supreme blessings to ourselves. To deem otherwise is to cut out the heart of Calvinism. It is precisely the false doctrine of man contributing to his own salvation which must be guarded against, even symbolically in the sacraments. In essentials like these we must above all maintain Scriptural consistency. To me baptism signifies not only the washing away of sin, our induction into the body of Christ, the sign and seal of the blessings of the everlasting covenant but also the holy anointing of the Holy Spirit whereby we are made prophets, priests and kings in Christ's kingdom. How else can we be Christians, which means "anointed ones", if we are not anointed? Only thus can we be like Christ and fulfil all righteousness by His almighty power and grace.

Sincerely in our Saviour's Name,
William A. De Jonge
Montclair, New Jersey

*As a member of the Orthodox Presbyterian church am happy to report that "dipping" is not mentioned in our baptismal formulae.

REPLY

First of all, a word of welcome to you as a new subscriber to our magazine, and also a word of thanks for your expression of esteem and encouragement.

Secondly, a word of explanation. I

eliminated the quotation from Dr. Smyth partly to abbreviate, but mostly because my questioner was inquiring as to the official stand of our Protestant Reformed Churches on immersion. This I answered by informing him that immersion is an allowable form of baptism according to our liturgical Form.

Thirdly, the following by way of a brief reply to your suggestions: 1) Much as I appreciate the desire to maintain infant baptism, I do not believe that allowing immersion undercuts the doctrine of the covenant. Nor do I believe that it is historically correct that immersion is a concession to baptist theology; or that the words "the dipping in" were inserted in our Form for the purpose of placating baptist oriented individuals.

2) I hesitate to criticize Dr. Smyth's argumentation because I have only one page of his writings on the subject. However, I would hold to the allowability of immersion (not the necessity of it, as baptists do): a) on linguistic grounds; b) in view of the two great types of baptism, which certainly were no sprinklings; c) in view of the meaning of baptism itself (not the sacrament, but the spiritual reality for which it stands), namely, being buried with Christ and arising in newness of life. d) in view of the fact that Scripture, both in the Old and in the New Testament, speaks of washings as well as of sprinklings. e) because it cannot be proved that New Testament baptisms were in every case by sprinkling, no more than it can be proved that they were by immersion.

3) I do not know of any Scriptural ground for the idea that our baptism constitutes an anointing in the literal and physical sense of the word, even though I fully agree that "when we are baptized in the name of the Holy Ghost, the Holy Ghost assures us, by this holy sacrament, that he will dwell in us and sanctify us to be members of Christ," etc.

4) Of course, I emphatically agree with your thought that "As helpless sinners we cannot apply these supreme blessings to ourselves. To deem otherwise is to cut out the heart of Calvinism." However, I do not see that the symbolism of immersion as such is a denial of this truth.

Once again, thanks for your interest. Any more detailed treatment of the immersion question will have to wait until I have more time and space. Besides, I would like to study Dr. Smyth's position in detail.

H.C.H.

QUESTION BOX—

Again - Hating God's Enemies?

From brother N.D., of Byron Center, Michigan a further question has come in, as follows:

Dear Rev. Hoeksema:

I thank you for answering my question in the Feb. 15 issue. I still have a little difficulty with hating God's enemies. As far as yours and Rev. Hey's writing is concerned, that we should not seek their company nor cooperate with them in their evil doing, that was not my problem. My trouble is: how far must I carry this hate? Suppose I am driving on a lonely road at about sixty miles per hour. About a half mile ahead of me is another car going about the same speed. All of a sudden one of the front tires of the car ahead of me blows out, and the car rolls in the ditch. Of course, I stop, and find the driver badly hurt, but also swearing and cursing. I tell him to stop his blasphemy and to thank God that he is not killed. Nevertheless, he keeps on taking God's name in vain. Now my question is: must I leave him there or help him while he proves himself to be God's enemy whom I must hate with a perfect hate, which means that I desire his destruction, while Paul writes in Romans 9 the opposite? Yours truly, —N.D.

REPLY

In the first place, brother N.D.'s question presents a strictly hypothetical case. Since it is hypothetical, I may also conceive of a hypothetically different turn of events, namely, that brother N.D. tells this hypothetical blasphemer that he will help him, but that he must stop his cursing; since the severely injured man is interested in being helped, he will probably also stop his cursing, — not for God's sake, but for the sake of his own skin.

In the second place, brother N.D. is obligated under the law of the state to stop and render assistance in case of a personal injury accident. And violation of the law of the land would be contrary to Scripture's injunction to be in subjection to the higher powers. Rom. 13.

In the third place, I think brother N.D. realizes that to pass by or to leave this hypothetically severely injured man would be tantamount to hypothetical murder. Not to help such a man when I am in a position to do so, — especially when on this lonely road I am the only one in a position to help him, — would be as bad as shooting him.

In the fourth place, it is certainly the Christian's calling to reveal himself by his testimony as standing over against any enemy of God in his sin. It is not the Christian's calling to take vengeance upon such a man. God will avenge Himself upon His own enemies in His own time. To do so is His prerogative, not ours.

In the fifth place, the apostle Paul is writing in Romans 9 about his personal attitude with respect to "(his) brethren, (his) kinsmen according to the flesh," etc. When, in response to his preaching, the Jews revealed themselves as unbelieving, the same apostle did not hesitate to quote the severe words of Isaiah 6:9 with application to them. Cf. Acts 28:25, ff. Even then, you may depend on it that Paul had personally the same attitude as is described in Romans 9:1-5.

Finally, this illustrates what I tried to emphasize in my first reply to brother N.D., namely, that to hate God's enemies with a *perfect* hatred is a spiritually delicate matter for an imperfect child of God.

H.C.H.

The Northwest Iowa Protestant Reformed School, the Lord willing, will open its doors September of 1967. Two teachers are needed: one for grades 1 to 4, the other for grades 5 to 8. Prospective teachers may write:

Mr. Ray Brunsting
R.R. 2, Rock Valley, Iowa 51247
The Northwest Iowa Protestant Reformed
School Board

The Hope Protestant Reformed Christian School must replace teachers for Kindergarten, grades One and Three for the 1967-68 school year. Those who are interested in filling one of these positions, please contact Mr. Clare Kuiper, 2450 Boulevard, S.W., Wyoming, Michigan, 49509.

The Free Christian School of Edgerton, Minnesota is in need of a teacher for the lower room for the coming school year. If interested, please contact:

Mr. Allen Hendriks
R.R. 2
Jasper, Minnesota 56144

The Protestant Reformed Christian School of South Holland, Illinois, is in need of a teacher in the lower room, to teach grades 1 through 3. Please submit applications to:

Mr. Gise Van Baren
16057 School Street
South Holland, Illinois 60473

NEWS FROM OUR CHURCHES—

March 11, 1967

Rev. C. Hanko, of Redlands, has declined the call which had come to him from our church in Hull, Iowa.

Rev. J. A. Heys, of South Holland, Ill., has accepted the call he has received from Holland, Mich.

Randolph's new trio consists of the Revs. D. Engelsma, C. Hanko, and M. Schipper.

* * *

Rev. D. Engelsma, on a three-week Classical Appointment to Hull, included a meeting of Classis West in that time. The classical appointment was shared with Rev. Decker in a pulpit exchange Sunday afternoon, March 5. Loveland's consistory decided to conduct the Annual Prayer Day Service a week early for the above reason.

* * *

Jamaican News. In a recent letter to a Grand Rapids brother Rev. Elliott exults that he has many candidates for adult baptism in his various churches. And you may be sure that these candidates will have been instructed in the truth as it is embodied in the Five Points of Calvinism!

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Southeast's March 5 bulletin expressed the good news that Rev. Schipper, "hoped to teach the catechism classes again this week and to lead the societies."

* * *

The Staff of our Theological School has announced the first "Seminary Day" will be held March 28, D.V. On that date all the prospective seminary students are invited to attend one day's classes in the school. The program provides for "practice preaching" by seminarian D. Kuiper; a regular "History of Dogma" class of Prof. H. Hanko; and Prof. H. C. Hoeksema's "Dogmatics" class. Beside the two regular students seven other young men are expected to sit in on this session of school that they may get a little taste of the banquet they will be privileged to attend when they will have finished their high school and college education. Here is hoping that the next "open house" will be for the general public that we, too, may appreciate the menu served in our seminary.

* * *

Redlands' church has a new Communion Table, built for, and presented to the church by the two Joostens. Is a new matching pulpit next?

* * *

Holland's Feb. 12 bulletin expressed congratulations and greetings to Mrs. N. Yonker who celebrated her

90th birthday anniversary. This sister was a charter member of our Grand Haven church; and since it was dissolved, her membership has been with Holland's congregation. The Ladies Society paid an evening visit to their aged member and presented her with the gift of an AM-FM table model radio.

* * *

Rev. G. Van Baren, in his Prayer Day sermon, expounded God's Word as recorded in Jeremiah 14:22, "Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain? or can the heavens give showers? art not thou he, O Lord our God? therefore we will wait upon thee: for thou has made all things." What a storehouse of comfort did the Holy Spirit tuck into that brief text!

* * *

Hope School staff has picked up quite a heavy project for their all-school Spring Program which is scheduled to be given in First Church's auditorium March 23. The title, "Our Catholic Undoubted Christian Faith," an exposition of the Apostles' Creed. You will agree that this is quite an ambitious undertaking, and far outclasses the caliber of many of the other school programs advertised in the daily papers, whose products consist of the presentations of "plays", or like vanities.

* * *

Doon's Ladies' Society prepares and sends parcels of baked goods to the Servicemen who are members of their church. Jay Stellinga received his package in far-off Viet Nam where the Service has called him.

* * *

Loveland's church now displays a new bulletin and pamphlet rack, the work and gift of Mr. Paul Griess.

* * *

A harbinger of Spring: some of the bulletins are mentioning that the young people's societies are electing delegates to the Summer Convention.

* * *

Edgerton's Men's Society was host to those of Hull and Doon March 6. The after recess program featured a paper on, "Protestant Reformed Mission Work", with a general discussion following.

* * *

Hope School Board is taking a telescopic glance at their needs in the future. It has prepared forms for a five-year kindergarten enrollment survey to be filled out by parents of one, two, three, and four year olds—and babies.

...see you in church

J.M.F.