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The Divine Law

God has given to man the law of the Ten Commandments as a perfect rule of obedience in this life. The moral law is not an arbitrary law devised by God to bind man but is a transcript of the divine nature. It reveals the moral perfection of the God of eternity and as the law of God for man requires of him "perfect, entire, exact and perpetual obedience" as the Westminster Confession states.

Man as created by God could keep the moral law of God in its entirety. Man as fallen cannot keep that law perfectly but, as the Shorter Catechism points out, "doth daily break them (the Commandments) in thought, word and deed". Consequently man is constantly acquiring guilt and so exposes himself to the just and holy displeasure of the God of heaven. The Shorter Catechism also warns men of the consequences of sinning against God in breaking the law of God. It states "that every sin deserves God's wrath and curse, both in this life, and that which is to come." How solemn then is man's state and condition when he cannot cease from sinning nor deliver himself from the penalty which his sins deserve. Anything less than perfect and perpetual obedience to the law of God, God will not accept.

God is to bring man into judgment at last. He is to be called to account for all the deeds done in the body whether they be good or evil. That judgment is certain and will be unerring. No sin in that day will be overlooked for all have been marked in God's book. How are poor sinners to face a God of inflexible justice and of infinite holiness in a sin-defiled state? Surely nothing can be more terrible than facing the God of eternity as an angry God, a God who is a consuming fire against sin, and who in justice will cast the sinner into hell fire for ever!

In the light of the infinite rectitude and holiness of Jehovah, what hope is there for a poor sinner who is under the condemnation of the broken

law? If he cannot fulfil it himself, is there One to whom he may look who is able to fulfil this law for him? This is the great wonder of redemption — there is One who did fulfil the law of God in its entirety and with whose obedience God is well pleased. This is God's Beloved Son, the Divine Redeemer and the only Saviour of sinners. But if there is One who has been able to fulfil the law of God perfectly, is there One who can take away the stain of sin completely? Is there One who can give infinite satisfaction to Divine Justice for the dishonour done to the holy law of God by the sinner's transgression of it? Again the answer is the same. There is One — even the Lord Jesus Christ who gave infinite satisfaction to the divine law in the room and stead of the guilty. It is in this One alone that the sinner's hope lies, "for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" but the name of the Lord Jesus.

It is to this One, the glorious and glorified Redeemer, that we must look if we are to be saved. Out of Him there is no salvation. We must find a hiding place in Him for our needy and never-dying soul. Multitudes of this lost and fallen race of ours have looked to Him in all their lostness and undoneness and have found in Him the shelter which their soul needed. It is not by making themselves better that poor sinners are to be saved and be acceptable to God. We must come with all the load of our sin and guilt to the One whose blood can cleanse from all sin. He is the Physician of souls who has balm to heal the needy soul. He declares in His Word — "I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." He is exalted "a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Let us come to the fountain fulness of blessing and good that is in Him in order that our soul may be healed. He invites poor sinners to come and encourages them to come saying: "Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out."

Sermon

by Rev. D. A. MacFarlane

"And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church." Ephesians 1: 22.

As enabled, I would address you to some extent on the Headship of the Redeemer, the Lord of Glory.

This verse is just part of the prayer He is praying for them about verse 15. In verse 16 he gives thanks and prays then, "That ye may know what is the hope of his calling and the riches of the glory of his inheritance in

the saints'', and many other things as it is here revealed by God the Holy Spirit. The Father put all things under the feet of the Redeemer and made Him to be the head over all things.

If men are to be saved they have need of the Redeemer as their holy and divine head of His spiritual body the Church, and of being taught their absolute need of having the Redeemer as the alone and divine covenant head of his body the Church. The Father said to the Son, ''Sit here at my right hand''. However little may be referred to on this occasion, He is the alone and Holy divine Head, able to save to the uttermost all who are made willing to come and who are brought unto Him. We are invited to come, welcome to come and we ought to come when God gives us the invitation and holy exhortation. Out of His covenant fullness they receive for ever and ever. However little we may grasp of this the Father hath put all things under His feet, and given Him to be head over all things to the Church. So that He is not only the Head of His body the Church but over all things for the good of the Church, according to the blessed promise, ''All things shall work together for good'', according to His glory and the need of His people down through the ages. He has control over all things invisible and visible, whether in heaven, in outer darkness or in the world. Things that are seen and temporal, then, He has divine rule and dominion over, for the glory of the triune God and for the good of the Church. We will make a reference to begin with to the absolute need of our minds and consciences' having the Redeemer as our head and our being of the Church of the living God which He purchased with His divine atoning self-sacrifice. We have this need because the first Adam believed the devil. He was seduced by the terrible counsel which poor Eve gave him when she herself was deceived and he took the counsel of Eve and became satanic. She was also satanic. Instead of being holy, harmless and healthily well as they were, in holy harmony with the heart of the Most High, sin entered into the bosom, mind, heart, conscience, thoughts, into the soul and therefore death eternal by sin. God the Holy Spirit from the Father and along the channel of the work of Christ tells us about the satanic, brutish nature that is in man. It is with trembling, and the Lord bless us with a measure of trembling, reverence and godly fear and gratitude for telling us the truth for our good that we may put our amen to the testimony of our malady. Man is in such a fallen estate since Adam's first sin. All mankind descended from him by ordinary generation sinned in him and fell with him. However educated men may be with the learning of this world, however theological they may be, as far as we can see, unless they get repentance, they are on their way to outer darkness. There

is a great deal of rationalistic theology in our day, a plague of rationalism — the reason of man sitting in judgement on the word of God. Men as far as we can see, who sit in judgement on the word and go by their own wisdom and their own philosophical views of the Bible, are still in the state of Satan, and are enemies of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the Three Persons, the one God in His self-existent being. May the Lord teach us; “who teacheth like Him?” All His children are taught of Him, though some have a deeper grasp than others. Those who are taught of him seek to set to their seal that there is a satanic nature in themselves, and that they are in a state of enmity. A person by common grace, restraining grace, may go very far, and be very kindly disposed and neighbourly, and have general good will, but below the surface is the hidden man of the heart. That hidden man of the heart in myself and your soul by nature is at enmity — which is another way of saying the state of man towards the Most High is one of enmity and moral poison. His law is holy and glorious. We ought to be grateful to him; we desire to thank him for forbidding what he forbids both with regard to the first and second tables of the law. The principle of satanic enmity of the carnal mind is in every mere man of the human race. He cannot stoop to the testimony of the law apart from the work of the Holy Spirit. It takes omnipotence to bring us down to stoop to put our amen to the law and the truth of the promise — any promise. The parent promise is that the seed of the woman, the Lord of glory, the express image of His character, that He would grasp our nature. May God the Holy Spirit seal this upon us. May we pray for others and for ourselves who by nature have this moral and immoral vacuum toward God as the Creator, Law-giver and Judge. When the Lord gives the summons, we are to stand before the judgment seat like a flash of lightning, men and devils will crowd to stand before him. May we and multitudes of our fellow creatures be secretly washed, consecrated, justified, united to the Saviour in and through the Saviour by the Spirit of our God. Oh that we may be found as debtors, that we may be fleeing from the subtlety of sin, the promises of sin. The natural man believes the promise of the devil in one way or another. No man can save us. Parents pray for their children and they are right to do so, and to bring up their young, and the Lord answer their prayers according to His holy will. God the Holy Spirit must bring it home that the soul is a bankrupt. We are in a state of enmity. The eternal son of His bosom was given to be the Head of His body. However learned a man may have been — he may get a great deal of praise in the world — unless he got Christ, he is in hell. Even though he may have a D.D., he may have a column put in the paper about him,

but when it comes to the last, unless a man got effectual calling in the mercy of the Lord, that is utterly worthless.

There is a self-seeking spirit in us all and it is left even in the godly. Wrestle for others as well as for yourself. The godly are children of the covenant by faith in Christ Jesus. They are reconciled to the Lord in incomprehensible grace. They are wrestling and praying that all the ends of the earth, Jews and Gentiles in our time, will be built up by the Lord as stones united to the holy corner stone, the Holy blessed one. There is no hope in man alone because mere man will never convince and convert, although men are used and are being used in their own way, in a becoming way, praying for their children and others. "The prayer of the destitute he surely will regard." May we be poor and little and frail in our own eyes — bruised reeds and a godly father, a godly man, and another man. However nice he is, if he has not Christ there is a gulf between them. The one is in the land of the living, the other among the dead. The man without Christ would hiss like a cobra if that was possible in the face of Jehovah. We are so fallen we cannot know, but we are told by one thing cannot lie that the heart is deceitful and desperately wicked. May the Lord give us the publican's prayer — what need we have of putting our amen to it, of seeing ourselves in the mirror of the law, ten thousand times in debt to law and promise. We must needs have His secret dealing and divine dealing with us to quicken the dead in trespasses and sins that they may come to the breast of a promise and get some milk for eternity. May He enable us to take a low place in our hearts and spirits, and may multitudes upon multitudes be blessed wherever the inspired word is. The Lord spared not His own Son. the one whom He gave was not a created angel, but the one from everlasting to everlasting the brightness of His glory and the God of majesty. We read these things and hear about them, but how little we know about them. We are only of yesterday, but Thou art from everlasting. If you feel your ignorance you will bow in your heart before Him. Seek to have tears in God's bottle, and ask, "Grant me a glimpse of the holy suitability of Immanuel; grant that I be found in Him." If you will have these things they will come out at the Great Day — pantings to be in Christ, hanging on Christ to get a sweet smell as of ointment poured forth. You may say, No one will know whether I am longing for him or not. Well the Lord knows and He has a book of remembrance and all the time He is recording these yearnings and longings for yourself and others. He remembers them and every secret thing will be brought to light in a way beyond our understanding.

I wish to point out that the Lord from heaven is Benjamin the son of

His right arm, the son of His love, who grasped our nature. You must fill in a lot of this yourself. Adam the first man went in the teeth of the commandment, God said to His beloved Son, "Thou art to be the second Adam, the Lord from heaven. Take their nature and grasp the holy human nature — the body prepared in the womb of the virgin Mary. You will be the covenant Head of the Church. The law is in bits and fragments." Christ said to the covenant of works, "How are you? I'm pleased to meet you: I promise to satisfy you, I promise to give up the ghost to fulfil you." He promised to gather up the fragments of the two tables of Moses, with the worth of his life and death and to hide them inside Himself. The representative and surety was made of a woman. It ought to be wonderful to us. I heard these things from my early days. I can in a sense recall yet the late Mr MacFarlane giving out Psalm 85. I was an ignorant lump, a poor unprofitable useless creature. One may remember these things and they may be blessed to you. The Lord said that He would meet the law and the curse. He said, "I promise to come under the law, meet the curse and make an end of the curse." This is another way of saying, there is no hell, there is no eternal doom. It is the Redeemer who tells us that. Christ is the author of the Old Testament, though men were employed as sub-authors. In the days of His flesh you know that again and again He himself spoke of a lost eternity and the worm that dieth not and the outer darkness and the division between sheep and goats. We might almost say in a sense He spoke about these things and about hell more than his disciples. They preached what He taught, He solemnly put before them the fact that men perish unless they have the Redeemer as their covenant Head. That is a wide field. He took a hold of the covenant of works and said, "Now Covenant of Works, I am shaking hands with you; I will please you and satisfy you infinitely. I will give up the ghost and hide you in Myself the way the two tables were hidden in the Ark." Turn it into good food for your own soul, nutriment for your own soul. On the ground of that satisfying of the law everyone who hears the trumpet gets the invitation though they will not come. The point at issue is that He satisfied the covenant of works and hid it in himself. He is now the Covenant Head, Head of His body the Church, and you yourself may meditate upon portions. We read later on, that we who were dead in sins He hath quickened by grace, of the free goodness of the Lord. By nature men are like a lot of serpents hissing at law and gospel. The Redeemer says, "I must turn these serpents into doves. I must impart a new nature so that they will begin to be ashamed of their own evil ways." The Redeemer was given a multitude, they are as the stars, and there are some in this house tonight

who will shine as the stars forever and ever, with Christ in them the hope of glory. If you have reason to believe before the Lord that you got grace to turn against yourself, to say with Ephraim, "Turn thou me", then He loved you with an everlasting love, and such are in this house today. The light may be very small. I see a handle here for putting on the lights; it can be put down to make the light very, very low. So it is with the Holy Spirit's work, it may not be very clearly seen even, but when death comes and the Lord puts the light on them, then in an instant they will shine in the full blaze of light, in love and every grace.

May we be of the spiritual seed of Immanuel. The secret things belong to the Lord. It is of sovereign grace that vipers are turned to be like doves. Watch that you will not make an excuse of divine sovereignty — because you cannot come, you will not be accountable. It is natural for us to make our excuse, to justify ourselves. Ask the Lord to change you to be a babe. "Make a little child of me. Enable me to close in with Thee on thine own terms." It is true that no one can do this of himself. We are walking lumps of mud and mire, and the horrible pit is in us. If it were not for grace there would be no church, no salvation, nor sinners saved. Have prayers in your bosom for yourself and for the ends of the earth that they will be saved from their false wisdom, to be of the blades of grass. We read of this city, "The city shall be flourishing." The devil has a city in this world. He has a city in Europe where Babylon is established. He has a city, to a large extent in Russia and he has a city in our own land too where we are so given to our lusts. When the Holy Spirit will come, Christ's city shall be flourishing, her citizens abound in number shall like to the grass that grows upon the ground. None can keep it back. You might as well try to stop the sun rising tomorrow. When the Son of Righteousness rises and blesses his word men will fly as a cloud and doves to their windows. If you like Christ then you are of that number — and blades of grass. Who can count them or the fourth part of the dust of Jacob? Christ — prophet, priest and king is now in glory, stretching out His hands, "Come along now and I will make a bargain". Ask the Lord that the Saviour be your living Head, not only your covenant Head — that God the Holy Spirit would take of this truth of Immanuel. May He take away the veil and captivate our hearts, give us a gracious frame of soul, to be good and climbing down. It is a promising sign to be climbing down. People naturally like to climb up. That the Lord would visit us and bless us! Ask the Lord to bless you with effectual calling. You read about it and hear about it time and again and we should be seeking to press our way into some of these matters. We are persuaded when the Holy Spirit

works in us. Flavel is very nice on the difference between moral suasion and persuasion. Persuasion is the work of the Holy Spirit. He has won your heart and will, He has created a nature in you so that you turn against yourself, so that you turn to Immanuel on His own terms. We heard today about the crops, and how the Lord showed us kindness in giving us the barley crop and the wheat crop, and so on. The woman of Samaria after she met with Christ, the corn of wheat that was to die, went to her friends and said, "Come and see a man that told me all things ever I did — and what a mess I was!" The Holy Spirit appears to have touched them invisibly, divinely, compassionately. They poured out to see Jesus. Here was now a whole field to wheat, white all ready to harvest, ready for the Divine reaper to put in His sickle, and gather them into His garner. They appear to have been all changed before they reached Him though they listened to Him and got corn and milk from the corn of wheat who was about to fall into the ground and die. Do you think you have reason to say, "I was as a bullock; turn thou me, that Christ would be mine. Let me be thine unreservedly, in total"? Do you have this — "turn thou me and help me to hide in Immanuel, let Him be my all and in all — He who was the Son from the bosom of the Father — my Prophet, Priest and King"? How little any one of us grasps or can grasp of the holy, inconceivable, incomprehensible fullness of Immanuel in His justice, goodness and truth. Christ is the bank, and Christ is the safe, and the door of the safe is wide open. The Father is saying, "Come and welcome to Christ; in Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge". They will not send detectives after you, saying you are stealing from the bank. The bank door is open. The safe is full of wisdom, justice and you are welcome to Him.

In conclusion, He is head over all things for the Church over all things in Heaven, in outer darkness and in the earth. You read all about that in the Lord's Prayer. He is Head over all the angels in glory and He has dominion over all the spirits in hell. They are only allowed to go so far. He has put a rein on them. "They Lord will never suffer you to be tried above that ye are able to bear but will make with the trial a way of escape whereby ye may be able to bear it". In Psalm 65 which we had He is Head over the sun and moon and stars and winds and waves. He spoke in the boat on the sea of Gallilee, and the winds and waves were calmed. He is head over all the wild and tame animals, fish of the sea. He is head over the seasons — the fruits of the earth. He has created food for man and beast. "Good unto all men is the Lord", as in Providence as was brought before us this morning. Oh! to render thanks unto the Lord, to

get a little grace, a baptism, to be saturated. Our bellies may be cleaving to the dust in our ignorance, all the same may the Lord take a hold of us and saturate us with the grace of Father, Son and Holy Ghost, that we be thankful for wheat and barley, fruits of the earth and His kindness to the unworthy and undone.

We read in the scriptures of those in heaven that followed Him riding on white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. They are in the army of Christ. This is difficult and mysterious; perhaps I should not refer to it. Perhaps in its primary reference this text speaks of the angels who are ministering spirits. Probably it is the case that the angels will meet the spirits of the just made perfect. I would like to think that they are in this house tonight who got this white horse of a promise and are riding on that white horse of a promise in the army of Christ. They are in the kingdom of heaven here below. There is a truth coming to my mind, I may say just floating before my mind, "This is a faithful saying, full of fidelity, and worthy of all acceptance, or acceptability", so that we should just pounce on it. If that is made precious to you I would think that would be a white horse. You would follow Him here in the kingdom of grace to the kingdom of glory hereafter. The world is to be rolled up like a scroll. The Lord has given us corn and wheat and barley and pretty trees and flowers. The pretty things He has given us are all under His hand, He is so kind to give us pretty flowers to look at, but He is going to destroy it all with a fervent heat. Ask that you would get Himself.

May He bless His word.

The Precious Blood of Christ

by Rev. D. Beaton

The Apostle Peter, in writing to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, who were elect according to the fore-knowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 1: 1-2) reminds them that the means whereby they were redeemed from the empty, vain life they had hitherto lived was the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifested in these last times for those who, by Him, believed in God (1 Pet. 19: 20). The price paid was not in corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but in something far beyond the most precious of earth's greatest and rarest treasures — it was "the precious blood of Christ". It was worthy of notice

that our Lord's first visit to Jerusalem was when the redemption money required by the Mosaic law was to be paid, and His last visit was when the redemption price of His people was to be paid not in silver and gold but in His own precious blood. Everyone who reads the Scriptures with any care must be impressed with the frequency of the references to the sacrificial blood in the old economy and the no less impressive references in the New Testament to the shed blood of God's great sacrifice — our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. From the early dawn of history down to the eventful day when our Lord announced, "It is finished," the thoughts of God's people were kept fixed on the shedding of blood which was to take away the sins of a countless number. And believers of the New Testament dispensation have their thoughts directed back to the shedding of that blood which speaketh better things than that of Abel and forward to the day when, through the mercy of their God, they shall join in the song to Him who was slain and who redeemed them to God by His blood (Rev. 5: 9).

As we read God's Word we are met with the announcement full to overflowing with tremendous significance — "without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin" — the import of which is not lessened but deepened by the apostolic statement that the gifts and sacrifices offered to God continually on Jewish altars could not make him that did the service perfect. But over against this failure of the blood of the sacrifices the Apostle directs our attention to the blood of Christ "who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God," and in doing so purged the consciences of His people from dead works to serve the living God. In this way infinite Wisdom found a solution to the perplexing question: How could God be just and justify a sinner? Nay, how could there be even the possibility of salvation for sinful men? Lying deeply imbedded among other mysteries in the words — "without the shedding of blood there is no remission" — lies the inexplicable mystery of iniquity. These words tell us that there is something in the nature of sin that neither omniscience nor omnipotence can take away. We make that statement with all reverence and in the full consciousness of our limited faculties failing to grasp all the bearings of the august theme, but if there was a way whereby omniscience or omnipotence could remove sin would there have been Gethsemane and Calvary?

Of old God in the covenant He made with Noah ordained that blood was not to be eaten, and in the Mosaic law whosoever would "eat any manner of blood" was to be cut off from among the people (Lev. 17: 10) and the reason assigned for this prohibition was that "The life of the

flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.” (Lev. 17: 11) These words clearly indicate the symbolic import of the shedding of blood and the inhibitions that warned the Israelite of the sacredness of blood, “for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.” Here, in a nutshell, we have the key to the New Testament doctrine of the shed blood of the Lamb of God. It was shed to make an atonement, and any doctrine of the atonement, though it lay tremendous stress on many aspects of that marvellous work, utterly fails to understand the New Testament teaching if it leaves out of account the shedding of the life-blood of the Son of God for the remission of the sins of many. It is the laying down of that life voluntarily with complete resignation to the divine will by One who was the God-Man that constitutes the efficacy, the infinite efficacy of the atoning work of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. It is well that the Church of the living God should meet often at that cross where the Lord of Glory died and read in the words — “It is finished: and He bowed His head and gave up the ghost” her legal right to a life that shall never end. Justice demanded no less a price than life — it is the greatest it could ask and it is the greatest that could be given, and when the Lord’s blood was shed the life was in it. Is it any wonder, therefore, that the Church of God in every age and generation should delight in the doctrine which speaks of the blood that set her free and sealed her right to the blessings in the everlasting covenant for ever? An age which had become finical in the things of God, but which can swallow without the slightest sign of squeamishness the works of the devil, turns away from the doctrine of a blood atonement as if it were confronted with some barbaric rite of a savage tribe. This attitude of mind, so prominent in Modernist teaching, is a direct arraignment of God’s truth as set forth in the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament. It is an attempt to rob the Church of Christ of a doctrine near to the saints of God which has encouraged them in their battle with sin and cheered them on the way until the happy day shall come when they shall sing the song of God’s redeemed to Him whose blood was shed for them and who obtained eternal redemption for them.

In the teaching of the Lord Jesus we find Him saying: “Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day” (John 6: 53-54). It is not our intention to discuss the great truths set forth in these divine words: we content ourselves meantime with quoting Prof. Smeaton when he says: “These

figurative terms imply that men are to believe on Him as giving His flesh for the life of the world, and that they are to receive the atonement with the same eagerness with which a hungry man partakes of food. The doctrine of Christ's sacrifice is the principal matter in the way of procuring the donation of spiritual life; and it is never ignored in any of those inward blessings of renovation, love, growth, zeal, and strength, which are comprehended in the spiritual life, and go to make up our idea of this life" (Our Lord's Doctrine of the Atonement, p. 279). Another utterance of vital importance in connection with His blood is the statement made by Him at the institution of the Supper: "This cup is the new testament (covenant) in my blood, which is shed for you" (Luke 22: 20). This is one of the greatest of the New Testament utterances in connection with the precious blood of Christ, and we take the liberty of again quoting Dr Smeaton, as his words are worthy of attention coming as they do from a theologian of the first rank and an exegete with exceptional spiritual insight and sanity of judgment. "Of all the sayings which our Lord uttered," writes Dr Smeaton, "on the subject of His death, there is none which can be regarded as either more important or more express than that testimony which He uttered at the institution of the Supper. He had previously called His death 'a ransom'; He had called His crucified flesh 'meat indeed'; and in the present passage He called His blood 'a covenant'. This phraseology may be considered as a key to all those passages in the Epistle to the Hebrews, as well as elsewhere, which speak of a covenant people as separated and sanctified, as saints and holy ones, or speak of the Church of God according to the new covenant relation in which believers stand" (Our Lord's Doctrine of the Atonement, p. 207). The words used by the Lord recall to the mind the blood of the sacrifices shed at the dedication of the Sinaitic Covenant when Moses sprinkled both the book and all the people. But as this Covenant was ratified by blood so, also, is the new Covenant, and the words used by the Lord Jesus describe His blood (1) as shed for his disciples; (2) as the procuring cause of the remission of sins; (3) as the fundamental condition of the new Covenant. A covenant cannot be constituted without sacrifice, and the New Covenant was no exception. The sacrifices were no accidental part in the vast system of the Old Testament Dispensation. The priesthood was a divine institution, and through it, with its manifold activities in the service of God, there were proclaimed these truths: (1) Man is alienated from God; (2) that God has a purpose of reconciliation; (3) that this reconciliation is to be effected through sacrifice — the shedding of blood — and by no other way. On the most solemn of all the Jewish feasts — the day of Atone-

ment — the whole functions of the priesthood were concentrated in the person of the High Priest and the solemn significance of the sacrificial blood was specially emphasised as the High Priest entered the holiest of all with the blood of others. Take away the shed blood from the institution in which the priesthood played such an important part and you rob it of its meaning and the day of Atonement of its solemn significance, and all that is left is an empty shell as it is with the Jews today. Take away the shed blood from the Gospel Dispensation and what have we? — no doubt, there are mighty signs and wonders and marvellous things brought to pass, but the way into the holiest of all is not opened, and the sinner is still without. It is in connection with the momentous action on the part of the Son of God that the Apostle writes: “Almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. It was, therefore, necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; nor yet that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with the blood of others; for then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world; but now once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself” (Hebs. 9: 22-26). Is it any wonder that the means which made it possible for sinners to draw nigh to God should, in the eyes of those so privileged, be regarded as a priceless blessing and that the blood of Christ should be precious in their estimation? The great truth set forth in the passage quoted is that the reconciliation God purposed has been brought about by the means that Infinite Wisdom found. It is by the blood of the Cross that this reconciliation has been effected — sinners have peace through the blood of His Cross, the peace of God which passeth all understanding. Sin was not simply passed by: it was punished to the uttermost in the death of the sinless Sin-bearer, and divine justice found satisfaction in the price paid and the conscience of the guilty sinner who, by grace, was enabled to look to the Lord Jesus, found the truest satisfaction ever it knew as it saw for the first time Heaven’s wonderful plan of salvation — sin being duly punished and yet the guilty one who believed in Jesus having a legal right through the infinite merits of the Sin-bearer to the priceless blessings of pardon and peace. It is through His blood that the guilty were justified (Roms. 5: 9). It is also through His blood believers have obtained eternal redemption (Ephes. 1: 7).

There are a number of passages which ascribe cleansing to the blood of Christ which merit attention. In 1 John 1: 7 — “The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.” The blood that cleanses is here described as the blood of God’s Son; this, no doubt, is intended to emphasise its infinite efficacy. Dr Smeaton, commenting on the passage, says: “Though the blood belongs to Him as Son of Mary, yet in virtue of the hypostatic union it is the blood of God’s Son, and, therefore, possessed of all the value that the divine nature lends to it, and adequate to the expiation of human sin laid in the scales against it” (The Apostles Doctrine of the Atonement, p. 450). The meaning of the term “cleansing” is indicated by the words: “On that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that you may be clean from all your sins before the Lord” (Levit. 16: 30). Evidently the expression “to cleanse” does not mean, as Dr Smeaton points out, to inwardly amend and renew but to free from punishment incurred by sin: to obtain remission was the great design of the sacrificial blood, and it is in this sense John uses the expression. The phrase used by him in Revelation 1: 5, “washed us from our sins in His own blood,” is to be explained in the same way. These phrases “to cleanse” and “to wash” from sin are borrowed from the Mosaic ceremonies, and have a sacrificial import. The words — “the blood of Christ” — therefore direct our thoughts to God’s great sacrifice — to the Cross of Calvary — and what took place there when by the death of the Lord of Glory He obtained eternal redemption for His inheritance. It is no wonder, therefore, that God’s redeemed on earth should see in the blood of Christ something worthy of being regarded as precious. That it shall never cease to be so in their eyes is evident from the words of the heavenly new song:— “Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever.” (Rev. 5: 9-13)

Letter

by Rev. Hugh Martin, D.D.

Montrose, 4th January, 1880

My Dear Friend, — I will have to be brief today, and you will not grudge brevity when I tell you that I have quite a number of new year's greetings — friendly souvenirs in the shape of books, etc. — to acknowledge, all which kindnesses on the part of friends should fill my heart with gratitude, although I have many trials and tossings to act as ballast. But I believe it is best for us to be kept in our own place by the stinging of thorns of affliction, if nothing else will do, than to be allowed to take our own way — the way, too often, of folly and of pride.

I hope this will find you well — well in soul and in body. I trust also that — is getting better, and that it may please the Lord to spare him for service in the church on earth; but, if otherwise designed, it is because the Lord has a higher sphere of work for him in the church above. And yet I have sometimes thought, as to the office of the ministry in the church on earth, that if we realised in the last measure the inconceivably momentous issues to immortal souls — issues of either an eternity of bliss or of an eternity of woe, according as they receive or reject the Gospel message — we must feel that we know not if, even in heaven itself, there will be work more important than the proclamation to sinners of the blessed Gospel of the grace of God, which brings “glory to God in the highest” and in which all the adorable perfections and attributes of the Triune Jehovah are harmonised and magnified to the very uttermost.

I observe that you say in your last letter — “The communion is to be observed in Dingwall first Sabbath of next month, and I wish I could be there in spirit, if only to get a crumb of what will be going; come you too.” With all my heart, but your invitation is after all too late, for I am there in spirit already. I had a letter from the dear host announcing the forthcoming solemnity, and in replying to him, I enclosed a card to be placed on the parlour mantelpiece so that the assembled friends and brethren might see it, and on the card I wrote — “A brother, cast down but not destroyed, desires a place in your supplications and sympathies.” But then, as it is with “all my heart” that I respond to your invitation, there comes as usual a scolding for you. For what? For saying you would like to be there to get *a crumb*. Now, it is very right and proper that after a feast of Christ's is over, we, in view of our ill-deservingness and nothingness, should be thankful for the smallest crumb — the very least taste of Christ and Him crucified that may have been vouchsafed to us.

But that is a very different thing from preparing and arranging beforehand to be content with just a crumb, seeing that the Lord says — “Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it.” This systematic cutting down and limiting and diminishing of the grace that is in Christ’s words is very far from being honouring or pleasing to Him, and it ought not to be allowed to go on, as if our object was to get the *minimum* or smallest portion consistent with our getting anything at all. Christ has not stinted the provision of the covenant. “He gave *Himself* for us.” Neither has He stinted the bestowal of the provision. “Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.” Are we then, as it were, to stint our own mercy, so far as in our power, by our unbelief, our unwillingness, and our unthankfulness? O! be not content without getting Christ — a whole Christ — to dwell in your heart by faith. Be importunate with Him to give you soul appetite, yea, heart relish for the provision of Zion.

Am I too hard upon you? Well, say “his bark is worse than his bite”, and you know that the bark of the St. Bernard’s dog has sometimes done good service to poor travellers. So do not think I have been scolding you, or if you do, take it as a very affectionate scolding, for I would desire, especially in this first week of a new year, to greet you well and lovingly in the name of Him in whom all time centres, and who inhabiteth the praises of eternity.

Yours, &c. Hugh Martin

Samuel Rutherford’s Directory

Challenges

1. For not referring all to God as the last end. That we do not eat, drink, sleep, journey, speak, and think for God but still are biased with our own selfish respects, putting them oftenest in God’s place.
2. That we have not benefited with good company, and have complied too much with the profanest sort; not reproving the blaspheming of God’s Name, but rather being silent witness of their loose carriage.
3. That the troubles of Zion now in her pangs of birth, have not affected us, but rather that days of humiliation in her behalf have been slighted, and have been rather matter of aggravation than of lightening of her burden. In not studying particular reformation: and in forgetting bypast experiences, mercies, deliverances.
4. That in reading the life of Paul, David, and such like, and the life

of many holy professors hath not humbled us, nor convinced us of our shortcoming, nor have we laboured to imitate them, having that same stream of God's free grace current to us, which maketh us the more guilty in refusing, or rather opposing it.

5. That unrepented sins of youth are not looked into, whereas if they were recent in our hearts it would be a means to make us more humble.

6. That sudden stirrings to pride, lust, revenge, and love to riches and honours were not resisted and mourned for: and that such thoughts as these got best room and entertainment in our corrupt hearts that no place is left for better.

7. That charity to God's saints hath been both rigid and cold, and small hopes of enlargement as yet.

8. That experience of God's mercies which after prayer He hath granted hath been forgotten. That in new troubles we have had so often our faith to seek, as if we were to begin at ABC, as if we had an idol god to deal withal.

9. That in great troubles we have cherished false reports of Christ's love, and misbelieved Him in His chastising and when the event hath been mercy; and have not been so busy to vindicate God's glory from the aspersions of the enemies of truth both in public and private.

10. Nothing should so weight our souls as that we have never so wrestled in prayer with God as it became His saints, but have easily contented us with the bare form without the power of His Spirit, still living to the world and dead unto Christ, cherishing the relics of Adam and quenching the light of God's Spirit, easily succumbing to a temptation, and trampling upon the means of grace.

11. That the Lord's dealings with thee upon body or mind have not wrought the effects, and have done nothing but extorted vows of new obedience which have blown away like chaff before the wind; and no sooner hast thou come out of the furnaces of God's affliction but thou becomest like a deceitful bow, and turnest with the dog to his vomit again.

12. That the practice of my duty was so narrow and short, not answering the breadth and length of my light, and what I have weakly done was but to stop the mouth of a natural conscience, and have been contented only with mints* in place of real performances.

13. That we have not been so much taken up with the thought of death, and that before this cottage of clay be dissolved and the pins of this tabernacle be loosed, we may be sure of a place of habitation whither to go before our flitting, and before we go hence and be no more.

*mints attempts

14. That the body and burden of sin hath not wearied us, the fear of hell affrighted us, the joys of heaven allured us to be with Christ which is best of all; and the profound and unsearchable thoughts of Eternity to prepare us to enter that strait gate.

15. That we have not made use of the grace, ability and opportunity to bring others home to Christ, neither have we ourselves walked in the light that the Lord hath enlightened us withal, neither hath the Lord's grace brought forth thankfulness in us.

16. That we were not so ready to smother thoughts at their infancy as to cherish them, till they have broken out to scandalous vices, whereas in all exercises good thought may be attained unto.

17. That we have not tendered the growth of grace by daily trying wherein we have come short, and wherein we have made progress, but only contented ourselves to live among the means without profiting, yea even the means of Sabbath, ordinances, sacraments, fastings, humiliations, standing to the points of our covenant, have been perfunctoriously abused: and we have rested upon the outward duties of formality, as prayer morning and evening, without any heart-work within, but giving place for wandering thoughts in suchlike exercises.

Obituary

Miss Daisy Mackinnon, Struan

Daisy MacKinnon was born in 1912 in the parish of Bracadale in the Isle of Skye. She was the daughter of Duncan MacKinnon, the highly esteemed elder and missionary of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, in Bracadale, and his like-minded wife, formerly Georgina Porteous. Daisy, thus, had the inestimable privilege of being born into a family in which the name of God was known and revered. She was a bright, intelligent girl who was keen to enter the nursing profession, but in the over-ruling providence of the Lord she became deaf while still in her teens and was unable to follow her chosen career. This disabling affliction was to continue all her life but it did not dim the brightness of her Christian witness.

Daisy came to know the Saviour while still in her teens and made a public profession of her faith at the first Free Presbyterian communion to be held in Portnalong. The esteem in which Daisy was held, by those who knew her well, is highlighted by this anecdote. On the Saturday of the Portnalong communion Rev. D. MacDonald, Portree, the congregation's Interim Moderator, and Mr Alexander Beaton, the Struan elder, return-

ed to the house of Mrs MacAskill, Carbost Beg (mother of the late esteemed Mr D. MacAskill), after the meeting of the Kirk Session. In reply to the quizzical look of Rev. D. N. MacLeod, Ullapool, who was assisting at the communion, Mr Beaton said "Chuir sin uan eile ris an treud bhig" ("We have added another lamb to the little flock"). Rev. MacLeod's reply was "Cha chreid mi nach fhaodadh sibh sin" ("I think you could") indicating that (in Mr MacLeod's opinion) Daisy was worthy of the privilege to which she had been admitted.

Unable to follow her chosen vocation, she was to prove an invaluable help to her mother who was left a young widow in 1931, in the midst of the Depression. Daisy was her constant companion and helper and the conversation at Craig-lea, the family home, was often of spiritual realities. Vital godliness was then known and seen in the land and left its mark on that generation. She felt her mother's death in 1958 very keenly but was comforted by the knowledge that her mother had displayed for many years that she was one who had the "good hope through Grace". Daisy continued to keep house for her two unmarried brothers, till they also died, and seemed always singularly content with her lot. She did not have very much of this world's goods but she did not her "alms before men" and after her death there was ample evidence found in her home that her contributions to the advancement of the Cause of Christ were many and varied. All missionary endeavours were of interest to her and she followed the progress of the Church's Mission in Zimbabwe particularly closely.

Because of her deafness she did not often enjoy the fellowship of other believers as she would have liked. However, she read widely and acquired a large library of sound literature. In the course of her reading she extracted numerous pieces which she sent to the editors of both the Free Presbyterian and Young People's Magazines. She had a wide circle of friends in many parts of the world with whom she corresponded regularly, though she herself was unable to travel far. She was the first person known to the writer who corresponded with Christians in Russia and she had keen interest in China as a result of reading the biographies of missionaries to that vast land in the past. She constantly prayed for the time when the Lord would again build up his Sion and the whole earth would be filled with His glory. Daisy was a woman of a prayerful spirit who delighted to withdraw to be at the Throne of Grace in private. What a rebuke this trait in her life is to those of us who are so slow to enter into our closets and shut our doors on the world and do "private business" with God!

A friend said of her, "She loved her Gaelic Bible" and it was clear that

though Daisy was deaf as to natural hearing she was one who often "heard" what God spoke in His Word to those who watch daily at His gates and wait at the post of His doors. She was one who believed the promise, "They shall not be ashamed that wait for me." Her love for her Bible as the Word of Life made her yearn that every sinner under heaven would have access to the Scriptures in their own tongue. As far as giving to the Trinitarian Bible Society was concerned, we believe it could be said "She hath done what she could" and we are convinced that every donation was steeped in prayer. But her prayers were not always at the ends of the earth. Daisy constantly wrestled for her nephews and nieces; for the Cause of Christ in the Isle of Skye but particularly for the parish of Bracadale where she lived and where her father had been such a faithful missionary and fearless witness for the Truth, not only on the ecclesiastical level but on the personal and community level also.

One feature of her life was a puzzle to this writer. She was deaf, sometimes she did not know what Psalm was being given out, yet she was in her place in the Church without fail, come wind, come weather. It reminds one of the godly lady who lived last century and was also deaf. A well-meaning friend asked her, "Why do you attend church so often, when you cannot hear a word?" The worthy lady replied, "'S caomh leum bhi far a faic mi ceo na h-iobairt ag eirigh suas" ("I like to be where I can see the smoke of the sacrifice rising up"). To Daisy it was important to be with the two or three gathered in His name. The house of God was where He was wont to reveal Himself and she would be there. She could not hear the preacher but could she not hear the voice that spoke to her heart from the Word, "Fear not for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine"? Her prayerful encouragement of her minister and support for him was total. Her spirit when she heard of her minister's mind to leave was, "We'll miss him but we'll not grudge him". To our sorrow she was not present to see another minister settled in Bracadale but it is our earnest wish that her prayers for the congregation will yet be answered in his preaching being blessed to many.

She was a Free Presbyterian by conviction as well as by birth and she was never ashamed of the name nor the testimony of our Church. The assaults by the evil one on this testimony, and indeed the most recent from within the Church to destroy the witness raised in 1893, were a cause of real distress to her.

Even in her last illness when the darkest storm clouds yet gathered over her beloved Church she understood the situation clearly and, even as her strength declined, her enquiries were for the well-being of her dear Church.

In March 1989 she passed away from this world of sin and sorrow. Her mortal remains were laid to rest in the cemetery at Struan. Her soul, we truly believe, entered "the palace of the King", where His people see Him as He is and serve him sinlessly.

(Rev.) D. J. MacDonald

The Greatest Sect

by Rev. J. A. T. van Dorp

Nations and empires come and go. One of the greatest empires to disappear from the face of the earth was the pagan Roman empire. The historian Edward Gibbon remarked that so "rapid, yet so gentle, was the fall of Paganism, that only twenty-eight years after the death of Theodosius the faint and minute vestiges were no longer visible to the eye of the legislator." This was quite according to the prophetic word of the apostle that "he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way." (2 Thes. 2: 7). The fall of pagan Rome reminds us a bit of the fall of communism in eastern Europe not so very long ago. It was also very sudden and generally unexpected. Whilst surprise is no doubt a main element in the reaction of unbelievers it ought not to be so in the experience of believers. After all they have for many long years prayed for the destruction of communism in the exercise of faith so that when the answer comes it ought not to be a matter of great amazement. Rather it is a matter of praise and thanksgiving for something that was sure to happen for the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

Christian sects seem to have much more tenacious existence. The errors of Arianism, Pelagianism, semi-Pelagianism and Socinianism are rife within sects as well as in denominations that claim to be within the mainstream of Christian religion. Yet, these sects and heresies will also have an end in spite of their longstanding tradition.

In this country, New Zealand, many professing Christians have gone will beyond Arius, Socinius and Pelagius in departing from the faith once delivered to the saints. In a recent article in a religious column a distinction was made between mainline churches and sects on the basis of size and influence on society. The mainline churches included the Roman Catholic, Anglican and Presbyterian churches. There was no reference to scriptural principles.

The scriptural meaning of sect suggests departure from the faith. The church is the body that sets forth the whole of the truth. Any departure from the truth is essentially sectarian. When such departure from the truth

involve separation the world is faced with the birth of a new sect. Mormonism, Seventh Day Adventism and the cult of the Watch Tower and Tract Society are easily recognised as sects. Few however recognise the so-called mainline churches as sects although in the present day religious climate they are hotbeds of sectarian elements. What denomination can claim catholicity when she allows the resurrection of Christ to be denied by her religious teachers?

The greatest sect however is undoubtedly the world-embracing Church of Rome. Of all sects she is the most subtle, the most bloodthirsty, the most dangerous, the most blasphemous, the most prestigious and the most numerous.

THE CHURCH OF ROME IS THE MOST SUBTLE SECT. It has been called the masterpiece of Satan. There is no sect that is more subtle than this organisation that is so widely accepted under the name of the church. When one considers how brimful of error the Roman Church is this is a truly amazing fact. When the apostle Paul wrote to the Thessalonians he already had to warn that "the mystery of iniquity doth already work". It took another two hundred years approximately before prayers for the dead and the sign of the cross began to be recognised as acceptable practices. Since then more than forty further unscriptural doctrines and practices were introduced, including transubstantiation, the mass, auricular confession and the Bible place on the index of forbidden books: not to mention the hundreds of curses directed by the Council of Trent against any that disagree with their pronouncements. In spite of these departures she has been successful in selling herself as a church, or rather **THE CHURCH**, ie The Catholic Church, of apostolic origin. This is no mean feat, considering that not only the Bible but also history is against these claims. There is only one noted writer and commentator that I have heard of that was prepared to grant the apostolic origin of the papacy. However that concession was only made on the understanding that the papal apostolic chair is not that of Peter but that of Judas. If one enquires into the reasons for such resounding successes in gaining acceptance over the past forty years we must be guided by the scriptures. Paul clearly speaks of the mystery of iniquity that would make its appearance when "he that letteth" i.e. hindereth, the pagan Roman empire, "be taken out of the way". He also points out that "Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness." (2 Cor. 11: 14, 15).

THE CHURCH OF ROME IS THE MOST BLOODTHIRSTY SECT. The people put to death runs into untold thousands. "The number of

Netherlanders who were burned, strangled, beheaded, or buried alive, in obedience to his edicts, and for the offence of reading the Scriptures, of looking askance at a graven image, or of ridiculing the actual presence of the body and blood of Christ in a wafer, have been placed as high as one hundred thousand by distinguished authorities, and have rarely been placed at a lower mark than fifty thousand". (Motley in *THE RISE OF THE DUTCH REPUBLIC*). Add to that the figure of the martyrs in other European countries at the time of the reformation and the total number becomes absolutely staggering. The objection may of course be made that this slaughter occurred in the 15th Century and that times have changed. That is true, the times have changed. The Church of Rome however prides herself in the fact that she does not change: her motto is *SEMPER IDEM*. This blood-thirstiness has continued through the ages wherever Rome had power to exercise this beastly character trait. During the Second World War there occurred one of the most cruel episodes in history — the massacre of Eastern Orthodox Serbs by Roman Catholic Croats, in an effort to make the province of Croatia solidly Roman Catholic. Dr Lorair Boettner states that "so hideous were the massacres that they surpass even those of the Duke of Alva in the Netherlands and those of St Bartholomew's day in France." The Ustashi leader, Ante Pavelitch, and the Roman Catholic archbishop of Zagreb, Stepinac, with the goodwill of Hitler and the Pope, secured the "conversion" of 244,000 Serbs to Roman Catholicism. Stepinac declared this to be the work of the Lord and to celebrate this event he had a *TE DEUM* sung in his church in February 1942. Presumably no mention was made of the more than half a million Serbian men, women and children that resisted "conversion" and as a consequence lost their lives at the hands of the Ustashi.

THE CHURCH OF ROME IS THE MOST DANGEROUS SECT. Her priests profess to speak in the name of Christ. Her chief-priest, the Pontifex Maximus, the Bishop of Rome, claims to have the gift of infallibility. Contact with this system seems to have an intoxicating influence so that "the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication" (Rev. 17: 2) i.e. "the wine by which she enticed them to commit idolatry with her. By this wine are meant honours, riches, preferments, pleasure, the gaudery of her worship, the magnificence of the apostolic see, their pretended antiquity, unity; in short, whatsoever specious arguments papists use to entice persons into the idolatrous communion of their church." (Matthew Poole Com.) Paul in 2 Thes. 2: 10 and 11 points out that some "received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved and for this cause God shall send them strong delusion,

that they should believe a lie.” The great attraction no doubt is that nowhere can one sin at such a cheap rate and still entertain hopes of being in the favour of God. That is why the God-given designation of the Bishop of Rome is “the man of sin”. (2 Thes. 2: 3). Whilst it is true that the elect are led to heaven in the use of the divinely-appointed means of grace it is also true that sinners persist in sinful ways that lead them to destruction in the use of soul-destroying habits. The idolatrous worship of popery is no doubt one of these ways. That is why it is also called the “mystery of iniquity”. The wickedness is managed under a cloak of the Christian religion and is therefore not easily discerned by those devoted to her worship.

THE CHURCH OF ROME IS THE MOST BLASPHEMOUS SECT. The Concise Oxford Dictionary states that to blaspheme is “to speak profanity about, to revile”. Vine’s expository dictionary defines it as “speech defamatory of the Divine Majesty”. Every heresy no doubt violates and reviles what is holy, whether one or more truths, and consequently the revealer of those truths. When heresy is tolerated within a denomination, blasphemy is tolerated. The defamation of the Divine Majesty is tolerated. Whilst mainline churches, as well as sects, are full of heresies, the situation is by far the worst in the Church of Rome which claims that outside of her there is no possibility of salvation. Not only does she claim the title of “Holy Father” for her earthly head but she has gone far beyond that heresy in allowing him the claim to infallibility. It is the opinion of some commentators that the fifth vial (Rev. 16: 10) was poured on the seat of the beast at the time of the Reformation. Yet this judgment did not result in repentance but “they gnawed their tongues for pain and blasphemed the God of heaven”. One would think that for a mere man to claim the divine attribute of infallibility would be the height of blasphemy. It certainly would be if there was not a greater blasphemy practised in the Roman Church, i.e. that of worshipping a bread god as the living and true God. The doctrine of transubstantiation decisively changed the divinely-appointed ordinance of the Lord’s Supper from a memorial of Christ’s death into a sacrifice of the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Roman Catholics pay divine homage to the “changed” piece of bread or wafer, called the host. The Council of Trent denounces with an Anathema any person that will say there is an error in the canon of the Mass. This form of idolatry goes far beyond anything that is practised in paganism. It is sad that such vast numbers of people have become intoxicated by the outward splendour of this giant deception. This of course is just another feature of Rome’s tenacious existence.

THE CHURCH OF ROME IS THE MOST PRESTIGIOUS AND NUMEROUS SECT. Considering her bloody history, as well as her record of oppression, bigotry, perversion of the truth and financial dealings, it is remarkable the amount of prestige this sect has been able to build up. Kings, queens, prime ministers and ambassadors have worn a track to Vatican city to pay homage to the man of sin. Much of this activity is entirely of a political nature and lends a great deal of worldly prestige. Would the politicians be so keen to visit the city on the Tiber if the bishop of Rome was a true scriptural pastor engaged in the normal pastoral work of visiting the flock and expounding the scriptures? Where do we read in the scriptures that a pastor must sit in state and receive foreign ambassadors and other dignitaries? Where do the scriptures teach that the church must have another head than the Lord Jesus Christ? The Bishop of Rome acts as if he is a king and he does not only act that way, he also claims that power and dignity. His "coronation" ceremony prescribes the following declaration: "receive the tiara adorned with three crowns, and know that thou art the Father of Princes and Kings, Ruler of the World the Vicar of our Saviour Jesus Christ. . ." All that pomp is propped up by the golden pillars forged by the financial dealings and dealings of the Vatican Bank and its subsidiaries. The Saviour said "My kingdom is not of this world". Jonathan Edwards expressed the opinion that the Euphrates river of gold would be dried up to prepare the way of the kings of the east preparatory to the downfall of this New Testament Babylon. (Rev. 16: 12).

John Bradford was one of the many martyrs who sealed his testimony with his blood in the year 1555. This is part of his testimony: "If I say, we behold the face of the popish church, Lord how it glistereth, and gorgeous it is in comparison of Christ's true church which is discerned in these days but by the word of God truly preached, the sacraments purely ministered, and some discipline nothing so much as hath been, might be, and should be. Whereas the popish church wants nothing to set herself forth to the show — as he that considereth the persons (pope, cardinals, legates, archbishops, bishops, suffragans, abbots, priors, deans, prebendaries, archdeacons, canons, monks, friars, parsons, vicars, subdeacons etc., and a thousand more), the power, riches, honours, promotions, lands, houses, fair services (as singing, saying, ringing, playing, censuring, etc.), implements (crosses, chalices, relics, jewels, basins, copes, cruets, vestments, books, bells, candles etc.) — he I say that considereth these things, he cannot but with Samuel, thinking Eliab had been he whom God had chosen, think this to be the catholic church and spouse of Christ. But

this sentence (Ps. 45) saith, the beauty of God's paramour is 'within': and therefore this may be suspected to be the rose-coloured whore St. John speaketh of in the Apocalypse, for whom her ministers watch night and day, how to maintain their mistress and whore-madam, with endowing her with the riches, power, and pleasures of the earth''. (The Hurt of Hearing Mass).

This system thankfully is doomed to destruction. The Saviour has already destroyed him that has the power of death. The devil's chief agent will also be destroyed "whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." (2 Thes. 2: 8).

When in God's providence we have so recently seen such a remarkable deliverance in many countries from communism, there is now much encouragement to ply the throne of grace for the downfall of the Roman sect. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

Notes and Comments

Collapse of U.S.S.R.

The collapse of the U.S.S.R. and its break-up into independent nations has brought to an end the Communist experiment, carried on for several generations at the cost of millions of lives, to try and prove that man can live by bread alone. The monolithic structure of the Communist system in Russia and Eastern Europe collapsed, as it was bound eventually to collapse, for it was established on two great lies — that there is no God and that man is inherently good. It was surely a costly lesson which had to be learned at the expense of indescribable suffering and misery. So must all attempts made by men to establish a Utopia on earth utterly fail. How good it would be for the people of the former Soviet Union if they would come to know the truth of God's Word and embrace it by the effectual working of God's Spirit in their hearts. For this we should pray. It is not enough to be delivered from one false system if it means being swallowed up in another. Nothing will avail but coming to the knowledge of the truth as revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Crime

The latest crime figures for England and Wales show an increase of crime of 18.7 per cent over the previous year. The continual rise in crime figures is very alarming. The sad matter is that it is but a solemn reflection of the moral state of the nation. The young are growing up without

any knowledge of the law of God and so become a law unto themselves. The great need of the nation is for a spiritual awakening throughout the length and breadth of the land. Only then will a reformation take place in the moral state of the country. Every other means tried has proved ineffectual.

Mission News

We should all be thankful that the Rev. John MacLeod has arrived home safely in Stornoway after a mammoth journey which included Canada, New Zealand, Kenya, Malawi, and Zimbabwe.

We have not yet received full reports of his visits to all the centres in Zimbabwe, but we understand that the services were much enjoyed and appreciated. The first weekend was spent at Ingwenya which old John Mpofu used to call, "Jerusalem wetu" or "Our Jerusalem." A service was held at Cameron which is about ten miles from Ingwenya. This school and preaching place was called after the late Rev. Neil Cameron. The Rev. A. B. Ndebele reports that the service was very much enjoyed. Another was held in Insiza, a more recently opened station where a congregation of seventy gave the greatest attention to the speaker.

The next weekend was spent at Zvishavane, where the Rev. Z. Mazvabo is minister, and where the Communion was held. Several of the staff from other stations attended.

From Zvishavane Mr MacLeod and Mr Neil Murray travelled by the small M.A.F. plane all the way to Mbumba, landing on a little airstrip near the hospital, causing a flurry of excitement there.

On Sabbath Mr MacLeod took the first service there, and the second at Zenka forty miles off. Zenka is without a minister since the late Rev. B. B. Dube passed away. It was once a busy station where the late Rev. James Fraser spent his first ministerial years, and he and his wife, Chris, ran a Clinic, and from which 22 small schools were supervised. There Magaya Ncube, elder, said on one occasion, "One day the whole Reserve will be lit up with the glory of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ."

On the following Monday the Rev. P. Mzamo took the Rev. John MacLeod to Nkai where old John Mpofu began the first of our church services in that area. His grandson, Mr James Mpofu, is elder, there, but Boarding Master and Carpentry teacher at Ingwenya during the school term.

Mr MacLeod and Mr Neil Murray also paid a short visit to Binga, the remote station near the Zambesi. Two services were held there and Mr MacLeod was very interested in that part of the field.

The following weekend the Communion was held in Bulawayo. This congregation is chiefly composed of young families and of young men and women working in Bulawayo. The Rev. John MacLeod was assisted by the Rev. Z. Mazvabo. On Sabbath morning the service was very impressive and moving. The text was from Psalm 22, verse 15. "And Thou has brought me to the dust of death."

On Monday Mr MacLeod referred to the great men of every nation who had gone before, such as Luther and others. He then referred to their late Paster, the Rev. A. Mpofu and the Rev. B. B. Dube. Mr Ndebele addressed the congregation and advised them to make a habit of reading good books. He recommended the Shorter Catechism, and said that the late Rev. James Fraser had advised him to memorise the Westminster Confession of Faith, which he had endeavoured to do.

Another short visit was paid to Zvishavane and Mr Mazvabo's home. Then the flight to London and Stornoway. We hope some were caught in the net of the Gospel. J.N.

Church Notes

Presbytery Meetings (D.V.)

Skye: At Portree on 4th February 1992 at 11 a.m.

Southern: At Glasgow on 18th February 1992 at 6 p.m.

Outer Isles: At Stornoway on 25th February at 12 noon.

Zimbabwe: At Bulawayo on 13th March 1992 at 2 p.m.

Canadian: At Inverness on 20th March 1992 at 9 p.m.

Sabbath Opening of Stores in England and Wales

The following is the text of a letter sent by the Clerk of the Sabbath Observance Committee to the Attorney General, the Government's chief law officer for England and Wales:

I write on behalf of the Committee to protest in the strongest possible terms against your decision, announced last week, not to prosecute the major stores who are flouting the Shops Act, 1950 by opening in England and Wales on the Lord's Day.

Our concern, of course rests primarily on the fact that these stores are in breach of the Fourth Commandment as given by God Himself for all time: "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy." The terms of this commandment are to some extent, however imperfectly, reflected in the provisions of the Shops Act. We believe that it is your duty to see that this law is obeyed.

We do realise that local authorities have been given a special responsibility in this connection, but we cannot accept that it is right for you to abrogate your responsibilities in this matter. The least the Government should do is to indemnify local authorities, who take successful steps towards enforcement, against the possibility of future claims for damages. We do feel that, when so many other members of the EC have laws which restrict Sabbath trading, far too much attention is paid to the possibility of falling foul of European law.

There are, as I am sure you realise, wider implications for the law-abidingness of the general public if powerful concerns such as the major multiples can with impunity break this particular law. There can be little doubt about the feeling of Parliament on the matter, having refused to pass the Government's Sunday Trading Bill in 1986. There is something totally unsatisfactory from every point of view about so many of the country's major retailers being prepared to break a particular statute so readily, especially when the Government's chief law officer in England and Wales has publicly announced that he will take no steps to have the law enforced. A precedent has been set; can you be sure that such law-breaking will stop here?

We have no doubt that it is not only in the best spiritual interests of this country that the Sabbath be rightly observed, but also in the interests of people's physical and mental well being. We are particularly concerned about pressure being put on individuals to work on Sabbaths against their wills and against their consciences. We therefore appeal to you to reverse your decision and make known your intention to encourage the prosecution of all retailers who are in breach of these particular provisions of the Shops Act.

Free Presbyterian Publications

A new edition of "The Life of John Knox" by Thomas McCrie (D.V.). A new edition of "The Life of John Knox" by Thomas McCrie (216pp, £5.95) should be available by the time this issue of the magazine appears. It is much more attractively presented, both inside and out, than previous editions. Although it was first published as long ago as 1812, no one since M'Crie has succeeded in bringing out nearly so well the spiritual dimension of Knox's life and work. The one major fact to emerge since then is that Knox was born probably in 1514, rather than 1505 as M'Crie believed; this is brought out in a new Publisher's Introduction.

A new edition of "Gospel Gleanings for Young People" has also been printed. This book has already proved very useful. It has been thoroughly

revised and some new material added. It too has an attractive new layout inside and a pleasant cover design. We hope that it will make a worthwhile contribution to young people's reading material when there is such a dearth of sound books on this nature. A completely new book for children is also to be published.

Committee Meetings will be held at Inverness Church D.V.:

Tuesday, 24th March

9.00 a.m. - 10.00 a.m.	Church Centenary Committee
10.00 a.m. - 11.00 a.m.	Training of Ministry
11.00 a.m. - 11.45 a.m.	Church Magazines
11.45 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.	Publications
2.00 p.m. - 3.00 p.m.	Welfare of Youth
2.00 p.m. - 4.30 p.m.	Finance
3.00 p.m. - 4.30 p.m.	Religion and Morals
4.30 p.m. - 5.30 p.m.	Dominions and Overseas
7.00 p.m. - 9.00 p.m.	Foreign Mission.

Wednesday, 25th March

9.30 a.m. - 11.30 a.m.	Church Interests
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Eastern Europe

The interest shown by our church people in connection with the last visit to Eastern Europe indicates that the missionary vision of our people is very much alive. Liberal financial support and practical help was readily given by our church people and friends from other denominations. Transport was kindly provided free of charge by Lochcarron Garage. We are indebted also to the Trinitarian Bible Society for their grant of scriptures, tracts and calendars. To each and all we express our heartfelt thanks.

Thankfully the journey went smoothly. So different to our visit when it was a crime to take a Bible into Romania and a nerve racking experience to take a few Bibles into Russia. All that, in the wonderful providence of God is in the past and Bibles have a much easier passage into these once forbidden territories. One Hungarian Missionary who distributes Bibles in many languages requested especially the Authorised Version expressing his disapproval of the New International Version. We assured him it was our policy to distribute only the Authorised Version.

In our communication with some churches one matter which did concern myself and Rev. Neil Ross was the obvious lack of understanding

about Reformed doctrine, worship and practice. In some places where there has been a history of Reformed doctrine, sadly as in our own country, lip service to a great degree is given to these doctrines. Among a group of believers one person told us that by his reading of the Word of God he came to understand and believe in the final perseverance of believers but regrettably nobody else belonging to the group believed this doctrine. What a need therefore for Reformed teaching. It is so, despite the erroneous teachings of Arminianism, that the Sovereign God will bless His own Word when and where He will. At the same time how many by these errors are given a false hope and so deceived for eternity. Our desire and prayer is that our small Mission to Eastern Europe will be able more and more to supply Reformed literature so much needed among the Churches in these parts. We were glad that along with Bibles and Gospels we did on this occasion have such literature to offer, which was supplied by churches in the West.

We were disappointed to be told when in Kiev, that due to the lack of paper in the Ukraine the printing of the Mother's Catechism in the Russian language has to be delayed. We hope however to obtain the translation and get it printed elsewhere.

A full report of our visit to Eastern Europe will be given to the Synod, in the meantime we ask your prayerful interest for the progress of this work began a number of years ago. We remind you also that while there is a steady flow of Bibles and good literature entering Eastern Europe it is imperative that the Most High would grant an outpouring of His Holy Spirit without which all our labour is in vain.

(Rev.) D. A. Ross

Reader's Request for Books

Mr H. McKendry, 151 Hillhall Road, Lisburn, Co. Down, Ulster would appreciate if any reader of the Magazine could help him find the following two books which he would be glad to purchase:— The Men in the Lews (1924) by J. McFarlane and Revivals in the Highlands and Islands in the 19th Century (1906) by A. MacRae.

Notices re Synod Agenda

Clerks of Presbyteries, Conveners/Clerks of Committees, and all interested parties should note that all items of business intended to be placed on the Synod Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk of Synod by Tuesday 24th March, 1992 (D.V.).

(Rev.) D. B. Macleod,
Clerk of Synod.

Notice to Conveners/Clerks of Standing Committees

The Conveners/Clerks of all Standing Committees should note that all Committee Reports must be in the hands of the Clerk of Synod by Tuesday 24th March, 1992, for printing purposes (D.V.). These Reports should contain information of the work of the Committees during the year. Recommendations and proposals should be sent up as separate items for the Synod Agenda.

(Rev.) D. B. Macleod,
Clerk of Synod.

Acknowledgement of Donations

The General Treasurer, Mr R. A. Campbell, 133 Woodlands Drive, Glasgow, G3 6LE acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:—

Dominions and Overseas Fund: Friends, N.Z. £300.

Sustentation Fund: K.C., Skye £1000.

Eastern Europe: Anon., £20; Anon., £100; A Friend, Darlington £300.

The Treasurers of the following Congregations acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:—

Broadford: Anon., Broadford £50 for Church Notice Board.

Breasclete: Anon., £20 for Collection; D.M. £40 for Church Funds.

Daviot — Stratherrick — Tomatin: Envelope in plate £10 for Sust. Fund.

Edinburgh: Anon., £50 (in Church plate); Anon., £200 per Rev. D.B.M., both for Manse Heating.

Glasgow: Anon., £5; Anon., £10; A.A. £10, all for Bus. Fund; Anon., £50 for Foreign Missions; I.G. (Sabbath School) £11 for Sponsor a Blind Child per R.A.C.; In memory of a loving brother £50 for Protestant Truth Society.

Laide: Friends, Deasdale £30; D.M., Applecross, £20; A. P. Condon £30; M.M., Milton £10; R. & L. M., Raasay £40; Anon., Friend, Gairloch £100; W. M., Aultbea £10; F. M., Mellon Udrigle £15; Friends, Gairloch £15; T. H. M., Gairloch £40; M.G., Aultbea £30; M.M., Ness £50; Friends, Inverness £50, all above for Eastern Europe Mission; Aultbea Friend for Church Funds £20; Deut. 33: 25 £50, to be used as you see fit; Aultbea Postmark £20 for Church Funds, all per D.A.R.

Lairg: A Lairg Friend £30 for Lairg Funds.

North Harris: R.M., Cluer £8 per J. McL.; Anon., £5 (envelope in plate); M.A., Tarbert £5, all for Bus. Fund; Friend, Stockinish, £5 for Comm. Exps.; Friend, Stockinish £5 for Door Coll., last two per R.McC.; Anon., £5 for upkeep of loop system; K.M.S. £250 for the benefit of the Church in North Harris per K.G.; M.A., Tarbert £10 for Sust. Fd. (envelope in plate); Friend, Stockinish £10 for Door Coll. per R.M.C.; Harris, Friend £10, where most needed per Rev. K. D. McL.

North Uist: Anon., £1000 where most need; Anon., £60 for bus; Mrs M., Struan £16.50 for bus.; Mrs Scott, Avonbridge £25 for Sust. Fd., all per M.J.M.; Mrs E. £50, where most needed, per Rev. A.M.

Portree: Friend and Wellwisher £1000, where most needed (envelope in plate); J.M., Portree £50, where most needed, per F.M.; Lewis Friend £13 per F.M.; Friend £50 per N.B. both for Sust. Fd.; Anon., £4 for Bus Fd., (envelope in plate); Mrs D. N. £10 for Door Coll. per S.Y.M.; J.M. £10 where most needed per F.M.; Portree Congr. £400 for Bibles for Russia.

Raasay: Glasgow Friends £20, where most needed; M.D. £5 for Ch. Fds., per Rev. J.R.T.; Anon., £20 for Comm. Exps.; Envelope in plate £10 for tapes; Friend, Inverarish £20; Anon., Inverarish £25, both for Car Fd.; J.M.M. £50, where most needed, per J. Gillies, Portree.

Staffin: Anon., Portree £20 for Staffin Congregation (envelope in plate).

Tain and Fearn: Glasgow Friend £5 for Comm. Exps. (envelope in plate).