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*For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion:
in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me;
he shall set me up upon a rock.
—Psalm 27:5*

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And Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the LORD hath said will we do. And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen unto the LORD. And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basons; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words.

—Exodus 24:3–8

The Blood of the Covenant

Having received from God all of his judgments, Moses came down from Mount Sinai to deliver God's judgments to the people of Israel. As Moses came down, God went up. The mountain no longer burned with fire. The cloud of thick darkness left the top of the mountain, so that the skies were clear and blue and sunny again. God would return to the mountain soon, as would Moses and Joshua and the elders of the people. But for now all was calm at Sinai. Moses told the people of Israel all of the words of Jehovah. They promised, "All the words which the LORD hath said will we do" (Ex. 24:3). Moses then wrote all the words of Jehovah in a book called the book of the covenant. It included the ten commandments that all Israel had heard, and it included the ceremonial laws that only Moses had heard because the people were afraid.

The next day, Moses arose early in the morning and built a great altar at the base of the mountain. He set twelve large stones upright as pillars around the altar. He called young men to offer burnt offerings of calves and goats on the altar. They also offered peace offerings of oxen. The blood of all these sacrifices was saved in basins. Moses sprinkled half of the blood on the altar. This was a picture of Israel's justification

and the forgiveness of all their sins against God's law in the blood of Jesus Christ.

Moses sprinkled the rest of the blood on the people of Israel, which blood was called "the blood of the covenant" (Ex. 24:8). Moses dipped a leafy branch of hyssop and a piece of wool in the remainder of the blood in the basins, and then he used the hyssop and wool to fling the blood, thus sprinkling it on the people (Heb. 9:19–20). Moses also sprinkled the book of the covenant with the blood of the covenant.

What did this mean? The sprinkling of the blood of the covenant upon Israel was a picture of their sanctification through the blood of Jesus Christ. How do we know? Hebrews 10:29: the blood of the covenant is that by which a man is sanctified. Hebrews 13:20–21: the blood of the covenant is that by which God makes us perfect in every good work to do his will. The blood of the covenant is the blood of Jesus Christ, by which our hearts are cleansed for lives of service and obedience to God.

It is a great truth of our salvation. Our sanctification is by the blood of the covenant just as much as our justification. Our sanctification is not by our willing or by our doing. Our sanctification is not even by the book of the covenant,

which is God's law. It is only by the blood of the covenant, which is Jesus Christ. For justification

and for sanctification, let Israel look to the blood of the covenant.

—AL

EDITORIAL

Introduction to a Corrected English Translation of the Canons of Dordt

In this issue of *Reformed Pavilion*, we embark on a new project of preparing a corrected English translation of the Canons of Dordt. The Synod of Dordrecht (1618–19) wrote the Canons as its answer to the Arminian heresy that was troubling the Dutch Reformed churches. The heart of the Arminian error was its doctrine of contingency. That is, the Arminian party taught that God's salvation of the sinner was contingent upon the sinner's will and work. The Arminian error regarding contingency infected every aspect of the doctrine of salvation: God's predestination was contingent, the efficacy of Christ's atonement was contingent, the power of God's grace was contingent, and the perseverance of the sinner was contingent—ultimately leaving the sinner hopelessly dependent on himself for his salvation.

Over against the Arminian doctrine of contingency stood the Synod of Dordt's doctrine of God's sovereignty. That is, the fathers of Dordt taught that God sovereignly saves the sinner by God's sovereign will and work and that the will and work of the sinner are the fruit and effect of God's will and work. Dordt's confession regarding God's sovereignty infused every aspect of the doctrine of salvation: God's predestination was sovereign, Christ's atonement was sovereign, God's grace is sovereign, and God sovereignly preserves his people in the salvation that he has given them, with man contributing nothing

to his salvation. The doctrine of the Canons is the blessed gospel of salvation by grace alone, making the sinner blessedly dependent upon God alone in Christ alone by faith alone. "Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation" (Isa. 12:2).

The Synod of Dordt set forth this gospel of God's sovereignty in the Canons of Dordt. The Canons were written and adopted in Latin, which was the international language of scholarship in the seventeenth century. The synod also adopted an official Dutch translation of the Canons. The English translation of the Canons that most readers of *Reformed Pavilion* are familiar with has been around for many years. One of the first English translations was published by one Thomas Scott in 1831.¹ The Reformed Church in America (RCA) published an English translation in 1840.² These translations contributed much of the phrasing that is found in the English translation that is currently used by such churches as Remnant Reformed Church and the Protestant Reformed Churches (PRC).

The English translation of the Canons is mostly sound and in many places is moving and beautiful. For example, in Canons 1.13 the English translation has this gem: "and rendering grateful returns of ardent love to Him, who first manifested so great love towards them."³

¹ Thomas Scott, trans., *The Articles of the Synod of Dort, and Its Rejection of Errors: With the History of Events That Made Way for That Synod, as Published by the Authority of the States-General; And the Documents Confirming Its Decisions* (Utica, NY: William Williams, 1831), 87–126; digitized by Google Books at <https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=TmkZAAAAYAAJ&pg=GBS.PA90&hl=en>.

² Philip Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom*, vol. 3, *The Evangelical Protestant Creeds with Translations* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1966), 581–97.

³ *The Confessions and the Church Order of the Protestant Reformed Churches* (Grandville, MI: Protestant Reformed Churches in America, 2005), 157.

This phrasing comes directly from the 1840 English translation of the Reformed Church in America.⁴ Compare the more stilted translation of Scott in the 1831 translation: “and of more ardently loving him reciprocally, who had before so loved them.”⁵

Or again, consider this jewel of phrasing from Canons 3–4.2: “A corrupt stock produced a corrupt offspring,”⁶ which translates the original, compact Latin: *nempe corruptus corruptos*—“inevitably a corrupt one [begets] corrupt ones.” Again, our present English translation gets its lovely phrasing directly from the 1840 translation.⁷ Compare the more stilted phrasing of the 1831 translation: “namely, being corrupted, corrupt ones.”⁸

Examples could be multiplied of places where our present translation faithfully captures the Latin and renders it beautifully in English.

However, though our present English translation is lovely and mostly sound, it does contain some significant errors. For example, in the same article that so beautifully expresses corruption begetting corruption, the English translation entirely omits a key phrase. The Latin of Canons 3–4.2 says that all the posterity of Adam derive their corruption from Adam *justo Dei judicio*⁹—by the just judgment of God. This phrase expresses the important doctrinal truth that man’s corrupt nature is not merely an accident of Adam’s fall; rather, man’s corrupt nature is God’s just judgment on Adam’s fall. It is not this, that when Adam slipped and fell, his children bruised their knees; it is this, that Adam fell, and God killed Adam’s children. The truth of God’s just judgment on the posterity of Adam is the glorious doctrine of federal headship. Adam represented the human race, and therefore God justly

killed the human race when Adam fell. But there is another federal head: our Lord Jesus Christ. Christ represents all of the elect. When God gives eternal life and salvation to his people, that too is *justo Dei judicio*—by the just judgment of God. For Christ has atoned for his people and has fulfilled all the law for his people, and God justly judges us to be righteous in our head. Our present English translation entirely omits the key phrase *justo Dei judicio*. Our English translation stumbled in this article by following word for word the 1840 translation of the Reformed Church in America, which also omits the key phrase. This ought to be corrected.

So serious is another error in our English translation of the Canons that it contributed to the doctrinal downfall of a denomination. The Protestant Reformed Churches today maintain that man’s good works are necessary unto man’s experiential enjoyment of salvation. It is the old Arminian error of contingency, this time applied to the realm of man’s conscious experience of salvation. The PRC today prefer the term “in the way of” instead of “contingent,” but it is the same Arminian error that God’s saving blessing is contingent on man’s obeying. At least one leader in the PRC has defended the Protestant Reformed doctrine by appeals to the erroneous English translation of Canons 5.7.¹⁰

The present English translation of that article makes *repentance* the means by which the sinner “may seek and obtain remission in the blood of the Mediator” and the means by which the sinner “may again experience the favor of a reconciled God.”¹¹ However, the original Latin adopted by the Synod of Dordt makes *faith* the means by which the sinner obtains remission of sins and enjoys God’s favor. The difference

⁴ Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom*, 3:584.

⁵ Scott, *The Articles of the Synod of Dort*, 90.

⁶ *Confessions and Church Order*, 166.

⁷ Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom*, 3:588.

⁸ Scott, *The Articles of the Synod of Dort*, 105.

⁹ Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom*, 3:564.

¹⁰ See Andrew Lanning, “Canons 5.7: Renewed to Repentance,” *Sword and Shield* 3, no. 13 (April 2023): 7–14.

¹¹ *Confessions and Church Order*, 174.

between these two is the difference between the truth and the lie, between the gospel and another gospel, between Reformed doctrine and false doctrine. If remission of sins in the blood of the mediator comes by the work of repenting, as the present translation has it, then no one's sins are ever remitted; for justification is not and cannot be by works. If the experience of God's favor comes by the work of repenting, as the present translation has it, then no one will ever experience God's favor; for God's favor cannot be secured by working. The only hope of the poor sinner is that remission of sins in the blood of the mediator comes by faith alone in Christ alone. The only hope of the ashamed sinner is that the experience of God's favor comes by faith alone in Christ alone. And, thanks be to God, it is indeed by faith alone that we receive all blessing from God.

Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. (Rom. 4:4–5)

Our present erroneous English translation of this article comes word for word from the RCA's 1840 translation.¹² This ought to be corrected.

While the above two are perhaps the most egregious errors in our present English translation, there are several other corrections to be made here and there throughout the Canons that could more exactly express the Latin that was adopted by the Synod of Dordt.

In light of these considerations, the undersigned thought it would be a worthwhile project to comb through our present English translation, comparing it with the Latin, in order to correct the English translation where necessary. For the most part the translation of the Canons that will be presented on these pages is not a *new* English translation of the Canons but a *corrected* English translation. The basis of what will be presented here is the longstanding, tried and (mostly) true

English translation that can be found in many places, such as *The Confessions and the Church Order of the Protestant Reformed Churches*. Dordt's official Latin version of the Canons that is being used to correct the English can be found in many places as well, such as Philip Schaff's *The Creeds of Christendom*.

The undersigned leaned heavily on several resources in preparing this corrected English translation of the Canons. First, Homer Hoeksema's commentary on the Canons, *The Voice of Our Fathers*, first published in 1980. Before commenting on each article, Hoeksema analyzed our present English translation in light of the Latin and provided corrections. Hoeksema's corrections are very exact, although they sometimes come across as somewhat wooden; and Hoeksema admitted that "it is a bit difficult to give a smooth-flowing English translation of the Latin."¹³ Latin has its own structure and rules that cannot always be rendered exactly in English. Nevertheless, the undersigned followed Hoeksema's corrections in most instances, departing only when it seemed especially obvious that there was a better phrase that was at least as accurate in smooth-flowing English.

Second, in 2019 W. Robert Godfrey prepared a new English translation of the Canons from scratch. His translation is Part II of his book *Saving the Reformation*. The special value of Godfrey's translation is that it breaks the long Latin sentences into shorter English sentences that are more manageable. However, as Godfrey himself notes, some of the precision of thought is lost in such a maneuver.

The canons were written for the church in a form designed to make them understandable for church members. This translation seeks to fulfill that aim. The translation does not simplify the vocabulary. Its main difference from earlier translations is to break the long Latin

¹² Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom*, 3:594.

¹³ Homer C. Hoeksema, *The Voice of Our Fathers: An Exposition of the Canons of Dordrecht*, 2nd ed. (Jenison, MI: Reformed Free Publishing Association, 2013), 280.

sentences of the original into shorter English sentences. A little of the precision of the Latin is lost in this process, but the result is a faithful translation that is much easier to read and understand for contemporary readers of English.¹⁴

In spite of the loss of precision in breaking up the Latin, Godfrey's new translation is accurate in its phrasing and thus very useful in correcting our present English translation. However, it is preferable to retain as much precision as possible; thus the undersigned mostly left the long sentences intact and did not follow Godfrey's example of trying to break them all up.

Third, there is a wealth of translation help online. Today the Latin student going to his labors in the *Canones Synodi Dordrechtanae* carries with him a toolbox stocked full with Google Translate, online Latin dictionaries, and online Latin grammars.

Fourth, the English translation prepared by Thomas Scott in 1831 was very useful. Even though its English is at times so stilted as to obscure the meaning of a passage, Scott was punctilious in translating the Latin as exactly as possible. Scott's translation was especially helpful in making sure that our corrected English translation is as faithful as possible to the original Latin.

Lord willing, the corrected English translation of the Canons will be published in *Reformed Pavilion* in weekly installments. The first installment published here is the Synod of Dordt's preface to the Canons. The preface was not part of the original confession that was adopted by the Synod of Dordt. Therefore, whatever is found in the preface is not to be considered as part of the church's official confession and is not binding on Reformed churches, whereas the contents of the Canons themselves are binding on the church as the church's official interpretation of the scriptures. Nevertheless, though the preface does not have confessional status in Reformed churches, it does provide some helpful historical background to the Canons. The preface was adopted by the Synod of Dordt two days after the adoption of the Canons and served as the synod's own introduction to its confession.

The subsequent installments of the Canons will be a corrected English translation, but the preface printed here is a new translation. This translation has been prepared by the undersigned and has been checked for accuracy against the work of far better Latin scholars, namely, Thomas Scott's 1831 translation and W. Robert Godfrey's 2019 translation. However, any translation errors here are mine.

Without further ado, let us embark on our project of a corrected English translation of the Canons of Dordt, God helping us.

—AL



CANONS OF THE SYNOD OF DORDRECHT

Judgment of the National Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church, held at Dordrecht in the years 1618 and 1619, in which many distinguished theologians of the Reformed churches of Great Britain, Germany, and France participated, concerning the five heads of doctrine disputed in the Dutch churches: promulgated on May 6, 1619.

Preface

In the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Among the many consolations that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ gave to his militant church in this weary sojourn, one in particular is deservedly celebrated, which he left to her as he was about to depart into the heavenly sanctuary unto his Father: “Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.” The truth of this sweetest promise shines forth in the church of all ages, which, since she has been besieged from the beginning not only by the open violence of enemies and the impiety of heretics, but also by the secret cunning of seducers, would long ago surely have been either crushed by the force of tyrants or seduced to destruction by the fraud of deceivers, if the Lord had ever deprived her of the protection of the saving promise of his own presence. But that Good Shepherd, who most steadfastly loves his flock for which he laid down his life, has always restrained the rage of the persecutors in due season, often miraculously stretching out his right hand; and he has uncovered and scattered the crooked ways and fraudulent counsels of the seducers; each time demonstrating that he is most certainly present with his church. An illustrious proof of this exists in the histories of pious emperors, kings, and princes, whom the Son of God so often has raised up for the relief of his church; has inflamed with holy zeal for his house; and by their handiwork has not only restrained the fury of tyrants but also has provided for his church the remedies of holy synods when she was troubled

by false teachers who variously corrupted religion; in which synods the faithful servants of Christ, united in prayers, counsels, and labors, have valiantly stood fast for the church and for the truth of God; have fearlessly opposed the ministers of Satan, though they transformed themselves into angels of light; have removed the seeds of error and discord; have maintained the church in the concord of pure religion; and have handed down the genuine worship of God, undiminished, to posterity.

With the same favor, our faithful savior at this time has affirmed his gracious presence in the Dutch churches, which have been most afflicted for many years. For this church was liberated by the powerful hand of God from the tyranny of the Roman antichrist and the horrible idolatry of the papacy; was miraculously preserved many times in the dangers of the long war; and flourished in the concord of true doctrine and discipline to the praise of her God, to the admirable growth of the Republic, and to the joy of the whole Reformed world. But James Arminius and his followers, bearing the name *Remonstrants*, assailed this church with various errors, some old and some new, first secretly and then openly; and, troubling her with scandalous quarrels and obstinate schisms, they brought the church into such a crisis that, had not the mercy of our savior intervened at just the right time, this most flourishing church would have finally been consumed by the horrible fire of dissensions and schisms. But blessed be the Lord forever, who, after hiding his face for a

moment from us (who had provoked his wrath and indignation in many ways), has testified to the whole world that he does not forget his covenant nor despise the sighing of his people. For when it appeared that, humanly speaking, there was scarcely any hope of a remedy, he inspired the most illustrious and mighty States General of the Dutch Federation with this mind, that with the advice and direction of the most illustrious and courageous Prince of Orange, they resolved to advance against these raging evils by those legitimate means, which have been sanctioned over the long course of years by the examples of the apostles themselves and the Christian church that followed them, and which have been employed before this with great fruit in the Dutch church as well; and by their authority they convened a synod at Dordrecht from all the provinces which they governed; having sought for it the favor of the most serene and powerful King James of Great Britain and of the most illustrious princes, earls, and republics; and having obtained many of the most esteemed theologians; that by the common judgment of so many theologians of the Reformed church, those doctrines of Arminius and his followers would be judged accurately and by the word of God alone; that true doctrine would be established and the false rejected; and that—by divine blessing—concord, peace, and tranquility would be restored to the Dutch churches. This is that blessing of God in which the Dutch churches rejoice, humbly acknowledging and gratefully proclaiming the mercies of their faithful savior.

Therefore, this venerable synod (prior proclamations having been made and assemblies having been held in all the Dutch churches, by the authority of the Supreme Majesty, for prayer and fasting, to avert the wrath of God and to implore his gracious aid) gathered in the name

of the Lord at Dordrecht, inflamed with love for the divine majesty and for the welfare of the church; and after calling upon the name of God, synod bound itself by a holy oath that it would accept sacred scripture alone as the standard of judgment and that it would operate with a good and clear conscience in examining and judging this cause. Synod diligently and with great patience sought to induce the principal advocates of those doctrines cited before them to explain more fully their notorious opinions concerning the five heads of doctrine and to explain the reasons for their opinions. But when they repudiated the judgment of the synod and refused to answer their questioners in a fair way, neither the admonitions of the synod, nor the orders of the most noble and most magnanimous delegates of the States General, nor even at last the commands of the most illustrious and most powerful lords of the States General could make any progress with them. Synod was forced to take another path by the order of these same lords and by the custom already received from ancient synods: an examination of their doctrine concerning the five points was made from their writings, confessions, and declarations, some previously published, others presented to this synod. Since this has now been accomplished, by the singular grace of God, with the greatest diligence, faith, and conscientiousness and with the consent of each and every one, this synod, for the glory of God and in order to promote the integrity of the truth of salvation, the tranquility of consciences, and the peace and welfare of the Dutch churches, has decided to promulgate the following judgment concerning the aforementioned five heads of doctrine, in which the truth agreeing with the word of God is set forth and the lie contradicting the word of God is rejected.



Article CXIX: The New King and His Kingdom: Abraham, the Friend of God (continued)

“And he believed in Jehovah and He reckoned it to him for righteousness.” — Gen. 15:6

If we consider the faith of Abraham, the faith by which he was justified before God, in the light of the New Testament, there can be little doubt that it was more than mere trust in God in the general sense of the word. It was not a general faith in God as it is sometimes explained, as if this general faith as such would be righteousness with God, but it was saving faith, faith in Christ, faith in the God of his salvation.

This is plainly taught in Scripture.

In John 8:56 we have the remarkable statement of Jesus to the Jews: “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad.” Jesus is engaged in a conversation with the unbelieving Jews. He had told them: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, if a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.” Because of this statement the Jews think him a blasphemer and say that he has a devil. Abraham, so they say, is dead, and all the prophets are dead. And now Jesus claims that the keeping of his sayings brings life eternal. Is he, then, greater than their father Abraham? Whom does he make himself? And it is in answer to these deliberations of the unbelieving Jews that Jesus says: “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad.” The contrast with the attitude of the Jews is evident. Abraham lived long before they did. Abraham lived at a time when Christ’s day was not yet. Yet he longed with great rejoicing to see the day of Christ. But they lived right in that day. They saw him and might touch him. He spoke to them and they heard his words. Yet, though they lived at

the day for which their father Abraham longed, they did not believe. There is for them a stinging rebuke in these words of the Savior.

But let us consider a moment what is implied in these words.

Abraham saw the day of Christ and was glad!

These last words of the answer of the Savior to the unbelieving Jews have been variously interpreted. According to some, Jesus refers in these words to Abraham in paradise. The saints above, the members of the church triumphant, so Jesus teaches here, according to them, are in living contact with what happens in the kingdom of God. Abraham knew that Christ came in the flesh. He was aware of the fact that Jesus was now in the world, and that the day for which he had longed had finally arrived. And the words: “And he saw it and was glad” must be understood, not as referring to Abraham when he was living in the land of Canaan, but to him in paradise, conscious of the fulfillment of the promise. According to others, however, these words refer to the very time that Abraham was on earth. Abraham 2000 years before the fulfillment of the promise saw the day of Christ, he saw the realization of all that God had promised unto him; he saw the coming of Christ in the flesh and the salvation God prepared through him. But he saw it afar off. In the first place he saw that day because he believed in Jehovah, who had given him the promise of a great seed, in whom all the families of the earth were to be blessed. He grasped that promise by faith. He knew it, as the promise that had been given to the fathers of old, the promise that had first been revealed in paradise, and for the realization

of which the saints before him had longed and suffered. He knew that it was not merely a promise which Jehovah had given him, but that it was **the** promise, the promise of the covenant, the gospel of salvation for which God's people longed. Abraham knew and believed the promise. And because he believed he saw in the promise the day of Christ. But in the second place he also saw the beginning of the realization of that promise in the birth of Isaac. For many long years he did not even see the possibility of its fulfillment. Sarah was barren and he had no son, and the realization of the promise could not be seen, even in its beginning. Time went on till the mother in Sarah was dead, and still there was no beginning of the promised seed. But when Isaac is born this beginning is there. And in Isaac Abraham saw the day of Christ. Seeing Isaac Abraham was glad, not simply because he possessed a son, not even merely because he now saw the possibility of developing into a great nation, but because he knew that this beginning of the fulfillment of the promise was organically connected with the ultimate realization in Christ for which he longed. And thus he saw in Isaac the day of Christ by faith and was glad.

We believe that the latter interpretation is the correct one.

It may be admitted that the former is very well possible. We have no doubt that also the church triumphant knew of and rejoiced in the fulfillment of the promise. The entire church triumphant saw the day of Christ and was glad. Especially when Christ, after all is fulfilled, ascends to heaven and takes his place at the right hand of glory, we can easily understand that the church triumphant rejoiced. He appeared in their midst. He for whom they had longed is now with them. And, therefore, there is in itself nothing absurd in the interpretation which has it that Abraham rejoiced in seeing the day of Christ while he was in paradise above.

But the text leaves the impression that Christ refers to the time when Abraham was living. The first part of Jesus' answer undoubtedly refers to

that time. Abraham rejoiced to see Christ's day when he was still on earth and living as a stranger in the land of promise. And there is no indication that in the second part of this same answer the time must be conceived as different from that referred to in the first part. On the contrary, Jesus continues to use the past tense. If he had meant to refer to Abraham in paradise, he might easily have indicated this by employing the present tense. It would have been literally true: "and he sees it and is glad." Yet, he does not do so. He speaks in the past tense throughout. This would rather indicate that in the entire statement the same time is referred to, namely, the time when Abraham lived on earth. Then Abraham rejoiced greatly to see the day of Christ, then he saw it, and then he was glad. Besides, thus the contrast with the attitude of the unbelieving Jews appears more vividly. The Jews saw the day of Christ, yet they did not see it and were not glad. They rejected him and ascribed his works and words to the devil. Abraham, on the other hand, did not see the day of Christ as they saw it. He lived 2000 years before that day. But he had the faith which is an evidence of things unseen, and by that faith he embraced the promise. And accepting the promise he saw the day of Christ, though not seeing him with his physical eyes in the flesh.

But even if this last part of the statement of Christ would have to be referred to Abraham in paradise, the first part of Jesus' answer still remains. And there is no dispute about the fact that it has reference to the time of Abraham's sojourn in Canaan. And if we had no other evidence in Scripture than this first part of Jesus' answer to the Jews, it would be altogether sufficient as a proof that Abraham's faith was more than a mere general faith in God, that it stretched forward to Christ Jesus and in him to the God of his salvation.

Abraham rejoiced. The word expresses a great rejoicing with a fervent longing. There was in Abraham a tremendous longing to see the day of Christ, to behold the salvation of the Lord. And this longing assumed the character of a

strong hope. And as he was longing for the day of Christ with a strong and firm hope rooted in faith which was its substance, Abraham rejoiced in that hope. He saw the promise afar off. Surely, Abraham's seeing by faith was inferior in degree to that of the church of the new dispensation. He could not as clearly see the things that are not fulfilled. But essentially this makes no difference. Abraham believed in Christ that was to come. In the promise which he had from Jehovah he could see the gospel of salvation. In the God of his salvation he believed and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness.

Thus conceived, a new lights falls on all that Abraham does in the world. It was this tremendous longing for the realization of the promise, for the coming of the salvation of Jehovah, for the establishment of God's kingdom and covenant, that actuated him in his whole life. He must

blindly follow. Not Abraham, but God must lead the way, since he alone knows how he will realize his salvation and ultimately establish his kingdom. Hence, Abraham lived by faith. Actuated by this faith and his strong hope he leaves his country and kindred and goes to the land Jehovah shows him. For that great salvation he follows Jehovah at all times, lives as a stranger and sojourner in a foreign land, and waits for the fulfillment of God's promise. For the kingdom of God Abraham by faith confessed that he was a stranger in the world, and that he looked for a better, that is, an heavenly country.

That this is actually the Scriptural conception of Abraham is still more plainly revealed in Heb. 11:13-16.

But to this passage we must call your attention next week.

—Grand Rapids, Mich.

