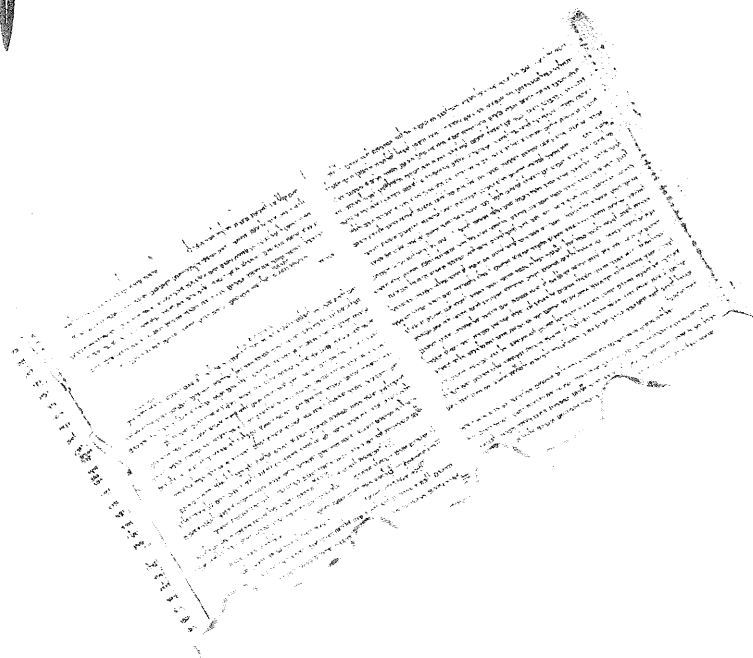




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The
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FOREWORD

Seven students were graduated from Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary on May 12 of this year. Theodore E. Aaberg, Timothy E. Erickson, William B. Kessel, Michael C. Krentz, and Gaylin R. Schmeling received the M. of Div. degree. Otto Trebelhorn and Juan Rubio received the candidate of Theology Diploma. The charge to the seminary graduates, delivered by the seminary president, appears in this issue of the Quarterly.

Also appearing in this issue is an exegetical study of Psalm 8:3-6, by Prof. Rudolph E. Honsey.

An Exegetical study of Matt. 18:15-20 by Prof. J. B. Madson appears in this issue. Readers will recognize this passage as one that is in controversy among us, and ELS pastors especially are asked to pay particular attention to the Editor's Note at the beginning of the article.

Readers will also find an announcement on the 1978 Lutheran Reformation Lectures in this issue.

ELS President W. W. Petersen delegated Dr. N. S. Tjernagel to attend a convocation January 4-6, 1978, at Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, Indiana, on: "Lutheran Confessions in the Contemporary Church." Prof. R. E. Honsey also attended, representing the ELS and Bethany Seminary. Dr. Tjernagel's report on the conference appears in this issue of the Quarterly.

T.A.A.

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CHARGE TO THE GRADUATES
of
BETHANY LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
May 12, 1978

by: Theodore A. Aaberg
Seminary President

Dear friends in Christ, and especially,
dear Seminary Graduates:

If there is one passage of Scripture which, when improperly presented, is conducive to putting people at ease in Zion, it is this one from Jeremiah 6:16 -- "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls ..."

By "improperly presented" we mean that the pastor or teacher presents "the old paths," i.e., the doctrines of Scripture, as divine truth, but without reference to the relation of one doctrine to the other, and especially without reference to the divine power which these truths have today. By improperly presented we mean also that the pastor stresses the "old" as a nostalgic past, to the neglect of the present and the future.

You have been taught the "old paths," the Biblical doctrines, here at the Seminary, and we say this without apology. You are pledged, by your own word, to teach and preach these doctrines to your congregations.

Permit me briefly to remind you of several truths regarding these "old paths" or doctrines.

The Bible is the Word of God, infallible, inerrant, all-powerful. To the so-called moderns, that is a dry, lifeless, archaic teaching, totally inadequate for a dynamic church in our day.

But let me illustrate from Luther:

Luther speaks of action words and command words in Scripture.

Regarding the Lord's Supper the action words are those telling us what took place in the first supper in the upper room, namely, that Jesus said, "This is my body" and having spoken that divine word, his body was truly present. So with the wine and his blood.

Now Jesus has commanded his followers: "This do ... in remembrance of me," and that command word includes our speaking the words of institution over the elements today, and because it is God's Word spoken at God's command, then what those words say, namely, "This is my body" are effective today also when the officiant says them at a legitimate celebration of the Lord's Supper, and Christ's body and blood are truly present also today in the Sacrament.

Luther illustrates this with several examples, e.g., at creation God said: "Let there be a sun and a moon," and there was a sun and a moon as he commanded. But he hasn't commanded us to speak those words and so we can say "Let there be a sun and a moon" until we are blue in the face and nothing will happen. But Luther says: "If . . . we had been commanded to say it, then you would

indeed see whether God is a liar, and whether there would not appear another sun were I to say this to a star or to the heavens. But since there is no such imperative here, of course no sun appears" (LW, 37:183).

So too, in reference to Jesus' miracle of changing water into wine, Luther says: "If there were an imperative that I should speak to the water these declarative words, 'This is wine,' you would see indeed whether wine would not appear" (LW, 37:183).

The same is true with absolution. Jesus told Mary Magdalene: "Your sins are forgiven." That is a declarative. Now if Peter or Paul say to a penitent sinner, "Your sins are forgiven," that is simply a declarative, "nevertheless," Luther says, "the sins are forgiven as the words declare, because it is embraced and commanded in an imperative, since Christ says in the last chapter of John (20:22f), 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any,' etc." (LW, 37:183).

And so the Lutheran Confessions can truthfully say: "It is not the voice or word of the man who speaks it, but it is the Word of God, who forgives sin, for it is spoken in God's stead and by God's command . . . We also teach that God requires us to believe this absolution as much as if we heard God's voice from heaven . . ." (Augs. Conf., Art. XXV, 3-4, Tappert ed., pp. 61-62).

That's how alive and powerful God's Word is today, and as for calling it an "old path" it is old only in the sense that God in His grace has given His Word down through the ages to the present day.

One could treat of other doctrines of Scripture, such as justification, sanctification, and the relation of sanctification to justification. There is power and there is life in the old paths, the doctrines of God's Word.

We are not merely to ask for the old paths to look them over and consider them in an academic way, but to walk in them.

That means

- to hold to them,
- to teach them,
- to live in them,

and it is here where the graduates of our seminary must preach hard and clear and fervently so that these old paths of Scripture stand out ever so clearly and boldly in the hearts and ears of their hearers so that it is as if God himself had just spoken the words to them.

Then we cannot have dead orthodoxy, our congregations cannot grow lax and indifferent to the Gospel, but they will be daily quickened in spirit, moved to repentance and faith, and drawn to live an ever more godly life for the Savior.

Then we and those who hear us shall, as our text promises, find rest for our souls -- not a false rest, not the illusion of rest which afflicts some Christians who are being lulled to sleep while the devil has a field day in their hearts and lives. But true rest, rest for the soul, and rest of a good conscience from the terrors of sin and judgment.

It is to such living convictions and to such a diligent ministry that we summon our graduates in God's name, as we present them for graduation.

Pastor Tweit, chairman of the Board of Regents,
we present to you the class of 1978

five members for the Master of Divinity degree
and

two members for the Candidate of Theology
Diploma

. . . all with the recommendation to the church
for the Office of the Public Ministry.

* * * * *

How beautiful upon the mountains are
the feet of him that bringeth good tid-
ings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth
good tidings of good, that publisheth salva-
tion; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!

Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice;
with the voice together shall they sing:
for they shall see eye to eye, when the
Lord shall bring again Zion.

Break forth into joy, sing together,
ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the Lord
hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed
Jerusalem.

Isaiah 53:7-9

EXEGESIS OF PSALM 8:3-6

(4-7 in Hebrew)

by: Professor R. E. Honsey
Bethany Lutheran College
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The passage assigned to this essayist is the middle part of a psalm that has been, and still is, interpreted in various ways by scholars. There are few passages in the Book of Psalms, or even in the entire Old Testament, where there is a greater difference of opinion in what the inspired author states. As an indication of the various interpretations we shall quote a few passages from various authors. These passages can in general illustrate three different interpretations of this psalm, and of the four assigned verses in particular. We may classify these interpretations as Humanistic, Typical and Messianic.

I. HUMANISTIC. For want of a better word, we use this expression to indicate a strictly human interpretation of this psalm, one which maintains that the psalm treats only of mankind, whether it be the perfect primordial man (Adam and Eve before the fall) or sinful man after the fall. This interpretation ignores and excludes the New Testament references, primarily Heb. 2: 6-8, but also 1 Cor. 15:27 and other quotations or allusions. The following quotations are representative of scholars who espouse that view, and who today are in the majority.

"Here is a psalm that is a mine for the expositor, as well as for any who would meditate

worthily in the eventide. W. E. Addis¹ heads it simply 'A Nature Psalm,' but it is more than that. It has also been called 'a lyric echo of the first chapter of Genesis'; but it is more than that too. It is a psalm of God, nature, and man, and might be called today the psalm of a religious scientist. Some of its phrases have become part of the permanent mental furniture of reflective people."²

"Ps. 8 is an evening hymn in two synth. trimeter octastichs, contrasting the glory of man as creature with the glory of the Creator. The Strs. are enclosed by identical trimeter couplets, praising the name of Yahweh as widespread in all the earth (v. 2a 10). An initial prayer that Yahweh would set His splendour above the heavens, is followed by a contemplation of His strength, in the speech of sucklings, overcoming His enemies; and of the insignificance of man when compared with moon and stars (v. 2b-5). Man made lower than the gods is yet sovereign of all creatures (v. 6-9)."³

John Calvin also interprets this psalm humanistically, in spite of its quotation in Heb. 2: 6-8. He states, in his comments on verse 5 (6): "What the apostle therefore says in that passage concerning the abasement of Christ for a short time, is not intended by him as an explanation of this text; but for the purpose of enriching and illustrating the subject on which he is discoursing, he introduces and accommodates to it what had been spoken in a different sense."⁴ In his rationalistic and humanistic exegesis of this psalm he not only ignores the powerful testimony of the New Testament, but also presumes to read the heart and mind of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews when he states that it "is not

intended by him as an explanation of this text," a prerogative that an exegete ought to refrain from assuming.

II. TYPICAL. Under this kind of interpretation can come a number of varieties. However, we can generalize by stating that this interpretation regards the statements in the psalm as referring first and foremost to man in general, and only secondarily, by application, to the Coming Messiah.

Perhaps the foremost proponent of this interpretation is E. W. Hengstenberg of more than a century ago. We must quote him at some length. "Passages from this Psalm are applied to Christ in the New Testament; and this has led many expositors to refer the whole Psalm to Him alone. Not only, however, do many internal grounds oppose this view, but it is not sufficiently confirmed by the authority of the New Testament. This will appear on an examination of the particular passages. In Matt. xxi. 16, Christ rebukes the Pharisees, who could not contain themselves because children were crying to him Hosanna, by bringing to their remembrance the 2d verse of this Psalm: 'Have ye never read, Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise?' From this quotation, it does not at all follow that the Lord explained the Psalm to refer to Himself. It is enough that the idea uttered in the Psalm, -- viz. the high-minded, who proudly shut their heart to the impression of what is Divine, withstanding, and impiously blaspheming it, are put to shame by the cheerful acknowledgement thereof, uttered by the unsophisticated mind of childhood, -- is here also exemplified. The stroke which the Lord here dealt to the Pharisees, was a completely silencing one; they must have felt it in

their innermost conscience. The second quotation from this Psalm, in Heb. ii. 6-9, appears to favour more the Messianic interpretation. There vers. 4,5, are applied to Christ's glory, and His lordship over all creation. But neither are we necessitated by this passage to refer the Psalm, in its primary and proper sense, to Christ. Although David, in the first instance, speaks of the human race generally, the writer of the Epistle might still justly refer what is said to Christ, in its highest and fullest sense. For whereas the glory of human nature, here delineated, has been so dimmed through the fall, that only some few slight flashes of it are seen, and therefore what is here said refers rather to the idea than to the reality, it appeared anew in Christ in full splendour. The writer of the Epistle describes the dominion obtained for humanity in Christ over creation, whereby it was exalted above the angels, in the words of the 4th and 5th verse of this Psalm. The thoroughly incidental reference of the beginning of ver. 5, as rendered in the LXX., to the humiliation of Christ, is not properly an exposition, but a popular adaptation. This is unquestionably the case also with the third quotation, in 1 Cor. xv. 27. Paul there refers the words of ver. 6, 'Thou hast put all things under His feet,' to Christ, because the power of humanity over the whole creation, lost and changed in Adam to a base servitude, was regained in Christ, and that, indeed, in a still higher and more perfect manner than it was possessed by Adam."⁵

In his introduction to this psalm, H. C. Leupold also maintains that the psalm is Typical rather than directly Messianic.⁶ Leupold was for many years Professor of Old Testament at Capital Seminary,

Columbus, Ohio, and died only a few years ago. We must let two more brief quotations illustrating the Typical Interpretation suffice. Both are from books of men of about a century ago, George Phillips and J. J. S. Perowne.

"This is a Psalm of thanksgiving to God for the exaltation of man above all terrestrial creatures. It is quoted by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews with reference to Christ; but whether it is to be considered a prophecy, or whether it is quoted simply because it describes by way of accommodation the character of our Lord does not appear certain It is appropriately applied to our Lord by way of illustration; for this power and dignity did not obtain their full consummation till He became invested with our nature, and was exalted 'above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.'"⁷

"The Messianic import of the Psalm is not of a direct kind. It is, however, necessarily implied in that mysterious relation of man to God, and that kingship over the inferior creatures of which the Psalm speaks, for this rests upon the Incarnation. Man is what he is, because the Son of God has taken upon Him man's nature. Man is very near to God, higher than the angels, because the Christ is both God and Man. This is the profound truth on which the Messianic character of the Psalm depends. This truth is the key to its interpretation."⁸ While this comes close to the Messianic Interpretation, it still falls short of making the Psalm a direct, linear Messianic Psalm, and is therefore rather Typical.

III. MESSIANIC. This interpretation maintains that the psalm is a direct prophecy of the Messiah in which from the outset the psalmist is speaking, not of mankind in general, but of the One True Man who in the fulness of the time assumed human nature and who during the state of humiliation did not generally make use of His divine prerogatives and powers and later during the state of exaltation exercised those powers, also according to His human nature. This psalm, particularly in the verses under consideration (3-6 or 4-7), does not, then, speak of other human beings, but rather of the Son of Man who, in the New Testament, repeatedly referred to Himself as such, echoing that expression from verse 4 (5). It is this interpretation which is held by the present writer, and we shall attempt to present it and defend it. Before we take up the exegesis, we shall quote a few statements from exegetes who have held the rectilinear Messianic Interpretation.

First we shall quote from the Prince of All Exegetes, the Great Reformer, Martin Luther. From the very outset he maintains that this psalm is a direct prophecy of the Messiah. We must content ourselves with one short excerpt from his excellent commentary. "This psalm is one of the beautiful psalms and a glorious prophecy about Christ, where David describes Christ's person and kingdom and teaches who Christ is; what kind of kingdom He has and how it is formed; where this King rules, namely, in all lands and yet in heaven; and the means by which His kingdom is founded and regulated, namely, only through the Word and faith, without sword and armor."⁹

With regard to the expression "Son of Man," George Stoeckhardt, whose commentary clearly

presents the Messianic Interpretation, has this to say: ". . . Jesus often spoke of Himself in the third person referring to Himself as the Son of man. That designation is evidently borrowed from Psalm 8. Jesus was very fond of being called the Son of man. It was something extraordinary that He dwelt among men as a man. He had come from above and had assumed the flesh and blood of men. He took pleasure in being a man and living as a man."¹⁰

In his General Remarks on this psalm following his verse-by-verse commentary, George O. Lillegard states: "In regard to the interpretation of this psalm, it may as well be frankly stated that hardly any writer of the present age considers it a direct prophecy of Christ. But over against the virtual concensus of modern commentators, we confidently place the directly Messianic interpretation given by the N. T., the ancient church, and the older Lutheran exegetes."¹¹ He then mentions the Typical Interpretation as held by Franz Delitzsch, and shows why he cannot accept it, and also expresses his objections to the Modern Interpretation (referred to as Humanistic on p. 1 of this study).

We shall at this time read the entire psalm (9 verses in English, 10 in Hebrew), and then offer the following translation. It may be of interest to compare in various respects the translations of vv. 3-6 (4-7). Thereupon we shall very briefly summarize the opening verses, proceed to a more detailed exegesis of the four assigned verses, and again briefly summarize the last three verses, the last of which is a repetition of verse 1 (English) or 2 (Hebrew). The translation will here be numbered according to the HEBREW rather than the English system.

[כוננתה:]

כִּי־אֲרָאָה שְׁמִידָה מֵעֲשֵׂי אֲצַבְעֹתֶיךָ יַרְחֹ וְכֹכָבִים אֲשֶׁר
מָדָה אֲנִישׁ כִּרְתוּבָנָנוּ וּבֶן־אָדָם כִּי תִפְקְדֵנוּ:
וְתַחֲסֶרְהוּ מֵעַט מֵאֱלֹהִים וְכְבוֹד־וְהַדָּר תִּטְמָרְהוּ:
וְתִמְשִׁלְהוּ כַּמְעֲשֵׂי יָרֵךְ כֹּל שָׂתָה תַחַת־רַגְלָיו:

1. For the musical director, upon the Gittith, a psalm of David.
2. YAHWEH, our Lord, how magnificent is Your Name in all the earth, Who have placed Your glory upon the heavens!
3. Out of the mouth of babies and sucklings You have founded strength, because of Your adversaries, to silence the enemy and the avenger.
4. When(ever) I see Your heavens, the works of Your fingers, moon and stars that You have set up,
5. What is Man that You remember Him, or the Son of Man that You pay attention to Him?
6. For You make Him lack God a little while, then with glory and honor You crown Him.
7. You make Him Ruler over the works of Your hands, everything You place under His feet,
8. Sheep and oxen, all of them, and also the beasts of the field,
9. The birds of heaven and the fish of the sea, crossing the paths of the seas.
10. YAWWEH, our Lord, how magnificent is Your Name in all the earth!

We shall now offer only a few brief comments on the first three verses.

1. For the musical director, upon the Gittith, a psalm of David.

The first word refers to the musical director (KJV: chief musician), who was in charge of the musical part of the service. The second expression is variously taken as either the melody (Leupold: "After the tune of the treaders of the winepress," p. 101) or as a musical instrument, probably one "which originated from Gath, a city of the Philistines" (Stoekhardt, p. 26). The latter is the preferable interpretation. The last expression clearly indicates that the psalm was composed by David.

2. YAHWEH, our Lord, how magnificent is Your name in all the earth, Who have placed Your glory upon the heavens!

This verse begins with the name of God, best transliterated YAHWEH, followed by the title Lord, which expresses His sovereignty, and is very appropriate for this verse. The word רַב־עֲלֹמָי literally means "broad," "wide," and has the meaning of "mighty" in Ugaritic. It can be rendered by "magnificent," "majestic," or "excellent." The chief grammatical problem in this verse concerns the word אֲנִי , which is taken various ways by the scholars. Time permits us only to state that we feel it best to take it as a form of the infinitive construct of אָנַן after the analogy of the form אֲנִי from אָנַן in Gen. 46:3, as Delitzsch (p. 131) and Lillegard (p. 28) take it. In his excellent commentary on this psalm Luther emphasizes proclaiming the glory of God. That naturally leads into the next verse.

3. Out of the mouth of babes, and sucklings
You have founded strength, because of
Your enemies, to silence the enemy and
the avenger.

The fact that this verse is quoted in the New Testament does not decisively make it a Messianic psalm, but it lends considerable support to the Messianic interpretation. The verses that follow clearly mark it as Messianic, since they are quoted in Hebrews 2. In turn, they help make a more cogent case for the Messianic nature of this verse. This verse is quoted in Matt. 21:16, which immediately follows upon the Palm Sunday incident. The New Testament quotation follows the Septuagint in using the word αἶνον, "praise," for the Hebrew יָצָוּ, "strength." Admittedly "strength" or "power" is more general, and includes "praise," but it is also more. Luther does not limit this verse to children in the chronological or physical sense, but refers it to "plain, simple, unsophisticated people, with simple faith" who "let themselves be led and directed by God like children."¹² Luther, Stoeckhardt and Lillegard take אֲדֹנָי and אֲדֹנָי as referring to Satan, the Arch-enemy. The last word is a hithpa'el participle and might well be translated as the "one exercising himself in vengeance," in order to bring out both the intensive and the reflexive aspects of the hithpa'el pattern. These brief remarks now bring us to the four verses that we shall give special attention to.

4. "When(ever) I see Your heavens, the works
of Your fingers, moon and stars that You
have set up,"

The vocabulary of this verse is relatively simple, but the thought is profound. The first word, יָצָוּ, when followed by the imperfect tense, is generally translated "when." We have listed

as a viable option "whenever," because that is really what it means in this context. The second word is the 1 com. sing. imperfect qal of the verb יָצַק . Under the older terminology the form יָצַקְתָּ is called "future," which is a misnomer, and indicates what a mistake it is to restrict the concept of the Hebrew tenses to time. The essence of the imperfect tense in Hebrew is to present an action or a condition in progress or in repeated instances and as such it views it as going on or as in a state of development. This is in contrast to the perfect tense, which views an action or condition as completed, and in its totality. Whereas the imperfect is most frequently translated in future time and the perfect in past time in English, such is not always the case. The time must be determined by the context. Here the present time in English is the natural choice, since what is stated applies to past, present and future alike. The third and fourth words are best translated "the works of Your fingers." Here we have an anthropomorphism. It is significant that, instead of "the works of Your hands" (indicating strength) we have "the works of Your fingers" (indicating skill). "The fingers are the instruments by which we construct a piece of work -- perhaps indicating skill rather than strength; and hence so used in respect to God, as it is by his skill that the heavens have been made."¹⁴ The last four words of this verse stand in apposition to the two preceding words. Since there is no article on either word, we have rendered them "moon and stars." However, because there is only one moon, it is justifiable to translate "the moon," and then by implication also "the stars," since He made them all. Those words are further described by the short relative clause אֲשֶׁר יָצַקְתָּ יָצַקְתָּ , "that You have set up." The last word is a verb in the perfect tense. Here the present

perfect in the English is the best manner of translating it, since it speaks of an event that is completed, having been done in the past, but having its results evident now in the present. The form is the 2 masc. sing. perfect *pilēl* (*pōlēl*) of the verb *לָבַן*, and it means "establish," "prepare," "set up." The *pilēl* is a form corresponding to the *piēl* (intensive, sometimes causative) of certain irregular verbs. The vowel in the middle syllable is lengthened, in a pause form. The word has an additional final *i*, as is sometimes the case after a long vowel. This sentence is a dependent clause, forming the protasis of the one that follows.

In this verse God's wonderful creation is referred to. It is of interest that the moon and the stars are mentioned, but not the sun. That fact has led many commentators to regard this as a "night psalm."¹⁵ At any rate, it does picture the splendor of the heavens as they appear at night, and are reminiscent of Gen. 15:5, in which God tells Abram to look up into the sky and try to count the stars. Luther, who makes a few questionable identifications in this verse,¹⁶ has many interesting and worthwhile things to say on this verse. Speaking of the pollution of sin, he laments the weakness of nature now compared to the time before the Fall, but that in heaven the sun and moon will give much brighter light.¹⁷ No doubt he spoke figuratively, since he was surely aware of the fact that in heaven there will be no need of created light, as we read in Rev. 22:5.

It is interesting to note that, of the commentators who accept the direct Messianic Interpretation, most begin with the thought that the next two verses are speaking of man, but then relate that it is Man in a very special sense,

the Messiah. Luther, however, from the outset relates the psalm to the Messiah. We shall now turn to the first of two particularly crucial verses in this psalm, and, with the help of God the Holy Spirit, try to arrive at the meaning.

5. "What is Man that You remember Him, or the Son of Man that You pay attention to Him?"

There is obviously an ellipsis at the beginning of this sentence. In order to connect it syntactically with the preceding verse, we would expect a phrase such as "I exclaim," "I declare," or a similar one. This verse, then, is an apodosis or a conclusion that corresponds to the protasis that is expressed in verse 4 (Eng. 3). It is the natural reaction of the Psalmist or speaker when he beholds the grand galaxy of the skies, a sight that must have been even more impressive to David and Abraham than to us 2000 or 3000 years later when pollution of all kinds obscures our view of the grand universe that they beheld so clearly. There is, therefore, no doubt that, along with the conclusion drawn in this verse there is also a striking contrast physically and externally from the greater to the lesser.

Before we take into account the Hebrew of this verse (which, incidentally, is not particularly difficult and ought not to be especially controversial), let us make a few remarks about the various translations. The Septuagint is basically in line with the Hebrew text. We might mention that it uses the same word, ἄνθρωπος, for two different Hebrew words, אִישׁ and אָדָם, revealing a limitation in vocabulary on the part of the translators. It is significant that in translating the two verbs the Septuagint here

shows itself to be less tied down to time than it usually is in its treatment of the Hebrew verbs, in that it uses the present tense instead of the future. The mood in the Greek is indicative. The Latin Vulgate also uses the present indicative, as do most of the other translations. The majority of English translations render the first verb "are (art) mindful of." Other translations, none of which differ materially, are: "take thought of," "spare a thought for," "think of," "keep in mind," "rememberest," "bother with," and "consider." The second verb, which corresponds to the first in synonymous parallelism, is translated in the King James Version "visitest," and also in several others by that form or the more modern "visit." However, a variety of other translations, most of them more easily understood by a modern reader, can be found, including "come and visit," "care(st) for," "take thought of," "heed," "inspectest," "thinkest of," "claim thy care," "take into account," "have respect to," and "pay attention to." We would feel that, in the translation of the nouns for "man," the Good News Bible and the Living Bible overstep the bounds in rendering the second expression "mere man" and "mere puny man" respectively. In its typical manner of expanding and contracting the text in accordion fashion, the Living Bible destroys the poetic parallelism by omitting the first member and translating it: "I cannot understand how you can bother with mere puny man, to pay any attention to him." (A commuting train is hardly the ideal place to produce a Bible translation.) In general, however, there is agreement among the versions in the meaning of the words of this verse.

Before we turn to a discussion of the interpretation of this verse, we must take note of the

Hebrew text, and try to arrive at precisely what is stated. A look at the notes on the bottom of the page in the Hebrew Bible will inform us that there are very few variant readings on these four verses, and none of any great significance.¹⁸ No variant readings are found for this verse. This verse begins with a direct question. The first word is significantly מִי , "what" rather than מִי־ , "who," thereby giving emphasis to quality rather than identification. It is implied, but not stated, in the second strophe of the verse. There the word אִישׁ lends a symmetrical balance. The first word for "man" is אָדָם . While like the other word, אִישׁ , it means "man" in the sense of "mankind," it has a different connotation, which is often borne out in its usage. The German word "Mensch" expresses it rather well. Delitzsch remarks that "according to the usage of the language, it describes man from the side of his impotence, frailty, and mortality (vis. cii. 15, Isa. li. 12, and on Gen. iv. 26)."¹⁹ The last-mentioned passage significantly states that Seth named his son Enosh. That godly man had begun to see the toll that sin was already taking, and indicated such awareness by the name that he gave his son, who like all others except Christ was born in sin after the Fall. The other word for man is אָדָם , which also means "man" in the sense of "mankind." Related to the word for ground, אָדָם and the word for "red," אָדָם (the soil has a reddish tinge), it expresses the means by which God created man, Gen. 2:7. It emphasizes the distinction of man from the other creatures, and as such it served well as the name for the first human being. In this verse the one spoken of is called אָדָם - אִישׁ as well as אָדָם . We shall hope to show that those

two expressions are very suitable for the One distinct individual whom we maintain is described here, but first we must come to grips with a few interpretations. The two verbs, each of which is the last word of a strophe, are identical in their identification: 2 masc. sing. imperfect qal with the 3 masc. sing. objective suffix, formed with the nun-energetic, in which the \bar{n} of the suffix $\bar{n}n$ is assimilated into the \bar{n} that follows. This can give the verb more emphasis and effect.²⁰ While according to the form of these verbs they could be either indicative or subjunctive, we prefer to take them as indicative, as do also most of the translators and commentators. As for the precise meaning of the verbs in the simple pattern (qal), the first verb, $\bar{n}n$, is given the following meanings in the lexicons: "remember," "recall," "call to mind," "consider," "think of."²¹ The second verb, $\bar{n}n$, has the following meanings listed: "attend to," "visit," "muster," "appoint," "look after," "take care of," "long for," "commission," "call to account for," etc.²² Obviously that word has a variety of meanings. In this context, however, the first verb is helpful in establishing the meaning of the second. Most of the English translations are justifiable. The last verb has the connotation of turning one's attention to someone, either to punish (e.g. Exod. 20:5) or to bless (e.g. Ruth 1:6). Hence the word "visit" in many English translations has both meanings. Since such is the case, it is better to translate this last verb with an English word such as "care for" or "pay attention to" or "show concern for."

The rationalistic or humanistic interpretation of this passage makes it apply merely to humanity, and maintains that it has no reference whatever,

either directly or indirectly, to the Messiah. It ignores the New Testament references, including Heb. 2:6-8, thus implying that it is irrelevant or a misquotation. Such is the case not only with this verse, but with those that follow, so we shall not repeat ourselves there. Since we cannot ignore Heb. 2:6-8, 1 Cor. 15:27, or Matt. 21:16, unless we assume those writers to have been either ignorant or guilty of deception, we must renounce the humanistic interpretation of this passage. We might add that we ought to refrain from using this verse as a proof text for the frailty and sinfulness of man, since it rather refers to that Man who took our place and who voluntarily assumed our human nature and in His state of humiliation refrained from using His divine powers (cf. Philip. 2:6-8) and who indeed was counted as the greatest sinner (2 Cor. 5:21) and underwent deep humiliation (Ps. 22:1-21; Is. 52:13--53:12; the Passion History) for us. A. L. Graebner's DOCTRINAL THEOLOGY does not list this verse under anthropology (pp. 55,56), and Franz Pieper's only reference to it in his CHRISTLICHE DOGMATIK is in reference to the humiliation and exaltation of Christ (II, p. 310), where he cites it along with Is. 53 and Ps. 110. There are several passages that we can use to give scriptural proof for man's lowliness and sinfulness: Gen. 3:19, 1 Cor. 13:47, Eccles. 12:7, and many others.

Of those who maintain the Typical Interpretation of this passage, making it refer first to ordinary man and then to the Messiah, there are a number of varieties. We must here restrict ourselves to two: 1) Man in his primordial sinlessness and holiness, perfect man in Eden, which narrows it down to only two people: Adam and Eve, and no doubt for only a short time. Those who

hold this view put much emphasis on Gen. 1:26, in which the language is strikingly similar to later verses in this psalm. We shall hope to point out, however, that there is one important difference between that verse and verse 7 of our psalm.

2) Man in his sinful fallen state. There are more advocates of this view than of the former. Some want to select various elements from each. Either of these views are held by all of those who want to make this psalm speak either entirely or in part of mankind. We are therefore treating it here in an attempt to refute both the Humanistic and the Typical Interpretation.

The first view is espoused by Leupold, a basically conservative Lutheran commentator who not infrequently manifested linguistic weaknesses as well as an overcautious attitude toward accepting the Messianic Interpretation of certain psalms. Both statements will, we are confident, be supported by what we have to say about his interpretation of this verse, and those that follow. Since Leupold is here talking about man in what he claims to be the state of primordial innocence, but states it under the next verse (Heb. 6, Eng. 5), we must turn to his comments on that verse in order to understand what he means by "man" and "Son of man" in this verse. We find no fault with his translation of either of the two words: "mortal man" rather well translates the first; "son of man" is almost universal for the second. However, his exegesis of these two verses is shoddy, even contradictory. We shall quote a paragraph from his exegesis of verse 6, since it pertains to 5:

"In any case, the writer views the account of the creation of man as asserting that man was placed so high on the scale of created beings

(for he is himself the very image of God) that man "lacks but little of God" -- as BDB renders the phrase. The reference is obviously to the primordial man, the first Adam before the fall, in the fullness of his powers and attributes, the very reflection of the majesty of the Almighty, who had patterned man after Himself. If someone might object that angels stood much higher in the scale than man, it must be remembered that they were from the outset 'ministering spirits' (Heb. 1:14) whereas man, as the words following (vv. 6-8) in our psalm indicate, was assigned a position of rule and authority over all things in the world. Nowhere is man's dignity asserted more clearly and boldly than in this passage. But we again remind the reader that the reference is to man before the fall."²³

Even if we were to ignore Heb. 2:6-8, we could find from the words for man in this verse evidence that would make Leupold's contention contradictory and impossible. We shall give two reasons, one in connection with each of the two terms used in this verse for "man."

1. The expression $\psi\tilde{\iota}\tilde{\iota}\tilde{\kappa}$ is NOT applicable to Adam in his state of innocence. To use that word of Adam or Eve in their original state of sinlessness would be out of keeping with the connotation of the word, and even contradictory. The word $\psi\tilde{\iota}\tilde{\iota}\tilde{\kappa}$ has the connotation of "weakness," "wretchedness," "mortality" that has come as a consequence of sin. While it could apply to Adam and Eve AFTER the fall, it could not apply to them in their state of primordial perfection. On the other hand $\pi\tilde{\iota}\tilde{\iota}\tilde{\kappa}$ was a very suitable name for the first man, since for at least a short time he was the only human being, and could also well

be borne by him the rest of his life, the name $\omega \text{ } \aleph \aleph$ would be a misnomer before the fall. Only after man had realized the toll that sin had taken on mankind did the name ENOSH become an appropriate appellation for a human being. Significantly it was Seth, a godly man who had a consciousness of sin, who named his son ENOSH. Gen. 4:26.

2. The expression $\aleph \aleph \aleph \aleph \aleph \aleph$ is equally inapplicable to Adam. In fact, it would have been ludicrous to name the FIRST MAN "son of Adam" or "son of man." He who had no earthly father or mother could NEVER be named that. Likewise, although in a unique sense Eve descended from Adam, she was by no means $\aleph \aleph \aleph \aleph \aleph \aleph$, for in the singular no woman is ever called "ben," but always "bath." She would have to have been $\aleph \aleph \aleph \aleph \aleph \aleph \aleph \aleph$, but without a mother. However, never is she referred to as a daughter of Adam, but as $\aleph \aleph \aleph \aleph$, which means "woman" and "wife." We therefore conclude that it is impossible to relate this verse to sinless man in paradise. As we shall see in our exegesis of verse 7 (Eng. 6), the important word $\aleph \aleph$ is all-inclusive, whereas Gen. 1:26 does not include as much, but is limited to visible physical creatures.

As for attributing this verse to fallen, sinful man, to any or all human beings after Adam and Eve, we must readily concede that both expressions for man would be applicable to fallen man. However, the last half of the next verse and in particular the following verse (7, Eng.6) would make that highly questionable. They apply only partially and imperfectly, since man's dominion over nature after the fall diminished considerably. And in that respect, the quotation of v. 7 in 1 Cor. 15:27, as we see when we

read that verse in context, makes such an identification highly improbable. And, of course, Heb. 2:6-8 ought to clinch the matter for anyone who takes seriously the relationship and harmony between the Old and the New Testaments. To deny that is to deny one of the basic hermeneutical principles: "Scripture interprets Scripture."

Assuming that we adhere to that principle, we are in reality left with only one tenable interpretation of this passage and of the psalm as a whole: that these verses refer to the Promised Messiah, True God from eternity, who in the fulness of the time was born True Man: Jesus Christ, who preferred to refer to Himself as the Son of Man. While at first it may seem that He does not fit the designation ENOSH, in reality He does so in a remarkable manner. Even though He Himself was perfect, holy, sinless, without any frailty or weakness, as True Man in His state of humiliation Jesus took upon Himself all sins, assumed weaknesses and frailties, became subject to disgrace and abuse, and suffered and died for all. In that sense the word שׂוֹמֵר -- weak, frail, mortal, sinful man -- fits our Savior very well in His state of humiliation. In Dan. 7:13,14 (from the Aramaic portion of the book) the Messiah is called שׂוֹמֵר בְּרִי , the Son of Man, the second word of which, though etymologically equivalent to the Hebrew cognate שׂוֹמֵר , as a phrase corresponds to the phrase בֶּן אָדָם in Hebrew, an expression that is found in the Hebrew portion of Daniel (eg. 8:17). The latter phrase is repeatedly used in the Book of Ezekiel, though obviously there it refers to the Prophet Ezekiel. And yet it points forward to the corresponding expression in the New Testament, $\text{ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου}$, "the Son of Man," used of

Jesus Christ 78 times. While it is used mostly of Jesus in His state of humiliation, it is also used of Him in His state of exaltation, e.g., in Matt. 19:28. There is therefore no point in talking about poor, frail, mortal man in the generic sense in these verses, but rather about the Messiah, who by His own free choice assumed our frailty, bore our sins, suffered and died for our salvation.

6. "For You make Him lack God a little while, then with glory and honor You crown Him."

There is so much in this verse that it perplexes one how and where to begin, and what to say as well as what to omit. Again before studying the Hebrew words and conducting the exegesis, we ought to look at the versions, most of which, as you will soon discover, differ considerably from the above. The Greek Septuagint translation, which was good on verses 4 and 5, is unfortunately rather poor on this verse. It is wrong in expressing the Hebrew on one word, rather inexact on another, and open to misunderstanding on the third. We shall take them up in connection with the Hebrew words after a cursory evaluation of some of the translations. Essentially the same can be said of the Latin Vulgate, which generally leans heavily on the Septuagint. On this verse very few of the translations are acceptable. Many follow the Septuagint in rendering מַלְאָכִים "angels," which in this context is untenable, particularly when we consider the meaning of the verb that introduces the verse. In this verse some translations import polytheism (THE JERUSALEM BIBLE, NEW ENGLISH BIBLE, TODAY'S ENGLISH VERSION, NEW WORLD TRANSLATION, BASIC ENGLISH, GELINEAU, ANCHOR), others say

simply "divine," and in fact the minority translate it "God." Beck follows the Septuagint rather than the Hebrew Bible in translating the verb. Except for stylistic differences, this writer would basically agree with the following translations of this verse: LUTHER'S BIBLE, STOECKHARDT, LILLEGARD and LUTHER in Vol. 12. (The 1964 Revision of Luther's Translation, does NOT represent Luther's position, but the revisers.) We would differ with ROBERT YOUNG'S TRANSLATION on the word "Godhead" ("God" would be better), with DRIVER on the expression "but little" (it is rather an adverb of time than of degree) and on the same expression with LEUPOLD. Stoeckhardt's version (translated very literally in this case by H. W. Degner) is correct, but very awkward.

Just a few remarks about the tense in English of the two verbs would be in order before we look more closely at the words in Hebrew. You will soon notice that all three basic English time-tenses are represented: past, present and future. (Such is also the case in many of the verses in Isaiah 53.) When one is aware of the flexibility and fluidity of the Hebrew tenses time-wise, this is not strange. Since the one imperfect in verse 4 and the two imperfects in verse 5 are by most translators rendered in the present tense, that tense in English appears to be the best choice also for this verse as well as for the first verb in the seventh verse, which is also imperfect. The last verb in verse 7, a perfect in the Hebrew language, also appears to be best in the present. The only verb which we have translated in the past time is the last verb in verse 4, which clearly speaks of an event that took place in the past, but since its effects are still evident, the present perfect is the best time-slot in English.

However, we feel that all of the other verbs can best be expressed in present time.

In spite of the wide divergence in interpretations that we find on this verse, the meaning of the six words is not particularly difficult. Even the first three words, each of which is translated and interpreted in numerous ways, ought not pose any great problem to one who carefully consults the Hebrew. It would be best to take the words in the order in which they appear.

וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה is 2 masc. sing. imperfect piel with waw-consecutive prefix (the only one in this psalm) and 3 masc. sing. objective suffix, but not with the energetic nun as twice in verse 5. Note the retention of the daghesh forte in both the ו and the ה in spite of the ׀ (shewa) under each. In the past we have felt that the presence of the waw-consecutive would make an English past tense preferable (and it no doubt is preferable to the future), but we now feel that it is justifiable to translate the verb in the present even with the waw-consecutive, since it does not necessarily indicate a temporal relationship but rather a casual relationship to the preceding. J. Wash Watts cites as examples of such a relationship 2 Sam. 14:5, Exod. 2:10 and Is. 53:1,2.²⁴ This verb, וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה, is found 23 times in the Old Testament, according to a concordance;²⁵ 19 times in the simple qal, 2 times in the Piel (both causative), and 2 times in the hiphil (also causative). In the qal, the verb means "lack," "be in want of," as in Ps. 23:1. It may also mean "diminish," "decrease," as in Gen. 8:3,5. Both meanings are listed in two standard lexicons that we generally use.²⁶ However, in the majority of instances the meaning is "lack," "be in want of," "be without." In the piel it

means "cause to lack" and not "cause to be less." Brown-Driver-Briggs on p. 341 translates the first half of this verse: "and thou didst make him lack little of God," which may be ambiguous and which suggests degree rather than time, but it does express the meaning of the verb. Koehler-Baumgartner defines it as "cause to lack in comparison with" on p. 320. That also is only partly acceptable. The Greek (Septuagint) renders it ἡλάττωσας, which is rather weak and inexact, since it means "make less," "make smaller," "lessen," "diminish," "lower," or "detract from."²⁷ We are convinced that it is not the matter of comparison or degree, but rather that of lacking, being without, in the verb.

The next word, לְיָדָי , is also variously understood and rendered. Some say "a little," others "but little" or simply "little." By way of contrast "a little" means something in comparison with nothing, whereas "little" or "but little" means little in comparison with much. However, in one respect they express essentially the same thing: the concept of degree. Now admittedly the word לְיָדָי in its primary meaning expresses degree, as a study of the passages listed in the lexicons will indicate. However, there are a few instances in which the word expresses time, e.g. Is. 10:25, Is. 29:17, Hag. 2:6 and Job 24:24.²⁸ Also the expression לְיָדָי in Ps. 2:12 is by most expositors taken as temporal. The Greek translation of the word in this verse is βραχύ τι, which might be construed as either time or degree, preferably time. It literally means "something little" or "something short." Greek lexicons list the word under space, time, quantity, and quality.²⁹ Luther, Stoeckhardt, Lillegard, and Beck take the word temporally.

The third word is in itself clear: מַלְאָכִים . While it may at times be used of angels or other

heavenly beings, there is no evidence whatever from the context that would substantiate or support such an interpretation or such a translation as in the Septuagint, which is echoed in many of the translations. Also unsatisfactory is the abstract term "Godhead," as in Young's translation (13). "A god" or "gods" is also unwarranted, for it is ruled out by the fact that the Bible clearly disavows the existence of such gods. Polytheism or even henotheism is foreign to the Old Testament. The expression "gods" is used only in condemning such figments of the imagination, as in the First Commandment and in other passages, for example in Isaiah. The only warranted translation of *לֹא יִבְרַח* in this passage is God. And so we translate it: "For you make Him lack God a little while." Although his translation of these words is cumbersome, Stoeckhardt has some very perceptive insights and instructive words about it. He says: "The thought expressed here is this: 'Thou hast caused him to want a little while away from God.' When we say, a man is wanting bread, he is in want from lack of having bread, not in want because of a lack of bread. The Psalmist is here saying that man lacks a little in the matter of having or possessing God, not lacking in being God. In Eccl. 4:8 a similar expression is used. 'For whom do I labor and bereave my soul of good?' Literally, '... and caused my soul to be in want or be away from good.' When man is said to be 'in want of God,' it means God has withdrawn from him, has withdrawn His hand from him, does no longer care for or protect him."³⁰

This first half of the verse expresses the humiliation of Jesus, but more specifically a certain "little while" during His deepest humiliation. In reality it does not refer to the greater period

in His deepest degradation and suffering, when in a very special sense He was "without God," forsaken by His heavenly Father, as was graphically predicted by David in Psalm 22, the opening words of which He spoke 1000 years later from the cross: "MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAST THOU FORSAKEN ME?"

During those moments He suffered the worst punishment anyone could ever suffer: the very experience of HELL, the worst of which is a separation from God, a being FORSAKEN BY GOD. That, we are convinced, is what these words express. In his inimitable manner Luther states that in his comments on this verse, of which we here select a few sentences: "David is talking here about this sublime, spiritual suffering, when Christ fought with death and felt nothing in His heart but that He was forsaken of God. And in fact He was forsaken by God. This does not mean that the deity was separated from the humanity -- for in this person who is Christ, the Son of God and of Mary, deity and humanity are so united that they can never be separated or divided -- but that the deity withdrew and hid so that it seemed, and anyone who saw it might say, 'This is not God, but a mere man, and a troubled and desperate man at that.' The humanity was left alone, the devil had free access to Christ, and the deity withdrew its power and let the humanity fight alone."³¹

As you will notice from your sheet of translations on which also the quotation in Hebrews 2:6-8 is listed, the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews precisely quotes the Septuagint on these verses. We mention it here because it is in the first half of this verse that the Septuagint substantially differs from the Hebrew text. That, of course, raises a question or two that can be puzzling and even disturbing to a student of the

Bible: Is the Epistle to the Hebrews a legitimate part of Sacred Scripture? Or, is the Bible inerrant and infallible? First, while we admit that the Epistle to the Hebrews is generally listed among the antilegomena rather than the homologoumena, we would hasten to add that, in regard to their inerrancy and inspired nature, we wholeheartedly accept both. We do not maintain a distinction in that respect. Furthermore, we do maintain with conviction that the Bible is inerrant and that there are no contradictions in it. In so saying, we do not deny that not every quotation from the Old Testament in the New Testament is verbatim. There are many instances in which quotations are approximate, but still express the truth that the Lord prompted the New Testament writer to inscripturate. The same Holy Ghost who inspired the Old Testament also inspired the New Testament. That is a general fact which can be verified by a comparison of such quotations as Rom. 10:18 with Ps. 19:4 and Matt. 2:6 with Micah 5:2. In addition to that apparent problem, however, there is the specific one in this text (Heb. 2:6) in comparison with the verse of our psalm (6). How can we justify the translation "angels" when the Hebrew clearly has "God"? First, we would do well to bear in mind that the Septuagint was a current, no doubt the current version of the day, similar to the status that the King James Version holds today (and has held for centuries in the English-speaking world). The people to whom the Epistle to the Hebrews was specifically addressed no doubt were familiar with it. Also, we must remember the main theme of the Epistle to the Hebrews: THE SUPERIORITY OF JESUS OVER ALL OTHERS AND EVERYTHING ELSE. In the early chapters the superiority of His Person is given the chief emphasis. In chapter 1 He is specifically declared to be far superior to

the angels. Continuing that theme in chapter 2, our psalm is quoted, and is followed by an inspired exegesis, which is set forth in Heb. 2:8b-10, in which again the angels are mentioned. It therefore served the specific purpose of the unknown author to emphasize that during His humiliation Jesus was even made lower than the angels, consequently adopting not only the Greek word ἀγγέλους but also the verb ἡλλάττωσας, which lends itself better to the meaning "made lower than" than the meaning "was without." However, with Stoeckhardt, Lillegard, and Luther we maintain that the expression in Hebrew is as we have translated it. This adaptive type of quotation is neither uncommon nor objectionable when properly understood in accordance with the purposes of the sacred writers.

The last half of this verse also consists of three words. We need not devote much time or space to those words, since they are clear in meaning and there is general agreement in their translation. The word order in this verse forms a chiasmus: The verb comes first in the first half, and last in the last. Between them are the other parts of speech. כְּבִדּוֹת, with the etymological meaning of "heaviness" in contrast to what is light, fickle and trifling, is given various meanings in the lexicons, including "abundance," "honor," "glory," "splendor," "dignity," "reputation."³² Generally the best meaning is "glory," and that is how most of the translations have for the word in this verse. אֲדָמָה is given the meanings "ornament," "splendor," "honor," "majesty," "dignity."³³ While any of the last four would be appropriate, we have followed most of the translations by using "honor," partly since it connotes a deeper and less physically oriented quality. The final word in this verse is the verb יִשְׁתַּבַּח, ; - ;

which is identical in form with the first verb except it lacks the waw-consecutive. It is 2 masc. sing. imperfect piel with the 3 masc. sing. objective suffix. While this piel, like the first, may be classified as a causative piel, it would be better to regard it as a denominative piel; a verb formed from the noun root, just as in English we may say "dust" the furniture, "stack" the deck, etc. Regardless, however, it is clear what it means: "You crown Him." Again David is addressing God the Father. He says "You crown Him with glory and honor," or, as the word order suggests, "With glory and honor You crown Him." The Hebrew words וַיְכִרֶם and וַיְכִרֶם are to be construed as accusatives. According to Gesenius, who takes the piel as a causative piel (which it could well be, or a denominative piel, both of which would express the same idea here), the verb at the end of this verse takes two accusatives: one of the person, expressed by the suffix of the verb, and the other of the thing, expressed by the words GLORY AND HONOR.³⁴ This kind of construction may also be called an adverbial accusative, which in an unidiomatic sort of English might be expressed: "You crown Him glorically and honorically." The meaning is the same essentially.

Luther, who prefers the word "adornment" as a translation of וַיְכִרֶם , states regarding this word: "The other decoration is וַיְכִרֶם , which really means the adornment that comes from precious and glorious clothes. But here he is talking about the royal adornment by which Christ, crowned as King, will be glorious in this world and in the world to come. Kings are usually adorned when they are to put on a spectacle. Thus Christ the King, says David, will be adorned, not merely for Himself in His natural body, but also for us in

His spiritual body, which is His congregation. For He gathers His church through the preaching of the Gospel, and He adorns and decorates it with His Holy Spirit. This adornment is set in contrast to His ugly form, of which we spoke earlier on the basis of Isaiah 53. As though he were to say: 'The Man, וְיָנִי , and the Son of Man has little adornment and little support in the time of His suffering. His own nation cries over Him, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" Yes, His own disciples rebel against Him and run away from Him. But after His resurrection He will have the glorious adornment and the great following of many Christians on earth. That will be the beautiful adornment and beautiful dress with which He will be crowned in this world."³⁵ These words make us seriously consider revising our translation of the word וְיָנִי to "adornment" and "splendor." We could do worse than be influenced by Martin Luther.

The last half of this verse stands in anti-thetic relationship to the first half, and introduces this psalm's statement of the exaltation of Jesus, which continues to the end of the psalm. We find that truth beautifully stated in Philip. 2:9-11 and elsewhere, e.g. in several verses of 1 Cor. 15. Of this we shall further treat in the next verse, and then very briefly summarize the remaining three verses of the psalm.

7. "You make Him Ruler over the works of Your hands, everything You place under His feet."

Again notice the anthropomorphisms: hands, feet, to indicate the creative power of God the Father and the ruling power of God the Son, respectively. It was an ancient custom for

conquering kings or generals to make their subdued enemies lie prostrate on the ground and to put their (the victors') feet on the victims' necks, or in some cases to lie supine and have the victors' feet on their chests. The latter is illustrated in a relief carving from the Behistun Rock, in which Darius the Great (pictured much larger) places his left foot on the chest of a subdued enemy lying face up. That indicates complete conquest.

Except for the time-slot (past, present, or future), there is no material difference between most of the translations on this verse. Nor is there any great difference in what time-slot we put the verse, since this is prophecy and as such can be viewed in advance as completed (thus the past tense), or it can be stated as a prophecy of a future event which, as we know, takes place at the exaltation of Jesus (thus the future tense from David's point of view), or it can be stated as a fact without special consideration of its pastness or futurity (thus the present tense). We have opted for the latter, as several have, without rejecting the others. The fact is that the first verb is in the imperfect and the last verb in the perfect. However, the difference does not here lie in the matter of time, but rather the state of verbal action as represented by the tenses. Both can lend themselves well to the present in this verse.

יְיָ יִשְׁׁרָאֵל is the 2 masc. sing. imperfect hiphil (causative) with the 3 masc. sing. objective suffix. The psalmist is, as throughout the Psalm, addressing God the Father, who is the subject of this verb, יְיָ יִשְׁׁרָאֵל , which clearly means "rule," "have dominion." The one referred to in the suffix is God the Son, who is the object of the causative factor in the hiphil pattern, and in turn He is the subject of the verbal factor, "have dominion."

Here, as often, the verb בָּשָׁט "have dominion" is followed by ל . In this construction it means "have dominion OVER," not merely "have dominion in."³⁶ It is used in that construction in Gen. 1:18; 3:16; 4:7 and in many other passages. The Septuagint uses the aorist for both verbs in this verse. For this verb it has κατέστησας , from καθίστημι or καθιστάω . Arndt and Gingrich list the following meanings for this word: "bring," "conduct," "take" someone somewhere; "appoint," "put in charge," "ordain," "appoint" someone; "make," "cause" someone to become something.³⁷ The word in the Septuagint, therefore, approximates the Hebrew in meaning. The object of the verbal element in this verb is an expression we have already considered: "the works of Your hands." That is all-inclusive, as we shall see. In the best manuscripts of the Nestle Edition of the Greek New Testament, this part of the verse is omitted. The next part, however, continues after the previous verse in the quotation in Heb. 2:8. It is also quoted in 1 Cor. 15:27, as we shall see.

The last stroke of verse 7 (Eng. 6) consists of four words. The word order is very emphatic, with the direct object coming first. Also, the word כֹּל is written with the holem and without a maqeph , giving it greater emphasis. While it may often (through the translation) appear to be an adjective, it is a NOUN: TOTALITY, EVERYTHING, ALL. It is collective in form, and in this case it is all-inclusive, embracing all of God's creation, visible and invisible. It therefore is not to be equated with Gen. 1:26, the command and promise given to man before the fall. That was restrictive, whereas this is all-inclusive, and can therefore apply only to the Lord. Lillegard states: "The 'kol' is unrestricted; it encompasses

all creation, even the invisible, (such as the angels) and expects from the dominion of the son of man nothing save Jehovah Himself. It makes the Son of Man not only the vice-regent of Jehovah, as was the first Adam, but His co-regent. And the term "under his feet," suggests that this absolute rule ascribed to the Son of Man is the result of victory gained, and a subjugation accomplished. The term represents the Son of Man as a conqueror who has earned His crown in a holy war. Cf. Ps. 110:1 and 1 Cor. 15:25. Accordingly, St. Paul in 1 Cor. 15:27 and Eph. 1:21ff interprets the 'kol' of our verse as comprehending in itself even Satan, death, and Hell; in fact, every name that is named, not only in this world, but in the world to come. And this all-inclusive interpretation of the 'kol' is emphatically endorsed by Heb. 2."³⁸

The verb הִטָּל is the 2 masc. sing. perfect qal of the verb הָטָל , which is here used in its primary meaning of "set," "place." It has an added final silent ל , which is not unusual, particularly in poetry. The last two words are perfectly clear: "under His feet." In the opening comments of this verse we gave the significance of that picture, which is also given in the expression "Until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool" in Ps. 110:1. The Septuagint uses the verb ὑπέταξας in which also the verb includes the prefix "under," so it could be rendered according to the Septuagint and the quotation in Heb. 2:8: "You have subjected under His feet all things," or, more emphatically, "All things You have subjected under His feet."

In 1 Cor. 15:27, Paul quotes this portion of Ps. 8:7 as He speaks directly of Jesus. He applies it to Him, and also speaks of God the Father in the

third person. The Greek reads: πάντα γὰρ ὑπέταξεν ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ, which we can render: "Everything, in fact, He has placed under the feet of Him (Jesus)." In this passage, we must take into account the context. This verse is from the great Resurrection Chapter, 1 Cor. 15. This quotation falls into a portion of the chapter in which we must look at the context that precedes and that which follows. A six-verse passage should suffice. "But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming, then comes the end, when He delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be abolished is death. For HE HAS PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET. But when he says, 'All things are put in subjection,' it is evident that He is excepted who put all things in subjection to Him. And when all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the one who subjected all things to Him, that God may be all in all." (1 Cor. 15: 23-28, NASB.) Here we have one of many instances of inspired exegesis in the New Testament.

Another example of such inspired exegesis on this passage, including also the three previous verses (the assignment of this paper), is found in Heb. chap. 2, again from the Septuagint, as is the rest of this passage. The explanation of that procedure (including the reading "the angels") in the light of the emphasis given in the opening chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrews has been attempted on pp. 33 and 34 of this presentation. We shall again quote the immediate context, before and after our verses, which are given in

capital letters. "For He did not subject to angels the world to come, concerning which we are speaking. But one has testified somewhere, saying, 'WHAT IS MAN, THAT THOU REMEMBEREST HIM? OR THE SON OF MAN, THAT THOU ART CONCERNED ABOUT HIM? THOU HAST MADE HIM FOR A LITTLE WHILE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS; THOU HAST CROWNED HIM WITH GLORY AND HONOR, AND HAST APPOINTED HIM OVER THE WORKS OF THY HANDS; THOU HAST PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET.' For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him. But we do see Him who has been made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God He might taste death for every one. For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons of glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings." (Heb. 2:5-10, NASB.)

On the basis of both of these passages, and their wider context, we surely conclude that these last verses in this psalm speak of Jesus Christ in His state of exaltation, in which as true God He makes use of His divine prerogatives and powers, also according to His human nature. While in regard to His Person, as the Son of Man, He is subject to His Father, as is stated in 1 Cor. 15:28, He is also, as True God, equal to Him. More specifically, it is according to His humanity that He is inferior to the Father, as we confess in the Athanasian Creed: "Equal to the Father, as touching His Godhead; and inferior to the Father, as touching His Manhood." Luther emphasizes the first part of that statement when he says: "He says, 'Thou wilt make Him Lord over the works of

Thy hands' and 'Thou hast put all things under His feet.' Thereby he testifies that Christ, true man, is also at the same time true God. For God does not make anyone Lord over the works of His hands nor put all things under anyone's feet unless He is His equal, that is, unless He is God. God alone is Lord over the works of His hands and has all things under His feet. Since this Man Christ, who was forsaken of God for a little time, is to be made Lord over God's works -- heaven, angels, sun, moon, earth, men, air, water, and everything that is in heaven, on earth, and in the water -- it follows that He is true God."³⁹

However, as we clearly see from 1 Cor. 15:24-26, the dominion of Jesus Christ and the subjection of everything under His power will reach its full climax and consummation at the end of the world, when He will come to judge all the living and the dead, and when in a blaze of glory and splendor that is beyond our imagination or powers of description He will reveal Himself as the Lord of lords and King of kings. This will not be a prolonged earthly rule as Millennialists imagine, but it will be a rule forever where, after having abolished death as the last enemy (1 Cor. 15:26), He will reign in the Kingdom of glory in heaven. However, even now, He is the King and Lord over the entire universe, as He governs His Kingdom of Power, where He is in control of everything, a few examples of which are given in the next two verses, which we shall only briefly take up. And, of course, He rules in His Kingdom of Grace for the benefit of His believers.

8. "Sheep and oxen, all of them, and also the beasts of the field."

In this verse are listed three kinds of

creatures: First, the small and the larger domesticated animals, and then the word, in a plural form, for the beasts of the field, which in this context is no doubt broader than the usual, in which we think of animals like oxen, sheep, horses, donkeys and camels. All of these (and everything else not enumerated here) are under the Son of Man. What is listed in this and the following verse is only a small sampling of the creatures of this world under His dominion. Each of them a marvelous wonder in itself, they all join in the great song of praise that nature sings to our Lord and God, Creator and Redeemer.

9. "The birds of heaven and the fish of the sea, crossing the paths of the seas."

This verse adds more creatures: the BIRDS, literally chirping creatures; the FISH OF THE SEA; and everything crossing or traversing the routes of the seas. That would include not only marine life of all kinds, but also birds who fly over the seas. The participle appears to have a transitive meaning here, although it could be taken as intransitive but with no preposition following. We would differ with Beck on one point: he limits the participle יָצְאוּ to the fish. It certainly must include other marine life as well as birds or anything that traverses the seas.

10. "YAHWEH, our Lord, how magnificent is Your Name in all the earth!"

The psalm closes with the same words with which it opens in v. 2, following the superscription. This gives it the final grand doxology in the same words with which the Psalmist expressed His praise to God.

As we consider this psalm as a whole, we can see that the Messianic Interpretation is more justifiable than any other interpretation even from internal considerations, apart from New Testament quotations, as we have noted in certain verses. The New Testament quotations leave us no other choice than the Messianic Interpretation. It was of the Old Testament Scriptures that Jesus stated: "They are they which testify of me." (John 5:39.) Cf. also Luke 24:44-47.

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4. John Calvin: Commentary upon the Book of Psalms, Vol. I, p. 105.
5. E. W. Hengstenberg: Commentary on the Psalms, Vol. I, pp. 126, 127.
6. H. C. Leupold: Exposition of the Psalms, pp. 100, 101.
7. George Phillips: A Commentary on the Psalms, Vol. I, pp. 94, 95.

8. J. J. S. Perowne: The Book of Psalms, Vol. I, pp. 154, 155.
9. Martin Luther: Luther's Works, American Edition, Vol. 12, p. 98. (This translation is by Jaroslav Pelikan, as are also later quotations.)
10. George Stoeckhardt: Lectures on Select Psalms, p. 33. (The translation is by Hugo W. Degner.)
11. George O. Lillegard: Commentary on the Chief Messianic Psalms, p. 34.
12. Luther, Vol. 12, p. 108.
13. Cf. Wilhelm Gesenius: Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar. (Kautzsch and Cowley), para. 47, Note, p. 125. Also cf. J. Wash Watts: A Survey of Syntax in the Hebrew Old Testament, p. 55.
14. Robert Barnes: Barnes on the Old Testament, Psalms Vol. I, p. 70.
15. Thus, for example, Briggs in The International Critical Commentary, p. 63.
16. For example, God's finger as the Holy Spirit (p. 118) and the sun as Jesus Christ (p. 121) from Vol. 12 of Luther's Works.
17. Page 119.
18. In verse 4, the Septuagint omits the suffix on the third word. In verses 4 and 7, the word לְשׁוֹנָם (plural in construct) as לְשׁוֹנָה (singular in construct) appears in many manuscripts. In verse 6, the waw-consecutive is omitted in the Septuagint reading.

19. Franz Delitzsch: Commentary on the Psalms, Vol. I, p. 153.
20. Cf. Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar (Kautzsch and Cowley), para. 58 i-1, pp. 157-158.
21. Brown-Driver-Briggs, pp. 269, 270.
Koehler-Baumgartner, pp. 255, 256.
22. Brown-Driver-Briggs, p. 823.
Koehler-Baumgartner, p. 773.
23. Leupold, p. 104.
24. Watts, p. 110.
25. Gerhard Lisowsky: Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament, Stuttgart. Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1958. p. 515.
26. Brown-Driver-Briggs, p. 341.
Koehler-Baumgartner, p. 320.
27. Liddell and Scott: Greek-English Lexicon. p. 247. Arndt and Gingrich: A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, p. 247.
28. Brown-Driver-Briggs, p. 570. We could also add Exod. 17:4 and Ruth 2:7.
29. Liddell-Scott, p. 156.
Arndt-Gingrich, p. 146.
30. Stoeckhardt, p. 29.
31. Luther, Vol. 12, pp. 126, 127.
32. Brown-Driver-Briggs, pp. 458-459.

33. Ibid., p. 214.
34. Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar (Kautzsch and Cowley), para. 117 cc, p. 370.
35. Luther, Vol. 12, pp. 129, 130.
36. Brown-Driver-Briggs, p. 605.
Koehler-Baumgartner, p. 576.
37. Arndt-Gingrich, p. 391.
38. Lillegard, p. 32.
39. Luther, Vol. 12, p. 131.

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AN EXEGETICAL STUDY
OF MATTHEW 18:15-20

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(NOTE: The Bethany Lutheran Theological Faculty has had the following antitheses under discussion at its past several monthly meetings:

Two Antitheses on the Doctrine of the Church

- I. We reject the position that the local congregation as an external assembly is divinely instituted.
- II. We reject the position that the synod as an external assembly is divinely instituted.

Note:

As used here:

1. "external" means outward, that which can be seen, handled, touched, or otherwise verified by the senses.
2. "assembly" means gathering of people, without regard to organization, e.g., to constitution, by-laws, officers, etc., but

a gathering whose members can still be numbered, listed, seen, heard, etc.

3. "divinely-instituted" means that God has ordered or commanded such an external assembly.
4. "Local congregation" and "synod" are used in the sense in which we have these today, e.g., Mt. Olive Congregation and the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

Since Matthew 18:15-20 appears to be the Bible passage most often cited in support of the position that the local congregation is a divinely instituted external organization, the chairman of the faculty asked Prof. Madson to prepare an exegetical study of this passage for discussion in the faculty meetings.

The study, which proved helpful to the faculty, is herewith offered to the readers of the Lutheran Synod Quarterly with the hope that it will prove helpful to them also. It is our further hope that by engaging in a thorough study of this one passage of Scripture as it applies to this one particular point of difference among us, we may reach agreement here, and thus move forward together towards greater unanimity on whatever other points of difference may still remain in our midst on matters pertaining to the doctrine of the church.

With the publishing of this study it is not our intention to open up the pages of the Quarterly to any and all articles dealing with points of controversy in our midst on the doctrine of the church. This applies to proponents of either side in the issue.

We do, however, want to be fair. We will, therefore, print another exegetical study on Matthew 18:15-20, dealing with the same point of issue, as set forth in the antitheses above, should one of our ELS pastors or professors submit such an article in support of the position that the local congregation is a divinely instituted external organization.

- Theodore A. Aaberg, Editor.)

MATTHEW 18:15-20

This well-known section of six verses is set in the context that ought not be overlooked in any search for its meaning. A question on the part of the disciples, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" has led our Lord to speak of several related matters, all of which indicate His concern for the welfare of all His people, particularly when any of them goes astray, for it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven "that one of these little ones should perish." (v. 14) So there should be no giving offence (σκανδαλίζειν v. 6), and there should be no despising (καταφρονεῖν v. 10), but there should be a desire for restoration (implied in the negative of v. 14.)

The section before us is introduced by the post-positive conjunction δέ. This particle is not a rigid word and is often translated simply "but" or "and." The English word "but" denotes some contrast, and there are some translations that employ that word

here. If there is a contrast to be noted, it is in reference to the negative in the preceding sentence: "It is not the will of your Father, etc." This word may also have the connotation of continuance, a meaning nicely imparted in the Authorized Version's "moreover." What has been set forth as a great concern of the Good Shepherd is to be translated into the day by day relationship of His followers. The Lord's disciple is to be committed to that seeking love both called for and displayed by His Lord. In expressing that love "the 'three steps' prescribed by Jesus are anything but legal prescription and casuistry. . . These are merely the clear-cut expression of Jesus' will for the fellowship of His disciples, the will, namely, that no sinner shall be needlessly degraded, that no sinner's fate shall be committed to the subjectivity of any one man but shall be the concern of the collective love and sobriety of the whole church, that the new people of God shall remain a pure people of God, pure in virtue of the effective divine forgiveness at work in its midst."¹

Verse 15

ἐὰν δε ἁμαρτίῃ εἰς σε This protasis with subjunctive sets forth a condition which, while not real, is very probable. The aorist tense indicates that the act of sin is uppermost, not a continuing state of sinning, though either would surely call for the same response. The verb employed is frequently found in the New Testament to express the idea of sinning, of "falling short of the mark." The accompanying prepositional phrase, though its textual validity is questioned because of its omission from some important MSS, such as Aleph and B, nevertheless has quite strong textual evidence and immediately indicates the nature of the sin, not a

general sin, but the sin against a brother. ὁ ἀδελφός σου The term "brother" expresses a very close relationship, that within a family, here the spiritual family of God, as evidenced by the connection with the "church" later on. The use of the second person singular pronoun, both in the accusative and the genitive, narrows the scope of this instruction. Nor should it be forgotten that this second person singular form is employed throughout: Thy brother -- against thee -- (thou) go and reprove -- between thee and him alone -- hear thee - thou didst gain -- (thou) take with thee one or two -- (even when several now involved, thou) tell it unto the church -- (and finally) let him be to thee.

Ὑπαγε ἔλεγξον αὐτὸν μεταξυ σοῦ, κτλ. The present imperative followed immediately by the aorist imperative without a connective ties the action of the verbs closely together without subordinating the one to the other as in the use of a participle ὑπάγων. The aorist imperative of the verb to "rebuke or, better, convict" indicates that the undertaking is not to be merely attempted, but carried out. The verb ἐλέγχω is distinguished from another of its synonyms, ἐπιτιμάω, as Trench points out: "But ἐλέγχειν is a much more pregnant word; it is so to rebuke another, with such effectual wielding of the victorious arms of the truth, as to bring him, if not always to a confession, yet at least to a conviction, of his sin."² Whereas Peter is said to have begun to rebuke (ἐπιτιμᾶν) his Lord, it is said of the Comforter that he will reprove (ἐλέγχειν) the world of sin, etc. (John 16, 8) ἐκέρδησας τὸν ἀδελφόν σου. The subjunctive in the protasis again points to the likelihood of the erring brother's responding favorably to the conviction; the aorist in the apodosis (where one might quite readily expect a future indicative) indicates that the conclusion, having leaped to the future,

now looks back; the moment the brother "heard," the gain was registered. The idea of gain implies previous loss so far as that individual is concerned, or the avoidance of an anticipated loss (i.e., of not being a brother.) Cf. I Peter 3, 1: "husbands. . . may. . . be won by the conversation of the wives."

Verse 16

εἰ μὴ ἀκούσῃ - Here the same condition is introduced, only in the negative, thus taking care of this case in the event the first attempt at conviction is not successful. (If the rebuke in verse 15 is heeded the entire process comes to an end at that point, and both live with their gain.) The first battle may be unsuccessful without the ultimate loss of the war.

παράλαβε μετὰ σοῦ ἔτι ἕνα ἢ δύο - This verb, in the aor. impv. form, itself anticipates the phrase μετὰ σοῦ. The text does not declare whether this one or two more are to be other "brothers," but since they are apparently more than mere witnesses, we can rightly assume that they are from the fellowship of the family, the church -- in other words, other brothers. The number involved with the erring brother is now two or three.

ἵνα ἐπι στόματος δύο μαρτύρων ἢ τριῶν σταθῇ πᾶν ῥῆμα. The ἵνα clause sets forth the primary purpose of their aid being solicited. Reference here is obviously to Deut. 19, 15: "One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: AT THE MOUTH OF TWO WITNESSES, OR AT THE MOUTH OF THREE WITNESSES, SHALL THE MATTER BE ESTABLISHED."³ Yet it is clearly indicated that these additional

witnesses also speak to the erring brother in an effort to convict him: "if he doesn't listen to them." Only if the first individual effort at conviction has failed is this second step to be taken. God desires us to be no less orderly in spiritual matters than in civil affairs. The term ῥῆμα is a Septuagint translation (in Deut. 16, 15) for the Hebrew ׀ ׀ ׀, which can mean either word (saying) or matter (thing). Because the "word" is here so closely connected with the "matter," it would seem that either translation would be satisfactory. The matter is to stand on the mouth (the concrete for the abstract testimony) of two or three witnesses.

Verse 17

ἐὰν δὲ παρακούσῃ αὐτῶν - The same type of protasis in this conditional sentence considers the probability of the failure of also this joint attempt at conviction. The verb itself contains a negative idea in the prefix; the idea is of letting the admonition fall on deaf ears, of hearing with the physical ears, but not with the heart. The plural αὐτῶν here also points to an additional reason for the presence of the "one or two more," namely, to testify to the one who has trespassed, not merely to serve as auditors or witnesses.

εἰπὲ τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ - Here we reach the climactic step in the dealing with an erring brother. When one has failed individually and in company with one or two others he is to bring this matter to the attention of the ἐκκλησίᾳ, in order that what was unsuccessfully attempted in two other stages might now be attempted in a third. Here the term ἐκκλησίᾳ is introduced without any modifying words or phrases except the article. Its

only other use in the Gospels comes earlier in the same Gospel of Matthew, chapter 16, where Christ has said that he will build His Church (μου τὴν ἐκκλησίαν) upon the rock of Peter's confessional statement. In this former place the term is quite readily recognized as the total fellowship of God's elect, all believers, the family of God, the Una Sancta, the universal church. Against this church even the powers of hell shall not prevail. (Matt. 16, 18.) This is so because it is the church of God, ἡ ἐκκλησία τοῦ θεοῦ. The use of the article with the word church in this passage before us leads us to think of a definite church, the church that has been introduced earlier, namely, God's church.

K. L. Schmidt, speaking of the confusion in the meaning of ἐκκλησία to be found in various circles, as reflected by translations and commentaries, says: "Cr.-Kß. is a notable exception. This digs deeper, and from the standpoint of Biblical theology reaches more valuable lexical conclusions. On the basis of the O. T. use of ἐκκλησία for the total community of Israel, it speaks of the 'saved community of the N. T.' which finds expression first as the total community and then as the same community in 'local circumscription' (a carefully selected phrase). Express reference is made to the fact that there is not always a hard and fast distinction between the local community and the universal community."⁴ (Vol. III, p. 503.)

That this church of God is found in various "local circumscriptions" will certainly make it possible for the concerned brother finally to bring this matter to the attention of God's church. The local congregation as we know it can therefore serve as a fitting vehicle for this action described

by our Lord. And though again in the brevity of this account it is not stated explicitly what the assembly does, the clear implication is that it joins the concerned brother and the other witnesses in the earnest effort to convict (ἐλέγχειν) the erring brother of his sin. But when all this concern has failed to bring about a restoration, the instruction for the concerned brother is clear:

ἔστω σοι ὡσπερ ὁ ἔθνικὸς καὶ ὁ τελῶνης - The imperative here does not declare this turn of events merely to be a possibility for a probability; it is a command, and the reality of the development in this case is to be recognized particularly by the concerned brother. The singular σου goes back to v. 15 and the singular forms there used. All along the way in this instruction the Lord is speaking of a relationship between the one sinning and the one sinned against (or at least aware of the sin.) Whether or not the assembly follows through in this matter by declaring the erring brother - and unrepentant - outside their fellowship, Christ directs the individual concerned brother now to recognize the former brother as "the Gentile and the publican."⁵ The articles with the nouns here designate them as classes. The gentiles and the publicans were both outside the fellowship of Israel, they were not ἀδελφοί. As a non-brother he is now not to be forgotten; he is only not to be considered a brother any longer, though there is nothing that forecloses the possibility of his restoration to that status.

Verse 18

That which the Savior has been setting forth is an extremely solemn and serious matter. The word Ἀμήν at this juncture reiterates that seriousness and prepares for the deposition that follows.

It is as if the μαθηταί at the close of verse 17 have wondered on what basis and by what authority they can carry out this difficult assignment of verses 15-17. The Lord now addresses them in the plural, ὑμῖν, and seals his asseveration with an oath. This expression, Ἀμήν λέγω ὑμῖν, is a frequently occurring formula in our Lord's discourses whereby he establishes His authority with an oath of verity. The change to the plural at this point, ὑμῖν, is quite marked after the repeated use of σὺ, σε, σοῦ and σοὶ in the foregoing section.

What our Lord now sets forth with the twofold seal of truth and authority is the simple yet profound teaching regarding the office of "the keys." That distinctive term is not here employed, but we readily carry it over from Matthew 16, 19, where our Lord has spoken on the same subject and where He himself so designates the power which he gives to His people (δώσω σοι τὰς κλεῖδας τῆς βασιλείας τῶν οὐρανῶν), namely, the power to bind (δέω) and to loose (λύω).

One important distinction in the Matthew 16, 19 passage is that the second person singular is employed throughout as contrasted to the second person plural found in our present passage and also in John 20, 23. This willingness to use either the singular or the plural shows that the validity of the exercise of the keys is not dependent upon the number involved in the action. When in the Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope it is stated "that the keys do not belong to the person of one particular individual but to the whole church,"⁶ the argument is not that the power is not given to the individual Christian, but that, rather, it belongs to every Christian.

In fact, what the individual has been directed to do in vv. 15-17 is nothing else than the exercise of the office of the keys. And without the assurance of the bestowal of the significant power of which Christ is now speaking, one could surely not expect to approach the sinning brother with any degree of confidence, at least not to accomplish what the Lord desires to be done.

ὅσα ἔαν δήσητε ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἔσται δεδῆμενα ἐν οὐρανῶ. This construction constitutes a more vivid future type of condition with the second person singular aorist subjunctive in the protasis and the future indicative (or future perfect periphrastic) in the apodosis. If and when the action of the verb in the protasis is carried out (and it is presented as a vivid probability), then the matter presented in the apodosis will also be assured.

Because it is the terminology of the office of the keys which is here employed, for the same verbs are used in Matt. 16, 19, the "binding" is nothing else than the exercise of the power to shut out from the kingdom of the heaven(s), and the "loosing" is nothing else than the power of admission to this kingdom.⁷

It should be noted, at the same time, that the grammatical object of both the binding and the loosing is in this passage ὅσα (ἑάν) and in 16, 19 ὃ (ἑάν), both neuter pronouns signifying acts or matters of persons rather than persons themselves. What constitutes these "matters" is even more clearly expressed in the parallel passage, John 20, 23, as sins (ἁμαρτίας). This clear distinction points up the fact that we, God's people, also in this binding and loosing are not to judge men's hearts, but their works; while God reads the hearts

of men infallibly, our vision of the same hearts is alone through the portals of their words and deeds.

The phrase ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς contrasts with the phrase ἐν οὐρανῷ showing clearly that the action is one which on the part of human agents takes place on this earth, the world of men, yet also has validity in heaven; that is, before God and the angels.

Even though the term "forgiveness of sins" is not employed in this entire section (15-20), the Gospel of forgiveness remains the great power of the office of the keys, as Christ further explains in reply to the subsequent question of Peter (vv. 21ff.)

Verse 19

πάλιν λέγω ὑμῖν. The Ἀμήν of verse 18 makes the utterance in that verse particularly solemn; the adverb πάλιν here provides the same setting for what follows. It is as much as to say: "In the same way; i.e., in great solemnity and truth, I continue to say to you ὅτι ἐὰν δύο συμφωῆσωσιν ἐξ ὑμῶν, κτλ." The particle ὅτι may introduce direct or indirect discourse. Because of the fact that in v. 18 direct discourse is indicated by the omission of ὅτι, it is easily assumed here that the employment of ὅτι indicates the introduction of indirect discourse. However, in the nature of the utterance, it makes no difference whether the construction is construed as direct or indirect, for to go from one construction to the other would require no change in any of the forms involved.

The form of the condition introduced is the same more vivid future construction as found in

the previous verse, indicating the strong likelihood of such a projected agreement among God's people who mutually share a given responsibility. The very word συμφωνέω with its prefix σύν implies involvement of more than one. Here the minimum number possible in such an alignment indicates the Lord's desire to respond to His people. It isn't only that they, without each other's knowledge, share an opinion or a desire about something, but that it has found expression (φωνή) and therefore is recognizable by both the one and the other.

The phrase ἐπὶ γῆς is remindful of the same phrase in v. 18, making clear that this agreement is among brothers who live in this world and therefore concerns the fellowship of those who have not yet been translated. The περὶ παντὸς πράγματος cuts a wide swath in the needs and desires of God's people in their life here below, for the adjective is quite inclusive; πᾶς without the article means "every, each and every, or any." In addition, the relative clause with its εἰς and the subjunctive heightens the generalization. Thus the Christian is not to be inhibited in his requests, even as Christ says in John 16, 23: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you." Nevertheless, in the present context the emphasis of that which is requested is in the area of their brothers' spiritual needs and of the tremendous privilege and responsibility bestowed by the Lord on His own people in the form of the office of the keys.

That the request thus made in agreement by two or Christ's children here on earth is to be directed to the Lord in heaven is made clear by the phrase in the apodosis παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς. Jesus' solemn promise is that none other than the Father

himself in heaven (for the attributive modifier τοῦ ἐν οὐρανοῖς again remind us of the correspondence between that which is ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς and that which is ἐν οὐρανῷ, cf. v. 18) will see to it that the request is fulfilled.

It should be pointed out that in verse 18, though the Lord is directing His promise to His followers collectively (cf. the various plurals), yet the reference is more likely to their acting "severally,"⁸ since v. 19 then speaks of their petition in concert, even where only two are involved.

Verse 20

The post-positive conjunction γάρ points to the reason for the strong promise just made; namely, that His special presence is assured wherever even two or three are gathered in His name -- not only the two or three on the special mission of v. 16. εἰσὶν...συνηγμένοι is the perfect periphrastic form of συνάγω, either middle with the reflexive idea of having gathered themselves together, or passive with the idea of having been gathered by the unexpressed agent, namely, the Lord, in whose name they gather. The perfect tense stresses not so much the act of coming together as the resultant state of togetherness in which, in context, they are to make their important petitions on which they are agreed.

This gathering is εἰς τὸ ἐμὸν ὄνομα. The preposition εἰς is frequently used interchangeably with ἐν in koine Greek, so there is no special significance to the choice here, even though the verb συνάγω by its very meaning has the idea of motion. The name (ὄνομα) of the Lord is that by which He

reveals himself.⁹ (Cf. the meaning of the name of God as found in the ELS catechism, Q. 43.) To be gathered in His name implies true faith or trust in the revelation and therefore confidence in Him who is thus revealed. The emphasis in the gathering is not on the place or locality wherein they gather, but on the manner in which they gather; the gathering is to be in Christ's name.

The phrase ἐκεῖ εἶμι ἐν μέσῳ αὐτῶν does not deny Christ's presence with the individual,¹⁰ but indicates a special presence and blessing where men fellowship in connection with the revelation of Christ. This promised presence of Christ is not to be understood of His universal presence among all creatures, but of His presence in grace, whereby He guides, directs and keeps those who are thus united.

This entire passage, therefore, while it certainly supports the validity of the fellowship and action of a "local congregation" that is gathered in Christ's name and in agreement with one another, is pressed too heavily when it is maintained as proof of the existence of but one divinely ordained form of the church or congregation. The whole emphasis in this larger context is on the office of the keys and the necessary exercise by God's people of the great power He has bestowed upon them, a power that resides not in any person or group as such, but alone in the Word which He has graciously entrusted to men.

NOTES

1. Franzmann, Martin H., Follow Me: Discipleship According to Saint Matthew, C.P.H., 1964, pp. 153-4.
2. Trench, Richard Chenevix, Synonyms of the N.T., Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1948, p. 13.
3. Hebrew:
4. Kittel, Gerhard, Theological Dictionary of the N.T., Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964, Vol. III, p. 503.
5. American Standard Version.
6. The Book of Concord, Translated and edited by Theo. G. Tappert, Fortress Press, 1959, p. 324, par. 24.
7. Cf. Lenski, R.C.H., Interpretation of St. Matthew's Gospel, Lutheran Book Concern, 1932, p. 610.
8. Cf. Bengel, J. A., Gnomon of the N.T., Perkenpine and Higgins, 1860, p. 229.
9. Cf. the meaning of the name of God as found in the ELS Catechism (1966), Question 43.
10. Cf. Hebrews 13, 5: "...never leave thee nor forsake thee."

THE ELEVENTH ANNUAL
LUTHERAN REFORMATION LECTURES

October 26-27, 1978

Bethany Lutheran College and Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary will host the eleventh annual Lutheran Reformation Lectures series at Mankato, Minnesota, on Thursday and Friday, October 26-27, 1978.

Dr. Herman A. Preus, a noted Luther Scholar and professor emeritus at Luther Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota, will serve as lecturer. His lectures will deal with the Office of the Ministry and the Role of the Laity.

Dr. Preus is the author of several publications, among them COMMUNION OF SAINTS and WHAT LUTHERANS ARE THINKING. His most recent work, published by CPH in 1977, carries the title: A THEOLOGY TO LIVE BY, with the sub-title: The Practical Luther for the Practicing Christian.

As with past Reformation Lectures, the 1978 lectures will be held outside the framework of church fellowship. There are no worship services connected with the Lectures, and, as in a free conference, the participants speak only for themselves and not for their respective church bodies. This arrangement has worked out very well the past years and has afforded an opportunity for Lutherans of various synods, especially conservative Lutherans, to come together to discuss and to debate scriptural, Lutheran doctrine.

More information on the Lectures will be given at a later date.

CONFERENCE REPORT

LUTHERAN CONFESSIONS IN THE CONTEMPORARY CHURCH - Convocation Sponsored by the International Center for Lutheran Confessional Studies, Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, Indiana, January 4-6, 1978.

I.

Introductory Remarks by Dr. Robert D. Preus, President of Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, Indiana.

Dr. Preus opened the sessions with brief welcoming comments and the announcement that the convocation was planned to initiate an International Center for Lutheran Confessional Studies which would feature annual convocations in the years to come.

"Why this Congress?" he asked. In answer he cited many similar convocations of scholars in 1977, the 400th anniversary of the Formula of Concord, and the recent publication of many books about the confessions, especially by Fortress Press and Concordia Publishing House. He referred to the extensive holdings of the Seminary library in the field of Lutheran Confessions and the suitability of the Ft. Wayne campus as a center for the study of the confessions. The objectives of the convocation and the International Center were cited in these words:

1. An ecumenical movement must start with creeds and confessions.

2. Confessional Lutherans need to be brought together for productive study.

3. A meeting place and a mutual exchange of learning is needed to give scope for international studies.

As the conference progressed it became apparent that point one, cited above, was becoming an unplanned theme for the entire conference. Ecumenism is, by definition, agreement and unity. Ecumenism has no meaning apart from creeds. There can be no ecumenism without creeds.

In closing Dr. Preus said that the need for confessional reapplication is as great as ever. There is a need for new confessions. "Whether we can actually produce them" he confessed, "may be questioned."

II.

"Survey of Protestant and Catholic Confessional Statements in the Second Half of the Twentieth Century," by Dr. C. George Fry, Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, Indiana.

Dr. Fry's presentation illustrated the fact that while Protestantism has made pretensions of offering an agenda for world Christianity, it has lacked a unifying principle and its efforts have been largely self-defeating. Programs for moral reform, for the development of an ethical society, and even toward world evangelization and social justice have generally failed.

Conflicts between theological counter-cultures, between liberals and evangelicals, and even movements toward world peace have exhibited a virtual state of theological anarchy in a Protestantism bereft of creeds or similar effective principles of unity.

Neo-orthodoxy made a brave attempt to give meaning to Protestant orthodoxy, but it was effectively challenged by three movements that have wide currency at present. These are:

1. Radicalism, with its emphasis on the personal inward experience of religion.
2. A born-again evangelicalism that emphasizes love and virtue without a compatible and supportive theology.
3. Pentacostalism in its many current manifestations.

Almost every decade has had its prime causes, temperance, Labor unionism, civil rights, pacifism, and drug abuse, to mention only a few. For a time church union was a vital movement within the church. Then ecumenism had its period of interest and vitality. Today both are dead issues, both seen as quite irrelevant to any meaningful religious activity.

In all of the futile and abortive thrusts of world Protestantism it is possible to see how the lack of solid confessional foundations have affected the Protestant denominations in their effort to justify their existence.

III.

"The Two Kingdoms Today," by Kurt Marquardt, Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, Indiana.

Emphasizing the fact that the Church has the mission of proclaiming the law and the Gospel, of bringing divinely revealed truth to the world, Prof. Marquardt reminded his audience of the civil obligations of all Christians within the church. However, he said, while individual Christians have civil duties, the church does not. He warned Christians not to appeal to civil authority on the grounds of biblical authority, but rather on the ground of natural law; that is, the universally recognized code of right and wrong. Abortion, for example, should be opposed in the civil sphere because it violates the most elemental law of nature, not because it is against the moral code of the Bible.

In speaking of the use of the word "reason" in the Lutheran Confessions, Prof. Marquardt said that we must be aware of a differing usage in our time. The word "reason," as used now, generally refers to an abstract rationality. The confessors used the word to denote the faculty of the mind that follows the inherent understanding of natural law in man.

In Secular Humanism, the paganism of our time, reason has become a self-defeating confusion of tongues. Natural law is in process of being driven out of public law, while revealed religion is being driven out of the church.

IV.

"Confessional Emphasis on Law and Gospel for Our Day," by Dr. Eugene Klug, Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, Indiana.

Dr. Klug began his discussion with the statement that the Lutheran Confessions are antidotes to error in the proclamation of law and Gospel. The confessions are the very roots of Christianity. In their emphasis on law and Gospel, of a reconciling justification, the confessions keep us securely to the bed-rock of a salvatory theology. Justifying faith is not just a feeling within us, it is a secure knowledge of what Christ has done for our salvation. Antinomianism, or even a neglect of the will of God expressed in the law, inevitably leads to anti-gospelism. The treasure of the Church is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He who has that treasure does the law of God in a truly Christian manner. Prof. Klug's lecture was richly illuminated by many references to the writings of Martin Luther.

V.

"Confessional Lutheranism: Churchly or Sectarian Movement," by Dr. Jobst Schone, Church Superintendent for Berlin, Independent Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany.

In one of the most finished and cohesive papers presented to the convocation, Dr. Schone spelled out clearly and confessionally the distinction between church and sect.

AC VII, the speaker said, is the first confessional statement on the church in the history of

Christianity. It was not designed to establish a new church, but to preserve the Apostolic church.

Is it realistic to speak of one church, or is it a fanciful idea? To be sure, the church can never be pure. It is always comprised of justified sinners. It is their obligation to strive toward making the church what it ought to be. The confessions that bind us together in that church are at the same time a barrier to what is false.

The division that separated us from Roman Catholicism was unavoidable. Yet, we may say that the division of the churches is the sin of Christianity. No one admits to being sectarian. But we must say that a church that deliberately exists in isolation, that cuts itself off from Christianity, is sectarian.

The Augsburg Confession proclaims a churchly movement. It proclaims evangelical doctrine and accepts responsibility for the true Christian church. It is as old as the Gospel itself. It refuses compromise in doctrine. It must be taken in its entirety or given up completely.

A true churchly movement is identifiable by total commitment to Scripture. As the prerequisite to fellowship is none other than belief in pure doctrine, so no unity can be based on denial of truth.

VI.

"Contemporary Denials of the Lord's Supper,"
by Dr. Tom Hardt, Pastor of St. Martin's Lutheran
Church, Stockholm, Sweden.

Dr. Hardt presented to the conference an essay

prepared in impeccable order and brilliant style. Every word appeared to have been chosen with deliberate care in the development of a scholarly point of view.

His first declaration was that rather than narrowing the margin of doctrinal difference between orthodox Lutheranism and the Roman Catholic Church, Vatican II has widened the breach with respect to communion in both kinds, transubstantiation, and the sacrifice of the mass.

Contemporary Reformed denials of the Scriptural doctrine of the Lord's Supper are no less serious now than heretofore. Reformed pretensions to a Lutheran interpretation of the sacrament have only made matters worse. There can be no new Marburg because the Zwinglians are no longer Zwinglian, and the Lutherans no longer Lutheran. The book, Marburg Revisited, is a travesty of truth in its misquotation of Luther and the posthumous work of Hospinian.

Contemporary denials of the Lord's Supper have appeared within Lutheranism in liturgical aberrations and in the diminution and a diminishing of the effect of consecration.

After, and as a result of, the consecration, the bread and wine of the sacrament becomes the body and the blood of Christ. Luther demands the complete consumption of the consecrated elements at every observance of the sacrament.

Some of Dr. Hardt's thoughts were developed more fully in the discussion that followed his presentation. When asked whether the true body of Christ is present on the consecrated host of

the Roman Catholic Corpus Christi procession, his answer was: "No, because there was no intention to distribute it in accordance with the institution of the Supper." He answered a question regarding the worship or adoration of the consecrated body and blood of Christ by saying: "Yes, we may worship Christ wherever we find him." In answer to another question Dr. Hardt said: "When it is not possible to consume the remaining elements we cannot think of a continuing presence."

VII.

"The Lutheran Confessions as a Distinctive Contribution to World Christianity," by Dr. Henry P. Hamann, Luther Seminary, North Adelaide, Australia.

Dr. Hamann introduced his presentation by calling attention to the false antithesis in the phrase, "not Lutheran, but Christian." The speaker said, "Since I am a Christian I am a Lutheran."

He also noted a tendency, misleading in its very nature, toward honoring Martin Luther for his defense of the right of private judgment. It should never be overlooked that Luther was bound by Scripture in all of his theologising.

The speaker then proceeded to outline the distinctive contributions of Lutheranism to the church as a whole:

1. Justification by faith alone. That doctrine is central in the Lutheran confessions. It is the heart of the Bible, and Luther's great gift to the church.

2. The concept of verbal inspiration and the inerrancy of the Bible.

3. The distinction between law and Gospel based on the doctrine of justification.

4. The freedom of man in God's creation. He is freed from sin, freed to love, freed for his own vocation.

5. The doctrine of the church, its nature, marks, and unity.

Our commitment to the confessions must mean that we confess them and use them. In theology Lutherans seek development, not alteration. We seek theological growth within the limits of biblical theology's own nature.

Loyalty to Christ is loyalty to the tradition of the Apostles.

VIII.

"Christian Apologetics in the Light of the Lutheran Confessions," by Dr. John Warwick Montgomery, Melodyland School of Theology, Anaheim, California.

The Ecumenical Creeds arose in the context of disputation. Confessions are always apologetic. Like the Ecumenical Creeds, the 16th century Lutheran confessions were not a tilting against windmills. They opposed universal error. They clarified Christian doctrine and the formulators understood that it was necessary to refute error by positive argumentation.

1. The confessions refused to give reason, i.e., work righteousness, a place of salvation. They gave reason a ministerial, not a magisterial role.

2. They recognized that in a theological sense Scripture makes sense only after regeneration.

3. The confessors accepted history and the effects of history, recognizing the total depravity of man and the redemptive sacrifice of Christ.

4. Only the Holy Spirit can apply Scripture to the end of salvation. Man cannot save himself by the use of Scripture; yet, the confessors maintained the clarity of Scripture.

In response to the question, "Are there apologetic principles in the Book of Concord?" Dr. Montgomery answered affirmatively:

1. Fallen man retains the power to reason deductively.

2. Fallen man retains the ability to reason inductively.

3. A common sense ground of logic and fact unites believer and unbeliever so that the believer can reason with the unbeliever.

4. This ground permits the use of positive reasoning to convince the unbeliever despite the fact that man is not himself able to mend the broken God-relationship.

Dr. Montgomery concluded by saying that we must continue to be John the Baptists in a secular

age. The church dare not be content with the old doctrinal formulations (Pieper, Mueller). The confessions call for a fresh and continuing apologetic.

IX.

"Future Confessionalism in the World," by Dr. Samuel Nafzger, Executive Secretary, the Commission on Theology and Church Relations, the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, St. Louis, Mo.

By far the most moving and eloquent of the conference presentations was that of Dr. Nafzger who spoke about the observable positive and negative factors in modern Lutheran confessionalism.

Among the negative factors, two stand out in glaring light. The first is the continued use of historical criticism both at home and abroad. The second is the widespread practice of a conditional subscription to the Lutheran Confessions. An unconditional subscription is and remains vital to the preservation of historic Lutheranism. Dr. Nafzger reminded his audience that such subscription dates back to 1532 when Luther and Bugenhagen demanded unconditional subscription to the Augsburg Confession and the Apology in the case of young candidates for pastoral responsibility.

As a result of the modern use of historical criticism and conditional subscription, Lutheran theology is in a state of worsening confusion and decadence.

Despite this there are positive evidences that Lutheran theology is indeed alive and well may be seen in the fact that:

1. The error implicit in historical criticism has been effectively exposed.

2. The effort of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod to reclaim the truth has been dramatically successful. In the "Statement" of the Missouri Synod and in other written works unprecedented strides have been taken in the reformation of historic Lutheranism.

3. There has been renewed interest and study of the Lutheran Confessions both at home and abroad.

Dr. Nafzger concluded his remarks with the following words of counsel:

1. Confessional Lutheranism will always be under attack.

2. Given the heritage of the Lutheran Confessions the Lutheran Church will always have at hand the means for its own revitalization and renewal.

3. Every generation needs to be faithful in the writing and publication of materials for study and understanding of Scripture and the confessions.

4. The confessions will always rule out the pride of its confessors.

5. The confessions must always be seen in their fundamental eschatological sense.

The present writer felt that Dr. Nafzger's address might almost be seen as a charter for future orthodox Lutheranism. If the speaker

reflects the present mood and faith of a substantial part of the membership of the LC-MS then the renewal of Lutheranism in our time may well be an event as significant as the 16th century renewal of Lutheranism following the adoption of the Formula of Concord in 1577.

X.

"Christology and the Eucharist," by Dr. Norman Nagel, Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, Indiana.

Dr. Nagel is a man whose wit and wisdom is best reflected in the intimacy of personal conversation or the exchange of an academic seminar. Public address systems do nothing for him and it was difficult for his audience to penetrate to the obvious sincerity and intensity of his presentation. A future reading of the paper will be rewarding.

The Augsburg Confession was written by men who prayed much. The Formula of Concord which followed was a paean of praise to God in which the gift of salvation, promised by Scripture, is seen in its certainty and glory.

Dr. Nagel referred to the fact that articles VII and VIII were necessitated by the fact that the verity of Christ had been called into question. The confessions make clear that what Christ wills his words tell us. He is able to do what he says.

XI.

"Discord, Dialog, and Concord - The Lutheran Reformation's Formula of Concord," by Dr. Lewis Spitz, Stanford University, Palo Alto, California.

Taking the historian's truism, "Ideas make for change, - Institutions make for stability," as a cue, Dr. Spitz developed the historic fact that the Lutheran Confessions made for cohesion and prevented the disintegration of 16th century Lutheranism.

In the years 1547-1577 the aim was religious unity. The Formula of Concord was the means to that end. Luther's false friends and their perversions of theology, legalism, synergism, and antinomianism, had threatened the very existence of Lutheranism.

The confessions arrived at a principle of authority that preserved the church. Their response was:

1. Not the authority of Luther, a great leader of the church.
2. Not the earlier confessions, their great value notwithstanding; but,
3. The authority of Holy Scripture itself and the genuine external marks of the church, the proclaimed Word and the administered sacraments. Dr. Spitz went on to say that no confession has ever undertaken to exhaust divine truth. Confessions typically ignore non-controversial doctrines. They deal in the issues of their time.

In this sense we may say that confession is more important now than ever. The Formula of Concord of the 16th century had an ecumenical thrust. The controversies of our time call for new confessions and a new ecumenical endeavor. The first step toward religious unity will always

be clear statements of faith. The value of the theological enterprise is not less now than it was in the days of Chemnitz and Andreae.

Our approach to unity and ecumenism may profit from the lessons of clarity and love of the 16th century confessors.

XII.

"Closing Comments," by Dr. Robert D. Preus, President, Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, Indiana.

Dr. Preus addressed his closing comments to the following questions: "Do we need new confessions today?" "Ought we to produce them?" "Can we?"

In view of the present state of world Lutheranism in which many who denote themselves Lutheran do not subscribe unconditionally to the entire Book of Concord, do not agree on what confessions are, or on what a doctrine is, there seems little practical possibility of reaching world-wide consensus. The 16th century confessors began with a shared assumption with respect to the authority of Holy Scripture. Contemporary Lutherans do not share that assumption. How can there be agreement on a new confession when there is no agreement on the Scriptures on which all confessions must be based?

Dr. Preus conceded, however, that Lutherans who share an acceptance of the authority of Holy Scripture and do subscribe unconditionally to the existing confessions may find it useful to consider

new formulas of Christian doctrine suggested by the needs of the 20th century.

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After the close of the remarks by Dr. Preus all of the conference speakers were called to the rostrum to answer questions addressed to them by the audience. Each was initially given two minutes to give his opinion as to matters which might be given priority if the writing of a new Lutheran confession were undertaken.

Surprisingly, most of them responded by suggesting subjects treated in the existing confessions. Only one suggested a statement of epistemology and the doctrines of Scripture and revelation. Another called for a statement that would make existing confessions effective. Still another called for a document that would make a clear distinction between true and false Lutherans. Other suggestions ranged widely over topics treated in the Book of Concord.

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The undersigned observer and reporter at this congress could not escape the impression that given the continued dedication and optimism of the conference speakers and those in attendance at the conference, the establishment of an International Center for Lutheran Confessional Studies may well prove to be a rich blessing of God and a source of strength and vitality to the Lutheran church of both the present and the future.

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