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Child Study According to the Bible

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daß sie meinen, der Christ könne und solle hier auf Erden so geheiligt werden, daß er alle Sünde meidet. Die Gradunterschiede, die dabei gemacht werden, ändern das Wesen der Irrlehre nicht. Denn alles das ist Perfectionismus; man meint, ein Christ könne in dem „höheren Leben“ ohne bewußte Sünde leben und so das Gesetz Gottes vollkommen halten. Dagegen betont die Konfordinformel mit Recht: „Es muß auch und kann die dadurch [durch den Erbschaden] verrückte [verkehrte], verderbte menschliche Natur allein durch des Heiligen Geistes Wiedergeburt und Erneuerung geheilt werden, welches doch in diesem Leben nur angefangen, aber allererst in jenem Leben vollkommen sein wird.“ (Sol. Deel., De Peccato Originis, 14.) Damit fällt der ganze Wahn von einem „victorious life“ in diesem Leben dahin.

4.

Zum Schluß möchten wir noch auf eins aufmerksam machen. Manchem möchte es scheinen, als sei die Darlegung von einem „victorious life“, wie sie Prof. Randolph lehrt, höchst harmlos. Aber das gerade Gegenteil ist der Fall, eben weil sich das verderbte Herz von Natur so viel auf seine guten Werke und sein „Siegesleben“ einbildet. Wird die Lehre von der Heiligung unsicher, so wird auch die sola gratia schwankend; der Teufel hat es ganz und gar auf Werkheiligkeit abgesehen.

Durch Gottes Gnade sind die lutherischen Synoden in unserm Lande so gesinnt, daß sie nichts Sehnlicheres wünschen als eine geeinigte lutherische Kirche. Bisher haben uns Verschiedenheiten in der Lehre und Praxis auseinandergehalten. Aber gerade in bezug auf das sola Scriptura, sola gratia und sola fide ist ohne Zweifel ein Fortschritt zu verzeichnen. Kommen wir in der Lehre immer näher, so können wir uns der Hoffnung hingeben, daß schließlich völlige Einigkeit erzielt wird. Um so mehr müssen wir uns vor dem Feinde vorsehen, der im Unschuldsmantel pietistischer Heiligkeit einherwandelt. Nicht nur die Modernisten, sondern auch die Fundamentalisten stehen der lutherischen Lehre sehr, sehr fern. Haben wir genau acht auf das, was schön gleißt, aber nicht schriftgemäß ist!

S. L. Müller.

Child Study According to the Bible.

The attitude of the Lutheran Church, specifically of our branch of the Lutheran Church, toward the Bible, is one which finds little appreciation in the world to-day. Wherever we turn, we find opposition. The Church of Rome has added to its mutilated Bible the vagaries of tradition and the claims of an „infallible“ Pope. Most Protestant denominations have set aside the inspiration of the Bible or so modified the meaning of inspiration as to make the word meaningless. Moreover, many of the alleged leaders of Protestantism have

joined forces with the enemies of the Word and the Church in denying even the fundamental truths of Scripture, such as the deity of Jesus Christ, the vicarious atonement, justification by faith alone, the Virgin Birth, and others. What Isaiah wrote of the true Church in his day has once more become true of the Church of the pure Word and confession at the present time: "The daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city," chap. 1, 8.

The opposition against the Bible becomes particularly violent when questions of general human knowledge are broached, such as those in the fields of history, geography, chronology, geology, astronomy, and other sciences. It is alleged that the information on these questions was put down by the writers of the Biblical books in the same way as any one else might write from even a meager acquaintance with the subject. For that reason countless pastors, teachers, and professors, both here and abroad, are engaged in pointing out what they consider mistakes on the part of the writers. This was a favorite pastime especially during the last century; but the effects of this false application of higher criticism persist to this day in spite of the many evidences to the contrary, such as were presented by William Ramsay, Robert Dick Wilson, Greene, Kyle, and others.

Yet this situation, far from discouraging us, rather tends to give us a new interest in the Scriptures, to induce us to search, ransack, scrutinize, the holy writings, John 5, 39; 1 Pet. 1, 10, 11, in order that we may be built up, not only in our most holy faith in the redemption wrought by Jesus Christ, but also in our certainty of the truth of every word as given by the Spirit of God. The Bible is not a text-book of geography, history, chronology, and the natural sciences, yet every word, even every incidental remark concerning these departments of human knowledge, is accepted by us as the truth. Likewise the Bible is not a text-book of psychology and pedagogy, yet every statement pertaining to these subjects as found in any book of the Bible belongs to the inspired account and must be so evaluated by us. All other books in the world, no matter on what subject they are written, are only relatively true; they represent, even at their best, only the highest accomplishments of the human mind. The Bible alone is *the absolute truth*, the truth which has survived the storms of centuries and millenniums, and will, as the Word of the Lord, abide forever. And while we rejoice in every discovery in archeology and in the natural sciences which tends to vindicate or corroborate the truth of the Bible, our pleasure is not based upon the fact that the Bible is in need of such defense, but only upon the possibility of removing doubts of earnest searchers for the truth more easily. It is primarily for this reason that we have systematized the defense of the Bible in the science of apologetics.

Since to us, as to all true believers, the Bible is *the absolute truth* in all its statements, therefore we accept also all its statements concerning psychology and pedagogy with becoming meekness and sincerity. He who made man and endowed him with reason, He who searches the hearts and the innermost thoughts of man, He who even understands our thoughts afar off, Ps. 139, 1—16, is surely the one whose inspired Book can best reveal to us the knowledge of man's soul and its workings in the various circumstances of life. If we add to this the fact that Jesus, who knows what is in man, John 2, 25, was the greatest Teacher that ever lived, the incomparable Teacher in both knowledge of the matter which He taught and the methods which He employed, then we have every reason to turn to the Book which He Himself bade us search and scrutinize in order to gain therefrom at least a little of the working knowledge which we so sorely need in our own teaching. No matter from what angle we view our problems, an approach to these pedagogical and psychological problems through the study of the pedagogy of the Bible is a scientific approach. It is in this spirit that we take up a brief discussion of the subject *Child Study according to the Bible*.

The first point that Christian teachers must remember with regard to child study is that children are *a gift of God*. This is clearly stated in the Old Testament. It is mentioned as a blessing of God, Ps. 68, 6, that He "setteth the solitary in families." In Ps. 113, 9 God is praised for His excellency, because "He maketh the barren woman to keep house and to be a joyful mother of children." In Ps. 127, 3 the virtues of God's blessings are set forth: "Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is His reward," to which the inspired author adds: "As arrows are in the hands of the mighty man, so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them." The same thought is expressed in Ps. 128, 3, 4: "Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house, thy children like olive-plants round about thy table. Behold that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord."

These declarations concerning children as gifts of God are reflected in the attitude taken by the believers of the Old Testament in desiring the blessing of the Lord. Abram complained to the Lord: "What wilt Thou give me, seeing I go childless?" and we are told that his wife shared his eagerness to have a child or children. Rachel, the beloved wife of Jacob, was so distressed on account of the fact that she had, up to that time, been denied the blessing of the Lord that she cried out: "Give me children, or else I die," Gen. 30, 1. It is expressly stated that it was the Lord who gave to Ruth, the wife of Boaz, the son over whose birth Naomi was so elated, Ruth 4, 13. In the story of Hannah, the very name which she gave to her

son, Samuel, signified "because I have asked him of the Lord," 1 Sam. 1, 20. The story of the Shunammite teaches the same lesson, 2 Kings 4, 16. 17. 36. 37. We might add here also the example of Elisabeth, the mother of John the Baptist, who considered herself as being under the reproach of men because of her childlessness, Luke 1, 7. 24. 25. 58.

The truth that children are a gift of God remains in full force also in the New Testament, as it ever will when men's false economic systems do not interfere with the providence of God. Our Lord speaks of the joy which a mother feels when a child is born into the world, John 16, 21. The Apostle Paul speaks of the function of motherhood in a manner which brings out its privileges in a most amazing way: "Notwithstanding she shall be saved in child-bearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety," 1 Tim. 2, 15. And shortly afterwards follows his admonition: "I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully," 1 Tim. 5, 14.

Since children are thus, in such an emphatic manner, described as the gift of God, it follows that *the Lord's estimate of children* is one which all parents and teachers must share. It was a most searching lesson which the Lord gave to His disciples when they presented their question, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" For He told them: "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in My name receiveth Me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea," Matt. 18, 1—6. The same lesson was brought home to the disciples when young children were presented to Jesus and the Savior spoke the well-known words: "Suffer the little children to come unto Me and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein," Mark 10, 14—16; Luke 18, 15—17. In His last charge to Peter the Lord commissioned him to feed His lambs, which has rightly been understood of the special care which the young children of a Christian congregation should receive, John 21, 15. It is clear, then, that Christ magnified child-life, that He emphasized the place and the importance of child-training both at home and in the church.

But all this was *not done with a weak sentimentality*, with a gushing emotionalism, which ignores the natural sinfulness of

children and prates about the innocent darlings both before and after the age of self-consciousness is reached, as though children were sinless when they are born into this world. It is said of Adam after the Fall that he begot a son in his own likeness, Gen. 5, 3, that is, in the likeness of sinful flesh. Here the words of the Apostle Paul apply: "As by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men for that all have sinned. . . . Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression," Rom. 5, 12, 14. This is further proved by the words of God, Gen. 8, 21: "The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth," that is, from childhood. The same truth is presented in the well-known words of David, Ps. 51, 5: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." And one of the most complete expositions of the question of natural sinfulness is found in the words of Jesus to Nicodemus, John 3, 1 ff., especially v. 6: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh," the word *flesh* being used as in Gen. 6, 3, 12: "My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh. . . . All flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth." Every parent and every Christian educator must keep in mind this inherited depravity, this natural sinfulness of children, otherwise the whole process of teaching and training will rest on a wrong foundation.

But before we follow up the thoughts suggested by this truth, we take note of the fact that the Scripture distinguishes *various periods, or stages*, in the development of children, physically, mentally, morally. The first stage of the child's life is that of infancy, from the time of his birth to the time when he gets his first bearings in life. At this time the child is a *babe*, an *infant*. The Babe Jesus is given that name, Luke 2, 12, 16; the little children whom Jesus blessed are so called by Luke, chap. 18, 15; the Hebrew infants whom the cruel decree of Pharaoh threatened are so designated by Stephen, Acts 7, 19; and the word is applied to Timothy when Paul writes, 2 Tim. 3, 15: "And that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures." — After the age of the babe (*βρέφος*) comes later infancy, that of the little child (*νήπιος*), originally used with great definiteness of the period after self-consciousness has been established. The distinction is clearly made in Matt. 21, 16, where Ps. 8, 3 is quoted: "Out of the mouth of babes [or little children] and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise." The meaning is quite clearly indicated in Eph. 4, 14: "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine." Here the absence of certainty and assurance, the dependence of the age of early childhood, is used as a figure in spiritual things. The same thought appears in Heb. 5, 13: "For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the Word of Righteousness; for he is a babe [or a young child]."

But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age." Here the contrast brings out the special significance of the word, as of a child that has not yet reached the age of clear discretion and of understanding. — When the child has passed the stage of childhood and reaches the age of discretion, so that he is no longer a *βεβήτος*, a *νήπιος*, or a *παιδίον*, Matt. 2, 8. 9. 11; Luke 1, 59 ff.), then we may expect him to lay aside childish thinking. Cp. 1 Cor. 14, 20; Is. 7, 16, just as in 1 Cor. 13, 11 the apostle had contrasted adulthood with the stage of the little child (*ἀνήρ* — *νήπιος*). It was clearly understood that the period of infancy would be merged into the stage of self-consciousness, that this would develop into the period of discretion, and that the first indications of adulthood might be expected to follow. Our present distinction is only slightly more elaborate, when we speak of infancy, of early childhood, of late childhood, of the preadolescent age, of early adolescence, and of late adolescence.

The Jews, who were very careful to follow every hint given by Scripture, observed the divisions, or stages, of development in their school system. Their lowest school was the *infant school*, the pupils being "babies of the teacher's house." Then followed the *elementary school*, or "the house of the book." Next came the *grammar, or early secondary, school*, the "house of study," or "house of learning." This, in turn, was followed by the high school and the academy, or college. Full authority and full privileges were granted only when the actual adult stage had been reached.

Each age of childhood presents problems of a peculiar type, but parents (and teachers) are instructed not to neglect *the care, love, protection, and guidance* of the children and pupils entrusted to them. We find many examples of this attitude in Holy Scripture. Amram and Jochebed, the father and mother of Moses, watched over their son with tender solicitude. Ex. 2, 2 ff.; Acts 7, 20; Heb. 11, 23. Hannah, the mother of Samuel, was deeply concerned about his welfare, even after she had brought him to the Tabernacle to serve before the Lord, 1 Sam. 2, 19. The widow of Zarephath showed her love for her son in a very impressive manner, 1 Kings 17, 21. Just as instructive is the account of the Shunammite woman, 2 Kings 4, 29 ff. The regard in which parents held their children became practically proverbial, as many passages of the Bible testify. Thus the Lord asks, Is. 49, 15: "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb?" A similar picture is used by Moses, Num. 11, 12: "Have I conceived all this people, have I begotten them, that Thou shouldst say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom as a nursing father beareth the sucking child?" This love and solicitude of parents is pictured also in the New Testament. The father of the lunatic boy besought Jesus: "Master, I beseech Thee, look upon my son, for he is mine only child. And,

lo, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out; and it teareth him that he foameth again and, bruising him hardly, departeth from him," Luke 9, 38. It is evident that his father's love was deeply moved by the affliction which had come upon his son. It is the same attitude which we find also in the case of the nobleman of Capernaum when he cried out, John 4, 49: "Sir, come down ere my child die," and of the Syrophenician woman, when she pleaded with the Lord to heal her daughter, Matt. 15, 22 ff. That this attitude of solicitous care was not confined to the parents alone is seen from 1 Thess. 2, 7, where St. Paul writes: "We were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children." Even the pedagogs, or assistants to the teachers, are referred to in Scripture as men to whom a certain part of the boys' training was entrusted, Gal. 3, 24: "The Law was our *pedagog* to bring us unto Christ."

It is in this connection that we note the emphasis of the Bible on *careful, conscientious, comprehensive, and consistent training* of children in order that the natural sinfulness of their hearts might be counteracted and that they might be led to the knowledge of their heavenly Father and their Savior Jesus Christ. The fundamental rule is that summarized by St. Paul, Eph. 6, 1—4: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right. Honor thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise: that it may be well with thee and thou mayest live long on the earth. And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." The form of this commandment in the Old Testament was: "Honor thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord, thy God, giveth thee," Ex. 20, 12. This is emphasized Lev. 19, 3: "Ye shall fear every man his mother and his father," and is repeated Deut. 5, 16: "Honor thy father and thy mother, as the Lord, thy God, hath commanded thee." It is clear from these passages that the obedience of the Fourth Commandment implies a reciprocal relationship, as we see also from Col. 3, 20, 21: "Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord. Fathers, provoke not your children to anger lest they be discouraged." On the part of the parents it means a sympathetic, but firm insistence upon an obedience in keeping with the authority vested in them by the Lord; for they are His representatives with regard to the children entrusted to them. This excludes both an absolute, tyrannical power and a weak sentimentality. And on the part of the children it means obedience *in the Lord*, with an attitude of eager service, or as Luther puts it in his explanation of the Fourth Commandment: "Give them honor, serve and obey them, and hold them in love and esteem." It is in this sense that we must read and interpret the various passages of the Bible which describe the position and the attitude of children.

The Lord says to all children: "My son, keep thy father's commandments and forsake not the law of thy mother. Bind them continually upon thy heart and tie them about thy neck. When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee," Prov. 6, 20—22. And again: "My son, hear the instruction of thy father and forsake not the law of thy mother," Prov. 1, 8. "Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father and attend to know understanding," Prov. 4, 1. "A wise son maketh a glad father, but a foolish man despiseth his mother," Prov. 15, 20. "A foolish son is a grief to his father and bitterness to her that bare him," Prov. 17, 25. "Hearken unto thy father that begat thee and despise not thy mother when she is old," Prov. 23, 22. These passages, rightly understood, find their application also to the relation obtaining between pupils and teachers. From these passages it is clear that all modern educational theories and doctrines which set aside the obedience of the children in the Scriptural sense and advocate either spontaneous development of the children's mind and will or a government in home and school based upon mutual agreement only, are entirely out of harmony with the will of God as so clearly expressed throughout the Bible. This obedience may call for such measures of discipline as the situation may require, primarily earnest admonition, reprimand and reproof. Prov. 1, 8: "My son, hear the instruction of thy father and forsake not the law of thy mother." Prov. 13, 1: "A wise son heareth his father's instruction, but a scorner heareth not rebuke." Prov. 15, 5: "A fool despiseth his father's instruction, but he that regardeth reproof is prudent." Prov. 6, 23b: "Reproofs of instruction are the way of life."

Training in obedience is the first step in the careful rearing of Christian children; but this must be accompanied and followed by a *training in knowledge*. The Bible says: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it," Prov. 22, 6. This is often referred to by modern educationists as speaking of a development of natural talents on the part of the child himself; but the verb means "to initiate or prepare" by imparting information. While education is not merely a telling process, it must begin with the giving of information. It is only later that this process can be expanded into directing the acquisition of knowledge on the part of the children. In the field of religion and morals in particular it is necessary to bring information to children again and again, or as the Bible puts it: "Thou shalt teach them [these words which I command thee] diligently to thy children," Deut. 6, 7, that is, impress the information upon their minds also by constant repetition and drill after they have once gotten at least a word-understanding of the text.

The third step of the training of children is that which pertains

to the training in practise, or the *training of the will*. All the knowledge of the head or intellect will have little value unless a consecrated heart will carry the lessons which have been learned into practise in a life of sanctification. And here the rule is that of 1 Thess. 2, 11: "We exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you as a father doth his children." That is the training which leads to success in teaching: to present information in a telling, helpful way, urgently to invite, to be a pleader for true learning; this will be accompanied by a constant encouragement not to be disheartened by obstacles and difficulties; to which will be added the constant witnessing to the truth of that which is presented and to its value in the life of a Christian. If this is rightly and consistently done, it will most likely lead to self-activity on the part of the pupil, to an effort of his will to make the most of every opportunity, to act upon the best initiative, with a consecration that will produce results.

To this end, of course, the Christian parent and teacher will ever keep in mind that the basis of all true education, and incidentally the means of the only education controlling the heart and mind, is the *Word of God*. The Lord says: "These words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children," Deut. 6, 6. 7. The Lord says of Abraham: "I know he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment." In another passage of Deuteronomy we read, chap. 11, 18—20: "Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, . . . and ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down and when thou risest up." Ps. 71, 18: "O God, forsake me not, until I have showed Thy strength unto this generation and Thy power to every one that is to come." Ps. 72, 2—4. 6: "I will utter dark sayings of old which we have heard and known and our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, showing to the generations to come the praises of the Lord and His strength, . . . that the generations to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children." In this making of the Word of God basic for instruction we keep in mind the words of Scripture: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," Ps. 110, 10. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge," Prov. 1, 7; 9, 10. "The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom," Prov. 15, 33. "To know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge," Eph. 3, 19. "And that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus," 2 Tim. 3, 15.

By such constant, consistent, conscientious training the objective of Christian education is reached: the knowledge of salvation, full trust in the grace and mercy of God in Christ Jesus, and a will consecrated to His service, so that a Christian's life, by the power of God's presence and help, will be a presentation of his body as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, Rom. 12, 1. Then our pupils will be no more children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive, but, speaking the truth in love, grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ, Eph. 4, 14, 15.

P. E. KRETZMANN.

Kurze Geschichte der deutschen evangelischen Kirche in Rio Grande do Sul, Brasilien.

(S c h l u ß.)

D. W. Notermunds Zeit.

D. Wilhelm Notermund wurde am 25. November 1843 geboren. Er wollte sich eigentlich dem Lehrerberuf an den höheren Anstalten widmen, mußte aber infolge eines heftigen Katarrhs mit Lungenblutung sein Amt als Pfarrer in der hannoverschen Landeskirche niederlegen und kam nach Barmen. Dort legte Dr. Fabri ihm eines Tages die Frage vor, ob es nicht im Hinblick auf seine Gesundheit wie auch aus Rücksicht auf die kirchlichen Zustände geraten sei, auf einige Jahre nach Brasilien zu gehen. Notermund sagte zu. Da er jedoch gehört hatte, daß in Brasilien der Pfarrertitel kein Ehrentitel mehr sei, ertwarb er sich erst das Diplom eines Doktors der Philosophie. Später wurde ihm auch der Titel eines Doktors der Theologie verliehen.

Viel Trubel bereiteten in dieser Zeit noch die Mischehen. Mischehen durften nur von einem katholischen Priester vollzogen werden. Dieser tat es aber nicht, es sei denn, daß der protestantische Teil geschworen hatte, er würde seine Kinder in der katholischen Religion erziehen lassen und dem katholischen Teil nie in der Ausübung seiner Religion hinderlich sein. Der katholische Teil fügte dann noch hinzu, daß er nicht unterlassen wolle, das Gemahl zur römischen Kirche zu bekehren. kamen später diese Eltern zu einem protestantischen Pfarrer, um ihre Kinder dennoch von ihm taufen zu lassen, so antwortete er meistens: „Ihr habt geschworen, eure Kinder katholisch zu erziehen. Ich kann die Hand nicht dazu bieten, daß der Eid gebrochen werde. Wenn die Kinder erwachsen sind und dann zu uns kommen wollen, so sind sie herzlich willkommen.“ Als Notermund ankam, taufte er sofort die Kinder aus solchen Mischehen und erklärte, daß ihn der Eid nichts angehe. Es sei schlimm genug, daß ein solcher Eid geschworen worden sei; schlimmer sei es jedenfalls, die Eltern zum Halten dieses Eides