

# Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

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# Pathway to Hallelujah

## *The Way on High*

Right in the middle of our Bible we find a most wonderful book, the Book of Psalms.

God's people of all times, and every child of His, have found their own pathway through life mirrored in these hundred and fifty poems. One finds there any and all conditions, situations, problems, joys and sorrows expressed that befall God's children.

Although the order of the Psalms is from later date and later hand (originally there were five books of Psalms - we even find the same Psalm twice, 14 and 53, and another Psalm cut into two, 42, 43) one cannot deny that the final order has come about under the special guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Look at the last Psalms; they all begin and end with Hallelujah. The last Psalm is one Hallelujah, multiplied several times. That's what the life of God's children will end in: an everlasting Hallelujah. Thus the book as a whole describes the way of God's people through this life. Although that way runs through valleys of darkness and danger and despair, it ends on the heights.

Going through this book one discovers that there is always a relation between either joy or grief and the life of the singer. Because of his faithfulness the LORD vindicates him, - or because of his sins and foolishness the LORD chastises him. This is one, very important, lesson among many others that we learn from these inspired songs: there is a relationship between the path of sins and consequent trouble. There is also a relationship between the way of righteousness and divine blessing.

Considering this, one is not astonished to find that the Book of Psalms, while it ends in Hallelujah, begins with the *two ways*, the way of the righteous and the way of the wicked.

. . . and do you know how the Psalmbook starts?

## *Counselling of the ungodly*

The opening verse of "the pathway to Hallelujah" is, "Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked."!!!

This initial warning is repeated all along the road of the 150 Psalms.

The first warning is not that we should not walk in (to) the *council*, the meeting of the wicked, although that is also a dangerous business. But it says, Do not walk in the *counsel*, the counselling, the advice and suggestions of the ungodly. Do not walk in, i.e. according to, their suggestions.

Then you will end up in their destruction (vs 6) instead of singing Hallelujah for ever.

This warning is of the utmost importance, maybe even more after so many centuries than when they were written originally. But many children of God do not heed this warning, be it unwittingly.

NOTE. This article, which only touched upon the matter of counselling, was written as a salute to Dr. JAY E. ADAMS, professor in pastoral theology in Westminster Seminary, Philadelphia, who has broken the ban of ungodly counselling, and whom the Lord has used to open the eyes of many. We most thankfully mention his publications, printed by *Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co.*, Box 185, NUTLEY, N.J. U.S.A. 07110. Here are the titles:

*Competent to Counsel*  
*The Big Umbrella*  
*Christ and your Problems*  
*What to do about Worry*  
*Godliness through Discipline.*

May what he started, develop into a fully biblical counselling service for God's people, and break the bonds of many who are lost in their sins. vD.

Our time is a time of counselling.

We live in troubled times, or rather in times in which many people are troubled. They live under constant stress and break down. Drugs, tranquillizers are common nowadays. More than ever before, also among God's people, marriages get into trouble and break up. Various tensions result in family troubles. People can no longer stand the tensions, get a nervous breakdown, end up in a mental institution, go to psychiatrists and/or counsellors.

It has been said that we are lucky to profit from the tremendous development of psychiatry and counselling services. Even the smallest town has its municipal family counselling service. Even pastors "refer" their troubled sheep to these addresses, without wondering if they do not act against the first advice of the Psalm book, "do not walk in the counsel of the wicked."

We are very good in "proclaiming the antithesis" although we do not have to do that; the LORD did it already in paradise. We are convinced that there is an antithesis in politics, in education, in the field of labour, in science.

Do we, however, according to Psalm 1:1 (and many other texts) also believe that there is an antithesis in counselling?

The "father" of modern psychiatry was *Sigmund Freud*, a man who has, to this day, as much detrimental influence on this modern world as *Karl Marx* has in social respect, and *Darwin* in the field of science. We realize that later generations have corrected him, even replaced his theories with others. *Mowrer* came, and *Rogers* reigns, and *Skinner* is a great authority. But the root from which Freudian psychology grew, has not been rooted up.

In the courts of our day Freud is still the guide. His theory was that a person in trouble can only be helped when he finds a scape-goat. He is only the tragic result of others' misbehaviour, be it his parents, grandmother or teacher. These, in their turn, were the product of their past, and in the end God is to blame for everything. Freud did not believe in responsibility of the individual; he did not learn the lesson of the Psalmbook, that there is a relation between sin and trouble. He did not understand David in Psalm 32; David who, when he declared not his sin, wasted away, whose strength was dried up.

When a veteran kills seven innocent people, the first question is not, how in the world could he do it!, - but, what did the world do to him . . . ?

## *Antithesis in counselling*

It cannot be denied that a percentage of "mental patients" suffers from organic causes, like a tumor in the brain or an imbalance in the body's chemical condition. This percentage, however, is but small.

Freud, when confronted with a person-in-trouble, saw

in him a "sick person". He worked with what is called the "medical model". And a person who is sick, is only to be pitied. He cannot, anyway should not be held responsible for his deeds. You should even urge him, lying on his couch, to blame everyone and everything for trouble except himself.

On this colossal mistake of Freud the whole science of "psychiatry" is built. It means, literally, the healing of the soul. A soul-sickness is equated with a physical malady. The question is not asked, let alone answered, whether there is a relation between the person's "being up against the wall" and his previous, sinful behaviour.

Once the concept of "psychiatry" was invented, the psychiatrist was put on a level with the physician. Even christian people, although they would prefer a christian doctor, do not hesitate to entrust their sick body into the hands of an unbelieving physician and surgeon. It doesn't make much difference if an appendix or gallbladder is removed by a believing or an unbelieving surgeon, if the man only is expert in the work he is doing.

It must be stated that many good christian people apply the same idea to psychiatry. If you have suffered a nervous breakdown, or your marriage is on the rocks, well, you go to an expert, don't you? What difference would it make whether the man is a godly or ungodly person? He knows all about the complicated processes in the human mind, and if he only acts according to his knowledge, you are "safe" in his hands.

It is about time that we discover the antithesis in this field, and thus also in counselling. Mind you, we do not put psychiatry on a level with counselling, but we maintain that also in counselling there is an antithesis. And that christians should not walk in the counsel of the ungodly, of men who do not regard God and his Word of any meaning in their work.

#### *Let's heed the warning of Psalm 1*

If we want to say Hallelujah again, after periods of depression, nervous breakdowns, marriage and family troubles, we should stop and ask ourselves "What kind of counsel do I seek and will I walk in?"

If we accept the continuous teaching of the Psalmbook (and the whole Bible) we should recognize that wrong attitudes, self-chosen sinful paths, unconfessed sins lie at the root of our troubles. We should, then, also recognize that no help should be sought from people who do not believe that man is a sinner who is to be held responsible for the results of his sins, by God and by men. Help should not be sought from people who believe that man is intrinsically good, if you only remove his feelings of guilt (which are non-sense anyway), and remove the faulty environment, or at any case blame that environment.

There is a lot wrong in this respect among us.

A homosexual is told that he should not feel guilty about his homosexuality, that he (or she) should learn to live with it and make the best of it. That seems kind for the person, but it is utterly cruel. Such a person will, if he follows this wicked counsel, never end in singing Hallelujah!

Parents, especially mothers who cannot cope, or say that they cannot cope with their children, go to counsellors who tell them, not that they might find fault with their own sin, in lack of discipline for example, but that hysterectomy or vasectomy is the best solution.

Marriage partners who have conflicts, are advised that they should separate because of their lack of harmony. They are not told that they should discover that "love" is a

matter of faithfulness and respect, and that they should confess their sins and shortcomings to each other and to the LORD.

Man is essentially good, you know. So, his trouble must stem from a "foreign" source. If a psychiatrist cannot help, then maybe a sensitivity group where one is invited to ventilate all one's ill-feelings against relatives, colleagues, etc.; in the process the essentially good "ego" will come to the surface.

If you have religious problems, why do you not stop going to church and stop reading the Bible, if that bothers you? Maybe, religion is not for you and you are not for religion.

Do not say that all this is heavily exaggerated. It is nothing but a random recollection of pastoral experience.

#### *What then?*

Quite simply, do not walk in the counsel of the ungodly.

And thus, pray the LORD that he may provide for us opportunities to seek the counsel of the godly. Of those who treat us so kindly and brotherly that they tell us to stand before the mirror of God's Law, asking, where did I go wrong? If it is, even for only 10%, true that Jesus Christ gives us peace beyond understanding, how is it that the peace has gone from our hearts, from our homes? One can certainly not blame our beloved Saviour for that. His burden is not too heavy but light. David knew how; and every christian should know, or seek to find the answer. "Examine yourselves, to see whether you are holding to your faith. Test yourselves. Do you not realize that Jesus Christ is in you? - unless indeed you fail to meet the test." (II Cor. 13:5.)

The church should more and more become a healing community. We should no longer look at James 5:13 and following as a foreign body in our Bible. According to the apostle there is a task for the elders of the Church. "The prayer of faith will save the sick man, and the Lord will raise him up; and if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven." (vs 15.)

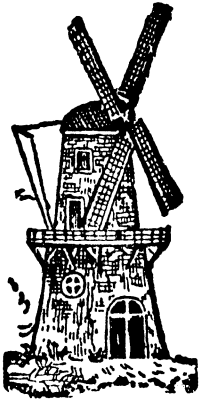
Every upright believer is to be a counsellor for his brother or sister in time of need. "As far as I am concerned about you, my brothers, I am convinced that you especially are abounding in the highest goodness, richly supplied with perfect knowledge and *competent to counsel one another.*" (Romans 15:14.)

Relatives, pastors and friends, christian friends that is, should think twice before "referring" a troubled person or couple to the counsel of the wicked. And we all should stop venting our problems before men who have no clue whatsoever of sin and of a body that wastes away, of confession and forgiveness and restoration to joy. "Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my help and my God!" (Psalm 43:5.)

The best tranquilizer is reciting the answer to the question, What is your only comfort in life and death? Or to read again what was read at our baptism, what it means to have been baptized into the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. He will bring you, finally, without spot among the assembly of the elect in life eternal, to sing forever Hallelujah!

And do not forget, the mercies of the ungodly are cruel; they do not *show*, because they do not *know*, the way to Hallelujah.

G. VANDOOREN



# Hoek van Holland

SUBJECTIVISTISCH "GETUIGENIS"-BEGRIP

We willen ons nog een laatste maal bezig houden met het rapport "Het gezag van de Bijbel", uitgebracht op de vergadering van de commissie voor Geloof en Kerkorde van de Wereldraad van Kerken te Leuven 1971.

We zagen hoe het begrip "interpretaties" in dit rapport domineert. De Bijbel is een boek vol menselijke interpretaties. Ze interpreteren het "Christus-gebeuren". Men kan ook zeggen dat er bepaalde centra zijn waaromheen zich de interpretaties groeperen. De bijbelse getuigenissen hebben - volgens Leuven 1971 - niet alle een gelijke autoriteit voor ons. Ze spreken ons immers niet alle gelijklijk aan. Sommige wijzen centraal op het "Christus-gebeuren", maar andere zijn meer een zaak van de omtrek; ze liggen als het ware aan de rand. Een voorbeeld van het laatste zagen we in de wijze waarop dit rapport spreekt over de maagdelijke geboorte van de Here Christus. Het geldt hier volgens Leuven een "interpretatie" en dan nog slechts een interpretatie van secundaire aard, als het ware van de tweede rang.

We zezen een vorig maal op de hoogmoed die er spreekt uit de eis dat wij, mensen, een onderscheidend oordeel moeten vellen inzake de onderscheidene "interpretaties" in de Bijbel. Nu wil ik er aan toevoegen dat we in het rapport op dit punt ook een cirkelredenering aantreffen.

Wat is het geval? Indien alle bijbelse getuigenissen slechts verschillende interpretatie-modellen zijn van het heilsgebeuren en indien wij een onderscheidend oordeel moeten vellen over de waarde ervan, komt onvermijdelijk de vraag op naar het *criterium*. Wat is de maatstaf om de waarde van de uiteenlopende interpretaties te meten?

We lezen daarover in het rapport het volgende: "But what was not

contested was that a critical distinction between various interpretations is in principle possible. The criterion is to what extent an interpretation interprets a central saving event attested in the Scriptures and is rooted in that saving event." (ER XXIII/4, 430).

De lezer zal het Engelse citaat wel hebben kunnen volgen. Het criterium om tussen de verschillende interpretaties te onderscheiden is dus de mate waarin een interpretatie een centraal heilsgebeuren uitlegt en waarin zij in dat heilsgebeuren is gegrond.

Maar het rapport heeft uitdrukkelijk betoogd dat wij zulk een heilsgebeuren alleen maar kennen in de interpretatie welke in de bijbel eraan is gegeven. U herinnert zich het veelbetekenend zinnetje dat de interpretatie in zekere zin het gebeuren *is*. Wordt dan niet een *interpretatie* de maatstaf voor een *interpretatie*? Draait men zo niet in een cirkel rond? Of om een ander beeld te gebruiken: is men nog wel in staat een standpunt op vaste bodem te vinden? Wie kan zich aan eigen haren uit het moeras optrekken?

Hier ziet men waar het subjectivisme heenleidt. Wie Je Heilige Schrift niet aanvaardt zoals zij zichzelf aanbiedt, als het onfeilbare en betrouwbare Woord van God, houdt geen norm meer over.

Dat subjectivisme is ook duidelijk aanwezig in de hantering van het begrip "getuigenis". Het rapport redeneert als volgt: Niet het "feit" als zodanig maar alleen het feit in verbinding met zijn geeigende interpretatie openbaart ons God.

Dus, "the temporal proximity and firsthand character of the Bible cannot be decisive for its authority. It is in principle possible for a later interpretation to be closer in substance to the Gospel." De nabijheid in tijd en het eerste hands karakter van de Bijbel kan niet beslissend zijn voor zijn gezag. Het is in beginsel mogelijk

dat een latere interpretatie naar inhoud dicht bij het Evangelie staat.

Indien men deze redenering vergelijkt met hetgeen de Heilige Schrift zelf zegt over de kracht van zijn getuigenis, ziet men het verschil. De Here Christus zegt tot zijn discipelen: gij moet getuigen, *want* gij zijt van het begin aan met Mij (Joh. 15:27). Wanneer de ledige plaats van Judas moet worden vervuld, zegt Petrus: Er moet dan van de mannen, die zich bij ons hebben aangesloten in al den tijd, dat de Here Jezus bij ons in - en uitgegaan is, te beginnen met den doop van Johannes tot den dag, dat Hij van ons werd opgenomen, eèn van hen met ons getuige worden van zijn opstanding (Hand. 1:21, 22). In zijn rede tot Cornelius en diens huis verklaart hij: En wij zijn getuigen van al hetgeen Hij gedaan heeft in het land der Joden zowel als te Jeruzalem. God heeft gegeven dat de opgestane Christus verscheen, niet aan het gehele volk, doch aan de getuigen, die door God tevoren gekozen waren, aan ons, die met Hem gegeten en gedronken hebben, nadat Hij uit de doden was opgestaan; en Hij heeft ons geboden het volk te prediken en te betuigen, dat Hij het is, die door God is aangesteld tot rechter over levenden en doden (Hand. 10:39-42). De apostel Paulus zegt dat de Here Christus gedurende vele dagen is verschenen aan hen, die met Hem van Galilea naar Jeruzalem opgegaan waren, die thans getuigen van Hem zijn bij het volk (Hand. 13:31).

Er zouden nog meer Schriftaanhalingen te geven zijn, die duidelijk maken wat "getuigen" en "getuigenis" betekent. Maar deze zijn voldoende om te doen zien dat het gaat om een getuigenis als voor een rechtbank omtrent de *feiten* die geschied zijn. De apostelen zijn oog- en oorgetuigen. Zij getuigen hetgeen zij gezien en gehoord hebben, hetgeen zij getast hebben van het Woord des levens, 1 Joh. 1:1-4.

Leuven 1971 zegt: "The question of historicity arises directly in many of the miracle stories and it affects also central reports such as that of the virgin birth, the empty tomb or the ascension. It is not our concern here to assert or deny historicity. For even apart from the findings of biblical scholarship, we are dealing here with reports which can clarify and interpret the central content of the Gospel, namely, God's action in Jesus Christ."

Het rapport laat dus de kwestie van de historiciteit (het echt gebeurd zijn) in het midden. Genoeg is te weten dat berichten als die omtrent het lege graf op Pasen of de hemelvaart de centrale inhoud van het Evangelie, Gods handelen in Jesus Christus, kunnen verhelderen en interpreteren.

Maar ons eeuwig behoud rust niet op de *interpretatie* van het "Christus-gebeuren", een interpretatie in de vorm van het bericht over het lege graf bijv., doch het rust op het *feit* van de opstanding van Christus. Wanneer de apostel Paulus in 1 Cor. 15 over de opstanding van Christus schrijft, noemt hij eerst een reeks getuigen aan wie de opgestane Christus verschenen is, en hij toont daarna de beslissende betekenis van de feitelijkheid van Christus' verrijzenis: Indien Christus niet is opgewekt, dan is uw geloof zonder vrucht, dan zijt gij nog in uw zonden (vs 17).

Overigens kan men vragen wat de uitdrukking "God's action in Jesus Christ" voor betekenis behoudt, wanneer men de ontvangenis uit de Heilige Geest, de opwekking en de ten hemel opneming van Christus slechts "interpretaties" noemt van het heilshandelen Gods in Christus. Juist die ontvangenis, die opwékking (een woord dat in het Nieuwe Testament nog meer gebruikt wordt dan opstanding), en die ten hemel opnéming waren handelingen van God!

Maar keren we terug tot het begrip "getuigen" en "getuigenis".

Het rapport Leuven 1971 zegt dat het dikwijls onmogelijk is de bijbelse interpretaties vandaag zonder nadere kwalificatie te aanvaarden. Het voegt er bij wijze van vertroostende mededeling aan toe dat dit niet inhoudt dat zij zonder betekenis zijn. "The truth is rather that the present generation enters into the process of interpretation in which the witnesses of that past time were also engaged. On the basis of the interpretation they have bequeathed to us we must try to catch a glimpse of the facts which they were interpreting and to do in our situation what they did in theirs."

Men ziet dat het volgens Leuven 1971 om één groot proces van interpretatie gaat. De getuigen van het verleden waren in het proces van interpretatie gewikkeld en het hedendaags geslacht begeeft zich in hetzelfde interpretatie-proces. De getuigen uit dat verre verleden hebben ons hun interpretatie als erfenis

nagelaten en nu moeten wij op basis van hun interpretatie ook een glimp trachten op te vangen van de feiten en in onze situatie daar een interpretatie van trachten te geven.

Het is duidelijk dat hier het woord "witnesses" (getuigen) niet zijn Schriftuurlijke betekenis heeft behouden. Het gaat Leuven niet om oog- en oorgetuigen, maar om mensen die een persoonlijk, subjectief getuigenis weggaven, een subjectief gekleurde interpretatie. Niet GóD gaf ons door oog- en oorgetuigen zijn betrouwbare openbaring in de Heilige Schrift omtrent de heilsfeiten die geschied zijn, maar de bijbelschrijvers vermaakten aan ons hun interpretatie en wij moeten daar in onze eigentijdse situatie onze interpretatie aan toevoegen.

Het geheel doet een beetje denken aan de wijze waarop men in de Hervormde Kerk sprak en spreekt over het belijden in gemeenschap met de vaders. Dat betekent niet dat men *hetzelfde* belijdt dat de vaders op grond van de Heilige Schrift hebben beleeden. Het betekent slechts dat men in eigen situatie een analoge belijdenisdáad voltrekt.

Nu zo heet het hier, nota bene in betrekking tot de Heilige Schrift zelf, dat wij moeten handelen in geestelijke overeenstemming met de bijbelschrijvers. "As their interpretation was related to God's revelatory action, so our interpretation must be oriented analogously." Onze interpretatie moet dus een analoge wijze gericht zijn op het openbaringshandelen van God.

Maar wij zijn niet aan de "interpretaties" van de Bijbelschrijvers gebonden . . .

Wat blijft er op deze wijze nog werkelijk over van de erkenning van het Goddelijk gezag van de Heilige Schrift?

En wat van de betekenis van de Canon?

Het rapport zegt: "The Canon has assembled a variety of witnesses . . . This variety certainly limits the theological significance of the Canon . . . The dividing line between canonical and non-canonical writings is not a hard and fast one. It is much more a matter of a fluid boundary."

Men ziet het: de Bijbel is een verzameling van onderscheidene, subjectieve "getuigenissen". "Getuigenis" is hier ongeveer hetzelfde als "interpretatie". Deze gevarieerdheid van getuigenissen stelt een grens aan de theologische betekenis van de


Canon. Moeten ook wij niet intreden in hetzelfde interpretatie-proces als waarvan de Bijbel het product is? Er is dan ook geen scherpe en duidelijke scheidslijn tussen kanonieke en niet-kanonieke geschriften. Er is slechts een soort vloeiende grens. Zijn we zo niet overgeleverd aan puur subjectivisme?

Laat me deze serie artikelen, waarin we nog slechts een deel van het rapport Leuven 1971 bespraken, mogen eindigen met een herinnering aan de Gereformeerde belijdenis.

God heeft, door een bijzondere zorg, die Hij voor ons en onze zaligheid draagt, zijn knechten, den Profeten en Apostelen geboden, zijn geopenbaarde woord bij geschrift te stellen. Wij vervatten de Heilige Schrift in twee boeken, van het Oude en van het Nieuwe Testament, welke zijn Kanonieke boeken, waar niets tegen valt te zeggen. *Alle* deze boeken *alleen* ontvangen wij voor heilig en kanoniek, om ons geloof daarnaar te reguleren, daarop te gronden en daarmede te bevestigen (N.G.B. art. 3-5).

Hoe is het mogelijk dat de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (syn.) nog een zekere band aan deze belijdenis pretenderen te bewaren en tegelijk lid zijn van de Wereldraad en verantwoordelijkheid nemen voor zulk een onkatholiek, wjl onSchriftuurlijk, geschrift als het rapport Leuven 1971?

J. FABER



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# Agnus Dei

Recitation and singing about the Son of Man  
Who is the Christ

CHANTING of Psalm 2:1 - 3 (King James Version), to be followed immediately by the singing of Psalm 2:4a (the first four lines).

Why do the hea then rage and the peo ple im agine a vain thing?  
The kings of the earth set them selves and the rul ers take coun sel to ge ther,  
a gainst the Lord and a. gainst his A noin ted say ing,  
Let us break their bands a sun der and cast a way their cords from us.

COMMUNITY SINGING of Psalm 2:4a (Book of Praise)

Let all attend and hear God's fixed decree,  
Of which he made to me this declaration:  
"Thou art my Son, I have begotten thee  
This day; be sovereign LORD of every nation."

CHANTING of Psalm 2:1 - 3 again, followed by the singing of Psalm 2:3

COMMUNITY SINGING of Psalm 2:3 (Book of Praise)

His wakened wrath shall shake his guilty foes,  
In great displeasure he shall sore distress them;  
And thus, while yet they dare his will oppose,  
The LORD himself in thunder shall address them:  
"Though madly thus you have my power disowned,  
Yet be assured, the King whom I ordain,  
On Zion's holy hill shall sit enthroned,  
And there securely shall forever reign!"

RECITING

There is war, God, war in the world.  
Was there war already from the beginning?  
There is grief, God, sorrow and grief,  
And a dreadful lack of belief,  
And there seems no end to our sinning.

I created, saith God. Yes, I did!  
And behold, it was very good.  
I created all things in right order;  
I laid down every limit and border.  
There was peace, there was work, there was food.

There is war, God. Yet there is war.  
All our days are turned into moaning.  
We weep for illness and death;  
We fear Thy kindled wrath,  
And there seems no end to our groaning.

I gave life, saith God. Yes, I did!  
And behold, it was very good.  
But the lips of my people curled;  
They made eyes at the Prince of the World,  
And My covenant they trampled under foot.

I set war, saith God. Yes, I did!  
I set war between woman and snake,  
And Death I have sentenced to death;  
On the devil I poured out my wrath,  
And a brandnew beginning did I make.

GROUP RECITING of Genesis 3:15

I will put enmity between thee and the woman,  
and between thy seed and her seed;  
it shall bruise thy head,  
and thou shalt bruise his heel.

SINGING of "In the beginning..."

In the be gin ning was God Who cre a ted  
Hea ven and earth by His ho ly Word.  
O ver the wa ters God's Spi rit was mo ving.  
God was cre a ting and no thing was heard.

Nothing but God's holy voice in the darkness:  
"Let there be light" and then there was light!  
God separated the light from the darkness:  
Light was called "day" and the darkness "night."

God spoke His Word and created the heavens  
Just like a dome-shaped vault on the flood,  
Stretched out the heavens like beautiful curtains,  
Made of the clouds His chariot.

God called the waters and they were obedient,  
Went to their places; and dry land appeared.  
't Was very good: on the earth grew the fruit trees,  
Different grasses and herbs yielding seed.

Next day the LORD made the heavenly bodies,  
lights, for the night and lights for the day,  
Marking the days, and the years, and the seasons,  
Ordering time in a regular way.

Four days were gone when God made fowl and fishes:  
gulls, hawks and finches, each bird you can find,  
And for the seas and the lakes and the rivers,  
Seal, crab and fishes of different kind.

Then came the day that the LORD made the cattle:  
Horses and cows, all the beasts under heav'n,  
And God created then man in His image,  
As male and female created He them.

God saw the world and behold, it was good now.  
God rested from all the work He made.  
That was the day of the LORD, that's the Lord's Day,  
which every week we commemorate.

RECITING

Shall clay that's on the potter's wheel resist the potter's will?

Shall statues boast against the man who carved them with great skill?

GROUP RECITING

We boasted, we rebelled, we mocked our Creator; we cannot bear His wrath, we need a Mediator!

RECITING

Shall children blame their parents for being born of them? Shall branches ever pride themselves, "We can do without the stem?"

GROUP RECITING

We boasted, we rebelled, we mocked our Creator; we cannot bear His wrath, we need a Mediator!

RECITING

Shall man deny his Maker, and not evoke His wrath? Shall God not punish him for sin with everlasting death?

GROUP RECITING

We boasted, we rebelled, we mocked our Creator; we cannot bear His wrath, we need a Mediator!

(to be continued in the next issue) EWOUND GOSKER

\* \* \* \* \*

Editor's Note: A few months ago Mr. Gosker wrote us: "... it would be nice if we could have a kind of 'declamatorium' (reciting and singing) on the Easter-event. We always do have things like that on the occasion of Christmas; we should not pass Easter by then..." Since that time Mr. Gosker has pursued his suggestion, with the happy result that we are now able to publish the first part of an Easter "programme" entitled "Agnus Dei" (Lamb of God). Although it was initially intended for school children, other groups may also wish to perform it. Moreover, it may stimulate some, e.g. our Societies, to engage in similar efforts. We hope this contribution will indeed encourage you to voice the joy of Easter.

\* \* \* \* \*

# Country Walks

When year after year we watch for our returning birds in spring, look at the calendar at their arrival and make notes of that, we'll discover a remarkable stability in the dates on which they return year after year. Indeed a remarkable thing, especially when we consider the differences in the way the various springs make their entrance. Unfavourable weather, a cold spell, a late breakthrough of spring can be the reason that the migratory birds arrive a bit later than normal, and mild, sunny, favourable spring days will stimulate them in coming a bit earlier.

If the weather is raw or too cold yet for their liking, we can't expect them to sing too enthusiastically; they then prefer not to sing at all and that is probably the reason why we miss so many of the first arrivals, as we all more or less listen for their songs instead of looking for the birds themselves.

Take the robin for instance, a bird considered to be THE harbinger of spring. Many a time have I seen them back during the first week of March, their normal time in



SONG SPARROW [National Museums of Canada]

the Brampton area, but wouldn't hear their song until the end of the month for the simple reason that some more snow storms had swept the countryside, either forcing the robins to go back to the warmer regions of the lake shores or to await the return of warmer weather by simply remaining near birdfeeders.

This spring, according to some old-timers the mildest in memory, has brought them back a week early. On March 6th the temperature soared to 50 degrees with clear skies, with the result that several singing robins were reported from various parts of the town. As I've seen one or more every day since then, they must have returned in large numbers.

Also enticed by the mild weather to come earlier were the common grackles and song sparrows, who beat the robins by five days and both appeared on the first day of March, the grackles congregating in their favourite roosting area, a group of century-old spruce trees near the Etobicoke creek, and the song sparrows singing from the undergrowth along the banks.

As the return of these birds means that the end of winter is in sight, it's rather humorous to see how even the grackles are tolerated for a while as harbingers of warmer times. Since they have the same mean streak that crows and magpies possess, they are far from popular for the remainder of the year.

The song sparrow is more popular. This little brown bird, one of the forty-odd species of native sparrows in Canada, is the first of its kind to return every year and will not cease to sing until well after most birds have gone south again in early fall. As they are abundant all across Canada's countryside and even in the larger gardens of cities and towns, people should be more familiar with them than the case happens to be, especially since their song is outstanding and has a lot of variety in it.

It is fascinating to observe these three kinds of early birds annually, especially since they are harbingers of spring in Brampton and points farther north. Brampton and Orangeville are too far from the milder regions of the Great Lakes' shores in order for these birds to survive the winter, in contrast with the Burlington, Toronto, or Chatham areas, where a small population of these birds are permanent residents.

With their arrival the time has come for other birds to leave these regions. A few snowy owls have been observed around town while a flock of evening grosbeaks and juncos still linger. Pine siskins and redpolls seem to have left already, all birds that, off and on, visit us during winter.

With birds such as meadowlarks, killdeer, kinglets and waterfowl likely to appear any day, March is a rather exciting month and once again shows us a wonder which still baffles scientists: the part of Creation called migration.

COR TENHAGE



# news medley

Although in this Medley we usually mention it only when a couple celebrate their fortieth wedding anniversary, we make an exception for our fellow-editor, REV. D. VANDERBOOM. Our brother and his wife are allowed to celebrate their thirtieth wedding anniversary on April 6th. Not all of these thirty years have been spent in the ministry; yet the larger part has. With them and with the congregation of Toronto we are thankful for the blessings bestowed upon this family. Many more years!

From East to West is but a small step in our thoughts. Let's make the jump: On April 11 br. and sr. P. J. HUTTEMA remember that the Lord has spared them for forty years for each other and for their children. They were there already when we arrived in New Westminster, and the contact has remained ever since. It was on the farm of br. Huttema that the Consistory meetings of the newly instituted Church at Aldergrove were held. There was never any lack of coffee or cake. The undersigned was privileged in having an active role in the solemnization of the marriage of several of their children. And our sincere congratulations be extended to them all.

When one preached in Middelharnis, the Netherlands, one was expected to go to Melissant in the afternoon, either by bike or aboard the miniature train that provided the transportation to and on the South Holland Islands. In the morning the two families living in Melissant came to Middelharnis for the service, but in the afternoon a separate service was held for them in the home of one of the two families involved. That's where the undersigned met the Van Dijk family for the first time. Little could we think at that time that some years later services would be held once more in their living room, this time thousands of miles from the original place: in Smithers, where the Church at Houston organized separate services for the families living in that area. Whoever travels the now beautiful highway between Houston and Smithers and has not known the old Queen's Highway No. 16, will have a difficult time realizing that many a sigh of relief was heard once the journey had been completed, especially during the spring break-up. Fortunately logging trucks were forbidden to use the highway during that critical period. Otherwise we might not have been able to get through at all.

In any case: BR. and SR. VAN DIJK will celebrate their fortieth wedding anniversary, the Lord willing, on May 4th. Also of some of their children I have wedding pictures in my growing album. But it is not just for that reason that we extend our heartfelt congratulations to

them too. In the communion of saints we are thankful with one another when such blessings are bestowed upon members of the Family. It also appears that our *Clarion* serves towards the strengthening of that bond. From some couples whom we mentioned in this column I received a letter which revealed that congratulatory messages had been received from Church members whom they did not know. Those who show the communion of saints by letting others know that we are one Family be assured that it is highly appreciated.

However, we had better continue with our news about the Churches.

Some time ago we requested that official news items regarding the calling of ministers be sent directly to the Publisher, in order that we may serve our readers with speedy information. I mentioned a specific example. Br. Meester, clerk of Grand Rapids, sent me a letter explaining that Grand Rapids (the Church mentioned in that example) did send word to the publisher at once. Apparently I created the impression that I was blaming the Grand Rapids Church for a delay. I would gladly do what I can to remove any such impression. Without blaming anyone, I just pointed out why it is so necessary that Premier Printing receives news directly and speedily. But enough about this. It proves that our *Clarion* is being read and that the readers do take note of what is being written.

That became also evident from the remarks which Rev. H. Stel made in the Winnipeg bulletin about what I wrote concerning the decision of Classis Alberta/Manitoba in the matter of appeals sent to a classis. The point is not very suitable to be dealt with in this column. Maybe we can have some separate articles about it in the future.

We learned that the fam. VAN SPRONSEN expects to be in Canada for some four months this summer, starting in July, and that the KNIGGES plan to come to Canada in August. Undoubtedly we shall have an opportunity to tell you more in another column.

In Edmonton an office-bearers conference is scheduled for the April 8 weekend, where the REV. G. VANDOOREN will speak. He will also preach in Neerlandia. It is good that also in this manner the Churches in other parts of the country can benefit from the work that is being done at our College. Our College does enjoy the interest of members throughout the Churches, as may appear from the saving-cans action. Everywhere the bulletins contain notices that the ladies wish to empty the piggybanks and send the money to a central address so that it can be presented on the occasion of the coming convocation.

In some Churches the question is investigated whether the female members of the Congregation should take a more active part in various proceedings. There is the question whether they should be allowed to vote. We'll see what the study committees come up with.

Even though they may not yet take part in voting,



This attractive and historic church building, located in Dutton, Michigan [near Grand Rapids], now belongs to the American Reformed Church, Grand Rapids. The parsonage is shown on the left. Our front cover provides a view of the church building by itself.



our sisters are active nevertheless. Oftentimes they provide the Churches with necessary equipment, as e.g. in Edmonton, where a one year's supply of saved coupons brought the bonus of an electric kettle and some tea towels.

In Fergus the ladies are collecting signatures to support a protest against more liberal abortion practices in the Hospital there. Brampton took some action re Capital Punishment and is contacting the Member of Parliament. Burlington East plans to do something to tie in with the Burlington centennial celebrations. They are thinking of placing Bibles in Hotels and Motels and of operating Gospel - and Bible - booths. Attention is being paid also to the possibility of work in Spain.

Hamilton used its new Church building for the first time and is planning a more official dedication in the beginning of April. Chatham printed a picture of the proposed Church building and we must say that it looks very nice.

It appears that it is not easy to keep the premises clean, whether the Church building is new or older. Frequently the bulletins contain a request not to leave wrappings, etcetera, in the auditorium. At times the people living in the neighbourhood of the localities where catechism classes are held, are not too favourably impressed with the behaviour of the covenant children who have to wait for their turn to be taught. Sometimes the students do more instructive things. In one Church they have to write a report on the sermon they heard the previous Sunday.

As for sermons: more and more Churches decrease the number of services in Dutch. That does not go without protests and requests to the contrary, but the necessity to have all-English Sundays is being realized more and more.

Consistories meet regularly and one is very much impressed by the time and effort given in the service of the Lord. The growth of the Congregations also prompts more than one Consistory to ask, "Do we need more office-bearers?" and some have increased

the number of elders recently. Whether this will contribute to a more efficient way of working and meeting will have to be seen. Already with the present number one Consistory-report mentioned: "The chairman suggests to close the meeting at 12:37 A.M." To everyone's surprise, the suggestion was adopted even! Maybe the meetings can be shortened if personal letters and personal matters are no longer discussed. We wondered how a Consistory could discuss "a letter from a member of the congregation to the minister."

The last issue of *In Holy Array* had as an enclosure a complete index of all topics dealt with in this periodical for the last ten years. When going over that list one is amazed at the variety and thankful for the activity thus shown by our young people. It certainly serves a purpose, as does the other periodical which intends to serve our societies: *Almond Branch*.

When the emigration to Canada started, it was thought by many that the farewell to parents and other relatives would be a definite one. These days, however, frequent trips are made to the old country. We do not understand why "Sr. V. took with her from there a broken wrist". Must have been quite a souvenir.

It may be a matter of punctuation, but we did understand why the nursery was no longer sufficient when reading the following: "Another suggestion: we pass on to the people concerned first of all the baby-sitters but also the parents, a remark we have heard repeatedly: would it not be better to move the nursery to one of the classrooms of the school?"

We live in the age of the child. The next generation is always more developed than the older generation (at least in their own estimation). They do seem to get some support from what one Church reported, namely "that three children were baptized last Sunday besides having celebrated the holy supper."

This Medley was a little longer than usual; we did not have one the other time.

vO

# An Introduction To CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

If good books fascinate you then it is always a great delight to browse through a library. It used to be that one had only to enter a home and there in the family bookcase all kinds of literary gems met the eye. Especially among Reformed people, many books relating to the Scriptures, to theology and to church history were to be found. How things have changed! Now when you enter a Reformed home an electronic picture-emitting monster dominates the living room. The bookcase is next to non-existent, stuffed in some inconspicuous corner. It usually contains a few picture books, a large section devoted to romance, espionage and miscellaneous adventures and, perhaps, just perhaps, a few Bible study books.

To find such a situation in a family which is only nominally Reformed would be no surprise but to find the same thing in the homes of faithful Reformed people makes one wonder. What material do they use to study the Word of God? How do they manage to progress from the "milk" of the Gospel to the "meat"? Do they think it no longer necessary to *grow* in faith and knowledge?

The whole problem might not be so acute if there existed a network of good church libraries which the members could use. But there

the situation is often not much better. Unused Dutch books at times dominate such a library, recent material is absent, Bible commentaries are few and sometimes ill-chosen, church history material is negligible (except for a few hand-me-downs). Indeed, that a church library is not considered all that essential in the life of the local church is revealed by the little money budgeted, the inconvenient place where it is set-up, the poor use that is made of it, and by the fact that the librarian's task is regarded as a do-nothing job.

The usual rebuttal to such a situation is "we just do not know what to buy". There is some truth in that, but at the same time, how much effort has gone into such a quest? Was there really a concerted attempt to consult bookstores, to read the material, and to ask advice? One wonders.

This attitude to buying and reading worthwhile books, be they Christian or otherwise, is part of a general illness affecting society at large. The question is not, "Do people still read?" but "*What* do they read?" Newspapers, magazines, racy paperbacks, the escapist kind, abound on the bookstands and sell like "hot-cakes", but that is usually the extent of the reading bug. As one modern historian remarked, "Educa-

tion has produced a vast population able to read but unable to distinguish what is worth reading."

Part of the problem lies in the fact that this is a consumer age. People want and expect to be entertained; they are no longer willing to expend the effort to entertain others, much less themselves. It is a matter of desiring all kinds of things and pleasures but being unable or unwilling to produce them of their own accord. For example, parties today rarely thrive on talk and food alone, not because the food is bad but because the talk is so superficial. Without some entertainment it is considered a dull affair. What it comes down to then is not a matter of brain-power but of brain-use. God has instilled man with this most marvellous of inventions but man is often content to let it go unused and underdeveloped. When we feel the urge to read we chose the light, shallow books, full of romance and adventure that lead one quickly to fantasy land. In competition with the comic book, the magazine and the novel stands the television. It offers an even easier escape: simply flop yourself down, consult the television listings, choose the most spell-binding program, turn the knob and away you go. Endless, endless hours of talk, action and suspense, mostly

## SECTION 1 - THE BIBLE

### Original Versions

1. *Biblia Hebraica*. Edited by R. Kittel (Stuttgart: Wurttembergische Bibelanstalt) 1968. 1434 pp. \$13.50.

Up until the present time this has been the main critical edition of the Hebrew Bible. The Masoretic text has been re-edited basically three times and is at present being up-dated again.

2. *The Hebrew Bible*. Edited by N.H. Snaith (London: The British and Foreign Bible Society) 1960. 1366 pp.

This is one of the most readable and cheapest of pointed texts of the Hebrew Old Testament; however the absence of a critical apparatus makes it of limited value.

3. *The Greek New Testament*. Edited by K.A. Aland, M. Black, B.M. Metzger and A. Wikgren (London: United Bible Societies) 1966. 920 pp.

This is one of the newest and also one of the best texts of the Greek N.T. The critical apparatus is set-up to facilitate Bible translation work.

### English Versions

1. *The American Standard Version*. (New York: Nelson) 1901, various printings.

This version was produced by the American Revision Committee in 1901. It is one of the most accurate English translations of the Bible; however, its style is awkward for modern use.

2. *The New American Standard Bible*. (Carol Stream: Creation House) 1971, 1730 pp. \$10.95 (\*\*\*)

The N.A.S.B. is a recent updating of the A.S.V. taking into account the original texts. It is a recommended version and is an improvement of the R.S.V. It is an accurate and faithful rendering although awkward in places.

3. *The Revised Standard Version*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan), also other publishers. 1952. (\*\*\*)

The R.S.V. is the most widely used version today. It will undergo a revision in the near future. It is not as accurate or as faithful to the original texts as the N.A.S.B. but it is a more fluent translation. *Note*: usually the footnotes give the more accurate reading.

irrelevant. You take it in, swallow it until 11:00 p.m., and digest it while you sleep. What have you learned? Usually nothing. You have merely succeeded in consuming some more hours of your life.

This is only part of the picture but taken together it shows us that the continuing education of ourselves is very meager. People lament when they are given a historical, political or philosophical book to read. It is too hard. Rarely do they bother to consult a dictionary to learn the meaning of a difficult word; mostly the book is pushed aside with the comment "that's beyond me". Laziness, ignorance, call it what you will, but the average Reformed person regards solid books with doctrinal content as almost wholly beyond his capacity.

The lack of good Christian books in our homes and churches and the lack of time spent with them has serious repercussions. Why do discussions at study societies frequently fall flat? Simply because no reading or preparation work is done. People, especially young people, prefer to talk off the top of their heads without even bothering to research and study

the topic under consideration. Is it then any wonder that some study meetings are considered "flops"? The benefits from these societies only come to the fore when the members take time to get acquainted with the subject on hand.

Perhaps the greatest factor contributing to and resulting from this literary or study illness is the lack of a "Reformed appetite". The hunger for knowledge that springs from a living, vibrant faith is sadly missing. There is a tendency to regard church services, catechism classes and study societies as sufficient to meet all our spiritual needs; rarely is there any time set aside to study and meditate on God's Word and to sprout in knowledge and in holiness. It should not come as a surprise then if the criteria for what constitutes a good sermon, speech, book or article are low. It should not even come as a surprise to find people easily led astray and into the arms of sects and the world.

The only corrective to the situation is that Reformed people must be seized with a new desire to plumb the depths of their faith and to take their rich heritage seriously. Being spiritually ignorant is tanta-

mount to being an unbeliever. It reveals an uncaring attitude towards the riches given by the Lord Jesus Christ to His Church.

In the articles that now begin I will try to help those who find themselves lost in the avalanche of evangelical books coming off the presses. I will also mention worthwhile books published in the past; however, I will restrict myself to English language material. It is my hope that this bibliography will help church librarians in the building of their respective libraries and that it will also help individuals in the fashioning of home libraries. To that end, books recommended for individual purchase will be marked by an asterisk (\*) and those recommended for societies or church libraries by a double asterisk (\*\*). Books recommended for both will be marked by a triple asterisk (\*\*\*)

A word of advice: read critically. No book is free from error, only the Bible. An attempt has been made to restrict this bibliography to trustworthy authors and to sound Biblical scholarship; nevertheless, read everything with a good critical eye and if need be check it out.

4. *The New English Bible*. (London: Oxford Press) 1970. Various editions.

One of the few entirely new translations of recent times, the N.E.B. is a literary delight; however, it is a product of liberal scholarship and shows it. It is also very British in language and paraphrastic.

5. *The Amplified Bible*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan) 1965, 1485 pp.

The A.B. is named after the principle of amplification, which means that it gives the reader the various meanings a word can have in the original language. It is a helpful version but tends to confuse people since it does not always give the precise meaning.

6. *The Berkeley Version of the Holy Bible*, also called *The Modern Language Bible*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan) 1959. 1233 pp.

An evangelical translation of good over-all quality. It has never been all that widely accepted, perhaps due in part to its penchant for adding footnotes of doubtful merit.

7. *The Jerusalem Bible*. (New York: Doubleday) 1966, 2045 pp.

Adapted from *La Bible de Jerusalem*, this version was originally the work of Dominican scholars. It is based on the Hebrew and Greek texts and employs the form Yahweh regularly as a name of God. Interesting to read, it none the less bears traces of liberal scholarship.

8. *The Living Bible*. Translated by K. Taylor. (Wheaton: Tyndale House) 1972. (\*)

A very readable rendering of the Scriptures; however, it is not as much a translation as a paraphrase. Its intention is to give the main idea of the text clearly and simply; as a result it may lack accuracy. If it is used as a paraphrase besides a good translation, it can be very helpful.

#### CONCORDANCES

1. *Cruden's Complete Concordance to the Old and New Testament*, by A. Cruden. (London: Lutterworth) various printings and publishers. (\*)

A good basic concordance available in various formats.

2. *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, by J. Strong, various publishers.

This is a concordance to the Authorized and Revised Versions. A numerical system is added which indicates that words although similar in English may be different in the original. This volume ranks among the best.

3. *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Holy Bible*, by R. Young. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans), various printings and publishers. (\*\*)

More than 300,000 English words are sub-divided under the original Hebrew and Greek words, complete with pronunciation and literal meaning. This is the most useful and also the best-organized concordance.

J. VISSCHER

# ***The Armstrong Cult (5)***

### 7. *Human Nature.*

We believe that God created man good, in true righteousness and holiness, and that our depraved nature comes from the fall and disobedience of our first parents, Adam and Eve, in Paradise (L.D. III).

This doctrine is rejected by Armstrong, who maintains that God created Adam with a nature which was vain, jealous, lustful and greedy. This carnal nature had to be controlled, and Adam and the rest of mankind could develop an eternal and Godly character.

Human nature, according to Armstrong, is not sinful in itself; it only causes us to sin. This doctrine is similar to the Roman Catholic doctrine of concupiscence.

Adam did not fall into sin in such a way that his nature was changed, says Armstrong. No, his nature remained the same; he disobeyed God and so did all other human beings after him. Jesus Christ, according to Armstrong, had the same human nature, but through the power of God's spirit He did not sin.

The result of this teaching is that Armstrong cannot have a doctrine of original sin (guilt and pollution). And therefore he goes against the Scriptures, which teach that all men sinned in Adam and sinned in such a way as to make them all liable to the punishment of death (Ro. 5:12-19).

Armstrong rejects also the doctrine of "an immortal soul", just as the Seventh-Day Adventists and the Jehovah's Witnesses do. Man is, in their view, only material; after death there exists nothing, and only a resurrection can bring a person back to life (in whatever kind it may be).

### 8. *Regeneration*

We believe that regeneration is the renewal, new creation, resurrection from the dead, making alive, which God works in us without our aid. In other words, regeneration is the act of God, whereby He takes away our stony heart and gives us a heart of flesh, a new heart.

As John Murray puts it: "Regeneration is the beginning of all

saving grace in us and all saving grace in exercise on our part proceeds from the fountain of regeneration." (1)

The apostle John describes Jesus' teaching concerning regeneration in John 3. In this chapter we are told that we have to be "born again", to be born of the Spirit. This being born of the Spirit refers to the regeneration by the Holy Spirit, the new birth.

Armstrong completely changes this doctrine of regeneration and (as Martin says) "in its place substitutes by all odds one of the strangest doctrines in the area of cultism. Through it he has quite literally given the new birth a new twist!"

"According to the theology of The Radio Church of God, the doctrine of the new birth is divided into two segments or areas. In the first or initial area, which takes place upon the acceptance of Jesus Christ as the Son of God, the believer is impregnated with the life of God through the Holy Spirit, which Armstrong terms 'begetting'. The second phase is the new birth itself, which he informs us takes place not at the moment of faith but at the resurrection of the body!"

Armstrong denies that when a person is converted and has fully repented and accepted Christ in faith, that that person is born again in the Biblical sense of the word.

He starts off with the Greek word "gennao", which can mean "beget, be born, bring forth, conceive, be delivered of", and he maintains that every time in the New Testament where this word has been translated as "be born" it should have been "begotten", as for instance in John 1:13.

Armstrong makes the following statement concerning the meanings "be born" and "beget": "The New Testament of the Holy Bible was originally written in the Greek language. And, in this case, the Greeks had *only one word* for the TWO vitally different phases of the process! . . . Since the original Greek, in which the New Testament was written, has *only the one word* for both meanings - and since the 'scholars' of our compara-

tively recent years who translated the Bible into English did not, themselves, UNDERSTAND God's Plan - they often translated the Greek word 'gennao' into the English word 'BORN' where it actually meant 'BEGOTTEN'."

But the case is that the Greek has at least four other terms to describe the idea of conception and birth; there is even a term which describes the idea of pregnancy from conception to delivery.

Martin says about the above-quoted statement that it "is either a product of his own ignorance or a deliberate falsehood. Since he seems to be aware of the existence of lexicons and concordances this writer is convinced of the latter." In other words, Martin says that Armstrong is a liar and deceiver, and he puts this black on white. I never heard that Armstrong objected against this statement by Martin, who repeats it in the second edition of his work, *The Kingdom of the Cults*.

The Correspondence Department of the Radio Church of God wrote in their letter to me that "this passage (of Armstrong) could be more clearly worded."

At this moment, according to this cult, a person can be begotten of God; that means that "the very Life and Nature of God has entered into him, impregnating him with immortal spirit-life, exactly as the physical sperm-cell from the human father enters into the ovum or physical egg-cell when a new human life is first conceived, impregnated, or begotten. But, just as that tiny ovum, as small as a pinpoint, is merely begotten of its human father - not yet born - so the converted human, is, at what we properly call conversion, merely begotten of God the heavenly Father - NOT yet BORN". Such a person is now a Son of God and will be born of God at the resurrection. Not as a human being, but as a God, a spirit being."

"The followers of Mr. Armstrong must settle for an impregnation by the Spirit and a gestation period (their entire life) before they can be born again. This new birth is dependent upon keeping the commandments of God and enduring to the end in Mr. Armstrong's theology, a fact overlooked by some of his more zealous disciples" (Martin).

This doctrine is entirely unscriptural.

Continued on Page 15.

# let's read

## THE EARMUFFS (5)

"There is something wrong with his leg," she says. "It must be broken. Then Allen too notices the right leg bent at an unnatural angle. "I'll carry him home." "But you can't . . ." Allen objects. She does not answer, but resolutely bends down over the boy and seizes the limp body. A moment she struggles to get the boy's arms around her neck, tottering to find her balance. Then she is on the way, her feet firm in the snow like a man's.

Allen watches his mother striding away, the heavy burden clenched in her arms. He looks at the spot where Peter lay . . . Peter! Had the boy come all the way to see him? That strong boy from the rich doctor's family had come to him, really? He hurries after his mother, stays close behind her. Contradictory emotions flurry through his mind: gladness and gratitude that Peter cared for him; anxiety and fear for the life of the boy, his friend . . . As his mother cautiously shifts her arms to get a firmer hold on the heavy body, something drops to the ground and rolls to the side of the trail. Allen mechanically stoops down to pick it up; it is furry to the touch . . . The earmuffs! His own earmuffs!

Oh, and then Allen grasps it all, then he understands everything . . . Peter's hesitation, Peter's flight! He stuffs the earmuffs in his coat pocket and quickly catches up to his mother, who is toiling up the slope to the house. Once beside her, he hears her uneven breath, watches her hands convulsively clasp the boy's limp body which is sliding down further and further, hampering her gait; one arm dangles down her side, the other is still on her shoulder. With sudden fright Allen notices the drops of perspiration faintly glistening on her brow. His mother cannot make it . . . ! He sets his teeth and runs forward to the house, throws open the door. "Out of the way, you!" he snarls at Billy. With clenched fists he watches his mother approach, tottering alarmingly, about to stumble and fall, straightening herself . . . Then she is there! With a strenuous effort she heaves the limp body onto the couch which creaks in protest. Peter is home . . .

Frightening visions threaten Peter in his feverish dreams. He tosses and turns wildly in his bed, kicks at imaginary enemies with his one leg; the other is so

heavy . . . it must be stuck! It cannot move! Desperately he tries to escape from the mass of snow which comes rolling down the steep slope, so fast . . . He cringes under the avalanche that is going to bury him, crush him. The snow . . . it is all furry and velvety like the furs of a thousand little mice; it is round and soft; it rolls and twirls . . . Are there claws? Two little claws that reach for . . . ? No, they are hands, nervously moving hands, groping, searching . . . What do they seek? Earmuffs . . . ? "But I don't have them, I really don't have them . . . I brought them back, I didn't want to steal them . . . !" Those eyes, those silent sorrowful eyes, growing bigger and ever more wounded . . . Peter would like to scream at those eyes, "I did not want to take them! Believe me, I didn't intend to . . . !" Is there no end to this maddening turmoil of things that blur and take shape and dissolve? All is dark and dismal; is there no light, no comfort at all? But look! Peter strains his eyes . . . A window of light . . . ? People beckoning to him, "Come in, poor boy, come on in . . . ?" Is it an old man by the window, an old grey father waiting for his son to return home, his prodigal son? Is that not Mom in the door opening? "Dear Mom, I didn't mean to . . . I didn't want to . . ." Hot tears are burning behind his eyes. "You forgive me, Mom? Do you forgive me? The Lord . . ." He feels the cool hand on his forehead . . . Threatening images fade away, dissolve into warm and woollen skies. Peter smiles.

The old lady at the bedside tenderly shakes her head. "Kindje, kindje," she mumbles, "de Heere heeft je wel bewaard." (1) Laboriously she rises, and over her shoulder she continues in an assuring tone, "The boy's asleep; that will do him good." But when she glances at her daughter by the table, she sees that she has fallen asleep too. Muttering to herself she takes up her knitting and sits staring out of the window into the dark and frosty night for a long time . . .

\* \* \* \* \*

Peter lies dozing in his bed. He is in the hospital, for more than a week already. This morning his father promised that - if all goes well - he will go home by the end of this week. "You would like that, wouldn't you?" Peter nodded awkwardly and blushed when his father stroked his hair. It was so embarrassing, Father in his white coat with a nurse by his bed . . . It was not nice at all to have your own father as a doctor, although . . . Peter knows that children are not allowed to come during visiting hours in this hospital; yet every afternoon after school there is a boy by his bedside, a boy with lank blond hair, Allen . . . That is because of his father, as Peter understands.

EWOUDE GOSKER  
Continued next issue

(1) Dutch for: "My child, the Lord has kept you well."

# our little magazine

Hello Busy Beavers,

You had me thinking we were all puzzlers but now I find out that we are bookworms as well! Such a pile of letters I received. And ever so many BOOK LOOKS!

## BOOK NOOK

The first two BOOK LOOKS really belong together. They are about one of my favourite book series. Many of our Busy Beavers will enjoy reading these true pioneer stories, I hope.

\* \* \*

My book is: *Little House on the Prairie*. The author is Laura Ingalls Wilder. This book is the second book in the series. She tells about her life in this series.

Her dad comes home one night and says he is crowded. They decide to go west where there is more land. They pack up and start out. They experience prairie fires and more exciting things in this book. The rest of the series are in order:

*Little House in the Big Woods*  
*Little House on the Prairie*  
*Farmer Boy*  
*On the Banks of Plum Creek*  
*By the Shores of Silver Lake*  
*The Long Winter*  
*Little Town on the Prairie*  
*These Happy Golden Years*  
*Four Years Later*

\* \* \* \*

*By the Shores of Silver Lake*, by Laura Ingalls Wilder.

This book is about a family of four children, Laura, Mary, Carrie and Grace. There was scarlet fever and Mary (who is the oldest) gets blind because of it.

This story is in the olden times and this family moves several times with their horses and buggy and finally ends up living in a shanty on the claim. This shanty had to be built up by their father (Charles).

This is a very interesting and true story which is written by one of the children, Laura, about their difficulties and also happy times which they had together.

\* \* \* \*

*Snow Treasure [the Rescue of Hidden Gold]*, by Marie McSurgan.

This book takes place in the Second World War when the Nazis were invading Norway. The citizens of the Norwegian village of Resvyk were nervous because they had nine million dollars of gold bricks. The children of the village went to a hideout in the woods and tied gold to their sleds. Then they went down to the Snake and buried the gold in the snow and, built snowmen over top. In the night a boy's uncle took the gold bricks into his camouflaged ship, and when the hold was full he took it to America.

Almost every day the children passed German troops. When the last bricks were hidden in the snow the Germans came along and became angry when the children didn't talk to them. A lieutenant started kicking snow and any minute he might hit the gold bricks . . .

. . . I like this book because it talks of the war and how the Germans were tricked. It has some adventure in it too, which I like. This book could give you a bit of insight into what happened in World War II.

\* \* \* \*

Thank you *Johanna Veldkamp*, *Cecile Van Woudenberg*, and *Carl Oosterhoff* for these BOOK LOOKS.

Lots of good reading ahead, Busy Beavers! I received many more BOOK LOOKS about interesting and exciting books to read. When you receive your bookmarks you'll know I have received your BOOK LOOK, all right? But it may be a while before we can place them all!



## From The Mailbox

We have new members to welcome first of all! Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Theresa De Gelder*. I hope you'll enjoy all our Busy Beaver activities. You're lucky, Theresa, to have so many brothers and sisters!

Hello, *Brian Hendricks*, I like your story about your pet gerbil. Do you always enjoy taking care of him?

And welcome to you too, *Carolina Barendregt*. You're really looking forward to your swimming lessons, aren't you? Do you have any other hobbies, Carolina?

You should make a good Busy Beaver, *Patricia Barendregt*. You did so well on the quizzes! Write again soon.

Welcome to the Busy Beavers, *Brenda Kobes*. Do you enjoy living so close to the ocean, Brenda? Would you like a pen-pal who doesn't know the ocean?

Of course you may join the Busy Beaver Club, *Mary Van Woudenberg*. We are glad to have you join us. Why don't you like feeding the cows, Mary? I always like the smell of hay!

Hello, *Lorraine Heres*. I'm glad you did so well on your project at school. What was it about? Thank you for your Spring poem too, Lorraine.

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Danny Linde*. I hope you'll enjoy joining in all our activities and reading Our Little Magazine. Do write soon, Danny.

Thank you for your long, nice letter, *Wilma Van Woudenberg* (Aldergrove). I'm glad your Variety Night was such a success. And how did you do on your tests? I'm glad you have enjoyed Our Little Magazine and the quizzes. Good-bye Wilma.

Hello, *Tommy Linde*. Nice to hear from you again. You did well on the quiz too. Write again Tommy.

Has your mother finished your sweater for you, *Carolyn Paize*? And is your weather nicer now? Thanks for your letter, Carolyn.

Thank you for your letter in the fancy (!) envelope, *Henry Krabbendam*. I really enjoyed the Little House series, too. Don't you think Mary and Laura were awfully brave?

Thank you, *Carl Mulder* for your pretty painting. I really did enjoy it! And your riddles too.

You must be excited, *Diane Breukelman*, about your trip to Ontario. You'll have to write and tell me how you enjoyed it.

Well, *Margaret Tenhage*, I suppose we should be glad you don't know anyone sick for so long that they need mail from us, right? Did you have a good birthday, Margaret?

Do you enjoy your books just as much the second time as when you read them first, *Johanna Veldkamp*? You did quite well on the quizzes. Did you enjoy today's?

Did you have fun the weekend your friend was over, *Grace Jongs*? You'll really be able to skate now next winter, won't you! You did well on the quiz, too, Grace.

Your baby sister has a pretty name, *Emmy Flokstra*. I'm curious about your trip to the Planetarium. Was it interesting?

Thank you for your letter and your BOOK LOOKS, *Henrietta Veldkamp*. I really appreciate your writing. And I'm glad you're doing so well in school.

\* \* \* \*

Now let's see how well you did on the Pyramid Puzzle. Here are the answers: 1. slavery; 2. Potiphar; 3. blessed; 4. prison; 5. dream; 6. year; 7. God; 8. 10; 9. T.

And here are the answers to the quiz in the March 10 issue. (The letters stand for the description.): 1-H; 2-D; 3-I; 4-B; 5-F; 6-C; 7-J; 8-A; 9-G; 10-E.

Bye for now, Yours, Aunt Betty

With gratitude to the Lord we wish to announce the 25th Wedding Anniversary of our dear parents and grandparents:

EPHRAIM CORNELIS BAARTMAN

and

NEELTJE BAARTMAN (nee Koppenaar)

on April 22, 1973.

*"Unto thee, O God, do we give thanks, for thy mercy is everlasting, and thy truth endureth to all generations"*

Their thankful children and grandchildren:

Clarence and Marge DeVries

*Kelly and Anita*

Andy - Rick - Julie and Gary

Rosemary - Edward - David - Bengie

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ARMSTRONG CULT Continued from Page 12

tural, for the Bible teaches us that we have been born again (this is the past tense) by the Word of God which liveth and abideth forever (I Pet. 1:23).

Nowhere in the Bible can we find that regeneration, the new birth, is to be divided into two stages. Regeneration is not a process, as Armstrong teaches, but the making alive by the Spirit of the sinner, who is dead in trespasses and sins. (2)

A. H. DEKKER

(1) In our Confession we speak differently, and not in the line of Dr. A. Kuyper Sr., as Murray does; see Art. 24 Belgic Confession. -Ed.

(2) Regeneration may not be a process in the manner in which Armstrong has conceived of it, it is a process, indeed, being the same as conversion; see Lord's Day 33 of our Catechism. -Ed.

With gratitude to the Lord we wish to announce the 25th Wedding Anniversary of our dear parents and grandparents:

GEORGE VANDERZYL

and

AAFKE VANDERZYL (nee Hoeksema)

on the 19th day of April, 1973.

Their thankful children and grandchildren:

Walter and Betty

*Doreen and Kevin*

Harry and Freeda Werkman

Tony - Jenny

Margaret - Ronald

15107 - 95 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T5E 3Z3.

In thankfulness to the Lord we celebrated our 30th Wedding Anniversary with our children and grandchildren on the 25th of March 1973.

W. H. DEVRIES

and

J. DEVRIES (nee Hoeksema)

Bill and Elly;

*Elsa - Joanne - Rick*

Warn and Jenny;

*Billy - Carolyn - Jerry - Janet*

Vic - Dorothy - Dinah

Robert - Monica

Fergus, Ont. Canada.

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