



Clarion

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The Office and Duty of the Organist⁽¹⁾ *

POETRY AND PROSE

THE ORGANIST

Up the stairs without a runner
Climbs he to the gallery.
Then begins, once he is seated,
Softly his soliloquy.
'Take a look at the first prelude,
Seven triplets in a row;
Here I'll use the sesquialtra,
There a flute should nicely go.'

So he tries to solve his problems.
'Tis already time to start . . . ;
Softly he begins his prelude,
Left hand has the solo part;
In a pair of worn-out sneakers,
On the pedal, feet are on the go;
Now and then he plays a few notes
On the manual below.

To the brothers and the sisters
His endeavours are not known.
'Let him have his fun,' they're saying,
And they add, 'To each his own.'
If you judge by what you're hearing,
He's not very good, you know.
It's too loud, too soft he's playing,
Much too fast or much too slow.

With the psalm, in proper rhythm,
Utter chaos reigns below.
It's too fast that way already,
Yet much faster it must go.
And his offertory playing
Could have been much better, too.
Through that tootling one hears barely
That the neighbour says, 'Thank you.'

If per chance he plays a wrong note
('As the hart . . . ' a child can play),
Heads are shaken in feigned pity:
'T was a proper mess today.
A hundred times it may be perfect;
If it's hundred-'n'-one, watch out.
That the complaints are then forthcoming
Oh so quickly, there's no doubt.

Down the stairs without a runner
Wearily he makes his way.
Even though he sometimes grumbles,
There's no doubt he loves to play.
If it's Bach he plays or, worse still,
Feike Asma or Jan Zwart,
Once he's seated at the organ
He plays it with all his heart. (1)

Those who meditate about the organist and his task are involuntarily tempted to quote from the copious poetry written about the office and duty of the organist. It is difficult not to do this for the nature of the man's profession is such that one is almost automatically inclined to speak and write about him in verse.

The title of this essay, however, is taken from a very prosaic book which, to be precise, was published 278 years ago by Reynier van Doesburg, bookseller on the Fish Market at Rotterdam. I mean that beautiful little book *The Office and Duties of Elders and Deacons*, written by Jacobus Koelman, minister of the gospel. (2)

We all have become quite familiar with the term "office and duty" through magazine titles, but mostly through the Morning Song of which the first line reads, "That we our office and our duty, Lord".(3) Let it be said beforehand that when we speak about the "office" of the organist we do not give it the pregnant meaning which Koelman gives this word. We are not dealing with a special office in Christ's church, even though others in certain liturgical circles think differently.(4) We are speaking about the organist's office as being synonymous with his duty.

THE ORGANIST AND HIS FAITH

The first point to be considered, in our opinion, is the organist and his faith. It has already been sixty years since Dr. A. Kuyper's well-known and oft-quoted book, *Onze Eeredienst*, was published. Kuyper was fond of quoting the 50th Psalm, which speaks of Zion as "the perfection of beauty". "So high stood the Temple for beauty in Israel", writes Kuyper, "that when Solomon had to build the temple and was unable to find an architect in all Israel who could give form to this beauty, he did not say: 'Then we must sacrifice this beauty, for it must be a Jew who is

going to do the work.' No, he went to the heathens and found in Hiram a man who could build it to the aesthetic and artistic requirements. It was this heathen builder who created the temple. That Solomon, in so doing, did not kick over the traces, but stayed in line with God's ordinances becomes clear from the lay-out and furniture of the Tabernacle. Then it is the Spirit of God Himself who gives Bezaleel and Aholiab artistic integrity and an eye for beauty and who to the smallest detail had the parts and the tools of the tabernacle constructed according to the law of aesthetics." (5)

Kuyper's conclusion is that there can be no objection against engaging an architect from outside our circle, if no suitable church architect can be found among the brethren.

Now one could perhaps think that Kuyper is of the same opinion with regard to organists. One could reason: the task of the organist is an artistic one; if we cannot find one among the brethren who meets our standards, we hire one from outside our circle.

Under no circumstances does Kuyper wish to go in that direction. He selects organists from among the brethren for in the worship-service not only beauty, but above all holiness plays an important role. (6)

This holiness comes first. The worship-service is a matter of the communion of saints. "It would be improper," writes D.W.L. Milo in *Zangers and Speellieden*, "to give this direction in the hands of an unbeliever who only works in the field of art and who could not lead the singers entrusted to him in the area of faith. The choir-master would be a stumbling block to his chorister and could conceivably keep them from the holy encounter." (7)

A few more quotations from Milo, for in our opinion he makes meritorious remarks on the subject. "Even when the organist is a confessing member of his church, he can only do his work properly if he has a rich life in faith. Isolation

behind curtains for many years can lead to an 'ivory-tower culture'.(8) When the organist literally as well as figuratively looks down on the congregation - *they* sang fairly well today; *they* do not know this tune; *they* like this minister - he has removed himself from the congregation and has become a wandering sheep. It is precisely the artistic type - also through lack of understanding on the part of the congregation - who runs the risk of losing himself in subjectivism. It is therefore dangerous to put an organist behind curtains. It harms his experiencing of the communion of saints. It is beneficial for an organist to sit from time to time among the brethren so that he can sing along. It is, however, not enough to see to it that the spiritual growth of the organist does not lag behind. The organist above all needs to have a rich life of faith and be an active churchmember. His playing 'according to the Word' is prophesying. Not only should he know the metrical psalter for the most part by heart and possess a great knowledge of scripture, but also have a feeling for the content and spiritual value of churchsong and make this feeling correctly known to others. His playing is not sufficient if it merely avoids all giving of offence. It must edify positively and contribute to God's honour and the congregation's salvation. Now without promoting the organist to special office-bearer we should insist that he be spiritually healthy and capable of growth in that respect. Organists with a derelict life of faith, indifference towards the sacraments, or chronic irresolution, cannot be chief-musicians." (8)

PROPHESYING FROM THE ORGAN BENCH

That organ-playing is related to prophecy, Jan Zwart already told the Reformed people in 1934. He spoke of "prophesying during the worship service, before and after the sermon, in a language the people understand" (quoted by Prof. Dr. K. Schilder in *De Reformatie*, Feb. 23, 1934). At Zwart's death he came back to this. Then Schilder wrote, "What our forefathers in not even circuitous ways concluded from I Cor. XII (namely that also from the organ bench the neighbour has to be edified), that Jan Zwart felt burning within him and how he was consumed by that fire!" (10)

A year later, during the unveiling of Zwart's tombstone, Prof. Schilder said: "His life's work was to prophesy

from the organ bench, and when we say that we give true expression to what motivated this man." (11)

In a commemoration address (1947) K.S. called Jan Zwart a confessor who did not wish to push prophecy aside. He ended with: "To those people for whom the language of art was foreign, and who had their own Christian faith content, he spoke in his own language; art's norms were obeyed and the church's 'credo' was honoured. He who is able to do that has done a great thing." (12)

There is thus a clear connection between organ playing and prophecy. The organist who understands his task well will confess his faith in his organ playing and so contributes to the edification, that is, to the building up, of the congregation.

K. DEDDENS

[Translation by S. VanderPloeg]

*An address delivered at the annual meeting of the "Landelijk Verband van Gereformeerde Koren, Corpsen en Musici", held at Amersfoort on Nov. 25, 1972. It was published in *De Reformatie* in Jan. 1973.

1. Jaap Mijderwijk, quoted in *Organist en Eerdienst*, vol. 21, no. 224, p. 1,389.
2. *'t Ampt en Pligten van Ouderlingen en Diakenen*, Rotterdam, 1964.
3. "Dat wij ons ambt en plicht, o Heer, getrouw verrichten tot uw eer; dat uwe gunst ons werk bekroon'; uw Geest ons leid', en in ons woon'."
4. They speak of "installation of organists" or of "cantor-organist". See Prof. Dr. G. van der Leeuw, *Liturgiek*, Nijkerk.
5. Dr. A. Kuyper, *Onze Eeredienst*, Kampen, 1911, p. 75.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 158.
7. D.W.L. Milo, *Zangers en Speellieden*, Goes, 1946, p. 216.
8. In the Netherlands organists often sit on a special gallery above the pulpit and are hidden from view by a curtain. (Transl.)
9. Milo, *op cit.*, p. 217.
10. *De Reformatie*, vol. 17, no. 42, July 16, 1937, p. 341.
11. *Gedenkboek Jan Zwart*, p. 239.
12. *De Reformatie*, vol. 22, no. 43, Aug. 2, 1947, p. 349.

Summer Courses For Teachers

The League of Canadian Reformed School Societies in Ontario has decided to set up Summer Courses for Teachers. They will deal with the following six disciplines: Bible Study O.T., Bible Study N.T., Reformed Doctrine, Church History, Psychology and Pedagogy, and Didactics.

These Summer Courses will be given during three years, and will run for three consecutive weeks, starting on the second Monday of July. Each week consists of five days of instruction and each day will see three hours of lectures or workshops on one subject. Those teachers who will be able

to handle two courses at once, can follow another course which is to be administered on the same day.

Upon completion of the courses (all six credits) the student receives a certificate to be honoured and credited by the Canadian Reformed Schoolboards in Ontario.

In the summer of 1974 the courses Bible Study O.T. and Reformed Doctrine will be offered. The lecturers are Prof. Drs. H.M. Ohmann and Prof. Dr. J. Faber. The period of three weeks begins on Monday, July 8, and ends on Friday, July 26.

In the summer of 1975 Mr. A.

Van Esch, Director of the Reformed Teachers' College in Groningen, The Netherlands, will lecture in Didactics.

Also the course Bible Study N.T. is scheduled for next year.

The courses Church History and Psychology-Pedagogy are programmed for 1976.

The fee is \$60.00 per course. Courses will depend on enrolment (minimum participation: 10). Teachers or students of Teachers' Colleges from outside Ontario who need accommodation, are requested to mention this in their letter of application.

Applications are to be sent before May 1, 1974, and are to be addressed to the Director of the Teachers' Courses, c/o Theological College, 374 Queen Street S., Hamilton (Ont.), L8P 3T8.

J. Faber, Director

Understanding the Old Testament

NAHUM [13]

NINEVEH, THE HARLOT - Ch. 3:1-7

A new part of the prophecy commences here, comprising the third and last chapter of the book. The several parts of the chapter constitute a whole in so far as we hear the prophet, or rather the LORD, *render an account of his doings* overagainst this city, so as to stress that the punishment is fully deserved. Nineveh's wickedness calls for revenge. It is an inevitable retaliation. And we learned: "The LORD is a jealous God and avenging" (1:2). The last chapter comes back to this subject. So the book is a rounded-off whole.

In the first seven verses of ch. 3 the city is pictured as a harlot. And from this angle all that is to befall her is accounted for. Therefore the fierce battle around and in the city is depicted once more, just as in ch. 2 but in a yet different way. "There follows a series of staccato phrases which build up a climax of vivid impressions" (J.H. Eaton). Second, such a cruel, bloody fate is accounted for by the city's harlotries; otherwise she would have been pitied. And, in the third place, that the city is to undergo such a fate is because of the LORD of hosts, the supreme Judge of heaven and earth.

R.S.V.: (1) WOE TO THE BLOODY CITY, ALL FULL OF LIES AND BOOTY - NO END TO THE PLUNDER!

A.V.: (1) WOE TO THE BLOODY CITY! IT IS ALL FULL OF LIES AND ROBBERY; THE PREY DEPARTETH NOT.

Vs. 1 begins with a "woe" cry. "An ominous *Woe* now introduces a fresh oracle, which seals the doom of Nineveh and depicts her guilt with a few bold strokes," J.H. Eaton says. Some exegetes call it a particular genre which you meet more often in the prophetic books; cp. Is. 10:5; 29:1; Micah 2:1; Hab. 2:5. The LORD has his prophet cry this "woe!" and right away it is accounted for, because it is meant for a bloody city.

Hebrew has here the word "blood" in the plural, and, just as in Psalm 51:14, "bloodguiltiness", is meant; deeds of blood. The charge of excessive cruelty is undoubtedly justifiable. It exceeded that of all other oriental peoples. The commentator Powis Smith tries to weaken it by saying that the prophets used almost identical language regarding Judah and Jerusalem; cp. Is. 1:15; 59:3; Jer. 2:34; 19:4, and so on. So, Nineveh or Jerusalem, it boils down to the same thing. But we should not reason this way. We should not put them on a par. Assyria was notorious for bloodshed all over the world. That is a matter of fact. But as for Judah, if the blood of the innocent shed there were only a thousandth or even the minutest part of all the blood shed by Assyria, it is laid to her charge so much the more severely because Judah is the covenant people, the holy nation. That makes all the difference. However, Judah's sins are more or less out of the picture in this book (but not altogether!) and some scholars blame this on Nahum, stating that he was not a good prophet. If they were consistent they would blame it on Nahum's Sender.

Besides, Nineveh is named "all lies". The lies are doubtless promises freely made to the weaker nations, which were as freely broken when national aggrandizement so required. Nineveh kept almost all the peoples in the Near East on a string, now easing it off, then drawing it tighter, at will playing a game with those peoples. Moreover, the city is full of robbery. The A.V. is preferable here to R.S.V. "booty", for, just as with "lie", it is the action that must be designated in this character sketch, this profile of the city: the action of "robbery" instead of its result, "booty". "The prey departeth not" also does not point to the booty piled up, but to the evil acts of robbery.

R.S.V.: (2) THE CRACK OF WHIP, AND RUMBLE OF WHEEL, GALLOPING HORSE AND BOUNDING CHARIOT! (3)

HORSEMEN CHARGING, FLASHING SWORD AND GLITTERING SPEAR, HOSTS OF SLAIN, HEAPS OF CORPSES, DEAD BODIES WITHOUT END - THEY STUMBLE OVER THE BODIES!

A.V.: (2) THE NOISE OF A WHIP, AND THE NOISE OF THE RATTLING OF THE WHEELS, AND OF THE PRANSING HORSES, AND OF THE JUMPING CHARIOTS. (3) THE HORSEMEN LIFTETH UP BOTH THE BRIGHT SWORD AND THE GLITTERING SPEAR: AND THERE IS A MULTITUDE OF SLAIN, AND A GREAT NUMBER OF CARCASSES; AND THERE IS NONE END OF THEIR CORPSES: THEY STUMBLE UPON THEIR CORPSES.

Verses 2 and 3 scarcely need comment. The facts, and especially the description, speak for themselves. Just read the passage and be impressed. From a literary viewpoint it is one of the most beautiful examples of Nahum's style. His method of description produces a lively effect; it brings the dash and clash of the situation vividly before us. It is a series of staccato phrases, as we heard J.H. Eaton say, and it is only in the last line that we find a verb: "stumble". So, in the translations verbs should be left out to get the same effect as the original text.

In conveying the idea suggested here, the R.S.V. has better succeeded than the A.V. As for the latter, the translation of the beginning of vs. 3 ("The horseman lifteth up both the bright sword and the glittering spear") is not correct. Perhaps the translators were too much attached to our custom of constructing complete sentences, which in itself is not wrong. But they should not have done so here, for it is the confusion of a battle that is pictured. The Hebrew language is very suggestive. In reading aloud you hear the crack of the whip and the rattling of wheels and the bounding of chariots and the tramp of horses' feet. You see horsemen driving the spurs into the sides of their steeds. You really see the flash of the sword and the lightning of lances (translation of Powis Smith, preferable to R.S.V.). And finally, reiterated three or four times in synonymous words, the outcome is presented: hosts of slain and

heaps of corpses, dead bodies without end; they stumble over the bodies.

A suggestive picture, I called it. But when you come to think of it, isn't it terrible? Sure it is. And therefore it has been described this way, so as to have us go further into the matter. This picture calls for someone to render account. Today many, many people say they find it hard to believe a GOD when they take into account all that is going on on earth, e.g. the wars, the famines, the misery. Is there a GOD, who permits such things to take place? Well, in the face of the facts just recorded, it is the LORD Himself who, by the mouth of the prophet, is rendering account of the massacre concerned.

R.S.V.: (4) AND ALL FOR THE
COUNTLESS HARLOTRIES
OF THE HARLOT, GRACE-
FUL AND OF DEADLY
CHARMS, WHO BETRAYS
NATIONS WITH HER HAR-
LOTRIES, AND PEOPLES
WITH HER CHARMS.

A.V.: (4) BECAUSE OF THE MULTI-
TITUDE OF THE WHOREDOMS
OF THE WELLFAVOURED
HARLOT, THE MISTRESS OF
WITCHCRAFTS, THAT SELLS
ETH NATIONS THROUGH HER
WHOREDOMS, AND FAMILIES
THROUGH HER WITCH-
CRAFTS.

"Because" is the first word in the A.V. And the R.S.V. has the same in view: "And all for the countless harlotries of the harlot." The harlot is a well-known image in Biblical usage. The word *zonah* is applied there in a twofold way. First, it is used for a married woman who has dealings with another man, a wife who is unfaithful. So we find it applied to Israel, by e.g. the prophet Hosea, because of its particular relationship with the LORD, just as a wife has with her husband. When Israel goes after the idols, it commits adultery. That is the one line to be found throughout Scripture. But there is also another; *zonah* can also refer to the (unmarried) woman who occasionally or professionally commits fornication, a prostitute. This second meaning holds good for Nineveh, and Babylon - heathen cities for which there was not such a relationship as between Israel and the LORD. What is meant here is: a strumpet associating with anybody she meets on her way, alluring him

and depriving him of his best powers, having in mind her own profit. She is the embodiment of the grossest egotism. In order to entice as many as possible, she displays her glamour before the eyes of everyone. This second meaning applies very well to Tyre in Is. 23 and Ez. 26 and 27 and to Nineveh in Nah. 3:4. And it is this line that we may extend into the New Testament, in the Book of Revelation, where we see Babylon again in ch. 17-19 as the great harlot, depicted in features which far exceed those of the false church in Articles 28 and 29 of the Belgic Confession - a conclusion to which one comes if a line is extended from e.g. Hosea 1 and 2 to Rev. 17 and 18. I may refer to the discussion on this point between the late Professor B. Holwerda and the Rev. C.P. Plooy. (Cp. the former's brochure "De 'Hoer' in Openb. 17-19". The latter emphasized, among other things, the importance of Nahum 3 in this debate, and I think rightly so.)

As a harlot, Nineveh is called "graceful" (R.S.V. is better here than A.V. "wellfavoured"), an expression referring to her appearance; at the same time she is "mistress of witchcrafts", designating the artifices and charms by which she got hold of the hearts of men. In 2 Kings 9:22 you find both mentioned together in connection with Jezebel.

To elaborate on the comparison, it means that Nineveh took advantage of her position and abused it by exercising a power of attraction. "In what manner?" you ask. "Did she not rather frighten and paralyze peoples? Didn't they abhor her?" Yes, but it is a peculiar thing, which you can observe today as well: what is appalling and terrifying does nonetheless entice. A harlot is a danger; she has power, weakening men by her charms. Yet, they lie at her feet and are willing to do anything for her. That is the point of comparison between a harlot and Nineveh. Aside from war, this city is a danger; she in advance weakens many other smaller nations by the reputation of her irresistible power. Some will resist, but there are more that lay themselves in anticipation at her feet, deluding themselves into the belief that this gesture of submission is in the given circumstances the best that they can do. It may turn out to be profitable to them. They hope to be in her good books and promise themselves a good time. "The lovemaking with its parallel

witchcrafts denotes the treacherous friendship and crafty politics with which the coquette in her search for conquests ensnared the smaller states. This policy is called whoring or lovemaking in as much as it was the selfishness which wraps itself up in the dress of love, and under the appearance of love seeks simply the gratification of its own lust" (Keil).

There is also a commercial aspect. The commerce of Nineveh appears under the figure of lovemaking with other people. That "she sells nations" is equivalent to a robbing them of their freedom, their being delivered over to destruction. In the background of all this a religious aspect comes into the picture. The Assyrian religion, especially the cult of Ishtar the "love goddess", played a considerable part in Nineveh's playing the harlot - and as for the Babylon of Rev. 17-18, religion may have contributed to the harlotry mentioned there, in which I see the influence and power of cultural life in this city and state. And in given circumstances even a false church may aid and abet and play a part in the game.

In verses 5-7 the LORD addresses Himself to Nineveh directly. And the vengeance of the LORD comes to the fore now. We find that Nineveh, by being guilty overagainst the peoples, becomes guilty overagainst the GOD of heaven and earth, infringing upon His ordinances for the life of the

continued p. 6



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Pastoral Counselling by the Elders of the Flock (4)

PASTORAL COUNSELLING - HOW, BY WHAT MEANS?

In the answer to this fourth question, two things must first have our attention, and these two are one.

Paul told us, repeatedly, that "goodness and *love*" are absolute pre-requisites for counselling. This means, among other things, that everyone who is called to counsel (as described in previous articles) must understand the art of *listening*. And an art it is! Something not to be underestimated, nor easily learned. Simple but loving listening is in many cases enough to unburden the burdened soul. But we talk *too much*; that goes also for ministers. And, worse, we often talk *too soon*. Like the minister who, living by names because of the size of his congregation, upon entering the maternity ward, right away started to congratulate, talking about children being the heritage of the Lord, - but when finally the lady could get a word in

and told him, in tears that the baby was stillborn, turned a page in his pastoral memory-book and spoke comforting words. No wonder that she told her husband: never that man at my bedside again! For true listening love is demanded, interest, an opening of our heart. And not, as many theories of counselling would have it, an uninterested, detached listening that serves only as a sounding-board.

This love must be accompanied by *hate*; hate against that system of counselling which calls itself *non-directive*. A counsellor is not supposed to give any direction, voice any demand, call for any course of action. One understands that this is a very cruel theory (and practice!). We should hate this cruelty because we are filled with christian love.

* * * * *

The "classical proof-text for inspiration", II Tim. 3:17, has been mentioned before. We seem to remember

only the words, "Every Scripture is God-inspired . . .", but Paul wrote, "Every God-inspired Scripture is profitable for reproof, correction, training, guiding . . . etc."

This means that office-bearers (we are talking about them) must be, and become, "people of the one Book" and able to surpass the Jehovah's Witnesses in their ability to quote the Scriptures. The Form of Ordination states that "the elders are in duty bound to search the Word of God, and continually (!) to meditate on the mysteries of faith". These mysteries are not mysterious experiences of one's own but the treasures of revealed truth. And if deacons are to fulfil their calling, "to administer also with comfortable words", the same goes for them. For preachers it goes without saying that they are always delving into the Scriptures, and not only for their sermon-preparation.

Paul says, "every Scripture"; the Bible is a dispensary filled to capacity with medicine for the soul. When one reads Adams' *Competent to Counsel*, which is only, according to the author, a first step, one becomes amaz-

OLD TESTAMENT - cont'd

peoples. The LORD is not only interested in Judah's lot but in that of other peoples as well. Cp. the Book of Amos.

"Behold, I am against you" (Dutch: "Zie, Ik zal je!"), says the LORD of hosts, the LORD of heaven and earth. "I will lift up your skirts over your face" (literally: uncover) - a sign of utter humiliation. Cp. Jer. 13:22, 26; Ez. 16:37. It is a punishment fitting for a harlot, taking into account what was her way of life beforehand: uncovering herself in order to have others uncovered so that she might abuse them. The onlookers, nations and kingdoms (mentioned in vs. 5) serve to add to the punishment. "Those who have been betrayed by Assyria will thus be compensated and avenged by seeing her undergo the humiliation she has so ruthlessly inflicted upon others" (Powis Smith). In texts like this, judgment is also passed on certain trends in modern life (nudism, streaking, etc.). What seems to some to be a joke, a pleasure, now, shall once turn into a punishment.

The humiliating character of the punishment is underlined by what it says in vs. 6:

R.S.V.: (6) I WILL THROW FILTH AT YOU AND TREAT YOU WITH CONTEMPT, AND MAKE YOU A GAZING-STOCK.

A.V.: (6) AND I WILL CAST ABOMINABLE FILTH UPON THEE, AND MAKE THEE VILE, AND WILL SET THEE AS A GAZINGSTOCK.

"Filth" - as if the LORD is saying: Since you did not abstain from impurity, you will be covered by it. And again: publicly. I shall treat you with contempt and make you an object of mockery. Cp. Ez. 28:17.

R.S.V.: (7) AND ALL WHO LOOK ON YOU WILL SHRINK FROM YOU AND SAY, WASTED IS NINEVEH; WHO WILL BEMOAN HER? WHENCE SHALL I SEEK COMFORTERS FOR HER?

A.V.: (7) AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS, THAT ALL THEY THAT

LOOK UPON THEE SHALL FLEE FROM THEE, AND SAY, NINEVEH IS LAID WASTE: WHO WILL BEMOAN HER? WHENCE SHALL I SEEK COMFORTERS FOR THEE?

In vs. 7 the passers-by and bystanders are presented dramatically. "And all who look on you will shrink from you" (R.S.V.). "All they that look upon thee shall flee from thee" (A.V.). Most exegetes favour the latter translation here. You find the same verb in Psalm 31:11. We hear the prophet strike an ironic note in letting the witnesses say: "Wasted is Nineveh; who will bemoan her?" "Bemoan" is literally: to shake the head with her, to condole her. But they do not mean what they say. They are just mocking. They take pleasure in her being devastated. She has made herself so universally hated that no sympathetic mourners and comforters will be forthcoming. We meet the same words in Is. 51:19. But what a difference between the fate of Nineveh and that of GOD's people, those who are comforted by the LORD after having been afflicted by Him.

H.M. OHMANN

ed at the untapped resources that Scripture offers for all the problems of life. Think of the abundance of practical wisdom only in the book of Proverbs. We must believe that Jesus Christ, through his Holy Spirit, gave his Church really everything that was needed and that we still need for every circumstance of life. Without this wisdom of the Scriptures we are nothing but fools. Here, again, is the antithesis between Freudian, Rogerian or any other theory of counselling and christian counselling. It is 100% true what Psalm 19 says: "Thy Word revives the soul, makes the simple wise, rejoices the heart, enlightens the soul."

Let's not forget the promise, which in the meantime has been fulfilled, "I will send you another Comforter, or *Counsellor*".

Here another aside.

In our Reformed past there has been the struggle between "*redemptive-historical*" and "*exemplary*" preaching. For the outcome of this struggle we still thank our God. But . . . let's not fall from Scylla into Charybdis. Let's not put so much stress on the progress of revelation in Old and New Testament, that we forget that "every inspired Scripture is profitable" for comforting and counselling. Then redemptive history could easily turn into a dry theory and our preaching no longer be like water on thirsty soil.

The means for counselling is God's Word!

This does not exclude but include the Creeds which are a faithful summary of the Scriptures, though not as full and complete as the Scriptures.

Why not use our "old faithful", the Heidelberg Catechism that describes how we can "live happily"!? Isn't that exactly what the distressed need?

Have the courage to confront them with their sins, to bring them to the Cross, and lead them back to gratitude. And the same goes for the other Creeds; especially for the Canons. Ever used Canon V to comfort yourself or others?

These then are the means of counselling: the art of listening in love, and then applying the Scriptures, which are sweeter than honey.

To these two must be added a third. No pastoral counselling without prayer. The classic example for this is

James 5: call the elders of the church to pray with you and for you. We fear we have often offended the Father of all mercy when, in a case of recovery, we sang the praise of the doctor and his prescriptions. Intercession for each other is heard by the Almighty One. Miracles do still happen, but often we don't see them. Also here the rule: *Reformata Reformanda* - Reformed in order to become more Reformed. We must identify with the sinner, as Christ has identified with us. We may forgive each other's sins, and thus restore what was broken and wounded.

PASTORAL COUNSELLING - WHAT IS ITS PURPOSE?

The purpose is to heal. But what is health, including so-called mental health?

It most certainly should not be man-centred. Our happiness lies outside ourselves; only then we have it within.

The purpose of counselling is to change attitudes, behaviour; in Reformed terms that means conversion, daily conversion. Or as Paul wrote (Coloss. 1:28), "that we may present every man mature (or complete) in Christ." There you have a definition of mental health.

A "sick" member does not func-

tion anymore the way it should. The dislocated member has to be "re-set" again ("dat been moet weer in 't lid", we say in Dutch).

The problem of the distressed and depressed is that they withdraw. They say, "No man cares for me . . ." (Psalm 142). But the end of the Psalm is, "Bring me out of prison . . . the righteous will then surround me".

The problem with many, especially older brothers and sisters, is that they feel no longer needed, wanted; they have lost the purpose and meaningfulness of life.

Dr. Frankl bases his theory of "*logotherapy*" upon his experiences in concentration camps. Who survived? Those who believed that there was still a calling waiting for them. He could later help many depressed people, suicidal people, by helping them to find some positive purpose to live for.

Experience will teach you that this is the best help you can ever give or get: to be presented to Christ mature, to fulfil your calling, to serve.

The purpose, then, is to restore the relationship to the Head of the Body, the Shepherd of the flock, and (!) the relationship to that body, the flock of the Shepherd.

That's what pastoral counselling is all about.

G. VANDOOREN

Press Release

Press Release, Classis Ontario North, March 21st, 1974.

Art. 1. Opening. On behalf of the convening church, Orangeville, Rev. C. Olij called the meeting to order; we sang Psalm 111:1, 2, read Isaiah 44:1-8, and joined in prayer. The delegates were welcomed, especially those of the recently instituted church at Guelph. There are now eight churches in our classis.

Art. 2. Institution. After examination of the credentials classis was instituted. Executive: Rev. Olij chairman, Rev. VanderBoom clerk, Rev. VanDooren assessor. The agenda submitted by the convening church, was adopted. No incoming mail had arrived since the churches received the provisional agenda.

Art. 3. Overtures. Rev. VanDooren, in his quality as one of the church visitors, overtured classis to appoint a committee to revise and streamline the present set of Rules for church visitation. Grounds: unnecessary repetitions; some strange or obsolete

questions; not always a clear reference to the church order, etc.

Classis decided to appoint such a committee, to prepare a revised and improved Guide for Church Visitation, that may serve the purpose better than the present one. Members of the Committee: the church visitors and their alternates.

Art. 4. Reports. Classis heard reports of the church visitation to all churches of classis during Oct. and Nov. 1973. Classis expressed its gratitude for the contents of these reports and the work of the visitors.

Art. 5. Preaching Arrangements. Of the three vacant churches only the church at Ottawa needs help in this respect. Classis granted the request from Ottawa to increase the number of Sundays-with-guestpreachers from once in the three to once in two weeks for the period April to October. Rev. VanderBoom submitted the following schedule: April 21, Rev. Olij; April 28, Rev. VanDooren; May 12, Rev. Selles; May 19, Rev. VanDam; June 2, Rev. VanderBoom; June 16, Rev. VanDooren, June 30, Rev. VanOene; July 14, Rev. Olij; July 28,

continued p. 13

news medley

Let us begin with giving you some information about persons. That is: about the persons of some ministers. In the first place: the Rev. A.B. Roukema returned from the Netherlands and is again in his chosen residence in Toronto. We only talked briefly on the telephone and therefore I cannot tell much. He sounded all right, though. The Netherlands will see two more of our ministers this coming summer, the Lord willing. The Rev. J. Van Rietschoten plans to go there for his holidays and the Rev. G. Van Rongen likewise. The latter planned last year to come to Grand Rapids from Australia via the Netherlands, and then to have there a short vacation. However, for several reasons that did not materialize, and now they are going to make up for it this summer. It is not that we wish to report on all holiday activities of our ministers, but it would not be nice if our readers heard these things via the Dutch press and then would not appreciate it at all if I had not mentioned it.

There are many members of the Churches who go for a trip to the Old Country. Twenty years ago we were convinced that a farewell was a farewell for life! Now there are several among us who make the one trip after the other. It is a blessing that it is possible and that, for instance, children can do their parents the great pleasure of going down there to see and visit them once more. It is money which is never thrown away.

I actually do not have to mention the call which the Rev. W. Huizinga received from the Church at Neerlandia (in cooperation with the Church at Barrhead). It is always an honour to get a call but never a pleasure to have one.

There are many good things to be reported this time. Also many things with which I agree wholeheartedly. Thus it gives me a pleasure to pass them on to you.

Let's start close to home. The Guelph Church took possession of their recently purchased building, and now they are busy renovating it, sanding and revarnishing the pews, tearing out the "bathtub" (which was used for baptizing adults), and making the whole presentable. They expect to be able to dedicate their building in the beginning of June.

From Guelph we go down to Burlington. Driving past the property of Burlington West, I saw that some digging had been done, presumably for the basement for the Church building. Meanwhile, the bond issue is going well, as far as we are told in the bulletin. The \$35,000.00 mark has been reached.

Burlington's PTA looked back and noted that, since its beginning, the PTA raised some \$18,000.00 in three years. They expect their income to be at least \$10,000.00 higher during the coming three years!! Some optimism.

From Burlington to Hamilton is but a few miles via the 403. In Hamilton it was decided to erect a sign in front of the Church building at the approximate cost of \$1,000.00. I presume that it is one of those lighted signs in a glass-covered box. If it were just for a painted piece of plywood on a stick, I would request permission to send in a tender. But I think that it will be a little more deluxe.

Hamilton also decided that members of the congregation requesting the congregational prayer on special occasions such as births, sickness, etc., are requested to inform the clerk of the Consistory. The minister will then announce them before the prayer. That, I should say, is a very wise decision. Most times it is left up to the Minister whether he deems it necessary to remember a certain family or member by name. The danger is there, of course, that he does mention the one - who did not deem it necessary - and does not mention the other - who takes it ill that his "case" was not remembered. Especially in a vacant Church it is good to have the rule that members requesting the prayers of the Congregation come and ask for that. However, it would be good not to confine such a practice to vacant Churches. It is not only the obligation of the Congregation to remember all members; it is also the obligation of the member to show that he or she does desire the intercession of the Church.

And then there is another element which I like very much. It is this element that the minister shall announce before prayer whom he is going to mention especially, and why. Personally, I have always done this. Sometimes I attended a service and heard someone else preach and pray. It did happen that I was wondering to whom the preacher was telling something in his prayer: to the Lord or to the Congregation. If the Congregation is to know what we are praying for, then there is the need, in the prayer, to describe the nature of the trouble quite extensively. But that is no longer a prayer; it is a news bulletin (excuse the expression; you will understand what I mean.) We should prevent that the Congregation becomes startled in the middle of the prayer because the Minister is praying for someone about whose illness or specific trouble no one except a few knew at that very moment. "Hey," they will think, "what's all this about?" And during "prayer" their thoughts start wandering and they start thinking about this brother or sister or family, etcetera. All this is prevented if, as Hamilton did, it is made a custom that such specific "cases" are made known to the Congregation before prayer. In cases of lengthy illness or worsening of a situation which is already known, such announcement would not be needed, although, if there is any new development, it still would be good to inform the Congregation beforehand.

Hamilton also has a new cover for its bulletin. I do recognize the Church building, but not the tree which grows beside it. Must be related to the big plant in Jonah's days. There is only one thing which I do not like (fortunately, the **Church Herald** of Fergus and Guelph has finally corrected this evil): you must always guess which volume and which issue it is, what the date of issue is, for it is mentioned on the inside. Grand Rapids always stamps the date on the frontpage, and that renders it easier to sort them out and put them in order. I know that you need two stencils if you also wish to have the date on the front page; if you utilize only the inside of the cover, it is very hard to have a date on the outside. However, that is a minor thing and it will not bother someone who just picks his bulletin up on Sundays (unless, by mistake, he takes an old one along!); it bothers only someone who wants to put them in order of issue. Maybe that's only me. Forget about it then.

From Hamilton we go to Smithville. I was wondering somewhat what they mean by a "combined consistory meeting". It did not seem likely that it was a meeting of

two consistories. But what, then, does it mean? There was a combined meeting in that region: it was a combined meeting of the deacons of the Churches at Lincoln and Smithville. They were together to discuss the possibilities of establishing a "Home for the Aged" in the Lincoln-Smithville area. A Form was enclosed which could be filled out by those interested in cooperating in such an undertaking. It is to be hoped that this action will succeed, for it is a necessary work.

Smithville also decided to change the rules for the election of office-bearers. Apparently, it was the custom to put up duos instead of letting the Congregation choose half the number from the full slate. Now the latter practice will be followed. I think that it is better that way, indeed. One provision, however, has never had my support. That is the provision that, in case there is a tie, the older one will be declared elected. If there is a tie, and that shows that the Congregation cannot come to a decision, then, in my opinion, we should ask the direct decision of the Lord by casting the lot. That's what is done in very many Churches, and I for one deem that a better solution than letting the factor of age be decisive.

The Church at Lincoln discussed the draft of an overture to establish correspondence with the Free (Old) Christian Reformed Churches. The draft will again be discussed later. But I am puzzled by a proposal to establish correspondence with a group of Churches in the same country. To me that is an impossible thing. Unless, of course, Lincoln means that we should take up contact; but that is not the same as correspondence. I can only go by what is published. As it is published, it is an impossibility.

From Lincoln to London is not too far. The Consistory received a suggestion to appoint a joint committee with the School Society to investigate the possibility of buying a piece of land. The Consistory, however, decided to leave this matter in the hands of the School Board. There was also the question whether the minister should not stand at the front of the Church after the services to greet visitors and guests. The Consistory was of the opinion that the members themselves are mature enough to do this as well and that they can introduce guests to the minister or elders.

After these wise decisions we leave the East and move on to Carman. There the Consistory decided to "do away with the collection vessels at the table of the Lord's Supper." It does not need any elaboration that I would call this a big step forward. The Consistory also decided to have the offertory and the announcements after the sermon and after the prayer after the sermon. This is being done in more and more Churches and there is much in favour of it. As for the announcements, strictly speaking they do not belong in a service, except in cases in which matters **must** be made known to the assembled Congregation. In by far the most cases we simply make use of the fact that the Congregation is together to tell them things which could just as well have been made known via the bulletin. These last remarks do not refer to any decision of Carman's. I add this to prevent wrong conclusions.

In Edmonton they had the sad case that "due to illness our Smorgasbord has been postponed." The flu, or indigestion? More strange things happened there. The Consistory received "a letter from a man in Medicine Hat regarding a conflict he has with the government." What all can you get at a Consistory meeting! Of course, the

Consistory decided not to deal with it. A pleasant piece of information which we pass on with joy is the following: "This coming week the Organ Pipes and everything that goes with it will be falling in place (pardon the expression) and soon we hope to hear pleasant noises float from the organ loft." You will recall that there was quite a setback due to the fire which they had. It will be a great day when the "pipes will speak".

Making a big jump, we go to Smithers. The Ladies' Auxiliary informs us that they sent \$185.00 to Brazil. Making the best of a "spring fever", they advise everyone who during the spring cleaning finds those "never-used dishes, planters or lamps . . ." to bring them to a bazaar where, undoubtedly, others can buy them and put them into the cupboard or closet till the next spring cleaning, when they say: "What really do I do with all this stuff? Let's bring it to a sale!" Everyone will have the same experience: when you have been married for some years you are amazed at the quantity of goods that you have collected. Then it is a relief when there is a bazaar!

Going south, we reach the Valley. Although Smithers, too, is in a Valley (the Bulkley Valley), yet everyone understands it when we speak of The Valley: that is the south end of the Fraser Valley where we find four Churches. There would almost have been a fifth one, but the Consistory of New Westminster decided, in the present circumstances, not to grant the request of a group of members in the Burnaby/New Westminster area to "leave" a separate Church in that region once the new Church building in Surrey is in use. The Consistory declared itself willing to discuss a similar request at a future date.

As for the particulars of the individual Churches: in Cloverdale there seems to be some enthusiasm for a girls' choir, for there are sixteen girls who have enrolled.

More general news is that an office-bearers' Conference was planned for April 5th. It is to be hoped that the attendance was, percentage-wise, better than the attendance at an office-bearers' conference which was held in Ontario recently. Not even one-third of all office-bearers in this district were present. I know that it is not a "punishable offense" if one does not attend such a conference, but I do start wondering how much the brethren are willing to do to improve their own abilities as an office-bearer and to acquire new skills for this work. If a minister does not study and does not do everything in his power to improve his "qualifications", he is admonished, and justly so! According to our Form for the Ordination, the Elders are also to do their best to become better office-bearers. One of the means to achieve this, I am convinced, is when we can talk together and discuss together the various aspects of the work.

The Resthome Society had another meeting scheduled, at which meeting the question would be discussed how to finance the purchase of a property or a home. I am most happy that this society has been awakened from its hibernation. Much success!

Another "Hollandse Avond" was planned for April 1st, and we are assured that it is not a joke. The Rev. VanBeveren was to speak on the topic "Israel", and Miss Jenny DeLeeuw, who visited Israel, was to show some colour slides.

Now that there are two schools in the Valley, with the beginning of a Junior High, the attention is drawn the other way: Would it not be good, some ladies asked, to also have Kindergarten? We are very much interested in

Studying The R.S.V. ⁽²⁾

Part of the mandate given to the committee reads "to continue with their work of checking the Revised Standard Version and to pass on also their own criticism of same." (Acts of General Synod, 1971, Art. 33). Criticism and suggestions for change have to go to the Standard Bible Committee which has authority to make any changes in the text considered necessary. Needless to say, this work of checking could not be done exhaustively. That is, not every text could be checked over. Therefore, as texts struck our attention, study would be made of them. This eventually resulted in some 44 specific recommendations being made to the Standard Bible Committee (33 on the O.T. and 11 on the N.T.). It would be beyond the scope of these articles to go into examples of what was done. One can check the official report. One can sense however that one is limited by just giving the Standard Bible Committee specific suggestions. The committee therefore also prepared more general recommendations which would cover more than one text and serve as suggested guidelines wherever similar problems presented themselves. It might be worthwhile to go into these recommendations here.

DISPUTED TEXTS

Many a person using the RSV has been struck by the fact that some texts (for example 1 John 5:7, 8) include much more in the King James than in the RSV. Usually, a longer

version of the text is included in a footnote with the explanation that the longer reading is not given by the best ancient manuscripts (for example Mark 16:9-20, John 7:53-8:11). Concerning this matter, the committee recommended to the Standard Bible Committee that Scripture portions left out of the text and referred to footnotes, because they were deemed insufficiently attested to by the best manuscripts, be printed in the text between brackets. This is the practice in the Nestle's Greek New Testament and also in the New Dutch translation.

When the 1972 edition of the RSV New Testament became available it was clear that the Standard Bible Committee had received similar recommendations from other quarters (our recommendation arrived too late to influence the new 1972 edition in any way). One of the major changes of this new edition is that Mark 16:9-20 and John 7:53-8:11 are restored to the text. (1 John 5:7, 8 is unchanged with still no footnote reference to it. Probably because the King James version of it, is rather poorly attested). With the inclusion of these texts no brackets are used, but a blank space before and after, plus an informative footnote inform the reader that most ancient manuscripts do not have the texts in question. As the preface of the new edition further informs us, "with new manuscript support two passages, Luke 22:19b-20 and 24:51b, are restored to the text and one passage, Luke 22:43-44, is placed in

the note, as is a phrase in Luke 12:39."

One can therefore see that in this area the new edition of the N.T. (RSV) has some improvements.

TRANSLATION CONCERNING THE THIRD PERSON OF THE TRINITY

Our recommendation here concerns the inconsistency that in some places the RSV refers to the Holy Spirit with the personal pronoun and other times in the impersonal or neuter pronoun. For example in 1 John 3:24 we read: "the Holy Spirit *which* he has given us" (compare with Matt. 6:9, "Our Father *who* art in heaven"). Yet in other places we find the personal pronoun used. For example in Romans 8:16: "the Spirit *himself*". Since the RSV nowhere uses "which" in the archaic sense of referring to persons, we recommended that "who" be used wherever there is reference to the Holy Spirit. The 1972 edition of the New Testament shows no improvement here (see for example Rom. 5:5, Eph. 1:14).

"YOU/THOU" AND THE LORD JESUS

The RSV translators decided to use "thou" or "thee" when God is referred to and when the person addressing the Lord Jesus realizes that he addresses God. "You" would be used to refer to man. Admittedly not everyone who addressed the Lord Jesus knew about His divinity and thus it could be argued that "you" should be used of Him. However, Peter did realize it when he confessed Christ's deity (Matt. 16:16) and therefore we would expect to read, "Thou

NEWS MEDLEY - continued

the response and the eventual answer to their question.

Sometimes you have to go far away in order to learn what is going on in your own neighbourhood. That was the case when I read something about the activities of the ladies who endeavour to "dress up" the College. I mean the Savings Action Theological College. Everywhere the bulletins contain messages to the sisters to empty their piggybanks. From the **Church News** I learned that the ladies have some \$11,568.23 in their account. A large part of this amount has to be reserved for the "Library rebuilding plans". But there are also other plans and actions. We learned that somewhere six gowns are being tailored for use at official College evenings. I hope that they are somewhat better than the "flodderdingen" (floppy, flimsy pieces of cloth) which were rented in some instances. At my graduation one of the professors saw my gown (made by one of the sisters of the Fergus Church) and

said: "Look, my students wear beautiful gowns, but see what I am wearing!" He had such a flimsy, blowing "gown". Knowing our ladies, I am certain that they will come up with something beautiful.

I also learned about a question that was put before our sisters. It was this question: Would it be worthwhile to sell spoons with a picture of the College? Apparently the Committee did not think it worth all the work involved, but would love to hear the thought of others. Well, if you attach any value to my opinion, I would say, "Do it right away!" Such a spoon would make a nice birthday present, or a wedding present. Besides, there are many Church members who collect spoons. There are also many Church members who have a store and who undoubtedly would be willing to sell on consignment. I see great possibilities here. But then, ministers are not very practical, they always say. Maybe this is an exception. Let's hope so.

vO

art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." Instead we read, "You are the Christ . . ." Satan also knew that the Lord Jesus was God (Luke 4:3), for the point of the temptation was to try to get Jesus to misuse His divinity. The demons also knew it (Luke 8:28). Yet in none of these places the old form is used. The RSV translators are therefore not implementing the rules they laid out. We recommended that the second personal pronoun when referring to the Lord Jesus should be rendered "thou" or "thee" wherever this pronoun occurs.

The Greek text of the New Testament has no special pronouns to differentiate between an address to God or man. The English language seems to have developed in such a way that the "thou" form expresses reverence, although at the time of the King James translation, "thou" and "thee" were used of ordinary people and showed no special reverence. There seem to be indications today that the trend is back to a single pronoun for both God and man. It is therefore a real possibility that a future edition of the RSV eliminates "thou" and "thee" altogether.* If this should happen, this would be an improvement over what we have now, since the revision of 1972 retains the undesirable and inconsistent usage of "thou/thee" in reference to the Lord Jesus.

UNITY OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS

The committee put its recommendation this way: "While one must indeed be careful not to read the New Testament back into the Old Testament, while translating the Old, some consistent effort at consistency should be made with the Old Testament and their quotes in the New Testament wherever this is possible. (. . . it is desirable to strive for general meaning equivalents between the Old and New Testament passages insofar as they are parallel.' *Old Testament Quotations in the New Testament*. U.B.S. Helps for translators, vii)." The basic reason for this recommendation is of course that the Bible is a unit. The Old cannot be separated from the New, nor the New from the Old. If this basic truth had been kept in mind and scripture compared with scripture where this is legitimate in the translating process, then Gen. 12:3 and 18:8, for example, would have been correctly translated, instead of the correct translation being put in the

footnote and the incorrect one in the text. For Gal. 3:8 makes it clear, when it quotes these passages, which of the two possibilities from the Hebrew is the correct one. There are also other examples of this (compare for instance Ps. 109:8 with Acts 1:20).

When the translation possibilities are no problem, then too the unity of the Old and New Testaments must surely be shown where this is evident in the original. It is remarkable that the RSV New Testament quotes Old Testament texts in such a way that if one were to look them up in the RSV Old Testament, one could have difficulty recognizing them as being the same, although the original text indeed gives no ground for the differences as shown in the English translation. Examples include Deut. 6:4 (Mark 12:29); Deut. 32:43 (Rom. 15:10) and Ps. 45:6 (Heb. 1:8).

"LORD" OR "YAHWEH"?

The problem here concerns the name by which God revealed Himself to Israel as faithful covenant God. Transliterated from the Hebrew, the name spells "YHWH". Since this name was considered too holy to be pronounced by the lips of sinful men, the name "Adonai", meaning "Lord" was simply substituted by the Jews wherever "YHWH" occurred. (This practice may have started after the Babylonian exile.) Since Hebrew is traditionally only written with consonants (without the vowels), the correct pronunciation of "YHWH" became a mystery. Greek translations of the Old Testament are no help for they simply followed the Jewish custom by reading "YHWH" as "Lord" and translating it this way. It now seems fairly certain that the pronunciation "Yahweh", which was first suggested early in the eighteenth century, is the correct one. (Other suggestions have, for example, included "Jehovah".) The question now is this: Should "YHWH" now not then be rendered by "Yahweh" instead of by "Lord" for "Lord" also translates "Adonai" and this name is also used of God. How does the RSV approach this?

The RSV goes back to the King James practice of translating "YHWH" by "LORD" (in capitals to distinguish it from "Lord" translating "Adonai"). Why does the RSV do this? Is it because they are convinced that "Yahweh" is a wrong rendering? No.

The relevant reason given in the preface to the RSV is this: "the use of any proper name for the one and only God, as though there were other gods from whom He had to be distinguished, was discontinued in Judaism before the Christian era and is entirely inappropriate for the universal faith of the Christian Church". This reason is obviously unbiblical since God *did* reveal Himself by different names in the Bible. Furthermore this reason is beside the point. A translator's task is to faithfully convey what the original has; including, therefore, also this distinctive name for God. This is important especially when this name is not without its own special covenantal significance (for example, Ex. 3:14f.; 6:3). Because of the footnote in Ex. 3:15, our attention is only there directed to the distinctiveness of this name. It is true that the capital letters spelling "LORD" are to set it apart; but, whether this is always in the mind of the reader is highly doubtful and the small lettered "Lord" means the same to most.

The committee has therefore recommended that "YHWH" not be rendered by capitals "LORD" but by 'Yahweh' since this makes for more accurate and distinctive rendering of a very special name of God. We should not do what amounts to following a Jewish practice, a practice which God has never required from His people.

The remaining general recommendation which the committee made to the Standard Bible Committee concerns yet another area of Old Testament translating difficulties. This we hope to look at the next time.

C. VAN DAM

*L.A. Weigle in "The Standard Bible Committee", an essay in *Translating and Understanding the Old Testament*, edited by H.T. Frank and W.L. Reed (New York: Abingdon, 1970), 39.

OUR COVER

This photograph, intended to accompany Part One the "The Office and Duty of the Organist was submitted with the title "Behind the Curtains". For an explanation of this choice, please read the above-mentioned article [see especially footnote 8]. Quite a few of the readers will no doubt recognize our picture as a view of the interior of the Noorderkerk in Groningen, The Netherlands.

YOUTH COLUMN

YOUTH, OBEY YOUR PARENTS (1)

On one of your leisure Saturday afternoons you might have strolled into one of our cities' covered malls. Protected from the wintry cold or summer heat outside, you can stroll or shop or just look in ease and comfort, providing you can dodge the buggies and oncoming traffic. However, our interest lies not with the shopper but with another growing group of people who loiter around aimlessly in these malls. You must have seen them by the dozens. They stand or sit around in groups, flocking together like birds of a similar feather. The girls wear tightly fitting blue-jeans; and the boys usually wear long hair. Their average age runs between thirteen and sixteen, I would guess. It is hard to understand what they are up to. They just seem to hang around, waiting for something or someone. If another group arrives, a sudden flurry of chatter and excitement hits them. Then suddenly they scatter in groups, some here, some there.

To me the most outstanding feature of these youthful mall-loiterers is their growing number. Restless as youth proverbially is, these crowds of huddlers seem to grow and grow. It seems they cannot find anything worthwhile to do. So they congregate into flocks, hoping that the 'crowd' will supply some excitement. As you walk along the mall, glancing at these youngsters, you cannot help but wonder what is behind this 'movement'. Oh, youth of course will always seek each other. As far as that is concerned, this 'happening' is not too strange. And malls seem to be excellent meeting-places. Besides, they are sheltered and offer much diversity of attention. Yet, this does not provide a satisfying answer. Something more and something else is behind this, we feel, . . . but what? Why are all these youths away from home and by themselves? Why do so many want to get away from home to clutter together in these malls? Has home lost its attraction? Are they trying to get away from mom and dad? Many questions start to surface when we ask ourselves the question why this wide-spread occurrence grows and grows.

May I suggest to you that the basic relationship between parents and youth is at fault here? On the one hand, if parents had made their house into a home, then many youths would not walk the streets at night or loiter in the malls for something to do. Often, parents took the easy route. They supplied their sons and daughters with all the gimmickry that fascinates youth (T.V.'s, radios, record-players, mod-clothes, motorbikes, even cars and so on) in order to keep them happy and occupied. But it did not work. On the other hand, the youth, being more independent and free, has become more demanding, selfish and rebellious. This combination does not make for a harmonious home. No wonder then that crowds of blue-jeaned youth clutter in clusters in our malls. The parent-youth relationship has gone sour.

Youth in Reformed circles are not left untouched by this mood of restlessness, caused in no small measure by the sour relationships between youth and parents. Words such as old-fashioned, conservative, out-of-the-times, backward and narrowminded can also be heard from our Reformed youth. Therefore it is both surprising and heartening that the YOUTH asks someone to introduce a subject such as, "youth, obey your parents".(1) It reveals that you youth feel and see the need and importance of this basic relationship of life.

To tackle this subject both parents and youth should be present. It takes two parties to make a biblically harmonious relationship, while this column restricts itself to the youth. Nevertheless, hopefully we can learn something despite this handicap.

To come to grips with our topic, we should first of all survey the biblical data concerning WHY youth should obey their parents.

I. WHY SHOULD YOUTH OBEY THEIR PARENTS

Obviously, we must deal with the fifth commandment, *Honour your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you, that your days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with you on the land which the LORD your God gives you.*

[Deut. 5:16]

As the first law was fundamental for the first table of the law, so the fifth word is fundamental for the second table of the law. Let me try to explain what I mean. If Israel transgressed the first commandment and went after other gods, consequences would follow. Idolatry followed as did the blasphemy of God's Name and the profaning of the sabbath. The same goes for the second table of the law. The first commandment (fifth) of the second table deals with the honour and respect paid to those God places in authority over us (parents, governments, teachers, bosses, and so on). If Israel would not obey these authorities, how could murderers (sixth law), adulterers (seventh law), thieves (eighth law) or false witnesses (ninth law) be punished? Would chaos not result? Later history proved that chaos did result because authority was rejected. Hosea, the prophet, decried the murderers, plots, assassination upon assassination of kings, adultery, prostitution, robbery, and false vows. Finally, God had to pronounce the ban over the land. This all happened because Israel did not honour and obey authority. And respect for authority is taught at a very early age. Therefore, the consequences of disobedience should be enough to instil a healthy respect for authority.

But let us start where God starts. In the fifth commandment in Deut. 5:16 we read that obedience to parents must be given BECAUSE GOD SAID SO - "as the LORD your God has commanded you". God knows what is best for us. We should trust and obey the all-wise God. And what did God say? Does God regard obedience a very important matter? Or do you just have to keep out of your parents ways? As long as you are not a family nuisance, all will be well? You will have to be your own boss later so you might as well learn to be independent at home at an early age!? What does God say?

First of all, in the fifth commandment, obedience and a long life (nationally and individually) as well as a prosperous life are interrelated. So we see that obedience is important. Then we could refer to what God says in Leviticus 19. In this chapter God gives rules whereby the general rule of verse 2 - "you shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy" - would be kept. What was the first rule given whereby Israel would fulfil the call to holiness? You can read it in verse 3 - "everyone of you shall reverence his mother and his father . . . I am the LORD your God". To show how important God considered obedience to parents, God placed this law first.

To show how seriously God took the fifth commandment we should remember the penalties inflicted for disobedience. Read the words of Deut. 21:18-21,

If any man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey his father or his mother, and when they chastise him, he will not even listen to them, then his father and mother shall seize him, and bring him out to the elders of his city at the gateway of his home town. And they shall say to the elders of his city, 'This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey us, he is a glutton and a drunkard.' Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death; so you shall remove the evil from your midst, and all Israel shall hear of it and fear.

Hear also what Proverbs says,

The eye that mocks a father,

And scorns a mother,

The ravens of the valley will pick it out

And the young eagles will eat it. [30:17]

Or if you want another example, consider the wicked sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas. Owing to these sons' wickedness and disobedience, Samuel had to tell Eli (who shared in the blame for his sons' disobedience) that the latter's two sons would be cut off from the land of the living.

These few passages and examples already impress us with the importance of our subject, "youth, obey your parents". God, who knows best, has commanded it. That in itself should be enough. And if you want more reasons, consider the outcome of a generation which has rejected authority when it was young. Lawlessness and restlessness are the results. You see that all around you - remember the groups in the mall who are the results of a pampered generation.

W. HUIZINGA

(1) These articles are an elaboration of a speech given at the Youth Conference held at Winnipeg, October 6, 1973.

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PRESS RELEASE - cont'd

Rev. Ohmann; Aug. 11, Rev. VanDam; Aug. 25, Rev. VanDooren; Sept. 8, Rev. VanderBoom; Sept. 22, Rev. VanOene.

Art. 6. Instructions. A. By church at Brampton: request for classical approbation of the call to Rev. C. VanDam. All documents were present, examined and found in good order. Classis was invited to attend his installation, May 5th, 10 A.M. and 2:30 P.M. Two delegates from Toronto were appointed.

B. By Church at Burlington West, request for advice re: "Admissibility of remarriage of a divorced member." This request came to classis because the consistory could not unanimously agree with the advice of the church visitors. After prolonged discussion classis came to a conclusion, on the basis of relevant Scripture passages, and gave its advice for this specific case. The brethren of Burlington West did not vote, according to art. 33 C.O.

C. By church at Burlington East re: public confession of faith by all persons joining the church, regardless of their background. After pros

and cons were expressed in the discussion, classis came to the conclusion that a general rule should not be made because of the differences in 'cases' and conditions.

Art. 7. Delegates to Regional Synod. Classis decided to request the Church of Smithville, appointed to convene the Regional Synod, not to convene that Synod for May 15th but postpone it till the end of September. Classis had three grounds for this: a. it is too early to appoint, in May, delegates for the General Synod that is to start in November. b. no provisional agenda for the General Synod has as yet been received. c. the churches have not received any information as yet re: the agenda of the Regional Synod.

Consequently no delegates were appointed.

Art. 8. Question Period ad art. 41 C.O. Two churches asked and received advice in disciplinary matters.

Brampton informed about a translation of the (dutch) Report on Reformed praxis in writing attestations. The church of Brampton was asked to try such a translation, and to distribute it among the churches.

The Church at Guelph asked and

received the Rev. VanOene as its consulting minister. Re: the borderline between Fergus and Guelph the consistory of Guelph was advised to again take up contact with Fergus to reach an agreement on the basis of their own overture to have immediate boundaries around the two towns, leaving an 'open area' in between. The delegates of Fergus and Guelph did not vote on this motion, according to art. 33 C.O.

Art. 9. Next classis. After personal question period that brought nothing new, the date for the next classis was set: Thursday, June 13th, 9 A.M., in Toronto, to be convened by Ottawa. Executive: Rev. VanOene, chairman; Rev. Olij, clerk; Rev. VanDam, assessor.

Art. 10. Closing. After approval of the Acts and Press Release of Classis, the assessor led in prayer, and classis was closed.

G. VANDOOREN Assessor.

SYNOD '74

All those who wish to send correspondence to Synod 1974, please send no less than 40 copies!

our little magazine

Dear Busy Beavers,

You really have been busy as beavers again. Such a pile of mail I had! I really enjoy hearing from you, seeing how well you do on the quizzes, and getting new puzzles and stories from you. When I read all that mail I think of how very lucky I am to have so many nieces and nephews all across Canada!

And here is what one Busy Beaver thinks of Our Little Magazine.

Our Little Magazine is old
But some new joiners think it's new
Especially about the quizzes, too,
That's why people think it's new!

Thank you for your poem, *Margaret Vanden Haak*.

* * * * *

Now let's congratulate all the Busy Beavers who are celebrating their birthday in May. Here is a birthday wish poem just for you!

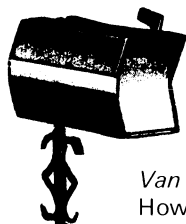
God be with you in the Springtime
When the violets unfold,
And the buttercups and cowslips
Fill the fields with yellow gold;
In the time of apple blossoms,
When the happy bluebirds sing,
Filling all the world with gladness —
God be with you in the Spring!

JULIAN S. CUTLER

| | | | |
|-----------------------|-------|---------------------|--------|
| Linda Huttema | May 1 | Irene Lodder | May 15 |
| Nelly Jane Tenhage | 1 | Rita Hoeksema | 16 |
| Rolean Hulzebosch | 3 | Barry Post | 16 |
| Peter Van Grootheest | 7 | Jimmy Hoeksema | 17 |
| Alice Sandink | 9 | Hilda Beyes | 19 |
| Sylvia Selles | 9 | Sandra Veenema | 19 |
| Yvonne Van Grootheest | 9 | Jake Ruggi | 20 |
| Jenny Bosscher | 11 | Caroline Onderwater | 24 |
| Geraldine De Boer | 12 | Lizzie Oosterhoff | 24 |
| Peter Kok | 12 | Carl Mulder | 25 |
| Bobby Lindhout | 12 | Teresa Metzlar | 26 |
| Janet Oostdijk | 12 | Brenda Vanden Bos | 27 |
| Ronny Van Andel | 12 | Jacob Kuik | 27 |
| Janet Dekker | 13 | Audrey Knol | 30 |
| Elaine Knegt | 14 | Kina Vander Putten | 30 |
| Theresa De Gelder | 15 | | |

* * * * *

From The Mailbox



Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Audrey Van Veldhuizen*. We are glad to have you join us. How is your new house coming along? Hope you had a very happy birthday, Audrey.

Hello, *Jeanette De Boer*. A big welcome to you too. I'm glad you like Our Little Magazine, and hope you like today's puzzle too. Write again soon, Jeanette.

I know you'll be a real Busy Beaver, *Cynthia Ludwig* - you did very well on the quizzes you sent in to me. Please write and tell me your birthday, Cynthia.

Hello, *Benita* and *Trudy Tamminga*. How did you like your holiday at your sister's house? Are you allowed to help on your farm? Thank you for the puzzle, Benita. I'm sure the Busy Beavers will enjoy it.

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Joyce Jagersma*. Has the cat recovered from her wounds, and did you find her owners? Well, there are plenty of animal stories to read Joyce. Have you read "Lassie Come-home"? You'll like it!

You will make a good Busy Beaver, *Yvonne Byker* - you had all your puzzles all right! Hope you'll enjoy all our Busy Beaver activities as much.

Hello, *Diane Holtvluwer*. Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club. You must be very busy looking after all your pets and reading so many books in one year! Please write and tell me your birthday, Diane.

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Joyce Dalhuisen*. We hope you will enjoy reading Our Little Magazine and doing the quizzes and puzzles! Let's hear from you again soon, Joyce.

Of course you may be a member of the Busy Beaver Club, *Ingrid Feenstra*. I'm glad you like Our Little Magazine and hope you will be a faithful member. How are your baby rabbits doing, Ingrid?

Hello, *Audrey Knol*. Did you like being the oldest at home when your sisters were gone? How is your new calf Nellie? You had your puzzles all right, Audrey. Keep up the good work!

Thank you for your letter, *Joanne Degroot*. You had your puzzles all right too! Write again soon, Joanne.

How do you like your new house, *Mary Van Woudenberg*? I'm glad you like your new teacher. And thank you for the BOOK LOOK too.

Thank you so much for your Mother's Day story, *Debbie Knol*. I'm sure the Busy Beavers will really enjoy it next time. Glad you had such a good time during your holidays. I think your grandmother enjoyed it too, am I right?

Hello, *Cathy Dalhuisen*. It's nice to hear from you again. Thank you for your poem, too. Did your Aunt enjoy her visit here? Bye for now, Cathy.

You must have had a lot of fun at Jenny and Greta's house, *Meta Bosscher*. Too bad you didn't get to play very much in your hut and house-boat. Thank you for the quizzes, Meta.

Thank you for your big letter, *Margaret Vanden Haak*. It was nice to hear from you again. And you had your quizzes all right. Keep up the good work! Those quizzes should keep us busy for a while, Margaret!

Well it seems to be a time for good-byes, *Arlene Feenstra*, *Cecile Van Woudenberg*, *Ann* and *Bert Holtvluwer*! We are happy to have had you in our Club, but just as you wrote, the time has come that you're probably more interested in reading some of the *other* things in Clarion besides Our Little Magazine. We hope you won't forget us, Busy Beavers, and that you will make us proud that you were once Busy Beavers too!

Thank you for your letter and riddles, *Betty Ann Vander Meulen*. It was nice to hear from you again. Has your weather improved, and did your Dad and sister enjoy their trip?

Has your dog learned not to nip people, *Angela Wiersema*? And did you get to see your little niece? You

had the answers to the puzzles all right. Keep up the good work!

What an interesting visit you had at the Lion Safari, *Patsy Linde*. But weren't you even a bit afraid of all those bears? And you had the answers to the puzzles right too, Patsy. Congratulations!

I'm glad you did so well playing hockey, *Louis Dykstra*. Are you sorry the season is over? I hope your uncle and aunt will like it here. I'm sure they'll love to visit Lethbridge and B.C.!

Thank you very much for the very nice cards, *Mary* and *Irene Vande Burgt*, and *Jane Kobes*.

Did you and your sister finish your pictures, *Geraldine De Boer*? And congratulations, you had your answers all right! I'm glad you enjoyed your holiday so much, Geraldine.

Thank you very much for your contribution to the Birthday Fund, *Irene Van Oene*, and for your pretty letter! And good for you, you had the answers to your quizzes all right too.

Here are the answers to the Easter quiz. How did you do?

1. angel; soldiers
2. Mary, Salome, Mary Magdalene
3. He is risen
4. Mary Magdalene
5. John, Peter

6. twelve
7. seven
8. five hundred
9. Ascension Day

QUIZ TIME

Find 52 Bible names going across, up and down.

```

E S T H E R A A R O N K R D E
L U K E V K B B A A L B O A Z
A D J O E L R E J M O E J N S
M E N O C H A L C A I N A I J
A N D R E W H L O T E J C E D
N O A J P A A D A M S A O L O
A A U A H A M G H N A M B B R
N H I M A N A C A Q U I L A C
I B D E S N J O B S L N R L A
A M O S T A Z B A R N A B A S
S E T H U H E R O D D E M A S
P L G I D E O N S J R L U M O
A G A G E Z E K I E L I J A H
U H A G A R W J O H N M A R Y
L E V I S A A C J U D A H K N
    
```

Good Luck to all who try this puzzle! From *Benita Tamminga*.

Bye for now, Busy Beavers. Hope you enjoy the puzzle. Please remember when you write me, my address is: *Aunt Betty*, Box 54, Fergus, Ont. N1M 2W7.

Yours,
Aunt Betty.

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Bertha, Rick, Jenette,
Alan, Jim, Bonita,
Gordon and Johnny.

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Thankful to the Covenant God we are happy to announce the birth of our son:

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ROSELYN ARDIS

A sister for: *Heather, Karen*
Michael and David

Jacob and Rita Kuik

March 18, 1974
Graysville

The Lord Who gave strength and life blessed our family greatly with the birth of a dear daughter and sister:

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