

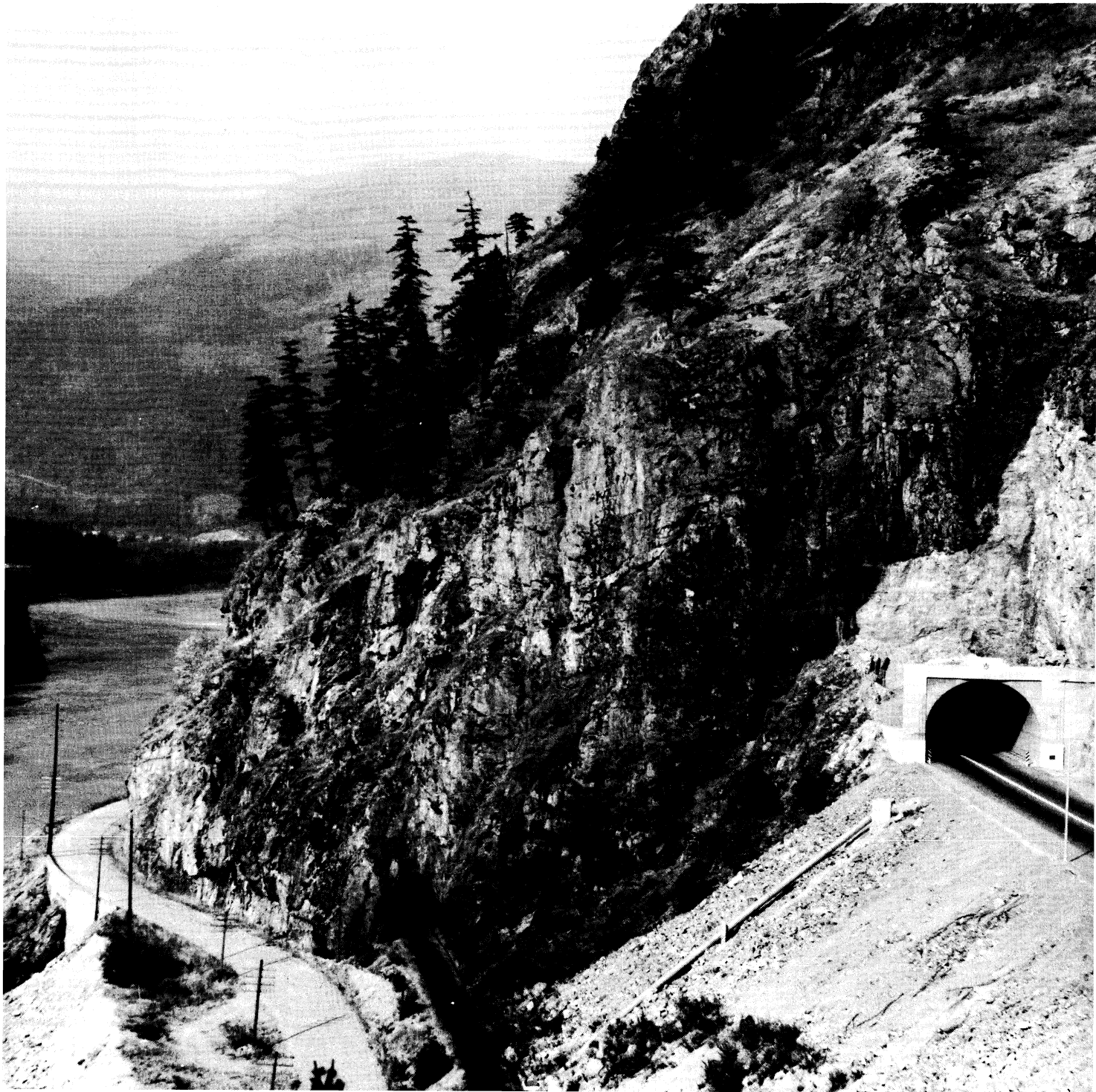


# Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

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# Scriptures and Abortion

*During the past months, 315 signatures of members of the League of Canadian Reformed Women's Societies in Ontario have been collected in support of a letter sent to the Honourable Mr. Otto Lang, Minister of Justice; the Honourable Mr. Pierre E. Trudeau, Prime Minister; and the Honourable Mr. Sinclair Stevens, P.C. Member of Parliament. A copy of this letter was submitted for publication in Clarion in the hope that other societies may wish to follow this example.*

Dear Sir,

We, the women of the League of Canadian Reformed Women's Societies in Ontario, wish to express our deepest concern about what has been happening and is happening in our country with respect to abortion practice.

We are no pressure group, nor an organization which has been formed for the express purpose of bringing the matter of abortion to the attention of Government and nation. Our Societies were formed in order that we as women might help one another with the study of the Word of God and so be better prepared to fulfill our task as Christian women.

It is as Christian women that we are so concerned.

We believe that the Lord our God has revealed Himself in the holy Scriptures, which are His inerrant and authoritative Word.

In His Word, the holy Bible, our God has told us that He Himself made man in His own image and after His own likeness. For that reason He also commanded that a murderer shall be put to death. (Genesis 9:6). He is the God Who gives life and to Whom all life belongs. It is He Who makes us in a most wonderful way, as Psalm 139 describes so beautifully: ". . . my frame was not hidden from Thee when I was being made in secret, intricately wrought in the depths of the earth. Thy eyes beheld my unformed substance; in Thy book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me when as yet there was none of them . . ." No one has the right to destroy life, which He alone can create and which belongs to Him.

We also believe that God has ordained the civil Government and has invested the Government with the sword for the punishment of evildoers and for the protection of them that do well. Both Governments and subjects will have to give account to the Lord Jesus Christ Whom God has appointed to judge the living and the dead. It is, therefore, the God-given duty of the Government to protect life, also the life of the unborn, and to prevent the murder of unborn children by forbidding the abortion practices which nowadays are being promoted and are being claimed to be the right of every woman who wants to have an abortion. It is not the woman, in whose womb the Lord God forms the

child, who has a right either keep or remove that wonderful work which God alone can make and owns. Our God claims us for Himself with body and soul and we do not have the right to dispose of it as we see fit.

As Christian women we may not keep silent, and by our silence condone practices which are sheer murder. Likewise, we may not, by our silence, acquiesce in a trend to liberalize the laws covering abortion. It is our duty to speak out and to remind the Government of its obligation towards God Who is the Lord of lords and the King of kings and towards the subjects who may look to it for protection and real justice.

We therefore urge the Government to be aware of its responsibility towards our God and Creator in the first place, and to oppose and prevent any liberalization with respect to abortion laws and/or practices. As we all shall have to do, so the Government will have to give account to the Judge of heaven and earth also of its actions in this respect. The blood of children, murdered before they were born, will be demanded not only of the hands of those who commit such crimes, but also of the hands of all who had the power to prevent it but either condoned or - indirectly - promoted such murders. "Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people". Proverbs 14:34.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. H. Riemersma, Pres. Mrs. W. Faber, Secr.



## Not Our Own

*We are not our own: let not our reason nor our will, therefore, sway our plans and deeds. We are not our own: let us therefore not set it as our goal to seek what is expedient for us according to the flesh. We are not our own: in so far as we can, let us therefore forget ourselves and all that is ours.*

*Conversely, we are God's: let us therefore live for him and die for him. We are God's: let his wisdom and will therefore rule all our actions. We are God's: let all the parts of our life accordingly strive toward him as our only lawful goal [Rom. 14:8; cf. 1 Cor. 6:19]. O, how much has that man profited who, having been taught that he is not his own, has taken away dominion and rule from his own reason that he may yield it to God! For, as consulting our self-interest is the pestilence that most effectively leads to our destruction, so the sole haven of salvation is to be wise in nothing and to will nothing through ourselves but to follow the leading of the Lord alone.*

*John Calvin  
Institutes, III, 7 [tr. L.C.C.]*



# Studying the R.S.V. (4)

Having seen the main recommendations of the committee, we can now come to the conclusions. It is probably best that the literal text of the conclusions and recommendations of the committee be printed. The only exception will be the material in brackets, which simply substitutes information in terms of the report with information in terms of the previous three articles. What follows is the text of the report.

## CONCLUSIONS

1. Goddard's dissertation (see the first article - cvd) shows clearly that there is much to commend about the RSV translation, which in some cases is better than the King James and statistically is more accurate.

2. However, the committee must also conclude that our continued investigation, over the past years since the 1971 synod, has shown that there is also evidence of an unscriptural influence. As grounds for this we draw your attention to the following:

- a. Our recommendation that the unity of the Old and New Testament be recognized in translation. (We saw in the second article that this basic truth is often ignored. - cvd)
- b. The lack of consistency in the usage of "thou" and "thee" when addressing God, even when the Lord Jesus is explicitly recognized as divine. (See second article. - cvd)
- c. The lack of consistency regarding the usage of personal and impersonal pronouns regarding the Holy Spirit. (See first and second articles. - cvd)
- d. The absence of corrections in the 1972\* revision of the RSV New Testament in matters of the Son and the Spirit. (See second article. - cvd)
- e. The Hosea study and our conclusion concerning the emendations. (See previous article. - cvd)

3. We are confirmed by our studies that the previous synod did a good thing in not positively endorsing the RSV but that it only recommended the RSV in a negative way. It is the opinion of the committee that we do not tie ourselves down to the RSV.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Continue the committee for the RSV. Grounds:

a. The Standard Bible Committee is receptive and, while not necessarily implementing all recommendations, does take them all seriously. (It meets every two years, including this year, in which suggestions for change are considered.)

b. Although the bulk of the work seems to be done and the major recommendations have now been made, yet, since there is no closing date and since it appears that the RSV will be revised continually, we must not neglect opportunities to bring forward proposals to the Standard Bible Committee as these come from our circles and committee.

c. Only the Christian Reformed Church and the Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod) have committees for this work. Our contribution will therefore not be lost in floods of other recommendations and our contribution could be substantial.

2. As churches we should keep our options open as to an official and positive endorsement of a translation besides the King James Version. We therefore recommend that either the present RSV committee or another synodically appointed committee be

given the mandate by synod to study another (or other) modern translation(s), with a view to possible use in our churches.

Grounds:

1. The weaknesses of the RSV as pointed out in our recommendations, study and report.

2. Our awareness of the existence of the New American Standard Bible and the New International Version (only the New Testament, 1973, available up to now). These translations appear to be worthwhile to be looked into.

## SUMMATION

Thus far the report. It speaks for itself. The final part of the mandate that the committee received from the synod of New Westminster was "from time to time to inform the churches about the result of their investigations." These articles were an attempt to also act according to this mandate.

C. VAN DAM

\* Technically, 1971 is a more correct date for the revision since the new edition of the New Testament was then copyrighted and published (by Concordia Publishing House). However, even the official preface to the RSV mentions the date 1972 in connection with the Second Edition of the translation of the New Testament.

## Sod Turning Ceremony

A sod-turning ceremony recently marked the official start of the construction of a new church building in Chatham. From left: John Bultje of the building committee; Tony Vander Linden of Linden Construction Co., contractor; Rev. M.C. Werkman; and Clarence Wiersma, chairman of the building committee. [Photo Chatham Daily News]



# Some Remarks Around A Proposal

1. In News Medley, published in *Clarion* of March 23, the Rev. W.W.J. VanOene mentioned that Hamilton's bulletin "informed us that the Consistory decided to propose to the General Synod not to leave Article 70 of the Church Order any longer in the freedom of the Churches."

The Editor formulated Hamilton's decision in a wrong manner. It was not a proposal to the General Synod but to the Classis Ontario-South of March 13, 1974.

2. "I found no reasons for this proposal, but I am very much puzzled by it. What actually does Hamilton wish to have changed? Is it their intention that . . ." Why did the Editor not wait? It would have been possible that the consistory of Hamilton or the classis of March 13 had the purpose to publish the proposal. Why does the Editor immediately air strong statements, as for instance, "That would be a tremendous step backward and undoubtedly would cause unnecessary difficulties"? Is it not tremen-

dously dangerous to make such tremendous statements before having received the least information about the reasons for a proposal?

3. In News Medley, published in *Clarion* of April 6, the Editor remarked: "I do have a little more light now, gathered from bulletins here and there, and this light still obscures more than that it makes clear. The press report of the latest Classis Ontario South also speaks of it. We encounter here another strange phenomenon . . . What a waste of time, energy, and money." The Consistory overtures Classis to overture Regional Synod to overture General Synod . . . That is not the proper way of doing things."

The Rev. VanOene is of the opinion that, when a matter belongs to the Churches in common, a Church should send it directly to the convening Church for the General Synod. "Neither a Classis nor a Regional Synod should act as if it were a General Synod."

But does our Editor not speak in too bold a way? To be sure, if a Church wants to send an overture directly to a General Synod, who would forbid it? But if in a certain case a Church wants to be careful and not to load the table of a General Synod with a proposal that maybe cannot stand even a superficial test, and therefore decides to send this proposal to Classis first, who should forbid it? Are there not certain advantages in this method? If the proposal has something in it that is good but it needs improvement, can it not be improved by discussions and decisions of a Classis or Regional Synod?

What will cause more waste of time, energy, and money? To burden the table of a General Synod with all kinds of (immature) proposals or to have certain proposals discussed by and improved by a Classis and a Regional Synod? Our readers will understand that I am not against the fact that Consistories send proposals directly to a General Synod - such proposals do not have to be immature -, but I am against the theory of our Editor that it is "another strange phenomenon" when a Consistory wants to go along the way of Classis

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## YOUTH COLUMN<sup>(2)</sup>

### I. WHY SHOULD YOUTH OBEY THEIR PARENTS? (Cont'd)

We continue to answer the question why youth should obey parents. Sometimes youth physically stands taller than the parents. So size cannot be the determining factor. Last time we pointed to the authority of God's commandment. God says so; therefore we should obey the all-wise God who knows best.

Obedience to the fifth commandment becomes meaningful when we remember how God regards you, the youth of His covenant. If Paul teaches that children of a married couple of whom only one is believing are holy, then certainly God considers you, the youth of believing parents, to be HOLY (1 Cor. 7:14). Holy means to be set apart as someone or something special. God has a special purpose with you. You are special, different. God has set you apart. The Lord showed this by including you in the covenant. God spoke to Abraham,

And I will establish my covenant between Me and you and YOUR DESCENDANTS after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and TO YOUR DESCENDANTS after you (Gen. 17:7, emphasis mine).

And the covenant sign of circumcision (now baptism) belonged and belongs to the youth therefore, too.

God GIVES children as a HERITAGE to believing parents. You can read that in Psalm 127:3, "Behold, children are the heritage of the LORD; the fruit of the womb is a reward." You are GOD-GIVEN. Therefore, God desired and demanded from your parents that they treat you as a holy child of God. God gave you to specific parents, entrusting the parents with the care and upbringing of HIS covenanted youth. Paul in Ephesians 6 says, "Bring them up in the discipline and instruction OF THE LORD." Parents will have to give an account to the Lord for what they have done with His youth.

Yes, we repeatedly wrote "HIS youth". Does that seem somewhat strange? Isn't that going a little too far? Do you not belong to your parents, first and solely? You live in their house, eat their food and listen to them, right? Why then do we continually write, "HIS youth"?

Let me try to answer this by two references to the Old Testament. In Leviticus 20 God prohibited the following:

Any man from the sons of Israel or from the aliens sojourning in Israel, who gives any of his offspring to Molech, shall surely be put to death; the people of the land shall stone him with stones. I will also set My face against that man and will cut him off from among his people, because he has given some of his offspring to Molech, so as to defile My sanctuary and to profane My holy name (vss 2,3).

and Regional Synod. The one way does not exclude the other.

When the Editor remarks that neither a Classis nor a Regional Synod should act as if it were a General Synod, he gives a wrong impression. In the case he is dealing with the proposal was not that *Classis* Ontario-South would rescind a decision of *Synod* Homewood-Carman 1954. Then the Classis would have acted as if it were a General Synod. The proposal was that Classis Ontario-South would *overture* Regional Synod to *overture* General Synod to rescind this decision of Synod 1954. Our esteemed Editor does not distinguish between an overture to decide, and the decision itself. His remark that neither a Classis nor a Regional Synod should act as if it were a General Synod, is not to the point.

4. The Rev. VanOene continues: "When the provisional agenda for the General Synod has been received by the Churches, and when there is any Church that wishes to express itself on any point or, for that matter, to give delegates specific instructions along, then there is a possibility of bringing it to the attention of a Regional Synod. For that reason the last Regional Synod before a General Synod

should be held at least after the first provisional agenda for the latter has been received by the Churches. Our latest Classis Ontario North decided not to appoint delegates to a Regional Synod, but to inform the convening Church that it is convinced that the Regional Synod should be held in September or even October."

Here again questions arise. I am not against the idea that the provisional agenda for the General Synod is discussed in Consistories, Classes, and Regional Synods. I am all in favour of such a method. It will be a good preparation for the work of a General Synod. But is the standpoint of the Editor not ambiguous? First he said very strongly: "A major assembly shall deal only with those things which could not be finished in the minor assembly or which belong to the Churches of *that major assembly* in common. Nowhere do I read that a major assembly shall deal with matters that belong to all Churches in common, unless that major assembly is a General Synod." Therefore, in his opinion it was a strange phenomenon that the churches in Classis Ontario-South made up their mind about a proposal to be sent to Regional Synod and eventually to General Synod. But

after the provisional agenda for the General Synod has been received, any Church may give delegates to Classis specific instructions along. In order to bring something to the attention of a Regional Synod, there has to be a discussion and decision of Classis. What is the *difference* between *this* discussion and decision and the method that our Editor before had labelled as an intrusion into the rights and duties of a General Synod? I would say: If a Classis were not allowed to discuss a proposal about which the final decision has to be made by General Synod and to pronounce a judgment, *before* the provisional agenda of a General Synod has been made up, why is it then allowed to do so *afterwards*? What makes the difference?

I will not put the question whether it is allowed to an Editor to pronounce a statement about a proposal for a General Synod. To me this goes without saying, though an Editor will always consider the question whether it is the right moment to publish an opinion. He shall not meddle with the affairs of an ecclesiastical assembly and he shall only publish an opinion if he has sufficient information at his disposal. But I cannot see

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Molech-worship involved the horror of offering your first-born to the god Molech. Under the outstretched arms of the idol a fire burned. Parents had to place their child "into the arms of Molech", that is, into the fire. Idolatry is cruel. You would say, God did not have to tell the Israelites twice to stay away from Molech-worship. To our surprise, however, the opposite occurred. The most influential persons, the kings, often set the horrible example for others. Wise king Solomon allowed sanctuaries to the god Molech to be built for his heathen wives. Ahaz and Manasseh, kings of Israel, burned their sons as an offering to Molech. Later on Ezekiel had to prophesy against this wicked and horrendous custom. He prophesied,

Moreover, you took YOUR sons and daughters WHOM YOU HAD BORNE TO ME, and you sacrificed them to idols to be devoured. Were your harlotries so small a matter? You slaughtered MY children, and offered them up to idols by causing them to pass through the fire. (16:20,21; emphasis mine)

The children, yes, the youth too, are MINE, said the covenant God. Look what you have done with MY children! The LORD thunders, Did I tell you to sacrifice MY children?

The point of all this is that you, youth, belong to God. God says, you are MINE. And your parents must remember that. God entrusted you, God's child, to your parents. This fact should make your obedience to your parents more meaningful. To obey your parents is to obey your God.

To sum it up then, you are HOLY, a HERITAGE, and the youth of GOD who entrusted you to parents whom He

invested with His authority over you. God delegated His authority to the parents. He told them and asked from them (even with an oath) to bring you up as a HOLY HERITAGE OF THE LORD. You are special. Hopefully you now can appreciate Paul's command,

Children, obey your parents IN THE LORD, for this is RIGHT (PROPER - W.H.). Honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with a promise, that it may be well with you and that you may live long on the earth. (Ephesians 6:1-3)

Youth, God considers it right and proper that you obey your parents in the Lord. This is a "first commandment" or a "commandment of the first rank" for you. Does it not make all the difference in the world that you obey them because your Lord, who owns you, commands this of you?

## II. WHAT DOES OBEDIENCE INVOLVE?

We should become practical. What does obedience involve for the youth? Lord's Day 39 explains the implications of the fifth law:

That I show all honour, love and fidelity to my father and mother . . .

First of all then, youth should show HONOUR. You find this word used in the fifth law itself (Deut. 5:16) and in Eph. 6:2. Leviticus 19:3 states, "Every one of you shall REVERENCE his mother and father . . ." The term "honour" means: to regard as weighty and important. So youth should show that their parents are important to them. In today's atmosphere this is a very practical



how the Editor of *Clarion* can defend that he himself gives a judgment about a proposal for General Synod, and at the same time forbids a Classis and a Regional Synod to deal with the same proposal, namely before the provisional agenda of a General Synod has been made up. Why is a private person allowed to do something that, according to his opinion, is not permitted to a Classis or a Regional Synod?

5. The Press Release of Classis Ontario-North of March 21 confirms that this 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."

I can understand the reasoning behind this request. Generally speaking, I think that it is a sound reasoning. It is good to appoint delegates to

a broader assembly after the agenda of this assembly has been discussed. But I cannot understand that Classis Ontario North made a *request*, and at the same time *decided* not to appoint delegates for Regional Synod. Now it is *impossible* to convene a Regional Synod. So there is no request, but a "fait accompli".

Could Classis North not have considered:

- a. that Regional Synod had been postponed already before, and that therefore May was not an *early*, but a *late* date for the normal Regional Synod?
- b. that it had been published that the Church of Hamilton had overture Classis Ontario-South and that Classis Ontario-South had decided to overture Regional Synod to put a certain proposal on the agenda for General Synod?
- c. that it would be better to appoint delegates and to instruct them to urge Regional Synod only to deal with the items that had been brought forward in the right way, and to decide to have another Regional Synod to discuss the provisional agenda of General Synod and then to appoint delegates for General Synod?

By acting the way it did Classis Ontario North made it impossible for Churches in Classis Ontario-South (e.g. the Church at Hamilton) and for Classis Ontario-South itself to put forward a proposal for General Synod in the ecclesiastical way, namely via Classis add Regional Synod. My objection is not that a private person has a certain opinion about the way proposals have to be placed on the agenda of a General Synod, but that a Classis now made it impossible to do it not in the "direct" but in the "ecclesiastical" way. Also in this respect Classis Ontario North placed brothers before a "fait accompli."

6. After these remarks about church polity I deem it wise to publish the proposal of the Church of Hamilton in the form in which it has been taken over by Classis Ontario South of March 13, 1974. It may be expected that now the Church of Hamilton and/or the Classis Ontario South will send it directly to General Synod. There is no other way left . . .

J. FABER

*The text of the above-mentioned proposal appears elsewhere in this issue. We thank Professor Faber for his remarks. Our readers may expect a response to them in the near future.*

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teaching. Many young people complain bitterly about dad and mom. To show respect for mom and to let dad know he is important seems to be equivalent to showing one's weakness. Instead, an aloofness or even a disdain for one's parents characterizes many youth-parent relationships. However, you covenant youth should be different. Regard your parents as very important, as indeed they are. They not only fed you and still feed you but they are God's appointed guardians to bring you up as youth who will stand up for God's covenant, crown and church. Parents' God-given position makes them "weighty" and important to you. Moreover, "honour" means: to be precious. I think that should speak for itself. The many days and years of life together in one home should make parents "precious" in the eyes of youth who are starting to realize all that their parents do for them.

If anything should come natural, it is the love of the youth for their parents. After so many years of receiving parental care, concern and discipline, youth should have the "instinct" of love for dad and mom. Yet, the opposite is often true. Those who should be most precious to us, we often treat most shamefully. The saying "you don't know what you have till you lose it" is often painfully true. When children move away from home, having to "rough" it on their own, *then* they learn what it means to have parents, who love them and who can be loved. And what is love? Is it not the willingness to sacrifice oneself for someone? Is it not the hearty wish to do good to someone? Is it not the longing to see someone happy? In the case of the

youth-parent relationship this would mean that youth wants dad and mom to be happy with them. How? Well, the principle that Jesus laid down, (if you love me, keep my commandments) applies here. That principle will have to be put into practice in the situations of daily life.

Fidelity means faithfulness or trustworthiness. In the Old Testament this aspect of obedience came out very clearly when parents grew older and became unable to support themselves. According to the law of Moses honour and fidelity to parents does not stop when one marries. There were no old age pensions or retirement plans at that time to take care of the elderly. This task belonged to the children in as much as the parents were unable to support themselves. In Old Testament times, old people were not valuable since it was often difficult for them to do an equal share of the heavy agricultural work. We can conclude this fact from the list of varying prices that had to be paid to free someone who had been dedicated by a vow to the Lord's service. For males this was: 5 shekels for those 0 - 5 years of age, 20 shekels for those from 5 - 20, 50 shekels for those from 20 - 60, and 15 shekels for those older than 60. An elderly man over 60 was worth less, economically speaking, than a young person between the ages of 5 - 20! Yet God said that we must honour and be faithful to our older parents even when we are married. When parents are old, lonely, and helpless, then the time is ripe to show your faithfulness. Mind you, you can show faithfulness in many other ways. For example, you could show up at home before the curfew your parents set!

W. HUIZINGA

# Understanding the Old Testament

NAHUM [15]

NINEVEH, FOREDOOMED TO FAILURE AND RUIN Ch. 3:12-19.

In these concluding verses of the chapter, and of the book as well, the city is pictured three times, and each time from a different angle. First from the viewpoint of the fortifications that were to protect the land, the inhabitants and the city itself but failed in the crucial hour. Second from the viewpoint of Assyria's power to multiply itself and to spread over the earth, e.g. in the persons of her merchants and officials, in which respect it is compared with the locusts, also with regard to their disappearing. And third from the viewpoint of the leaders who are failing now, while finally, in vs. 19, the prophet summarizes the prophecy with a peroration that will not fail to resound in the ears of the readers for a long time, making it clear that justice has been done.

(12) ALL YOUR FORTRESSES ARE LIKE FIG TREES WITH FIRST-RIPE FIGS - IF SHAKEN THEY FALL INTO THE MOUTH OF THE EATER.

In the verses 12-15a the defence of the land and the city is in the picture. The fortresses referred to are first and foremost those on the frontier and others in the country that are intended to block entry into the country. It is only vs. 14 that the defence of the city comes into the picture. Prior to that the land of Assyria, the homeland, is supposed to be put in a posture of defence. Well, it is. But it is of no use. The comparison with the fig tree shows it up. The attentive reader will discover that the strongholds are compared with the trees as well as the fruits. The trees are shaken, and the fruits are shaken as well so as to fall into the mouth of the eater. "While the figs on the shoots of the current year (Hebr.: *te'ênâ*) do not ripen before the end of August, the shoots of the preceding year produce a ripe and succulent fruit (*bikkûrîm*)

from June onwards. The delicious and much prized early fruit has but to be shaken to drop into the mouth of the eater" (Eaton).

So, all the fortresses in the land will easily fall like delicious figs into the mouths of the conquerors, to be devoured by them.

(13) BEHOLD, YOUR TROOPS ARE WOMEN IN YOUR MIDST. THE GATES OF YOUR LAND ARE WIDE OPEN TO YOUR FOES; FIRE HAS DEVoured YOUR BARS.

It is not cowardly warriors who are represented by figs. Those warriors are meant by "thy people" (A.V.) in vs. 13; "thy troops" the R.S.V. renders, and rightly so, for since it is the able-bodied men that are referred to, the simile does make sense. The point of comparison is not the cowardliness of the soldiers, for that is not characteristic of women, who may behave bravely - examples can be given - but rather the weakness and inability to offer successful resistance as a real army is supposed to. Now the army does the very opposite. "The gates of thy land" are probably mountain passes leading into the country. And - with Keil - we may consider the castles to be the bolts of these gates. The word "land" implies that we are still in the country, the surroundings, not in the capital. And so it came true, in accordance with the prophecy, the oracle, as we learn from a Babylonian chronicle.

(14) DRAW WATER FOR THE SIEGE, STRENGTHEN YOUR FORTS; GO INTO THE CLAY, TREAD THE MORTAR, TAKE HOLD OF THE BRICK MOULD!

(15a) THERE WILL THE FIRE DEVOUR YOU, THE SWORD WILL CUT YOU OFF. IT WILL DEVOUR YOU LIKE THE LOCUST.

Vs. 14 has reminiscences of ch. 2:2. The exhortation is not to be taken seriously, of course. The prophet is

just mocking. In a manner of speaking, the prophet is playing a cat-and-mouse game with Nineveh, in releasing for a moment the city that had been caught. Ironically he urges Nineveh to put forth her most strenuous efforts in self-defence, assuring her in one and the same breath that complete destruction awaits her. "Draw thee waters for the siege." We may compare here the steps taken by king Ahaz to secure the water supply of Jerusalem (Is. 7:3). We learn from one of the inscriptions unearthed that king Sennacherib had done the same for Nineveh. "Strengthen your forts" - in this verse the fortresses of the city itself. "Go into the clay, tread the mortar", potter's clay. What follows is rendered either by: "make strong the brickkiln" (A.V.) or by "take hold of the brick mould," depending upon how the Hebrew word *malbên* is to be explained. It is not easy to make a decision here. I should like to leave the question open. Anyway, the intention is clear. The Ninevites have to prepare for the siege.

However, it does not serve a useful purpose anymore. There, put in the forefront, right there where the Ninevites are straining every nerve, the fire will devour the city with its buildings, and the sword will destroy its inhabitants. The destruction of Nineveh by fire was related already by ancient Greek writers and also confirmed by the ruins. And fire as well as sword will do their work thoroughly, as thoroughly as the locust (vs. 15a).

(15b) MULTIPLY YOURSELVES LIKE THE LOCUST, MULTIPLY LIKE THE GRASSHOPPER!

(16) YOU INCREASED YOUR MERCHANTS MORE THAN THE STARS OF THE HEAVENS. THE LOCUST SPREADS ITS WINGS AND FLIES AWAY.

(17) YOUR PRINCES ARE LIKE GRASSHOPPERS, YOUR SCRIBES LIKE CLOUDS OF LOCUSTS SETTLING ON THE FENCES IN A DAY OF COLD - WHEN THE SUN RISES, THEY FLY AWAY; NO ONE KNOWS WHERE THEY ARE.

Where vs. 15a passes into vs. 15b, the image is shifted. It is one of those sudden turns that the readers have become acquainted with, I think. Nevertheless there are scholars who find it hard to follow this prophet in his train of thought and who raise all sorts of objections, making proposals

to change the text and e.g. to delete the line "It will devour you like the locust." These words are best treated as a gloss, or as due to dittography" (a reading twice of what was written once). They are hard to understand . . . If the comparison with the locust applies to the subject, i.e. the sword will devour you as the locust devours, the figure is a weak one," so Powis Smith says. He comes to the conclusion that the text must be corrupt. I am sorry that a distinguished (although liberal) exegete fails to see the clue, which is not hard to find, taking into consideration the particulars of Nahum's style. First, in vs. 15a, a comparison is made between the sword devouring the Ninevites and the locusts devouring trees and vegetation. The point of comparison is: the definite character of the work of both of them. To our amazement in the second half of the verse the prophet suddenly applies the image of the locust to Nineveh. The point of comparison is not anymore the destructive power, so that Nineveh in its turn will devour its enemies, but the power to multiply, which was characteristic of Nineveh as well as of the locusts.

As for the locusts, in Hebrew we come across three different words or designations for this disastrous insect. The first is: *jèlèq*. We meet it in the third and fourth line of vs. 15 and the last line of vs. 16. A.V. as well as R.S.V. are consistent in their way of rendering, the former by "canker-worm" the latter by "locust". The second is: *'arbèh*. We meet it in the fifth line of vs. 15 and the first line of vs. 17. Again A.V. and R.S.V. are consistent in their translations, the former by "locusts", the latter by "grasshoppers". Then, there is yet a third word: *gôb gôbaj*, which we meet in the second line of vs. 17 and in one more place: Amos 7:1. A.V. renders "the great grasshopper"; R.S.V. "clouds of locusts".

As far as a further specification is concerned, scholars wonder whether it is biological species that are meant here or, which is possible too, the various stages in the life of just one species, which is a well-known phenomenon with insects. I mean the so-called metamorphosis by which the insect concerned first passes through the phase of a larva (with butterflies: caterpillar), subsequently the phase of a pupa or nymph, a period of rest after which the developed insect breaks open its pupal

case. For a time they are not able to fly yet. With butterflies this stage lasts a very short time. In about an hour, they expand their wings. With locusts it is quite otherwise. The larva already, though smaller, in most respects looks like a full-grown specimen, but for the wings, which are only stubs. Yet the beast can move about and . . . do damage.

So some exegetes like to consider the *jèlèq* as a larva and the *'arbèh* as the full-grown locust - that is able to fly, the notorious migratory locust, moving on in swarms which may attain a breadth of three miles and a depth of half a mile at times. The disaster they bring in their train is painted in vivid, or rather, dark colours in the Bible. I just mention the book of Joel, the first chapters.

Again the prophet, just as in vs. 14, summons the Ninevites to new efforts: "Multiply yourselves". Vs. 16 embroiders on the theme: "You increased your merchants more than the stars of heaven". We are confronted here with another aspect of Nineveh, namely as centre of trade. We saw this quality come into the picture already in vs. 4, playing a part in her charms, in her selling the nations. Situated at the Tigris river, just at the point where east (Persia) and west (Greece) and also north (Asia Minor) and south (Babylonia) meet together, it was predestined to become a centre of trade, with Assyria's army contributing to its having conquered countries and consuming markets as well.

And now a third feature borrowed from the habits of the locusts is brought into the fore. I prefer R.S.V. here as very applicable: "The locust spreads its wings and flies away". "This probably refers to the final emergence of the locust from the pupa-stage, at which time it casts off the membraneous sheaths which have thus far confined its wings, rises into the air and flies away" (Powis Smith). However, Dr. Bruijfel - in his book *Bijbel en natuur* is right in stating that with locusts a pupa-stage cannot be spoken of, strictly speaking.

So we've come across three habits of the locusts: their devouring; the way they multiply; their sudden disappearing. In addition to the last characteristic, vs. 17 brings out a nice example of the behaviour of the locusts. I'm not going to digress upon the subject of the two sorts of officials denoted by A.V. as "crowned"

and "captains", by R.S.V. as "princes" and "scribes" or "marshal" in a footnote. The first word we meet only once, the second two times in the Bible. Jer. 51:27 is the other instance. Whether government officials or sacred officials are meant is hard to find out. Some relate the second category, the *tafserim*, to a Babylonian word *tupsârru*, meaning "tablet-writer", one writing on a clay-tablet, from whence they come to: "official for recruiting". Be that as it may, it is their mass, their multitude that is the point at issue now. And from that angle they have been compared with a locust becoming full-grown, spreading its wings. In vs. 17 it is a swarm, a cloud of locusts that is spoken of. The word *gôb gôbaj* points in that direction. In cold weather the locust swarms creep into the cavities of the rough stone walls. Innumerable locusts gather like an enemy in its camp; they lie quietly during the night and the cold morning, until the sun rises and the whole swarm "flies away", disappears, no one knows whereto. Again the sudden and complete disappearance to places unknown is the point of comparison. The expression has much in common with Psalm 103:16 and Job 7:10; however, the intention is just the opposite, i.e. the plant of Psalm 103 is gone, decayed on the very spot, but as for the locusts, nobody knows where they ended up. They vanished into space. What is Nineveh's doom, is a comforting message for the subdued peoples, especially for GOD's chosen people that has learned the glad tidings from the mouth of His prophet or by reading the book of his vision (cp. ch. 1:1). The Assyrian officials that have come in the train of the occupying forces will vanish from sight. And that because of the LORD's intervention against the oppressor, in behalf of His people. Let us not forget YAHWEH, the LORD of hosts. It was He who sent the armies marching irresistibly through the Assyrian territories to lay siege to Nineveh herself.

(8) YOUR SHEPHERDS ARE ASLEEP, O KING OF ASSYRIA; YOUR NOBLES SLUMBER. YOUR PEOPLE ARE SCATTERED ON THE MOUNTAINS WITH NONE TO GATHER THEM.

(19) THERE IS NO ASSUAGING YOUR HURT, YOUR WOUND IS GRIEVOUS. ALL WHO HEAR THE



NEWS OF YOU CLAP THEIR HANDS  
OVER YOU. FOR UPON WHOM HAS  
NOT COME YOUR INCEASING EVIL?

In the last two verses he rounds off his prediction with a satirical song, a funeral song for the Assyrian king, striking a plaintive note. The closing of ch. 3 has some similarity with that of ch. 2. The prophet pauses for a moment, dwelling on the fact how it will be when his prophecy is fulfilled.

It is the king of Assyria that is addressed here. Not the last historical king of that kingdom, but a rhetorical personification of the holder of the imperial power of Assyria. His "shepherds" and "nobles" are the princes and great men upon whom the government and defence of the kingdom devolved. "To slumber", "to sleep", is not a figurative expression for care-

lessness and inactivity, but denotes the sleep of death, as in Ps. 76:5. And consequently his people is scattered upon the mountains like sheep that have no shepherd to gather them - and they will never have one anymore. The people has played its role in history.

And for the last time (vs. 19) in his picturesque, moving way of presenting the fate of Nineveh Nahum brings out into full relief that once it will come true what he had proclaimed from the very outset: The LORD is a jealous and avenging GOD. That basically is why there can be no assuaging of Nineveh's wound. So grievous, so mortal is her wound. Nor has he mourners, for the news of his overthrow is everywhere greeted with rejoicing (cp. France in 1813. Germany

and Japan in 1945). For there is no nation that was not constantly harassed and oppressed by wicked Nineveh.

Especially those last words are touching, moving. "For upon whom hath not thy wickedness passed continually?" I hear in the verb the idea of the peoples and of that one people Israel being run over and knocked down by the Assyrian chariots - a sea of blood, a sea of troubles, a flood of tears, turned into gladness. For YAHWEH is a jealous and avenging GOD, not leaving unpunished the wicked, intervening in the history of the peoples, and so: of his chosen people. And to bring this consolatory message, Nahum - which means: the consolatory one - was called.

H.M. OHMANN

## OUR COVER

[Canadian Scene] - From the beginning, the life of Canada has flowed mainly down two rivers - the St. Lawrence in the east and the Fraser in the west. The first is well known to Canadians, but the second is known to most Canadians only as a ragged line on the map, even although it has been as important to British Columbia as the St. Lawrence has been to Quebec.

The Fraser is a Canadian river. All of its waters move through Canadian territory. Those who have seen it agree that of all the great rivers of the world, none is as savage as this one, none flows in such a rough terrain, and none is more beautiful. But in his book, *The Fraser*, Bruce Hutchison observed that the beauty of the most spectacular parts is that of a nightmare.

The river rises in two small branches fed by Mount Robson's glacier in the wilderness of the northern Rockies, some 300 miles north of the American border. It is 850 miles long without its vast mesh of tributaries [100 miles longer than the Rhine] and it drains two mountain ranges and 91,000 square miles of land, more than the area of many great nations, nearly twice the entire space of New York State. It flows with cataract force for more than 600 miles in a course the shape of the letter S.

Its journey begins by heading northwest in a wide curve, along the Rocky Mountain trench. After about 200 miles, the turbulent waters meet the northern spur of the Cariboo Mountains, sweep around them, and plunge directly south. Its channel is cut out of the rock and it roars on for 400 miles down to the town of Hope. Here it breaks out of the canyon, creating one of the most dramatic spectacles in Canada. Within a distance of one mile, the entire

character of the river changes and the stream is calm, as it winds slowly through a serene farming valley. Before the Pacific receives it, the Fraser leaves a reminder - the dirty yellow silt it has torn out of the mountains stains the clean Georgia Strait.

"This river was navigated - at least most of it was - by human beings in canoes of the North West Company," says Hugh MacLennan in his book *The Seven Rivers of Canada*, "and of all the facts connected with the Fraser, this single one is the most impressive to anyone who knows the region . . . Simon Fraser's was the most terrible and wonderful inland voyage in the history of North America. Tiny in their birch bark canoes, the voyageurs stared up thousands of feet at the walls of the canyon. The river roared so loud that they could not hear each other speak . . . when they watched the walls of the canyon flashing past, they must have realized that no canoe, for that matter no ship hitherto built, had ever travelled at such speed and survived. They were spun like tops in the whirlpool, and when backwashes swept them ashore, they portaged over cliffs thousands of feet high, crawling sideways with their packs along the cliffs. Somehow they got through and lower down they bought Indian dugouts and so reached the ocean." In his journal, Fraser recorded: "I have been for a long period in the Rocky Mountains, but have never seen anything like this country. It is so wild I cannot find words to describe it. We have to pass where no human being should venture . . ."

[Our cover photo, provided by the Photographic Branch of the British Columbia Department of Travel Industry, shows the Fraser Canyon near Yale.]

## 45th Wedding Anniversary



Mr. and Mrs. G. Tenhage of Guelph, during the celebration of their 45th wedding anniversary on Saturday, May 4, 1974.

## news medley

Again there is happiness with a few families because the parents, grandparents, maybe great-grandparents in some instances, are allowed to celebrate a wedding anniversary. We are to mention two of them in this Medley. There are in the first place brother and sister K. Vander Velde of Hamilton, who will celebrate their fiftieth wedding anniversary on May 22. They may be assured that the whole Family is happy with them and we wish them also on their further pathway the blessing of the Lord. I wrote that they are of Hamilton, for if I had said Stoney Creek, the Edmontonians might have thought that I was referring to a couple from their midst. Ten years after the above couple, brother and sister H. Kiefe of Toronto were married and now celebrate their fortieth wedding anniversary. Also to them we extend our heartfelt congratulations. It is a blessing when our gracious God leaves husband and wife together for so many years.

Since we are in Ontario with our thoughts, we may as well stay there for a little while. The Hamilton Consistory adopted a proposal from the Committee of Administration to build a parsonage beside the Church building. It did not say whether they already own sufficient property alongside that on which the Church building stands or are planning to purchase a lot there. In the Hamilton bulletin the undersigned was mentioned as being of Guelph. However, he did not move from the one "Royal City" (New Westminster) to the other (Guelph); he resides and is a minister in the more rural community of Fergus. But what is twelve miles in our situation in this great country?

In the Smithville Consistory they discussed the question whether the holy supper should be celebrated every other month instead of once every three months, as is the case right now. It was decided to discuss this first with the Congregation. In the question period, the Deacons

informed the Consistory that they would have a meeting with the Congregation to discuss possible establishment of a home for the older brothers and sisters, respectively a nursing home. Meetings were held both in Lincoln and in Smithville.

And, to stay in Classis South for a while, in Grand Rapids the Consistory received a visit by two members of the Schoolboard with the request to cooperate in the plans of the Board. They received the reply that more information was needed before the Consistory could make any decision. In the same Congregation a paper drive was organized, the proceeds of which were for the school-to-be. The Consistory also discussed the question of buying radio time, but for the time being, due to the high costs, they decided to leave it.

As for the services: it was decided to drop one Dutch service and, starting September of this year, just to have one Dutch service per month. The Consistory further decided in principle to abolish the Church collections, a decision about which my feelings are well-known. I also liked it that a short telephone directory of the Congregation was enclosed with the bulletin (rather: the magazine, for **Pro Ecclesia** is not just a bulletin, but I hope that I shall not have to use it. If you have a spare address list . . . (This applies not only to Grand Rapids!)

Coming closer to home (my home) again, we stop for a while in Burlington East. There the Consistory had to proceed in two cases of Church discipline. That is a sad thing. It is not about that that I wish to say something; it would not be proper. There are, however, some elements in the remarks which accompany that information which I do not wish to withhold from our readers, while at the same time stating my own views in one point.

Let me give the literal text as found in the bulletin first:

"During the discussions two aspects come to the fore: 1. discipline ought to be an act of love, for the benefit of the member; therefore the whole congregation has to become involved by prayers for repentance and conversion; 2. a member who, though baptized, has not yet done profession of faith, cannot just 'withdraw' in case he/she has become a professed unbeliever. Such a member **was** incorporated into the church of Christ. Only by an act of the church (excommunication) his membership can be terminated. It stands to reason that such an excommunication will not take place until such a member has fully grown up. These were the reasons why the Synod 1971 adopted a special Form (see Book of Praise, pp. 519 ff.)."

A slight correction: It was the Synod 1968 which adopted the Form mentioned in the above quotation. Another slight correction: the **Acts** of Orangeville do not mention any reasons for adoption. Personal recollection plays a role in everything we say and write, but we should not assign to an ecclesiastical assembly what may have played a part but is not mentioned expressly in its decision.

Further: I even doubt it that the second reason did play a part in Orangeville's decision. (I mean: Synod Orangeville 1968; this to prevent confusion). I do not believe the second reason to be correct.

I am aware of it that there has been difference of opinion for as long as I can remember about the question

whether one can break with the Church by an act of one's own or whether Church-membership can be terminated only by a decision of the Consistory. There are among us those who have defended the thesis that only when a Consistory declares: "You are no longer a member of the Church," such a person ceases to be a member. If that were so indeed (I am of a different opinion) then it must apply not just to members who have not made profession of faith but also to those who did make it. Someone who was born in the Church and received the sacrament of holy baptism was not ingrafted into the Church by his profession of faith! If that were so, then, indeed, the second argument of Burlington would cut ice. No, he was a member right from his birth on. The **only** difference between a communicant member who breaks with the Church and a non-communicant member who does the same is, that the former made profession of faith and the latter not. If the latter cannot break with the Church, then the former cannot do this either, for it is not the profession of faith which makes one a Church member.

I am convinced that one can break with the Church, for Church membership is a voluntary thing. The sin of one who has made profession of faith is greater than of him who did not do that. But both have equally the "right" to declare that they no longer wish to belong to the Church. A Consistory can then not do anything but state that fact and declare that, as a result of that personal decision, the bond with the Bride of Christ has been cut. If the Consistory wishes to draw up and use a form in which the seriousness of such a decision and action is held before the Congregation and in which the Congregation is warned against slackening, that would have my wholehearted support. For some time we did have such a Form in the Church at Schiedam, the Netherlands, a Form which was patterned after the Form for the Excommunication and in which the Congregation was warned against such actions.

But to the question whether one who has not made profession of faith can only be excommunicated and cannot, by his own decision, break the bond with the Church, I answer: "He, as well as one who is a communicant member, can break by his own decision." He has, as it is so beautifully and correctly stated in the above-quoted paragraph, made the wrong profession: "he has become a professed unbeliever."

However, this is not an article, so let's continue. Burlington East also received a report from their organists concerning the health of the Organ. Repairs are suggested which will cost an amount about twice the figure of the original purchase price! Don't get nervous: they paid only \$3,000.00 for it many years ago! Now another "drive" is suggested, since the budget did not provide any amounts of this magnitude to lengthen the organ's endurance. We'll keep you posted.

The neighbouring Church at Burlington West is busy selling bonds. They have sold thus far for an amount of \$50,000, which is almost half of what they hope to achieve. The goal is an issue of \$120,000. The bonds will mature from 1975-1994, and an interest rate of 7½% will apply. I thought that I had better mention that; there may be Church members here or there who would be able and willing or maybe even desirous to purchase some. And if you live till 1994 you'll get your money back. If you don't live that long, you'll not have lost anything.

Yes, we have to leave Ontario, but as a last piece of information I can tell you that the Guelph Church intends

## 45th Wedding Anniversary



*Mr. and Mrs. H. Idema (nee VanderVeen) hope to celebrate their 45th wedding anniversary on, the Lord willing, May 16, 1974. They started their married life in Buitenpost, the Netherlands and later on lived in Groningen until they emigrated to Canada in 1959 with as destination Houston, B.C.*

*Mr. Idema found work at a saw mill in Houston. In May 1965 they moved to Hope, B.C. where Mr. was employed as baker until their move to Cloverdale, B.C. Both are still in good health and enjoying their retirement. They received three children and 18 grandchildren, which all live in beautiful B.C.*

*May the Lord grant them many more years together under His blessing.*

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to use their "new" building for the first time on Sunday, June 2.

Edmonton's bulletin contains an interesting piece about Immanuel Velikovsky. You know his name and books, I hope (f.i. **Earth in Upheaval**). This man will receive an honorary doctor's degree from the University of Lethbridge. Whatever the ultimate scientific value of his works and stand may be, it is certainly interesting to take note of them.

Since I quoted already from one bulletin, I may as well do it for the second time in this Medley. (You see that the end of the postal walkout brought us some benefits.) The Edmonton Consistory namely took a decision which follows here:

"A proposal was accepted by the Consistory that when a child is baptized the parents who present their child for baptism may take some or all of their other children along to the baptismal font. We do not approve of the custom as sometimes found somewhere else that all the children of the congregation are invited to come to the fore; baptism is administered before the whole congregation and not especially in front of children. When however the parents come forward to present their child the whole family may feel involved in particular. Besides, also for practical reasons some parents may prefer to take their little ones with them instead of leaving them in the pew. Of course parents are free in this."

I would say that the very same reasons which Edmonton mentions why not **all** children are invited to come forward also apply to the family of which a child is baptized. Surely, it happened many a time that a little one

came with the parents to the baptismal font. But in the first place I cannot see why a special Consistory decision is necessary for that, and in the second place I think that we should not, by such a decision, encourage it that parents take all their children along. By baptism a child is openly ingrafted, not into a family - then all the members of the family should be close witnesses - but into the Church of Christ. There the family-bond has no prevalence over the bond as members of the Church. Parents and minister should stand there, that the whole Congregation can see baptism being administered. If a little one comes along with the parents, no objection. But that should be all. As soon as baptism has been administered, both parents and baby should return to their pew or chair, lest it become a demonstration.

Going north, we reach Neerlandia, which is now without a minister of the Gospel, so that Rev. DeJong will be somewhat busier, I guess; and a little to the West we find Barrhead. The Consistory there decided to buy the tape-recorder which they had for a trial period, and to record all the sermons in services conducted by a minister. They further decided to buy another organ and are shopping around for it.

The **Church News** of the Fraser Valley contained quite some interesting material in the two issues which I received.

First the activities of ladies' auxiliaries and so on. When I say "and so on" I mean the help the ladies receive from their loyal spouses. Which, on the other hand, is not meant to take away any of the praise and honour due to the ladies of their constant efforts.

On May 16 and 17 the ladies had a stand in the Guildford Shopping Center (for Ontario members: somewhat comparable to the Bramalea Shopping Center) and on May 3rd a dinner. As for the latter, we read the exhortation, "Let's make this a gala affair, ladies wear your long gowns if you wish, gentlemen, your nicest outfit." I think that I would have worn my gown, for that is my nicest outfit; it also covers any irregularities which might be found in the rest of my clothing, although my wife sees to it that there are no irregularities when I start wearing it in the morning. Maybe, for I have a black jacket with shiny lapels, but that is more than twenty years old, I would have put on bowtie plus accompanying accessories. Now, don't think that I wish to ridicule our ladies; they know me better than that. I am just in the mood for the above remarks, you see.

The Rev. J. Mulder was requested to address the occupants of an Old Age Home in Cloverdale on Easter Sunday in the evening. The Choir also participated in this. It will have been greatly appreciated, I am convinced.

Rev. Mulder also makes some remarks about the new Yearbook. He noted that the total membership of the Churches has increased by 58. Considering the number of births alone, he calls this in fact a decrease, and he is right. Yet, with him, I do not believe that the membership has increased by only 58. The reason is, of course, that some Churches were slack in providing the necessary information or some clerks too lazy to figure it out. Rev. Mulder mentions one Church whose membership (at least according to the Yearbook) has remained at exactly the same number now for three years in a row!! But what can a publisher do when no new information reaches him? The only thing he can do is just take the latest available figure. But it is unfair of those Churches, for the costs of Church

Federation, for Mission, for the Theological College, and for other purposes, are calculated on the basis of membership!! Thus other Churches, that give the correct number, pay for those who just sit down and leave things as they are. As, within a Congregation, those who give no or very little contribution let others pay for them. It should not be like that in the Church of Christ. Noblesse oblige!

Cloverdale also decided to install folding doors and have the "walls partly carpeted to make the big basement room usable for children from 1-3 years of age." Why the walls have to be partly carpeted for that purpose, is a riddle to me. But then, there is so much in this world (and in the Church) that I don't understand.

New Westminster instructed the building committee to aim for a building with a seating capacity of some 450. That is too big, in my opinion. Generally speaking, a seating capacity of 450 would require a Congregation of some 600 members to fill it to capacity. And such a Congregation, I think, is too large for one minister. Besides, then people hardly know each other. Maybe I am mistaken, and the future will show.

Our readers will recall that there was a request at the New Westminster Consistory to have a separate Church instituted in the Greater Vancouver Area, once the Church building would have been replaced by the new one in Surrey. The Consistory declined that request. However, several members appealed to Classis, and the following decision was made:

"That the council of the Church at New Westminster consider, upon implementation of their plan to relocate their church building, to provide a sectional meeting place in the Greater Vancouver Area, until such a time that upon growth this section may become an independent Church or on decline discontinuation of this section becomes mandatory."

The Rev. M. Van Beveren is not very happy with the above decision. He writes about it in the **Church News**. I do not wish to speak about what he writes concerning the **contents** of the above decision. I wish to draw attention to just one point, for here I see a danger, a danger which I saw become reality, and a destructive reality, in the Netherlands in the early fifties: the making of a connection between articles 30 and 31 of the Church Order. First a quotation:

"The procedure to deal with an appeal at a major ecclesiastical assembly is very simple. Although our Church Order does not have many articles about appeals, the essentials of the procedure are very clear. (Art. 30, 31, 36, 84)."

It is incorrect to state that our Church Order has more than one article about appeals. It has only ONE article about that: Article 31. The articles 30 and 31 should most certainly not be mentioned in one breath. They deal with totally different matters. I do not wish to give an impression, of course, as if an ecclesiastical assembly is free to deal with an appeal in a non-ecclesiastical manner. But neither should the impression be given as if the articles 30 and 31 deal with the same matter. They do not.

As for the rest, we shall have to wait for further information if we wish to say a wise word about the issue itself. And if one cannot say wise words, why say anything at all? I am at the end of my wisdom for this time. That's why I quit for now. Thank you.

vO

# Recommended to His Grace (1)

*"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."*

[*Revelation 22:21*].

## IN NEED OF GRACE

This is the very last verse of the last Bible book, the book of Revelation, and as such the last verse of the whole Bible.

It is a nice one.

This may become apparent when we read it in the light of the previous lines, verse 20: "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely, I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

In our articles on "The Coming of the Lord according to the book of Revelation" we amply dealt with the coming of the Lord Jesus. We may repeat the final words of these articles to prove that we came to the conclusion that we badly need the grace of the Lord Jesus. We wrote this:

"We need the forgiveness of our sins in His blood, because time and again we are inclined to lose our first love and no longer see the dividing lines, and do not enough realize the great privilege of possessing the Word of God and being a Church of the Lord Jesus.

"We need also the grace of the renewal of our heart and life through the Spirit of Christ. These two go together all through our Heidelberg Catechism.

"It is God's grace that has to keep us going. To this grace we are recommended in the final words of the books of Revelation."

Yes indeed, we need this grace of our Lord, because He is coming. He is coming, not only on the last day, for the great judgment, the final covenant ordeal. But He has come and is coming time and again to arrange such a covenant ordeal, as we have seen from the respective places in the book of Revelation which inform us about a coming of Christ.

Therefore it's so nice that the very last verse of this great last Bible book contains the strong assurance: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all!

It is so great that the very last verse of the whole Bible is a benedic-

tion, a strong encouragement, a firm assurance.

This is, however, not the only place in the Bible where we find such a benediction.

In Acts 20:32 we read that the apostle Paul, when he addressed the elders of the Church of Ephesus on the beach of Miletus in a farewell speech, commended them to God and to the Word of His grace.

At an earlier time he was addressed in the same way, even more than once. For when he, together with Barnabas his companion, was sent out from Antioch by the congregation to preach the Gospel elsewhere, he was commended to the grace of God for the work which they would fulfil (Acts 14:26). And when he was sent out for the second time, now together with Silas, he was again "recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God" (Acts 15:40). The same apostle Paul at the end of his epistles does the same thing time and again. We hear them: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all", or: "be with your spirit"; or with a longer formulation: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all."

Whatever he says or writes, it is always the same: he does not let his readers or hearers go unless he first has commended them to the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The apostle John, at the end of the last book of the Bible, does the same thing. The readers of this majestic book have heard about the great things which are at hand and will happen soon. The Lord is coming! He will judge according to the lines of the covenant! Well, it is a great thing that he adds to the documentation of the revelation which was given to him this recommendation: he commends them to the grace of the Saviour.

## GREAT IS THIS GRACE

This grace is good and great, not only because it indeed includes the forgiveness of our sins and shortcomings, but also because it is directed towards a specific thing.

When we are recommended to the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, then this has a certain goal or aim.

Remember that the apostle Paul and Barnabas, his companion, were

recommended to God and to the Word of His grace - but that it was added: for the work which they had to fulfil.

Paul needed this grace because of the work which he had to do, and that was very difficult, as he tells us later on.

In the same way we must also read his epistles when he, at the end, recommends his readers to the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. For in these epistles he issued all sorts of admonitions and exhortations. They, the Christians, had to show a truly Christian way of life. The Christian Church has to be a light in the midst of the world and to show this in its way of life.

His recommending them to the grace of the Lord is as it were traditional. Time and again he wants them to show that they are true and living Christians. This recommendation is directed to the work which they have to do.

## OUR WORKS

Here in the last verse of the Bible it is exactly the same.

For the question: Whereto is this whole wonderful book directed? What does it aim at? can be answered by saying: It is aimed at their works, the works of the congregation concerned, the works of the readers.

The great covenant judgment will be on them, says chapter 22, verse 12: "Behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be." We may remember that the works of the seven congregations play an important role in the seven messages of chapters 2 and 3. No less than seven times we find there the sentence: "I know thy works."

Christ knows everything about us. He knows what we are doing. He knows also what we are not doing but should do. He knows all about His whole Church, all about every individual Christian.

He knows our works, whether we persevere or not, whether we clearly see the dividing lines between the true Gospel and the false messianic ideals and ideas of these days. He knows whether we are inclined to compromise, or not.

When we are recommended to the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ at the end of the book of Revelations, then this is directed to this particular point, this aim.

G. VAN RONGEN [Pro Ecclesia]

# Proposal Concerning Solemnization of Marriage

*A proposal of the Church of Hamilton in the form in which it has been taken over by Classis Ontario South of March 13, 1974.*

## I. TOPIC

General Synod Homewood-Carman 1954 decided "that the maintaining of article 70 of the church order shall be to the discretion of the churches." (Acts, Art. 74). The Classis of Ontario South of March 13, 1974, would like to have this decision rescinded by General Synod Toronto 1974.

## II. CONSIDERATIONS

1. General Synod Homewood-Carman 1954, art. 74, decided "that the maintaining of article 70 of the church order shall be to the discretion of the churches". The draft translation of the church order remarks that "the observance of this article is left in the freedom of the churches" (Acts of Orangeville, 1968, p. 125). The Classis of Ontario-South of March 13, 1974, is of the opinion that an article of the church order *either* is to be maintained by all the churches in the confederation *or* is to be removed (or replaced).

The decision of Homewood-Carman 1954 created an ambiguous situation.

2. The result of this decision has been a wide variety of different practices in our church life with respect to the solemnization of marriages. Ministers of our Canadian Reformed Churches may act in a completely different manner. The one may solemnize only marriages of members of a Can. Ref. Church; the other may restrict the use of his marriage license to marriages of *confessing* members of a Can. Ref. Church. A third minister may use his licence in order to solemnize a marriage of a couple of which *one* of the partners is a member of a Can. Ref. Church, while a fourth minister may even officiate - be it not in the way of banns - at marriages of persons who *both* will not belong (or will not belong anymore) to a Can. Ref. Church. Even in cases that both partners are members of a Can. Ref. Church, the possibility exists that in certain circumstances a minister advises them that he will solemnize their marriage by license rather than by banns.

While the marriage license has been given to a minister in his capacity of a minister of a Canadian Reformed Church, this church does not seem to have any control of the way in which her minister makes use of his marriage license.

The question rises whether this is in agreement with the *consideration* of Homewood-Carman 1954 "that several ministers, by virtue of the license given to them to contract a marriage, have the possibility of contracting the marriage of *members of the congregation* (emphasis ours) under invocation of the name of the Lord".

But the question also arises whether the *decision* "that the maintaining of article 70 of the church order shall be to the discretion of the churches" has not given occasion to the widespread growth of several, different and conflicting practices.

3. The same variety is noticeable in the matter of the use of Forms for the solemnization of marriage. In the one case the Form is used that can be found in our Book of Praise, pp. 539 ff. If the banns are used, the question remains what the content is of the sentence, "If no lawful objection is brought forward, the ceremony will take place, the Lord willing . . ." Is the solemnization of marriage under the supervision of the consistory, or not? If the answer is affirmative, why is the consistory no longer officially represented at such a solemnization? Often the Form of the Book of Praise is altered, e.g. certain elements are added. In other cases another Form is used, or a combination of elements from several Forms. Is it right that ministers of the Canadian Reformed Churches regard this matter as a completely private thing?

Has the result of the decision "that the maintaining of art. 70 of the church order shall be to the discretion of the churches" not been that the matter in this respect has been left to the discretion, not of the churches but of the *ministers*?

4. Synod Homewood-Carman considered "that it cannot be proven from the Word of God, that it is proper that the blessing on the matrimonial state be asked from the Lord in the presence of Christ's Church, or that it is proper that the matrimonial state be confirmed in the presence of Christ's Church".

With respect to this consideration we make the following remarks:

a. In the life of the congregation of Christ there are several rules which are not explicitly prescribed in Holy Scripture but which, nevertheless, are subservient to maintaining good order in the Church of Christ (art. 1. C.O.). Especially in the part of the church order dealing with sacraments and other ceremonies (art. 56-70) we find several stipulations that cannot directly be proven from the Word of God.

b. The church order used the expression that "it is *proper* that the matrimonial state be confirmed before Christ's Church". It does not say, as e.g. in art. 72, that it is "the rule clearly prescribed by Christ . . .", but it simply states that it is proper. In such a case it would have been the task of Synod Homewood-Carman to prove that it is *not* proper to confirm the matrimonial state before Christ's Church.

c. Art. 70 simply stated "that the matrimonial state be confirmed *before* Christ's Church". Synod Homewood-Carman enlarged the wording by its consideration that it cannot be proven that this state be confirmed "*in the presence of Christ's Church*". This enlargement was incorrect, in as far as this wording might change the significance of the original expression. It could give the impression that, according to art. 70 C.O., *the whole congregation* would have to be present in order to make a solemnization of marriage a solemnization *before* Christ's Church.

d. Positively speaking, we defend that it can be proven from the Word of God that it is *proper* that the matrimonial state be confirmed before Christ's Church.

First of all, we think of the comparison the apostle Paul draws between husband and wife on the one hand and Christ and His congregation on the other hand (Eph. 5:21-33). In the line of the covenant relationship between the LORD and His people under the Old Dispensation, time and again proclaimed by the prophets in the image of bridegroom and bride, of husband and wife, the apostle Paul shows us the unity of husband and wife in reference to the unity of Christ and His Church. He also warns: do not be mismatched with unbelievers (2 Cor. 6:14).

The Word of God teaches that our marriage must be a marriage "in the Lord". A christian marriage presupposes that husband and wife "are joint heirs of the grace of life" (1 Peter 3:7). The prayer of our Form rightly calls them "co-heirs of the covenant", and includes the petition that they may bring up their children "in the fear of the Lord, to the honour of Thy Holy Name, to the edification of Thy Church and to the propagation of Thy holy gospel".

The Church of Christ is directly involved because infants "are inclu-



ded in the covenant and Church of God", and "by baptism, as a sign of the covenant, must be ingrafted into the christian Church" (H.C., A. 74).

It is appropriate, then, that the Church of Christ:

1. officially proclaim the Word of God at the solemnization of the marriage of two of her members;
2. officially inquire whether bridegroom and bride intend to live as a pious and faithful husband and wife are bound to do according to the holy gospel;
3. officially call upon the Name of the LORD;
4. and officially bless husband and wife in the Name of the God of the Covenant.

It is part of the good order that ought to be maintained in the Church, that a marriage is officially registered by the congregation of Christ as a marriage in the Lord.

5. A reinstatement of art. 70 C.O. will serve as a good pastoral reminder for the Can. Ref. Churches and especially for its young members, that a marriage has to be a marriage in the Lord, to the honour of God's Name, and to the edification of His Church.

Though it by no means has been the intention of the decision of Homewood-Carman to weaken the consciousness about the character of the holy state of marriage, the question may be asked whether the widespread variety in practices, described under the points 2 and 3, has not contributed to such a weakening of Reformed consciousness.

6. Art. 70 C.O. has a historical background. Historically speaking, there were two phases: marriage was agreed upon (gesloten) in the family relationships and confirmed (bevestigd) before Christ's Church. However, the word 'confirmed' has often been interpreted to mean that the Church of Christ approves the action of the government, namely, that the government officially contracts the marriage.

Therefore, the classis proposes to use the term 'solemnize'. This would clear away any confusion concerning the word 'confirmed', which originally meant what we mean by 'solemnize' today.

### III. PROPOSAL

On the basis of the above mentioned considerations the Classis of Ontario-South, held March 13, 1974, proposes that the Regional Synod of Ontario 1974 decide to send an overture to General Synod Toronto 1974: to rescind the decision of General Synod Homewood-Carman 1954, Art. 74, and so not to leave the observance of art. 70 of the church order in the freedom of the churches, and, further, to revise the wording of Art. 70 C.O. by replacing 'confirmed' by 'solemnized'.

## Press Release

*Classis Pacific, held at Abbotsford, B.C., April 17, 1974.*

1. Rev. M. VanderWel, opens the meeting on behalf of the convening church at Abbotsford, B.C.; he requests the singing of Ps. 66:1, 4, reads Revelation 3:7-22 and leads in prayer.

2. The credentials are examined and the churches of Classis Pacific are properly represented. The church at Chilliwack has an instruction.

3. Classis is constituted. Rev. M. VanderWel, chairman; Rev. M. van Beveren, clerk; Rev. J. Mulder, vice-chairman.

4. The provisional agenda is adopted.

5. The church at Chilliwack proposes via an instruction "that all matters which are voted upon by the classis, whether they be adopted or rejected, be 'verbatim' included in the Acts." Adopted.

6. The church at New Westminster sent a provisional agenda of the Regional Synod to be held May 8, 1974. This agenda is taken note of.

7. The following communications are read:

a. Letter (with enclosures) dated April 15, 1974 from the br. G.D., K.S., W.V. of the New Westminster church, in which they appeal a decision of the council of the church at New Westminster taken March 21, 1974, "not to grant the request to maintain a congregation in the New Westminster/Burnaby area and give assistance in that endeavour." Council judged that "in the light of present developments, and seeing the number of families/members who have signed the request, a separate congregation is not warranted."

The brethren request classis to declare council's decision unjustified and "to suggest to both parties to search for an earnest and brotherly solution acceptable to all."

b. A letter of appeal (with enclosures) dated April 9, 1974 of br. and sr. W.E. pertaining to the same matter.

c. A letter of appeal (with enclosures) dated April 15, 1974 of the br. C.d.J., T.J.H., A.K., L.T., J.V., also pertaining to this matter.

After ample discussion the following decision is taken: Classis Pacific having taken notice of the appeals made to her by a. the br. G.D., K.S., W.V.; b. br. and sr. W.E.; c. the br. C.d.J., T.J.H., A.K., L.T., J.V., against the decision of the council of the church at New Westminster to relocate the churchbuilding to the Surrey-Delta area, decides to pronounce, that the council of the

church at New Westminster consider, upon implementation of their plan to relocate their churchbuilding, to provide a sectional meeting place in the greater Vancouver area, until such a time, that upon growth this section may become an independent church or on decline discontinuation of this section becomes mandatory.

Ground: To safeguard that the public worship be not prematurely removed from the greater Vancouver area.

According to art. 33 C.O. the delegates of the church at New Westminster did not take part in the voting.

8. Rev. J. Mulder reports on his representation of classis at the installation of Rev. J. van Rietschoten as minister of the church at Smithers, B.C.

9. During the question period ad art. 41 C.O. the church at Smithers asks and receives advice in disciplinary matters.

10. Appointments of deputies made by the classis of April 11, 1973 (Acts, art. 11), are maintained by this classis.

The appointments of the Rev. J. van Rietschoten as counselor of the church at Houston and the Rev. M. VanderWel as counselor of the church at Chilliwack by the previous classis, are also maintained.

11. The church at Chilliwack requests to receive as classical appointments each month four services equally divided over the three ministers in the Fraser Valley. Granted. The following schedule is adopted: May: Revs. Mulder and van Beveren; June: Revs. VanderWel and Mulder; July: Revs. van Beveren and VanderWel; August: Revs. Mulder and van Beveren; Sept: Revs. VanderWel and Mulder; Oct.: Revs. van Beveren and VanderWel; Nov.: Revs. Mulder and van Beveren.

12. The church at Chilliwack is convening church for the next classis which will be held D.V. October 9, 1974 at 9:30 a.m.

13. No censure according to art. 43 C.O. was necessary.

14. The Acts and Press Release were read and adopted

After the singing of Ps. 147:1 the meeting was closed by the chairman and Rev. Mulder led in thanksgiving.

For the classis,  
J. Mulder, vice-chairman.

#### CORRECTION

On the front cover of May 4th, 1974 issue, Volume 23 #8, it should have read Volume 23 #9.

## Letter-to-the-Editor

Here follow two letters to the Editor which we publish by way of exception.

A "Letter to the Editor" is a "single" matter; it is not an article to which other readers are invited to react, with a rebuttal, etc. One writes a Letter to the Editor, the Editor writes a comment or publishes it without comment and that is it, generally, speaking. Previously, before C.R.M. became *Clarion*, it did happen that such letters were attacked, which was followed by a defense, upon which another attack was launched. That was possible because the column was called "Readers' Views and Voices". We shall not follow this practice. That is the reason why we stated: "By way of exception".

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Editor:

In *Clarion* of April 6 I read among other articles also a letter to the Editor from a brother in Edmonton, H.L. Stel. This brother expressed the hope that his letter be published in *Clarion*. His hope was fulfilled. So do I hope that *this* letter be published in *Clarion*, because this brother puts

## Church News

Called by the Free Reformed Church at Launceston, Tasmania, Australia: REV. W. HUIZINGA of London and Watford.

\*\*\*\*\*

Called by the Church at Hamilton: Rev. W.W.J. VANOENE of Fergus.

\*\*\*\*\*

### THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

The Faculty of the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Church invites students who obtain their B.A. degree or its equivalent this spring or who are eligible for admission via the admission examination to contact the Registrar with a view to the requirements for application.

Students who graduate from Highschool and are considering to study theology after completion of an undergraduate program are also requested to contact the Registrar to be advised as to the B.A. program which forms the best preparation for their future study at the College.

The Registrar, L. Selles,  
374 Queen St. S.  
Hamilton, Ont. L8P 3T8

part of the congregation of Edmonton in a bad light, to put it mildly, and this has to be corrected before more damage will be done.

In the first part this brother writes that "the school that this Society supports was instituted by the Christian Reformed Church." Of course this is not true, this was done by very concerned parents who did not like to see their children attend the public schools, for reasons known to all of us. But I can forgive this brother this oversight. But when he goes on by writing "that this Society has pulled a number of people of the Canadian Reformed Church with them to support this General Christian School", etc., then I strongly object. This is plain slander of the worst form!

I am one of the parents who send my children (5 at present) to the schools operated by the Edmonton Society for Christian Education. I am not and was not pulled along by any one. I and my wife have decided for ourselves, without any advice from anybody, to join the Edmonton Society for Christian Education, years before our children even enrolled, simply because we could not see any other choice if we wanted education for our children in accordance with what we promised before the Lord and the congregation at baptism. And up to this day we have never had any regret that we did enroll our children in the Christian Schools. It has been and still is a great blessing from the Lord that this possibility exists in Edmonton!

Therefore the slander that *Clarion* has published on request of this brother has to be corrected publicly, because not only my wife and I but many more parents who have children attending one of the 4 Christian Schools in Edmonton are very grieved by these statements, published in *Clarion*. It puts them in the "suckers" line, easy going, the way of least resistance, going along with the big majority. And that definitely is not true. We all have struggled very much with this education matter, we voluntarily have decided to sacrifice and pay for the education that God wants our children to receive. This also brings me to the next statement of this brother in *Clarion*: "General Christian Schools". This again is slander of the worst form, that a person does not expect in a publication of Churches that call themselves the true church.

The basis of the Edmonton Society is the Word of God, as also explained in the 3 Forms of Unity. Attempts to change this basis have failed, maybe also through the influence of 2 brothers of the Canadian Reformed Church, who have served

terms in the board of the Society, maybe also through the involvement of the Canadian Reformed Society for the Advancement of Christian Education, which society has spent several hours on this matter. Two brothers of the congregation have held teaching positions in one of the schools, and I can assure you that these brothers would not have kept these positions if the Society would have been watered down to "General Christian Schools".

At the present time I myself serve as boardmember, together with a sister of our congregation. We also have put a lot of time and energy into the work involved and we both fully agree that we have experienced that this Society strives after giving education to the children of the covenant in complete conformity of God's Word and the 3 Forms of Unity. And therefore it really hurts to read in *Clarion* that a brother from Edmonton calls the schools operated by this Society "General Christian Schools".

This brother, along with everyone in Edmonton's congregation, has been invited time and again to investigate this school system. They have been invited to visit the schools, to attend board and committee meetings, general meetings, etc. But *none* of them ever showed their face! Yet they are ready with their judgment, as also br. H.L. Stel proves in his writings and statements.

I think it is high time that we go about these things a little more in the line of an article of Rev. G. Van Dooren in the same issue of *Clarion*, instead of making things look worse in Edmonton, for all who read *Clarion* than they in fact are. Therefore my urgent request to publish this letter in the next issue.

A very concerned brother,  
J. Leffers  
Edmonton

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Editor:

I don't mean to bore you or your readers, but I do wish to react to some statements made by you and the publisher of the *Clarion*, dated April 6th, 1974.

Referring back to my first letter to the *Clarion*, I didn't mention anything about the local situation here in Edmonton. From what I can see the local situation here, in Edmonton, doesn't show any influence in my letter. You stated that the question whether our own schools have been sufficiently supplied, has nothing to do with the basic point.

Didn't you as Editor state in the News Medley that the time has come to call our own teachers due to a shortage of them in our own schools? Getting back to my first letter, I made no mention that a church member teaching at a Public School or a General Christian School is commit-

ting a sin. I stated it like you did in the News Medley; isn't it their calling to teach in our schools first? You expressed in the *Clarion* which I shall state to you for your reference: "But that does not preclude the right of a publisher to include advertisements from others who desire to have our teachers"; isn't it a teachers duty to teach at our schools first and also the first duty of the publisher to help our schools? This is all I was referring too.

Now to the Publisher: He states that regarding an "ad" for a General Christian School in place of where there is no possible way at all for a Canadian Reformed School or even if there was a Canadian Reformed School, there shouldn't be any real objections brought forward. I didn't make any signs or any such statement at all in my first letter. The Publisher stated: "If we should now refuse such an ad we would interfere in the local situation in Edmonton, which we do not think is our calling and duty as publisher." The publisher doesn't seem to realize that by putting this "ad" in the *Clarion*, that he also is interfering in a local situation, not only here in Edmonton but

also where ever there is a shortage of teachers for our own schools.

Herman Stel  
Edmonton

\* \* \* \* \*

*Editor's Comment*

1. If Mr. Stel now states, "I did not mention anything about the local situation here in Edmonton", he should read his first Letter to the Editor again.

2. Putting ads in a paper does not constitute interference in local situations. Inserting ads is simply providing the medium through which employers and employees may find each other. It has nothing to do with local or national issues. A publisher should only then refuse ads in which employment is offered if he is convinced that the employment as such is of such a nature that a Church member would not be allowed to accept it.

3. In my "News Medley" I stated as my conviction that the "own" schools have priority. But whether those eligible for this employment heed my advice, that is their responsibility and decision.

4. This is the end of this "discussion". vO



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Ontario, Canada, N1M 2W7  
EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:  
Editor: W. W. J. VanOene  
Co-Editors: W. Helder, D. VanderBoom  
REGULAR CONTRIBUTORS:  
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W. Huizinga, P. Kingma, H. J. Ludwig,  
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**An Introduction To**

**CHRISTIAN LITERATURE (14)**

COMMENTARIES: GENERAL.

1. Calvin, J. *Calvin's New Testament Commentaries*. Edited by T. F. Torrance and D. W. Torrance. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans) 12 vols. \$79.25.

At last this newly translated Calvin series on the N.T. has been completed. It makes a splendid set, although, personally speaking, I think a church library would be better advised to first purchase some of the more up-to-date series (Hendriksen, New International Commentary, Tyndale). No commentary was completed by Calvin on the Johannine Epistles and Revelation.

2. Lenski, R.C.H. *Commentary on the New Testament*. (Minneapolis: Augsburg) 12 vols. 1933-46, \$75.00.

A good commentary series on the whole N.T. The author was Lutheran and so we differ with respect to the grace of God in salvation, especially in John's Gospel and Paul's letters; however, that does not destroy the general excellence of this series.

COMMENTARIES: SEPARATE BOOKS.

*Matthew*

1. Hendriksen, W. *The Gospel of Matthew*. (Grand Rapids: Baker) 1973, 1015 pp., \$14.95. (\*\*)

An outstanding work of great depth and scholarship. Hendriksen commences with a detailed discussion of the Synoptic problem and continues with a lucid commentary on the text. This volume will profit both pastor and layman.

2. Lloyd-Jones, D.M. *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount*. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans) 1959, 657 pp., \$8.95.

Undoubtedly the best study of its kind in the English language, although one does not always agree with its interpretations.

3. Plummer, A. *An Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew*. (London: J. Clarke) 1953, 452 pp., \$4.50.

An older but highly regarded work by a master expositor of the N.T.

4. Ridderbos, H.N. *Commentary on Matthew*. (New International Commentary on the N.T.) (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans)

In preparation.

5. Stonehouse, N.B. *The Witness of Matthew and Mark to Christ*. (London: Tyndale Press) 1958, 288 pp.

A first rate theological study, unfortunately out of print.

6. Tasker, R.V.G. *The Gospel According to St. Matthew*. (Tyndale New Testament Commentary) (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans) 1962, 264 pp., \$3.95. (\*\*\*)

A volume in the Tyndale New Testament Commentary series (henceforth TNTC), giving reverent and thorough exegesis. Especially recommended for the home (comparable to the Korte Verklaring) and soon to be issued in paperback at \$2.25.

(\*) Recommended for individual purchase.

(\*\*) Recommended for societies or church libraries.

(\*\*\*) Recommended for both.

# our little magazine

Dear Busy Beavers,

Spring is beautiful! Are you enjoying the new flowers and the green, green grass? I am! And the birds singing! And of course you'll be having fun playing spring games like baseball and skipping!

I wonder how many of you help your parents out in the garden? Maybe some of you have a little garden of your very own! If you do, I'd love to hear from you what you put in it. And please let me in on your secrets on how to get a good crop!

Remember my address is: *Aunt Betty*, Box 54, Fergus, Ontario N1M 2W7.

\* \* \* \* \*

Here is a limerick Busy Beaver *Sandra Knegt* sent in for our enjoyment.

There was a young boy from Tute,  
Who knew how to play the flute.  
He sat on a pig,  
And played a weird jig,  
And that was the end of his flute.

\* \* \* \* \*

And we have a Spring-time story from Busy Beaver *Jerold Van Assen*.

### *Woolly the Lamb*

Woolly was a baby lamb.  
He wanted a playmate.  
He asked the cows, the pigs, the turkeys and the dog,  
if they had a baby.  
They all said no.  
But the dog said,  
"Go to your mother."  
So he did.  
When he came he found a baby lamb.  
Then he had a playmate.

\* \* \* \* \*

### BOOK NOOK

Title: *Trixie Belden and the Mystery at Bob-White Cave*

"What is it, Brian?" Trixie asked.

Bats, thousands of them.

They're asleep.

The startled bats roared into flight, circling the cave clockwise and beating against the Bob-Whites, almost knocking them down. The girls waved their arms wildly and ran out of the cave.

Slim, pushing the girls aside, ran ahead of them.

The whirring wings of the frenzied bats sounded like the roar of an express train.

The book is good, because I like mystery.

by Busy Beaver *Loretta Dam*.



## From The Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Tanya Harlaar*! Thank you for your big letter. And such a pretty bookmark you got from your teacher!

Please write back soon and tell me your whole address,

Tanya, otherwise I won't be able to send you your membership card.

And welcome to you too, *Joanne Lodder*. We hope you'll enjoy reading Our Little Magazine and joining in our Busy Beaver activities. Write again soon, Joanne.

Thank you for the riddles, *Marianne Bergsma*. You'll make a good Busy Beaver, I'm sure. You did well on the puzzles, too! How do you like your new house, Marianne?

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Charles Lodder*. Thank you for an interesting letter! I'm glad you had such good times with your class, this winter. How is your pony riding coming, Charles?

Thank you, *Grace Bosscher*, for your word puzzles. We can always depend on you for some fun things to do! Thank you, Grace.

Hello, *Jeanette Vande Burgt*. Thank you for your letter. Yes, you were right - your poem is too late. But it will keep till next time. Hope you had a good time writing it, Jeanette.

What an interesting visit you made to that castle, *Patty Kamstra*. And you sure had a good birthday too! Hope you soon get the pen-pal you want, Patty.

\* \* \* \* \*

WANTED a pen-pal from Western Canada for:

*Patty Kamstra*  
2254 Orchard Rd.  
Burlington, Ontario

\* \* \* \* \*

### QUIZ TIME

First, two word puzzles from Busy Beaver *Grace Bosscher*.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. My First (letter) is in <i>zip</i> ,<br>But not in <i>soak</i> .<br>My Second is in <i>ear</i> ,<br>But not in <i>at</i> .<br>My Third is in <i>nail</i><br>But not in <i>pail</i> .<br>What word am I? | 2. My First is in <i>bat</i> ,<br>But not in <i>cat</i> .<br>My Second is in <i>for</i> ,<br>But not in <i>car</i> .<br>My Third is in <i>door</i> ,<br>But not in <i>care</i> .<br>My Fourth is in <i>key</i> ,<br>But not in <i>me</i> .<br>What word am I? |
|--|---|

Answers: 1. book 2. uad 'l

### *Which One?*

a quiz from Busy Beaver, *Jenny Bosscher*

- What did John the Baptist eat in the wilderness?  
(a) bread and water; (b) locusts and honey; (c) wild animals
- What did the chief priests give Judas for betraying Jesus? (a) 20 pieces of silver; (b) 30 pieces of gold; (c) 30 pieces of silver
- Alpha means: (a) First; (b) Middle; (c) Last
- Omega means: (a) First; (b) Middle; (c) Last
- How many times did the Devil tempt Jesus? (a) two times; (b) three times; (c) seven times
- A thousand years is to the Lord as (a) one minute; (b) one day; (c) one hour

\* \* \* \* \*

Did you like doing those quizzes? Answers to "Which One?" next time, all right?

Here are the answers to last time's quiz "Jesus our Prophet, Priest and King".

- |           |          |                |
|-----------|----------|----------------|
| 1. Elisha | 2. Aaron | 3. Saul, David |
|-----------|----------|----------------|

How did you do?

That's it for this time, Busy Beavers! Bye for now.

Yours, Aunt Betty.