

# Clarion

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# WITH POWER

From what does the Gospel derive its power and from what does the preacher of the Gospel derive the strength of his message? Why is the Gospel a power of God unto salvation unto everyone that believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek?

The answer to that question may be gathered from the Apostle Paul, when he calls himself a bond-servant of Jesus Christ, called as an Apostle, set apart for the Gospel of God.

In his Epistle to the Romans he will write about the glory of the message of which he is an Apostle: he will write in such beautiful terms that this very Epistle throughout the centuries has remained THE part of Scripture to which the Church returned time and again when she wished to discover or re-discover the riches of the justification through faith.

It was through the Epistle to the Romans that Luther came to the full light of the joy which God will give through the only Mediator. It was to the Epistle to the Romans that the Church returned after having lived in the darkness of Romanism for many centuries. It is this Epistle which has formed the pattern for many an exposition of the Scriptural doctrine regarding man's sins and misery, his deliverance from it and the gratitude which he owes his God for the deliverance.

Having been set apart for God's Gospel, the Apostle is not ashamed of it, for it is the power of God for salvation.

From what does it derive that power?

When describing the Gospel for which he has been set apart, the Apostle reminds us of it that God promised it beforehand through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures. It was the Gospel concerning His Son Who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh.

To David the Lord God promised that He would raise up his Son after him to sit upon his throne. That promise, Paul states, God has fulfilled, for the Son of God was born of the seed of David; the Lord Jesus Christ, God's eternal Son took upon Himself the very nature of man of the flesh and blood of the virgin Mary. He became like unto His brethren in all things, sin excepted.

He became so like unto His brethren that He even died for them, showing therein His perfect unity with them. He died their death, having taken upon Himself all their iniquities.

Does that constitute the power of the Gospel? Does that cause the Gospel to be a power for salvation to everyone who believes?

Not yet, although it is part of that power. Does not for this reason the Father love the Son because He has power to lay down His life and has power to take it up again? What would the power to take up life again mean if not the very same Person had the power to lay it down?

It was the Son of God Who became the Son of David. And that the Son of David was the Son of God became evident when He rose from the dead.

David spoke of Him when he told the nations of the decree by which he had been declared king: The LORD has said, Thou art my Son, today have I begotten thee. That

was fulfilled in David's Son who was born of his seed. This Son of David's was appointed to be David's Heir and Successor, to sit on his throne for evermore.

But His glory and power was so much greater than the glory and power of all the other descendants of David as He is more properly called the Son of God. This title receives a fulness in Him which it could never have in any other son of David.

David may have appealed to God's declaration, "You are My son, I have made you a king", He who was born of David's seed could appeal to it more strongly: the victory over all enemies, including, in principle, that last enemy, death, proved beyond doubt that He is THE Son of God. Hence his rule and glory is greater than that of all who were before Him. He can in truth claim the ends of the earth for His possession and He can justly claim the authority over all the lands and nations: there is nothing exempt from His dominion.

Having laid down His life, He also took it up again, for He rose from the dead. THAT is something which can be done only by God. Thus He was declared and placed in a position of power which far exceeded that of any other; it even surpassed everything which could previously be ascribed to Him while He was yet in the state of humiliation. It was the dominion and power, the glory and the excellency which God promised beforehand through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures.

Son of God, of the seed of David, yet more powerful than His father-according-to-the-flesh. He was not ashamed to become David's Son, and yet this did not bring Him down: it only brought David up, for David's Son was also David's Lord. And although David was buried and did see corruption, David's Son saw no corruption: having laid off His life, He took it on again and thus guaranteed the continuation of life and the deliverance of all that believe. This Gospel is a power of God for salvation, and it is so beyond doubt.

No breach should be assumed between the incarnation and the resurrection; no gap should be construed between the Son of God becoming of the true seed of David, and Him being proved beyond doubt to be the Son of God by His historical resurrection. Whoever would wish or try to do so, deprives the Gospel of its power-for-salvation.

It is only from the risen Christ that the Gospel derives its power: it is the contents of the Gospel which should remain inviolate.

Whoever assumes a breach between the incarnation and the resurrection, deprives himself (and others) of the comfort that the same Son of David Who had mercy on those who were sorely burdened and Who died for their sakes, pulled them through to bring them up with Him. Now they all who believe are safe in the hands of Him Whose resurrection proves that He IS the Son of God indeed, unto Whom the ends of the earth have been given and Who shall destroy also that last enemy.

That He became like unto His brethren did not bring Him down: it only brought us up, high above all sin and sorrow, all misery and death.

vO

# What Should Our Attitude Be?

One who is not a "stranger in Jerusalem" knows that in recent years quite something has been brewing in the Christian Reformed Church.

This writer is kept abreast of some developments by receiving various communications or being subscriber to *The Outlook*.

Two movements are growing in strength. The one is *The Reformed Fellowship* which publishes *Outlook*. The other is an Organization of *Christian Reformed Laymen*. In the former ministers take the lead, in the latter, as the name says, "non-clergy", members of congregations.

Both present to their readers a long list of complaints, worries, or whatever one wants to call them. Both are deeply concerned about the direction the Christian Reformed Church, especially its "leaders" and synods have taken, and are taking.

These issues concern the stand on biblical authority, the attitude towards homosexuality, pentecostalism, World Council of Churches, the apostate community in the synodical churches. They mention the downfall of Catechism preaching, the change in the subscription form, liturgical liberties, open table. It all boils down to an abandoning of the Reformed heritage. The brethren in both organizations do not hesitate to use strong language. They ask themselves and each other, what to do. Just leave, as many already seem to have done? Or, organize some kind of party within the Church to defend the faith of the fathers? Or stand up and be counted, protest against any deviation from the Reformed path?

\* \* \* \* \*

This brief article is not written to discuss and evaluate all those issues, although I believe that *Clarion* should give more attention to them than it has done till now.

The question is, now that we see this development, what should our attitude be as people who have gone through a similar struggle and in the end have received the Liberation as a gift from God?

My answer to this question contains the following elements.

1. We should be aware of the fact that we are, in a way, outsiders. Our Churches have tried, for twelve years, to influence the course of the Christian Reformed Church by means of our Contact Committee. As a result this Church dropped two doctrinal statements, the one about presumptive regeneration, the other about Common Grace. They are no longer in existence in the Christian Reformed Church. Looking back, one may wonder if those decisions were taken in a reformatory spirit. One may, as far as I am concerned, doubt it. Anyway, as soon as we arrived at the real issue, the whole course of the Christian Reformed Church, coming to light in its persistence to continue the relationship with the synodical churches, it became clear that the Synod was unwilling even to listen any longer. We read that our warning voice was like a needle getting stuck on the record, repeating endlessly the same old tune . . . The Christian Reformed Church then discontinued the relationship with our Churches as well as with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, which sang the same tune. At the same time they became intimate with the Reformed Church.

Consequently, we are officially out of the picture. We are onlookers. We cannot take part in the discussions by means of a contact committee any longer.

2. That does not mean that we are not deeply interested. On the contrary! The Christian Reformed Church is "beloved for the sake of the fathers"! Some decades ago we were one, and we cannot and should not forget that. We believe, anyway I believe, that the Christian Reformed Church has its own history and that our God has his own dealings with that Church. We came in "from the cold", from the outside. I have never believed that the case and the cause of the Christian Reformed Church would be decided exclusively by their attitude towards our Churches. Many of their members do not even know us. The dealings of the Lord with the Christian Reformed Church were not finished when our Contact Committee

was finished. The Lord is not that soon and that fast through with a Church which stood, once, firmly on a Reformed footing. We see that now. Without any doing of ours, two movements are getting more and more impact on the membership of this Church. That we may see as an answer to our prayers. And if we have any "Kerkbesef", we can only be deeply interested in what is going on.

3. Our attitude as we see the controversy growing is, therefore, not one of pleasure because they are in trouble, but of deepfelt gratitude that there are still so many people, with or without a special office, who are moved by the Spirit of God to stand up and to "rebuke the church for its errors", Conf. art. 29. This is, indeed, a fruit of the Spirit. As much as we are thankful for the liberation of the National Presbyterian Church from apostasy, so much we are hoping and praying that a true reformation may result from the warning voices by both organizations. Whether this will result in a reformation of the whole "denomination" or in a partial liberation, is hidden in the future and is for the Lord to decide. But grateful we are and grateful we must be.

4. This gratitude should be accompanied by humbleness. I have read certain things here and there that, to my taste, are wrong and unpleasant. They are also misplaced.

It may be easy for us to criticize certain terms these protesting brethren are using, because we ourselves have gone through a similar struggle, and have learned much, anyway something, from it. It is easy for us to tell them: you must not do this and you are confused in that . . . When they, for example, talk about the difficulties of "starting a new denomination" we can right away condemn such strange talk. But let us be humble and remember! Let us remember how we, before the Liberation, talked about the pluriformity of the Church, swallowing it head and tail. How we were brought up, for generations, in the Kuyperian doctrines as popularized by the catechism booklets of Rev. Landwehr. How we, before 1940, condemned the Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk for its attitude toward the compromise of 1905 because we ourselves had accepted that compromise and lived by it. How we, before the Liberation, swallowed the "Nieuwe Kerkrecht", introduced by Dr. H.

H. Kuyper in 1926. If not the Lord had taken us by the hand . . . If not the Lord had taken us by the hand step by step and guided us on our way, we would have perished. Let us, today, show proof of our conviction that the Liberation was the work of God! And not act as though it were *our work*, *our* merit. Many of us, if we were already around in those years preceding the Liberation, also used strange expressions, also wondered whether there was anything in "starting a new denomination" (although we did not use exactly the same words, maybe). We sang Psalm 124, "If it had not been the LORD who was on our side . . . we would have been swept away."

Remembering our past makes humble and, at the same time, gives good hope for all those who, in the Christian Reformed Church (and anywhere), now want to turn back, or stay with the Reformed Confession. They will experience what we experienced, "He leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble his way." Psalm 25:9.

5. This attitude produces willingness to help, wherever we can. We have been approached; our help is being asked. Would there be room for Christian Reformed students to study at our College? The answer is quite simple, in my view. Would some of us be willing to speak to these brethren, if invited? Again, the answer is quite simple. Should we not all tell these brethren, whenever there is any contact, that the (only) way is to stand up, in congregations, in consistories, in classes and synods, and simply refuse to accept anything that is not in full agreement with the Word of God and Reformed Polity? In one word, the way of Art. 31 of the Church Order. Thus the Christian Reformed Church will (have to) be forced by its own members to choose.

6. Finally, in the meantime, what is the picture of our Churches? Is it attractive to others who are looking for a true, a faithful church where there is unity among the brethren of one house? Are we not condemning each other, mistrusting one another because we want to go beyond the bond of unity in the Three Forms? Woe if, whenever others are looking for a truly Reformed Church, the Canadian Reformed Churches would not stand out as a model of what such a Church really is; with the doors wide open for all who seek the peace of Jerusalem. G. VANDOOREN

# school X crossing

The Dufferin Christian School of CARMAN received its second teacher when Miss Ann Wierenga came over in January. This will no doubt be an important relief to the principal, who in turn will give her all the help he can. We noticed from Carman's *Newsletter* already that the principal assists not only in the actual work of teaching but when necessary also in starting or fixing her automobile. Must be handy to have such a practical instructor around!

Carman has an enrolment of 47 students. The Midland School Board has agreed to transport our children from the Carman Elementary School to our own school for \$600.00 annually. This is done on a trial basis. This seems an agreeable price compared to the extra costs Chatham had to face when the bus used so far proved to be too small. A bigger bus had to be arranged for, at the cost of an extra \$2400.00 a year.

Carman is also busy studying textbooks to be used in our school. The Midland School Division seems to be very cooperative, although a Reformed school has to find its own way. The grade 6 Science textbooks especially seem to be a problem. In the words of the principal: "It does promote a very clear anti-Biblical view of nature." We may be thankful that our teachers in Ontario get together at least five times this season on their Curriculum Evaluation Days. Hopefully they will come up with some good Curriculum and Course Outlines, for use in all our schools, East or West. Without such help it is very difficult for our teachers to give Reformed instruction. And, while our teachers have all this extra work to do, in their own time, let all the parents take to heart the words the principal of Carman wrote after the opening of the school last September: "With the opening of the school we have received much; this will also require much. From the parents it will require in the first place *not* to relax in teaching the children. Don't leave it to the school, to the teachers. It was, and it still is, in the first place the task of the parents to teach the children.

Delegating this work just isn't acceptable to the Lord."

The uncertainty about which Bible translation to use in our churches shows up in our schools too. Carman is using the R.S.V. while some schools in Ontario are using the New American Standard Version. It will take some time before we will have a beneficial uniformity in this respect.

An encouraging note is that some brothers and sisters in congregations where there is no Reformed school, show that they have Reformed education at heart. From a congregation in the West as well as from one in the East, Carman received a financial gift. In this way too we can all practice the communion of saints!

CHATHAM has been very happy too with the addition of another teacher. Mr. Peter Roukema of Grand Rapids has become the third teacher, alleviating the workload of Mr. Bol, the principal, who now takes care of grades 7 and 8, while Miss Wildeboer teaches the grades 1, 2, and 3. The new teacher's responsibility is grade 4, 5, and 6, while he also teaches French to the highest grades. Judging from the children's reactions, Chatham's third teacher must have some of that "teacher's blood" of his ancestors! In the meantime, Chatham's budget has increased significantly. The extra costs of the bigger bus and the salary for an extra teacher made it necessary to increase the membership fees. From \$15.00 a week it was increased to \$20.00 weekly, which means that well over \$1000 a year is paid for Reformed education. Hardship? There was thankfulness and joy with the membership, who unanimously adopted this increase. May we all see it more and more as a *privilege*. Some people seem to be convinced that the Eben-ezer School is rich (and granted, it *is*, although not in material terms). For the second time somebody broke into the school building at night, this time escaping with about \$1.50. This money was collected by the students for the orphans in Korea. The thief (or thieves) ran into a problem when they got

# SUFFERING OF CHRIST

From nothing to bring forth the round creation,  
To force the raging sea to keep his bounds,  
The rising and the setting sun his rounds —  
These are the signs of endless domination.

But greater still, O Christ, that you should leave  
The spotless halls of heaven for sinners' filth,  
Debtless to pay their debts from your great wealth  
In hellish agony and deadly grief.

O, could we rightly fathom this great feat!  
What stony rock would then not melt with heat!  
What heart would not with love be wounded through!

But no; no man nor angel, Lord, can know it;  
You, Lord, alone to us can ever show it,  
For none has ever known this pain but you.

# LIJDEN CHRISTI

Des werelts rond' te gronden op een Niet,  
Het woeste meyr te dwingen in sijn palen,  
Der sonnen rat doen rijsen en doen dalen  
Sijn teyckens van een eyndeloos gebiet.

Noch meer is dit, ô Jesu, dat ghy liet  
Om sondaers vuyl des hemels reyne salen,  
En hare schult onschuldich quaemt betalen  
In helse quael en dodelijck verdriet.

Och! kosten wy te recht dit wonder smaken!  
Wat steen-rots sou niet als een oven blaken!  
Wat hert sou niet met liefde sijn doorwont!

Maer neen, geen mensch, geen engel can het vaten;  
Ghy Heer alleen cont het ons weten laten,  
Want ghy alleen sijt die het ondervondt.

JACOBUS REVIUS (1586-1658)

Translation by Henrietta Ten Harmse

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stuck with their car, trying to turn on the driveway. Apparently they jacked the car up and managed to get away in time. They left the jack standing upright in the mud. Whether they meant to leave it as a donation to the school or whether they planned to leave it for future use, is not clear. However, the Board is looking into the possibility of grating the window used as entrance.

School attendance has increased from 53 to 55 as one family sold their farm and moved into the transportation area.

The student's in Mr. Bol's class do not have to put on extra sweaters anymore. An extra furnace was installed in the basement and solved some problems for students and teacher both. Some new members joined the School Society. Membership has about doubled within the last year. It now stands at 40.

When the Eben-ezer School opened, an old ex-missionary to China was so impressed that she gave a generous gift which was gratefully used to purchase a world globe. It must have been a gratifying thought to the giver that the money was used to buy an instrument that helps the children "see" the great work of the Lord in this world.

The Ladies' Auxiliary has been

very busy lately cleaning new houses and apartments. Sometimes it comes too sudden when instantly half a dozen ladies are needed. But the results make this hard work sweet. With the money that the sisters have earned, items like blackboards, projector, roll film, screen, duplicator, chairs, stove, etc., etc., have been bought. With good cooperation a lot can be done.

Since Chatham is presently without a church building, catechism classes are held in the school basement. The School Society does not charge the church for the expenses. This also is a form of good cooperation.

EDMONTON reports some happy and encouraging news in the Church Bulletin. A person in the Netherlands who owned some land in Alberta authorized the School Society to sell the land and keep the money. The School Society realized \$2300.00, for which they are very thankful. Indeed, who would not rejoice with them? When we are obedient, the Lord will show His faithfulness and bless us in unexpected ways!

The Maranatha Christian School of FERGUS started with 93 students in September '73. For the first time in the history of its school society, the doors were opened for the children of all 8 grades. For the first time the

Maranatha School offers also grades 1 and 2. The girls outnumber the boys, especially in the lower grades, where the boys number only 9 out of 30 students. The students are equally divided among the principal, Mr. L. Hoogerdijk, and the teachers, Miss L. Diek and Miss M. Bol. With this increased enrolment the facilities receive maximum use. With the new addition to the building, it is now possible to have *opening exercises* for all classes together on Monday mornings. The teachers also get together before classes on Monday and after school on Friday. This may seem a natural thing to us, but it is worth mentioning that this is done. Not only the students but also the teachers need to lay their needs before the Lord and thank Him for his help. As we read in the *LINK*: "the task that awaits our teachers every schoolday is no small one and we the parents do well to remember them in our prayers, support them with our 'follow-up' in discipline and instruction in the truth. May our Lord bless our joint efforts that His Name may be glorified, and our school exist and function until His coming."

We (not only the parents, but all of us) are not forgetting to PRAY for the children AND the teachers DAILY, are we?  
M.C. WERKMAN

# Understanding the Old Testament

## NAHUM (12)

NINEVEH, THE LIONS' DEN - ch. 2:11-13 (Hebr. 12-14)

It is a general opinion - which the readers know about and which some of them maybe share - that prophets are men called to speak on what is to happen in the future. Although the message or task of a prophet is not characterized exhaustively this way, because the prophets, reminding the people of what GOD did in the past, speak a word with a view to the time they live in as well, it remains a fact that it is in predicting the future that they give evidence of their divine calling and their being endowed with supernatural visions.

In the last three verses of chapter 2 we get a striking example of it - as, for that matter, we already did throughout this chapter. But whereas in the preceding verses Nahum gave a picture of Nineveh on the day it was captured, here, from vs. 11 on, he carries us along with him to a still later point of time, to a time when Nineveh's, downfall is an accomplished fact and but a heap of ruins is left of

the once proud and mighty city, to view in retrospect the times when the city stood in all its lustre. And he does so not in a spirit of "all earthly things will pass away", however much this had come true for Nineveh, but rather in a mocking tone. Some scholars compare these verses to a satire (Dutch: hekeldicht); it is a satire fading into a dirge, more or less. However suddenly (vs. 13) we hear the prophet return to his own time, to proclaim from that standpoint the threat of his GOD against the city. That is why after the verbs in the past tense in vss. 11-12 ("walked", "made afraid", "tore", "strangled", "filled"), we read verbs in the future tense in vs. 13 ("will burn", "shall devour", "will cut off"). So, after he has had his readers transport themselves in their mind to the farthest possible point in the future as if it were present-day reality, he calls them back in vs. 13; there he speaks in the future tense on what is bound to happen in the future in accordance with the word of the LORD.

R.S.V.: (11) WHERE IS THE LIONS' DEN, THE CAVE OF THE YOUNG LION, WHERE THE LION BROUGHT HIS PREY, WHERE HIS CUBS WERE, WITH NONE TO DISTURB? (12) THE LION TORE ENOUGH FOR HIS WHELPS AND STRANGLED PREY FOR HIS LIONESSES; HE FILLED HIS CAVES WITH PREY AND HIS DENS WITH TORN FLESH.

A.V.: (11) WHERE IS THE DWELLING OF THE LIONS, AND THE FEEDINGPLACE OF THE YOUNG LIONS, WHERE THE LION, EVEN THE OLD LION, WALKED, AND THE LION'S WHELP, AND NONE MADE THEM AFRAID? (12) THE LION DID TEAR IN PIECES ENOUGH FOR HIS WHELPS, AND STRANGLED FOR HIS LIONESSES, AND

FILLED HIS HOLES WITH PREY, AND HIS DENS WITH RAVIN.

The comparison with a lions' den is maintained up to and including vs. 14 (see below). "The prophet, (in spirit) beholding the destruction as having already taken place, looks around for the site on which the mighty place once stood and sees it no more" (Keil).

"Where is the lions' den (literally: dwelling)?" The word that usually designates a human residence, here, as in Jer. 9:11 and 10:22, stands for the abode of wild beasts of prey. The implication is that they are at ease there, making themselves comfortable. That is the first viewpoint in this pericope of the lions' den. The den is a place to relax.

What is meant by these lions? I have read of one author who saw here an allusion to the zoological gardens connected with the royal palace. So, real lions, animals, were meant by the prophet. Most scholars think this is very doubtful. Imagine! A prophet who concerned himself with the zoo in Nineveh! Is that probable? Yet, it may have been the lions in the Nineveh zoo and the lions against which the kings of Assyria measured their strength while hunting, that suggested the idea to the prophet. From the excavations we know that the lion was the favourite animal for artistic and decorative purposes in Assyria as well as in Babylonia.

It is the Assyrians, especially the rulers of the kingdom, who by way of comparison are presented here. Some say that it is a favourable comparison, one that indicates the supreme position of power to which Assyria had risen. But, I ask, would it not be as probable that the prophet regarded Nineveh's rulers as having degenerated to the level of ferocious beasts? Had they not crushed the peoples like lions, plundering their treasures? Because of that, Nineveh had become a feeding-place or a pasture. Since "feeding-place" everywhere else means a grazing ground for cattle, a great many exegetes consider the word wholly inappropriate as a name for a lion's feeding-place. In a context like the present one, not a word like "pasture" but rather "cave" is to be expected. That is fitting for lions. And because in Hebrew "pasture" is written with the consonants *m-r-ṣ-h* and "cave" with the same consonants but



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in a different order, *m-c-r-h*, an emendation is proposed by, among others, J. Ridderbos, and adopted by e.g. the R.S.V. Yet, although it sounds strange perhaps, it does make sense, so I subscribe to the A.V. here.

In that dwelling, that feeding-place, we meet lions of various ages and sex. I mention the Hebrew words in the order of vs. 11: *'arî*, in vs. 11a, means "lion" in the general sense; *kefir*, used next in vs. 11a, denotes a young lion, though old enough to go in search of prey. Then, in vs. 11b, the picture is completed, in a manner of speaking, since here we meet first the lion [*'arjēh*], that is, the full-grown male lion; next the lioness [*lābî*], and, finally, the lion's cubs, the whelps, which cannot yet seek prey for themselves [*gûr'arjēh*]. The word *gur* we find in the name of the late prime minister of Israel, the well-known David Ben-Gurion (= David, son of a lion). The reader may observe that I prefer the A.V. here in so far as it sticks to the Hebrew text: "where the lion, even the old lion, walked, and the lion's whelp, and none made them afraid." The only thing is that we had better translate the word *lābî* by "lioness". My objection against the R.S.V. here concerns especially the words "brought his prey". If someone wonders how it is that such a translation is offered, I may explain that in Hebrew it is indeed possible to read a word like *lābî* either as a noun, "lioness", or as a combination of a preposition *le* and a verb-form *bî*, "to bring".(1) But I fail to see the word "prey" here. Moreover, the text does not present any difficulties, as far as that goes. On the contrary, it is very fitting in the context that we meet the lion's whole family here. The last words, "with none to disturb", help us envisage a scene of complete rest and security.

That is to say, what the Assyrians were pleased to call rest and security. When and where lions are at ease, other animals must have suffered for it. That is a matter of fact. The lions' den is a den of robbers and murderers. Although the killing and strangling did not take place in the cave itself, yet it is there that the prey was devoured by lioness and cubs. What Psalm 34:10 says about young lions that suffer want and hunger does not hold good for the human lions in Nineveh: they feast upon their prey to their heart's content. The Assyrian economy was built for a major part on

robbery and murder. However great an empire it may have been in those times, all things considered it is a den of robbers, as all the other peoples realized. It was at their cost that the lion could tear enough and fill his caves or mansions with prey - more than a real lion, i.e. the animal, is wont to do. So at the end of vs. 12 we leave figurative language to face cruel reality. A further question is: to whom are the designations "lion", "lioness", "young lions", and "cubs" applicable? Taking one thing with another, I think that the prophet is speaking not only of the Assyrian king, the queen, and the royal family, but also of the princes and the noble ones, those leading a luxurious life with their wives and concubines, and, further, everybody benefitting by the wealth and riches piled up in the city.

R.S.V.: (13) BEHOLD, I AM AGAINST YOU, SAYS THE LORD OF HOSTS, AND I WILL BURN YOUR CHARIOTS IN SMOKE, AND THE SWORD SHALL DEVOUR YOUR YOUNG LIONS; I WILL CUT OFF YOUR PREY FROM THE EARTH, AND THE VOICE OF YOUR MESSENGERS SHALL NO MORE BE HEARD.

A.V.: (13) BEHOLD, I AM AGAINST THEE, SAITH THE LORD OF HOSTS, AND I WILL BURN HER CHARIOTS IN THE SMOKE, AND THE SWORD SHALL DEVOUR YOUR YOUNG LIONS: AND I WILL CUT OFF THY PREY FROM THE EARTH, AND THE VOICE OF THY MESSENGERS SHALL NO MORE BE HEARD.

Then the prophet has the readers make a sudden turn from their what I would call advanced base in history, the time subsequent to Nineveh's fall, to have them return to the time they live in. And they hear the LORD GOD addressing Himself to the city as it was still flourishing in those days. The LORD makes the prophet His mouth-piece, but it is as if we hear His own voice saying: "Behold, I am against you." Compare in English: "I'll give it to you!" (Dutch: "Ik zal je!") In Jeremiah and Ezekiel it is a usual way of announcing the punishment of Yahweh (Jer. 21:13; 23:30; 50:31; 51:25; Ez. 5:8; 13:8,20; 28:22). Although some fifty years had to pass, the

event is announced as imminent or at least near at hand. This utterance, Dr. Goslinga says, is the appropriate finale of the whole chapter, its crowning piece. And the LORD who speaks so, is YAHWEH SEBÂ'ÔTH a well-known name ("LORD of hosts") which we may explain as referring to the host comprising all that there is in heaven and on earth. When He comes with the scales of judgment - world history is world judgment - nobody is able to hold Him. And right from the outset of the book we already saw Nineveh as the enemy of the LORD Himself, and the LORD as a God considering the lot of the nations, especially that one nation Judah, as a matter concerning Him personally. So, apart from Medes and Chaldeans and whoever is to join the battle against Nineveh in 614-612 B.C., it is the LORD who will burn her chariots in smoke. In such an address the word "her" sounds somewhat strange, and the R.S.V., while admitting in a footnote that it says "her" in Hebrew, nevertheless translates "your". But we agree with Keil: "The suffix of the third person must not be altered; it may easily be explained from the poetical variation of prophetic announcement and direct address."

That there is a continuous alternation of image and reality we see when in the next line it is lions that are spoken of, the lions of vs. 11 and 12, of course. But the sword is not the weapon in the hands of a lion-hunter, but rather a spear or arrows. So imagery and concrete language alternate continually, also in the next line: "I will cut off your prey from the earth." The prey referred to is the booty already in Assyria's possession.

"And the voice of your messengers shall no more be heard." The word "your", a suffix in Hebrew, is in a peculiarly lengthened form. I suppose the prophet uses it for the sake of effect. There is something plaintive in the Hebrew word *mal'ākêkêh*. "The voice of their ambassadors, deceiving with seductive flatteries and enticing promises, or terrifying by dreadful threats, will no longer be heard" (Laetsch). We'll hear more about this in chapter 3.

H.M. OHMANN

(1) From the verb *bô* (= to come); literally, *bî* (= to make somebody come).

# Studying The R.S.V. (1)

The time has finally come that the RSV committee as appointed by the Synod of New Westminster has once again finished its report. Via these pages we hope to tell you something (unofficially) of what has kept us busy, viz. how we executed our mandate and what our conclusions are.

## REVIEWING AVAILABLE CRITICISM

The first part of our mandate included inviting criticism from church members and scrutinizing it.

Of the material received, mention should be made here of the booklet of br. C. Hoff entitles *The R.S.V. and God's Revelation*, for the simple reason that it enjoyed a wide distribution. Unfortunately the committee could do little with this booklet because it completely ignored and bypassed the report of the RSV committee to the 1971 synod and thus simply repeated the objections which had already been raised before the New Westminster Synod convened and which had been taken into consideration in the report to that synod. The booklet has good points and the concern to be scripturally critical of new translations was also once again the concern of the RSV committee after they received their new and renewed mandate. However, overagainst the negative tone of the booklet and the insinuations that the RSV translation denies many Scriptural truths, one must posit a "counterweight" so that when we critically evaluate the RSV we do so as fairly as possible.

## DISSERTATION ON THE R.S.V.

At this point it can therefore be mentioned that your committee studied a doctoral dissertation which deals with the RSV of the New Testament. The title is *An Objective Evaluation of the Accuracy of the Revised Standard Version in the Translation of the New Testament* by R. L. Goddard. It was submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Dallas Theological Seminary (Texas). It is noteworthy that this study was done at this Presbyterian school, since it is a place which after existing for some 50 years

still publicly affirms its commitment to education centered on the Bible as the inspired, inerrant Word of God. One would therefore not *expect* from such a school a study giving favourable comments and assessments on certain aspects of the RSV unless these favourable comments were truly deserved, especially since the RSV has traditionally met much criticism in the southern United States (where the school is located).

The study begins by making a reference to this criticism by saying that since its appearance the RSV immediately became the centre of a heated controversy. But, the author notes, very little of a fair and objective nature has been issued. Most of it is "very biased, very subjective and very unfair" (p.4). The author therefore wants to present a fair evaluation, which includes seeing both the weak and strong points of the RSV. The committee found this study to be basically sound (taking into account some dispensational tendencies).

Before Goddard tackles the main points of his study, he first clears the important area of the original text that the RSV uses. It is a well-known fact that the King James translators did not have at their disposal as good a collection of manuscripts translators today have. When one studies the RSV one notices that usually the RSV is shorter than the King James in areas of disagreement. (As we will see, the Lord willing, in a future article, this has met some significant change in the New edition of the N. T. of the RSV.) The reason that the RSV is usually shorter has, however, nothing to do with wanting to erase part of God's Word. It is simply what the majority of scholars (both liberal and conservative) agree to be the best text. It is therefore unfair to say, as a generalization, that the RSV mutilates the text of Scripture (here with particular reference to the New Testament). If the RSV is charged with removing words from the Bible then the King James "would be guilty of adding to the content of Scripture, an offense as serious as deleting from it." (p. 13)

The main part of Goddard's study concerns itself with the question of what doctrine or system of theology could be derived from the RSV translation of the New Testament. He concludes that an objective study of the RSV would lead to an accurate doctrine of theology (that is the Godhead, trinity, attributes of God, etc.), an accurate doctrine of anthropology (man's origin, constitution, fall sin and its consequences on the human race), an accurate doctrine of ecclesiology (the church), angelology (good angels, bad angels and Satan), and an accurate doctrine of eschatology (future events including the return of the Lord, the eternal state of the saved and unsaved). Because the author is a dispensationalist, the area of eschatology was also carefully checked by the committee and it was found that his conclusions also held for the formulation of a Reformed eschatology.

In other areas of doctrine, Goddard gave more qualified conclusions. Of *bibliology* (understanding of what Scripture is) he concludes: "This investigation, it is felt, has revealed that an unbiased study of the RSV would lead to a comparatively accurate doctrine of Bibliology, equal if not superior, to that which could be derived from the A. V. (Authorized or King James Version - cvd), R. V. (Revised Version of 1881-85 - cvd), or A. S. V. (American Standard Version of 1901 - cvd). The translation is such that one would conclude from it that God has revealed Himself in nature, in Christ and in the Word. He would further conclude that all Scripture is inspired of God, being written by men moved by the Spirit, that this inspiration extends to all parts of Scripture and to the words themselves. Finally he would conclude that the Scriptures are possessed of a living character and that they will abide forever" (p. 71f).

Concerning *Christology* Goddard notes that the chief weakness of the version lies "in the translation of words and passages bearing on the person of Christ. The use of the word 'origin' (Heb. 2:11) in connection with Him is unwarranted in view of the many passages clearly expressing His deity. If He is God He could not have had an origin (p. 128). Goddard then goes on to mention the inconsistent usage of "thee/you" when it concerns the person of Jesus Christ,



which robs several verses of their testimony to the deity of Christ. He also notes the poor punctuation of Romans 9:5. (We hope to return to some of this in a future article.) Goddard then goes on and concludes: "In favour of the version it should be pointed out that many passages dealing with the person of Christ are accurately translated. In such verses as John 1:1 and Heb. 1:8 He is called 'God'. In Titus 2:13 and 2 Peter 1:1, the RSV by virtue of accurate translation, upholds the deity of Christ more than does the A. V. (King James - cvd). In regard to the virgin birth of Christ it should be noted that the narratives in both Matthew and Luke are accurately translated" (p. 128).

Another area which receives a qualified conclusion is *pneumatology* (person and work of the Holy Spirit). "Perhaps in no other field of theology is there such widespread lack of understanding as in that of Pneumatology. Many factors have brought about this situation, among them being the way in which words and passages bearing on the subject have been translated in the A. V. There was surely a need for considerable revision of that version along this line" (p. 129). He concludes: "A purely objective study of the N. T. as translated in the RSV would lead to an accurate doctrine of the Holy Spirit, both in regard to His person and His work. The only major defect in the version in this field of theology is the use of the neuter pronoun *it* to refer to the Spirit in some instances" (p. 157).

Finally he also brings our attention to the field of *soteriology* (salvation). He notes the "Much criticism has been made against the manner in which words and passages pertaining to soteriology have been translated in the RSV of the N. T." (p. 189). His final conclusion is however that "the RSV of the N. T. is, for the most part, accurate in the translation of the words and passages in the field of soteriology. The lone weakness in the translation of words and passages bearing on the finished work of Christ is the substitution of the term 'expiation' for 'propitiation'. The version is very accurate in those translation having to do with the appropriation of salvation. The tenses of the Greek verbs are translated in a very acceptable manner . . ." (p. 224).

#### SUMMING IT UP

One can readily see for God-

dard's study that in spite of some instances of weaknesses, the RSV does maintain in its translation all the key doctrines that are mentioned above. As a matter of fact the author notes, before his final conclusion, that statistically speaking the RSV is more accurate than the King James or Authorized version. "On the other hand when the RSV is in error, the error is usually of considerable importance. In fact most of the glaring errors of the version have to do with the person of Christ and are, therefore, by virtue of this fact alone serious" (p. 312).

In view of this fact, what will Goddard now conclude? Will he conclude (as many is the 1950's concluded with less study) that the RSV can therefore not be used or endorsed? No, the author sums it up this way, ". . . while the RSV of the N. T. is accurate in most places, its errors are of such a nature as to forbid its unqualified endorsement" (p. 312). The translation can therefore be endorsed, but not in an unqualified way.

Behind this conclusion there actually lies another conclusion which the author touches on in an appendix. It is this conclusion, that the Revised standard Version is still God's Word. In far too many instances, the author notes, not the translation, but the translators were attacked. For it is remarkable that scholars who are admittedly liberal have nevertheless produced a translation which discredits their own theology.

Does this now mean that since the RSV translation has not undone the New Testament as God's Word that now most of the work of the committee is by this very fact finished? This, of course, is not true. The preceeding was however mentioned to show that we must keep things in balance. The RSV can certainly still be critically evaluated and recommendations can be made. For this reason much work was done in this connection. The Lord willing we hope to show you something of this next time.

C. VAN DAM

## mission news

What a source of comfort and courage is it to know that the power of the Word of God is able to transform and renew lives and that the Lord will use us, His people, to perform this here on earth. What the Lord will perform here in Sao Jose we do not know, but it is evident that the seed which is being sown here is beginning to germinate. This the following may illustrate.

#### List of Catechumens:

For several Sundays now we have announced that we would like those visitors who are interested in becoming a member of the Church, to give their names so that we may enter them on the list of catechumens. This means that they will receive special instruction preparing them for doing public profession of faith. So far 17 adults have indicated their desire, a number that exceeds our expectations. May the Lord bless their intention and confirm and establish them also by means of further instruction.

Of course, with some we are more hopeful than others, depending on how much they realize what it

means. Not all are equally sincere. More than half have been member of, or affiliated with, other protestant churches, mainly pentecostal groups. These are generally our "better prospects", who are more familiar with the consequences.

Yet, some others also realize that profession by mouth must go hand in hand with a Christian way of life, as some of their questions show. One asked: "Can I still go fishing on Sundays if times are rough?" Another: "Do I have to get married legally?" And a third: "May I still sell liquor at the bar?" (He has a grocery store but a little bar on the sideline to attract his customers; without it he cannot make a living, he claims.)

We intend to wait with further instruction, dividing them into small groups, until we have suitable facilities in our new church building.

#### Church building:

Construction has been started, be it rather slow. The problem is a shortage of construction material and awfully high prices. The constructor has

*Continued on page 16.*

# news medley

For people with some ability to come up with unusual ideas there is a big chance again. The Smithers Church will finally get a steeple. It cannot be installed as yet, for the steeple needs an ornament to top it. And this is exactly where the inventiveness of the Church members may come in. There are certain conditions, and I shall mention them right away:

"The ornament must be made out of square tubing not larger than 4"; the height must be no less than 6 feet and no more than 8 feet. At the widest part no less than 2 feet and no more than 4 feet. It must be designed in such a way as not to catch much wind and not collect any snow."

All right, get to work. Designs are to be sent to Walter's Welding, Smithers. Maybe the Rev. J. Van Rietschoten is willing to pass the design on. (We learned that he had been ill, but it did not say for how long and whether it was more than just a slight indisposition.) In Houston they have already a "Rooster Church", for there they placed the well-known Dutch "rooster" on top of the steeple when they built their building many years ago. What they get in Smithers should be something "original". Don't expect anything from me, though!

We are speaking now of buildings anyway, and therefore inform you that the total amount of pledges received by Winnipeg stood at \$52,982.00. Almost all of those pledges, we are told in the bulletin, are sacrifices. One pledge was received from a member under twelve years of age, who promised one dollar per month for three years.

The Chatham Church expects to have a firm quotation by the end of March and then to proceed without delay. Their old building brought them net proceeds of \$42,439.64.

So far about Church buildings.

Chatham also expects to host an Easter Study Weekend Conference, for the Ontario Young People again come together in two different conferences, the component societies of which are mixed up every time. In this way they all get to know each other, which is a very healthy situation!

And then that Ladies' Auxiliary of Chatham!! They cleaned three houses in two days. Wow! And we are certain that the "mantle of love" can stand it when a tip is lifted. On the other hand, the ladies also receive some unexpected help once in a while. When, one evening, they went down to the school building to clean the basement, they found that the cupboards had been done and some girls (and boys?) of the school had washed all dishes for them. As long as it is done, that's the main thing.

Chatham, too, discovers that, once you start, you have to continue. They saw themselves compelled to bring the weekly contribution for the school to \$20.00. Not all School Societies receive such a bonus as the one in Edmonton did. There the School Society was authorized by a brother living in the Netherlands to sell land in Alberta belonging to him. They realized no less than \$2,300.00 from that sale. If there are any more of such

willing brethren, I can assure them that they will find a host of willing salesmen in our midst. But most of the support for our schools must come from the pockets of the members. How happy does it render one when it is experienced that more and more such willingness is shown and that the number of congregations where a school has been established grows almost by the year. In London and environment they are also planning to open one in September 1975. The School Board had a meeting with the Consistory, and the Consistory was not unwilling to give permission to use the Church basement for a day school, but both the Consistory and the Board were convinced that this should be done only as a last resort.

The Consistory of London also decided to ask for inclusion of "proof-texts" with the Belgic Confession in a reprint of the Book of Praise. That would be a marvelous thing, indeed, but there is one catch: who can tell us which texts are the "original" ones? There may be a more or less general consensus, that does not yet mean that we can just sit down and copy them from an "original" and authoritative source.

Above we already mentioned possible cooperation between Consistory and School Board; we learned that the Consistory of Burlington West has been approached by the School Board about the possible availability of land for a second school in that area. Our readers may recall that Burlington West possesses 9½ acres of land, which they do not need by a long shot for their Church building plus parking. Might be also a possibility for highschool use! However, the Consistory has the say about that, and it answered the School Board that it was willing to cooperate.

The Burlington P.T.A. held two dinners and they realized a total profit of some \$900.00 on those dinners. They further received \$98.00 for nearly three tons of old newspapers. It is an ill wind that blows nobody good! In this way we benefit from the rise of prices.

In Toronto a meeting was held where Dr. Dresser spoke. Dr. Dresser's name is well known among our Church people: he is the medical doctor who works in Irian Jaya and who also oftentimes helps the missionary families, among whom the Knigge family. Dr. Dresser is also on furlough, and the Toronto Church used his presence here to have him speak to them on his work there.

At the latest Classis Ontario North, the Church at Ottawa requested a minister for every other week during the months from April to October; such with a view to the isolated position of Ottawa and the many visitors who go to Church there during the summer. This request was granted. When the Rev. C. Van Dam is here it will not mean that much of an increase for the ministers in this Classical Area. Barrhead and Neerlandia, on the other hand, had a combined meeting of the Consistories and came to the conclusion that they should request a minister every four weeks once Rev. Van Dam has left. Barrhead also decided to buy a good-quality tape-recorder to enable ill members later to hear the complete service. That is done in practically every Church now, and the members appreciate it very much.

An encouraging news item was found in the Church News of the Fraser Valley. New Westminster reported the following: that they found a note enclosed with the weekly contribution for the Church, reading, "Please find \$18.00 instead of the weekly \$15.00. Reasons: now that the

Consistory has decided not to have collections for the Mission anymore, and our monthly contributions normally came to \$3.00, we are now paying per year 12 times \$3.00 extra to make up for the 'loss'." That is very encouraging, indeed, and it is something that should be followed everywhere. In this manner a Consistory also has a better possibility of checking whether the members fulfil their duty also in financial respect. For our Reformed people sometimes become very reticent when their own financial contributions for the Church become the topic and we all know the stories of people who claimed that they put it into the collection bag, but with the strange result that almost never larger bills were found in those collection bags; the times when there was a larger bill it was even frequently from the few who contributed in this way during all their life, and of whom it was known!

Let me close with something else.

The other time I expressed my uncertainty as to what Hamilton meant with their proposal concerning Article 70 C.O. 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, something about which I wrote several years ago already. 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. When a matter belongs to the Churches in common it is a matter that should be dealt with at the General Synodical level, and a Church that has something of that nature 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. 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.

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.

But now back to the proposal regarding Article 70 itself. Grand Rapids' bulletin contained the following passage by the Rev. G. Van Rongen: "It has been left to the local Churches what they decide and do concerning the problem of marriage-confirmation or -solemnization, in particular which particular arrangements must be made regarding the latter. There seems to be a lot of confusion and all different practices."

I do not know who has informed my colleague, but I can assure him that the information which he received is not correct. I have been in Canada for more than twenty-one years and have never heard of a lot of confusion; in

fact, I have never heard of any confusion. If it is there, it must have been stirred up lately. And if "all different practices" are in existence at present, they must have come into existence only rather recently, for I have not heard of them all the years I have been a minister within the Canadian Reformed Churches. Of all the Churches in Classis Ontario North plus the whole West, I know of only one Church where they are "different" in that they "maintain article 70 C.O.": in that Church the marriages are solemnized in an official worship service. Don't believe it right away when you are told that there is "confusion".

Besides, I oftentimes have a feeling that the situation is as follows: there are always some who deplore variety and confuse variety with confusion. Their stand is: **You** do things differently from the way in which **I** do them; thus there is confusion. We must come to a unity of action, which invariably means: you must do things the way **I** do them!

But what harm is there in it when in this Church a certain thing is done in this manner and in the neighbouring Church somewhat differently? Does that work confusion? Nonsense. I do **not** believe the plurality of churches, but I **DO** believe the pluriformity of the Church! That is one of the treasures shown to me by the late professor K. Schilder, a treasure which I shall not suffer to be taken from me. If anyone wishes to call that confusion, let him go ahead, but know at the same time that he has not yet understood the abc of being truly Reformed. vO

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# Pastoral Counselling by the Elders of the Flock (3)

## PASTORAL COUNSELLING - BY WHOM?

In answering this third question we are, again, in danger of saying too much, and thus saying nothing really. Or, in Latin, of saying *multa sed non multum*, many things but not much.

The first part of the answer should be negative. When talking about *pastoral* counselling, knowing that Christ is the Great Pastor, the Good Shepherd, we must draw a line and not cross it. Some time ago *Clarion* published the article, "Pathway to Hallelujah". This pathway is the book of Psalms which concludes with multiplied Hallelujahs. But look how it starts! Psalm 1:1, "Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly." The technical term in the world of psychiatry, counselling services, etc., is "referral", meaning that we, if we meet a person in need of special care, "refer" him to the specialists. Psychiatrists are considered such specialists.

Up till now many christian leaders, pastors and all who are responsible for others, have made no bones about "referring" a needy brother or sister to "the counsel of the ungodly". He is a specialist, a psychiatrist, isn't he? Let's be glad that there are such people; we are unable to help anyway. It's exactly what we do if a person suffers from physical illness: go to the doctor! So what?

It is time to realize that it is an evil thing to "refer" a member of Christ who is in trouble, to a person, whatever his qualifications are, who:

- does not know, with the knowledge of faith (Cat. L.D. 1), what sin is and, as a consequence, what misery is;
- who believes that man is essentially and by nature good, has sufficient inner sources and resources;
- who has no clue of the three things necessary "to live (and die) happily";
- who suggests to the "patient" that he shifts the blame from himself to others, to his surrounding or whatever and whoever else;
- who even suggests that, if "religion" bothers you, why not throw it overboard and try to live

without it, if that would help you get rid of anxiety and guilt-complexes.

While reading these lines many a reader will have remembered examples of such ungodly counselling in his own neighbourhood.

We are good at proclaiming the *antithesis* between what is from God and what is from the world, from the devil. We proclaim it in the field of education, labour, politics, science; but why do we, all of a sudden, forget it in the field of counselling? "As far as the East is from the West . . ."

This recognition of the antithesis does not have to result in a complete refusal of ever letting an expert enter the picture.

"All things are yours". Help is available from psychologists, counsellors who are trained in helping people to understand what is wrong with them, and thus to understand themselves. But this help should be sought, always, on the condition that such "experts" are prepared to maintain a close contact and cooperation with "the elders of the flock". Here is much left to be desired. Experience tells us that, even in christian institutions, psychiatrists (but we should question the legitimacy of this term) are acting as though they were demigods. It also tells us that there are counsellors who are christians but show unwillingness to come down from their ivory tower and to communicate with the shepherds of Christ's Church. Is it, maybe, *jalousie de mé-tier*?

No, we haven't been complete. We gladly acknowledge that there are others; that the conviction is growing that a "patient" cannot be helped when separated from his surroundings, especially his Church-surroundings. There are experts who gladly engage the help of minister, elders, relatives. And that's the way it should be. Our brother or sister, if ever (that happens!) put before the dilemma: "either you listen to me, or you listen to your pastor", should not hesitate to say farewell to such an expert.

\* \* \* \* \*

The second part of the answer to the third question is more positive.

If we are a living community, we should be a healing community. It

can, alas, not be denied that the opposite is sometimes true; that brothers and sisters of one House make life so difficult for each other that they produce patients instead of cures. In a true, real, Church the word of Paul should become a wonderful reality, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as you teach and admonish one another in all wisdom, singing Psalms and Hymns and Spiritual Songs" (Coloss. 3:16). (Between brackets: Paul obviously believed in the healing power of singing Psalms and also Hymns and Spiritual Songs, making melody in your hearts). In this text the word rendered by "admonish" may also be translated as "train", "help along the right road", "sing them out (of their trouble)". From this word Dr. Adams has derived his term "nouthetic counselling".

Another text from Paul, Romans 15:14. "You (that is the whole flock!) are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and *able to instruct* one another." The *Williams* translation has; "you are competent to counsel one another."

In Proverbs we read, "A man of understanding shall attain to wise counsel."

Such congregational competence to counsel one another sprouts from love and concern for one another; from the wisdom of faith, given by the Holy Spirit and built upon Scripture and upon our own experience of the truth of Scripture in our lives.

Such counselling is not a science but an art which can be developed by every true christian. If there is goodness (as Paul says), that is, the desire to help, and if there is the courage to tell the truth "in love", we can help each other. If it is not in love, forget it! "Rather speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up together in every way" (Ephes. 4:15). When this quotation is read in its context, we learn that this congregational competence to counsel one another is an essential part of "equipping the saints for the work of *diakonia*" by the "pastors and teachers."

\* \* \* \* \*

The third part of the answer to the question "Who gives pastoral counselling?" must be that the task of all the members of the flock does in no way deny the *special* counselling task of the *special* office-bearers! (Remark: There is some truth in *Van Ruler's* objection against the word "special" here. An office is always

“special”; if it becomes “general” it is no longer an office. Therefore he is opposed to the term “office of all believers” and suggests words like “calling”, “mandate”.)

Again, it would take hours to describe fully what each of the three offices in the Church must consider its special task. Therefore, let us try to say something about the *unity of the three offices*, especially with regard to their counselling tasks.

A growing number of New Testament commentators has come to the conclusion that the term “*presbyters*” (elders) is to be used for *all* office-bearers.

Time and again it has been said that the New Testament is insufficient as to the organization of the Church, locally. Therefore every “tradition” has a relative right to read its own church-political set-up into the New Testament. Moreover, one finds - thus it is said - more than one source for New Testament givens regarding the offices and their names. There is a judaistic trend (the word “presbyter” stems from that source); there is also a hellenistic trend (the concept of “episcopos”, bishop or overseer, finds its origin there).

We should, however, read and understand the New Testament, *not* against a hellenistic or Greek background, but against the background of the Old Testament. That is the only legitimate way. For the understanding of the New Testament teaching regarding the offices it is absolutely necessary to “see” them in the light of the Old Testament.

If Peter (Acts 1) found it necessary to use the Scriptures (more than one quotation) in order to fill the vacancy of Judas, how much more must that have been the case when (Acts 6) it became necessary to appoint men to take care of the church in Jerusalem!

They appointed *seven* men. Why seven? Two answers: not only because the Lord Himself appointed seventy (for a whole province, Galilee, seven would not have been enough; for a local church seven would do), but because of the Old Testament example of Moses. Acts 6 must be understood in the light of Numbers 11! The young Christians after Pentecost lived with the Old Testament, day by day, now seeing everything in the light of Jesus Christ. When one compares Acts 6 with Numbers 11, one will discover that there are sur-

prising similarities as to why such men should be appointed. Moses could not do the work alone anymore; nor could the apostles.

In addition, these seven men are *never called deacons*. They are called “The Seven” (Acts 6:3, 21:8). And when we are informed about their work it certainly was more than “serving the tables”; Philip, Stephen did a lot of preaching.

But we have to stop short here. The article would become too long. Be it sufficient to state that a renewed study of the theology of the offices is not a luxury (another task for our College); and secondly, that “the elders of the flock” (Acts 20:17 - the word “presbyter” is used here) is the oldest term and includes *all* the office-bearers of the local church. We are accustomed to speak of “elders and deacons”. The New Testament never does that. When what we call “elders” are mentioned together with the deacons (Philipp. 1:1), the word “bishop” or “overseer” is used by Paul. “Elders” or “presbyters” is the word for *all* offices.

For our purpose, speaking about pastoral counselling, the conclusion is that, although the offices always have to be distinguished (Form for Ordination), they *all* are involved in the presbyterial or shepherding task of pastoral care. They *all* have to “heed and feed” (Acts 20).

This conclusion should force us to take another look at the theology of “*the keys of the kingdom*”. When the Lord handed them to His apostles (Matth. 16:19), He anticipated what He would say later on, in Revelation 3:7: “. . . who has the key of David, who opens and no one shall shut, who shuts and no one opens.” And this word, in turn, has to be understood in the light of Isaiah 22:15ff, where the man who has the key of David, has to be “a father to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem.” Being a father to the flock, that is having and handling the keys of the kingdom. Shebna, Eliakim had the keys to *all* doors in Jerusalem, to all store-rooms as well as to the armoury. In this light our deacons are also “key-bearers”; they as well as the others, have received the keys of the kingdom, be it for a special purpose; they also have the task of “heed and feed”. And if one insists on using the word *discipline* in the context of the “keys”, let’s then, by all means, do that in a biblical way: discipline is nothing but the

*training for discipleship*. This includes what we found as a translation of counselling: “helping on the way.”

Thus there always has to be a close cooperation between the three offices, not only in “special” cases where all are to be involved, preachers, overseers, and deacons, but also in general: they are together “the elders of the church,” as we rightly confess in Art. 30 of the Confession of Faith.

Thus “pastoral counselling” is most certainly *not* the exclusive right and task of the preacher or “pastor and teacher”.

We conclude with three practical suggestions.

1. The preacher has to be known by his flock as a loving and trustworthy “pastor”. He not only has to have a sharp eye for the special needs of individual members, but these members must feel free to come to him with their problems. It happens too often that members of Christ spill these problems not in the office of the minister but in the office of the doctor. Something must then be wrong on both sides, minister and member. It should not be denied that the minister, as “the angel of the church” (Rev. 2,3), has a special position as well as a special training, but if Peter calls himself “a fellow elder of the elders among you” (1 Peter 5:1), how much more must the preacher consider himself as such and behave accordingly. Counselling is most certainly not a one-man-show!

2. Overseers (we call them elders) have to “bear the families of their ward on their heart” just as the high-priest bore the twelve tribes on his breast. They have not only to do the regular family visitation, but to create occasions for special contacts with those who need it.

3. Deacons certainly do not become unemployed when the welfare state arrives. *Dr. Trimp* recently wrote, and rightly so, “Their task has expanded tremendously”, and that in the Netherlands, the socialist paradise!

In short, we have to get rid of the one-man-show and to work for the rehabilitation of *all* office-bearers. That will call for a training of overseers and deacons. We wholeheartedly agree with *Stringfellow*: “True discipline by the elders helps the distressed (etc.) people more than the counselling by the ‘experts’.”

G. VANDOOREN

# The Coming of the Lord According to the Book of Revelation

In the last Bible book, the book of Revelation, the theme of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ plays a prominent role.

The previous to last verse contains this theme in the wellknown words: "Surely, I come quickly". And for the second time in the response: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus!"

We hear there about Christ's coming from two different sides.

But also elsewhere in the book of Revelation the coming of our Saviour draws our attention.

It is for this reason that we have selected this particular theme from the many and manifold themes which play their respective roles in this book.

**NOT DEAD!**

First of all there are several texts that introduce the LORD God to us as the One Who is and Who was and Who is to come, or: Who shall be.

We find this in chapter 1:14, in 11:17; and in 16:5.

When we read this phrase we are immediately reminded of the story of the burning bush, Exodus chapter 3. There the LORD introduced Himself to Moses as "I am Who I am", or "He is Who He is", Yahweh.

This is the covenant name of the LORD. This is the indication of His covenant activities in the relation with His people. This name tells us that He is very much active in making His promises, and even His threats, His menaces, come true.

He is the God Who is there, and definitely not the God Who is dead, as it was said a few years ago: "God is dead".

**IMPORTANT**

The fact that the LORD introduces Himself this way in the last Bible book is of great importance. It prevents us from reading this book in the wrong way.

As soon as we forget this Self-introduction we easily start reading this book as one that is full of mysterious things, even sensational things. It is no wonder, then, that many people let their fantasy go and make all sorts of speculations - as e.g. is done by many sects.

However, as long as we keep God's Self-introduction in mind - and remember, He is the One Who is, and Who was, and Who is to come - we will read this book as a covenant document, as a book that tells us about the Lord Jesus Christ, Who on behalf of His Father in heaven acts according to the lines of the covenant, in blessing some and cursing others.

**THESE LAST DAYS**

Then at the same time we understand that the book of Revelation does not only inform us about the very last days of this world, the final judgment, but about what the Bible calls "these last days", the last dispensation that began with the resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus.

All during these centuries He acts from heaven along the lines of the covenant, or - to say it in an adequate but perhaps clear way - according to the principles of the covenant of God.

**ITS SIGNIFICANCE**

As far as this is concerned the last Bible book is of very great significance for the days in which we are now living, in which it is suggested and preached that God is no longer there, or that one should not look for God as being in heaven since we meet Him in our neighbour or even in ourselves, and that for this reason we must completely change our way of worshipping God: no longer by going to Church, praying and singing, but by being good to our fellow-men; and that on this basis a completely new society can be established, a truly better one.

This last Bible book - if only we read it in the correct way - is of great spiritual support and consolation in these days, because it so clearly shows us that God is faithful to His covenant in any respect, and that our Lord Jesus Christ is acting accordingly.

**HE COMES WITH THE CLOUDS**

It is a matter of course that in particular the coming of Christ takes an important place in the book of

Revelation. Time and again we read about the coming of Christ, the Head of the Church.

This is how the Saviour is introduced to us - rather, first of all to the apostle John, but through him to all the readers of this book - as the One Who comes with the clouds.

He went with the clouds and would come with the clouds, according to the words spoken by the angels on Ascension Day.

It is the image that we remember from the prophecies of Daniel, chapter 7, that of the Old One Who set Himself in the throne for the great judgment, and of the Son of man Who set Himself next to Him in the same throne, and Who would execute the great covenant judgment. This way the Lord Jesus is introduced to us in the first chapter of the last Bible book: He comes, He is coming!

**ON THE LAST DAY ONLY?**

And now we must be on our guard!

For we should definitely not restrict the coming of Christ to the last day. For then we get stuck with the contents of the book of Revelation. Then we would not be able to understand its message and its great significance for what is taking place nowadays.

For the very first time that we again are informed about a coming of Christ is in chapter 2 verse 5, where He Himself says: If the situation will remain as it is now in the congregation of Ephesus, namely that the first love is lost, then I will come and take your candlestick away from its place.

Nobody will understand this as being applicable to the last day.

In chapter 2:16 He announced His coming to the Church of Pergamus. He will come, personally, He said, to fight against the Balaam-people and the Nicolaitans, and this way help this particular congregation. Well, this must have taken place in the days when the apostle John had to write down this majestic revelation and these particular words.

We find the same thing in the message which is sent to the Church of Thyatira: He will come to punish the woman called Jezebel, who was a danger to the Church.

He even said He would come against a whole congregation, that of Sardes (3:3). He would come as a thief in the night, unexpectedly, if they would remain dead, spiritually

dead, as they were at that moment.

In chapter 3:11 we read about a comforting coming of Christ, to make true the word that He had given to the Church of Philadelphia, that this congregation would be saved from the temptations that would be there, the world-wide propaganda of the nationalistic Jews who tried to win the sympathy of all their fellow-Jews for their great and final rebellion against the Romans.

A similar coming of Christ which is of a comforting character is also announced in the message which was sent to the Church of Laodicea: If they would let Him in, He would come and have supper with them. He would come to those who open the door for Him.

#### REPEATED COMING

It is in the light of this repeated coming of Christ, already in the days in which the book of Revelation was written and read by its first readers, that we have to give attention to the same verb, "to come" or "coming", in the remaining chapters of the last Bible book. Chapter 5 provides us with a panorama of what is going to happen: The Lamb will take the book with the many seals and open it. He will execute the judgments that have been written in this book, the judgments which will fall upon the apostate ones who even became the persecutors of the faithful believers, the Christians. Christ will fulfil the judgments upon the synagogue of satan, the world-wide organization and community of unbelieving Jews, who at an early stage already were taught to accuse the Christians in their so-called "Eighteen Prayer" during the synagogue services. In this light we must listen to the statement made in chapter 6:17, "The great day of His wrath is come!" and to that of 14:7, "The hour of His judgment is come!"

#### HIS FINAL COMING

There is much in the book of Revelation that must be read in the light of the great event that was to take place in the year 70 A.D., when the city of Jerusalem was conquered and destroyed by the Roman army, and the rebellious Jews were beaten.

Nowhere else than in Jerusalem "our Lord was crucified", so that by "the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt" in 11:8 the city of Jerusalem is meant. Jerusalem had become "Egypt" and identified itself with this heathen nation that

oppressed the people of God. It is no wonder then that the plagues of Egypt can be clearly distinguished in the respective judgments of chapter 16. Neither is it strange that chapter 18 speaks of "plagues". For the "synagogue of satan" was guided and inspired by "Jerusalem" and the "Jerusalem ideal" of a world capital that would take the city of Rome's place and bless the world with the blessings of Judaism.

However, it cannot be said that all that the book of Revelation informs us about was exclusively a matter of these nearby events. There is a great perspective, in the light of which we must try to understand things.

Indeed, the event of the year 70 A.D. takes a prominent place in this book. God's covenant wrath would be shed upon the apostate Jew who rejected the Lord Jesus as their Messiah and responded to the preaching of the Gospel with hatred and persecution of His followers. But we read in 11:18: "Thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets . . ."

Does not this suggest a final judgment on the great and last day?

This, then connects all the events which were nearby in the days when the apostle John received the revelation of this book, with the final coming of Christ on the last day.

It shows us that He did come, and came time and again, and will continue to come with His judgments, and with help for His Church, even with punishment for the unfaithful congregations, and that all this will take place in accordance with the rules and lines of the covenant, and that finally the great judgment of the last day will take place along the same rules and lines.

#### BEHOLD!

It is not only the Church of Sardis, then, that heard the words: "Behold, I come as a thief in the night", because some of them defiled their garments by compromising with the enemies - most likely because they wanted to be able to lead a much easier life - but that all the congregations to which the book of Revelation had to be sent hear the same thing in 16:15: "Behold, I come as a thief, blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame."

Then only will they enjoy the joy of the wedding feast of the Lamb - concerning which it is stated that this too will come! (19:7).

Then only will they be given the consolation of the last chapter, wherein it is said, even no less than three times: "I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."

Therefore the Church has to learn to pray: "Come, Lord Jesus", as it is done in 22:17, even twice, and also in 22:20, the last verse of the Bible but one.

#### NO COMPROMISING

The Christians and the Christian Church must not compromise with the synagogue of satan, which is flirting with the nations of the world. There must be no compromising with the false, Jewish church of those days, that tried to obtain the help of the civil authorities in cities and regions and even of the whole Roman Empire in the persecution of the Christians.

"Jerusalem" was an influential power in those days, "Jerusalem" with its false messianic ideals. In their opinion the Jews had a calling in the midst of this world. They would be able to redeem the world from misery. In order to arrive at that stage they were acting in a very diplomatic way, by trying to make friends with the authorities.

It is fundamentally the same in our own days. The Church of Rome uses all sorts of tactics and diplomacy to keep its influence in this world, even in the political field. The World Council of Churches publicly supports all sorts of revolutionary movements, for one of the trends of these modern days is that of being anti-apartheid, anti-establishment, and so on. They flirt with world-communism, in particular that of Soviet Russia.

But in the meantime, generally speaking, they have lost the pure and undefiled Gospel. This means that the faithful Church of Jesus Christ, the true one, wherever it may be situated, is not taken into account. They are only small in number. As soon as they become active and raise their voice in any matter they are contradicted and mocked, even oppressed and suppressed.

The Christian Church is warned all through the book of Revelation: If you would not stay in your first love, if you would lose that, then it is no

wonder that you do no longer see the dividing lines and start to compromise and state: I cannot see that things are as bad as we are told!

This book informs us that in the days when it was written there were a number of Church members who did no longer see these lines. They gave room for heresies in their congregations which were closely affiliated with the false messianic ideas of the synagogue Jews of those days, and they were already under way to deny the Lord Jesus as the only and complete Saviour.

Even in the days of the apostle Paul it was necessary to seriously warn the Churches against this danger. He pointed to them when he said farewell to the elders of the congregation of Ephesus.

Satan is always trying to draw the attention of the Church and the Church members away from the Gospel. He has done this all through the centuries and will go on with that till the last day. He is doing so by means of heresies, by means of the propaganda of false messianic ideals, by making the Church lose its first love; even by means of the modern socialist welfare state, concerning which everyone can see with his own eyes that it has a bad influence on the spiritual life of many: slackness in attending Church and things like that. Prosperity often makes one weak!

For this reason the book of Revelation is full of the warning: I come!

There is a strong warning in these two brief words: "I come!"

The future and fate of many "Christians" could easily become the same as that of the apostate Jews of the "synagogue of satan"!

#### FULFILMENT

Christ comes, time and again, and presently for good.

He has already frequently come in the course of Church history.

He did often come to take a candlestick away. Certainly, then there still was, and is, a "church". But there was and is no light in that church any more. It did no longer shine, and actually it was no real church any more. There are many dead churches and many dead christians. They do not pass on the glorious light of the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, the light of the joy of life's renewal by the perfect Saviour.

What about ourselves?

This is the very important and urgent question that arises now.

What will our future be? How will the situation be in, say, twenty years' time? Will we still be faithful then? Will our first love still be there?

What will Christ's opinion concerning us be? What will He think about us?

For no less than seven times we read in the seven royal messages of chapters 2 and 3 the sentence: "I know thy works". Christ knows everything about us, about our congregation and about each and all of us!

#### RECOMMENDED TO HIS GRACE

It may be clear that we badly need the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

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 Christ's grace that has to keep us going. To this grace we are recommended in the final words of the book of Revelation.

But since this is a separate subject, we will deal with this later on, D.V., under another heading.

G. VAN RONGEN  
(Pro Ecclesia)

### MISSION NEWS - continued

to do quite some shopping around to obtain the material for reasonable prices. However, the initial difficulties have been overcome and work should be in full swing shortly. A building permit has been granted. The people are greatly interested and I am stimulating them to contribute as well, reminding them of the two copper coins of the poor widow.

"*Progress and Order*" is the Brazilian motto. One cannot deny that there is evidence of progress in Brazil and it even penetrates to the little out-of-the-way corner wherein we live, for which we are very thankful.

A most valuable improvement is that we now have treated town water. This past week our house was connected to the water system and we enjoy having water that is supposedly safe to drink. For the time being we still take the precaution of boiling and filtering the drinking water! If the people will use it, many diseases can be avoided and it certainly is a great step ahead in public health.

The first telephone is installed in the Post Office (by radio). This means we now have a means of communications with Recife and shortly should also be able to reach Canada through Recife. In cases of emergency this may prove to be most valuable.

Two more improvements which we enjoy greatly and which save us trips to Barreiros are the openings of a drug-store and a milk-outlet selling pasteurized milk from Recife. Under

construction is a large resort-hotel. Although we will not likely ever need it ourselves, it will provide some employment and draw more people to town.

The new clinic is now operating with a full-time doctor and has a limited supply of free medicine, and also milkpowder and cornflour for underfed infants. Assistance is scheduled to be increased.

So far for progress. As for order: we have received a new president this month, General Ernesto Geisel. *Time* gives the news under the heading "Democracy Mocked" and calls it a farcical election with the trappings of democracy, while it is a military dictatorship. However, in my opinion it is probably the best system of government considering the stage of development this country is in. Noteworthy is that Geisel, 65, is Brazil's first protestant president, being of Lutheran background. Little change in general policies is expected. Most people in town are ignorant of the fact that there is a change in presidents.

*From Rev. C. Van Spronsen's report for the month of January.*

1974 YEARBOOK  
Extra copies available  
at  
PREMIER PRINTING LTD.

OUR COVER  
Sproat Lake, Vancouver Island.  
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Photograph]



# Letter-to-the-Editor

Dear Editor:

In the last issue of *Clarion*, dated March 9/74, and also in *Clarion* dated Feb. 23/74, I found advertisements for a Principal for the Edmonton Society for Christian Education.

Does the Publisher of *Clarion* not know that the school that this Society supports was instituted by the Christian Reformed Church, and is also maintained by them, and other churches. And that this Society only supports that School and no other. And that this Society has pulled a number of people of the Canadian Reformed Church with them to support this General Christian School, instead of working towards a School of the Canadian Reformed Church as they should be.

In *Clarion's* News Medley dated Feb. 23 I read that the Editor "counted no less than ten vacancies coming up". And I know of only a few who prepare for the task of teaching our children at school. I know that there are several Church members who teach elsewhere. That was - and is - their privilege. Until now we did not have to ask them to come over and teach at our own schools.

"But I think that the time has come to do so, at least to put before them the question whether their first obligations are not towards their fellow-Church members who either are maintaining a school or are planning to establish one." These words were taken from News Medley in *Clarion*, Vol. 23, No. 4 (Feb. 23).

Does this obligation hold nothing for our Canadian Reformed Magazine *Clarion*, and the Publisher? If it is the obligation of our teachers towards fellow-Church members, is it not the obligation of our Canadian Reformed Magazine to help get teachers for our own schools first, and not to help other General Christian Schools by advertising for teachers for them until we have teachers for our own schools first.

With advertisements like this in *Clarion* I think of City-Guide of the Canadian Reformed Church of Edmonton with all its announcements of activities of other Churches in it. This letter is written to the Editor of *Clarion*, and it is hoped, that it will appear in *Clarion* along with an answer.

H. L. Stel Edmonton

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## Comments

The business-part of a magazine, which includes advertisements, lies outside the responsibility and authority of an editorial committee. It is a matter for the publisher.

We could, therefore, just publish this letter and say, "If the publisher wishes to react, that is his problem; we just keep out of it".

We do not wish to do that, for we know that the publisher has many a time pondered the question which advertisements to insert and which ones to refuse.

I also wish to state clearly how I see it.

In the first place: such a question should be answered *apart from any local situation*. It is deplorable, indeed, that there is no "own" school in Edmonton as yet, but that should not influence our arguments at all when we ask whether *Clarion* should refuse any advertisement in which a "General Christian School" (as brother Stel puts it) asks members of the Churches to apply for a position as a teacher.

Further: the question whether the "own" schools have been sufficiently supplied has nothing to do with the basic point.

In the third place: Would anyone dare to state that a Church member teaching at a public school or at a "General Christian School" is committing a sin? If anyone should dare to do so, he dares more than I do. I for one reject such a stand. If it is a sin now, it is also one when the "own" schools have a sufficient number of teachers.

The question is simply: What has priority?

And *that* is a question which can be answered and decided upon only by our fellow-members who are teachers.

It is no doubt superfluous to state that I am convinced that the "own" schools have the first rights.

But that does not preclude the right of a publisher to include advertisements from others who desire to have "our" teachers.

Publication of a magazine does not even mean endorsement of the articles written!

Neither does it mean endorsement of advertisements.

A publisher could only then be justly admonished if he should allow advertisements which are clearly against God's Word. Not in this case.

vO

## NOTE OF THE PUBLISHER:

Personally and as publishers of *Clarion* we are fully in favor of and wish to promote the own Canadian Reformed Schools, where our reformed parents have the best opportunities for a reformed education for their children, according to the promises made at the baptism of these children.

However, we agree fully with what the Rev. VanOene states, that we cannot say that it is sinful when a Canadian Reformed teacher teaches at a not-Canadian Reformed school. And therefore, though fully acknow-

ledging that our own schools should have priority, we cannot forbid our teachers to teach elsewhere.

Further, when it would have regarded an ad for a general Christian School in a place where there was no possibility at all for a Canadian Reformed school, there would not be any real objection. Neither could there be much trouble, in our opinion, when in Edmonton a Canadian Reformed school did exist.

And if we now should refuse such an advertisement, we would interfere in the local situation in Edmonton, which we do not think is our calling and duty, as publisher, although we hope, of course, that also in Edmonton there will soon come an "own" school.

G. KUIK, publisher

## Press Release

*PRESS RELEASE of Classis "Ontario-South" of the Canadian Reformed Churches, held at London, Ontario, March 13, 1974.*

1. *Opening.* On behalf of the convening Church of Watford, Rev. W. Huizinga calls the meeting to order, and suggests to sing Ps. 48:1 and 4. Scripture reading is taken from Ephesians 5:22-33.

Rev. Huizinga leads in prayer. Hereafter he speaks a few words about Christ's love for His Church in relation to the Scripture passage which had been read to us.

He welcomes the brethren and recalls the disappointment for the Church of Hamilton on account of the decline of call by Rev. Geertsema of the Church of Carman, Manitoba. He, further, expresses the wish that the Church of Hamilton may soon receive a minister of the Word.

2. *Credentials.* The delegates of the Church of Chatham check the Credentials. They report that the Churches are duly represented.

3. *Constitution of Classis.* Classis is constituted; the officers are: Rev. G. Van Rongen, praeses; Rev. W. Huizinga, scriba; Rev. P. Kingma, assessor.

4. *Adoption of Agenda.* The Agenda is adopted, after a few points are added to it.

5. *Reports.* The Report of the treasurer, br. C. Ouwersloot, R.R.#2, Beamsville, Ontario, L0R 1B0, is read and adopted.

The Church of Smithville is appointed to audit the books.

6. *Proposals and Instructions.*  
a. Proposals from the Church of Chatham and from the Church of Grand Rapids regarding increase in 'car allowance' for the delegates.

A proposal to raise the mileage

[continued p. 19]

# our little magazine



## From the Mailbox

Dear Busy Beavers,

Easter is "Sunday of Joy". People used to greet each other on Easter morning with "A joyful alleluia to you" or "Christ is risen!" and others would answer, "He is truly risen!"

What a joyful day when we remember how the Lord Jesus rose triumphantly from the grave after He had died for our sins!

How happy we are when Spring comes again! The grass is so green the tulips and daffodils so bright, the skies blue and the sun so warm.

But Easter is far greater than Spring! For Easter is the rising of the Sun of Righteousness and a new life for all of us who love and serve the Lord Jesus. That is why Easter is "Sunday of Joy". And really not only one Sunday, but every day again God's children may be happy.

Happy Easter, Busy Beavers!

\* \* \* \* \*

Snowdrop, lift your timid head, All the earth is waking,  
Field and forest, brown and dead, Into life are breaking;  
Snowdrops, rise and tell the story, How he rose, the Lord of  
Glory.

\* \* \* \* \*

Now let's do our Easter quiz.

1. The appearance of the \_\_\_\_\_ frightened the guard of \_\_\_\_\_ from Jesus' grave.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ were afraid they could not roll away the stone from Jesus' tomb.
3. The angels told the women, "\_\_\_\_\_."
4. \_\_\_\_\_ knew the risen Lord by the sound of His voice.
5. Two disciples, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, ran quickly to the grave that the women said was empty.
6. On the evening of Easter Sunday Christ appeared to \_\_\_\_\_ disciples.
7. Later on, beside the Sea of Galilee, He appeared to \_\_\_\_\_ disciples.
8. In I Cor. 15 we read that the risen Lord "appeared to more than \_\_\_\_\_ brethren at one time."
9. The Lord's last appearance to the disciples here on earth, was on \_\_\_\_\_ Day.

### SOMETHING TO DO

Do you know exactly what happened to the Lord Jesus during the last week before His death and resurrection? Let's find out by making an outline of that week.

Write down on a sheet of paper all the names of the days of the week between Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday.

Now, carefully read the accounts of the Lord's "last week" in the Gospels (Luke is especially helpful). Maybe you have a Bible handbook or commentary to help you. Fill in beside the name of each day what happened on that day.

This outline should give you a clear picture of what happened that most important week!

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Joanne Koning*. We hope you'll enjoy all our Busy Beaver activities. Thank you for your nice poem, Joanne.

Hello, *Yvonne* and *Denise Van Amerongen*. We're always glad to have sisters join us! I'm glad you both liked skating this winter. Write again soon, girls.

And welcome to you, too, *Joanne De Boer*. What a nice long letter you wrote me! I hope you will really enjoy reading Our Little Magazine and doing the quizzes. Please write and tell me your birthday, Joanne.

Hello, *Anthony Tenhage*. Of course you may be a Busy Beaver! We hope you'll really enjoy joining in all our Busy Beaver activities. That's quite a way for you to go to school, isn't it, Anthony? Hope you have a happy birthday.

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Anita Tenhage*. I hope your mother got better fast, Anita. And I hope you soon get your penpal.

*Busy Beavers*, Anita would like a penpal. Don't disappoint her! Anita's address is:

14 Kingsmere Cres. Brampton, Ontario

Congratulations, *Helen Linde*, you had the answers to your quizzes all right! Keep up the good work, Helen.

Thank you for your story, *Hetty Witteveen*, I think the Busy Beavers will really enjoy it. Do you often write stories for fun, Hetty?

You had the answers to the quizzes all right too, *Patricia Van Raalte*! And thank you for your nice story, but it was too late for the contest. Hope you enjoyed writing it!

Hello, *Celia Van Woudenberg*, Thank you for your nice chatty letter. How is your wallpapering coming? I really enjoyed reading about your hobby stamp collecting. Do you know some other Busy Beavers who collect stamps?

Thank you for the story and Book Look, *Jo-anna Flach*. But your story, too, was too late for the contest. It was nice to hear from you again, Jo-anna.

\* \* \* \* \*

Let's finish with a story from Busy Beaver *Hetty Witteveen*.

### Scat! Scat!

Once upon a time there was an old man who lived in a green house and an old woman who lived in the house beside him, which was also green. They both hated cats. Whenever a cat came near they would say, "Scat! Scat! Little cat!"

One day a cat came near their house. The little old man's door was half open, and so the cat went in between the crack. The little old man was sweeping the porch. He could see the cat. Then he said, "Scat! Scat! Little cat!"

The cat leaped out of the door. It went to the little old woman's house. When she saw the cat she said the same thing as the little old man. She chased him out of the house.

The little cat saw a wagon and got into it. A little girl named Nancy saw the little cat in the wagon. Then she ran to her mother and she said,

"Mother, look outside. There is a cute little kitten there. May I have it for a pet?"

"Where are you going to put it?" asked mother.

"In the wicker basket in the basement," replied Nancy.

Her mother said yes and so she got it. When she came

in the house she put the kitten in the wicker basket. And Nancy named him Micky and they lived happily ever after.

\* \* \* \* \*

How did you like last time's puzzles? Here are the answers.

Names of 5 animals are: ape, ox, tiger, cow, goat.

Names of 4 European capitals: Bonn, Madrid, Paris, Rome. How did you do?

Before I close I want to wish all the Busy Beavers a happy holiday! I know some of you will have had some already. Hope they were fun too!

Bye for now.

With love  
from your Aunt Betty.

## PRESS RELEASE - continued

allowance to 12 cents per mile is adopted.

- b. A proposal of the Church of Hamilton regarding a decision of General Synod, Homewood-Carman, concerning Art. 70 of the Church Order. This Proposal is discussed till recess time.

After recess at 1:45 p.m. meeting is reopened with the singing of Ps. 84:5.

The discussion of the proposal is continued and results into the adoption of Hamilton's proposal, as follows:

Classis adds the following consideration to the five of the Church of Hamilton: "Art. 70 C.? has a historical background.

Historically speaking there were two phases: marriage was agreed upon (gesloten) in the family relationship and confirmed (bevestigd) before Christ's Church.

However, the word 'confirmed' has often been interpreted to mean that the Church approves the action of the Government officially contracts the marriage. Therefore, it would be better to use the term 'solemnize'. This would clear away any confusion concerning the word 'confirmed', which originally meant what we mean by 'solemnize' today."

The proposal adopted by Classis reads: "On the basis of the above mentioned considerations Classis "Ontario-South" of March 13, 1974, proposes that Regional Synod of May 1974 decide to send the following overture to General Synod of November 1974 at Toronto.

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 Church Order, namely, by replacing 'confirmed' by 'solemnized', and to officially adopt a translation of the form for Marriage accordingly."

- c. Instruction of the Church of Watford. This instruction is dealt with.

7. *Appointments*. The following

delegates are appointed to the forthcoming Regional Synod of May 1974 at Smithville, Ontario: Primi Ministers: Rev. W. Huizinga, Rev. P. Kingma, Rev. G. Van Rongen, Rev. M. C. Werkman. Secundus Minister: Rev. A. H. Dekker, alternate for any of the primi ministers. Primi Elders: Br. H. J. Wildeboer, Br. P. A. Ten Haaf, Br. J. Janssens, Br. H. Breukelman. Secundi Elders: Br. G. Hart, Br. J. Van Dieren, Br. L. Haan, Br. S. Vander Woude.

The delegates to the Regional Synod are instructed to inquire whether there are any rules for convening Regional Synods.

8. *Question Period ad Art. 41 C.O.* The Question Period is held.

The Church of Chatham and the Church of Hamilton ask advice in certain matters. Advice is given.

The Church of London asks to raise the remuneration for services rendered to each Classis by the Church of London from \$60.00 to \$80.00 to date from March 13, 1974. This request is granted.

9. *Personal Question*. The Personal Question Period is held.

The Church of Smithville, convening Church for the Regional Synod, May 1974, is instructed to put on the Agenda of this Synod a proposal of Classis, March 22, 1972 regarding the Revised Standard Version.

10. *Appointment of Convening Church, Date and Place of next Classis*.

Convening Church: Church of Chatham. Date: June 12, 1974. Place: London.

11. *Adoption of Acts*. Acts are read and adopted.

12. *Press Release*. Press Release is read and adopted.

13. *Censure ad Art. 43 C.O.* Censure is held.

14. *Closing*. The chairman wishes the delegates a safe journey.

The ladies are thanked for their service.

Psalms 16:1 is sung.

Hereafter the chairman leads in prayer of thanksgiving and adjourns Classis.

For Classis,

P. KINGMA, assessor.

## CHURCH NEWS

Called by the Church of Neerlandia

REV. W. HUIZINGA

of London/Watford, Ontario.

Engaged:

CARLA DOORTEN

to

ROBERT McARTHUR

February 14, 1974.

Calgary, Alberta.

The Lord entrusted to us a second child, a daughter:

TESSA FREDERIKA

March 16, 1974.

Harold and Tina Ludwig  
(nee Jager)

134 Ontario Ave. Hamilton, Ont.

Thankful to the Lord for His goodness shown to us, we announce the birth of our daughter and sister:

PATRICIA ELISABETH

Mr. and Mrs. H.A. Berends  
*Barry, Stephanie, Bernice*  
and *Heather*.

March 20, 1974.

Thankfully we announce that on March 23, 1974, God entrusted to our care, our first daughter:

MELANIE RAE

a sister for: *Jason* and *Shaun*  
Pete and Carol Werkman  
Box 92, Neerlandia, Alta.

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