

Clarion

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Israel - Its Past, Present, And Future

10. PROPHECY REGARDING ISRAEL'S FUTURE: ISAIAH II

Once again Isaiah?

Yes indeed: Isaiah! This second article on Isaiah is not going to be an article on "Second Isaiah" or "Deutero-Isaiah", the great unknown prophet, a mere invention of the critics of Holy Scripture, regarded as the author of the chapters 40 - 66, or of 40 - 55 anyway, and hailed by them as the first proclaimer of true monotheism and the greatest among the prophets ever. For a refutation of these statements, I may refer the interested reader to the work of Prof. E.J. Young: *An Introduction to the Old Testament*, pages 202 - 211. Rightly Prof. Young wonders, "If 'Second Isaiah' was so great, and a man who supposedly presented the most exalted doctrine of God which the world had ever witnessed, why such a man had dwindled so rapidly in stature that by the time of Ecclesiasticus his stature had disappeared entirely and his name had been forgotten."

But enough of this. Maintaining the viewpoint that Isaiah the son of Amoz is the author of the entire prophecy, we may say that in one and the same book by the same author prophecies have been written down which have a quite different point of departure as far as time is concerned. Small wonder with a book covering such a large span of time. Part of the prophecies, to be found in the chapters 1 - 39, clearly bear the mark of the time the prophet himself lived in, around 700 B.C.; a period in which the kingdom of the two tribes was still in existence and the world-power Assyria dominated the scene. But from ch. 40 on, the scene is quite different. Assyria has disappeared from the stage of history and Babylonia its successor was already on the decline and the day of liberation was dawning for the Judeans led into captivity by the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar. These chapters, stamped by what was to happen a century and a half afterwards, make us transport ourselves mentally to another country and another period, around 550 B.C.

We do not fall in with Scripture Criticism, stating that something of the sort is impossible. It is indeed impossible with man that a man on his own accord would express himself in such a way far ahead of his time. But what is impossible with man is possible with GOD. And it is the LORD GOD who reveals Himself in this part of the Bible as having made His Divine plan in the long long ago, far ahead of the events, with a view to the salvation of His people, whoever they may be: Jews or (and) Gentiles. It is that plan or counsel which is brought out clearly in the other part of the book. Even Scripture criticism must give Isaiah credit for that and does so, as we have seen above, stating however, that it is Isaiah's opinion rather than God's revelation that made him speak this way.

When you turn to a modern author like Max I. Dimont, mentioned in one of my first articles, you soon find out how things are approached from a definitely human angle. In the chapter "Religion is packaged" he discusses the question of Judah's survival. On page 60 of his book *Jews, God and history* we read:

"There must be more to survival in exile than mere chance. There must be a continuous and conscious effort on the part of the exiles to retain their identities, both religious and national. The ten tribes did not have such a conscious will to remain Jews, whereas the captives of Judah carried with them into captivity an implacable will to survive as Jews. What gave them their will to retain their Jewishness in the face of every obstacle and threat? Somewhere between the fall of Israel and the fall of Judah a spiritual reawakening of the people of Judah took place. A new Jewish character and a new concept of Jewishness itself was forged."

"In spite of the theories of Spengler and Toynbee, that Jewish civilization should have come to an end at this point, since Judah did not respond with solutions permitting her to continue as an independent nation, Judah met the challenge of the times by responding with two ideas which not only saved her from national

extinction but are still influencing the Western world today," Dimont says. The first was the canonization of Holy Scripture, making it the word of God, by king Josiah. The second was the "packaging" of Jewish religion for export by the prophets. "What in essence was it that the prophets taught and exhorted? What they said was, in effect, that ritual and cult in themselves were of no value to God. Humanity, justice and morality they contended were superior to any cult. God did not want rituals; He wanted higher moral standards from man."

Needless to say, the present writer totally disagrees with this picture, I better say, this misrepresentation of Israel's history and the history of God's revelation. It shows us Dimont as a man who runs away with the notions of Scripture-criticism. That it definitely is not Israel that manages to survive the captivity, that is what we are taught in the second part of the book of Isaiah, this wonderful part of the Bible, which is in complete accord with the teaching of the first part and with the other prophets, not to forget the Law of Moses: the One and Only God revealing Himself.

* * * * *

1. First of all it is the LORD who is in the focus here. The praise of His glory is sung and not that of Israel. He is proclaimed as Israel's Redeemer. And what does redemption mean here? Redemption from the Exile? Is it Israel's need and misery that they are exiles and that Jerusalem lies devastated for such a long time? As often as we hear or read of the Exile we are reminded of Israel's sin (e.g. Is. 40:2). And the misery of the exiles is basically a spiritual one, they being deprived of things bearing witness to God's love. By its sins, before and also during the exile, Israel had forfeited the LORD's grace. According to ch. 43:22 it was a sad thing that the sacrificial service was stopped all that time (quite contrary to the statements of Dimont and Scripture criticism!). The forgiveness of sins was at the base of the redemption (ch. 43:25). God's love came to light here (43:4).

That love is unchangeable (49:15). "For my name's sake I defer my anger" (48:9). He is the only Worker of redemption and He does so to the glory of His name, which is the ultimate goal of Israel's redemption (ch. 43:21). In the first part of the book it is Egypt, in the second part it is the idols which are set over against the LORD as the only source of salvation. That Salvation is not only negative (the return from Babel) but also to be conceived of in a positive way, we learn from a chapter like 55. With the liberation from Babel corresponds a life in the blessed communion with the LORD.

Everything else is to be subservient to His glory and greatness. Yes the LORD shows His greatness in making use of instruments like king Cyrus of Persia. We cannot help being surprised about what it says of this heathen king. Just read the first verses of ch. 45. This king is given a wide scope comprising much more than the delivery from Babel; he is even called the LORD's anointed. But it is *the LORD's plan* that is carried out by him. And this in view of a great future: "I gird you, though you do not know me, that men may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is none besides me; I am the LORD, and there is no other." Whereupon a reference is made to creation, to the beginning, and we are given an insight into God's plan, comprising the world and its history from the beginning till the end. The fall of Babylon (ch. 46 and 47) is just a moment in this history and when it is spoken of it is given eschatological dimensions, Babylon being the representative of the kingdom of God's enemy Satan and the Antichrist. And the return of the exiles is pictured in such a way as to suggest the times of refreshing that come from the presence of the LORD and the restoration of all things. Cp. ch. 41:18ff. and 55:12ff. The wilderness is to be turned into a paradise. All these sounds, perceived already in the first part of the book, are now brought out into fuller relief. Israel's return from Babylon is just one stage in the long course of the history of God's revelation that leads His people, the Church, from creation via redemption to recreation.

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2. Another significant point is the question: What about the position Israel is to get in the midst of the

other peoples of the earth and in view of them? Israel is to return to its own land, and Zion, at one time representing the city of Jerusalem, at another time its inhabitants or all Judah, is in the focus. Not on account of the merits of the people, but since it is the LORD who shows His favour to her, bestowing His blessings upon her right there. Cp. ch. 51:17ff.; 54:1ff. Zion was known for that. It is the Sion from of old that is to be restored, yet it is different since now it is clearly the LORD who has been laying her foundations (ch. 54:11). Henceforth it really will be the Holy City, the righteous city that Isaiah was longing for and looking forward to in the first chapters of his book. This Sion is imperishable. Zion and the salvation given to her surpass all that is earthly and perishable. We hear Isaiah speaking in this context about a new heaven and a new earth (51:6f; 65:17). And again we see how prophecy exceeds the limits of the time in view of which it was uttered first of all: the time of the restoration after the exile. Jerusalem had been restored and populated again. The promise was fulfilled and *yet not fulfilled*. The contents of the prophecy are so rich and extensive that they cannot come true in that one city that is the capital of the promised land. Zion, Jerusalem, stands and must stand for much more: the centre of the Messianic kingdom. That is how the other peoples of the earth come into the picture.

Although their destruction is spoken of as far as they had been the enemies of the LORD, it is especially *their gathering together* with Israel which is in the limelight. The destination of God's salvation is not just confined to Israel but is universal. That is why God's work of creation is spoken about repeatedly and his leading of world history to make an appeal to the heathen too. The heathen peoples are sought by the LORD (45:22). And it is a heathen again who is called to a very special service. A prospect of the future is held out, not only to Israel but also to the nations. Cp. Is. 51:4f. Sea peoples and inhabitants of the desert are summoned to sing the praises of the LORD (42:10; 45:14). Israel is given the task of being the servant, the messenger of the LORD in proclaiming His mighty deeds before the heathen.

Seemingly it boils down to the same as what Dimont tells us: "This

time, anticipating an exile for the Jews of Judah, the universalist Prophets outline a workable blueprint for survival . . . It was Isaiah the greatest of Jewish Prophets, who became the chief architect of Jewish universalism . . . Who gave the Jews their universalist message of a future brotherhood of man to carry to the nations of the world . . . They give the Jews a reason to remain Jews in exile and a purpose for their fate . . . The Jews, the Prophets said, must by their conduct, their ethics, their concepts of man, life and God, set an example for the rest of mankind . . . the Prophets turned political defeat into spiritual victory by transforming politics into ideology. Their ideas built a bridge for the Jews to escape from a crumbling political kingdom into the enduring fortress of the coming Diaspora. The Prophets preached the victory through surrender of the body and resistance of the spirit." (*The Indestructible Jews*, pages 66ff.)

It is an example of the view that humanists take of the history of Israel. The praises of the Prophets and their genius are sung, and the praises of the will-power and sagacity of the Jewish people. So, quite the opposite of what the greatest among the prophets intended himself: to magnify the LORD, who revealed his righteousness in the sight of the people.

* * * * *

3. This brings me to a third point I want to make, namely with regard to the task set for the Jewish people: to serve the LORD in the realization of His plan of salvation. Was the Jewish people a worthy servant? Did the people really serve the LORD? In the second part of the book of Isaiah we meet the figure of the *Servant of the LORD*. It is in four prophecies especially that this figure is in the focus: ch. 42:1-7; 49:1-9; 50:4-9; 52:13; 53:12.

Who may be indicated by this name, I better say this title? For we do not learn a name. The question of the Ethiopian eunuch - "About whom, pray, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?" - has been reiterated ever since. By theologians, I mean. There is no end of books and articles on the subject and so is the number of solutions. The latter can be summarized roughly in two or three groups. First, the collectivist one, stating that the servant stands for the people of Israel. Second, the personal one saying that

a person must have been meant, either one of the past, or of the time the prophet lived in (maybe the prophet himself), or of the future, e.g. the Messiah.

As for the collectivist view, it was taken first of all by the Jews, though not by all of them and not by those of the first centuries A.D., and with all sorts of modifications. To see in the servant the Jewish people which had gone through so many hard times full of persecution and sufferings did make an appeal to the Jewish mind. Wasn't Jewish history a corroboration of prophecy after the event? Since the last century a great many Christian or rather liberal exegetes also have taken this view. It cannot be maintained, however. Granted that Israel is named the LORD's servant once in a while (e.g. ch. 41:8; 42:19), in other instances the servant is obviously *distinct* from the people as such so as to make some adherents of this view take recourse to a modified standpoint, namely that by the servant not all Israel, but an ideal Israel, the "cream" of Israel, the prophets, the God-fearing, or the remnant, must be meant.

The picture given of the servant has an unmistakably personal character. Taking into consideration the glorious things we are told of Him, it must be a person not of the past, e.g. Moses, David, Uzziah or another pious king, but rather one to appear in the future; one to be identified with the Messiah known already from the first part of the book and from Isaiah's predecessors. You may be wondering: For what reason is the Messiah here presented in this way: as *Servant* of the LORD?

Probably since it is not so much the royal aspect of his office as the spiritual aspect of his work that is brought out, which aspect first of all implies: service. He is featured as a prophet; then as a sufferer. He came not to be served but to serve. When He is named "Israel", He is pictured as the real representative of God's people (Is. 49:3). He is God's chosen One, in whom God delights. "I have put my Spirit upon Him" (ch. 42:1). Also in ch. 49 we are enlightened about his calling.

In his work He has had a bitter experience: "I said: I have laboured in vain." But He is comforted by the LORD to the effect that he who was disappointed in Israel will be given as a light to the nations (49:6). It is

characteristic of his work that it is consolatory. "A bruised reed He will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not quench" (42:3). So He will be for Israel as well as for the nations. "He will faithfully bring forth justice." "He will not cry nor lift up His voice." He does not make a show. He is humble and modest, sharing the lot of his people in exile. He is not after making a name for himself.

Of this Servant it says that He has come to bring Jacob back to the LORD. From the dispersion of the exile? Certainly, but there is more, since they all like sheep had gone astray and turned everyone to his own way (ch. 53:6).

Now we see that the Servant cannot be the people itself. Israel did not listen (49:4, 5) to Him. Surely He is counted with the people and shares its lot, but it is especially He who is to suffer (Is. 50:6). More than others. So we have come to ch. 53, the moving and wonderful chapter in which THE MAN OF SORROW ACQUAINTED WITH GRIEF is shown. In this very chapter you see brought out into full relief the difference between the Servant and the people estranged from Him. He is depicted here as the Silent, the Humble One, committing himself to the LORD, willingly accepting what his God brought upon Him. He suffered out of his own free will. If from any passage, then from this one we can gather what substitution is all about. "He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." He endured suffering and passion and death instead of others and to the benefit of others.

Since this Servant humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, the LORD has highly exalted Him. It is said of Christ and it applies to the Servant of the LORD. As with CHRIST, His exaltation is first of all his justification (ch. 50:8 and 9). "Surely my right is with the LORD and my recompense with my God" (ch. 49:4). How great a favour is extended to Him, as it says: "Kings shall see and arise; princes and they shall prostrate themselves". He who was a prophet first of all in time of humiliation, will turn out to be the mighty Leader of His people. He who humbly served the plan of God's salvation is the One who is authorized to carry it into effect. Small wonder, for He is the man regarding whom the LORD once spoke: "I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to

the nations." Considering these prophecies of the Servant in the light of all the Scriptures, it cannot but be the Mediator who is capable of doing that. In some respects He reminds us of Moses, but more than Moses is here. The greatest thing to be reported is his mission in the heathen world. "He will bring forth justice to the nations" (ch. 42:1). "The coastlands wait for his Law." Israel and the nations are on a par, on one level. That will be Israel's future. Do not feel sorry about it. That is the very favour, the greatest favour the LORD can ever bestow upon His people from of old, that His Servant is watchful of its interests. And when the heathen are permitted to share the same benefits, there is the more reason for rejoicing.

H.M. OHMANN

OUR COVER

Jerusalem: The grill work of one of the windows of the Lutheran Church forms an interesting frame for the building of the Temple Mount. [Israel Government Tourist Office]



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office three to four weeks prior to
event.

A Joyous Event



Mr. J. DeHaas, member of the first Consistory of the Lethbridge Church.

The evening of April 16, 1975 was a memorable occasion for the Canadian Reformed Church in Coaldale. Members of the congregation, young and old, many guests and several friends gathered together for the 25th anniversary of the congregation.

As theme for the evening was chosen,

"O give thanks unto the Lord, for

He is good and His mercy endureth forever . . .

This is the Lord's doing; and it is marvellous in our eyes."

For this occasion the church building was very attractively decorated; colourful plants and artistic flower-arrangements all around added to the festive atmosphere.

Mr. A.H. Lubbers opened the evening with Psalm 118, prayer, and a word of welcome to everyone.

Mr. H. Pieffers, only son of the late Rev. G. Ph. Pieffers spoke to us on behalf of the family.

Rev. J. Mulder from Cloverdale reminded us that we, as Church, are the household of God and are to be the pillar and foundation of the truth. This knowledge will give us the strength and wisdom to continue building God's church in this world.

Rev. M. VanBeveren from New Westminster pointed out to us that God's dealings with us are great and wonderful. The Canadian Reformed Church was instituted 25 years ago, the Lord kept us in His care and will not forsake us in the future.

All together we sang to our heart's content, listened proudly to our church choir and some fine solo singing, and enjoyed beautiful instrumental work.

Gifts in the form of money and plaques were presented to congre-

gation and consistory by senior and junior members of our church.

Congratulatory letters from Brazil, Neerlandia, and Barrhead were read. Also greetings and felicitations were brought by the ministers of the churches in the Alberta-Manitoba Classis.

A sister of the congregation delivered a very humanistic speech in verse, reminiscing on the highlights of the past 25 years.

Mr. Barendregt, one of the founders of our congregation, was unable to attend this celebration; however, Mr. VanBostelen spoke on his behalf.

Rev. J. Visscher, present minister of the Canadian Reformed Church in Coaldale, spoke the closing words. He remarked that God's church is chosen to everlasting life and that we as members of His church have the calling and duty to preserve the truth as a living reality in our lives.

With thankful hearts we closed this festive occasion with the singing of "Prayer of Thanksgiving" and the national anthem "O Canada".

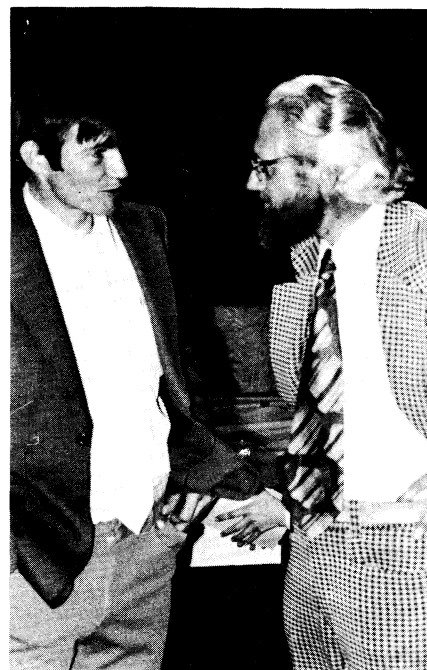
After sitting and listening for three hours we gladly accepted the invitation to enjoy refreshments served in the basement.

There we were able to meet old friends and acquaintances to hash over "the good old times".

A Church member.



A social hour concludes the festal gathering.



Rev. D. DeJong talking with Henry Pieffers, the only son of the late Rev. and Mrs. G. Pieffers.

YOUTH COLUMN

A letter came in the mail responding to the questions about choosing a vocation and so on. The letter reads:

I think you have chosen a topic which is a problem among many Canadian Reformed youth. I for one don't know what I want to do after I am through highschool. I am glad you asked the questions about girls as I am a girl and this has me 'stuck'. I do not know if I should become a teacher or a nurse for say two years (after training) and then get married (if the right person came along). Wouldn't it be a waste of time and money? Could you discuss this in the "Youth Column"?

Let me then try to give some guidelines. Not knowing the complete background of our sister limits me to offering only some words of guidance.

As a rule young girls become wives and mothers. The Bible teaches us that the norm is not to remain unmarried but to be married. Marriage is an institution of God made already in paradise at the beginning of creation. It is not good that man is alone. He needs a companion. Therefore God created Eve from Adam. Man and woman now belong together. They complement each other.

This means that the great majority of girls will end up married. Their previous calling will (slowly sometimes) come to an end. Their life-calling will be the enormous and exciting task of being a wife, and hopefully a mother. Read Proverbs 31. Her marriage life will lay so many demands on her time and energies that she cannot fill another calling besides this one. If a mother and housewife tries to devote a large percentage of her time to other pursuits or callings, it will be to the detriment of her family. Her family will suffer. That is not good, nor right. Her family needs her full-time care and attention.

So, if every young girl only knew that she would soon marry she would not have too many problems making up

her mind, what life-vocation she will choose. Her life-vocation will be to be a housewife.

But the future is not ours to see. And the facts show that the possibility exists that a girl will not marry. She will have to reckon with that possibility. For example, a girl can keep living at home. She takes an ordinary job which is not really satisfying, but she hopes that wedding bells will make the job unnecessary. However, years roll by and no marriage proposals come. The springtime of her life is gone. She has given up ever being married. However, she still works at her ordinary, now boring job. Instead of preparing for a calling in which she could serve the Lord the best, she now is a disgruntled and disappointed spinster.

So the girls should face the important question of a calling. Of course a woman is not a man - neither in physique nor in character. She will have to keep that in mind. She should stay a woman. A vocation should not remove her feminine character. I do not think we need to state which jobs are and which are not suitable for women. A woman will sense that for herself. Our writer has the problem: to become a nurse or a teacher. One's qualifications will determine which you choose. Both require quite some study. Also, one's inclinations will play a role. One person is more inclined to teach others. Another cannot put ideas across well but is very good at using her hands and mind to help people. And one's personal situation may be a determining factor.

However, to become a registered nurse takes at least two or three years and to become a teacher usually involves study at a university and/or teacher's college. Before one could actually begin nursing or teaching I would imagine that she would be twenty years of age or over. So, if marriage comes, not too many years of nursing or teaching lie ahead. However, even if marriage calls, then one's nursing abilities will not be wasted in the home. One's teaching ability could be put to use at home and in the church or even possibly as a substitute teacher. However, if marriage does not beckon, you have a good life-vocation wherein you may serve the Lord well.

The ideal, of course, should remain marriage. In your preparation for another calling before marriage, you must remain ready to surrender that calling if and when the Lord leads you to the right man. So, the choosing of a vocation must not block the door to marriage, on the one hand. On the other hand, a girl in her choice of a calling should keep in mind the possibility that she might continue that calling for life.

I hope this will help as a guideline. If anyone has something more to offer, please write.

I enjoyed our sister's following comment:

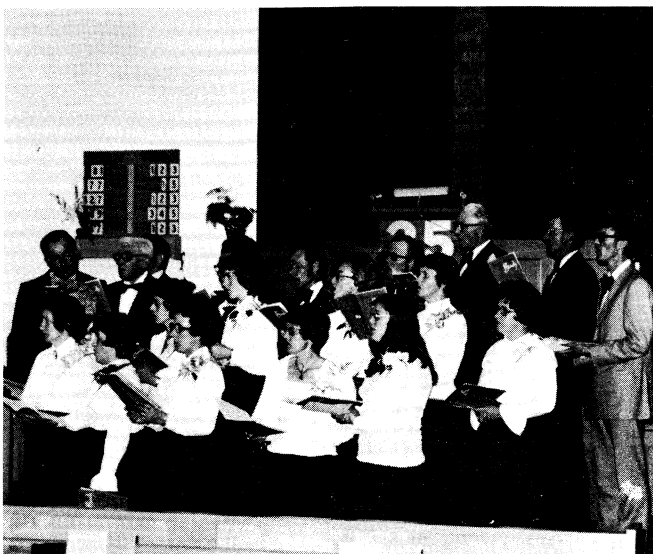
In your column you asked about girls working in homes for mothers who are ill or who cannot do all the work. This I think is good and I wish that more girls would do this sort of thing for the mothers of the church.

Yours truly, 'Spais' (as far as I could decipher!)

W. HUIZINGA

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The Choir.

CHURCH NEWS



COMMUNICATION

FROM the Consistory of the Canadian Reformed Church at Smithers.

TO the congregation.

CONCERNING television and believers.

I. TELEVISION - SANCTIFICATION - DISCIPLINE

Television - Television as a technological product is a marvel. Television as a means of communication is a gift from God.

Television in the hands of sinful man is a dangerous tool. "Big" business, "big" sports, "big" show business, "big" government agencies which condone and advocate the "new morality", are the planners of the programs. Add to this the religious programs of the Sects, and anyone who has a T.V. set in the house confronts himself and his family with a powerhouse of error and temptation.

This, T.V. has in common with all the other news media, but we consider T.V. as the leader in this field. *Sanctification* - Believers and their children are sanctified in Christ. This means first, that we are separated from the world, and second, that we are joined to God and His Christ. Our lives and our homes are to be directed by the Spirit and Word of God. We are called, not to let the licentiousness of the world, neither the errors of false teachers, but what is out of God direct our lives. The world's prevailing spirit of error in religion, politics, labour, show-bizz, soap-opera, easy money, sports and "sex" life, is daily a threat to any family of believers. Television, in an "innocent" manner, channels this spirit into any christian home where it is part of the furniture. *Discipline* - Discipline is first of all a training in orderliness, and second, a treatment which corrects. The above-written lines are an attempt to call the believers to order with respect to television. Those lines are an attempt to teach the believers and their children orderliness in the sanctified life of the believers in Christ. Either to prevent that commercial television enters the homes of the believers, or to convince believers to bring their house in order and remove this

"brainwasher" from their homes so that "foreign" infiltration is prohibited.

II. TELEVISION - JUSTIFICATION - CENSURE

So far we have spoken of the threat which television potentially holds for our christian lives and homes. The owning of a television set represents such a threat, the use of television enlarges this danger. Against this we have disciplined, or "taught in a correcting manner". Not only briefly here above, but over the years from the pulpit and in home-visits. This teaching was done from the Word of God and known to the congregation. We now only refer to: 1 Peter 2:11, Gal. 5:16, 17, Eph. 6:11-13, Rom. 8:4-6, 1 Tim. 1:18, 19, Matt. 5:29, 30, 1 Cor. 11:31, L.D. 21, Q. & A. 31.

This discipline was never followed by censure. Does this mean that your consistory not really expects the believers to heed the admonitions, either by refraining to take into, or by removing television from the home? No, it indeed does not mean that! This admonition is not followed by censure because of the relationship which there is between justification and censure.

Justification - In Christ, God declares the believers righteous, their sins are forgiven. Faith in the Saviour Jesus Christ, the Son of God is accounted for righteousness. (Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:3; Gal. 3:6.)

Censure - Censure is a spiritual corrective act, which, in case of extreme stubbornness in sin, may result in excommunication of the sinner from the Church of Christ. By excommunication in fact is said that, unless the sinner repents from his sin, he has no place in the Kingdom of God. In other words, the Church, in the name of Christ, declares through her offices that, unless the sinner repents he is not righteous before God, because he has strayed away from the faith.

Television - Can we say that the owning of a television set must lead to censure as briefly outlined above? Certainly not. Censure, however, must be exercised over the wrong use of television. For example, where

Sunday-sports, when televized, would entice believers to misuse the Sunday, or even lead them to skip the worship services in order to watch the game.

Censure mainly would have to do with the *results*, of the errors and temptation presented in the programs, showing in a believer's sinful way of life. So it is possible that a believer were led astray by Armstrongism, the Mormons, etc. Someone could be lured into forsaking the Table of the Lord and to celebrate the Lord's Supper with Rex Humbart administering it across the T.V. network from his "Cathedral of To-morrow". Another may be overcome by the new morality advocating premarital sex, the use of preventives or abortion. How many would have fallen victim already to the make-believe world of money-games and give-away programs.

These, and the heroes and heroines of the movies, have made many men and women, boys and girls, dissatisfied with the position, the husband or wife, the house and furniture, the brothers and sisters which God had given them?

It is with these sins, resulting from - among other things - television watching, that officebearers are confronted. Over these sins (now we did not even mention drugs, run-away children, marriages which are not in Christ) censure is exercised.

We have no statistics which show in how far T.V. is to blame, but pastoral experience has taught us that T.V. is a major contributing factor.

III. THE BELIEVERS AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITY

This should be enough to convince every believer that T.V. cannot have a place in a christian home. By having, or taking T.V. in our homes, we believers place a burden and temptation on our way which the Lord has not placed there.

The consistory urges the officebearers to set a good example, and the congregation as a whole to heed this teaching. Let us exercise christian wisdom by voluntarily abstaining from any means by which the prevailing spirit of the world could infiltrate into our lives and homes. In our time that means also the voluntary abstention from having and using television in the home.

The Consistory.
(From the church bulletin of April 13, 1975)

Dutch Church Activities on Taiwan (2)

“KRAAKPORSELEIN”

Most people may know what the word “china” (with a small letter) stands for. They may also know that egg-shell china is even more brittle.

“Kraakporselein” is the latter’s Dutch equivalent.

We offer our apologies for using this term, but we need it in our story.

For on February 25, 1603, the Dutch sailor - wellknown from his polar expeditions - Jacob Van Heemskerck captured a Portuguese merchant ship somewhere in the vicinity of Malaya. Its name was “Catharina”.

Most of its cargo consisted of very expensive Chinese porcelain. The Amsterdam auction of August 1604 realized the huge sum of almost 3½ million Dutch guilders, which was a very large amount of money for those days.

Now the “Catharina” was one of the Portuguese “caraques”, a heavy type of ship, difficult to manage. The Dutch pronounced this name as “kraken” (caracks). And from then on they called this particular sort of china-ware “kraakporselein” - which suggests that it would easily crack.

This event is closely related with the beginnings of the Dutch settlement on Formosa or Taiwan.

In March of the year 1602 the United East India Company was established. That happened in the middle of the Eighty-Years’ War in which the Dutch were involved, their war of liberation from the Spanish yoke. Their power on the high seas was already very strong. They let their presence be felt in many regions. The Indonesian archipelago was taken from the Portuguese.

But the Dutch were not satisfied yet. They had an eye on China. If possible they wanted to lay their hands also on the complete Chinese trade, in order to be able to sell their wares in other parts of the world, for example on the Amsterdam or the Japanese market.

However, the Portuguese and the Spaniards offered strong resistance against this policy. In particular the former had much influence in China. They even had built a settlement on the peninsula of Macao. The Spaniards tried to do the same thing but were not successful and had to be content with the fact that the Chinese came to Manilla on the Philippines to do some business with them.

The story in brief is this that a number of expeditions undertaken by the Dutch to get a foothold in China failed. This happened in the year 1601. However, the capture of the “Catharina” stimulated the appetite. The governor-general of the Dutch East Indies, the wellknown Jan Pieterszoon Coen, then simply declared war to the Chinese in order to force them into handing over their whole trade to the Dutch. But even this failed. At last an agreement was made between them and the Chinese that the Dutch would settle on Formosa, which was claimed by the Chinese as belonging to their territory. There the Chinese would bring their merchandise, and the Dutch ships would carry it further to the world markets.

In the month of August of the year 1624 the building of a fortress called “Zeelandia” was started on a sand-bank on the south-west coast of the island.

This sand-bar, the island called Tayouan, was by deposition connected with the larger island which is now known as Taiwan. Close to the fortress a town was built which was also called Zeelandia.

This happened to be the sally-port for the conquest of the whole island, in the northern part of which the Spaniards held their own to the year 1642. The Eighty-Years’ War, then, was continued in the Far East!

The factory of Tayouan was, together with that of Batavia, the largest in the history of the East India Company (4).

MERCHANT CHURCH

We should never forget that the Churches which were born from the activities of the United East India Company were originally mere merchant churches.

A naval chaplain used to be

among the crew of the ships that belonged to the Company. The Company, however, wanted to extend this “spiritual care” to the people who were employed at its settlements. So that the ministers were at the same time employees of the Company, being paid by the cashier of the local office.

From the “factories” - as these settlements were called; in Dutch “factorijen” - they were often engaged in intensive missionary activities among the natives with whom business was done. The Company really saw something in this mission work. We cannot charge our fathers with the reproach of undertaking this missionary work merely for reasons of trying to promote their trade interests. We have to do justice to them. But it is a matter of fact that trade and religion were closely connected with one another: the ministers might establish good relations with the natives which could make the latter more willing to sell their products to the Company.

But this close affiliation of trade and religion created some strange situations. On Taiwan, e.g., the first minister who settled there had to ask more than once for the assistance of the military power of his employers in order to make the tribes among which he had to labour a bit more willing to listen to his message. Apart from this he had to establish and maintain peace and order, act as a judge, and try to sell the natives some “civilization”. The schools had a Christian character, but the accent sometimes was on transferring Western civilization. This was a strange mixture of Christian calling and one’s own business interests.

It was no wonder that on Taiwan this aspect of the minister’s work was called “political service.” Sometimes the burdens were so heavy that the ministers were compelled to ask to be relieved from them. Only in the year 1651 these duties were for always taken from the ministers’ shoulders.

Just to give our readers an idea what this meant we may point to the fact that Rev. Junius had to act as an administrator of the hunting results. Chinese immigrants used to hunt deer. They had to apply for a license, and for every pit they dug they had to pay 90 reales per season, for 1 snare 1 reale per month. This money was spent to meet the expenses of churches and schools. Rev. Junius

FOR READER’S INFORMATION

This issue was mailed from Winnipeg
Central Post Office on May 23, 1975.

had also to supervise rice-growing. The intention of the Company was that Taiwan would become self-supporting.

This may be sufficient to prove that the ministerial duties did not always give reason to feel happy.

At the same time we learn to distinguish a bit of the background against which the spreading of the Gospel and the establishing of Christian Churches had to be undertaken.

(To be continued)

G. VANRONGEN

PRESS RELEASE

of the Classis Pacific held on April 9, 1975, at Cloverdale, B.C.

1. On behalf of the convening Church, the Church at Cloverdale, the Rev. J. Mulder calls the meeting to order. He requests to sing Ps. 93, which is also read, and leads in prayer. The delegated brothers are welcomed by him.
2. The credentials are examined by the brothers of Chilliwack. All Churches appear to be lawfully represented. The Church of Abbotsford has an instruction.
3. Classis is constituted and the following officers will serve the Classis as a moderamen: Rev. J. Mulder, chairman; Rev. J. Van Rietschoten, clerk; Rev. M. VanderWel, vice-chairman.
4. At the opening of the Classis, the chairman remembers the Mission-work, which is done by the Church of New Westminster, and also the need for a new missionary.
5. The agenda for this Classis is discussed and adopted as it was proposed by the convening Church.
6. A request of the Church at Chilliwack for financial assistance, in order to be able to call a minister, is read by one of her delegates, and given into discussion. The following motion is adopted: To grant the Church of Chilliwack the \$4,000.00, which she is short on her budget, in order to enable her to call a minister. This money will not be needed until a minister accepts a call to the Church of Chilliwack. After this decision the chairman expresses the wish that the Church of Chilliwack may succeed in the calling of her own pastor and teacher.
7. By way of instruction, the Church of Abbotsford submits the following proposal:
 - a. Classis decided to appoint preferably those brothers as delegates to a Regional Synod, who will be still in

- (4) Apart from the dissertation of W.A. Ginsel the same story is also told, in a popular way, by P. DeZeeuw JGzn, *De Hollanders op Formosa, 1624-1662: Een Bladzijde uit onze koloniale en Zendingsgeschiedenis*, 1924. Other literature is: L. Knappert, "Hollandische Pioniers op Formosa", in *Nederlandsch Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis*, Volume XIX, 1926, pages 97-121.

- office when the assembly to which they are delegated convenes;
 - b. Classis proposed to the forthcoming Regional Synod to take the same decision with respect to the appointment of delegates to a General Synod.
- Reasons:
1. Since according to the art. 41, 47 and 50 C.O. as delegates to the major assemblies shall be appointed brothers who are office-bearers, it is proper that those assemblies then also are attended by delegates that are office-bearers.
 2. The rule that, whenever an ecclesiastical assembly goes into closed session, only office-bearers are allowed to be present, makes it feasible that the members of such an assembly are all office-bearers too.
- This proposal is adopted.
8. No reports are submitted. It is decided that the Treasurer of the Classis, br. P. VanEgmond, will receive a letter with the request to submit every year a financial report to the Classis which is held in April, and with apologies for the fact that he was not notified about this rule before. The Church for the Archives, the Church at Smithers, informs Classis that those Acts for which previous Classes have searched, appeared to have been displaced, but that they are properly filed now.
 9. At the Question Period acc. to art. 41 C.O., the Church of Cloverdale asks the advice of Classis in disciplinary matters concerning union-membership. Advice is given.
 10. After the lunch, Classis is reopened. The chairman requests to sing Ps. 119:49. Roll call is held; all delegates are present.
 11. The Church of Smithers asks the

opinion of Classis about the procedures which she has followed in a disciplinary matter. This opinion is given.

12. Classis makes the following appointments: Classical Treasurer: br. P. VanEgmond; Deputies ad art. 11 C.O.: Rev. M. VanBeveren, br. H.A. Berends, br. G. Boeve; Deputies for the Arrangement of Preaching Engagements in vacant Churches: Rev. J. Mulder, Rev. M. VanderWel; Deputies for Examinations: Rev. M. VanBeveren, Rev. J. Mulder; Examiners: Rev. M. VanBeveren for Exegesis O.T. and Practical Theology; Rev. M. VanderWel for Exegesis N.T. and Ethics; Rev. J. Mulder for Systematic Theology and Symbolics; Rev. J. VanRietschoten for Church History, Church Polity and Knowledge of the Holy Scripture; Church Visitors: all ministers in the classical district: Church for the Archives: the Church at Smithers; Church for the inspection of the Archives: the Church at Houston.
13. The Church at Houston requests to have Rev. J. VanRietschoten reappointed as her counsellor. The Church of Chilliwack requests the same with respect to Rev. M. VanderWel. Both requests are granted.
14. The Church at Chilliwack asks for preaching engagements. Classis decides to grant the Church at Chilliwack four services per period of six weeks, to be respectively conducted by the ministers M. VanBeveren and M. VanderWel.
15. As convening Church for the next Classis is appointed: the Church at Houston. This Classis will be held D.V. on October 8, 1975, at 9:30 a.m., in Houston, B.C. The Moderamen for this Classis will be: Rev. M. VanBeveren, chairman; Rev. J. Mulder, clerk; Rev. J. VanRietschoten, vice-chairman.
16. Question Period is held. The Church at Chilliwack expresses her gratitude for the decision, made by Classis, to support her in the calling of a minister.
17. Censure ad art. 43 C.O. does not have to be executed.
18. Acts are read and adopted; the Press Release is read and approved.
19. The chairman thanks the convening Church for receiving and serving this Classis. After the singing of Ps. 66:1 and 4, Rev. M. VanderWel leads in prayer of thanksgiving and the chairman closes the Classis.

On behalf of the Classis,
M. VANDERWEL,
Vice-chairman e.t.

news medley

The other time I made a mistake when I wrote that brother and sister DeJong of Burlington celebrated their fortieth wedding anniversary. That should have been their forty-fifth wedding anniversary. I hereby correct this mistake. No offense meant!!

And now that I am speaking of wedding anniversaries anyway, let me offer our congratulations also to brother and sister Daniels of Coaldale who, on May 4th, celebrated their fortieth, and to brother and sister DeVos of New Westminster who, on May 16th, celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary. The former couple I know only slightly; the latter I know somewhat better. I would say that the very picture of brother and sister DeVos shows that they have a big heart and are always willing to help someone out. I can tell you that that is indeed the case. Both couples will have experienced the communion of saints in their respective communities; may I add the best wishes of the community-at-large and wish them the Lord's blessing in the years to come. May these years still be many.

We are in the personal sphere and may as well remain in it for a while. From the Ebenezer Burlington bulletin we learned that the Rev. VanDooren was in the hospital and underwent surgery. It was called "minor surgery" and we expect our brother to be at home by long by the time you read these lines. We wish him a speedy and complete recovery.

A last "personal item" is the information which I found in the Brampton bulletin. There the following line was found: "This past week notification was received from the School of Theology at Toronto that your minister was admitted into the Th.M. program at Knox." That means that the work which the Rev. C. VanDam did during the past year was of such a nature that the Toronto School of Theology has become convinced that his scholarly standing is indeed such that that is the proper level for him. Our congratulations.

Now we go to the Church-news, although I do not wish to imply that the above was not "Church-news" in the proper sense of the word. I expect that you know what I mean.

Burlington has already been mentioned. The Ebenezer Church is having their organ remodelled and improved. A while ago they solicited extra funds for this purpose; now we are told that the work has begun and that the new console is in place. It will be a real improvement.

Our readers may recall that some time ago I mentioned the establishment of a "Camera Club". I received some further information regarding this club and am happy to pass it on to you; there may be some camera fans in other congregations who wish to consider these suggestions. Let me just quote a letter I received:

"We call this club the 'Canadian Photo Club'. So far there are four members with a few more coming after exams and other important things to be over first. Actually we do not prefer too many. Everyone is welcome but our main idea is to do all types of photography within our church to save our people

money and help church donations wherever needed. There are not too many able to do portraits and weddings, but we also teach photography, so anyone is welcome."

If you wish to have more information, you may contact John Oosterveld, 588 Pinedale Ave., Burlington, Ont. I am not planning to run an employment agency or to be a coordinator for all sorts of clubs, but if I can help in this way I'll gladly do it.

Besides Burlington, we also mentioned Brampton. The following item from the bulletin is of interest: "After some discussion the consistory decided not to sing the Credo in our worship services. Reasons: 1. A decision to Credo would mean restructuring our afternoon liturgy. This should not be done without careful study to ensure that it is a change for the better. It was also felt that the music was reminiscent of medieval chanting."

This brings me to the Book of Praise. I could have written a special article about it, but may as well write something about it in our Medley. There is not too much other news anyway. The brethren of the committee which has been continued by the 1974 Synod will have to continue their work and they will have to revise the rhymings found in the present edition, especially the Hymn section. I, therefore, pass on the request to the membership to send to the Committee any suggestions they may have. Maybe you have a rhyming of a certain passage of Scripture, maybe you think that a certain passage should be rhymed, maybe you have an idea how existing rhymings can be improved, and so on. Tell the Committee what you think should be done and, if you have any definite thought about that, how it should be done. That helps. I speak from first-hand knowledge: during the last five years the Committee received next to nothing from the membership which would have been helpful in the completion of the Book of Praise. And even after the complete edition had been published the Committee received only **very few** communications outlining specific criticism and suggestions for detailed improvement. If this is to be an endeavour by the Churches and not by a few men who do not claim at all that they are experts in the field, then we need the help of all and everyone.

The request is repeated once more: does anyone have a rhyming? Send it in. Does anyone have any idea as to which passages should be rhymed? Inform the Committee. Does anyone have a tune which may be suitable? Draw the Committee's attention to it. The Committee does not read papers or articles. If you do not cooperate now, you forfeit your right to speak later. Remember: when the present edition of the Book of Praise is sold out, no new printing is planned until changes can be inserted. We have to work fast.

The remarks which I made about the figures in the Yearbook have stirred up quite some dust. The Consistory of Orangeville also wrote me regarding this point and I am happy to pass on part of what they wrote: "We do know that our membership per January 1, 1975, was exactly the same as per January 1, 1974. We gave that information to the publisher of the Yearbook." I said that I gladly pass on this information, for I am happy when I can take away a wrong impression. Our readers are requested to take good note of this. Maybe I can tell the same about the other figures and then take back what I wrote about it.

But what I honestly cannot see is how one can

conclude from what I wrote that I accused Churches of **giving** unreliable figures and thus accused them of dishonesty. I received a few letters about my remarks and these letters all show that their writers put more into my words than could be reasonably found in them. I have even been told that I did not stop short of slander. Be it far from me to do any such thing. I urgently request our readers to re-read the relevant passage and to do so without putting more into the words than they contain.

Now we go to Edmonton, for that is about the only Church left this time about which I can tell something.

The brethren of the "Silver Committee" were greatly honoured by my mentioning them and their activities in our medley. They now pass on some additional information which I do not wish to withhold from our readers, especially since there are many ex-Edmontonians living in various parts of the country. Here it comes. "Too bad that he did not mention that gifts of all former Edmonton Church members would be welcome. Over the last 25 years a lot of members have left Edmonton and joined Canadian Reformed Churches all over Canada. Imagine if they all would send \$10.00!" Yes, imagine that they were to do that. However, you never know, for it would not be the first time that something like that happened. Come on, former Edmontonians: the addresses where to send your money follow here; you even have a choice: A. Harke, 12824 - 120 Avenue, or R. Winkel, 15428 - 78 Avenue, both in Edmonton, of course. The brethren also would like to receive some more suggestions on how to spend the money so that a lasting monument can be erected, so to speak.

The Edmonton Consistory discussed the activities of the Home Mission Committee. "It was decided to drop the radio broadcast from Radio Wetaskiwin for the following

45th Wedding Anniversary



John Werkman and Antje Norden were married June 5, 1930, in the Gereformeerde Kerk at Uithuizen, Gron., and the text on which Rev. Lugtigheid preached was Exodus 33:15.

Mr. Werkman was born May 14, 1902, and Mrs. Werkman July 28, 1904. They emigrated to Canada with their ten children in March 1950. The first three weeks were spent in Neerlandia, but then they moved to Coaldale just after the Church was instituted there. For two years they worked in the sugar beets.

In 1952 the family moved to Edmonton, where they lived for two years, and in 1954 they bought a farm in Bloomsbury, Alta., approximately 10 miles NW of Neerlandia. Mr Werkman had to retire some years ago after having suffered a few strokes and heart attacks. Finally they moved back to Edmonton and are now residents in the Emmanuel Home there.

Mr. Werkman served as an Elder in Coaldale, Edmonton, and Neerlandia; and, although he himself never mastered the English language well enough to understand a sermon, he has always been in favour of more English for the sake of the younger generation and has never missed a service either in English or in Dutch unless the condition of his health prevented him from attending.

Mr. and Mrs. Werkman have 10 children, 6 sons and 4 daughters, all of whom are members of one of the Churches. Recently, their 59th grandchild was born.

Although Mr. Werkman's health is failing and it is hard for him to keep up with things, and although Mrs. Werkman also is not as strong any more as she used to be, yet they are very thankful to the Lord that they may still be together.

Their address is No. 105 - 13425 - 57th Street, Edmonton, Alberta T5A 2G1

50th Wedding Anniversary



Mr. and Mrs. J. DeVos celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary on May 16, 1975. Their address is: Suite 305-340 9th Street, New Westminster, B.C. V3M 3V6.

reasons: a) There has been no response from the listeners. b) The irregular broadcast of the program. The radio station often cancelled the broadcast without notification or proper explanation. c) The program was essentially a one man show, which failed to involve the congregation." That was a sad decision and this leaves the Churches in the Valley as the only ones to use the means of broadcasting for spreading the Gospel. Of course, as a Church you do not wish to sue for breach of contract, but in the business world such an attitude of cancelling without

Continued on page 12

Klaas Jan Mulder at the Organ



Klaas Jan Mulder began his career at age 6 or 7 when he clandestinely would go to the organ of the church where his father was the minister. Playing was by no means an easy task in those days. The organ was rather antique. First, he would

have to pump the bellows, run to the console, play for a couple of minutes and then back to the bellows. The fun was usually short-lived because invariably the janitor's wife would appear on the scene.

Klaas Jan Mulder made his debut at age 15 with a Grieg piano concerto. The same year he also played Beethoven's third piano concerto. He graduated with top honours from the Conservatory of Amsterdam and went on to study with Eduardo del Pueyo.

The uniqueness of Klaas Jan Mulder as an organist lies in the fact that he has purposefully left the well-trodden paths of many church organists. He has dedicated his life's work to bringing the organ to as many people as possible. Mulder feels that there is much beautiful music. Why not play that music on a church organ and play it for everyone's enjoyment.

Mulder's efforts to popularize music have paid off. His concerts and records are in great demand by a large section of the Dutch populace.

Klaas Jan Mulder excels in improvising at the organ. He has recorded many Dutch hymns, giving each his unique interpretation. He will preface each concert with an improvisation of 'O Canada'. He might even be asked to improvise upon a theme given to him on the night of the concert.

Beside his duties as a regular organist at the Nieuwe Kerk in Kampen, Klaas Jan Mulder directs several popular male choirs, and gives a great many concerts, both in the Netherlands as well as the surrounding countries.

A colleague describes Mulder as having an exceptional talent in music and a healthy view of music literature. He feels that the combination of these two form the broad basis for Mulder's success.

Profit - after deduction of expenses all profits will go to charity.

NEWS MEDLEY - continued

notification or proper explanation would not be accepted. If you cannot rely on a station to do what you have agreed upon, it is better to terminate the "cooperation". Yet it remains a sad decision.

The third annual Office-bearers Conference was scheduled for May 19, and the Rev. R.F. Boersema was to speak there on "Counselling with the Bible". The conference was open to all who believe they might benefit from it. I am happy to learn that also in Alberta the office-bearers meet regularly. We need the contact with the brethren.

I know that the term "Counselling" is an often-used expression. In fact, you seldom hear anything else nowadays. It is, therefore, not to be construed as criticism on Rev. Boersema's topic when I state that I have my objections against the very term "counselling". I am also very happy with the articles that Prof. Trimp wrote in **De Reformatie** which were entitled "Pastor en Medicus" and in which he critically discussed the thoughts of Prof. Jay Adams. Sometimes I get the impression as if a minister is expected to function as a psychiatrist and has to be able to "counsel" people in all sorts of conditions and circumstances. "To counsel" still has the basic meaning of "to advise", "to recommend" and it smacks too much of a neutral, non-authoritative advice, an effort together to solve difficulties and to help a person along in solving his "problems". I wished that we would avoid this term when speaking of the work which the office-bearers in Christ's Church have to do.

I am fully aware of it that everyone has to solve his own difficulties and that the ultimate responsibility rests upon the person himself. But the term "to counsel"

sounds too "tame" in my ears for the help which the office-bearers extend to the members of the flock. Maybe I am mistaken and maybe I do not understand the term as such, but I think that it leads us into a direction which we should avoid. I am also afraid that the Word of God is in danger of being used as a "case-book" by many who, instead of preachers of the Word, have become social workers and solvers-of-problems. **Thrust**, the quarterly news and review magazine of The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada in its April 1975 issue contained a very worthwhile article by the Rev. H.H. Barber of Winnipeg entitled "Church Growth Through Preaching." It begins with the question to ministers how they see themselves, "as a pastor, an administrator, a public servant, a counsellor, a specialist (youth, prophecy, charismata, marriage, etc.), or as a preacher, a spokesman for God?" . . . "God called you to preach. If He did not, then please, don't clutter the place. Go and teach school or run for parliament. Your first task is to proclaim God's Word." "Covet in your ministry only one accolade: 'He preached the Word, all of it, at all seasons, without fear or favour. He was a man of the Book'."

Enough about this for the moment.

Mr. Dirk Jansz Zwart was scheduled to arrive in Edmonton on May 24. As was the case the other time, so this time our brother will have a busy schedule: play the organ during the services on May 25, have a musical evening in the Churchbuilding on May 26, give an Organ Recital in the All Saints Cathedral on Wednesday, May 28. And then we expect him here in Fergus on the 29th. Rehearsal that same day; concert the next evening in Guelph, up to Burlington on the 31st. And so on. Sterkte!

vO

press review

THE STRUGGLE IN THE LUTHERAN CHURCH - MISSOURI SYNOD.

There are three major Lutheran denominations in the United States: the American Lutheran Church, with a membership of about 2.5 million; the Lutheran Church in America, having about 3 million members; and the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, with also a membership of about 3 million. In the latter a struggle is going on to preserve its orthodox character. This struggle resulted in the suspension of Dr. John H. Tietjen as president of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis on charges of false doctrine. This theological seminary belongs to the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS). The suspension happened in January 1974. In the October 25, 1974, issue of CHRISTIANITY TODAY an interview with Dr. J.A.O. Preus, president of the LCSM, was published, from which I quote:

Question: What really happened last spring? Could you (Dr. Preus) give us your own version of the big showdown?

Answer: The events of last winter and spring go back a long way in history. Both of my predecessors in office, Dr. Behnken and Dr. Harms, attempted over a very long period of time and with great efforts to try to stem the tide of liberalism which was arising at Concordia Seminary. They were not successful. I inaugurated the Fact Finding Committee as a way of trying to get a fair evaluation of what the situation actually was. The Synod convention in 1971 upheld my efforts and, when I gave a report to the church of what the situation was, I think the overwhelming majority of the church supported the doctrinal position of our Synod and took the position that they did not want theological liberalism and the use of the historical-critical method in the Synod. They spoke very loudly concerning this matter at the New Orleans convention. The liberal element of the Synod, under the leadership of the St.

Louis faculty majority at that time, took very strong exception to the actions of New Orleans, with massive protests at the convention, protests following the convention, and the organization of ELIM (Evangelical Lutherans in Mission), which has been recently cautioned by the Board of Directors of the Synod as being a church within the church. All kinds of political actions also took place.

Then in January 1974 the Board of Control (of the Seminary), after very careful study of all aspects of the matter, suspended Dr. John Tietjen, the president of Concordia Seminary, on charges of false doctrine and malfeasance in office. This was followed the next day by a "moratorium" of the students and then the following day by a moratorium of the faculty. After many efforts by me, by the Board of Directors of the Synod, and by the Board of Control to bring about a resumption of normal academic activities on the campus, the Board of Control on February 17, after giving the faculty full information and warning of its intentions (to which there was no reply), dismissed the faculty on the grounds of breach of contract.

This resulted, shortly thereafter, in the creation of Seminex, the term being a shortened form of "seminary in exile".

So Seminex is the Theological Seminary of the "Moderates", the liberals in the LCMS.

This interview started with the following question and answer:

Question: What is the main theological issue in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod? *Answer:* The authority of the Bible.

In CHRISTIANITY TODAY'S issue of April 11, 1975, Dr. John Tietjen reacts to the interview from which I quoted above and especially to that first answer. He writes:

The answer is a smokescreen. The authority of the Bible is not at issue in the Missouri Synod. I

personally have been very much at the center of the controversy and have been removed from office presumably because of my position on doctrine. I fully accept the authority of the Bible as the inspired and infallible Word of God. As a pastor of the church I have no other message that what the Bible teaches.

These last two sentences sound good. But it has always been necessary in the history of the church to ask: what do you mean with the terms you use? A few examples may make this clear. Pelagius, about 400 A.D., said: we must be saved by Christ only, by grace only, by faith only. That also sounds good. But Augustine saw that the doctrine of Pelagius was entirely in conflict with the Scripture. For Pelagius gave these terms a completely different content from what they have in the doctrine of the Bible. The grace of God then is that Christ gave the good example for a good life. And faith is that we follow Christ's example in doing good works. In that way of faith, (= doing good works) we are saved. The same we can see in the Canons of Dort with the Remonstrants. The terms are the same but the contents are different. Cf. e.g. ch. III/IV, art. 11 and paragraph 7.

So we have to ask: what does Dr. Tietjen mean when he says he is committed to the Bible as the inspired and infallible Word of God? Is the Bible the inspired and infallible Word of God (only) with respect to its message? That is the view of the liberals. And we get the strong impression that that is what he means. Why does he not speak of the inerrant Word of God? Inerrant not only with respect to the message, but also in the historical and geographical, matters, etc.

After having said that the smoke-screen of the authority of the Bible serves the purpose of concealing what really is going on, Dr. Tietjen writes that the struggle is a matter of power: who will dominate the LCMS? And that the chief issue is confessional. But then we read:

Isn't the Bible an issue at all in the Missouri Synod controversy? Not the authority of the Bible! Interpreting the Bible is an issue. There is disagreement over what is legitimate and what is illegitimate in biblical interpretation. The role of tradition in

biblical interpretation is an issue. Strange to tell, a church body that calls itself after the name of Martin Luther is telling its members that the results of their Bible study must conform to the *tradition* of Bible interpretation sanctioned by the Synod in its past century and a quarter.

At best there is an issue over whether the authority of the Bible can be separated from its gospel content.

What is meant by "the role of tradition in Bible interpretation"?

In an article following the one of Dr. Tietjen, in the same issue of CHRISTIANITY TODAY, its editor, Dr. Harold Lindsell, writes:

I also recollect the action of the Centennial Convention of the Missouri Synod in 1947. At that time it reaffirmed the BRIEF STATEMENT adopted by the Synod in 1932, which said in part:

We teach also that the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures . . . is taught by direct statements of the Scriptures. . . . Since the Holy Scriptures are the Word of God, it goes without saying that they contain no errors and contradictions, but that they are in all their parts and words the infallible truth, also in those parts which treat of historical, geographical, and other secular matters, John 10:35.

So the tradition of Bible interpretation in the LCMS was that the whole Bible is in all its parts God's inerrant Word. Dr. Tietjen, as far as I can see it, distinguishes between the (infallible) message of salvation through Christ and the (fallible) garment of the Bible writings. And that is the modern liberal view.

At issue is really the question whether it is allowed in the LCMS to use the historical-critical method of interpreting the Bible. To give an idea of what this liberal method means the following may serve. The historical-critical method assumes that Genesis and also the other four first books of the Bible were not written by Moses but by several authors and were basically composed and written from 1000 to 500 B.C. That is, after David and even partly after the Babylonian captivity. And especially the first part of Genesis, the chapters 1-11, is not

considered to be an historical account but to belong to Israel's wisdom literature, like Proverbs. And the Gospels in the New Testament are not an account of historically true facts but the result of the theology of the early church.

Now a Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod Theological Convocation was held in Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, last April 14-18. At this convocation the use of the historical-critical method of interpreting the Bible was discussed. Three speakers introduced the topic. In the main presentation Dr. Martin H. Franzmann tried to keep the parties together. The next speaker was Dr. Ralph W. Klein, a professor at Seminex, who defended the use of the historical critical-method. The third one to speak was Dr. Harold H. Buls, professor at Concordia Theological Seminary, Springfield, Illinois. From his reaction to the presentation of Dr. Franzmann I quote via CHRISTIAN NEWS, published by Lutheran News Inc., issue of April 21, 1975:

The call to repentance in Dr. Franzmann's paper is well taken and we thank him for it. But we have to say more than that we are in trouble. Unless we really face these issues and attempt to resolve them under God and His grace, this theological battle will go on and on. . . . Dr. Franzmann failed to deal adequately, if at all, with the following and dangerous matters: the rampant rationalism which denies the very inspiration, inerrancy, truth, historicity, and causative and normative nature of the Scriptures. . . . He did not speak of how scholars who use the Historical-Critical Method have been using many theological terms with meanings different from those which constitute the *usus loquendi* (normal usage) among Lutheran Christians. . . . He did not say anything about how these men try to destroy the unity of the Scriptures by teaching that the theology of the various Books of the Bible differs. Not mere stresses of theology, but outright differences of theology. He said nothing about this godless hypothesis about the Christian community producing the Books of the Bible out of tradition (a mixture of truth and legend) and that therefore the Bible is the product of the

church, not vice versa. He said nothing about these controversies among us concerning the historicity of Gen. 1-11, the historicity of the account of Jonah But, worst of all, Dr. Franzmann should have mentioned that unless we do something very soon, the central doctrine of the Scriptures, Justification by Faith, will become blurred, disappear, and we will fall back into a condition which will parallel that of the church in the Middle Ages. No less than Justification by Faith in Jesus Christ is at stake.

In the last part of his paper Dr. Buls gives the ideas of Dr. Klein in 11 points as an illustration. I quote the points 10 and 11:

10. Why the account of the sacrifice of Isaac in Gen. 22? Wasn't this maybe a message to the Israelites in the monarchical period (1000 B.C.) that they should not sacrifice their children as did the heathen around them? There is no reference at all to Hebr. 11:17-19. And it is clearly implied that Gen. 22 is not true history.

11. What of the Melchizedek account (Gen. 14)? When Abraham pays the tax here, "he is giving a lesson in political and ecclesiastical authority." A type of Christ? Nothing at all about that.

And he adds, so summarizing the view of Dr. Klein:

What does this all mean? Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch (the first five Books of the Bible) as Christ said? NO. Does Genesis represent the very facts of history? NO.

I will conclude this review with a quotation from an article in the same issue of CHRISTIAN NEWS, by Dr. Robert Preus, a brother of the president of the LCMS, mentioned before. He writes:

2. *The authority of Scripture entails the inerrancy of Scripture.* In all the discussions, probings, debates in our Synod concerning the Historical Critical Method, one fact has emerged clearly: Those who advocate the method - all their protestations that they are Confessional and that they adhere to the so-called "Luth-

Continued on page 15

eran" presuppositions of Biblical interpretation to the contrary notwithstanding - admit that there can be and are errors of fact in Scripture. . . .

What has happened to becloud the issue is that the practitioners of the Historical Critical Method in our midst have, in contrast to most of their counterparts outside our circles, asserted slogans affirming authority, but in one way or another abandoned the inerrancy of Scripture.

It is my contention that this cannot be done. To speak of Biblical authority or inspiration becomes a mere cliché or phrase unless it entails inerrancy in the sense of freedom of error and contradiction.

The struggle in the LCMS is comparable with the one in the Synodical Churches in The Netherlands, although there the struggle for the truth is already lost, actually. May the Lord give that in the LCMS that struggle is won.

If someone wishes to study the struggle around the Bible as God's inerrant Word and the attacks on it also in Evangelical circles I can recommend the book edited by Dr. John Warwick Montgomery, published by The Bethany Fellowship Inc., Minneapolis, Minnesota. The title is *God's Inerrant Word: An International Symposium On The Trustworthiness Of Scripture*. Maybe not the easiest reading, but very instructive.

J. GEERTSEMA

Puzzle No. 9



CORRECTION

On page 4 of the May 7 issue, the five stanzas of "The LORD Is My Shepherd" appear in the following (wrong) order: 3, 4, 1, 2, 5. Also, the word "my" in stanza 3, line 3, should read "may".

Letters-to-the-Editor

Dear Editor:

In April the fifth's *Clarion* you write in the "News Medley" about a suggestion of the consistory of the Canadian Reformed Church at Calgary, from which you have read in the bulletin of Carman's church. From this hearsay, which you gathered from the bulletin of another church than Calgary, you come to the conclusion that the consistory of Calgary needs "a better training in Reformed Church Polity; for what we read in that proposal has definitely not been learned from Reformed books on church polity."

However, you did not read Calgary's proposal but you read a very short summary of it in Carman's bulletin. You did not mention, let alone deal with, the grounds for Calgary's proposal. You write, "How in the world should a Classis have responsibility for the training of elders and deacons???" Wir setsen uns mit Traenen nieder."

Do you realize that people get reason to sit down in tears after the damage you are doing with your "News Medley?" This is not the first time that in this corner there is meddled in the affairs of local churches.

Consistories might have to reconsider whether they will continue to send their church bulletins to *Clarion*. Not only do they run the risk that in this corner of *Clarion* is interfered with their church affairs, but their church bulletins can even be used for interference in the matters of sister churches.

The question whether a Classis has responsibility for the training of office-bearers is in this case to be decided upon by the Classis of the Canadian Reformed Churches in Alberta and Manitoba. I ask the readers of *Clarion* to judge about the unfounded, public condemnation of a Canadian Reformed Church consistory by the editor of *Clarion*.

Yours in the Lord's service,
D. DEJONG

Dear Brother,

In our previous issue I replied to a letter of the Rev. R.F. Boersema regarding the same topic and I could just have referred you to that reply; but let me add a few remarks.

1. You are wrong when you call my information "hearsay". Please look up what the word means: hearsay. I quoted a published decision on a proposal which was described in that decision. That is no hearsay.

If you wish to "attack" me correctly, you should have shown where I went wrong in my rendition of

Calgary's proposal, but *no one* thus far has even suggested that I was wrong in my description of *what* Calgary proposed. The very press release of the latest Classis Alberta/Manitoba already would refute any such suggestion.

2. You speak of "damage" I am doing with my News Medley. Let me tell you that I hear such judgments only when people *disagree* with what I wrote; quite different qualifications are given when people *agree* with the contents of the Medley. In the latter case they oftentimes write, "Thank you for saying that." In order to keep me humble, there are also qualifications as the one you give in the above letter. What you did not say is in what respect I am supposed to have caused some damage. Do you mean that, also as a result of my remarks, the proposal will have less chance of being adopted? Then I can only be thankful for that. And how remarks about a proposal to Classis can be meddling in "the affairs of local churches" is beyond me.

3. Don't you think that it would be childish if a Consistory should decide no longer to send their Church bulletins because they disagree with the manner I write about the things I read in those bulletins? That would be the same as if someone should cancel his subscription to *Clarion* because he disagrees with what I write. Don't worry: they will read it anyway, but then at someone else's expense; they will borrow our magazine from someone else and read it without paying. That's cheaper, too. They won't be able to resist the urge to read it somehow!

If a Consistory should decide no longer to send their bulletins, then, I am sure, there would be quite a few Churchmembers most willing to send it to me. But I expect better things of our Consistories.

4. You write that "the question whether a Classis has responsibility for the training of office-bearers is in this case to be decided upon by the Classis of the Canadian Reformed Churches in Alberta and Manitoba." Sorry, brother, but here you are dead-wrong. Whether a Classis has such a responsibility is to be decided upon by Reformed Church polity. That's why I wrote about it. And even *if* the next Classis Alberta/Manitoba should decide that *they* have such a responsibility, *is* it therefore the responsibility of a Classis within the Reformed Churches? Fortunately not!

5. To you I extend the same invitation as to the Rev. R. Boersema: if you wish to argue that a Classis has a responsibility for the training of local office-bearers and that this is in harmony with Article 30 of the Church Order, the columns of *Clarion* are open to you.

Yours in Christ,
W.W.J. VANOENE

our little magazine

Dear Busy Beavers,

What do you like best about Spring? The green, green grass? Red tulips? Yellow daffodils? Maybe the clouds of white blossoms? Or robins singing and nesting?

Spring always makes me think of the song:

"All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small.
Yes, all things wise and wonderful,
The Lord God made them all."

Anyway, we're all happy Spring is here. And some of us because now we'll soon have summer holidays! Right?

* * * * *

Now, Busy Beavers, here's a way for you to help. You know the people in the post office want *everybody* to use the postal code. And many of you have written me using yours. So I have the code of many of you. But if you *haven't* written me for a while and *haven't* let me know, would you please do it now?

I'd like to be able to say I have all the codes! Then if I should want to send you something, I'll be proud to use your very own!

* * * * *

Time for birthday wishes! To all Busy Beavers who celebrate a birthday in the beautiful month of June we wish you the happiest birthday ever, and God's blessing and guidance in the coming year. Congratulations!

Teresa Bouwman	June 3	Ann VandenBos	June 19
Marcelle Lindhout	3	Marion Pieterman	19
Johanna Veldkamp	3	Norma VanderPol	19
Anneke 't Hart	4	Jacob Jongs	20
Nick Boersema	5	Catherine Smouter	20
Leonard Hoogerdyk	5	Joyce Dalhuisen	21
Henry Nieuwenhuis	8	Debbie Medemblik	21
Wilma VanWoudenberg	10	Marianne Bergsma	22
Calvin Lodder	11	Mary Oostdyk	22
Julia Huttema	12	Joyce DeGelder	23
Linda VanDyk	14	Cathy Dalhuisen	28
Bonnie Boeve	16	Harold Jansen	28
Cheryl Hansma	17		

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From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Marianne Tenhage*. We hope you will really enjoy reading Our Little Magazine and joining in all our activities. Do you enjoy our puzzles and quizzes? Write again soon, Marianne?

Of course you may join the Busy Beaver Club, *Leonard Hoogerdyk*. And we hope you will enjoy joining in all our activities besides keeping busy with your hobbies.

Thank you for your nice chatty letter, *Greta Bosscher*. I'm glad you had so much fun with birthdays at your house.

How did your pictures turn out? Bye for now, Greta.

Hello, *Hetty Witteveen*. It was nice to hear from you again. Thank you for the Book Look. Write again soon, Hetty!

Thank you for a big fat letter, *Corrie DeBoer*. I think the Busy Beavers will really enjoy doing your quiz. I'm sorry your story was too late for the contest. I hope you enjoyed writing it, though.

How did you do playing your "The Spring Song," *Irene VanGrootheest*. I'm proud to think you can play so well! What do you think, Irene? Would you like to have lived in pioneer days?

* * * * *

QUIZ TIME

This quiz comes to you from Busy Beaver *Corrie DeBoer*. Thanks for sharing, Corrie.

Who am I?

1. I thought I was the Lord Jesus' best disciple.
2. I am a Pharisee. I came to Jesus in the night to ask Him who He was.
3. We are a group of 70 people. The most important person is the High Priest.
4. I was the first man to die a martyr. I was stoned to death by Saul and his friends.
5. I sang songs to the Lord. God gave me a special Child.
6. I was the leader of Israel. I did a wrong thing against God when I was angry.
7. I married a Jewish girl. Later on I helped the Jews.
8. I disobeyed God. I went to the other side of the sea.
9. I cried for Judah. I wrote Lamentations.
10. I lived to be very old. The Lord made a covenant with me.

Are you good detectives today? See if you can discover the names of these Bible people.

We haven't unscrambled any names for so long!

- | | | | |
|-----------|-------------|------------|------------|
| 1. LUAP | 4. HOTAANNJ | 7. MULESA | 10. NELADI |
| 2. JESAM | 5. STEH | 8. HURT | |
| 3. RACSOD | 6. GIBLIAA | 9. HORABED | |

Answers next time!

How did you do on last time's quizzes? Here are a few of the words in the wordsearch puzzle "A man who tried to hide."

God, Tarshish, fare, forty, fish, evil, repent, journey, flower, sea, storm.

Maybe you found lots more!

Top Secrets

- 1 - e, 2 - a, 3 - j, 4 - f, 5 - l, 6 - k, 7 - b, 8 - h, 9 - d, 10 - g, 11 - i, 12 - c.

Mothers and Sons

Ruth - Obed	Bilhah - Dan
Elisabeth - John	Maacah - Absalom
Jochebed - Moses	Naomi - Chilion
Eunice - Timothy	Hagar - Ishmael
Zilpah - Asher	Sarah - Isaac
Bathsheba - Solomon	Rachel - Benjamin
Hannah - Samuel	Rebekah - Esau
Leah - Judah	Eve - Seth

How did you do?

Bye for now Busy Beavers!

Yours, Aunt Betty