

# Clarion

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# Encouraging Development

In the first half of the nineteenth century the Lord set His Church in the Netherlands free again from a hierarchical and un-scriptural form of Church government and from a freedom which was not the freedom in Christ but in reality the bondage of error and modernism. The movement of the Separation spread slowly, and after a while the situation seemed to be consolidated. No one could foresee that some fifty years later another liberation would follow.

Not all who were very much concerned about the condition of the Church and the course that was being followed, took the step of breaking with an institution which clearly lacked the marks of the true Church and which, on the contrary, promoted and protected error and unbelief, meanwhile persecuting those whose only desire it was to live holly in submission to God's inerrant Word. There were those who in hope against hope wished to strive for a change for the better, only to be frustrated in their efforts time and again; there were those who did not dare to take that step; there were those who were so much tied down by bonds of friendship and position that they refused to go along.

Yet the Lord gave another liberation in His grace. Little more than fifty years later the Doleantie came. It affected and involved more members and more Churches than had been the case in 1834. Our God gave a new awakening and by the power of His Spirit He brought the two together: in 1892 the Churches from the Separation and the Churches from the Doleantie merged; the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands were formed.

Even this new reformation did not mean that now all those who were concerned had joined the reformatioal movement. The Netherlands Reformed Church became a conglomerate of various groups and sometimes clearly marked sections which lived together in one organization but as for the rest almost formed a church within the church.

In the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands a gradual deviation from the Reformed Church polity crept in and when this was combined with a binding to doctrinal statements which, to say the least, bound beyond and above Scripture, the Liberation of 1944 was the result.

And, as had been the case in the days of Separation and Doleantie, so in 1944 not all those concerned left the bondage. Many who really worried about the condition and the course of the Churches continued their protests and tried to cause the Churches to return to the truly Reformed path. However, in spite of their efforts, the deviation continued and the fear was expressed at several occasions that in the synodical Churches in the Netherlands a situation would develop similar to the one in the Netherlands Reformed Church: a polarization and, as a result, a continuation and consolidation of the status quo: stay where you are and resign yourself to the situation as is.

Recently these fears were put to shame.

More and more members of the synodical Reformed

Churches in the Netherlands became convinced that the course followed in those churches is such that they can no longer bear the responsibility. The authority of the Holy Scriptures is systematically being undermined by teachings of professors who are left alone, with whom discussions take place but who are never admonished or disciplined. One of them, Dr. H.M. Kuitert, is even present at the General Synod as an adviser. The discipline, which in 1944 and following year(s) was used so diligently to expel those whose only endeavour it was to bring the Church back to the right, Reformed track, appears to have been forgotten. Protests by consistories seem not to have any effect.

During the first week of October, three ministers in those Churches informed others that they were convinced that the moment was there to come to a definite step, the step of separating oneself from those who are not of the Church and to join oneself to the Church where the pure preaching of the Gospel is maintained. They are convinced that the time of endless discussions is past and that actions must be the fruit of long-established convictions.

Others declared that error is being tolerated in the synodical churches and that modernistic ministers continue to determine the course more and more. Since there are still more Churches in the Netherlands that have preserved the marks of the true Church, they direct an urgent appeal to those who desire to live in obedience to the Lord to come and join themselves to those Churches.

We are thankful for this development and for the Christian courage on the part of those brethren and sisters who have made the decision.

Let no one think that they acted in a hurry-mood. We know from experience that those days of struggle, of pondering and weighing, of discussing and praying, are no days of exuberant courage or lighthearted farewell gestures. They are days of working out one's own salvation "with fear and trembling", as the Apostle writes. It is so hard when friendships are broken up and when ways must part. It really hurts when you see brethren and sisters with whom you were sitting together at the one table of the Lord, going a different way. It wounds your heart when your very own relatives decide to live on the other side of the line which divides those who just stay where they are and those who return to the obedience in Christ.

Yet, once the decision has been made and once the step has been taken, there is indeed the experience that a real burden has been taken off the shoulders, that there is breathing-space once more, and that reformation is indeed a liberation. I can fully understand it when some of the ministers that joined our sister Churches write that those liberated Churches are certainly not without spot or wrinkle, but that the writers nevertheless experienced when they joined the liberated Churches that they again could be living members of Christ's Church.

It is our sincere wish that the development in the Netherlands may also have its effects on this continent. Dr.

J.H. Kromminga, president of Calvin Seminary, was the official delegate from the Christian Reformed Church, and he expressed the deep concern in the Christian Reformed Church about the development in the synodical Churches in the Netherlands. Dr. Kromminga also referred to the difference in the application of Church discipline between the present time and a few decades ago. He warned against giving in to those who claim that everyone has the right to maintain his own opinion. The unity of the Church, he said, is not broken by those who endeavour to maintain the bond that binds us together, but by those who claim a right to personal freedom. That is how Dr. Kromminga is reported to have addressed the Dutch Synod.

Now that several members of the synodical Churches have drawn the consequences, we hope that also the

Christian Reformed Church may come to a conclusion and to action. And if the Christian Reformed Church as a whole refuses to do so, we hope that those who have been concerned about the development for a long time by now, may receive the courage to come to actions. If it appears impossible to get the whole body along, then the members have to act on their own. It will hurt, there is no doubt about that. But the promise of Christ still stands that whosoever has left, for His sake, fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, and everything else, will receive it all back even in this age.

Division is not caused by those who only bind to the old proven basis of the Church and to that basis completely, but it is caused only by those who refuse to let themselves be gathered on that condition. vO

## Drama and Preaching

*First in a series of five, including:*

1. *Drama and Preaching*
2. *Drama and Church*
3. *Drama and School*
4. *Drama and these Modern Days*
5. *Drama and Holy Scripture*

### PLAN

Our original intention was to write a series of articles on the subject of drama in its relation to religious school education, or - as it is also called - dramatization of Bible stories, Bible plays, or religious plays.

At many a Christian school this sort of "teaching aid" is used. Some of the parents who are not in the position to send their children to a Reformed school are confronted with it. It could quite well be that their little boy came home the other day and told them: "I am Joseph!"

In order to help these parents, and inform at the same time the other readers of our magazine, we deemed it useful to draw their attention to a thesis which in our opinion deserves to be put in the limelight - and even translated and edited for English-speaking readers, since the English Summary at the end may be useful but does not give them enough.

We have in mind now the dissertation of Dr. Zacharias Rittersma, Principal of the Reformed Teachers College at Amersfoort in The Netherlands. He defended this thesis at the University for Christian Higher Education at Potchefstroom, South Africa, April 1972.

Its title is "Het dramatiseren van bijbelse geschiedenissen door jeugdigen. Een pedagogisch-didactische bijdrage met bijzondere aandacht voor het schooldrama van de 16de eeuw" (Dramatization of biblical stories by youngsters. A pedagogic-didactic contribution paying special attention to 16th century school drama). It can be obtained at fl. 18.50 (Dutch currency), plus postage, from the author, Koningin Julianalaan 68, Leusden-Zuid, The Netherlands.

However, the reading of this book and the study of some affiliated literature led us to the conclusion that there is more than the "Bible plays" only in which we as people of

Reformed confession are interested - or at least should be interested - and against which our children must be protected.

There are certain ideas at the background of the introducing of drama.

These ideas are related with or even the consequences of a movement of renewal in the field of school education.

And in their turn this movement has been influenced by modern philosophies and even theology.

Therefore is it not strange that the tendency to reintroduce drama does not stop at the schools. It has the desire to affect the church services as well and import drama as an alternative to the preaching.

Consequently we have changed our plans and put a wide-angle lens on our camera.

And first of all we will pass on some information on the relation between drama and preaching.

### RELATION

This relation was put in historical light in the July 1975 issue of *Eternity* magazine.

The author of the article concerned, Dr. Thomas Howard, associate professor of English at Gordon College, Wenham, Massachusetts, pointed his readers to the origin of mediaeval drama: the preaching in church. That is to say, in his opinion drama was revived after many centuries of silence, in the church, precisely in the church.

It is not clear yet whether this includes a sort of hint for today's preaching. The series on drama in that magazine is still running.

However, a clear sound came from the Rev. William C. DeVries, minister of the Christian Reformed Church at Ann Arbor, Michigan, and from Calvin College, Grand Rapids.

The former seems to be very much in favour of introducing drama, films, colour-slides shows and things like that as alternatives to the preaching in church.

The *Grand Rapids Press* of Saturday, July 19, 1975 contained the following:

NEW SERMON STYLES REFLECT TELEVISION AGE

After a week of careful planning and coordination, a min-

ister intent on sprucing up his monologue-style sermon is ready for a trial run at the Sunday morning service.

He faces a full congregation, takes a deep breath and punches a button to begin a slide show-Sunday sermon. Upside-down images appear on the screen.

A bit flustered but as yet undaunted, he turns to an overhead projector to transmit some simple diagrams to the still-empty screen. The projector's bulb begins to flicker and the lead breaks in the grease pencil.

In desperation, he tries to salvage the morning with some extemporaneous preaching. The microphone goes dead, and he begins to wish he were, too.

You might call it a media nightmare.

It's the price some ministers are paying for trying different styles of preaching. "I've tried to do things like that and repeatedly fallen flat on my face," laments Rev. Bill DeVries, pastor of a Christian Reformed Church in Ann Arbor, who believes audio-video instruction should be part of the regular seminary curriculum.

Films, drama, slide shows, music tapes each is being used to vary the sermon formats to get away from standard monologue deliveries. A pastors' workshop at Calvin College last week featured one discussion section on the media, in part how sermons can be more effective.

Thomas J. Ozinga, speech professor at the college, presented a paper on the effects of mass media upon Christian life.

The media explosion of this century, he concluded, presents a formidable challenge. Moral effects aside, mass media, especially television, have conditioned viewers to expect "packaged, organized, varied, pictorial communication . . . The monologic sermon may underestimate the ability of listeners to take in information".

Ozinga advises pastors to "judiciously" use the arts in worship, and to prepare sermons with the principles of attention and perception in mind. "Arouse interest, hold that interest and know when to stop talking", he said. Sermon aids can be as simple as interspersing appropriate hymns within the sermon itself.

Professor K. Schilder taught us: "Please, gentlemen preach in an interesting way!" But he was talking about the preaching! Not about "pictorial communication".

#### COMMENT

At this stage we would like to make some comment:

1. What about the quality and level of the preaching of the Middle Ages, to which Dr. Howard refers his readers?

Edwin Charles Dargan in *A History of Preaching*, Volume I, says concerning the Eastern Church (page 157):

There was continuous decline in the frequency of preaching. The two chief causes were the ever increasing regard for the Mass as being the essential thing in worship, and the growing ignorance of the clergy.

With respect to the Western Church he writes (page 166) regarding the preaching:

As a consequence it could not have had much influence on the life of the people. Church services consisted largely of the liturgy, especially that connected with the celebration of the mass, and very little of direct appeal to conscience and thought, and (173):

Altogether the preaching of the gospel was at its lowest stage during the dark ages that extended from the death of Gregory the Great in 604 to the beginning of the Crusades in 1095.

Indeed, it was often a one-man-show indeed, really a show, just as Dr. Howard says in *Eternity*.

2. However, we are not convinced that "religious drama" had its origin in the preaching and its decay.

Again we turn to Dargan, who writes on page 302:

Throughout the whole mediaeval period, as we have seen, there are traces of the burlesque and sensational in preaching. But in the fifteenth century, and especially in Italy and France, this always questionable and often thoroughly evil tendency found frequent and exaggerated expression.

Then he continues on page 303:

One of the better sort of the Italian preachers - himself by no means above reproach - writes: "Preachers ought to abstain from levity and not speak idle words and stories to provoke a laugh. Even if sometimes it is necessary to make the people attentive by some modest pleasantry, let it be done moderately and rarely."

However, when this warning against pleasantry in the preaching - say: against delivering a one-man-show - was issued, "religious drama" had gained solid ground for a long time already.

3. In our opinion the introducing of "religious drama" was not so much a result of the decay in the preaching as a further consequence of the church setting its foot on the path of enacting sacred history as done in the mass. No longer were the events in the history of salvation acknowledged as being "einmalig": they cannot be repeated or enacted; they can only be commemorated: taken in their significance for today.

4. Over against this the Great Reformation of the 16th century put the preaching of God's Word. That is to say, after a hesitant beginning as far as "religious drama", in particular schooldrama, is concerned, it did away with even this sort of "books of laity". It realized: "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Romans 10:17).

5. Now someone could object and ask: But what about the sacraments, are not these "dramatic"?

The answer is: No, they are not. For the essential characteristics of drama are lacking in them: there is no dramatic dialogue, no identification, no repetition or enacting of the event concerned. The sacraments are "the Word visible", which they seal unto us.

6. And as for a similar question regarding the Old Testament sacrifices we may refer to Dr. Rittersma's thesis when he says (page 18) - in our translation:-

The actions in the Old Testament sacrifices, just as these sacrifices themselves, are of a symbolic-prophetic character. They point to Christ, and this is included in the redemptive-historical order God has made.

These sacred acts are not things by themselves. As acts they do not produce any effect. They do not enforce anything, neither are they means of power in the hands of the offering priest. Besides, the priest does never identify himself with someone or something else, let alone with God. He realizes that he is a weak and sinful creature, having no power in itself to work reconciliation with God. Actually his actions are powerless, and they become superfluous as soon as the only perfect sacrifice of Christ has been offered. The repetition of these acts is of a temporary nature. They do not emanate from mythical thinking. Further, in this sacrificial worship there is no trace of a dramatic dialogue. The "amen" of God's people is a confession of faith.

#### QUESTIONS

For the following articles we have to deal with these questions:

1. Can we rightly make an appeal to history for the re-introduction of "biblical plays" or "dramatization of Bible stories"?

2. What are the influences on the present-day pleas for the use of drama at school and in church?

3. Is it really proper to dramatize God's Word? Is this in accordance with the peculiar character of God's Word? Are we allowed to use the Bible as a scenario? We agree with Dr. Rittersma when he says (page 13): This is the main question!

G. VAN RONGEN

# "And So All Israel Will Be Saved" (4)

## THE *THIRD* PRINCIPLE: THE BIBLE IS THE ONE BOOK OF THE *ONE* COVENANT

In our discussion of Millennialism this third principle is certainly not the least-important one. People like H. VERWEIJ, J.N. VOORHOEVE, the Baptists and many sects are in one respect alike: they fail to see the Bible as *one* Book, and consequently fail to do justice to this fact.

For the Baptists the "christian Bible" really begins with Matthew 1, or Luke 1, the birth of Jesus Christ. Before that date the Covenant was a national business; from now on it is individual(istic). Even around the struggle in and around 1944 the proponents of the strange doctrine of "presumptive regeneration" fell into that trap.

For a man like Verweij there are really two Bibles, one for the Jews and one for the Christians. There are two essentially-different Covenants; it is even doubtful whether he would consider the "covenant" a christian concept. Thus also God has two peoples, a spiritual people, the congregation from Pentecost till the "rapture", and a national (or natural) people, the Jewish nation which will be restored.

There are even two Messiahs! Or (what boils down to the same reality) there are two different functions and mandates for the one Son of God. His first mandate was to establish a "kingdom not of this world", his Church; the second will indeed be a "kingdom of this world" established with worldly means, be it then that the spiritual aspect is not completely absent.

The final step would be that there are two Gods: the God of the Christians and the God of the Jews. No one has yet dared to take that final step.

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One of the strongest arguments against this cutting up of the Bible into two Bibles is, to me, exactly and precisely the *Name* which the LORD God gave to our Redeemer. Twice, Luke 1 and Matthew 1, there is the express command to call the child "*Jesus*". If, and it is probable, the angel spoke to Mary and Joseph in their "home-language", he must have said, You shall call his Name "*Joshua*". In this name, a contraction or shorter form of the complete name "*Jahwe-sjuang*", we find exactly the Name of "the God of the Old Testament"! In other words, the angel said to them: now the time has come that Jahwe comes to the help of his people. Sure, a new dispensation starts in the *one* Covenant-history, but it is the same LORD who now, after having sent so many servants and messengers, comes to his people in his Own and Only Son.

Mary and Zechariah (and also Joseph, Simeon and Elizabeth) have understood that very well. When you read the "Psalms of Luke 1", the songs of Mary and Zechariah, you hear all the time Old Testaments sounds. "He has helped his servant Israel in remembrance of his mercy, as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his posterity for ever" (verses 54, 55). Zechariah is even more pronounced in his song. "Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, for he has visited his people." (This is an exact paraphrase of the name "Jesus".) "He has raised up a horn in the house of David . . . as he spoke by the mouth of his prophets from of old . . . to remember his holy covenant . . . the oath which he swore to

our father Abraham . . .", etc. We could quote this whole Psalm in order to prove our point that in the name "Jesus" the whole Old Testament is summarized, concentrated and fulfilled. Or rather, in his *first* coming that Old Testament is fulfilled. The "intermezzo" did not begin with the birth of Messiah Jesus, but it was fulfilled, had reached its purpose, and thus could disappear (letter to the Hebrews).

Thus there is only *one* Bible, *one* Messiah, *one* people of God. There is only *one* plan of God for our redemption. There is only *one* "Israel of God." This is what we confess in L.D. 21 of the Heidelberg Catechism and Art. 27 of the Confession of Faith. This confession is squarely based on the texts previously mentioned, I Peter 2:9, 10, James 1:1, etc., where the early church is addressed as "the twelve tribes of Israel in the dispersion" which is then called, "*you* are the chosen race, the royal priesthood, the holy nation, God's own people."

## REAPING THE HARVEST FROM THESE THREE PRINCIPLES

Elaborating on these three Reformed Principles of Scripture-interpretation seems to me a necessity, in order to find the answer to the questions around Romans 11 and some specific statements of Paul in this chapter; and of course also to other "grounds" for the idea of Millennialism.

As to the whole of Romans 9-11, one must realize that Paul dealt here indeed with a very urgent and burning problem. Try to imagine it!

There finally the LORD God of Israel offered the promised Messiah, and the fulfilment of all that the prophets had spoken from of old (Luke 1) - and lo and behold! "His own received him not" (John 1). Who would have expected such an unbelievable course of events?! Had now everything been in vain and was now everything thrown into confusion? Was not everything going wrong?

That was exactly the urgent problem that Paul had to deal with. Believers from the Jews as well as from the Gentiles were "flabbergasted" (one must again, redemptive-historically, try to creep into the skin of Paul's contemporaries, in order to "feel" the problem. We live many centuries later; have the complete New Testament and know how Paul speaks of the removal of the wall of partition, but the people of his days were very confused, to say the least, by this unexpected turn of events: away from the Jews and towards the Gentiles).

Thus, for a correct understanding of these chapters one must try to become a contemporary of Paul and not "hear" them as though they were not written before the twentieth century (although they were also written *for* the twentieth century!). Paul himself had difficulties with the fact that his brethren according to the flesh did not accept the Messiah. That was for him a constant grief, although he learned to see (compare his other letters) that the promises to Abraham, etc., were fulfilled to Jews and Gentiles alike.

## ROMANS 11 "IN THE LIGHT OF ROMANS 1-11"

Although it is a must to bring Paul's teaching in Galatians, Ephesians, etc., into the picture for a correct understanding of those expressions in Romans 11, one does not even have to go that far. The Romans letter *itself* is there to help us.

It starts out with the great theme of justification by faith only, "to the Jew first and also to the Greek" (1:16, 17).

Then, chapter 2 and 3, Jews and Gentiles are said to lie under the same judgment and condemnation. "There is no difference" (2:1ff, 9, 10). "Then what advantage has the Jew? (3:1). Sure, they have some because "they were entrusted with the oracles of God" (3:2). But "are we Jews any better off? No, not at all . . . both Jews and Greeks are under the power of sin" (3:9). But for both the *one* way out is being justified by faith only; in that way "God is not the God of the Jews only; he is God of the Gentiles also" (3:29), "since God is one" (3:30). There is no difference between Jew and Greek with regard to the *only* way of salvation.

Thus I could go on and quote from chapter 4, which has been mentioned before. "What then shall we say about Abraham our father according to the flesh?" (4:1). What shall Paul say about him? The whole chapter gives the answer. "The purpose (!vD) was to make him the father of all who believe", with or without circumcision (verses 11ff.). "It depends on faith" (verse 16 ) and on faith *only*.

Chapter 5 goes even farther back, before Abraham: there was Adam, in whom "all men sinned" (5:12ff). Now we are back on the "universal" scene. Then chapters 6, 7, 8 describe in glorious terms the change that faith brings about for those who walk not after the flesh but according to the Spirit.

But even when we "enter" the special passage of the chapters 9, 10 and 11, there is so much material against the idea of Millennialism and of a repeat of the Jews becoming again God's own people, that one becomes amazed because of the fact that all this information seems to be forgotten as soon as some read in chapter 11 about "all Israel" and "beloved for the sake of the forefathers."

Let's have a look.

Romans 9 "forbids" the chiliastic view. "It is not the children of the flesh who are children of God" (verse 8).

The riches of His glory have been prepared (!) beforehand, "even us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles", and then follows the quote from Hosea (9:24 ff).

From Isaiah the cry, "Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, *only a remnant of them will be saved*" (verse 27).

"Israel did not succeed . . ." (verse 37).

That is the "mystery" (see also Ephesians 2:11-22): although only a remnant of the Jews will be saved, yet God gets his fulness "not only from the Jews but also from the Gentiles". For the people of Paul's days that was indeed something they had never yet seen clearly. Now this "mystery" is explained to them.

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But even chapter 11 helps us to the correct understanding of the above-quoted expressions which Millennialists distort because they separate them from the whole of the Scriptures.

#### WHAT ARE THE PROOFS FOR A NO-ANSWER?

Chapter 11 starts with the question, "Has God rejected his people?" Paul's answer is a heated "by no means!"

What are the *proofs* to support this No-answer?

He gives quite a few and it is very important for our topic to take good notice of them.

1. The first proof is Paul himself! "I myself am an Israelite" (11:1). If God had rejected his people, he would

not have called Paul at the gate of Damascus, to become an apostle of Jesus Christ to both Jews and Gentiles.

2. When Elijah complained that he was the only one left, "what is God's reply to him? 'I have kept for myself seven thousand men' " (verses 2-4) Not many, only 7000, yet a "full number" (cf. Confession art. 27), and a proof that God still has a people of his own.

3. Paul applies this then for the, for him, present situation: "So too at the present time *there is a remnant*, chosen by grace" (verse 5). Mind you, this is for Paul a *proof* that God has not rejected his people (verse 1)!

4. Thus Paul does not lose courage. He will go on preaching to the Jews. Does he expect from them a massive turning to the only Messiah, as a proof that God has not rejected his people? Certainly not. Listen to his expectation: I will "make my fellow Jews jealous, and *thus save some of them*" (verse 14). For these "some" that will mean "life from the dead" (verse 15).

5. However, that does not mean that there is in Paul's mind any room for an extra or special or even "natural" chance for the Jews to again become a Messianic people. No, for Jews the same condition goes as for Greeks and barbarians, "if they do not persist in their unbelief" (verse 23). What kind of unbelief was that? Unbelief in the chiliastic dream of a restoration of David's kingdom in this world for one thousand years? Certainly not! It was exactly because of their nationalistic dreams that they rejected the Crucified One. The Cross was their great stumbling block. They fell over it, to their ruin. Now there is for them only *one* chance: "not persist in this their unbelief" but accept the Cross of Jesus Christ as their only salvation; yea, as the fulfilment of "all the Scriptures" (Luke 24). "O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe *all* (!) that the prophets have spoken . . . And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself" (verses 25-27).

Moses, the Prophets, the Scriptures, *all* of them, spoke about Cross and Resurrection. Christ, in dying and rising again, fulfilled *all* the Scriptures. Nothing else is to be expected now but his second and final coming to judge the living and the dead.

And among the complete number of the elect there will also be the "remnant of the Jews, chosen by grace" (Romans 11).

Not a word in all these words of Romans, even of Romans 11, that in any conceivable way points in the direction of a restoration of the Jewish nation before that second and final Coming.

BUT, BUT . . .

But . . . what then about the "fulness of Israel ", "all Israel," etc.??? A final article will consider and answer this "counter-attack".

G. VANDOOREN

Don't forget to return your  
Christmas greeting envelope  
to your correspondent.

SEE PUBLISHER'S MESSAGE



# press review

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

This time, as press review, something that first served as a Letter to the Editor in a local paper. In the federal riding of Lisgar, of which Carman and surroundings form a part, a survey was held which showed that 89 percent of the interviewed people were in favour of a return of capital punishment. Reacting to it, a minister of one of the churches in the Carman area wrote the following:

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## The Answer for Capital Punishment

With the death of Mary Steinhäuser and the murder of prison guard Paul Gosselin, the cry for the return of the noose in Canada has been heard. Recently a survey in our federal riding of Lisgar showed 89 percent favour for the return of capital punishment. Canadians may think we are secure when one death has been avenged by another. Such an attitude is an easy way out for an apathetic public.

Violent attacks on prison guards in Canada have been increasing. Last year prison guards suffered from 200 such attacks. The number of murders has been increasing. A quick jump to decide to hang the offender speaks more of the public's desire for revenge than it does for dealing with the problem of crime.

That capital punishment is a deterrent to crime is one of the most mistaken beliefs in Canada. Most murders are committed under panic, passion, insane behaviour, or by a person who thinks he will not get caught. The noose has little or no deterrent effect upon a person in such a mood.

Neither does capital punishment protect society. It merely points to how we view life - something to be got rid of if not following accepted behaviour. In all other instances of wrong doing we try to rehabilitate, to re-train, to help and to heal. Life imprisonment would offer this hope to the murderer.

Paroled murderers in Canada have the cleanest record of any parolees. From 1867 to 1974 only one person with the death sentence commuted committed a second murder. That was in 1944.

If we were to focus on causes, in the long run, we would be safer. Poverty, isolation, loneliness, easily-available fire arms, prison reform, and the wish to take the law into our own hands need our attention.

From a Christian point of view there is just no way to justify capital punishment. We who follow Jesus must take our lead from his teaching. There is no doubt where he stood on the issue. He said, "You have heard that it was said 'an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth', but now I say to you 'do not take revenge on someone who has done you wrong'. From the cross Jesus said of his murderers "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do."

For Christians, revenge must never be a motive. Hanging a person will never reform him. We believe that every person is capable of being redeemed and reformed. Capital punishment makes that New Testament mandate impossible.

What a loss for western civilization if Moses had been put to death for killing an Egyptian. What a tragedy if David had been killed for the death of Uriah. What would have happened if Paul had been hanged for co-operating in the death of Stephen?

The Gospel of Christ speaks of hope and new life for each person. Capital punishment takes hope away. The possibility of new life for the offender and for society is gone.

My comment on this in a Letter to the Editor was as follows:

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In the DUFFERIN LEADER of Wednesday, September 24, 1975, as "A Message from the Churches," the matter of capital punishment was dealt with. The author stated: "From a Christian point of view there is just no way to justify capital punishment. We who follow Jesus must take our lead from his teaching. There is no doubt where he stood on the issue." And, then, as proof two words of Christ are quoted. The first we find in Matthew 5:38, 39. We read there (in R.S.V. translation): "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say to you, Do not resist one who is evil." In

the mentioned article the translation was given from "Good News for Modern Man"; I repeat the last part: "But now I tell you: do not take revenge on someone who does you wrong." This is not a literal translation, but a paraphrase. As a whole it renders the meaning of Christ's word quite well. But the remark must be made that the word "now" is wrongly added: we do not find it in the original Greek. I will come back to it. The other word of Christ is that spoken at the cross: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). Then the author adds: "For Christians, revenge must never be a motive."

I would like to comment on this. I dare call myself a Christian who tries to follow Christ by taking lead from His teaching. And I wholeheartedly agree with the statement that for Christians revenge never must be a motive. And I also am of the opinion that Christ Jesus, our Lord, teaches us not to avenge ourselves in the above mentioned words.

However, when it is said that "From a Christian point of view there is just no way to justify capital punishment," I have to disagree. And when the conclusion is drawn from the two words of Christ Jesus, which were quoted, that the Lord Himself clearly rejects capital punishment, and that therefore we have to do the same, I again must disagree. I shall try to explain why. And I should like to start with saying something about that first word of the Lord found in Matthew 5.

The words "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth" appear three times in the Books of Moses: in Exodus 21:24, in Leviticus 24:20, and in Deuteronomy 19:21. Now it is often thought that Christ rejects this word of Moses, this law of God in the Old Testament, and so contradicts Moses. This opinion is also the background for the addition of the word "now" in the translation of "Good News": before, Moses said . . . , but now Christ tells us. In this way a contrast, and actually a conflict, is created between Moses and Christ. This means: between what God says through Moses and what He says through Christ. And so God would be in conflict with Himself. This is impossible and also not true. Let us read carefully.

In the first place we must pay attention to the remarkable fact that the Lord does not say: "You have read that it is written". That is the

normal expression He uses when referring to the reliable and authoritative Old Testament Word of God. With the expression "you have heard that it was said" Christ refers to what was said to (or rather by) "the men of old," see Matthew 5:21, 33. These "men of old" are not Moses or the prophets, but the later doctors of the law, the teachers in the synagogue, among whom the pharisees. In the whole context of Matthew 5 - 7, Christ is opposing them and their teaching, and not Moses.

When God gave the rule to Israel through Moses: "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," this law was meant to be maintained by Israel's official judges as rule for a just jurisdiction. This is especially clear from the context in Deuteronomy 19, see the verses 17 and 18. This rule or law was definitely not given as a ground for self-revenge, see Leviticus 19:18. And that is exactly what the "men of old" taught. They made this word a ground for self-revenge. It is this abuse of God's Old Testament Word that Christ strongly refutes. But this does not include that He is opposed to the right use and maintenance of also this law of God. We cannot read in this word of the Lord that He rejects capital punishment.

The same can be said with respect to that other word. Asking the Father to forgive the soldiers and the others who had a hand in crucifying Him, Jesus Christ keeps God's commandment, given already through Moses: "You shall not take vengeance or bear any grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbour as yourself: I am the LORD," Leviticus 19:18. At the moment of His crucifixion Christ was not called to be a judge. He was called to die for our sins under God's severe judgment. But when He returns as Judge He will punish the ungodly who refused to believe in Him with the punishment of eternal death, executing God's wrath. So again, the prayer for forgiveness does not include that Christ denies that the government has the right to maintain capital punishment.

I should like to point to what Paul, the apostle and servant of Christ Jesus, says in Romans 13:4. Paul tells us to submit to the governing authorities and not to resist them. For the government, also the judges, are "God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he (the

governing authority) does not bear the sword in vain; he is the servant of God to execute His wrath on the wrongdoer."

When we hear these words about the government, the official judge, being God's servant to execute God's wrath on the wrongdoer, and compare this with what God spoke through Moses about the calling of Israel's official judges, we can conclude that Old and New Testament teach the same thing. And when Paul uses the word "sword" in this context, we may conclude that this includes the right to use the sword for executing capital punishment. And does not Christ Jesus actually say the same thing in His word to Peter: "Put your sword back into its place: for all who take the sword will perish by the sword." Peter, as an individual, had no right to take the sword. Those who use the sword for reasons of self-revenge, will be punished and will perish under the official sword of the governing authorities who, in those days, were also the judges. So we can draw the conclusion that Christ Jesus, rather than wanting to have capital punishment abolished, wanted it to be maintained. We may not read into the prohibition of personal revenge a prohibition of any official death sentence and its execution.

This connection is mistakenly made also in the beginning of the article. The author is not satisfied with the fact that 89 percent of the people in the federal riding of Lisgar favours the return of capital punishment. And he rebukes that 89 percent. He says: "Canadian may think we are secure when one death has been avenged by another. Such an attitude is an easy way out for an apathetic public." And: "A quick jump to decide to hang the offender speaks more of the public's desire for revenge than it does for dealing with the problem of crime." I find this quite an accusation. And I doubt whether we can say in general that favouring the return of capital punishment is a desire for revenge of an apathetic public. I would rather see here that with quite a percentage of the people in the Lisgar riding there still is a concern that justice be done, and that our Canadian society and those who want to do good be protected. Not apathy, indifference, insensibleness, but concern and a feeling for justice. Capital punishment should not be a matter of revenge in a personal way. It has to

be a matter of justice, God's justice (Romans 13:1 - 4), performed by the authorities who rule as servants of God maintaining law and order in a sinful world. This does not mean that I would see every murder punished with capital punishment. But this is not the question. At issue was the principle: capital punishment or not; and does the Word of God, does our Lord Jesus Christ prohibit capital punishment or not.

A last remark. The author points out that "the Gospel of Christ speaks of hope and new life for each person." We add: who believes in Him. He goes on: "Capital punishment takes hope away. The possibility of new life for the offender and for society is gone." In my opinion the author speaks here in a way that is too confined. A murderer, sentenced to death, still receives the time to confess his sin before God and men, and to seek the forgiveness of it in the atoning blood of Christ Jesus in order to be saved for ever in that way and enter eternal new life. Capital punishment does not take hope away. Indeed, the possibility of new life in this society is gone. But is it not normal, even when our sin is forgiven, that we still have to bear the consequences of our sin? God holds us responsible for what we do! More could be said. This is enough. J. GEERTSEMA



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# Mission And Church Order

Just a few remarks, more questions than answers, and thus - maybe - an introduction to a call for "Re-thinking Missions".

First, the Dutch sister churches, in their present general synod, are discussing art. 23 of the Church Order (again). It happened before, in 1923 (see my booklet, *Get Out!*, ch. IIIf.). In 1923 a whole set of "Principles for Evangelism" were built on the last sentence of art. 23: ". . . and also to exhort others in respect to the Christian Religion." (N.B.: art. 23 describes "the office of the elders".)

The Dutch background of this renewed attention for art 23 C.O. is a joyful one: there has been in recent years, especially among the young generation, a great urge to "reach out"; the urge was translated into action, and now they asked guidance and leadership from the older generation who had been so intensely involved in "inner" struggles.

On the table of mentioned synod is a proposal for revision of the C.O. If adopted, a new art. 27 will look like this (we translate):

1. The churches shall, by means of evangelism, seek those who are estranged from the Word of God, in order to bring them back to the fellowship with Christ and His congregation;
2. The consistories shall see to it ("er op toezien") that the members of the congregation take upon themselves this ecclesiastical responsibility partly (I know, this is not good English, but translation of "voor een deel". I have, however, the impression that there is a printing error in *Opdracht* (Contact paper of Committees for Evangelism), and that it should read "voor hun deel", i.e.: for their part; see below. The proposed revision then continues:) by confessing Christ with word and deed, and exhorting others to join the church.

*Dr. C. Trimp* expressed the hope that synod would accept this revision, which would result in a separate C.O. article on "Evangelism". From his other remarks (in *De Reformatie*, summarized in *Opdracht*) I am happy to learn that he does not agree with "1923" that the consistory has to

initiate evangelism by appointing committees. The "guidance" of the office-bearers has to be given in their typical work of preaching, catechesis, home-visits, exhortation, etc. That is "their part". The membership then has to do "their part" as described in the above points 1 and 2.

Dr. Trimp is of the opinion that such an article is desirable; he even adds that it stands to reason that ecclesiastical assemblies, from consistory to general synod, show real interest in "deze grote zaak van de kerk in de wereld" (this matter of great importance for the church in this world).

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Having promised more questions than answers, here are some.

If "Evangelism" must have a place in the C.O., what about Foreign Mission? Since the Liberation several Synods have busied themselves with the latter, expounding principles, etc., but it all resulted in the fact that, surely Foreign Mission is a task for the local churches, *but* should be kept away from the tables of major assemblies. If there is to be an "Order", it should be a separate "Mission Order". The Canadian Reformed Churches followed suit.

I confess that I cannot follow this reasoning in comparison with what now is said about (what till now has been called) "Evangelism".

Next question: did, and does, the old art. 23 really and only speak about "Evangelism" (or Home Mission)? Knowing that the Synod of Dort 1618/19 busied itself quite extensively with "Foreign Mission" in the (then) "Dutch East Indies", one wonders. Art. 23 speaks about "the *Christian* Religion", while in art. 61 the C.O. prescribes that none shall be admitted to the H. Supper except those who have made a profession of "the *Reformed* Religion". One might argue that "Reformed" is used "at home", over against the romanist religion, while "Christian" is used for "abroad": over against the heathen religions.

If there is some truth in this argument, our C.O. has had room, though very modestly and unsatisfactorily, for "Foreign Mission from the beginning. And then one

might quote Dr. Trimp again and say, It stands to reason that the assemblies from consistory to general synod busy themselves with "de grote zaak van de kerk in deze wereld."

Synod Toronto 1974 did not accept any of the proposed revisions of C.O. articles yet. On its table was the product of the Committee for revision of C.O. art. 1-28. In the revision of art. 23, the last line (about exhorting others to the Christian Religion) is simply left out! Hope is expressed that our Committee, in its further work, seek close cooperation with the Dutch colleagues before we, head over heels, cut out the last (and least) remnant of anything about "the great task of the Church in this world".

This brings us to another question. Art. 2 C.O. speaks about four offices, including that of "doctors". Our Committee proposed to simply leave that out (rightly so) but also to read, "There are *three* (not four, vD) kinds of offices in the church". Before we ever accept this, we had better sit down and discuss whether this is indeed right. Somewhere else I have already, and will again, argue that there are *four*! The office of a missionary (my suggestion, in the light of biblical evidence, is to call him "evangelist") is essentially different from that of a minister. He cannot be ordained with our Form for the ordination of ministers. That just doesn't fit.

Once that would be agreed upon, the next question is, why not make room for him and his office in the Church Order, and from there on continue the way Dr. Trimp continues with regard to "Evangelism", see above. I am not for multiplying the number of articles of the C.O. Several could be left out, or combined, as they deal with only minor matters, some of them obsolete. But should there not be sufficient room for "the great task of the Church in this world", the task of Mission and Evangelism?!

This brings me to my last question for the time being.

Is it necessary, helpful, prescribed by Scripture, to differentiate so strongly between two kinds of Mission: Foreign and Home Mission? Are not both included in the one "Great Commission" of Matthew 28:18-20? I know I touch a controversial issue. I do not believe that the churches and our way of thinking about and fulfilling

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# news medley

Everywhere the activities seem to be on the increase. Societies announce their regular or special meetings. Larger organizations also call their members together in League Days or Study Weekends. Of these last two we may mention that the League of Men's Societies in Ontario scheduled an annual meeting for October 18th. This time the meeting place was different from other years. For quite some years Fergus was privileged in hosting these annual gatherings; this time Rehoboth Burlington was the receiving congregation. As for the topic to be dealt with there, this time the Rev. P. Kingma had been asked to be the main speaker. At first, his subject was announced simply as "To Believe", but that was too simple apparently, for later on it was formulated as follows: "The Significance of the Church and the Ministration of the Word for the Life of the Believers". That's what I gathered from the Rehoboth bulletin. It may be that a mistake has crept in here or there, for I do not think that it is proper to speak of the "ministration of the Word". I am quite certain that this will have been corrected during the speech. Hopefully everything will have been recorded so that we all can benefit from it via **Clarion** . . .

As for other study weekends or conferences: the two Burlingtons (if I understood it well) hosted a study weekend of the Ontario Young People's Societies. And in Edmonton a similar event took place on the Thanksgiving weekend, with Rev. D. DeJong speaking on Saturday morning on "The Role of the Young People in the Church", an introduction on Sunday evening on "Prayer", and an introduction on Monday on "The Role of Women in the Church".

The office-bearers in Ontario plan to come together on Saturday, October 25th, where Dr. J. Faber is scheduled to speak on the Sects and the task of the office-bearers in connection with the danger posed by these sects, and Rev. G. VanDooren will speak on the supervision by the elders over the doctrine of the ministers of the Word, on their preaching, and the manner in which this is to be practised.

So far about special meetings.

We start our wanderings across the country in the far West.

New Westminster is making progress with the erection of their new churchbuilding. The specific committee reports, "From hole in the ground to box in the ground we have now graduated to bunker in the ground complete with peep holes which some day will be windows." That gave me great joy. But I could hardly believe my eyes when I read about strippers! Listen: "A big 'Thank You' to the approximately 35 people (strippers) who came last Saturday to strip and clean the forms." Only some deep thinking made it clear to me that the forms for pouring concrete were meant. Now, the committee continued, the footings for laminated beams were to be put into place, a very precise work. That was, of course, something for experts. But there is or was lots of other work. "Those who have outgrown the shovel will be promoted to help placing the 550 floorjoints and to nail the 1000 jointhangers in

place." We'll keep you posted, for it says, "To be continued".

I was very happy with the frankness of the following announcement: "The **little women** of 'In Service of the King' will be delighted to see some new faces (not that we are tired of the old ones) at their next meeting." The (somewhat longer) announcement was signed "This message is from the Bored".

It is about time that we move on to Cloverdale. Cloverdale's Consistory apparently discusses the Acts of the General Synod 1974. During the discussion "some members express their regret that Synod did not continue the Committee to consider the set-up of a Textbook useful for Catechism instruction in the home, church and school." Although I must agree with the decision of Synod that it is not a task of the Churches in general to do so, I do share the regret of the Cloverdale brethren. I think that it would be a great help for many if such a book would as yet be composed, but the problem will be, as always, who will find the time to do it?

Cloverdale also is considering what steps should be taken next in order to solve the matter of double services for the one congregation. Apparently it is deemed to be the healthiest development that the one Church becomes two autonomous Churches. It does not need any elaboration that I wholeheartedly agree with such a stand. From the report on the Consistory meeting I get the impression that the brethren consider two courses of action possible: either wait till a request for institution of a separate Church reaches the Consistory or take action as a Consistory and decide that such institution shall take place. In the latter case, you would, of course, so easily get criticism as if the Consistory were doing something to break up the congregation. In the former case those who come with a request could so easily be considered as people who want to get away from that particular Church. However, let me quote literally:

Considering the disadvantages of having four services per Sunday in Cloverdale and the increase in membership in the Langley area, a discussion is held which course to take to follow up the (principle) decision taken in the past: to steer into the direction of a second congregation in that area. Several possibilities are looked into. For instance: wait for a request from the membership in that area to institute a separate church there; have a meeting arranged of members in the Langley area to discuss the desirability of separate church services.

Since four members living in that area, being elders, have heard and taken part in the discussion, it is decided to keep this matter in abeyance till the next meeting.

The result is to be read in the same issue of **Church News**: the four brethren called a meeting of all those living in the Langley area to discuss this point. Before long, I presume, a request will reach the Consistory to start separate services, and, not long after that, there will be a fifth Church in the Valley. A very gratifying development.

Frequently I have criticized terminology with respect to attestations. Let me now quote what Abbotsford wrote in their report on a Consistory meeting: "Br. N. is received into the communion of the Church upon an attestation from the Church at N." That's now exactly as it should be done and formulated. No discussion whether an "attestation shall be accepted", no speaking of "his attestation": a

brother or sister is received into the communion of the Church on the basis of an attestation given by a sister Church.

We have spent enough time in the Valley now, and therefore we move up to Alberta. First to Barrhead.

"At the classis", we read, "our delegates inquired about the Sermon Series by Rev. Mulder, editor of the Series. It is still the same story: lack of co-operation from the ministers to supply sermons. Our need for sermons was stressed again to Rev. Mulder and the other six ministers present at this meeting." In case you are wondering what Rev. J. Mulder was doing at that Classis, he had to be there on behalf of the sister Churches to give advice in the admission in the ministry of Mr. S. DeBruin. But now back to the point of lack of cooperation.

I have good news for my brothers-in-office. You can make money by sending in sermons. Maybe that will help to prod you into activity. Maybe even, if **Clarion** were able to pay handsomely for articles sent, we would get some more cooperation too! Will you please let me know on how many articles we may count if you should get fifty dollars per article? No pushing, please!

However, about that money for sermons. It is almost too good to be true. Maybe there is something in it for colleague Mulder. In any case he could look into it, for it might yield such a wave of sermons that he has to reduce the premium paid.

There appears to be a "Christian Sermon Society" somewhere in the United States. "For immediate release" they sent me a communication in which they informed me that "The Christian Sermon Society is pleased to announce \$1,500 in Awards for Preaching in 1976. You have lots of time to prepare one, for the deadline is June 1, 1976. The winning sermon will receive a \$1,000 honorarium. Second and Third Place sermons will receive \$300 and \$200 respectively. Seven sermons will be chosen for Honourable Mention. Hope is expressed that "the winning sermon will be interesting, Biblical and relevant" (in that order!)

I do not know whether I would qualify for a prize. Maybe an "honourable mention", maybe not even that. In any case, you won't have to be afraid of competition on my part. I preach for the Congregation and if they wish to publish some sermons of mine, fine with me; however, I refuse to send any sermon to compete in a contest and that for prize money. I do my best to prepare such sermons as are 1. Biblical, 2. relevant, 3. interesting (in that order!) and I could not care less whether they would be deemed worthy of a prize. If they want an article on a certain topic, fine I'll take part in a contest; but not when the preaching of God's Word is at stake.

However, back to Barrhead's complaint. Come, brethren preachers, when are you coming to the aid of vacant Churches? "I don't write out my sermons" you say? Sorry, I have not graduated to that stage even after thirty-two years, but let that not hold you back from having to step down to the level where sermons are written out when thereby you can help others. You might even be surprised how beneficial it may turn out to be when you do write them out! I know that I am a sort of anachronism in this respect, but I also know that if, f.i., the sermons of Calvin had not been written out, we would have been much poorer today. A few more years and I won't bother you any longer; right now I plead for well-prepared, written homework from which also other congregations may

benefit besides the "home Church". You won't get rich from it, I can promise you that, but you will prevent it that vacant Churches will have to read the same Catechism Series for the fifth or sixth time. Ever thought about that?

Barrhead's Church is not large, neither is their Church yard. But it is worth mentioning that "In view of being classified as the second best kept Church property in the Town of Barrhead, the Consistory stated its appreciation for the maintenance of the Church property by the caretaker." I add my compliments to those of the Consistory. In this respect, too, we can cause the Church to have a good reputation with those who are without, and that apart from any element of competition, and without prizes.

From Barrhead we go to Edmonton. From what we mentioned above it appears that the Church did receive some attention from officials in one way or another. Officials in Edmonton, too, were compelled to evaluate the presence of churches and their meaning in society. From a brother in Edmonton I received a clipping dealing with building permits for, among others, the Moravian church and St. Luke's Lutheran Church. Residents were worried that the churchgoers would use the street spaces in front of their houses, we read. In connection with another application, the chairman of the committee involved, a city alderman, remarked, "If residents have to go through a little annoyance, then perhaps we should just put up with it." And he started, "They make the city better, not worse, and they should be given every help we can give them." Besides, adds Ald. Newman, "the church tends to 'bend over backwards' to get along with residents, which 'is more than some developers do'."

Edmonton's Consistory decided to "relieve the minister from regular house visiting district" in order to enable the minister to concentrate more on teaching. It is a miracle, so to speak, that in Edmonton the minister apparently still did have a separate section. Even apart from the fact that, as my experience has taught, it does not work anyway, I also think that it is incorrect to assign to the minister a section as to each (ruling) elder. No, the minister is not above his fellow office-bearers; but his task is different. Even though it does have its advantages when the minister goes along on family visits once in a while, it should be borne in mind that he is primarily a "teaching elder". And when I look at the quite a few hours of Catechism classes which Rev. DeJong has to conduct, then I think that he has his hands full. This also in connection with the new task which he has taken upon himself, together with Rev. Boersema, to edit papers which are intended to be distributed to those who are without I wrote about that in a previous **Clarion**. Of what I then wrote, Rev. DeJong stated, "Though premature, this information is correct." Now you know that I don't mind a little needle now and then. I can even appreciate it. But here my colleague is incorrect in stating that it was premature. The same information can already be found in the bulletin of Barrhead of September 7, and they took it out of . . . Calgary's bulletin. I cannot understand it how then my information in **Clarion** of September 19 can be called "premature". All right then, Rev. DeJong gives some more information to the Edmonton Congregation and promises, "In a later bulletin you will read something about the money-part, the easiest side of this endeavour." He is perfectly right when he calls the money part the easiest

part. It will be much harder to get the cooperation of writers. Much success!

Going down to Calgary, we find in the bulletin an extensive outline on the first chapters of the Gospel according to John, taken, as Rev. Boersema writes, from the Commentary by Dr. W. Hendriksen. That has been done to promote the Bible Study in the midst of the Congregation. The pastor also mentions that the custom of memorizing a Psalm or Hymn seems to have disappeared. He, therefore, intends to mention a song in every bulletin and also to include it in the service on the coming Sunday, so that older ones and younger ones can learn that song in that week. That is an excellent idea and worth to be followed. A disadvantage is, of course, that a certain song **may** be changed in the final edition of the Book of Praise or - in the case of Hymns - may even be eliminated altogether. However, that should not withhold anyone from memorizing rhymed versions. Here we see anew how important it is to have a Reformed school where the children do learn songs from our Book of Praise and where, in some instances, the children **lead** the Congregation in singing when the Psalmboard shows an unknown Psalm and a unfamiliar tune.

Rev. Boersema also suggests that the members take notes of the sermons and discuss these together. There is another thought which is worth considering.

Some time ago I mentioned the decision of Houston's Consistory to remove the clock from the main auditorium, because some members looked back at it too often during a service. Houston is not the only Congregation with that problem. And Houston, being in their own building, could at least remove the clock. Calgary, meeting in a rented building, cannot do that. We read about that: "I am concerned about the clock-watching among us . . . because it reflects a very poor attitude towards our worship services. The matter may arise innocently enough. The seats are hard; certainly not the most comfortable, so when we begin to feel aches in our backs we look back to see what time it is. However, when it becomes a major topic of conversation and when, for the last part of the service we look back at the clock every five minutes (or at our watches), then there is a problem. The problem is that we don't take God seriously enough." Rev. Boersema then suggests various ways in which this can be improved. Especially the latter advice is something which I gladly underline. Due to my need for a thorough preparation and my laziness on other days of the week, I am almost invariably unable to go to bed early on Saturday evenings, but sleep bothers me very seldom on Sundays during the services. However, I also have the impression that quite a few members would be able to pay more attention on Sundays if they prepared for the Sunday by going to bed earlier than they are used to.

There is, however, another point which I also wish to bring to the fore, be it not in defense of the clock-watchers!! Rev. Boersema also writes, "I have, at times, deliberately planned to have a short sermon and then because of the subject matter, it still became forty minutes." I wish to start with saying that a forty minute sermon is not too long at all. Mosttimes mine are not that long, but sometimes they are and, perhaps, even exceed that time-limit. I never look at the clock or maybe even at my watch until we are back in the Consistory room and then may be surprised at the length of the service.

But there is one thing for which we preachers should

watch out, and it is a danger to which especially those are subject who speak from notes or even without them; that is the danger that we are so carried away by our own thoughts that we keep on talking and then about things which do interest us but may not be interesting to the hearers at all. Yes, we may insert a passage of which we come to think while preaching. It would not be **living** preaching of God's Word if we just stood there and read an introduction. But, on the other hand, are digressions really necessary? And do they not tend to confuse the hearers when we think, "Oh, yes, I should say this, too." And: "This is something which I should not forget!" And so on, and so on. Then we repeat ourselves, and the attention of the Congregation understandably weakens. In that case it is not that the **hearers** "don't take God seriously enough", but that the **preachers** don't.

Ministers sometimes do different things, too. Calgary's bulletin mentions, "I have been trying to do some painting and carpentry work to fix up the basement of our home as a place to have a bookroom for the congregation and for the public and I would like to paint the outside trim of the house to make it somewhat more attractive." Rev. Boersema then requests the help of members of the Congregation. Many years ago I got a book which described life in the Wild West. That book described, among other things, how a young minister was building a churchbuilding with his own hands. At that time I found that strange; but some twenty-three years in Canada have taught me differently and Calgary's pastor is another example. It is good to do some different things once in a while; and it proves that ministers are no strangers in the world of practical activities.

Yes, yes, there are other regions in Canada, too, and therefore we hasten to Ontario.

Let' start in the south. The Willing Workers in Chatham had a general meeting and it was decided for the time being not to accept any large cleaning jobs like the last one they tackled. That does not mean that the ladies are idle or out of a job altogether. On the contrary, they have been asked by the Committee of Administration to sew drapes for the two catechism rooms for which carpet has been purchased. Further it was decided to sew drapes for the upstairs hall. "The ladies will be asked to sew them together at the church." Of course, that is much "gezelliger" than doing it all by yourself at home. Have a good time.

Ebenezer Consistory (Burlington) discussed the report of a committee that had a conversation with Dr. Lee of the Korea Theological Seminary, whom we mentioned the other time. The result of that conversation and of the report of the committee was that the Consistory discussed the possibility of taking over "this missionary from the Korean Church". I have not been able to discover who "this missionary" is. There was another suggestion, namely to provide for his expenses. Neither motion was adopted, but instead the Congregation will receive the opportunity to give what they wish to give for that work in a collection on the third Sunday of the month.

In another context Rev. VanDooren writes about the lack of public relations among us. He is right in so far as more ministers of the Churches should have been informed of Dr. Lee's presence and should have had the opportunity to meet him. I live about fifty miles away from "Jerusalem", but was not aware of his presence, nor of the presence of special visitors at our Convocation . . .

I mentioned Rev. VanDooren's name: Rev. C. Stam reminds the Burlington Congregation that Rev. VanDooren's bonds with Ebenezer Burlington are twenty years old this year. Congratulations.

In conclusion, some financial advice: if you wish to make money, go to Rehoboth Burlington. No, I do not give you the exact address, for I want a percentage of your

profit. Collect pennies, please, and make a 100% profit. The following announcement drew my attention and all of a sudden I was wide awake. "It is often said that pennies do not add up to much, but 4750 pennies were counted and wrapped, worth \$95.00. Keep on saving them, we will collect."

I will.

vO

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## Mission And A Youngster

Carlos (not his real name), a 13-year old boy, has been coming to Church for several years and is very faithful. However, he is very moody, and is either an excellent and helpful student, or the opposite.

His behaviour at Youth Club was worsening to such an extent that I requested him to leave until he would behave again. That same day I received the following little note from him:

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MISSION & CHURCH ORDER - cont.  
our great task in this world are helped by apodictic remarks, for example that the words, "The Great Commission" may not be used for Home Mission, maybe not even for Foreign Mission because "this mandate was given to the apostles and they fulfilled it." The reader knows that in the closing words of Matthew, the Lord also spoke about "making disciples". Was that only for the apostles? Of "baptizing them . . ." *Idem?* And what about those last wonderful words "and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age"? Also only for the apostles? KJV has, "unto the end of the world"; others: "every day, until the end of time." This Great Commission, including this Great Promise, is still upon us. Without fulfilling it we cannot lay claim to the name "true church" where "all things are managed according to the pure Word of God." And this should also be reflected in a Church Order which is in great need of revision.

I do not apologize for having burdened the reader with questions rather than with answers. I would welcome an open, brotherly, scriptural discussion and exchange of opinions on this primary interest of the Church.

This would certainly make for a desirable atmosphere among us!

G. VANDOOREN

Pastor Cornélio,

I am going to quit the Youth Club because I don't want to stay there any longer. I will take it once, but no more than once, pastor. They were all unruly, and you only saw me and only took it out on me.

I will continue to go to Church but to the Club I won't go anymore, and it will end up in me quitting the Church as well, because they were all unruly and not only I.

I am not going to the Club anymore. You take my name off that card because I for sure won't go anymore. I take a scolding once but not more than once. You only saw me, pastor, and you didn't see the others. Carlos will not go to the Club anymore.

As usual, I did not respond to this outbreak of youthful furor. Knowing the boy, I knew the dust would settle soon, as it did. Then days later another note was delivered to me by means of one of his buddies:

Pastor Cornélio,

I ask you to forgive me for being so mad at you. I am not mad anymore and am sorry that I told you that I wouldn't go to the Club anymore. But I am going again, Pastor Cornélio, and ask you to excuse me again. I am going to the Club on Saturday. I will never leave the Club, Pastor Cornélio; I will never the Club because I love the Lord more than anybody and I love you too.

Carlos.

He did indeed come to Club again, but only two weeks later I had to give him another lecture on behaviour, together with his friend, and promptly another note was slipped into our home.

Pastor Cornélio,

You can take my name off the list for the Club. You sent us out again, well, know that I won't go anymore.

Mr. Cornélio, you think that I am going to die because you took me off the Club, but you could be mistaken. All our lives we lived without the Club and without you, and we lived off our parents.

Please don't talk with us anymore.

In the beginning we liked you very much but now we know that you don't like us. You think we won't leave you, but you can keep your riches and we, poor folks, will keep our poverty that God gave to us. May it go bad with you, Mr. Cornélio, who expelled us boys.

Written by Carlos.

They again were the talk of the day for the other children and all wondered what I would do now, but I ignored it as before.

A week later, in time not to miss the next meeting of the Club, a fourth note found its way to my desk.

Pastor Cornélio,

Good morning! Mr. Cornélio, forgive me what I did at the Club, pastor. I am still going to the Club. Forgive me, Mr. Cornélio, you are right in getting angry with us at the Club. The Club is not the place to talk, neither to play nor to laugh. I felt very sorry after I sent you that note. Bye for now.

Carlos.

Carlos continued to come, memorized all the catechism questions and answers which he previously had refused to say and is making good progress in his knowledge of the Bible.

More notes have been received since, more outbreaks of youthful anger, but always followed by repentance. Conversion is a daily repeated matter indeed. May the Lord have much patience with all of us.

C. VAN SPRONSEN

# "Public Relations"

Something I heard recently, has been bothering me since. One of our number talked to a "concerned" christian belonging to another church. The latter one fully agreed with what was said by "our man", but when the latter said, "if that is the case, why do you not join the Canadian Reformed Church?", the answer was, "I like your stand but I do not like your people."

Subsequent discussion proved that what he "did not like in our people", most certainly was *not* that our people are criminals, or Unionists, or supporters of public education or pro-abortion. On the contrary, he knew very well (and agreed with) our strong stand on these and similar issues.

Our people, however, had made upon him the impression of being so intolerant, a little bit self-righteous and acting as though they are the only ones who have all the answers. Finally they gave him the impression that according to us there is nothing good and God-pleasing outside the (small) Canadian Reformed constituency.

It is not my purpose to prove the opposite, or to investigate whether everything he said is true.

The only thing that "stings" is, "I do not like your people." In his case he (if we may believe him) would readily join the Canadian Reformed Church, if we as "people" were only a bit different.

This underlies the heading of this brief article.

It is a matter of "public relations". That is a biblical issue, even a biblical command. Being a light, being salt, to begin with. And then, as fruits of the Spirit, friendliness, kindness, etcetera.

This is, however, only part of "public relations". If it were all of it, I would not dare to write this article.

Friendliness is not all. Many people are friendly, although their stand is not the right one. Their friendliness is of the "live and let live" type.

"Public Relations" means to me that our surroundings should know what we stand for; that we should proclaim the Reformed truth which the LORD has granted us in His undeserved mercy. And that is a wonderful truth; a truth that, if it has not all the answers (who can answer all questions except God?), has all the elements to constitute a firm position and to lead a consistent life in the midst of this crooked world.

We seem to hide our light under a bushel. Two examples may illustrate. On the solemn occasion of the opening of our Theological College the press was not invited, nor the local magistrate. Even some professors and ministers who happened to be there (not by chance, mind you, but because they had a meeting with our Committee for *contact* with them) were not mentioned, let alone welcomed. This was not to be done!

Recently we had the official opening of the Guido de Brès High School in Hamilton; a great event with a great crowd. But again, I checked the newspapers the next days, but not a word about it! Obviously they didn't know that within their walls such a school had been started. Considering their attention for other, similar, events, they would have considered it "news". But again, no word.

Dr. Stott, in one of his many truly Reformed books, remarks that we often act as "rabbits". Every now and then we peep out of our holes, even venture a few steps away from the hole, but then, at the weakest noise, run back into the hole and hide.

We should honestly face such a charge.

Now, do not misunderstand me: this has not been said to criticize organizers of both solemn occasions "after the fact". It has only been said to pave the way for a call for more "Public Relations".

I believe, firmly believe, that we have a message for the surrounding world, even for our whole nation. The number is not important, I mean: our number. Elijah was a loner; so was Groen Van Prinsterer. Yet, "one is more than a thousand" (Eccles. 7:28).

These remarks also contain a personal confession. Last week it was twenty years ago that we arrived in Burlington. They have been busy years, but that is no excuse for the fact that I have hardly spoken out in public. Now, lately, some invitations have opened the way for a Reformed witness, one in a political meaning. Right after the first came, as a result, a second invitation. No

strings attached, and therefore, as strongly as possible, a radical biblical message. Then people come flocking to you. I trust no one "interprets" this as conceit. It was not *who* spoke, but *what* was said. And what was said was "daily bread" for Canadian Reformed people, but obviously for many others it was not. And that, after having lived here for twenty years . . .

Thus far the personal note, and "a sin of omission".

We seem to be so scared of so-called "inter-church cooperation" that we, in advance, usually do not even go there, let alone stand up and speak up, with a show of the "fruits of the Spirit" (lowliness, meekness, friendliness, but at the same time: fully biblical!).

Do we realize that there are many who look for guidance, and receive no guidance at all?

No, it is not only asking people if they know the only Saviour. It is: speaking up, biblically, on the issues of the day, the issues that are today in everyone's mind. Amid the bombardment of nonsense in the media, we should make sense and speak sense. You will be hated for it, but you will also find many a sympathetic ear. Many will "like your stand"; and, who knows, if we establish the right kind of "Public Relations", that other statement will sound weaker and weaker, till it will not be heard anymore. You know it, do you not? ". . . but I do not like your people . . ."

It is the highest time that we "get out" and speak up! Speak up before it is too late and the freedom of speech, as so many other freedoms, has gone down the drain.

But, but . . ., is not the divine call, "be ye separate?!"

Sure, but then as separate as the last witnesses who will lie dead, not in their rabbit hole, but on the streets of the great city (Revel. 11:4ff).

G. VANDOOREN

## Press Release

*Press Release of the Meeting of the Canadian Reformed Churches in Classis Pacific, held at Houston, B.C. October 8, 1975.*

1. On behalf of the convening church at Houston br. G. Leffers opens the meeting at 9:40 a.m. He requests the meeting to sing Psalm 67:1, 2, reads from Scripture Galatians 6 and leads in prayer. Br. Leffers welcomes the delegates.
2. The delegates of the church at Cloverdale check the credentials. All churches are properly represented. There are no instructions.
3. Classis is constituted. Moderamen: Rev. M. VanBeveren, chairman. Rev. J. Mulder, clerk. Rev. J. VanRietschoten, vice-chairman.
4. Rev. M. VanBeveren, as chairman speaks a word of welcome.
5. Correspondence received: (a) Letter from the church at Edmonton re- Regional

- Synod Canada-West. This synod is to be held on Tuesday, December 2, 1975, D.V. at 9:30 a.m., at the Canadian Reformed Church, Edmonton, Alberta. (b) Letter from the Church at Edmonton with complaint against the consistory of the Church at Chilliwack, B.C. (c) Letter from the Church at Chilliwack concerning complaint of the Church at Edmonton, Alberta.
6. Agenda is adopted.
  7. Letter from the convening church re-Regional Synod is read. No matters with regard to Regional-Synod have been received.
  8. It is decided to deal with the letter of complaint from the Church at Edmonton in closed session.
  9. Meeting of Classis continues in closed session.
  10. The letter from the Church at Edmonton with complaint against the consistory of the Church at Chilliwack is read.
  11. The letter from the Church of Chilliwack, concerning complaint of the Church at Edmonton against the Church at Chilliwack is read.



12. Adjournment for coffee at 10:40 a.m.  
 13. Re-opening in closed session at 10:45 a.m.  
 14. Discussion of the letters from the Churches at Edmonton and Chilliwack, with added supporting documents.  
 15. Meeting is adjourned for lunch at 12:30 p.m.  
 16. Meeting is re-opened in closed session at 1:45 p.m.  
 17. A committee is appointed to draft a proposal.  
 18. Classis adjourns at 2:00 p.m. to give the committee time to draft a proposal.  
 19. Meeting of Classis is re-opened in closed session at 4:02 p.m. The proposal of the committee is adopted.  
 20. Classis continues to meet in open session.  
 21. Report from the Church at Houston concerning classical archives. The archive keeping church, the Church at Smithers, B.C., has kept the archives up to date and in good order.  
 22. Question period ad art. 41, Ch. O. The Church at Chilliwack asks when they have

to re-apply for support from Classis in order to be able to call a minister. Answer: If the Church at Chilliwack still needs this support after April 1976, the Church at Chilliwack is to direct such a request to the April 1976 Classis.  
 23. All deputies are re-appointed.  
 24. Upon request the Rev. M. VanderWel is re-appointed counselor to the Church at Chilliwack; Idem the Rev. J. Van Rietschoten to the Church of Houston.  
 25. Election delegates to the Regional Synod, to be held at Edmonton, Alberta, December 2, 1975. The following brothers are elected. Primi: Rev. J. Mulder, Rev. M. VanBeveren, Rev. J. VanRietschoten, Br. R. Fennema, Br. J. Hendriks, Br. A. Lengkeek. Alternates: Rev. M. VanderWel, Br. A.W. DeLeeuw, Br. F. Hofsink, Br. T. Pothoven, Br. G. Veen, Br. M. Vreugdenhil.  
 26. The Church at New Westminster is appointed convening church for the next Classis to be held at New Westminster, D.V. April 14, 1976.  
 27. Question period. Travel expenses for delegates to Classis is set at maximal

\$75.00 per delegate.  
 28. Censure ad Art. 43 of Ch. O. The chairman concludes that no censure is to be exercised under this art. of the Ch. O.  
 29. Proposed moderamen for the next Classis, Rev. M. VanderWel, chairman. Rev. M. VanBeveren, clerk. Rev. J. Mulder, vice-chairman.  
 30. The Acts of this Classis are read and adopted.  
 31. The Press-Release is read and approved.  
 32. The chairman, Rev. M. VanBeveren, speaks a word of farewell. On behalf of all he thanks the convening church for their good care. The ladies who prepared and served two delicious meals are voted, and receive, a "big hand".  
 33. The chairman leads in thanksgiving.  
 34. The chairman closes the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

On behalf of the Classis,  
 J. VANRIETSCHOTEN,  
 Vice-chairman e.t.

## Letters-to-the-Editor

Dear Sir:

In reply to the articles in your paper of August 23 and August 30 by our missionary, Rev. C. VanSpronsen, entitled "Let thy light shine", may I bring to your attention that, in my opinion, some things are not aiming for the common objective. But before I mention them let me say that "to make the Canadian Reformed people more aware of their duties in the fields of home mission" is definitely needed, because it must be perceptible that we are God's children and it should make the people jealous to see our spiritual riches and the trust and comfort we have received in Christ. This is lacking in many of us. But I don't follow Rev. VanSpronsen when he mentions the declining numbers in the Christian Reformed Church in order to illustrate the need for home mission, because christianity has never (with the exception of Pentecost in the New Testament) been a magnet that draws people in great numbers because it is against our own will and sinful, selfish nature. People are not that eager to become christians, as Rev. VanSpronsen experiences many times in Brazil, I am sure. And membership doesn't seem to increase in any of the churches that have left the true doctrine and/or those that didn't take the right stand at times of reformations.

But to come back to the part of the article that seems to cause some confusion. Rev. VanSpronsen seems (to me at least) not to make any distinction between foreign mission and home mission. To my understanding home mission is the proclaiming and propagating God's Word by the members of a congregation in the area in which they live

by whatever means possible, but the emphasis is on the individual believers and the area of activity is wherever these members may be, or by means of radio, T.V., or publications. This work to be encouraged by the local consistory. But if this is not nearly enough, as Rev. VanSpronsen suggests, and considering that much more of Canada should be reached, then we can only compare the remainder of Canada with the many other parts of this world, South America, Asia, Africa and perhaps parts of Europe as well. Then we are in fact talking of *other* mission fields in this world. Also when Rev. VanSpronsen asks "why an ordained qualified minister in foreign mission and not in home mission", then the logical answer must be that we don't need one in home mission because it is the duty of all believers who, "in proper order", can refer, if need be, to the consistory, a body of believers charged with instructing the congregation and having oversight over the members of this congregation. We can not all travel to distant parts of Canada to bring the gospel; if we wish to reach them in an orderly way then in fact we are talking again of another mission field. I personally do not want to support mission work in Canada now because this suggestion comes at the wrong time, and I don't think the churches would be willing to start a new mission field where we don't even have a missionary replacement for the mission field we have started. It may seem interesting to start something new in the Kingdom work of our God, but then we need certain things to perform this work. One thing needed would be money, and this may be available, but where would Rev. VanSpronsen find us a minister to take this work upon himself? A man who would be willing to dedicate the greater part of his productive life to this new mission field? For this work cannot be

abandoned after a short duration, because then converted people would be compelled to move or be left without spiritual food, and therefore Rev. VanSpronsen asks in the closing part of his article, "Is it feasible?". I say no, let's look after that which we have started. Two weeks ago I saw the slides shown by mission aid workers, Mr. and Mrs. John Kuik. It is wonderful to see that also some of the people they work with are children of Christ, our brothers and sisters; and this work I am sure is not easy, and also these people don't flock to the Gospel in droves. It is through prolonged systematic work of God's servants that God works in those hearts. Let's concentrate on the continuation of this work and let home mission be done, as the word also indicates, around our own areas by means of the grass root system.

T.M. VEENENDAAL  
 Carman, Manitoba



## Church News

GRAND RAPIDS, Michigan: clerk: J. Jissink Jr., 7295 Clyde Park, S.W., Wyoming, Michigan 49509; telephone (616) 455-4809.

The address of the Consistory is still: Rev. G. van Rongen, 3167-68th Street, S.E., CALEDONIA, Michigan 49316; telephone (616) 698-6754.

# Books

J.A. Thompson, *Deuteronomy: An Introduction and Commentary*. (Chicago: Inter-Varsity Press, 1974), 320 pages, \$7.95.

For many years it has been a lamentable fact that no reliable and full-fledged commentary was available on the book of Deuteronomy. This beautiful, varied, and contemporary book was widely by-passed by scholars, with the exception of a few of the liberal persuasion. In the past year however this situation has been altered greatly with the appearance of this volume in the *Tyndale Old Testament Series* (D.J. Wiseman, general editor). Dr. J.A. Thompson, a Senior Lecturer at the University of Melbourne, Australia, has presented us with a lucid and dependable commentary on Deuteronomy.

The format of this volume is much like the others in this series. It begins with a rather extensive introduction which discusses among other things: title, structure, literary characteristics, social and religious background, date, authorship, and the theology of Deuteronomy. In these 80 pages one finds a wealth of information and insights which can not be neglected if one wants to become thoroughly familiar with this part of the Bible. Indeed, the introduction alone is worth the price of the book. This introduction is in turn followed by an analysis of the contents and by a fairly detailed commentary that is 260 pages in length.

Despite the many favourable features in this volume there are however, several points and practices that can be disputed. For one, Thompson in dealing with the structure of Deuteronomy, reviews the findings of some of the scholars like G. Von Rad, G.E. Mendenhall, M.G. Kline, G.J. Wenham and then concludes, "It is beyond question that the structure of Deuteronomy is related in some way to the structure of political treaties of the Ancient Near East" (pp. 20-21). The expression "in some way" is uncalled for since he had already shown how they were related. Furthermore, in his later analysis of the content of this book, he all but ignores what he said about "structure" and returns to the older view which saw the book of Deuteronomy as composed around the three addresses of Moses. Consistency, however, should have forced Thompson to base his analysis on the idea of a political treaty as do Kline, Wenham and G. van Rongen in his outline *The Words of the Divine Great King* (London: I.L.P.B.).

This inability of Thompson to follow through on some of his earlier

conclusions is also illustrated in the introductory section entitled "Deuteronomy and the Central Sanctuary". Here the author informs us that in the past it was always assumed that the book of Deuteronomy demanded the centralization of all worship at a single sanctuary. This view was based on a certain reading of Deut. 12, where it speaks of the Lord God's choosing a place for offerings in one of the tribes (vs. 6, 11, 14, 18). Now Thompson states in this regard that on the contrary "there existed other sanctuaries where legitimate worship might be carried on" (p. 40). Also he says that a close reading of Deut. 12 does not prove that it refers only to a single sanctuary or place of worship. Indeed it is even interesting to note that up to this point there are some similarities between the reasoning of Thompson and B. Holwerda (see "De Plaats, die de Heere verkiezen zal" in *Begonnen hebbende van Moses*). Nevertheless, this similarity is shattered and his own reasoning undermined when the author continues and

says, "There is no compelling reason why we should not regard the phrase 'the place which Yahweh your God shall choose' in Deuteronomy as referring to the central sanctuary" (p. 41). How confusing can you get! First Thompson disproves an old interpretation, and rightly so, and then in his conclusion he goes right back to support the very interpretation that he had set out to disprove. That is certainly not called for.

These critical remarks, however, should not in any way discourage you from purchasing this commentary for your personal or society use. The author shows time and again that he is committed to the reliability of the O.T. text. His explanations are both clear and succinct. They will help you to uncover many of the treasures that lie hidden in this splendid book. On the whole, this volume is an eminently worthy addition to what promises to be one of the best series of evangelical commentaries on the Old Testament.

J. VISSCHER

## *From The Publisher's Desk*

The unfortunate happened! We are in the middle of a postal strike.

The following correspondents promptly offered their service upon request to act as coordinators in their respective areas.

ONTARIO: Mr. A. Smouter, 2318 Redfern Road,  
Burlington, Ont. L7R 1X3, Phone 1-416-632-1642

FRASER VALLEY: Mr. H. Berends c/o VanderPol's  
Eggs, 8592 - 148 Street, Surrey, B.C. V3S 3G3,  
Phone 1-604-596-7155

EDMONTON: Mr. D. Postma, 10705 - 135 Street,  
Edmonton, Alta. T5M 1J7, Phone 1-403-453-2096

Your *Clarion* will be sent to the coordinator who in turn will forward them to your correspondent, who will take care of local distribution. As for Calgary, Lethbridge, Houston and Smithers, we will send *Clarion* by Greyhound bus.

Also, all advertisements, payments, book orders, etcetera, should be given to *your local correspondent*, who will forward them to the district coordinator.

Further, for your convenience enclosed with this *Clarion* you will find an envelope for your Christmas/New Year's Greeting ad. Please hand the envelope with \$1.50 enclosed at the first opportunity possible to your correspondent. It will eliminate collecting money on Sundays. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

This issue of *Clarion* was sent out on October 25, 1975.

# our little magazine

Dear Busy Beavers,

Have you been enjoying our puzzles and quizzes?  
Did you try some of our "Fall things to do"? I would love to hear from you if you did!

\* \* \* \* \*

Now we have something else coming up. You always like to share things — here is your chance! If you have something for the CHRISTMAS ISSUE of Our Little Magazine be sure to send it just as soon as you can!

Do you have a nice picture, or design, or story, or poem, or quiz, or whatever it is you have, send it in very soon, all right You know my address is:

*Aunt Betty* Box 54, Fergus, Ont. N1M 2W7

\* \* \* \* \*

Here is a story for you from Busy Beaver *Christine Vis*.

### One Saturday

Paul woke up and sat straight up in bed! He had such a special feeling crowding inside him. He thought he'd pop open with excitement.

"John!" he called down to the bottom bunk.

"John, wake up! It is Saturday. Don't you know Mom is coming back from Holland?"

Paul and John wanted to see what their mother had for them. They wanted to see their Mom and ask about her trip. They hurried to wash themselves and get dressed to go to the airport.

At 10 o'clock they were in the car speeding down the highway. Mom was supposed to arrive at 10:45. As they came close to the airport the plane arrived. They were glad to see their Mom again. They hugged her very tight.

Mom told all the exciting things that she did and told some news about the relatives in Holland. Paul and John said,

"Next time you go to Holland may I come with you?"

When they got home Mom opened her suitcase and gave John and Paul some wooden shoes and a thick colouring book with pictures of Holland!

That night when they went to bed Paul said to John,

"We had an exciting day today!"



## From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Harold Meyer*. We are happy to have you join us! Be sure to join in all our Busy Beaver activities, Harold. And thanks for your contribution to our Birthday Fund!

Thank you for your letter and the nice poem, *Mary Vande Burgt*. I'll have to save the poem for next year because it's a bit late now. My, you certainly have been very busy, Mary. But I think you had a good time showing

your Aunt all around beautiful British Columbia, am I right?

Hello *Joan Hofsink*. It was nice to hear from you again. You had the answers to your puzzle all right, Joan. Good for you! And thank you very much for the others. I think the Busy Beavers will just love them!

Thank you for your quiz, too, *Evelyn Geusebroek*. Have you received your card already? Be sure to put it away carefully!

Sounds to me as if you really had an exciting summer vacation, *Diane Holtvluwer*. Is your mother all better? How is your Eskimo project coming along?

Thanks for a big fat letter, *Grace Bosscher*! And the pretty design and quizzes, too! How is your new family room coming along? Write again soon, Grace.

\* \* \* \* \*

### QUIZ TIME

Unscramble the following names from the Bible. The first letter is given.

- D nilea
- A smo
- N hmua
- I ahisa
- E jihal
- L cehma

### Father, Mother, and Son

In each of the puzzles below there is the name of a man in the Bible, with a row of squares for the name of his father, and another row for the name of his mother. How many can you fill in?

A									
B					J	A	C	O	B
E									
L									

  

					M				
					O				
					S				
					E				
					S				

Here are the answers to the "Elijah Puzzle":  
1. Bread 2. Flesh 3. Rain 4. Jordan 5. Ravens 6. Cherith

Till next time, Busy Beavers.

Your Aunt Betty