

Clarion

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This is How it Continued . . .

Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and cleave to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

Genesis 2:24

Perhaps you have never paid special attention to the fact that there is much in favour of the statement that Eve was not created on the same day as Adam, namely on the sixth day. Otherwise on that sixth day much more would have happened than on the preceding days.

We read that on the sixth day God created: cattle, reptiles and wild animals. After that He kept divine counsel and created man. Further He would then on that same day have made the Garden of Eden. After that all sorts of animals passed by Adam, who looked at them attentively and gave them names which perfectly fit their nature. God also gave him before that the so-called "test-commandment" and considered with Himself to make a help meet for him. Then follows Adam's sleep and God's surgical action, from which no scar remained or bodily defect, for God filled up the place with flesh. Finally there is the awakening of Adam while he saw the Lord approaching him with Eve to give her to Adam who sang about her: "the wo-man!"

And all that in one day? Yes, it is, of course, possible! Of course, God can do that!

When it says in Genesis 1:27, "God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female He created them," then we should pay attention to this "male and female." Scripture does speak here of Adam and Eve both, but not only of our first parents. God created "him"; that is a so-called collective pronoun and refers to the whole human race, men and women. If you would like to conclude from this verse that Eve, too, was created on the sixth day and, for instance, not on the eighth day, then I don't wish to fight about that. "If anyone is out to be put in the right, we do not have that cus-

tom, neither do the Churches of God." I Corinthians 11:16.

If only it is established that God created heaven and earth in six normal days and that everything was very good (1:31). Anyway, in Chapter 2:7 and 8 reference is made to Adam only, and in 2:8 God Himself says: "It is not good that man should be alone."

To create is the work of God alone. But after the seventh day, on which He rested, nevertheless we read frequently that God works: Psalm 51:12, Isaiah 45:7; 65:17, 18; Jeremiah 31:22; Amos 4:13; cf. also Psalm 104:13, 14.

* * *

Adam was for some time the only human being on earth. The only one! Wasn't that a terrible thing? But he was not lonely in the gloomy sense which the word has with us. God his Father was always close by, walked with him and talked with him in that Garden of Eden which was inhabited by the most beautiful animals, such as we have never known them. Alone, but not lonesome!

Then God began again to create. Adam did not witness that. God brought him under "anaesthesia" and took away a rib of his. That rib points to his breastbone and his spine, which protect his heart. Children are born out of the generation of father and mother. Eve was created out of Adam's side, behind which was his heart. She was not born of Adam, but built into a separate being.

Adam appears to understand that unity as it exists in marriage. He is elated. First he felt the one-ness of his own existence; now he feels the "two-ness" and, when children are born, the plurality.

Two people: Adam as human being is not superior, but as man he is totally different from Eve who, as the woman is not inferior, but equally different in everything (and not only sexually.)

The fact that woman is "the other one" appears in everything: in her way of thinking, her speaking, her manner

of reacting, her moving around, her task and place in vocation and art and every other aspect of life. They were both naked and were not ashamed for each other nor for God, as was the case later on.

* * *

During a youth conference the honest question was asked, "May a boy shake hands with a girl?" Of course! "May he kiss her?" Yes, if he succeeds. "May he go further, even to the last and most intimate unity?" No! "And why not? Everyone laughs at you if you say that you never went all the way, and then you simply don't rate. They look at you as if you are not 100%. Your friends mock you. And what are you then to say in reply? That that is not proper?" — "Who is it that forbids you that? Why do you have to make such a fuss about a wedding day? Why all those special clothes which cost handfuls of money? Why do you first have to declare before an official person that you love each other? What an old-fashioned nonsense and dead customs! It is a matter between the two of us alone, isn't it? Why can you shake hands, why go for a walk, why give a kiss (if you get the chance) and then all of a sudden: 'Stop, no further!?' And then — your whole long life tied to that one person? Come on!"

That was really an honest question; what are you to say to that?

They put the Bible in front of me on the table, for they knew themselves that it was not proper to go "all the way." However, the "Christian consensus of opinion" is breaking down more and more and has, in fact, been totally undermined; and now our boys and girls can no longer be content with just saying, "It is not proper," when they are being attacked at the office or in the factory or wherever they have their place of employment.

Then the last and only bulwark is: "What does the Lord God say in His Word?" And I don't think that this applies only to the younger ones!

* * *

Because God Himself "made" marriage, He is the only One who knows "how it works." First read His "instructions for use," otherwise accidents will happen.

"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother."

That's the first thing. "To leave," of course, does not mean "to despise." Never! It means as an adult "to leave the house," of course with the approval of the parents.

That is already a strange thing: a child, a part of yourself, whom you brought up together as parents, of whom you took care in days of illness, for whom you prayed, whom you brought to school and accompanied for years, "all of a sudden" goes along with a strange boy or a strange girl: "Thanks for everything," and you have "lost" your child. And even if you see them back within a week, everything is different! They are grown up, they live in another house, they take their own decisions. They have become independent.

That is the first thing: bodily and spiritually to be an adult, able before God and men to bear the responsibility for one another and eventually for a family.

To say "Yes" on the day of the engagement or the day of marriage to a boy or a girl that did not yet say "Yes" to the God of his (her) life, that is something you should not do!

The time of engagement does not mean, "Let's see whether it will work out," but "Learn to prove that it does work out."

For that reason there should not be any "child marriages" as is the case in the Orient. What an inconceivable misery is suffered by the girls in those regions!

Then there is the second point: "cleave unto his wife." To cleave unto her means that she is included in everything, that she is not kept out of anything, cf. Genesis 34:3; I Kings 11:2; Ruth 1:14; II Samuel 20:2.

You love one another, but you will also *have to* love one another. That is beautiful, when you have to do that which you love to do, also in days in which sometimes a cloud of estrangement is the reason why you have trouble finding his (her) hand. "You shall love."

Finally (!) there comes as the third and last point, "And they two shall be one flesh."

That is quite a bit more than just sexual intercourse! This can be inter-

rupted for years, for instance because of illness. And ultimately it disappears altogether, after which there frequently is a happy married life for many years yet.

Sexual intercourse can be blessed by God by means of the birth of children. There are many means nowadays to prevent that. "Sex" is something in itself and leaves deep wounds. Ask any Christian-psychiatrist!

But everything that can be done is certainly not yet permissible.

God "built this into" that which we mentioned above under "first" and "second." Only after that did He mention the third aspect: "to be one being," and part of that is the bodily unity.

Thus He created marriage and instituted this order.

In this institution "father and mother" definitely have a place, and, together with father and mother, "all who are in authority over us," and they are in this connection the civil authorities and the Church.

If we call all that unnecessary fuss, we so easily block the way for the blessing of the fifth commandment (which precedes the seventh): "that it may be well with you."

* * *

Animals do not get married; they mate from sexual urge.

Christians get married according to the creation-institution of God.

For that reason this institution is so disfigured by satanic hatred and human disobedience, which causes ever-growing destruction.

There is enormously much suffering. The girl may feel humiliated and made into an object to be used and exploited. The boy may ultimately feel like an animal.

Children, too, may suffer: "Your Daddy first was my Daddy." For many a child the foundation of his life has split right open under his little feet!

The tragic case of two students in Paris is well-known. They really loved each other, but they did not know what love was: to serve the other one. At home they now saw this man, then that man who was sitting in Dad's chair, or every time another woman in Mother's place. Love? Should they have their fling, sex, unlimited? Who is going to put the brake on me? They regarded each other too highly to just live together as the beasts. Then, in despair, they jumped off a bridge over the river Seine. Existentialism à la

Sartre had destroyed the institution of God so that it became unrecognizable.

But what is not made so widely known by television and radio is this: he with his grey hairs and bent back sitting at her deathbed, she totally wasted away. That's what had become of that beautiful girl of sixty years back! Then the old man arose, when no longer a sigh came out of that wasted "bundle": "My darling."

Together they enjoyed love, together they bore grief, together they sang and prayed, "till death do part."

Fortunately, such a sanctified and deepened communion of love is still found, more even than we may think, although it is tragic when we notice how many young people do not dare to promise and to demand faithfulness.

The riches of Genesis 2 are still there: "insofar as I receive such a benefit with a believing heart" (Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 23).

P.K. KEIZER



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OUR COVER

Steinbach Mennonite Museum.
(Photo courtesy Department of
Tourism and Recreation, Win-
nipeg, Manitoba.)

The Struggle Around Israel

In introducing this topic this evening¹, I will attempt (as requested) to place the present day political confrontation in the Middle East in a Biblical perspective. Our introduction will therefore have four main areas of concern (all of which will of necessity receive but brief attention).

1. Does Israel have a Biblical right to the land?
2. The background to the present situation.
3. Some aspects of the present conflict.
4. The real struggle for Israel.

1. DOES ISRAEL HAVE A BIBLICAL RIGHT TO THE LAND?

What of course makes the present conflict in Palestine interesting is that many say, "Here is fulfilment of Biblical prophecy! Israel will overcome and triumph!" To keep our topic manageable, we must severely restrict ourselves, but let us look at some of the prophecies that deal with the land and the return.

The Land

God promised to Abraham, "To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates" (Genesis 15:18). Elsewhere the promised land is simply described as "all the land of Canaan" (Genesis 17:8). Dispensationalists consider this promise to be unfulfilled up to now, but state that the promise is being fulfilled in present developments in the Middle East. The *New Scofield Reference Bible* states that it is important to understand that the nation has never been in possession of the whole land. However, is this true? The answer according to the Bible must be "No." This prophecy and promise was fulfilled in the Old Testament. The Scriptures themselves emphatically state that the promise concerning the land was fulfilled. We read in Joshua 21:43-45, "So the Lord gave Israel all the land which He had sworn to give to their fathers, and they possessed it and lived in it. And the Lord gave them rest on every side, according to all that He had sworn to their fathers, and no one of all their enemies stood before them; The Lord gave all their enemies into their hand. Not one of the good promises which the Lord had made to the house of Israel failed; all came to

pass." This statement from Scripture does not mean that there was nothing left to fight for. There was! Think only of the period of the judges in Israel. The point is that the battle had clearly been decided in Israel's favour. Israel had only to go in faith and take the land for it had been given to them by the Lord. In this connection it is good to remember the words of Joshua in his farewell address. "You know . . . that not one word of all the good words which the Lord your God spoke concerning you has failed; all have been fulfilled for you, not one of them has failed" (Joshua 23:14). Joshua then goes on to warn Israel that God's threats and warnings of judgment will also be fulfilled if Israel does not serve the Lord. God has shown His faithfulness to His promise, the land is theirs; but, Israel must also be faithful to the Lord, lest He execute His Word of judgment.

When we consider the fulfillment of the promise of the land we can also think of Solomon's kingdom. According to I Kings 4:21, Solomon's kingdom extended from the river Euphrates to the land of the Philistines and to the border of Egypt (also II Chronicles 9:26). In summary we can say that the promise of the land given to Abraham has been fulfilled. God has no further obligations here, so to speak. Israel today has therefore no special Biblical claim to the land on the basis of God's promise to Abraham.

The Return

But what about the prophecies concerning the return? There are many people who regard the present situation in Palestine as a partial fulfilment of the return to the land of which the Old Testament speaks.

As a sample of what is usually quoted to support this idea, let us consider Jeremiah 29:14 and Isaiah 11:11, 12. In Jeremiah 29:14 we read that the Lord declares, "I will restore your fortunes and will gather you from all the nations . . . and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile." Especially important here for Dispensationalists is the reference to "all nations." This must therefore, according to them, refer to a restoration other than the restoration from Babylon. For further support Isaiah 11:11, 12 is quoted. ". . . the Lord will again

recover the second time with His hand the remnant of His people . . . and (He) will gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth." Besides the reference to the four corners of the world, which, as the Dispensationalists see it, must refer to the situation in the twentieth century, the reference to this being "the second time" is considered conclusive evidence that the Lord here refers to what is happening today, the first return being from Babylon.

Dispensationalists who so interpret these passages (and others like it) overlook two things: the context of these words and the return of which the books Ezra and Nehemiah speak. A return in which the temple was rebuilt and a public confession of sins was made and covenant obedience promised again.

What is the context of *Jeremiah 29:14*? Verse 10 makes it clear. "When the seventy years have been completed for Babylon, I will visit you and fulfill My good word to you, to bring you back to this place." This shows that the return is specifically a return after seventy years. Daniel speaks of these seventy years in the literal sense (Daniel 9:2), as applying to the time in which he was living. Why then does *Jeremiah 29:14* speak of a return "from all the nations"? Because it was a customary practice to sell captives to other nations as slaves (see Joel 3:7, Ezekiel 27:13, Amos 1:6, 9). In this way the Jews could become scattered all over the known world (perhaps especially through the seafaring Phoenicians, cf. Ezekiel 27:13). Besides this fact, one should also remember that Jews from the total dispersion (that is, also of the Northern tribes) returned to the promised land. Although the Bible emphasizes Judah because of the Davidic promises, yet we should not overlook the fact that *Israel* returned. It is also conceivable that representatives from the other ten tribes returned. When for instance a sin-offering was brought at the dedication of the temple in the time of Darius, then it was "a sin-offering for all Israel, twelve male goats, corresponding to the number of the tribes of Israel" (Ezra 6:17, see also Ezra 2:59, I Chronicles 9:33, 34). The New Testament also regards Israel as twelve tribes, whether literally or symbolically (Acts 26:7, Matthew 19:28). In view of the above, there is no need to take *Jeremiah 29:14* and see the return mentioned there as referring to a twentieth century phenom-

enon. The same applies for Isaiah 11:11, 12.

When we come to *Isaiah 11*, the Dispensationalist points out that here it speaks of the second return. Isn't that today? No. For the first return is not the return from Babylon, but from Egypt! *That* was the first release from bondage for Israel. The Old Testament is full of that and even Isaiah 11 in verse 16 speaks of it and by way of comparison connects it with the Babylonian return, which is clearly then the second return.

As far as the context of Isaiah 11 goes, we read that the returned exiles "will swoop down on the slopes of the Philistines on the west; together they will plunder the sons of the east; they will possess Edom and Moab; And the sons of Ammon will be subject to them" (verse 14). W. Hendriksen² aptly notes that these predictions were fulfilled, as is clear from the First Book of the Maccabees. Furthermore, "those who believe that *now*, in the twentieth century A.D., these Philistines, Edomites, Moabites and Ammonites must still be destroyed or plundered or subjected will have a hard time even finding them!" There is no need to see present-day Israel as a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. Israel was restored after the Babylonian captivity.

Conclusion

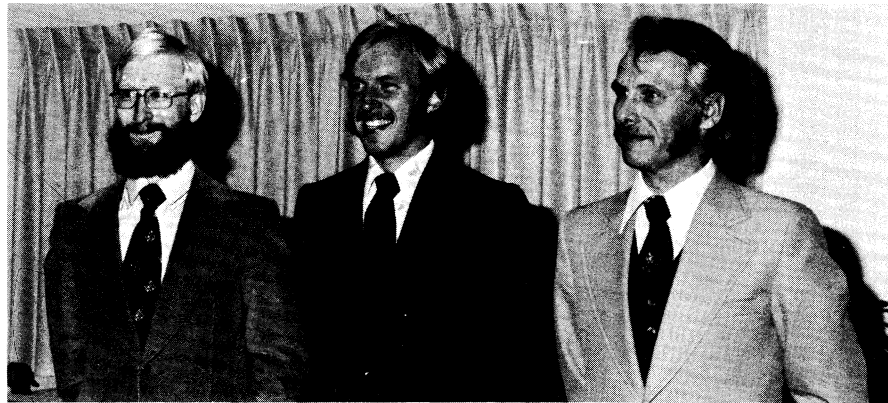
We can conclude with a statement of Dr. G.C. Aalders, who is reported to have said, "The establishment of the State of Israel, though certainly a remarkable event in the historic process of the world's nations, cannot be regarded as a realization of prophetic prediction in the Old Testament. Whatever has happened in Palestine and may happen there in the future, it has nothing to do with the divine prophecy which is presented in Holy Scriptures."

Of course this does not mean that we therefore now need no more concern ourselves with what is happening there. Although according to Biblical data Israel has no right to the land, how does the immediate background help us to see the situation? What forces have brought about the present tensions? (to be cont'd.) C. VAN DAM

¹ The evening of the "annual meeting" of the Men's Society, May 12, 1976, in Brampton, Ontario.

² In *Israel in Prophecy*, on which much of this section is based. This booklet is recommended for further study.

First Grade 10 Class Graduates from William of Orange School



The teachers of grades 8, 9, and 10. Left to right: Mr. Koat, Mr. Moes, and Mr. Vander Ploeg (principal).



The award winners. Academic Award went to Miss Cecile Van Woudenberg (at left), Student of the Year to Miss Jeane Aikema (at right), and P.E. Boy and Girl to Cecile Van Woudenberg (at left) and Ed Baartman (middle).



The 1976 grads of the William of Orange School with, at right, the principal, Mr. S. Vander Ploeg. (All photos by D. Byzitter.)

“Her Children Will Rise”

THE ROLE OF WOMEN

A lot of negative stress is being placed on the women's role in church and home. We bombard each other and our men with “Why not? So?” as our public media also bombard us daily. Why not vote in church? Why not hold office? Why not speak? Actually, we can make as much noise that is more intelligent than a lot of men. Why do we keep asking these questions? Do we desire to get away from responsibilities in our homes? What's wrong with these responsibilities? Have we also been influenced by women's lib — that to be a housewife is not a challenging profession but a low demeaning drudgery which we must get out of as soon as our families allow us to and then get into a more “stimulating” environment?

SCRIPTURAL

In my introduction* I would like to keep away from that approach and dwell on the more positive side of a woman's task in life. What seems to be the scriptural directive to women? What examples of holy women do we have in the Bible? How did they conduct themselves so that they lived their life to the Glory of God? Is the way we carry out our task in life different in character than that of men?

The first marriage in history took place in Paradise. The first husband was created with a definite sex. He was male. Then God created another person from the rib of this man. Man had everything he needed for his daily needs, but even being God's image did not satisfy the need that God had planted there for the affection of someone of his own kind. We can imagine Adam's joy when he awoke to find that he had been given the perfect mate — who in every way complemented his being.

The woman who was also created in God's image was and is still now the glory of man as man is the glory of his Maker (I Corinthians 11:7). They each had their task given them of God: Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it (Genesis 1:28).

The Bible illustrates how both partners together show the image of God, and that as God's image is revealed throughout the Bible. He pos-

sesses both male and female characteristics, or we should rightly say that male and female possess Godly characteristics.

As in Psalm 103:3, “He as a father pities His children.” In Isaiah 49:15, God's close relationship with Israel is portrayed: “Can a woman forget her sucking child?” And Isaiah 66:13, “As one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you.”

But God deems it necessary in His Word to stress that the man was created first and the woman out of man, and for man.

This stress was necessary in the New Testament times as it is now.

THE FALL

In the beginning the woman's being revolved around the man and under his leadership. Except that once she did take the initiative, and we all know what the outcome was. Here she is, the supposed helpmeet of man — yes, she helps him even so far as to lead him into sin, as we can read in I Timothy 2:13, 14 and I Corinthians 14:3, 4. She took the initiative to believe the serpent and then misled Adam through his love for her, to make him also decide to eat. There we have those feminine wiles! This does not mean that Adam is innocent of that sin. As it is stated in Romans 5:12, “Adam as head is held responsible for all the sin and death in this world.” God then punished the first family for their sin. Eve's punishment is in her task as mother and help for her husband because she misused this when she misled Adam. She will now be a mother — that most glorious moment — yet we all know of the pain and suffering that precedes and will follow that event.

As a result of sin she is destined to be classed as a lesser being; an object for the lusts of men; a slave in a harem; a mere possession; lowering herself to positions such as Samson's “Delilah”; one of Solomon's thousands; or an accomplice in adultery as in Bathsheba and David's case.

The man was punished in his role of master. Whereas he first had the privilege of subduing a perfect and co-operating earth, he now had to subdue it by toiling on a rebellious

world, fighting the elements, reaping crops from land that wants to produce thorns and thistles, in the sweat of his face. But man kept his original calling, and in Eve there is the promise that through childbearing she shall be saved as we see through the most blessed of mothers, Mary. The Son Whom she bore would rectify what wrong Adam and Eve did. Eve's comfort was that their deliverance would come by her motherhood through the promises God gave them of the coming Saviour.

That promise was fulfilled through a poor, humble, meekly believing, God-fearing Mary of Nazareth — not a beautiful, cultured rich socialite that might catch our fancy.

AFTER THE FALL

After the fall into sin, people of the world were pre-occupied with either one of two goals. First there were those that believed and remembered the promises of their Lord, God and Creator. They looked to the future generations for their promised Saviour.

Then there were the others — the majority. They also looked to the future generation for a better life, hoping that it would be their strong, intelligent, beautiful children who would make life and the world a little better and easier. There was Jabal, who made life a little more comfortable with tents and domesticated animals; Jubal, who invented the wonderful, sublime entertainment of music with the lyre and the pipe. Then Tubal-Cain made work a lot easier with his instruments of bronze and iron. Strange, that our first culture originated with the children of man. Is the worship of youth, as the answer to our problems, not also the religion of the world today? They hope that war, pollution and disease can be eliminated by the inventions of their children. Who needs a God?

The end for the accursed race in those pre-deliverance days was the flood. Noah, his wife and children were the only God-fearing survivors. They were saved through God's mercy and the promises made to Adam and Eve in paradise.

WOMEN IN THE BIBLE

But there were other women in the Bible besides Mary, the mother of Christ, who looked for the future Messiah in their children, ancestresses of Mary who waited patiently for their promised son when years of barrenness made a miracle necessary for

them to have a child. Every Israelite wanted to be able to look at his family and think of God's promise to Abraham.

"As the stars, so shall the number of your children be." When a woman did not conceive, then it seemed as if God was punishing her for a particularly sinful life, and the burden for the couple and especially the woman was heavy. Other women used this as a means of taking out their petty jealousies on their sister wives. Remember Hagar, Sarah's slave, who bore contempt for Sarah because she could not bear children; Leah's taunting of Rachel; and Penina's teasing of Hannah, Samuel's mother, because she could not conceive. And in Luke we read how Elizabeth had been reproached among men for her barrenness.

Yet we learn from Scripture that Sarah was one of the holy women and her conduct towards Abraham is cited as an example to us women how we should address our husbands as in I Peter 2:5, 6: "calling him Lord." Hebrews 11:11 states that it was Sarah's faith which gave her the strength to conceive and bear a child at her age.

"Faith can move mountains." That same strength of faith at the blessing of having children should be present in our midst. A birth today, in our midst, is still the fulfilment of God's promise to Abraham. We are now the chosen Israel and God keeps His people, His Church, in existence by means of our children. Seen in that light, a faithful mother in a Reformed family is more appreciated than any female minister or office-bearer.

One marvels at Abraham's faith when Isaac needs a wife. He sends his servant to his kinsmen to find a fitting wife for the father of the chosen race. He trusts that God will lead his servant to the right girl, and God provides Rebecca as lifelong companion for Isaac. One reads in Genesis 24 how she generously offers the servant water and also draws for his camels. No mean feat. They do not consult her whether she would like to be a wife to a complete stranger. They only ask her how soon she wants to go. Her family blesses her saying, "May you be the mother of thousands of ten thousands."

Imagine saying that to a new bride today! Maybe parents and children should have more of the faith and wisdom of Abraham. When a young man has his eyes open for a girl, is her

faith the most important factor when he chooses his future wife or is her pretty face, good figure, and intelligence foremost?

Rebecca was also barren. Isaac prayed to God and then they received two children (twins) from Him, Esau and Jacob.

In each family example in the Old Testament we see definitely different characteristics portrayed by the man-husband and the woman-wife. The man is the leader, the woman the follower caring for him and fighting for the love of her husband, as in the case of Rachel and Leah, and finding honour and happiness in bearing his children. When they travel, the men go out in front; the women and children stay behind for protection. Woman is the weaker vessel.

SUBMISSIVE OR INDEPENDENT?

Then, there are other women in the Old Testament that are greatly honoured in history and also considered typical of the liberated women if you just skim through each story. Look at Abigail — who takes matters in her own hands when she sees that her whole household is in danger from David's band because her husband, Nabal, refuses to provide David hospitality in return for protection. Was this right? Was she being submissive? A. Janse in *Eva's Dochteren* argues that in times when a husband puts his family in danger, be it through drunkenness, gambling, etc., or when he is mentally ill or just plain being obstinate and stupid, then she may take the managing position. Abigail feels it necessary to explain her unnatural behaviour to David and in the same vein blames Nabal's mental condition as reason for taking the assertive position.

Abigail reverts to the proper address of a woman in her times when in answer to David's proposal of marriage she says in Samuel 25:41, "Behold your handmaid is a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my Lord."

When you carefully peruse the chapters of Ruth, one sees a woman who with terrible correctness goes about trying to ensure that her mother-in-law's family name will not disappear in Israel. With almost maddening politeness and submissiveness (maddening for us today) she approaches her kinsman Boaz. She shows her faith in God by putting complete trust in Him, and therefore Boaz reacts in the way

she had hoped and prayed and she becomes his wife.

We can also cite Deborah as an example of female independence — a prophetess even in the Old Testament. Yet, what do we really know about this woman? The times she lived in were strange chaotic times when Israel went from one strange leader to another. Ehud, who was lefthanded; a poor, unsure Gideon; undisciplined, impetuous Samson; a bastard Jephthah and then a woman, Deborah. These are all examples of judges. Each time God seemed to choose the weaker and in some ways inferior to shame those in Israel that were supposedly strong and mighty. Imagine the shame for the men to have a woman as leader.

Yet, she was the wife of Lappidoth and therefore under the jurisdiction of a male and as in the 10th commandment part of his possessions.

When she orders, e.g. telling Barak to go to war, she spoke God's word and not her own. That makes her — not liberated but — a believing, faithful woman who was privileged to hear God's revelation and use it to Israel's benefit.

Then we have some examples of seemingly free, liberated women who make their own decisions and try and make their husband's decisions also and lead them on in the way of perdition. There is Michal, Saul's daughter, David's wife, who does not give her husband proper honour but laughs at him and his faith. "And Michal had no child till the day of her death," we read.

We all know of the horrible Jezebel who took it upon herself to provide her husband with the gift of a much coveted vineyard by first arranging for the murder of the owner. The Bible says she incited Ahab to sell himself to all that was evil.

There was also something lacking from David and Solomon's lives because of their polygamy. David did not have a wife who could be his comfort and companion in his old age. Even Bathsheba could not fill the place that the young slave had in David's dying days.

Solomon's words and actions seem to be at odds. He writes, although inspired, about the perfect love of a man and woman for each other, about God and His church, in the Song of Solomon. Knowing this, how can one have a thousand wives? This

seems to have left him with nothing but bitter experience, as in Ecclesiastes 7:28 he writes, "One man among a thousand I have found, but a woman among all these I have not found."

He knew what it was like to live with a contentious woman and expresses it so well — "Continual dripping on a rainy day"; the many evils in store for men from wicked women; and the necessity for a son to heed his mother's teachings and obey his parents.

IN NEW TESTAMENT TIMES

Then, what happens to the women in the New Testament times? Do we still have to find satisfaction and happiness in serving the Lord, and our husbands, bearing children and managing our households? For us today, this is certainly a challenge. We have already been reminded that our children keep God's church in existence. We have to run our households well and instruct our children in the Word to make this true. This will also result in good ministers, elders, and deacons, as in 1 Timothy 3:4, 5. Then the saying is true that behind every successful man is a woman. Then as in Proverbs 31 our husband can sit at the gate and govern because he knows his home is in good hands.

Paul tells us in Timothy that a woman will be saved through child-bearing if she continues in faith and love and holiness with modesty. We are again reminded in Titus 2:4, 5: Train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be sensible, chaste, *domestic*, kind and submissive to their husbands.

The change in the New Testament is that men also are exhorted about their behaviour to their wives and family. A woman has to do the Lord's will but she may point out (submissively) to her husband how God also instructs the husband as in 1 Peter 3:7. "Likewise you husbands live considerately with your wives bestowing *honour* on the woman as the weaker sex since you are joint heirs of the grace of life." The immense responsibility of the husband is impressed on you when you read that Christ is the Head of all men as the husband is the head of the woman. When we realize the sacrifices Christ made for his Church, how can a man ever begin to match the same to his wife.

CHALLENGING

Most women today seek a job or

a profession when they quit school so that they can fulfil their creative talents or make some decent money. The newspapers take pride in the women that choose a profession that is male-dominated. Being a housewife is passé. No one, including myself, thinks of preparing oneself with a course which would make one better prepared to become a wife and mother. Yet most of us expect to enter the holy state of matrimony fairly soon after we finish school. But that isn't challenging — one doesn't need brains to be a housewife. Yet being a housewife, wife and mother is one of the most diversified professions on earth, including arts which many of us have not bothered to learn. Would we not take a lot more pride in our work if we could confidently arrange the finances of a home, knew how to buy and prepare nutritious, economical meals for our families, knew the arts of canning, pickling and jam-making to the enjoyment and the praise of our husbands and children? Flower arranging can create a cheerful, cosy note in the home and use of the natural outdoor plants in spring, summer, and fall give a living touch to an otherwise dull home. Sewing can be a satisfying way of dressing your home and family.

PARENTHOOD

More important yet! What do we know about the basic rules of parenthood? How do we care for the health of our families and ourselves, spiritually, physically, and mentally. Are you a good example? Do you pollute your own and your families lungs by smoking, not to forget the visual pollution from papers, books, and most of all television?

How many young mothers are at a loss when they bring home a new baby and with the first scream are on the phone to the doctor because they've never had a proper background in childcare?

What do we do about discipline? When do we start? Do we know how to handle the results of sin in our families? Maybe we should get together as parents and form a discussion group to aid each other in what must be common problems. After all, we have post-confession classes. Why not post-marriage classes?

How well are we prepared to become Reformed parents? Do we know our Scriptures and confessions well enough to answer our children intelligently when they ask about the why's

and wherefore's of our faith? What do we read besides Harlequin Romances? Do we try and expand our home library with Reformed literature so that our own minds don't remain stagnant? After all, women can read! In this way, again, are we a good example? In our conversations, our language, showing respect for your child's teachers, the minister, the elders and deacons? Do we as wives show the same respect towards our husbands and not undermine his authority, by arguing about his discipline in front of the children?

Today a woman does not seem to pull her weight if she stays at home after her children are at school. We must get out and fulfil ourselves once our youngest is five because we want to have an extra car; a trip to Florida; or a nice camp trailer for the summer. The next step is to leave your little ones in a day-care centre because there you have professionals taking care of them. When will this philosophy infiltrate our ranks? Will we also forget about the virtues of being a good housewife as described in Proverbs 31? "A good wife, who can find? She is more precious than jewels." But above all, "Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised!"

M. SCHOLTENS

**Delivered at the 1976 Annual Meeting of the Women's Societies of Rehoboth Church, Burlington. Mrs. Scholtens, a member of Rehoboth Church, was formerly a teacher at the John Calvin School, Smithville.*

Letters-to-the-Editor

Dear Editor,

After reading an article named "School X Crossing" in the *Clarion* of June 12/76, I got a bad taste in my mouth.

The writer criticizes Rev. D. de Jong's article written in the *Edmonton City Guide* and then sets himself up as the one that will guard the Canadian Reformed Churches from all impurities.

I know Rev. D. de Jong is very able to defend himself. I do not have to do that.

But if the writer of "School X Crossing" would be fair he would quote de Jong's whole article, criticize it and then if Rev. de Jong answers, print that answer in full.

As the writer did not quote the whole article, I find his criticism "below the belt" style!

R. WINKEL
Edmonton, Alberta.



The Choir of the Maranatha Church.

Maranatha Church, Surrey

DEDICATION

Blessed be the Lord for ever!

The relatively short history of the Maranatha Canadian Reformed Church takes us back 26 years. It was in 1950 that five families in the Vancouver area (Dutch emigrants), came together on Sundays to worship the Lord. This "house congregation" placed itself under the supervision of the Consistory of the Canadian Reformed Church at Lethbridge, Alberta. Later that same year this group was strengthened with the arrival of several families from the Lethbridge area.

The "house congregation" increased sufficiently to institute a Church, and on December 17, 1950, three office bearers were ordained, namely: P. DeWit, C.A. VanderGugten and E.C. Baartman.

The Lord blessed the congregation with tremendous growth. Initially, services were held at the Baartman residence, but soon moved to the Seventh Day Adventists' Church on Ash Street, New Westminster, and later still, to a meeting hall on Church Street, New Westminster (Dreamland).

December, 1957, a theatre on 12th Street was purchased and renovated to suit the needs of the growing congregation. This building was sold in 1975 when a decision was made to erect a new building, in which you are present now.

The Rev. W.W.J. VanOene became Pastor of the congregation November 23, 1952. He left in 1970 to ac-

cept a call to Fergus, Ontario. In 1972 the congregation received their present Pastor, the Rev. M. VanBeveren.

Some activities closely related to the history of the congregation include foreign mission, Christian education and radio broadcasting. The Consistory directs a mission post, served by the Rev. C. VanSpronsen, in Pernambuco, Brazil, with financial support of co-operating congregations in Western Canada.

The children of the congregation mostly receive their education at the William of Orange School, operated by the parents, in co-operation with the parents of the Cloverdale congregation.

A very visible aspect of home mission takes the form of three radio broadcasts aired every Sunday on two local radio stations. This is accomplished in co-operation with three other Fraser Valley congregations.

BLESS THIS CHURCH Words by S. VanderPloeg

Bless this Church, O Lord we pray,
That we dedicate today;
Bless the work our hands have
wrought.

All the labour all the thought;
Bless this house that we have built,
With Thy praise let it be filled;
Bless us Lord and be Thou near
When we enter to worship here.

Bless the preaching of Thy Word,

Let it light our way, O Lord,
Bless the psalms and hymns of praise,
That we to Thee in thanks do raise.
Bless and hear when we in prayer,
Come to Thee with all our cares,
Bless us all O Lord we pray
Keep us in Thy care for aye,
Bless us all, that one day we
May dwell, O Lord, with Thee.



The Chairman of the Committee of Administration, Mr. E. Van Woudenberg, presents the Rev. Van Beveren with a key.

our little magazine

Hello Busy Beavers,

Have you been looking forward to our big Summer Contest?

Well, here it is!

I hope ALL the Busy Beavers will have a good time doing the quizzes and sending in their entries!

Send in the *best* entry you can, and be sure to put on it your name and age!



From the Mailbox

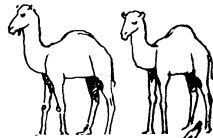
Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Florence Visser*. We are happy to have you join us and we hope you will enjoy being a Busy Beaver. Your answer to the quiz was right, Florence. Keep up the good work!

Hello *Joyce De Gelder*. Did you have a nice birthday party? And how did you enjoy your holiday? Your answer to the quiz was right, Joyce! I hope you'll soon have a pen-pal.

Busy Beavers, we need another pen-pal! Are you interested in exchanging letters with another Busy Beaver? You may write Joyce De Gelder at this address: R.R. #2, Hamilton, Ontario L8N 2Z7. Now for our quizzes!

QUIZ I BIBLE MEN AND ANIMALS

1. Abel offered a



2. David killed a



3. Daniel was put into a den of



4. The Wise-men rode on



5. Aaron made a golden



6. Absalom rode a



Each of the Bible men in column 1 had some connection with one of the animals in column 2. Draw a line connecting each man with the animal that finishes each sentence.

QUIZ II

How Many?

- How many times did Peter deny the Lord Jesus during the trial? _____
- How many of the ten lepers returned to thank the Lord Jesus for healing them? _____
- How many times did the devil tempt the Lord Jesus in the wilderness? _____
- How many men were appointed to assist the apostles of Jerusalem with the "business affairs" of the church? _____
- How many men carried the paralytic to Christ and lowered Him through the roof? _____
- How many loaves of bread did Jesus have to start with when He fed the 5,000? _____
- How many years did the Lord Jesus live on earth? _____
- How many people did the Lord Jesus meet on the Emmaus Road? _____
- How old was Abraham when Isaac was born? _____
- How many times did God call Samuel in the night? _____
- How many disciples did the Lord Jesus have? _____
- How many days did it take Nehemiah and his men to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem? _____
- How many men did Gideon have in his army when he fought the Midianites? _____
- How many years did Jacob work for Rachel? _____
- How many times did the prophet tell Naaman to dip in the Jordan? _____
- How many days were Daniel and his friends allowed to test their food? _____
- How many days did the twelve spies stay in the Promised Land? _____
- How many wives and concubines did Solomon have? _____
- How many pairs of each type of bird did Noah take into the ark? _____
- How many days did it rain at the time of the great flood? _____

QUIZ III

Of Whom was it Said?

- Of whom was it said that none greater was ever born? _____
- Of whom was it said, "She hath done what she could"? _____
- Of whom was it said, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth"? _____
- Of whom was it said, "Thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting"? _____
- Of whom was it said, "Saul slew his thousands and _____ his ten thousands"? _____
- Of whom was it said, "... but he that cometh after me is mightier than I"? _____
- Of whom was it said, "Is not this the carpenter's son"? _____
- Of whom was it said, "And they were both righteous before God..."? _____
- Of whom was it said that she "pondered these things in her heart"? _____
- Of whom was it said, "This woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did"? _____