

# Clarion

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# A LETTER FROM THE COMMITTEE FOR CONTACT WITH THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH to the COMMITTEE ON ECUMENICITY AND INTERCHURCH RELATIONS 1

October 13, 1978

Esteemed brothers:

General Synod 1977 of the Canadian Reformed Churches commissioned its appointed committee for contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church to respond to your letter dated April 14, 1976.

First of all, we thank you for your willingness to clarify your viewpoint on the differences in doctrine and church government. We also appreciate the positive, christian tone of your letter.

As you may have noticed from the decision of General Synod 1977, our committee does not need to discuss and evaluate the points of difference in order to ascertain whether such divergencies constitute an impediment towards recognizing the Orthodox Presbyterian Churches as true churches of our Lord. Indeed, an important consideration leading to the decision "with thankfulness to recognize the Orthodox Presbyterian Church as a true church of our Lord Jesus Christ as confessed in Article 29 of the Belgic Confession" was:

"The letter of the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations of April 14, 1976, confirms that the Orthodox Presbyterian Church wholeheartedly adheres to the Westminster Confession of Faith and maintains the rules for church polity as laid down in the Form of Government, and also that the divergencies having been discussed in this letter do not form an impediment to recognize the Orthodox Presbyterian Church as Churches of the Lord Jesus Christ." (*Acts* 1977, Art. 91, Ilh.)

However, the same synod still considered "further discussion on divergencies in confession and church polity . . . desirable" and therefore also asked us to respond to your letter.

Our response is divided according to the points of difference regarding doctrine (A) and church government (B) as dealt with in your letter. For convenience we list them as follows:

- A-1: Visible and Invisible Church
- A-2: Assurance of Faith
- A-3: Covenant of Grace
- A-4: Descended into Hell
- A-5: Explanation of the Law
- B-1: Presbyterian and Reformed Systems of Church Government
- B-2: Office-Bearers
- B-3: Authority of Church Assemblies
- Interchurch Relations

## A-1: VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE CHURCH

In answer to our letter of March 1972 you answered d.d. April 14, 1976: "A-1 does not question the legitimacy of a distinction between the church visible and the church invisible as such . . ."

Our letter did not want to sound too aggressive. Our deputies stated, ". . . we live in a time in which the visible Church, as manifested in its institutional form is set in sharp contrast to the invisible Church . . . which is gathered together out of all institutes." They did not simply call atten-

tion to the dangers inherent in the distinction, but meant to reject the distinction itself.

This rejection is in agreement with the teaching of one of your "own prophets," Dr. John Murray, in his essay "The Church: Its Definition in Terms of 'Visible' and 'Invisible' Invalid," in *Collected Writings* I, 1976, pp. 231-236. "The distinction between the church visible and the church invisible is not well-grounded in terms of Scripture, and the abuses to which the distinction has been subjected require correction." (p. 232). Also: ". . . there are those aspects pertaining to the Church that may be characterized as invisible. But it is to 'the church' those aspects pertain, and 'the church' in the New Testament never appears as an invisible entity and therefore may never be *defined* in terms of invisibility." (p. 234).

Dr. Murray shows the deep practical significance of this thesis for the fulfilment of the obligation incumbent upon us to foster unity and fellowship in the Church of God.

You refer to our Three Forms of Unity, e.g. to the fact that the Heidelberg Catechism speaks to a church chosen to everlasting life. This expression, however, is to be distinguished from the description in the Westminster Confession "the catholic or universal Church, which is invisible, consists of the whole number of the elect." Question and Answer 54 speaks about the chosen *Church*, but this expression is different from "the church of the *elect*." Instead of your reference to Question and Answer 52, and your statement, "this chosen church appears to be composed of chosen individuals," we like to remark that in Question and Answer 74 of the Heidelberg Catechism we confess that infants, as well as adults, are included in the Church of God. There is no indication whatsoever, that our Heidelberg Catechism in this context refers to *elect* infants only.

Apart from that question whether we can discern in the Heidelberg Catechism "the beginning of a definition of the church in terms of the doctrine of election," it is clear that the Heidelberg Catechism does not speak of the invisible Church and the visible Church.

You also refer to the Canons of Dordt, First Head, Article 7 where is spoken of "a certain number of persons" as the object of God's sovereign and merciful election. You write that the Canons "present, in effect, a more elaborate description of this Church," the church in terms of the doctrine of election, or the invisible Church.

We would answer that the Rejection of Errors, Paragraph 1, makes it clear that the Canons object against the Arminian thesis that the will of God to save those who believe is the whole and entire decree of election unto salvation. We confess that God has from eternity chosen "certain particular persons." We can not read in Article 7 a more elaborate description of the *church* in terms of the doctrine of election, or the invisible Church. On the contrary, the way in which e.g. Article 14 states that the doctrine of divine election "is still to be published in due time and place in the Church of God," makes it clear that the Canons of Dordt do not know of the Church as an invisible entity.

We are thankful that you have shown sensitivity to our

concern that viewing the Church from the perspective of election does tend to depreciate the authentic churchly character of the congregation of Christ, and may even lead to complacency with the existence of a diversity of geographically overlapping denominations within the one church of Jesus Christ.

Nevertheless, we cannot accept your suggestion that the covenantal understanding of church in the Canadian Reformed Churches today, reflects more precisely the perspective of the Heidelberg Catechism than the Canons of Dordt, while the Westminster formulation would reflect both Dordt (church as invisible) and the earlier Reformation (church as visible).

As we indicated above, the Canons of Dordt do not speak of the invisible Church and there is no difference in perspective between the Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons while the Westminster formulation cannot be characterized as the balanced combination of the fruits of Dordt and the earlier Reformation. The question rather arises whether the Westminster formulation does not betray a retrogression into a scholastic distinction, which is "liable to be loaded with the misconceptions inherent in the concept 'invisible church' and tends to support the abuses incident thereto" (J. Murray, *Collected Writings* I, p. 235). Do the Westminster Confession Article 25 and the Larger Catechism Question and Answer 64-66 not need correction?

We gratefully acknowledge that the Westminster Confession mentions the possibility of degeneration: these degenerated churches are no churches of Christ anymore, but synagogues of Satan. We thank you for the reference to the special attention for church discipline in Chapter 30 of your confession. However, your letter did not answer our question what, according to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, the "particular Churches" are of which Chapter 25, IV of the Westminster Confession states that they are members of the catholic Church. This question was brought up because the Westminster Confession does not clearly mention the marks of the true and the false Church. It might be debatable whether neither the Belgic Confession nor the Scottish Confession of 1560 faced the ecclesiastical complexity to which, according to your letter, the Westminster Confession addresses itself in terms of degrees of purity. Our Belgic Confession states in Art. 29 that we ought diligently and circumspectly to discern from the Word of God which is the true Church, "since all sects which are in the world assume to themselves the name of the Church."

In the meantime, we noted with gratitude that you are of the opinion that the Westminster Confession does not propound a doctrine of the pluriformity of the church. The question remains whether or not the manner in which the Westminster Standards (we think also of Larger Catechism, Question and Answer 62-65, 82-83) speak of the invisible church and the visible church is Scriptural and whether or not it easily leads to the acceptance of the theory of the pluriformity of the church.

#### A-2: ASSURANCE OF FAITH

The question raised by us was: do the Westminster Confession (Chapter 18, III) and the Larger Catechism (Answer 81) not teach two kinds of faith: one including the assurance of faith and the other not including this assurance? The Larger Catechism states very clearly that assurance does not belong to the essence of faith. "Assurance of grace and salvation not being of the essence of faith, true believers may wait long before they obtain it . . ." We note

that, to our knowledge, only the Westminster Confession and Larger Catechism state that assurance is not an essential element in faith. Calvin's Geneva Catechism, 1541, the Heidelberg Catechism, 1563, Craig's Catechism, 1581, the New Catechism of Scotland, 1644,, all speak of faith in terms of assurance. This is in agreement with the Scriptures, Hebrews 11:1, Romans 4:18-21, Ephesians 3:12.

It seems that you have not really answered our objection in this respect and that your reference to the Canons of Dordt (Chapter V, Art. 11) is not to the point here. Chapter V, Art. 5 states that those who are converted can fall into serious sins, by which they "interrupt the exercise of faith." This is not the same as having faith but not having the assurance of faith. In Chapter V, Art. 9 we confess that "true believers may and do obtain assurance according to the measure of their faith." This implies that assurance is essential in faith. Note in Chapter V, Art. 4 also the expression "full assurance of faith." This indicates again that assurance is essential in faith.

Subjectivism and Mysticism have no confessional basis in the Canons of Dordt, but are in Reformed circles the outcome of misinterpretations of the doctrine of God's predestination or the result of Pietism. To separate faith and assurance in essence and chronological order — "true believers may wait long before they attain it" — is dangerous.

Nevertheless, we are thankful that you agree with our testimony that the hope and joy of the believer is rooted and grounded in Jesus Christ and His promises, and not in his own experience.

#### A-3: COVENANT OF GRACE

Our letter of March 1972 expressed the opinion of our Committee that the Larger Catechism implies "the confessing of . . . two covenants, one with the elect and one with the believers and their children." The response was: There is dual emphasis, which dual emphasis runs parallel to the distinction between the church as visible and the church as invisible.

However, this does not meet our objections, brothers. The first half of that "dual emphasis," the "conception of the covenant as made with believers and their children" is not very clear in the Westminster standards (Larger Catechism, Answer 166). As far as the second half is concerned, Scripture does not say, as the Larger Catechism does (Answer 31), that "the covenant of grace was made with Christ as the second Adam, and in Him with all the elect as His seed." Scripture calls Christ the Mediator of the covenant (Hebrews 8:6; 9:15; 12:24), and says that He has confirmed the New Covenant in His blood (Matthew 26:28; Hebrews 11:25), which is different. Unfortunately, there is not only a parallel between the dual conception of the visible and the invisible church on the one hand and on the other the "dual emphasis" regarding the covenant, but there is even a close relation between the conceptions of the church and of the covenant in the Westminster writings. This becomes clear from Westminster Confession, Chapter 28, I where baptism is first of all called "a sacrament of the new testament, ordained by Jesus Christ . . . for the solemn admission of the party baptized into the *visible* Church." Fundamentally the same is said in the Larger Catechism when the question: "What is the visible Church?" in 62 is answered: "The visible Church is a society made up of all those in all ages and places of the world who profess the true religion, and their children." Answer 64 reads thus: "What is the invisible Church? The invisible Church is the

whole number of the elect, who have been, are, or shall be gathered into one under Christ the Head."

Are we not to draw the conclusion that the conception of the covenant as including the children of believers can be identified with the visible church, and the conception of the covenant as limited to the elect with the invisible Church?

Are the Westminster standards not close to the well-known theological distinction between an external and an internal covenant? The same distinction played a prominent role in the defense of the doctrinal statements issued by the Synod Sneek-Utrecht 1942 of "De Gereformeerde Kerken" in The Netherlands which our churches have rejected and do reject. As far as your comparison with the (lack of) doctrine of the covenant in the Three Forms of Unity is concerned, we like to remind you of the fact that the matter was not whether the Westminster Standards or the Three Forms of Unity gave a complete doctrine of the covenant, but the question was: Who belong to the covenant? With whom is the Covenant established? It should further be considered that:

- I. the doctrine of the covenant was not under attack when the Belgic Confession was written, but only the position of the children had to be defended against the Anabaptists, and the concept of the covenant with the believers and their children becomes operative in this context (Art. 34).
- II. The Heidelberg Catechism has a covenantal structure (e.g. in Lord's Day 5 and 6). In the Church Order of Heidelberg it was placed between the Form for Baptism and the Forms for Public Confession of Faith and the Celebration of the Lord's Supper, which clearly speak about the covenant of grace. Further, our Heidelberg Catechism's leading idea is that of the "only comfort." The term "comfort" is closely related with the word "covenant." It is no wonder, therefore, that the Larger Catechism of the main author of the Heidelberger, Zacharias Ursinus, started with the question: "Which firm comfort do you possess?" and which was answered by: "That . . . God . . . has taken me up into His covenant of grace." The covenantal structure becomes operative in the well-known statement that infants, as well as adults, are included in the covenant and Church of God and that by baptism, as a sign of the covenant, they must be ingrafted into the Christian Church (Answer 74).
- III. The Canons of Dordt were limited to the five points of the Arminians, and consequently cannot be expected to include a complete doctrine of the covenant — though they clearly state that the children of believers belong to the covenant (I, 17).

You find in the Westminster Confession "a perspective on the covenant, again arising from the impetus given by the forms of the Canons of Dordt on the doctrine of election, which defines the covenant as made with Christ and in him with the elect." We humbly respond that according to us, the Canons speak a language that differs from the Westminster Larger Catechism Answer 31. They do not say that the covenant was made with Christ, but that Christ is the Mediator of the New Covenant and that He confirmed it with His blood (Chapter II, Rejection of Errors, Paragraph 2).

The difference in approach between "Dordt" and "Westminster" may be clear from what they confess

concerning children who die in their infancy. The Canons state in the First Head of Doctrine, the chapter dealing with Divine Election: Since these children are "holy, not by nature, but in virtue of the covenant of grace, in which they together with the parents are comprehended, godly parents ought not to doubt the election and salvation of their children whom it pleases God to call out of this life in their infancy (Genesis 17:7; Acts 2:39; I Cor. 7:14)." The Westminster Confession, Chapter 10, III, speaking of effectual calling, says: "Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated, and saved by Christ, through the Spirit, who worketh when, and where, and how He pleaseth . . ." The Canons offer consolation to the parents of such children by referring them to the covenant of grace, established with the believers and their seed, while the Westminster Confession in this context is silent about God's Covenant.

#### A-4: DESCENDED INTO HELL

In respect to the point raised in section A-4, there seems to be no conflict between the positions taken by the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and the Canadian Reformed Churches. The different interpretation of the clause in the Apostles' Creed "descended into hell" should not become a point of disunity.

#### A-5: EXPLANATION OF THE LAW

We appreciate that you can understand from the perspective of the Heidelberg Catechism, the difficulty we experience with the explanation of the Fourth Commandment in the Westminster standards. Our previous Committee wondered whether full justice is done to the progress in the history of salvation. We thank you for your enlightening remarks and your reference to our common observance of the Lord's Day. However, when we e.g. read in Westminster Confession Chapter 21, VII that "it is of the law of nature, that, in general, a due proportion of time be set apart for the worship of God," we still like to be informed about the binding character of such details of the interpretation of the commandments. As for the fact that it is not readily apparent to you "how the necessity for maintaining schools or for contribution to the relief of the poor can be inferred or deduced from the Fourth Commandment," we may point to the following:

The prooftexts that are added to the text of the Heidelberg Catechism (II Timothy 2:2; 3:15) may show that those schools are meant that teach the future leaders of the church, in particular the ministers of the Word of God. There is a direct line here with the Fourth Commandment because the preaching usually takes place on the Lord's Day.

I Corinthians 16:2 is the prooftext for the line that says giving Christian alms is one of the purposes for which we diligently attend the Church of God. There is even an apostolic command that regards "the first day of the week."

In both cases the progress in the history of salvation made since the Fourth Commandment was issued at Sinai, is clearly shown.

(To be continued.)

With brotherly greetings,  
From Committee for Contact with the OPC,  
J. MULDER, Convener,  
J. BOOT, W. HUIZINGA,  
J. FABER, W. WILDEBOER



# Christ's Church, the Bible, and Me

by Alexander C. DeJong

Paracletos Press, 12940 Western Avenue,  
Blue Island, Illinois, 60406.

The main part of the above brochure is an Address originally given by Dr. Alexander C. DeJong at the request of the Consistory of the First Christian Reformed Church, South Holland, Illinois, on Thursday evening, April 13, 1978.

The second part is formed by reprints from *The Banner* of Dr. DeJong's review of *Above the Battle: the Bible and Its Critics*, by Dr. Harry Boer, Dr. Boer's reply to that Review, and Dr. DeJong's reply to Dr. Boer's reply.

In his address Dr. DeJong discusses and defends the inerrancy of Scripture over against the attacks made on this doctrine, attacks among which the one by Dr. Boer is dealt with specifically.

I can recommend Dr. DeJong's exposition, having read it with pleasure and unto my edification. It is good to see a serious effort to expose errors. It is also heartwarming to read the frank confession that *faith* is the determining factor here.

The big question which remains is: "What now? How are we going to proceed from here?"

Frankly, I think that here we find Dr. DeJong's weak point. "Theologically" he may take a firm and consequent stand; regarding the course of action to be followed I find him refusing to draw the consequences.

(That I write the word "theologically" between quotation marks is done because ultimately the whole matter is not a question of theology but of faith, as also Dr. DeJong points out correctly.)

His firm "theological" stand will not help unless he sees very clearly which way should be followed from now on. When the moment is there to go on that way, that is something I cannot judge. I am afraid, however, that the way itself is not clear to Dr. DeJong. For that reason I deem it necessary to write more about his brochure than might have been the case if it had just been a treatment of the issue as such.

I find it a strange advice, given to the members of a Congregation: "If you experience conscientious difficulty

in supporting, with your gifts, leaders who do not confess their faith in an infallible and inerrant Bible, try to direct your gifts to organizations and members of the church whose position is unambiguously clear." Such an advice — apart from the question whether it is really *the* solution — could be followed in the case of voluntary contributions to certain organizations, but what about the synodically set quota?

Stranger is the advice, "If it becomes apparent that neither your Pastor nor consistory wish to confess inerrancy as part of their doctrine of Scripture you could transfer to another C.R.C. where one can experience genuine edification."

In the first place: in this advice the emphasis is shifted, switched from faithfulness to the Confessions and to promises made to the subjective field of "genuine edification." But that is not the issue here! The question is not whether I receive genuine edification. The question is whether the church as a whole shall remain faithful to the Scriptures and whether in every Christian Reformed Church the Truth shall prevail. The struggle in defense of the inerrancy of Scripture is not a matter of "genuine edification." If that is the prevailing thought, the whole struggle has been hamstrung. Then it becomes, "You in your small corner, and I in mine," but it is no longer light that shines forth from that small corner. Darkness takes over.

And secondly, the whole matter of "transferring to another church" is something which, again, circumvents the issue and yields to the temptation to evade a choice. It also promotes polarization.

I can well appreciate Dr. DeJong's carefulness and earnest desire to hold on to his brothers as long as possible, but here I cannot find the firmness which especially in days of crisis is so absolutely necessary.

Dr. Boer should have received a clear answer to his statement that he was not aware "that we and those of our mind, accepting each other as brothers in Christ, cannot honourably and truthfully live together under the same denominational roof, and that in complete loyalty to the Reformed un-

derstanding of the Christian faith." He should have been given to understand as clearly as a human being can give something to understand that *the roof extends only as far as the foundation reaches* and that therefore those who leave the foundation — and all who deny Scripture's inerrancy as Dr. Boer does have left the foundation — also place themselves out in the cold, away from the covering and protection of the roof.

Has it not become abundantly clear during the history of the Church that those who deviate from the old proven foundation begin with claiming for themselves the right to remain in the Church even though they "disagree" with the "interpretation" which their dear brothers give of certain issues and doctrinal beliefs? What did the followers of Jacob Arminius do? And many others?

It is clear to me and to many others that Dr. Boer, by publishing his views, has acted contrary to the promises made when he signed the subscription form. Although there may be place under the one roof for brothers whose opinions on many issues differ, there is no room for those who leave the foundation.

Until that is recognized and unless the consequences of such a situation are courageously and faithfully accepted, the Christian Reformed Church will more and more become a body which harbours within itself all sorts of foreign elements as if they belonged to the body. Iron and clay.

It is not easy to reach such a conclusion and to act accordingly. I know what I am talking about. Did the older ones among us not have to go through a similar situation with all the bitter experiences connected with it? Yet, for the preservation of the purity of doctrine and the future of the Church such is necessary. Otherwise there will be only sighing and groaning, which will peter out gradually, and the end will be that they "live happily ever after," yes, under one roof, but without a common foundation.

And then the living together is only "common-law" but no legitimate communion. vO

## OUR COVER

"The Garden Wall" in American side of Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park. (Photo courtesy John Van Laar, Abbotsford, B.C.)

# press review

## WOMEN'S VOTING RIGHTS IN THE NETHERLANDS

The General Synod of our sister-churches in The Netherlands made a decision in the matter of "women's voting rights." That decision was: not to give the right to vote to women in the churches. In *Gereformeerd Kerkblad voor Overijssel*, etc. of September 9, 1978, the Rev. A.P. van Dijk writes about this decision and the preceding discussions under the heading: "Synod Impressions." I give a translation of this article here to the readers of *Clarion*. The author was a member of the Synod of Groningen himself. He writes:

### WOMEN'S VOTING RIGHTS

The tenth week of meeting of the Synod of Groningen-Zuid has been used almost entirely for dealing with the matter of "the right of women to vote." Many had been looking forward to this point on the agenda with a certain tension, because they considered it to be one of the most important matters of this Synod. This is also how we have to explain the great interest of the church members in the sessions of Synod during this week . . . .

### NO NEW MATTER

The question whether the sisters of the congregation who have made public profession of their faith have the right to vote in the election of office-bearers is not brought up for the first time in these last years. Therefore several speakers at Synod warned not to connect this matter too hastily with the women's liberation movement. During the discussions at Synod it was recalled that Dr. Abraham Kuyper, for instance, was in favour of women's voting rights during the larger part of his life, and that also Dr. H. Bavinck favoured the right of women to vote during the last period of his life. During the twenties several synods intensively dealt with this matter. A strong advocate of the right of the sisters of the congregation to vote, in that time, was the Rev. C. Lindeboom, a son of Professor L. Lindeboom. The Synod of Arnhem, 1930, made the decision "not to grant the right to vote in the church to the female members of the congregation."

Nevertheless, time and again there were voices in the churches which wanted to see the rights of the sisters in the church recognized. This happened also after the Liberation. More than one general synod had to deal with it. The Synod of Hattem, 1972-1973, had on its table a request from

the Consistory of Delft to appoint a committee to investigate the matter of the right of women to vote in the light of Scripture, since the argumentation of the Synod of Arnhem, 1930, was considered unsatisfactory. The Synod of Hattem granted that request. The committee appointed by Hattem served the Synod of Kampen, 1975, with an ample report. However, this Synod did not want to make a decision on the basis of this report only. It was of the opinion that there were still quite a number of questions left which asked for an answer.

That Synod hoped that through the answering of these questions the apparent divergency, the differing of opinions, on the point of "women's voting rights" would be overcome. So, it wished more unanimity. The committee was now also charged with paying attention to the character of the election of office-bearers in all its aspects.

However, this committee could not come to unanimous conclusions. The consequence was that the Synod of Groningen-Zuid had two reports on its table: a report from four committee members, named R4, and a minority report of two members of the committee, which was called R2. R4 comes to the conclusion that only very weighty reasons, to be derived from Scripture, can compel the Consistory to exclude the sisters of the congregation from the election and that those reasons are not there. But R2 ends with the conclusion that, even though the decision of Arnhem, 1930, was weakly founded and formulated, that decision — namely, that the right to vote in the church cannot be granted to the female members of the congregation — has to be upheld.

### THE DISCUSSION AT SYNOD

Besides the two reports Synod had received quite a few other overtures concerning "women's voting rights." Some of them were in favour of R4, others favoured R2. There were also some which asked to postpone a decision and to study the matter further. The Synod-Committee to which the preparation of the discussion was entrusted delivered an extensive report and draft-decision regarding all these materials. This rather extensive draft-decision concluded with: "not to grant the right to vote to the sisters of the congregation because of the Scriptural demand of the subordination of woman." At Synod an ample, high-calibre discussion developed, in which really good attention was paid to the various reports as well as to the proposed deci-

sion. As a result of the discussions the proposed text of the decision was replaced by a different one which was much shorter. Also a counter-proposal was moved, in which Synod was asked to decide to declare the decision of Arnhem, 1930, rescinded, and further to declare that the Consistories ought not to deny to the communicant sisters of the congregation the right to participate in the election of office-bearers in the congregation the right to participate in the election of office-bearers in the congregation of Christ. It was also moved again to appoint a committee for further study of the matter. This committee would have to study especially the points in discussion at Synod.

This last proposal, however, was not discussed anymore, because it soon was withdrawn. Synod, then, had the choice between the two other proposals that were left. With a vote of 24 to 12 Synod adopted the proposal of the Synod-Committee. By that, it was decided on the basis of a number of judgments that, with regard to the participation of the sisters of the congregation in the election of office-bearers, the rule must not be changed which was maintained among others by the General Synod of Arnhem, 1930.

### THE GAIN OF GRONINGEN-ZUID

A decision was made in a matter which had the attention of the churches for many years. Some will be happy with this decision, others will be disappointed, and again others will be of the opinion that the time was not yet ripe for a decision in either direction. But we can all be happy with the profit of the discussions at the Synod. Some of the points of benefit I will mention.

1. We have learned to see that the election, as the means through which the calling-to-office-from-the-side-of-God comes to the brother, contains much more than only the voting by the congregation. This voting can even be missed without diminishing the legality of the election by the church, of which Article 31, Belgic Confession, speaks.

2. The cooperation of the congregation contains also much more than the voting. The part of the sisters in the election is much greater than they often realize themselves. Not only is there the "submitting of names," and being involved in the approbation of those chosen, but also the praying along with the other members, at home and in the worship services, and in the election meeting.

3. The election of office-bearers concerns the whole congregation under the leadership of the Consistory. That our election meetings are meetings of the "Consistory with the communicant male members" is an enormous impoverishment of this part of the legal election in the church. They have to be congregational meetings, whereby the sisters of the congregation

and the so-called "baptized-members" not just graciously are allowed to be present, but where they, if at all possible, ought to be present. Our election meetings now sometimes look more like a conclave (election of a new pope) of the Consistory with the male members who made profession of faith, than like a congregational meeting.

4. We saw our eyes opened more again for the great wonder that through the service of the congregation the Lord wants to call human beings to office, and that He in that way wants to give office-bearers to His congregation. But He also wants us to pray to Him for the gifts which He promised. That is why in the churches of the Reformation prayer had such an important place in the election of office-bearers. But is for us the election not often hardly more than a mere administrative matter?

5. We have learned to understand that it is not right to speak of voting *rights*, or choosing *rights*. In the church it is not a matter of *our* rights. The matter is not that we have something to say. Also in this work of voting/choosing, those who have a task here are called to serve the Lord Jesus Christ and His congregation.

If the above-expressed insights become alive in the churches and begin to dominate the practice of the election of office-bearers, then there is great profit for the church, including the sisters — a much greater profit than perhaps would have been the case if the number of voters in the church would have been doubled, if the sisters had received the right to vote.

As for the last remark of the Rev. A. P. van Dijk, one could ask the question: how will the insights gained in this matter reach the congregations? Through the writing of an article like he did? But this article is only a short summary. One could say that it is sometimes regrettable that a formal, concisely-worded decision is inserted in the Acts of a synod, without the good, high calibre, educational discussion on the matter which is also helpful in further discussions. But that is not what the Acts are for. Besides, the Acts would become ten times thicker than they are already. We do not ask for this. A summary of the discussion has appeared in *Nederlands Dagblad*. In these articles we were informed, e.g., that one of the authors of the majority report to the synod, R4, and thus in favour of recognizing the right of the sisters to vote, nevertheless advised that the churches were not ripe yet for such a step, and therefore should not take it. That, I think, was a wise word.

I have taken over this article of the Rev. van Dijk here, not least of all because of the last part. I am of the opin-

ion that also we in Canada can learn and profit from some more and better insight in what election in and by the congregation is. I also wonder in what direction the report of our committee will go. And I agree fully with what is said above under point 3 in particular. Let the election again become a matter of the whole congregation, even if only a part does the voting.

With respect to what is said under 2, I am inclined to say: if the sisters are involved in the first part of the election procedure, the submitting of names, and if they also have a calling in the second last part of the election, namely, the approbation, is it, then, correct to exclude the sisters from the voting part? Some strongly stressed the difference between the voting and the approbation. That was done already by the Rev. K.J. Kapteijn, in his brochure printed in 1918: *The Question: "Women's Voting Rights — Also in the Church?" Answered in the Negative Over Against the Rev. C. Lindeboom.* According to him voting is a matter of authority, but approbation is not. Opinions still differ.

If granting — or to say it in this way: recognizing — the right to vote to the sisters in the churches would mean great disunity, or if it would mean a step into the direction of women in office, I think that all our sisters would agree with me: then we would rather not have this right: the unity and preservation of the churches in the right Scriptural track has preference above the recognition of a right to vote. It is important, indeed, to keep in mind that in the church it is not a matter of *our* rights, but of serving God and His church in the best way we can, also with the denial of what we see as our right.

There is one thing which I would like to point out here yet. In connection with the matter of the right of the sisters to vote, as well as in the matter of women's right to be office-bearers, one can read that these are often defended and promoted on the basis of the common office of all believers. It is said that the right to vote as well as the right to be chosen is included in that general office of all believers, and that the special office in the church *comes up out of* that general office of all believers.

Here I disagree. Although we could say that the voting belongs to the office of all believers (which some deny, since they see it as a matter of authority), we should not say that the

*special office* comes up out of that general office of all believers. It is true, the *office-bearer* comes from the congregation of believers, but the *office* comes from Christ Jesus. *He* is the great Office-bearer. He appointed the apostles in their apostolic office. And through His apostles He instituted the special offices in the congregations. It is also for that reason that we cannot conclude from the general office of all believers the *right* (!) also of the sisters in the church as being eligible for the special offices.

J. GEERTSEMA

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# Ministers' Workshop

On June 5, 1978, ministers, professors, and students met together in the college building for a workshop. Our convener, Rev. M. Werkman, opened the meeting with Scripture reading and prayer. He extended a hearty welcome to all the brothers who had left their flocks for a day in order to be refreshed and renewed in their zeal to tend Christ's flocks.

As you may remember, for the winter workshop Rev. J. Geertsema was scheduled to speak to us but bad weather forced him back to Chatham. Therefore, his speech entitled, "The Sermon on the Mount and the Covenant," was awaited eagerly.

We dealt with one speech during the entire workshop to allow full justice to be done to the presentation. Hopefully the ministers will soon receive a written copy of the speech in their new ministerial paper, *Koinonia*. However, not all are ministers thankfully, and we shall therefore try to condense the substantial paper of Rev. J. Geertsema.

Various interpretations of the Sermon on the Mount circulate. One sees it as a set of rules to be kept in order to be saved. Another regards it as a number of ideals which cannot be kept and only incite us to seek Christ's righteousness. C. Vonk regards the Old Testament as completely abolished. By placing Moses over against Christ, he pleads for the removal of the words of the covenant. Instead, let us read an admonition from Paul, in our worship services, he argues. He thus has his own interpretation of this sermon. A commentator as Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones sees no dominant structure in this sermon.

Rev. J. Geertsema does see a definite covenantal structure in this sermon. Matthew 5-7 is a unity, one sermon. You may divide it as follows: 1. The Beatitudes 5:3-12; 2. About salt and light 5:13-16; 3. Christ's relation to the law 5:17-48; 4. Further practical explanations of this righteousness 6:1-7:23; 5. Conclusion and application 7:24-27. Thus you may divide it into three basic parts (trust a Reformed minister to find three points in a sermon!): 1. Beatitudes, 2. Body of commandments outlining the way of righteousness, 3. Conclusion.

To document how this illustrates the covenantal structure of the sermon, our speaker elaborated on the structure of the covenant which God made with Israel. Also, he noted the essence of the covenant to be formulated as "I am the LORD your God." In this covenant Rev. J. Geertsema sees three major parts: 1. God's promises (of redemption, etc.); 2. The obligations of faith by Israel; 3. The Sanctions. These three parts correspond to the three parts of the sermon on the mount.

After this our speaker toured the whole sermon and gave overview comments as he went along. The conclusion was that Jesus structured the sermon on the mount according to the set-up of the covenant.

In the discussion our speaker received praise for stressing the covenantal approach of our Lord who based his teachings firmly on the covenants which God had cut with Noah, Abraham and which He established with Israel. However, the majority of questions and comments were directed against the rigid framework which the "merciless" questioners felt was super-

imposed on the Sermon on the Mount. They all agreed that everything Jesus said was covenantal. Yet they felt the speaker's interpretation verged on being artificial. The antithetical nature of Jesus' words (against the false judaistic approach of the scribes who followed the "men of old") must not be easily overlooked.

In spite of these ministerial questions, everyone's attention was focused on an important and popular portion of Scripture which is often badly abused today. It was invigorating to delve into Christ's teachings and to remember their covenantal basis.

At four o'clock we departed. The next workshop will be held on January 8, 1979, D.V. The topics will be "The Value of Canonics for Preaching" by Rev. G. Van Dooren and "The Radical Commandments in the Sermon on the Mount" by Prof. L. Selles. It promises to be another instructive and refreshing workshop.

In case you thought that we did not take a break from our vigorous discussion, you are mistaken. We enjoyed a delicious lunch served by the wives of the professors. Instead of telling you a few quips and quotes from the table talk, allow me to print one of the poems we received (we receive them periodically from a well-meaning colleague who has a fatherly concern for us all).

## *Poem for an Important Man*

Sometimes, when you're feeling important, —  
Sometimes, when your age is in bloom —  
Sometimes when you take it for granted  
You're the best-qualified in the room;  
Sometimes, when you feel that *your* going  
Would leave an unfillable role, —  
Just follow this simple instruction  
And see how it humbles your soul:

Take a bucket and fill it with water,  
Put your hand in it up to the wrist —  
Pull it out, — and the hole that's remaining  
Is a measure of how you'll be missed!  
You may splash all you please  
when you enter;  
You can stir up the water galore, —  
But stop! and you'll find in a minute  
That it looks quite the same as before.

The moral in this quaint example  
Is: "Do just the best you can,  
Be proud of yourself, but remember:  
There is no indispensable man!"

Author Remains Unknown

For the Workshop,  
W. HUIZINGA



# There is Still Lots of Work to be Done!

The following information has been derived from Focus, the Zurich Life Agents' Magazine.

In the August 3 issue of *Clarion* you could read an article about the work and plans of CRWRF. Some people seem to assume that this work is no longer needed — I will return to that.

But first of all, I received a letter from the Y.P.S. in Ontario requesting me to come and tell them something about this Fund and its meaning, because they had only a very vague idea about it. I can understand that, because when CRWRF started, most of these young people were just children. So, at their annual convention I told something about the origin and the work of the Fund and showed some slides.

Well then, how did it start? Quite simply (I am not supposed to mention names, but for the "spiritual father" of CRWRF I make an exception: brother John VanderBoom, Sr. in Burlington), because some of our people read about the work of various organizations which tried to help people around the world in hunger and poverty, at the same time trying to make them understand that this is done out of love for Christ, for His sake. Since practically all those organizations were church-affiliated, we had to set up our own organization. And that was CRWRF!

Perhaps someone will say, "Okay, but is that still needed?"

Well, did you not see the emblem which goes with CRWRF? A cross in a heart, a circle symbolizing the *whole world and giving hands*. May I repeat what I wrote in one of our Newsletters?

"Many people think that the recent hunger crisis is over. They are totally wrong. The world hunger crisis has not gone away. It has simply been dropped from the headlines. To be sure, there have been reports of improved productions of crops in several parts of the world. But one good year does not mean the end of generations of malnutrition! There are still 15,000 persons dying each DAY from the effects of hunger and food shortage. There is still a minimum of 460 MILLION people in the world who are severely malnourished, among them roughly 100 MILLION children under the age of five.

"The spectre of hunger has not been removed, nor is it likely to be eliminated for some years to come. For

'hunger' is not a single thing which can be solved with one good harvest or one generous foreign aid program. Bringing food to the poorest and hungriest in our world takes more than simply growing more crops. It demands international cooperation and farsighted leadership. Above all, it takes people who are concerned and who will not give up when they find out that the war on hunger is a long, hard struggle."

When we know this, what is the Christian's duty who by the grace of God may live in a country of abundance? Well, what does the Bible say about riches and poverty? One of the most striking features of the Bible's dealing with wealth and poverty is its consistent bias *in favour of the poor*. The Lord does not *want* poverty among His people; they belong to the weak ones whom He *protects*, in strong contrast with the heathen nations around Canaan. To mention only one law: every seventh year, creditors were required to *release* borrowers from their debts (Deuteronomy 15:1-4). In short, the whole system of life for Israel was set up to guard against excessive acquisition of wealth and to insure provision for God's special charges, the widow (that is, the woman who had lost her *protector*, her husband) who in heathen countries often had to take to prostitution to stay alive and to provide for her children; the orphans; the poor and the needy. What was the Lord Jesus' attitude towards the poor? Think only of His words in Matthew 26:11: "For you have always the poor with you." Think of John's words: "If anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?" Remember the flaming words of James about the man who says to his ill-clad and hungry brother, "Go in peace and be warmed and filled."

For this reason the work of CRWRF is still needed, perhaps even more than ever before. Think of the crowds who flee to Kenya because of the oppression and blood-lust of Idi Amin. Think of the need in the former Congo (Zaire) stricken by tribal wars and genocide. Think of the thousands who lost their homes in the recent flooding in India. We MUST continue

our work, although, of course, we can not take care of the whole world. But for every ONE man, woman, or child that we may help, for every ONE soul that looks in thankfulness to God, the angels in heaven sing their praise. Let us act as true followers of Him Who gave His life for every ONE person who believes in Him.

REV. A.B. ROUKEMA



Miss Park, Yun Ji



Miss Kim, Sung Bok

## PROJECT: MEDICAL AID TO THE SLUMS IN PUSAN, KOREA

The director of the Gospel Hospital in Pusan has written that plans to start a new Health Care Unit in the slums of Pusan are underway. The two nurses who will be working at the Unit have been picked. They are Miss Park, Yun Ji and Miss Kim, Sung Bok. Miss Park, Yun Ji is thirty-nine years old and is married to Mr. Lee, Jong Han. (According to traditional Korean custom women retain their maiden name when they marry, but the children of the marriage take their father's last name.) She has her basic nurse's training, along with special training as mid-wife. She has experience in providing pre-natal and post-natal care to mother and child besides being able to deliver babies. At present she is employed as Managing Director of the Nurses' Association in Pusan.

Miss Kim, Sung Bok, who will work as assistant to Miss Park, Yun Ji, is thirty years old and graduated from Nursing School in 1973. She has experience in working at a Health Care Unit on Cheju Island.

The director of the Gospel Hospital wrote that they hope to open the new Unit in October. Since we have been sending \$600 support since May, they have saved up \$3000 to help cover the initial cost of \$5000 for opening the Unit. Once the Unit is open the \$600 CRWRF sends every month will cover the running costs of the Unit.

# King Solomon's Molten Sea 8

## VIII Common or Temple Cubit?

8.1 So far it has been assumed without proof that the seven handbreadths temple cubit was used for the Molten Sea. As explained before, the Hebrew cubit had the same subdivisions as the Egyptian cubit, i.e. 7 or 6 handbreadths and 28 or 24 fingers. In Figure 8.1 a Royal Egyptian Cubit is shown. This particular cubit rod is 20.67 inches (525 mm) long. Other cubit rods recovered from Egyptian ruins sometimes vary in length by a few millimetres. For our use we will adopt the convenient, round values of 525 mm (20.67 inches) for the royal cubit and 450 mm (17.72 inches) for the common cubit. In the literature slightly different lengths may be found.<sup>1 2</sup> It is quite possible that the Hebrews adopted the Egyptian linear measures with a small decrease in length (518 and 444 mm). The two systems probably have a much older, common origin as the dimensions of Noah's Ark are given in cubits (Genesis 6:5).

### 8.2 COMMON CUBIT CALCULATIONS OF THE MOLTEN SEA

The names given to the two cubits clearly show their intended use. It is known that the temple or royal or long cubit was mainly used for temples, palaces, etc., and the common or short cubit for general purposes. Some authors, however, did use the common cubit in their calculations of the Molten Sea. For instance, R.B.Y. Scott, in an

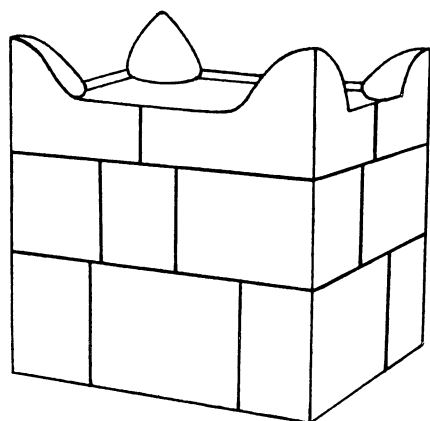


Fig. 8-2 Beersheba-type horned altar.

article in *The Biblical Archaeologist*, used his computations to support a length of 17.51 inches (444.8 mm) for the cubit.<sup>3</sup> He reasoned as follows: "If the ancient scribe used by mistake the formula for the capacity of a sphere instead of that of a hemisphere (which is quite possible) the capacity of 1000 baths = 22,000 litres corresponds to a cubit of 17.51 inches." In all fairness, it should be mentioned that Scott did omit this analysis from the revised article in *The Biblical Archaeologist Reader*.<sup>4</sup> Scott's computation is referred to in *The New Bible Dictionary*. It is stated there, as a fact(!), that the capacity of the "bronze laver" (i.e. the Molten Sea) was 1000 baths, in direct conflict with the Biblical record.<sup>5</sup> Was the writer of the article on "Weights and Measures" caught off-guard? Other authors also have used the short cubit in their calculations. Therefore it will be shown that support for use of the temple cubit can be found in Scripture and otherwise. In a later article some ancient and modern descriptions and calculations of the sea will be analyzed.

### 8.3 SCRIPTURAL EVIDENCE FOR THE TEMPLE CUBIT

The only Old Testament book that directly mentions the seven hands cubit is Ezekiel. In Ezekiel 40:5 we read about a six-cubits-long measuring rod, each cubit having a length of a "cubit and a hand breadth." This cubit is the common cubit of 6 handbreadths with one handbreadth added to make a 7-handbreadths-long temple cubit. (Note that the measuring rod was  $6 \times 7 = 42$  handbreadths and therefore its length could be taken as 6 temple cubits or 7 common cubits.) In II Chronicles 3:3 the cubit used for the temple of Solomon is mentioned. It was the cubit "after the first measure" (KJV) or the "old standard" (RSV, NASB). The Hebrew word for "first" is RISHON but in many cases RISHON is translated as "former." There can be hardly any doubt that the first or former cubit was the one mentioned in the description of the tabernacle. But how long was this "first or former" cubit? Nowhere in the books of Moses do we find the length in handbreadths mentioned, but there

are a few indications that the cubit of 7 hands was used. Another indication of the importance of the number 7 is its frequent use in the ceremonies of the tabernacle and otherwise in the books of Moses. Seven days one finds many times, but also seven sabbaths, seven weeks, seven lamps, and the seven times sprinkling of blood or oil. It shows that seven was a sacred number, and there is every reason to believe that the seven-hands cubit was used in the dimensioning of the tabernacle and its sacred utensils and furnishings. A few calculations will shed more light on this.

### 8.4 FURTHER INDICATIONS FOR THE USE OF THE TEMPLE CUBIT

In Exodus 26 and 36 we find the description of the curtains made to cover the tabernacle. First, ten curtains are described; each was 28 cubits long and 4 cubits wide. They were joined together to form two sets of five curtains, each set measuring 28 by 20 cubits. Both sets were provided with 50 loops along a 28 cubit side to connect them together to form the inside cover for the tabernacle; 40 cubits long and 28 cubits wide. Eleven more curtains, made for an outside cover, were 30 by 4 cubits each. These were also joined together to form two sets, one of six curtains measuring 30 by 24 cubits and the other of five curtains measuring 30 by 20 cubits. Again, they had to be provided with 50 loops, now on a 30 cubit edge, to connect the two sets together. The outside cover therefore measured 44 by 30 cubits. It is logical to assume that the loops would be evenly distributed along the length of the sets and also that the loops started at the corners to prevent loose-hanging ends. This calls for 49 equal spaces along the edges to be connected together. It would now be possible to calculate the distance in fingers between the loops if we knew the length of the cubit in fingers. Let us compute this distance with both cubits, the 28-finger temple cubit and the 24-finger common cubit, for both tabernacle covers. A 28 by 20 cubits curtain-set was either  $28 \times 28 = 784$  fi. or  $28 \times 24 = 672$  fi. long. Because there were 49 spaces between the 50 loops, we divide both lengths by 49 and find for each space:

(i) For the temple cubit:

$$784/49 = 16 \text{ fingers per space;}$$

(ii) For the common cubit:

$$672/49 = 13 \frac{5}{7} \text{ fingers per space.}$$

The 30 by 24 and the 30 by 20 cubits

# THE ROYAL EGYPTIAN CUBIT

2 HALF-CUBITS = 4 SPANS (OF 7 DIGITS) = 7 HANDS (OF 4 DIGITS)

$$\text{III} = 1/14$$

ONE SPAN • 7 DIGITS

ONE HAND • 4 DIGITS

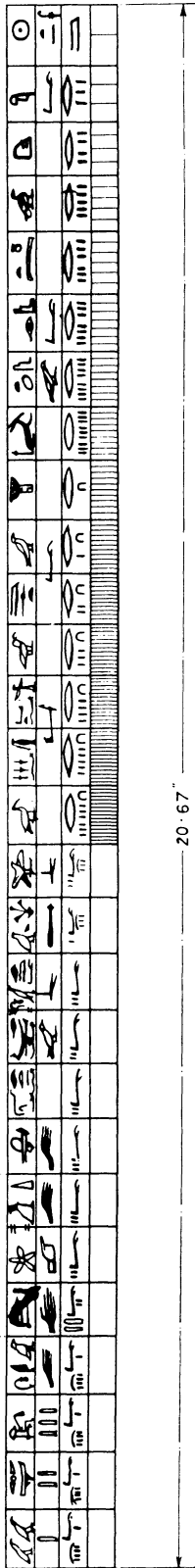


Fig. 8.1 Egyptian cubit of seven hand-breadths. (Courtesy Science Museum, London, England.)  
According to the Science Museum description, this was the "Royal Egyptian Cubit of

Amenophis I (Amenhetep I) 1559-1539 B.C." Fifteen of its 28-finger (or digit) divisions are subdivided from half a finger down to 1/16 of a finger. Every divided finger division is marked with its unit fraction. The symbols are a vertical stroke for a unit and an inverted U for ten. Combinations of these two symbols were used for the numbers 3 through 16 on the cubit rod. The pointed ovals above the rows of symbols indicate that unit fractions are meant instead of whole numbers. The only exception to this scheme is 1/2, which had its own special symbol, as can be seen above the first finger at the right hand side. As an example, the Egyptian notation for 1/14 is shown separately in the drawing.

curtain-sets were either 840 or 720 fi. long, depending on the cubit used. As above, it is a simple matter to compute the distances between loops and we find:

- (iii) For the temple cubit:  
840/49 = 17 1/7 fingers per space;
- (iv) For the common cubit:  
720/49 = 14 34/49 fingers per space.

As can be readily seen, there would be a practical difficulty with the common cubit in measuring off the spaces between the loops on the 30 cubits long curtain-sets. To divide a finger of 18.5 mm into 49 parts would necessitate a distance between marks on a measuring rod of 18.5/49 = 0.38 mm (0.015 or just under 1/64 inch). No such precision was achieved in ancient times as far as known today. As was previously mentioned in Section 5.1, the Egyptians divided the finger measure into a maximum of 16 parts. This is shown in Figure 8.1. Their finger was 525/28 = 18.75 mm or 0.738 inches long and 1/16 part of this is a little less than 1.2 mm (about 3/64 inches). One-sixteenth part of the Hebrew finger measure of 18.5 mm or 0.729 inches (Table 3.2) is also a little less than 1.2 mm. Assuming again that the Hebrew cubit rod had the same subdivisions as its Egyptian counterpart, we may conclude that 1/7 of a finger could be measured but not a 49th part as would be required if the common cubit had been used for the measurements of the curtains. This is a strong indication that indeed the long or temple cubit was used for the tabernacle. But can the assumption be justified that the Hebrew cubit rod was as good a measuring instrument as the one used by the Egyptians? We will turn to the Scriptures and try to find an answer to this question.

## 8.5 SKILLS AND CRAFTS IN THE DESERT

The story of the building of the

tabernacle clearly shows that first class workmanship was required but also that several men and women were equipped with skills adequate for the work that had to be done. And did not Moses have to oversee it? (Exodus 25:9, 40 and Hebrews 8:3). There is no reason to doubt that he was capable of doing it because he was educated "in all the wisdom of the Egyptians" (Acts 7:22). Bezaleel, the leader of the work, was a gifted man with many skills. Aholiab, his assistant, was an engraver and both men had to teach others. The LORD had filled them with His Spirit and granted them "ability, intelligence, knowledge, and craftsmanship" (Exodus 35:30, RSV; see also Exodus 38:21-31 and 39:43). In Exodus 38:21 we read that Ithamar, the son of Aaron, and his helpers had to "count" it all (KJV, RSV) or "number" it (NASB). The Hebrew word used is PAQAD which Holladay's Hebrew Dictionary translates as "be determined, counted" with reference to Exodus 38:21. In my opinion, "be determined" is the best translation. The context (Exodus 38:21-31) clearly shows that it was not a case of simply numbering the items made by the people. It involved calculations and tabulations and probably also weighing and measuring. The amounts of metal used were carefully recorded and expressed in talents and shekels. There is a nice problem in arithmetic hidden in this passage. Readers will be able to figure out how many shekels made up one talent.

What is recorded in these chapters of Exodus leaves no doubt that the craftsmanship must have been excellent in every respect. This is especially obvious in Exodus 38:27 where we are told that a "socket" for a "pillar" had to be cast from one talent of silver. A casting mould would have to be accurate to obtain such a precisely specified weight. And has the reader ever paused to consider the fairly involved calculations needed to design a mould accurate enough to produce a "socket" weighing one talent and of the right size to fit a "pillar"? The same care and precision were required for the "lamp-stand" and its utensils which had to be made from one talent of gold (Exodus 37:24). All this points to a mature System of Measures and Weights for that age. Consequently, reasonably accurate balances and weights, measuring rods, and volumetric standards must have been available to the craftsmen who did the work. We do not have to assume that these instruments and the

other tools they used were all made by the craftsmen themselves. The Israelites had been in Egypt a long time, and at least some of the people must have received a training and possessed the tools of their trade when they left Egypt (compare Exodus 16:18, 16:36, 20:25, and 32:4). It was only during the last part of their sojourn that they were enslaved by the Egyptians. Bezaleel's specific trade is not mentioned, but Aholiab was an engraver as we have seen above. There is no reason to think that these men were suddenly endowed by the Lord with the required skills without any previous training and experience. In Exodus 31:6 we read that God said to Moses: "... and in the hearts of all who are skillful I have put skill that they may make all that I have commanded you" (NASB). Calvin comments on this as follows:

"God had already conferred acuteness and intelligence on the artificers in question; yet their dexterity was only, as it were, the seed; and He now promises that He will give them more than had previously appeared." (Translation of John Calvin's Commentary on the Pentateuch by the Calvin Translation Society.)

It has been argued above that a mature System of Measures and Weights would be required to carry out the building of the tabernacle and its implements. With the skills described previously, readily available, there would be no difficulty in setting up such a system. Some Egyptian Measures and Weights probably served as prototypes, but there is also a Sumerian/Babylonian influence as we have seen in Section 7.8. We may conclude that all required measuring and weighing could be done with adequate precision and that measuring 1/7 and even 1/16 part of a finger would not be a problem.

## 8.6 ALTAR DIMENSIONS

In Exodus 27:1-8, the Lord commanded Moses to make an altar; 5 cubits long and 5 cubits wide with a height of 3 cubits and horns on its four corners. On the strength of the evidence presented in Sections 8.3 and 8.4, we will assume that the dimensions of the altar of the tabernacle were expressed in temple cubits. This altar, made by Bezaleel, was still in use at the beginning of the reign of Solomon (II Chronicles 1:5, 6). In Ezekiel 41:22 an altar is described that also had a height of 3 cubits. Because the 7-hand cubit was used for the temple of Ezekiel (Ezekiel 40:5, 43:13), the dimensions of

this altar must also have been measured in temple cubits.

Archaeology has provided some additional evidence for the dimensioning of altars in temple cubits. The late Yohanan Aharoni of Tel Aviv University discovered an altar at Arad which had the same dimensions as the altar of the tabernacle.<sup>7</sup> Later he found stones belonging to a horned altar in the excavations at Beersheba. Enough stones were recovered to permit reconstruction. The reconstructed altar was 157 cm high, measured to the top of the horns, but the length and the width could not be determined due to missing stones. Although the altar had to be reconstructed from scattered stones, Aharoni felt sure that the height was 157 cm because the successive layers of stones had different heights.<sup>7</sup> Figure 8.2 is a restoration in the form of a line drawing of the type of altar found at Beersheba. (A missing horn, on the rear at the left hand side, has been restored in the drawing.) Assuming that the Beersheba altar was designed to be 3 temple cubits high, this cubit would have a length of:  $157/3 = 52.3$  cm (20.6 inches). This is very close to the 51.8 cm cubit listed in Table 3.2 (Section 3.8). If Aharoni was right in his assumptions, these investigations provide us with some additional proof that, in general, altars were measured in temple cubits. The altar of Beersheba was illegal, and, according to Aharoni, it was destroyed by King Hezekiah (II Kings 18:4, 22). It might appear, therefore, that proof for the height of the official altars of the Lord, obtained this way, is invalid. But, would not the people who set up the illegal altars of the "high places" be inclined to give them the height and appearance of the official altars? That way they would most likely be more acceptable to the Judaeans living nearby.

There are some interesting further developments regarding the location and reconstruction of the Beersheba altar. Yigael Yadin, another well-known Israeli archaeologist, made an independent investigation. He claims to have discovered that the high place (Hebrew: BAMAH) of Beersheba, where the altar once stood, was located to the left of the city gate (II Kings 23:8). Yadin therefore believes that the altar was destroyed by King Josiah, not only on the ground of II Kings 23:8, but also on the basis of archaeological dating.<sup>8</sup> A co-worker of the late Yohanan Aharoni, Anson F.

Rainey, disagrees and defends Aharoni's view that King Hezekiah destroyed this altar and that archaeological dating to the time of Hezekiah is correct. He feels that II Kings 23:8 refers to one of the gates of Jerusalem.<sup>9</sup> Personally, I feel attracted to the views of Professor Yadin based on II Kings 23:8, but because my knowledge of Hebrew is extremely limited, I am unable to present an independent opinion. Neither can I judge the relative merits of the two different archaeological datings. However, Rainey, who teaches at Tel Aviv University, gives some further details regarding the reconstruction of the Beersheba altar which are of interest to us. He mentions that more stones of the altar were found later and that, as presently reconstructed, the altar is 1.55 metres square (3 cubits) and also 3 cubits high. If these are the true dimensions of the altar, one cubit would be  $155/3 = 51.7$  cm long. This is very close to the 51.8 cm length we have adopted earlier for the temple cubit.

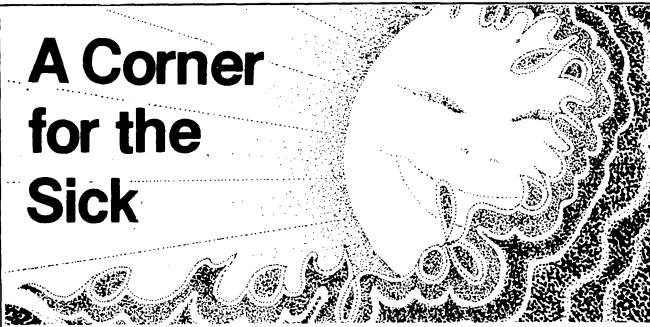
## 8.7 EXACT COMMON CUBIT CALCULATION OF THE SEA

In Section 3.2 we calculated the volume of the Molten Sea, assuming use of the 7-hands temple cubit, and found it to be 328 cubic (temple)cubits. If the 6-hands-long common cubit is substituted in the computations of Section 3.2, the thickness  $t$  (one hand-breadth) must be changed from 1/7 to 1/6 or 0.167 cubit. Doing this, and as before, using  $\pi = 3.14$  and rounding off all intermediate and final results in the computations to 3 digits, we obtain a volume of 323 cubic (common) cubits. (Slightly different results will be found if the rounding off is left to a calculator.) With the common cubit equal to 44.4 cm or 0.444 m, we obtain a volume of 28.3 cubic metres or 28,300 litres. Dividing 28,300 L by 2000 baths leads to 14.2 L for a bath and dividing by 3000 baths results in 9.43 L per bath instead of the 22.8 L and 15.2 L adopted previously (Section 7.10). This is proof that the common cubit calculation is erroneous as the bath values computed above do not support the roughly 22 L royal bath volumes derived from various sources and summarized in Table 3.1.

## 8.8 CONCLUSIONS

As has been demonstrated, there is a considerable amount of evidence in favour of the use of the temple cubit in the sacred buildings. In the previous

## A Corner for the Sick



“And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.”

Philippians 4:7

We have to understand this verse in relation to the previous verse. If we let God know all that troubles our hearts and mind, in prayer and supplication, not forgetting to give thanks to God, we will receive a peace that is beyond understanding. It will keep our hearts and minds from going astray. We all will have experienced, or will experience sometime, how easy it is to stray away from God mentally. If we experience frustrations or worries, the first inclination of our hearts is to blame God and our neighbour. When this happens we may become so wrapped up in our frustrations that we become prey to such sins as hatred, envy, etc., thereby grieving God and causing harm to our neighbour, but we hurt ourselves most of all. For when hatred and resentment rule our minds, we are blinded for the needs of others and we only see the injustices done to ourselves. The danger of becoming bitter and pitying ourselves is common to everyone! We have to arm ourselves against such sins, in order

that we do not become fruitless in God's Kingdom. Paul in his letter to the Philippians urges the believers to turn to God with all their difficulties. Let God know all that troubles you and He will keep your hearts and minds. Paul also urges them to think about these things in verse 8: “Whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.” Paul learned the secret of contentment! His strength is shown in what he confesses in verse 13: “I can do all things in Him who strengthens me.” Compare with II Corinthians 12:10 and II Corinthians 4:7. Our strength is in the Lord. Read with me: Ephesians 5:10-19.

Jack Dieleman's mother sent a thank you note to tell everyone who sent Jack a card how much it was appreciated. He received many! Quoting what he himself said: “I got a whole bunch of cards from all over Canada, the States, and Australia.” Thank you everyone!

Mrs. Grace Visscher phoned me to convey her thanks to all who sent her a card. She was very surprised also by all the attention. She received cards even from Australia! She is doing very well; she is home again from the hospital and hopes her health will remain. Thank you brothers and sisters!

If there are any sick or lonely brothers or sisters, please send in their name for publication (with permission of the person involved), and do not forget our special calendar children.

Send your requests to:

**Mrs. J.K. Riemersma**

380 St. Andrew Street E., Fergus, Ontario N1M 1R1

### KING SOLOMON'S MOLTEN SEA — Continued.

section it has also been shown that volume calculations of the Molten Sea by means of the common cubit lead to bath volumes that are too low. We may conclude therefore that use of the common cubit for the calculation of the Molten Sea is unwarranted and that the temple cubit should be used. A.Z.

#### NOTE ON ARTICLE VII — TWO- OR THREE THOUSAND BATHS OR BOTH?

Readers may have wondered about the sudden appearance of the cursive *ℓ* as the symbol for the litre in Article VII. This was caused by a misunderstanding. It should only have been used in Section 7.2 for the capacity designation of the Canadian 3 quart milkbag, i.e. 3 quarts - 3 pintes - 3.41 *ℓ*. The cursive *ℓ* has been replaced by capital letter L and is being phased out at present. The following revision (No. 1, May 1977) to the Canadian Metric Practice Guide; CAN 3-Z234. 1-76, Table 6, Note (e), published by the Canadian Standards Association (CSA), explains the situation:

*The international symbol for the litre is the upright letter L. However, this may be confused with the number one (1). In Canada, the cursive upright ℓ or the full word "litre" has been used to avoid that confusion. A number of countries are now adopting the upper case L as the preferred symbol for the litre, both when used alone and with a prefix, e.g. mL. Note that the symbols l and ℓ will still be encountered, perhaps for some years. The ℓ should be phased out as opportunity permits and should not be used after December 1980.*

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# Opening — Prof. Dr. K. Schilder American Reformed School

IN GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN



The members and guests of the American Reformed School Association assembled in front of the school building.

On a beautiful, warm Saturday afternoon on September 9, 1978, a joyous occasion, namely, the official opening ceremonies of the Prof. Dr. K. Schilder American Reformed School, took place in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The brothers and sisters of our sister church in Grand Rapids had come together with various guests from Holland and Canada officially to open the newly starting, two-classroom, Reformed Elementary School in that city. Although the children had started classes already on Wednesday, September 6, the official opening was on the Saturday following in order that all of the members could attend the ceremonies. There was a tremendous turn-out; almost all of the members of the church, young and old, participated in the festivities. After receiving a glass of punch, the group gathered in front of the new school building and the ceremonies were begun by the singing of Psalm 105, stanzas 1 and 3. After this, Dr. W. Meester, President of the American Reformed School Association, read from Scripture Proverbs 3:5-18, after which he led in prayer. The president spoke a word of welcome to everyone present, particularly to those who had

come from far, The Netherlands and Canada. He indicated that the present ceremony reminded him of the groundbreaking ceremonies at the same location two years ago and expressed gra-

titude to God, the Giver of all, Who has made it possible after so many years that the Reformed School in Grand Rapids has now become a reality. He spoke briefly about the *past*, the *present*, and the *future* of the School Society. With regard to the *past*, he reminisced about the historical events that took place during the past twenty-five years of the existence of the society and gratefully acknowledged the many hours of work, the donations, and the perseverance of the members to go on in the faith to come to this point where we now finally may live up to the promise we gave at the time of the baptism of our children, namely, to cause our children to be instructed in the doctrines of the church. In addition to acknowledging the work of the ladies' auxiliary, he expressed a great gratitude to the brothers and sisters, both in The Netherlands and in Canada, for their prayers and financial assistance in the fund drives undertaken for the Dr. K. Schilder School during the past year. He mentioned that more than \$5,000 was received from Canada and in excess of \$40,000 from The Netherlands. Only with these gifts was it possible to complete the work on the school building and to furnish it properly for the start of the school year. He alluded to the *present* by quoting I Samuel 7:12 "Ebenezer: hitherto the Lord has helped us." The Lord has provided the school building, the books, the teachers, and the children. Twenty-



Br. N. Bronsema (left) ready to cut the ribbon in front of the doors of the new school building. Br. W. Meester (right) and others shown on the picture anxiously awaiting for the cutting of the ribbon.

three children were enrolled in nine grades. Mr. William Den Hollander, the principal, arrived earlier in the summer from Smithers and set up the organization and the curriculum of the school. Mrs. A. Sieber from Smithers, the lower-grades teacher, arrived during the last week of August. Indeed, the Lord has helped us thus far. This does not mean that all problems have been solved and that no other problems may arise, but, if we go on in obedience to the Lord, He will lead us and continue to help us. And this brings us to the *future*. Although only God knows what is in store for us in the future, we also know that He has a purpose and that we must go on in faith and in the fear of the Lord which is the beginning of all knowledge (Proverbs 1:7a). In this fear, we will teach our children in the sure knowledge that if God is on our side, who can then be against us.

After these words by the President, the American flag was raised on a 26 ft. flagpole in front of the school building. During the flag-raising, the American National Anthem, The Star-Spangled Banner, was sung. Following this, one of the older brethren, Mr. N. Bronsema, was asked to cut the ribbon in front of the doors to the school building. Following a short speech by Br. Bronsema, he cut the ribbon and the doors of the school were opened. The President of the School Society invited everyone to enter the building and to reassemble in one of the classrooms where Mr. William Den Hollander, the Principal of the school, and Rev. P. Kingma, Minister of the American Reformed Church, addressed those present. Following this, on behalf of the Ladies' Society, Sr. A. VanderSluis presented a gift of \$1400 to be used by the



Br. W. Den Hollander, Principal, addressing the group in one of the classrooms.

Board for the acquisition of a future school bus and, at the same time, presented a small yellow toy bus which symbolically represents the wish of the Ladies' Society which saved for almost twenty-five years to accumulate the amount of money presented for this purpose. The President gratefully acknowledged this gift. Br. T. Ludwig of Hamilton congratulated the School Society, on behalf of the brothers and sisters of Hamilton as well as of Smithers, with the opening of the Prof. Dr. K. Schilder School and offered the greetings of the brothers and sisters from these congregations in Canada and expressed the hope that the Lord may bless the efforts undertaken in Grand Rapids. Following the singing of Hymn

62, stanzas 1, 2, and 3 from the *Book of Praise*, Rev. Kingma closed in prayer. On exiting the school building, the children assembled in the hallway underneath a text written on the wall in large letters: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," and sang Psalm 111:1 and 4. After this, everyone was invited to a barbeque supper which was served on the lawn of the church. Altogether, it was a wonderful day of communion and fellowship — a day received from the Lord . . . a day not easily forgotten by those who were privileged to attend. To God be all the glory. To Him and to Him alone we owe all our thanks.

A PARTICIPANT

### A PINCH OF SALT



For those who like sweet and sour dishes, this is a quick delight. It is simple but very tasty. Any kind of tuna will do.

#### Chinese Sweet and Sour Tuna

6 slices canned pineapple  
2 tbsp. margarine  
2/3 cup pineapple juice or syrup from above  
2 diced green peppers

2 tbsp. corn starch  
2 tbsp. soya sauce  
2 tbsp. cider vinegar  
2 tbsp. sugar

1 cup chicken bouillon  
2 cans tuna 6 1/2 or 7 oz. each  
1/2 tsp. salt  
1/4 tsp. pepper

Cut pineapple rings into sixths. Sauté over high heat for 5 minutes. Add 1/3 cup of the pineapple juice and the green peppers. Stir well and simmer covered for 10 minutes.

Mix cornstarch and 1/3 cup pineapple juice, add to the pineapple mixture along with soya sauce, vinegar, sugar, and bouillon. Cook over medium heat, until thick and creamy. Then add undrained tuna, salt, and pepper. Heat thoroughly. Serve with rice. Serves 6.

# PRESS RELEASE

of the Regional Synod East of the Canadian and American Reformed Churches, held at London, Ontario, on Wednesday, October 25, 1978.

1. *Opening.* On behalf of the convening Church at Chatham the Rev. J. Geertsema called the meeting to order. Psalm 119:1, 2 is sung and II Peter 1 is read. Then the LORD is asked for a blessing. The brethren delegates are welcomed. The Rev. W.W.J. VanOene is congratulated with the fact that he became grandfather.

2. *Examination of Credentials.* The credentials from the two classes are examined and found in good order. Two primi-delegates — one from each classical region — are replaced by an alternate.

3. *Election of Officers.* As officers are elected the Rev. P. Kingma, chairman; the Rev. Cl. Stam, clerk; and the Rev. J. Geertsema, assessor. The elected officers take their place and the meeting is constituted.

4. *Adoption of the Agenda.* After a proposal from the Church at Toronto re: changing the day of meeting to the Saturday is added, the Agenda is adopted.

## 5. Reports.

A. *Report of the Treasurer.* His report is read. It shows that the income had been \$7,649.29 + \$24.00, while the balance from the previous period was \$2,412.83. This made a total of \$10,086.12. The expenses were \$8,695.94. The new balance was \$1,390.18. Other points from the report were dealt with later on in connection with the proposal of the Church at Lincoln.

B. *Report of the Church at Lincoln, re:* Auditing the books of the treasurer. The books were found in good order and a letter of appreciation will be sent to the treasurer.

C. *Report of the Church at Toronto, re:* the Archives. The consistory of the Church at Toronto asks the question whether an Archives-keeping Church is also an Archives-collecting Church. The Archives are not complete. Regional Synod decides to request the Church at Toronto to make all possible efforts to have all the missing documents, or photocopies of them, in the Archives.

D. *Report of the Church at Brampton, re:* examining the Archives. In this report the delegates are also informed that a number of documents are missing. The Synod takes note of this report.

E. *Report of Deputies ad Art. 49, C.O.* Two deputies report that they attended the examination of candidate J. De Jong, who, with their approval, was admitted to the Ministry in the Church

by the Classis of Ontario South, held in September 1978.

## 6. Proposals.

### A. Proposal from the Church at Toronto,

The proposal is that from now on the Regional Synods be convened on Saturdays, since that would suit a number of possible elder-delegates much better and make more elders available for delegation. It is decided not to adopt this proposal, since

- 1) meeting on Saturday is also an impediment for some elders and ministers;
- 2) Regional Synods can last far into the night; and the distances involved in travelling on Saturday can hinder proper preparation for the Lord's Day.

### B. Proposal from the Church at Lincoln, re: collecting the funds for the Regional Synods. The Church at Lincoln proposes:

1) Regional Synod rescind the decision of Regional Synod Ontario 1976 to collect funds for its own and for General Synod's expenses, but shall depend on the Classis Ontario-South and Classis Ontario-North, who must and will provide the required funds.

2) Regional Synod see to it (a.) that the General Synod shall receive the funds required to cover its expense; and (b.) that the General Synod report to the Regional Synod, how the funds of the Regional Synod were spent.

3) Regional Synod report after all meetings of Regional Synods and General Synods to its Classes, who provide the funds for both major assemblies, so that these Classes may report to its consistories, who provide for all the funds, and who give the major assemblies their existence and purpose.

Regional Synod decides: "It cannot rescind this decision, since this decision pertains to a period of time already past and does not regard a permanent rule."

Regional Synod does decide: "to inform the treasurer in future to request the Regional Synod monies needed, from the classical treasurers."

Regional Synod also decides, in connection with the request of the treasurer: "to ask an amount of \$2.50 per communicant member for the coming year."

7. *Appointments.* Reappointed are the treasurer, the church for auditing the books of the treasurer, the church for the Archives, the church for the checking of the

Archives, and the deputies ad Art. 49, C.O. The Church at Burlington East, the Ebenezer Canadian Reformed Church, is appointed convening Church for the next Regional Synod.

8. *Personal Question Period.* It is decided that all the delegates are to have a copy of the Financial Report of the treasurer at the meeting of the Regional Synod.

9. *Censure ad Art. 43, C.O.* Nobody needs to be censured.

10. *Adoption of the Acts.* The Acts are read and adopted.

11. *Approval of Press Release.* The Press Release is read and approved.

12. *Closing.* The chairman thanks the delegates for their good co-operation; he also speaks a word of thanks to the sisters of the hosting Church at London and to this Church for the much appreciated services. After Psalm 85:3 is sung he closes the meeting with thanksgiving and prayer.

On behalf of the  
Regional Synod Ontario,  
J. GEERTSEMA, Assessor e.t.

## CONSULATE-GENERAL OF THE NETHERLANDS

10 KING STREET E.,  
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PHONE: 364-5443

### OPSPORING ADRESSEN:

BAKKER, Wilhelmus, Lambertus, Antonius, geboren op 13-10-1913 te Hilversum, laastbekende adres Th. de Bockstraat 47 te Amsterdam.

DELOGNE, V.M.E.E., geboren 27 mei 1954 te Bertix (België) laastbekende adres, Van Beierenlaan 73 te Delft.

DE JONG, Jan Johannes, geboren 21 juli 1947 te Zeist.

VAN LOHUIZEN, Hendrik, geboren 23 juni 1937 te Haarlem, laastbekende adres, Kanaalstraat 53 te Amsterdam, naar Canada vertrokken in mei 1977.

DE RUITER, Gerrit, Dirk, geboren 6 november 1913 te Den Ham, naar Canada vertrokken op 3 april 1959 met bestemming Dunnville, Ontario.

STEINBERGER, Jozef, geboren 29 november 1913 te Majdam, Polen laastbekende adres, Kerkstraat 9 te Utrecht, naar Canada vertrokken op 10 april 1954.

VAN WEERD, J.F., laastbekende adres 7415 Rowland Road te Edmonton, Alberta.

VAN WESTERVELD, Hendrikus Lambertus, geboren 15 februari 1943, laastbekende adres, Guido Gazellestraat 13 te Blerick.

WILLEMSE, Theodorus, geboren 15 augustus 1913 te Amsterdam, laastbekende adres 1650 the Queensway te Toronto.

WOLFS, Bertus, geboren 6 oktober 1913 te Amsterdam, laastbekende adres, Kostverlorenstraat 22 te Amsterdam, naar Canada vertrokken op 21 juni 1954.

De Consul-Generaal, voor deze:  
Mevr. G. Schnitzler

# Report

*of the Annual Convention of the League of Canadian and American Reformed Women's Societies of Ontario and Michigan.*

This annual Convention is something you read about or attend on a more or less regular basis. But when you give it some thought, you realize how much planning and work go into it. Delegates of societies leave home the day before (their families just manage somehow), drive for miles, stay somewhere overnight, and come home (sometimes late) the next night. Others leave early in the morning, have hired a sitter; maybe hubby has to cook when he gets home from work, etc.

Then there are the local hostesses. They prepare for overnight accommodation, stay up late with their guests, rise early to get their families organized for the day. Then off to the church building, the car loaded with a huge pan of hot soup, or some other food needed to keep about three hundred women happy for a day. Lots of food has been prepared in advance, flowers all over the building have been arranged, programmes printed, and last but not least, some people have been busy for a long time to prepare a speech, essay, entertainment, etc. Most of us know how much work that is! Then comes the after-fun of cleaning up . . . . Is it all worth it? Judging from the atmosphere at the Convention and the reactions later, it is.

Let's see how the day went. It was a beautiful day this year with lots of sunshine, and as we arrived at the church there was coffee, cake, etc., to perk us up after a long drive. It was difficult to start the meeting on time, but when we did we could heartily sing for the opening Psalm 66:1, 2, and 4. Our president, Mrs. Riemersma, read from Scripture Ephesians 6:10-18 and led in prayer. She spoke a word of welcome to all present, and encouraged us to be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might (Ephesians 6:10). We are all in need of Someone to keep us in difficult times. Let the Lord be our strength; let us study His deeds continually, and grow rich in the knowledge of Him.

Several announcements followed: It was decided by vote at the delegates meeting the night before to donate the collection of the Convention to the

Canadian Reformed Association for the Handicapped. Fergus will host the Convention of 1979, the Lord willing. Mrs. Riemersma then introduced Mrs. F. Ludwig as our newly elected vice-president. Mrs. Ludwig will be the Board's representative to the I.L.P.B. (She will also publish reports of Regional "kring" meetings in *Clarion*. The societies can also submit difficult questions out of meetings to her, and she will ask one of our ministers to answer them in *Clarion*. Her address is: Mrs. F. Ludwig, 133 Hampton Heath Road, Burlington, Ontario L7L 4N8.)

A card was sent to Mrs. A. Zuidhof, who has now finished her term as vice-president. She was not able to come to the Convention, so the card expresses our thoughts and appreciation for her work as Board member. It was signed by everyone at the Convention.

Then the report of the League's Convention of 1977 in Burlington West was read, followed by the financial report by the treasurer, Mrs. G. Stieva. Roll-call showed that about 290 women were present. Ottawa was absent this time because of the distance, but more ladies came from Grand Rapids than is usually the case. We sang our League song with enthusiasm after the roll-call.

Mrs. Riemersma then introduced Mrs. Willa Dale Smid, who read to us a beautiful essay on "The Signs of the End of Time," followed by a Dutch summary. Mrs. Smid's essay was in particular about Mark 13:3-37. She showed us very clearly how the Lord comforts His disciples (and us) with the promise that the Word and the Holy Spirit will be with us till the end of times. The Lord encourages them/us to stand fast, to watch for the signs of the prophets, to beware of anti-christs through the years, and to be ready always for the Lord's return. The essay will be published in *Almond Branch* and will make very worthwhile reading.

After the essay we sang Hymn 43:1 and 3. A good discussion followed, which had to be cut short because of lunchtime. In closing of the morning session we sang Hymn 44:1, 2, and 3 while the collection was held. This money was counted at noon and amounted to \$336.47.

During lunch we were divided into two groups, one to eat in the church

basement, one in the school basement. The last few years we have certainly benefitted from schools being beside churches. The mood was festive during lunch, with a whole lot of talking going on and busy hostesses flurrying by.

The afternoon session started with the singing of "O Canada." We've changed the words a little the last few years, but some did not realize it if they did not look at their songsheets. The entertainment consisted of something we all enjoy. This year songsheets were handed out and everyone could happily join in the singing of a number of favourite psalms and hymns. It almost dried our throats, but dry or not, our president had to carry on afterwards. She read for us Psalm 16 and Colossians 2:6-3:4, followed by the singing of Psalm 61:1, 4, and 5.

Rev. J. Geertsema was introduced to us and given the floor for his speech on "Mysticism." The Reverend professed to us that he has one weakness; he cannot be brief! This you can see for yourself, for his speech is to be published in *Clarion*, so we won't go into it at all. It was a very difficult and educational topic. Many of us are confronted these days with charismatic movements, people who want more than just "dry doctrine." It benefits us all to have it emphasized once more that the Gospel always comes first. As a result of faith in the Lord, the Word, we will have the fruit of the Spirit. Mysticism is a danger today, because it is a reaction to atheism and liberalism.

Following the speech we sang Psalm 25:6 and 7, and had the discussion on the topic. Some questions could be asked after the meeting yet, as we were running out of time. Rev. Geertsema would answer them in *Clarion* later.

At the end of the meeting Mrs. Riemersma thanked everyone involved in this day one way or another — essayist, speaker, organist, hostesses, etc.: thanks to one and all. We sang in closing Psalm 145:1, 2, 4, and 5, and Rev. Geertsema closed the meeting with prayer.

After eating and drinking something downstairs again we were ready for the trip home and happily joined our families there. For the Board,

A.M. BERGSMA (Secr.)

**Answer to Puzzle No. 33**, Vol. 27, No. 22, November 4, 1978. The remaining 75 letters form the Bible text of Matthew 7:12

# our little magazine

Hello Busy Beavers,

Busy Beaver *Carl Dorgeloos* has a fall poem for us. Shall we start with it?

Thank you for sharing, Carl.

*Fall*

In autumn the leaves fall.  
The winds scream and call.  
The leaves turn yellow, orange, and red.  
It's time to put heavy covers on the bed.  
Isn't Fall a beautiful season?  
Don't you think that is a good reason?

\* \* \* \* \*

Do you know what I think is a good reason to like fall? I like fall because it gets dark early.

And then after supper there's time to sit around the table together and shell peanuts, or make some popcorn, or play games. Or just read, or do puzzles and quizzes.

That's why I like fall!  
How about you?

\* \* \* \* \*

We all like a story, right?

Busy Beaver *Bernice Vandebos* has one for us. Thank you, Bernice.

*Uncle Dan's Car*

Whenever Uncle Dan visits us, I always enjoy sitting in the driver's seat of his big car. I usually only have imaginary rides. All of a sudden the car began to roll and I steered for dear life. I missed poles, trees, and houses. But what is going to happen now? There is a row of trees in front of me. Crash! At that I awakened, found the car in perfect shape, and no trees in front of me. I also found myself at home and realized I had dreamed it all.

\* \* \* \* \*

Now, before we do anything else we want to wish our Busy Beavers celebrating a November birthday a very happy day together with their family and friends. Also the Lord's blessing and guidance in the year ahead. Does it sound the same each time? Yes? We DO wish that every month again. But we really mean it just the same. And we really do hope you will have the nicest birthday ever, Busy Beavers!

Tanya Harlaar	November 1	Bernice Van Overbeeke	November 14
Sylvia Jans	1	Brian Bosch	15
Paul Mulder	4	Leona Dam	15
Shirley DeVries	5	Bernice Vandebos	17
Sharon Kieneker	9	Lorinda Barendregt	22
Carla Griffioen	10	Glenda Bulthuis	24
Julius Wierenga	10	Tony Linde	24
Joanne Lodder	11	Charles Doekes	27
Lorraine Bosch	12	Annette Van Andel	28
Lucy DeBoer	12	Sylvia Foekens	30



## From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Jasper Harlaar*. We are happy to have you join us! Be sure to share in all our Busy Beaver activities. And thank you for the funny story. I liked it. How was your track meet, Jasper?

Thank you for sharing your fall poem, *Carl Dorgeloos*. It was nice to hear from you again. Write back soon.

Hello *Bernice Vandebos*. Your story was late for the contest. But I'm sure the Busy Beavers will enjoy it anyway. And I think it deserves a little reward, too! Bye for now, Bernice.

You must have had a very exciting holiday, *Carol Lubbers*. Has your new minister arrived? How do you like being a member of the choir, Carol?

### QUIZ TIME

Busy Beaver *Carol Lubbers* sent in some riddles for you!

Do you have your thinking caps on?

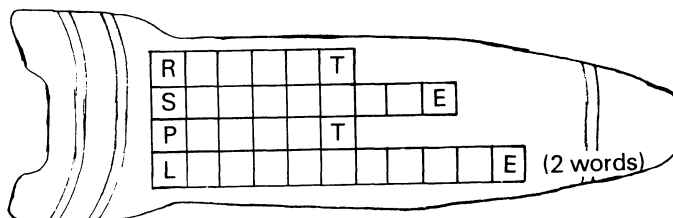
Here they are! Can you think of the answer without peeking at the solution?

1. What fruit is never found alone?
2. What fruit is found on a dime?
3. What nut is part of a room?

Answers: 1. pear (pair); 2. a date; 3. a walnut.

### OBJECTS IN SPACE

Can you discover what four objects are meant? The first one is a GIVEAWAY!



Answers next time!

One of you Busy Beavers asked me a while ago "How many Busy Beavers are there in our Club?"

Let me count the names on the membership list, I thought.

But, oh dear, at the top of each row there were names of Busy Beavers I haven't heard from for years!

Do you have an older sister, brother, cousin, or maybe even an aunt or uncle who was a Busy Beaver long ago? And isn't any longer?

Is his/her name still on our lists?

Will you help me "weed" out the names of our "overgrown Busy Beavers"?

Thank you for your help.

Bye for now, Busy Beavers.

Till next time, hopefully.

Yours,  
Aunt Betty



# Word Search - Puzzle No. 34

## JOSHUA

I	I	C	O	N	G	R	E	G	A	T	I	O	N	E	V	E	R	M	O	R	E	J	P
D	N	E	E	D	D	E	F	E	A	T	E	D	S	R	M	A	N	S	L	A	Y	E	R
R	H	H	U	G	A	M	B	U	S	H	I	M	T	E	A	P	A	D	A	R	M	R	O
O	E	E	A	I	L	N	D	K	S	H	Y	M	S	G	O	R	A	E	U	Y	R	I	D
C	R	R	S	B	A	A	A	I	M	E	S	S	E	N	G	E	R	S	H	T	A	C	U
T	I	I	S	E	I	N	N	N	S	P	E	F	I	E	O	T	A	C	S	O	C	H	O
E	T	T	E	O	R	T	N	G	E	T	O	R	R	V	D	E	S	E	O	O	L	O	E
L	A	A	M	N	O	M	A	S	I	P	R	U	P	A	R	N	U	N	J	B	V	E	N
R	N	G	B	E	M	O	M	N	S	O	T	I	N	T	E	S	D	D	O	G	S	E	D
A	C	E	L	S	E	H	A	L	T	S	A	T	B	E	N	E	D	A	S	I	P	O	R
C	E	S	E	L	M	A	L	M	A	S	E	N	T	U	V	K	I	N	D	L	E	D	A
S	P	E	D	A	N	R	L	P	T	E	S	N	O	O	T	R	E	T	Y	G	R	N	H
J	O	R	D	A	N	V	O	T	E	S	D	O	T	S	R	E	H	S	S	A	I	A	A
E	O	V	C	O	V	E	T	E	D	S	A	E	F	I	A	F	D	E	U	L	S	M	B
S	E	E	V	I	L	S	M	U	N	I	D	C	N	O	W	U	E	R	B	N	H	M	P
L	T	L	R	E	S	T	E	U	E	O	I	N	S	O	N	G	S	V	T	R	S	O	E
S	O	F	F	E	R	I	N	G	E	N	A	H	C	A	T	E	T	A	R	K	O	C	A
L	L	A	W	F	A	I	T	H	I	J	E	A	L	O	U	S	R	N	I	S	L	N	C
M	E	H	C	E	H	C	S	E	E	T	I	M	S	V	H	S	U	T	W	E	L	V	E
E	D	I	V	I	D	N	A	L	A	W	S	P	I	E	S	E	C	S	H	I	L	O	H
R	J	U	D	G	M	E	N	T	I	T	R	O	P	E	R	R	T	N	E	T	N	I	D
C	R	A	D	L	F	A	I	T	H	F	U	L	N	E	S	S	I	A	F	I	N	D	R
Y	A	R	D	S	R	E	T	A	W	C	A	L	E	B	R	E	O	R	G	C	L	A	O
T	A	P	P	O	I	N	T	B	D	I	R	E	C	T	I	O	N	E	E	D	S	A	L

- |            |              |              |             |            |              |          |         |
|------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|------------|--------------|----------|---------|
| Achan      | cast         | evil         | hid         | law        | pasture      | servants | war     |
| Ai         | cities       |              |             | LORD       | peace        | serve    | water   |
| allotments | command      | faith        | inhabitants | lot        | perish       | Shechem  | witness |
| ambush     | congregation | faithfulness | inheritance |            | possession   | Shiloh   |         |
| appoint    | coveted      | flee         | intent      | manna      | priests      | shut     |         |
| ark        |              | fruit        |             | manslayer  | pretense     | smite    |         |
| army       | defeated     |              | jealous     | memorial   | produce      | snare    |         |
| assembled  | descendants  | gate         | Jericho     | mercy      |              | spies    |         |
| avenger    | destruction  | Gibeon       | Jordan      | messengers | Rahab        | stoned   |         |
|            | devoted      | Gilgal       | Joshua      |            | refuge       | sun      |         |
| battle     | direction    | God          | judgment    | Nun        | remnant      |          |         |
| booty      | distributed  |              |             |            | report       | treasury |         |
|            | divide       | harvest      | kindled     | offering   | rest         | twelve   |         |
| Caleb      |              | Hebron       | kings       |            |              |          |         |
| Canaanites | enemies      | heritage     | land        | Passover   | scarlet cord | wall     | W. Diek |