



# Clarion

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## Self-obligation or Covenant?

With respect to newer studies on God's covenant I mentioned the discussion of the dogmatic standard work by H. Berkhof, *Christelijk Geloof* (1973).

It is clear that in this book, soon to be published in English translation, the concept of covenant plays an important role. Berkhof states that covenant and history are the two constituents of the path of Israel. The sense that the relation with God was a covenant-relation ran through the whole history of Israel. While Israel's sin and rebellion brought about the problematics of the covenant, Jesus is "the saviour of the covenant." His sonship stood in the covenant-tradition: He is the One Who uniquely obeyed the covenant, the obedient and therefore beloved covenant-partner. Even the trinitarian relation Father-Son-Spirit is the comprehensive expression of the covenant event. Covenant implies community; this thought introduces in H. Berkhof's Dogmatics the whole section on the doctrine about the church: the church is "the new community."

It is not my intention now to discuss Berkhof's covenant theory and especially his rejection of the classical trinitarian doctrine. Berkhof used his covenant theory in an attack on the doctrine of the Godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I would like to draw attention to the completely different criticism from a famous exegete, James Barr, who wrote an essay on "Some Old Testament Aspects of Berkhof's 'Christelijk Geloof'" (in: Weerwoord, 1974).

Barr is of the opinion that the degree of centrality attached to the covenant in Old Testament scholarship will come increasingly under challenge in the next decades. He refers, among others, to the studies of Ernst Kutsch whose latest publication I mentioned in a previous article. What is the issue? Well, Kutsch is of the opinion that the word "covenant" is a mistranslation. The Hebrew word does not mean an agreement or covenant, a relationship between two parties. Fundamentally, it is unilateral, one-sided; it means *obligation*. If someone cuts a *berit*, that means, if someone establishes what was formerly called a "covenant," he really takes upon himself a solemn obligation. It is a *promise* confirmed by oath. When God establishes a *berit*, He promises to give the land to His people, and this is a one-sided obligation. Thus the Hebrew word does not mean "covenant" or "agreement" but something like "determination" or "disposition."

Our readers understand that the topic is of importance for Reformed confessors. Our Reformed sister churches in The Netherlands and our Canadian Reformed Churches have gone through a struggle concerning God's covenant and baptism. After the liberation from synodical statements in 1942 preaching and teaching in our Reformed Churches have borne the stamp of this struggle. It is clear that, if the Word of God would teach us that there is no real covenant between God on the one side and the believers and their descendants on the other side, we should have to change our Reformed confessions, our liturgical forms, our way of preaching and teaching. Even our Reformed schools are unthinkable without

Reformed covenant doctrine. I think that, when they gave their baptismal vow to cause their child to be instructed in the aforesaid doctrine to the utmost of their power, our parents rightly thought of Reformed schools, where all instruction is not only according to the doctrine of the church but where this doctrine itself is taught too. Therefore the topic of the covenant touches also our Reformed schools and the instruction given by them.

We will not go into technical details about the Hebrew word for "covenant." I only mention that there are scholars who have a different opinion about the etymology of the word. Some think of a word "bond," others of a word "between," and these meanings are closer to the idea of covenant as a mutual relationship than the word "obligation" for which Kutsch opts.

But every Bible reader can see how in daily life in the ancient near East a "covenant" came about. We read about the covenant between King Solomon and Hiram king of Tyre; the two of them made a treaty, 1 Kings 5:12. Hiram had always loved David, verse 1; he had always been on friendly terms with David. The Hebrew term indicates a covenant partner. Hiram addresses Solomon as "my brother," 9:13, and there was peace or "peaceful relations" (NIV) between Hiram and Solomon. Is it enough to say that this was only a matter of self-obligation of the two kings, or do we see here in everyday life of the ancient near East the reality of a covenant, a positive agreement of friendship that implies a mutual relationship and a communion of two parties? In my opinion, it is evident that the friendship and economic relation between Hiram and Solomon may be called a covenant. The Dutch translation justly uses this word "covenant": "en er was vrede tussen Hiram en Salomo, en die beiden sloten een verbond." It is the same word that Solomon, in chapter 8, uses for the covenant that the LORD made with the people of Israel, 8:9, 21. Sure, there is a difference between the treaty between Hiram and Solomon and the covenant of the LORD and His people. Hiram offers the relationship, Solomon utters certain desires, while then Hiram clinches the covenant by some counter-proposals. Later, in chapter 9, Hiram complains about the execution of a part of the agreement: "What kind of cities are these which you have given me, my brother?" It is a complete two-sided mutual relationship. In the covenant between God and His people, the initiative is the LORD's and there are no counter-proposals. Nevertheless, in its existence this covenant, too, is a relationship between two parties and not only a self-obligation of God.

Also in the case of the *berit* between David and Israel, we read that Abner promises to "gather all Israel to my lord the king, that they make a covenant with you," II Samuel 3:20. In 5:3 we read that David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the LORD. Is this covenant not a relationship between two parties, of which the one says to the other, "Behold, we are your bone and flesh"? (5:1). To speak of a mere self-obligation of the one, or even of both, is not enough to indicate the established relationship.

Now, when Scripture speaks about the *berit* of the LORD, the covenant of God, the same words are used: the LORD cuts a covenant with Abraham, Genesis 15:18a. Here, the initiative is wholly God's, and, nevertheless, it is a covenant *with* Abram. God obliges Himself over against Abram. You may speak about a self-obligation, but this self-obligation establishes a communion and asks for faith. God informs Abram first, 15:12ff.; He addresses Abram; and He also grants Abram and his descendants the right to appeal on the basis of the God-given promise.

In the book of Deuteronomy the mutual character of the covenant between the LORD and His people is evident. We do not read the word "covenant" in 26:16-19, but we see clearly the communion established: "You have declared this day concerning the LORD that He is your God . . . and the LORD has declared concerning you that you are a people for His own possession, as He has promised you, and that you are to keep all His commandments." The two-sidedness of God's covenant and the two parts—promise and demand—are clearly expressed.

The newer studies on God's covenant to which James Barr referred often allege that there was no real covenant theology before Deuteronomy. The covenant concept would be a late fruit of the Old Testament; "it arose with the Deuter-

onomic movement." Here it becomes manifest that these newer studies still uncritically accept the theory of Wellhausen, who regarded Deuteronomy as a late book, and who really tried to turn the Old Testament upside down: first the prophets and then "Moses," instead of Moses and the prophets. He who does not accept this critical theory from the school of Wellhausen will not yield for the statement that the covenant concept is only a late fruit of the Old Testament. Moreover, how can we explain the resistance of the prophets against heathenism if there was not the background of God's covenant with Israel at Horeb?

The reader will understand that although in my previous article I expressed some caution with respect to the book of C. Van Der Waal, *Het Nieuwe Testament: Boek van het Verbond*, because of the far-fetched analogy of God's covenant and Hittite treaties between a Suzerain and a vassal, I object much more strongly against publications that on the basis of Scripture criticism do away with God's revelation about the *communion* between the LORD and His people, the relationship of His covenant with His promise and demand.

Let us and our children listen, believe, and obey; for God's covenant with us and our seed is our salvation in Christ the Mediator.

J. FABER

## Christ Above All Glory Seated

(PRESENT HYMN 22)



1. Christ, above all glory seated,  
King triumphant, strong to save!  
Dying, Thou hast death defeated;  
Buried, Thou hast spoiled the grave.  
Thou art gone where now is given  
What no mortal might could gain,  
On The eternal throne of heaven,  
In Thy Father's power to reign.
2. There Thy kingdoms all adore Thee,  
Heaven above and earth below;  
While the depths of hell before Thee,  
Trembling and defeated, bow.  
We revere Thee, Lord and Saviour;  
We implore Thy grace and love.  
Hear our prayers and help us ever  
See the things that are above.
3. So when Thou again in glory  
On the clouds of heaven shalt shine,  
We Thy flock shall stand before Thee,  
Owned for evermore as Thine.  
In Thy faithfulness confiding,  
Jesus, Thee shall all adore.  
On Thy holy throne abiding,  
Thou shalt reign for evermore.

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# Irregularities

## HIERARCHICAL TENDENCIES?

Our readers will recall that some time ago I published some remarks about calling a Candidate who had not been beforehand declared eligible for call within the Canadian Reformed Churches.

Now I received a letter from a brother "somewhere in Canada" who wrote, among others, "I read that article and consider it to be correct. However, now I have a few more questions." He did not wish to send his letter as a "Letter to the Editor," and told me, "If what I write here is worth to be mentioned in News Medley or in an article, I'll see that in *Clarion*; and if not — well, nothing is lost."

The points which our brother raises are well worth a more extensive treatment than just an occasional mention in a news medley, for they are questions which live not only with him but — as I have noticed — also with others. For that reason I am glad that he asked his questions, since that gives me the opportunity to elaborate a little on them.

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The first point deals with those ministers who were called from The Netherlands or from Australia; and they all are ministers who have not received their training at our own Seminary. In some instances they even conducted services before they were installed here in Canada. Let's first give the floor to our brother.

I start with the Rev. Pieffers. He arrived on a Sunday morning in Lethbridge and preached that afternoon. He was installed the next Sunday.

The same happened with the Rev. Wielenga: he arrived in Coaldale towards the end of October, conducted services for two Sundays, and on the third Sunday he was installed as minister of Coaldale.

My problem is: What is the status of a minister who has been released from his Congregation and has not yet been installed in another one? Is here a vacuum? To be a minister is not a "permanent office" is it? That would be Romish: where the clergy is, there is the Church. Even if a priest celebrates mass in an empty church building, that is a service. But the office of a minister is always

bound to a local church. Even when ministers work as missionaries or in the work of evangelization, they are always bound to a local church. The same applies to army chaplains. They have received "leave of absence" from their consistories and remain minister of their respective churches; they also conduct services in those churches that invite them. I mention those cases, but it also applies within the country itself. A minister who accepts a call from Ureterp to Bilthoven or from New Westminster to Burlington first has to be released from his congregation and be installed in the other church. Once again, what is their status? Of course, financial arrangements have to be made. Also as far as church membership is concerned things were in order, e.g., with Rev. Wielenga: he brought an attestation along from the church at Albany . . . Does the consistory have the authority to ask such a brother to conduct services? Perhaps this is a little bit too long-winded but I hope that you understand what I mean.

Yes, I think that I get the meaning of the question. The question itself is not new. I recall that the same point was raised when I came to New Westminster, B.C. The Consistory had asked the Rev. Pieffers to install me. Since the exact date of our arrival was somewhat uncertain at first (there was at that time still a "house-congregation" at Paterson, N.J., and it could be that we were going to stop over there first after our arrival on this continent). Rev. Pieffers had been asked to come to New Westminster for the November 23, 1952 weekend. We did not stop over in New York, but travelled directly from Halifax to Port Coquitlam, B.C. and thus arrived on Tuesday, November 11. Thus there was one Sunday between our arrival and my installation. Neither with me nor with the Consistory was there any hesitation or doubt: I preached on Sunday, November 16, 1952.

There may be ministers who feel at ease when during their holidays they sit in Church and listen to an elder reading a sermon; I would not dare to do that, although I would not offer myself for the task: I would wait for an invitation from the Consistory; if such an invitation should not be forthcoming, I, too, would feel at ease sitting in the pew and listening. It is definitely not so that I *have* to be on the pulpit and can-

not stand it to see someone else on there. But I would not dare to say, "You had better read a sermon; I am having holidays, you see," if I were asked to preach.

Thus I thought it to be only a matter of course that I conducted the services on that Sunday before my installation.

However, a brother who followed a "super-Reformed reasoning" was of a different opinion. He has since long ceased to be a member of the Church, and that is not strange at all. All "super-Reformed" reasoning" is basically sectarian, its authors and sustainers are sectarian in their thinking, and usually end up with the sects, as was the case with the late Petrus Dathenus, a man who did much in the service of the Lord and whom the Churches owed much to, but who towards the end drifted off to the sects.

That brother reasoned as follows: "Either we did not have an official ('ambtelijke') proclamation of the Word on Sunday, November 16, or — if it was an official proclamation of the Word — the installation on November 23 was no longer necessary and was no more than a show."

Well, there you are, sir!

So much for that.

It proves that the point in question was not clear in 1952, as it appears not to be all that clear in 1979.

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When does a minister cease to be a minister of a specific Church?

For all *practical* purposes he may have ceased to be the minister of that Church and been relieved of all responsibility for her as soon as he has delivered his farewell sermon: he no longer conducts services or catechism classes, brings no more visits, etc., but prepares for his departure. If the moving van doesn't come for a few days, he may drop in here or there, but that is no longer of the same character as the visits he brought before: that task has been taken off his shoulders.

However, even though for all *practical* purposes he has ceased to be that Church's minister, *technically* he continues to be its minister until the very moment at which his release becomes effective according to the agreement made between the two Consistories involved. That moment is most times determined very precisely, e.g., "at 12:01 a.m. E.S.T., Wednesday, January 31, 1979."

When I left Schiedam, I delivered



my farewell sermon on October 19, 1952, although we did not leave The Netherlands till October 29. The moment at which I was to become the responsibility of the New Westminster Church was set at "the moment I was to pass through the customs in order to board the ship which was to carry us to Canada. Thus, from the moment at which I was through the customs and, technically speaking, had left The Netherlands, I was no longer the minister of Schiedam.

What was I then?

A "common Church member"?

Not exactly.

The agreement which the two Churches makes covers not just the financial aspects of a minister's move from the one Church to the other. How could — strictly speaking — a Consistory justify its assuming financial responsibility for a minister who is not even their own minister?

The agreement also means that as of that particular moment the minister is no longer the minister of the "old" Church and has become the minister of the "new" Church, even though he has not yet been installed as such. And as a farewell-sermon in itself does not yet mean that the official bond with the Church has been terminated, so an installation does not mean that only at the moment at which he says, "I do with all my heart," a "new" bond is established.

Indeed, we do not believe that the office of a minister has an "indelible character," but we do not have to take refuge in such a construction at all.

On the other hand, we should not create any "problems" either.

It is easy to create a problem. Let me do that for the sake of argument. In the following manner.

Someone moves from A to D, and takes two months to reach his destination, a not uncommon thing. He takes an attestation along. During his two months of travelling he stops over for a weekend in Church B where they happen to celebrate the Holy Supper on that Sunday, four weeks after his departure from Church A. He requests permission to participate, but when the Consistory of Church B asks him, "Do you belong to any Church right now?" our brother has to say, "No, I ceased being a member of Church A when I left that place, and I have not yet joined myself to the Church at D, where I am going to settle." Formalistically speaking, the Consistory should refuse him, since he ceased being a member of one of the Churches.

However, everyone feels that that

would be wrong and that that would mean creating difficulties where there are none. We could say that, technically speaking, the brother remained a member of Church A until the very moment of his joining Church D. Whether the move from one Church to another takes two days or two months does not make any difference. During one's journey one is not "Church-less."

Likewise, when moving from the one Church to another, a minister is not "office-less."

Herewith we have said enough about the first question, and proceed to the second one. First I'll give the question.

\* \* \*

Another question which I should like to ask deals with the status of the professors Dr. Faber and Drs. Ohmann. I have to elaborate on this point before I put my question. The issue here is our Theological College where students are trained for the ministry. As a rule, the professors are minister-emeriti (professor Lettinga in Kampen is an exception). We could find three professors, but Rev. Van Popta passed away before he could learn of his appointment as professor Dogmatology. The professors Kouwenhoven and Selles were ministers within our Churches, accepted their appointment, and received the status of minister-emeritus of the Church resp. at Toronto and Chatham. We could find no replacement within our Churches for Rev. Van Popta. Therefore, Dr. Faber, minister of a Church in Rotterdam, The Netherlands, was appointed as professor Dogmatology and Drs. Ohmann as professor Old Testament. However, these brothers were ministers in The Netherlands. They could, of course, not become ministers-emeriti of the Churches in The Netherlands which they served. The brothers did desire to retain the right to preach, to remain a minister of the Gospel; a good intention, but how to fix it? Well, the Church at Hamilton extended calls which were accepted immediately. Thus followed the installation, most likely also a sermon and then these ministers were declared ministers-emeriti. I trust that formally everything is in order, but it bothers me. An installation according to the existing form with all the serious sentences in it. What should then be done? I don't know, and therefore I ask whether you could give some more information and could shed some more light on this matter. I have a feeling that here the seriousness of the office is taken very lightly, that the office of a minister has become a bridge via which the vacancies can be filled. I am certainly not planning to flood the tables of our major assemblies with appeals, but my question is whether such actions can receive the approval of the Head of the Church.

That is quite a question, I must say!

Let me start my answer with saying that the historical review in the above question is not quite correct and everyone who checks the Acts will be able to correct the above given description of the sequence of events.

However, that is not all that important. The position of our professors is the issue here. Do we find any "irregularity" here? Is there anything here which was twisted and turned until it fit or seemed to fit into the Reformed system of Church government? And is there, consequently, anything of which we must say, "The King of the

*Continued on next page.*

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# press review

JOHN TRAVOLTA

In "Variant" of *Nederlands Dagblad* of Saturday, December 9, G.J. Nijhof wrote an article on the man whose name is placed above this Review. It was written in connection with the publication of a booklet about him, written by Mr. Cornelsen and edited for The Netherlands by Mr. Ernest Bénéder. Nijhof starts with a quotation from the book. Here it is:

John is driven by car to the premiere of *Grease*. Thousands of fans block the entrance to the Casino. They fight for a place in the front rows. An entire battalion of French policemen tries to force a free passage for the car. With might and main they attempt to keep the fans at a safe distance. It looks as if they will succeed. Then a number of photographers, who are also waiting in the crowd, go and lie down in front of the slowly rolling wheels of the limousine in order to compel it to stop. The car doors swing open and ten bodyguards drag John Travolta through the cheering crowd into the Casino. The fans scream. It is an inferno of flashing lights. It

## IRREGULARITIES — Continued.

Church certainly cannot approve of that!?"

When we decided to establish our Seminary, the question came up what the position of the professors of theology would be. Should we follow the Dutch custom that a minister who is appointed as professor of theology becomes a minister-emeritus?

At the Synod of Orangeville 1968 we chose definitely *against* that, and our brother is mistaken when he assumes that our professors are ministers-emeriti. They are *not*.

When a minister becomes a professor of theology, he does not become incapable of performing the duties of the office of a minister of the Word. That is something which I personally always have found strange in the Dutch Churches and — with our brother — I reject that "solution." We rejected it in Orangeville in 1968 too. Article 163 of the *Acts* shows what that Synod did decide.

Let us continue with that decision in the next issue of *Clarion*.

looks as if the photographers produce an entire fire-works display. As soon as John is inside the Casino, the doors are immediately closed and barricaded with sheets of iron. In this way they hope to be able to resist the run of the fans. John, the exulted star, is shocked. Of course, he is pleased that they like him so much. But something like this scares him.

Who is this John Travolta? I must admit that I did not know him before I read this article in "Variant." That was dumb, of course. For posters with his picture are displayed for a long time already in many a store urging people to buy. John Travolta is a very important young fellow. Parents who do not know him or his name, may ask their school-age children, their teenagers, and they can tell. I give you another quotation as it appeared in the article: It was taken from *Elseviers Magazine*.

He (Travolta) is kind of a saviour in whom all teenagers (and those who were teenagers) in the world wish to recognize something of themselves. He has something very disarming [ontwapenends], something primitive, something that makes us forget the competitive existence of every day a little bit. Of course, his charm for a large part is "from below the belt," his radiation is primarily sexual, but that sexuality has something absurd, something very relaxing.

We then read what is going on. It is about the disco-movies. A disco-movie is a movie which brings with it records on which songs and music from the movie are recorded and which people can (and must) buy.

The disco-movie . . . is the new response of Hollywood, that seemed to have lost the battle for movies to television. First Hollywood tried it with calamity-movies, super-shockers, and hard porno . . . , but now the answer is the disco-movie with which full theaters can be achieved again.

Nijhof takes this information from what Mr. Ernest Bénéder, the Dutch editor, writes in that booklet about John Travolta. He further quotes from what Mr. Bénéder writes:

For the new generation the disco-movie is a fact. The exuberant life on Saturday night in the discotheque is for many the only fun they enjoy after a week's hard work.

Nijhof continues and what follows now



John Travolta

is almost all that he writes further:

What is a discotheque actually? Well, there all the hits are put on the turntable which you hear via Top-pop and the TROS [a broadcasting organization in The Netherlands, J.G.]. There they dance. Hanny van den Horst, editor in chief of the women's weekly *Margriet*, went to have a look. She writes in the issue of May 21, 1978: "Did you ever do it? I did. And I liked it very much. It must be admitted, it is warm there; it is crammed; it is so noisy that sometimes you cannot even hear yourself, let alone someone else, but it has atmosphere and action."

In Cornelsen's [the author] booklet a psychologist says: "If nothing else works, you can still dance. You can better have fun in the discotheque than fight with each other on the street."

This is the same rationale which is applied in defense of public whoredom. For this prevents sexual excesses like rape, and so on. It is the rationale of a world which does not know true solutions against sin and its consequences, and then legalizes that sin which seems to be the least damaging, in order to prevent worse.

Smart young readers will conclude from this that I mean to say that also disco-entertainment is sin. That is correct. And I am pleased that the author of the Travolta booklet explains his "victim" from the same historical approach which we also have always used. He writes on page 25 about Travolta's young years: "Elvis Presley is making his triumphal procession, the Beatles and the Rolling Stones are rising. They not only make music. They are rebels as well. In a direct way they voice the resistance, the protests, the discontentment of young people. Besides they show a new life-style. They make clear that young people have the right to be young, and

that they are not in the pre-phase of adulthood in order to become old in a dull way. Certainly not. Young people between ten and twenty years of age are a separate unity with a culture of their own. The guitar is held like a machine-gun. The lower part of the body is moved forward rhythmically. In that way Elvis Presley conquers the hearts of millions of Americans. Elvis embodies the vitality of youth, the Beatles electrify, and the Rolling Stones provoke."

## IDOL

It is this climate that, at a certain time, offers possibilities for people like John Travolta to break through. No, he cannot do that on his own, because he lacks the capabilities for that. But with the help of an entire apparatus, which floats upon the gigantic profits that can be gained where people of wickedness seek their fun outside of Christ, a fellow like Travolta reaches the top. He becomes an idol. Many young people say you should not take such things too literally, but, nevertheless, it is good to see how far the glorification of man goes. As an example may serve the great predecessor in the same field, Elvis Presley. We give a report from the book, *The True Elvis Presley*, written by his private secretary, Becky Yancey . . . :

"A few minutes after the first announcements had come in via radio and television that Elvis was dead, big crowds started to gather at the Music Gate. The atmosphere at the fence became somewhat surrealistic when the crowd swelled and the people lamented, fell on their knees, clung to one another to find comfort . . .

Thousands marched past his body during the four hours before the Music Gate, made of wrought iron, finally perforate had to be closed at about five fifteen in the afternoon, by a group of sweating uniformed policemen, who tried to check the crying fans who had become insane by the idea that they would never have the opportunity to see

**He dances "intelligently." Every movement is refined and is full of discipline, perfection, and sex.**

Elvis again. There were two hundred policemen to keep the crowd in control, and there was a group of 120 medical personnel to treat fans who became ill or fainted from the heat and the emotional tensions. Rows of men and women collapsed after they had stumbled past the coffin on shaking legs, and were loaded in waiting ambulances to be brought to hospitals. My husband Jerry and I at one point counted 30 bodies stretched out on the ground in front of the house. It made me think of

a war scene in a movie I once saw together with Elvis . . ."

An idol is not an abstraction made of wood or stone in itself; it is something or someone in whom people believe. An idol is the answer to the question what meaningful life has when it is withdrawn from God.

What does Cornelsen write? "Nowhere is a star about whom America's youth can really dream. Nowhere is a type whom they can exalt and adore. No idol with whom they can identify themselves."

And then Travolta comes. According to the author he has a certain radiation which immediately brings you under his spell. On page 87 he quotes *Time*: "John Travolta is a guy who dances divinely with powerful movements and the grace of a Johan Cruyff. He is a mixture of shyness and insolence, of boyish innocence and hypodermic sexuality."

And who still does not believe that this is idolatrous, when he reads that the steward of Travolta's apartment sells so-called "Travolta garbage" for ridiculous prices. The fans buy empty shampoo bottles, faded lettuce scraps, and crumpled envelopes. We know the function of relics in the Roman Catholic church. What must we say of the posters of John Travolta which one finds in one out of every three stores? And of the buttons of John Travolta, and the purses with the head of John Travolta? And what do I forget of John Travolta? The school agenda and the stickers? And what do you think of the mammon? Within a few months the movie "Saturday Night Fever" raises 220 million dollars. The movie "Grease" brings up 100 million in a few weeks, and the LP's of these movies raise an amount of at least 660 million dollars. Do you still dare to look at the collection bag on Sundays?

## SEX SYMBOL

In what, now, is that enormous radiation which Travolta has, and which proves to be so lucrative? A few times already in this

story we drew your attention to the function of sexuality. We give some quotations from the book (p. 79): "Travolta is seen as the hottest sex symbol since Elvis Presley."

Lily Tomlin (actress): "The most exciting thing about him is probably his sensuality" (p. 80). "He dances 'intelligently.' His feeling for rhythm and his movements work infectiously and every movement is refined and is full of discipline, perfection, and sex" (p. 91).

"Especially the guys do their utmost to

master the disco-style of Travolta well and soon. Experience teaches that with a few well-placed dance steps the girls can be easily taken in. And that is the thing on a Saturday evening for many, isn't it?"

What does Travolta think himself about this label put on him? He says: "On T.V. I am a sex symbol. Then it is hard to live like a monk in my private life, isn't it?" (p. 47).

Now the annoying thing is that a lot of boys and girls simply do not accept this. Experience tells us that they generally bring forward all kinds of elements to defend their idol. And the most important element will be that they say: "We have nothing to do with his life. We like his music." Others will say: "Listen now, you cannot expect that everyone is Reformed. The way he lives is rather normal in the world. In fact he is quite decent. You cannot expect that he is the way we are." And there will be few boys and girls who say: "We do not want to have anything to do with this man and his music, because it is not pleasing to the Lord. It is an abomination to the Lord. And why should we grieve our Father in heaven Who has adopted us in His love?" It is in fact that love which is at stake. And those young people who say: "We like his music," must be aware that they did not search their own feelings, or that they do not want to do this.

And they do not want to believe other and older people who say to them that they simply have to believe their parents when they themselves do not understand or sense these things. The latter is perhaps the most difficult thing to do, if not impossible. Particularly today. For are things not so, today, that young people have their own culture, and that the older generation are outsiders and have to stay out. Is not the youth culture an independent unity, the basis of the new man who refuses to grow old in an annoying way or in faith, but wants to enjoy life and kick against life? Many young people do not want (anymore) to take something on trust at the authority of someone else, because the powers that stimulated the youth culture banned all authority. Authority is dirty. Authority is fascism. And he who wants to protest against this (way of thinking) has to watch out, for he is a fascist himself. No, young people have to find out themselves. The programmers have already determined how things will look later. And the church is already on its way back. Long live the discotheque! Long live sex!

## STIGWOOD

It is useful to bring the man behind the scenes to the front. For without this man behind the scenes Travolta would not have become much. Travolta himself is only a puppet in the big show, just like Elvis Presley. Perhaps Travolta is a little more intelligent and knows how to withdraw from the dark powers that rule over him. The man behind the scenes has the

name Stigwood. And Stigwood is no fool. He senses very accurately just what all the boys and girls do not sense or do not want to sense. He knows that big money cannot be gotten where faith in Christ flourishes, but where sin blooms. Stigwood is a man of reputation. Some time ago he helped the Bee Gees into the saddle, and he is the great man behind monster-productions like the rock-musical "Hair," the rock-opera and movie "Jesus Christ Superstar," and later "Oh! Calcutta," and also of the rock-opera "Tommy."

It is remarkable that when these productions are tested on their contents, they contain everything with which contemporary man keeps himself desperately busy. Faith has fallen away, and man seeks other certainties: certainties of astrology and sexuality ("Hair," "Oh! Calcutta"), humanism and idols ("Jesus Christ Superstar").

Here we see Mr. Robert Stigwood's business-instinct. For him nothing is holy. Yes,

ments from the tent of Lamech: violence and sex. Stigwood knew the commercial value of it. That is why a big show was built up on the basis of that magazine article. It pictures a boy from a working class quarter in New York, a discotheque "which reflects the picture of a generation living on sex, drugs, and disco-soul." Well-known elements: music, dance, jealousy, fighting, attempted rape. A sure success! The best music of the Bee Gees (Staying Alive), the best dancer (John Travolta); shortly: "one of the better disco-movies, because it remains recognizable for the youth" (p. 133).

The last part of the article tells about two other Stigwood movies with John Travolta playing a leading role and bringing in millions for Stigwood and Travolta by means of showing things which God's Word calls abominations.

### Young people seek a way out . . . In deafening music and vehement dancing they find their relaxation.

one thing is. Money is holy for him. He serves mammon with total devotion. It is time that we expose that mammon not only as an image, but as a real idolatrous power that is ruthless.

Is man insecure? Stigwood makes him adore the sun. Are the World Council of Churches and humanism getting more influence? Stigwood immediately places a different Jesus Christ on the stages, who is acceptable to contemporary man. Is it so that a new morality has to free man from taboos and cramped conditions? Stigwood sees profit in nude scenes.

In short, all that modern, twentieth-century man, set adrift, tries to get in his insolence and despair, is grasped by Stigwood in order that he can administer it to mankind in the idiom of this time and of the youth; of course, for a proper remuneration. Business is business. This is how it happens: Stigwood reads an article in an American magazine dealing with youth problems. Young people seek a way out in these hard times. Saturday evenings seem to become the great entertainment evening. In deafening music and in vehement dancing young people with their own style find their relaxation. The author of that article made a connection with the rock 'n roll culture of the fifties. Stigwood read that article and twelve hours later a contract was signed for a new production! "Saturday Night Fever . . ."

Stigwood had discovered Travolta already through a television series, in which John played the role of an impudent school boy whose aggressive behaviour over against teachers and the getting of the girls were the strongest sale arguments. They were the well-known argu-

I have taken over most of what Nijhof wrote, in order to give the reader the possibility to taste the world of sin, of greed for money, of sex and violence in modern youth and adult culture. I hope that parents will urge their young people, their teenagers, to read this article about John Travolta, and *discuss it with them*, in the light of God's commandments. I also hope that our young people will become aware of the fact that this abominable life of rebellion and violence, of immorality and sex, of drugs and booze, and of money provokes the Creator to anger and invokes His terrible wrath. I hope that they can recognize the devil in it, and in

### A wise man is cautious and turns away from evil; but a fool throws off restraint and is careless.

faith say "no" to it; that they hate this "culture," because their God hates it.

Many of the youth of the Church have their own record player or 8-track stereo or radio. Many listen to the modern top-hits with its hard rock or western music and songs. Those songs speak of rebellion, sex ("love"), drugs, and parties. And young people say so easily: we do not listen to the words. We do not even hear the words. We only like the music. But modern psy-

chology has pointed at the fact that besides our conscious mind there is the subconscious. And what we do not hear with our conscious mind can stick to our subconscious, and so greatly influence us and our behaviour. We hear the word "party," the word "love" (= sex), the word "booze," the word "rebel," with our subconscious "ears," and they become the things that we get used to and think we need. And there the holiness of life for the Lord disappears. How many young people who let those songs of the world with its appealing rhythm or beat batter their Christian mind as much as they can, and, also in that way, themselves become rebellious against parents and teachers and boss; and themselves need those Saturday or Friday night parties with dancing and booze, with drugs and sex? How many young people in the covenant marry without having had pre-marital sex, without having controlled themselves as children of the Lord, also because they let their minds (maybe without being aware of it) be influenced by the devil, by the thinking of an ungodly, wicked world via that constant bombardment of sex songs and, perhaps, sex books? Let me conclude with a wise word of King Solomon, written especially for young people:

"A wise man is cautious and turns away from evil

But a fool throws off restraint and is careless" (Proverbs 14:16).

A wise man fears. He fears God, and therefore is afraid to sin against the LORD, His God; so, he flees away from evil, from what is sin. But a fool, that is one who does not fear the LORD, who does not care, who lets himself go, fol-

lowing his sinful passions and desires, while he, nevertheless, feels safe. You have to be a fool for that.

May our young people find their way out of the grip of sin and devil in Christ Jesus. May their lives become filled with the Holy Spirit and be placed in the service of Christ, to win also others for Christ, saving them from the devil's emptiness for God.

J. GEERTSEMA





News items are published with a view to their importance for the Reformed Churches. Selection of an item does not necessarily imply agreement with its contents.

### POPE OFFERS SERVICES

Pope John Paul II offered his services as mediator in international conflicts during a reception for diplomats in the Vatican. He already sent one emissary, cardinal Antonio Samore, to Latin America to mediate between two countries on that continent.

It is good when influential persons offer their good services, but there is a catch here which we should not forget. The pope claims to be the representative of Christ and the head not only of the church but also of the world. The doctrine of the "two swords" has never been revoked, but is still very much alive. That is also the reason why the pope speaks out on various happenings and situations in the world. Times may change, personalities may differ, but the old claim remains.

### LEFEBVRE IN THE VATICAN

Archbishop Marcel Lefèbvre, the rebellious and suspended archbishop, was again in the Vatican. He was "examined" by the department which is responsible for the maintenance and the purity of doctrine. No results have been made known. The Vatican even seems to keep silent about the fact that the suspended archbishop was examined. As our readers know, Lefèbvre refuses to accept and live up to the reforms which were introduced by the Second Vatican Council, especially those concerning the liturgy.

### BOOK ON LIBERATION AND LIBERATED CHURCHES

Mr. P. Jongeling, Mr. P.J. de Vries, and Prof. J. Douma have been working for quite some time on a book about the Liberation. It is the intention

that the book shall also contain photographs of historical value. The title of the book will be *Het Vuur Blijft Branden — de Gereformeerde Kerken (Vrijgemaakt) in Nederland 1944-1979*, and will appear around August of this year.

At the same time two smaller books will be issued written especially for the young people. These books, too, will describe the Liberation. The larger one (*Vrijgemaakt, Toch Gebonden*) is more directed towards the students of secondary schools, while the smaller one (*Vrijgemaakt — Waarom Eigenlijk?*) has more the elementary students in view.

The *Nederlands Dagblad* contained a request for photographs, snapshots, etc.

We pass the latter request on. Perhaps there are some among our older members who have interesting pictures in their possession, perhaps even unique photographs. The authors have in mind pictures from 1930 to present. It will be understood that only pictures made in the old country are meant. Do not send pictures right away. If you think that you have any good ones, just write a letter, telling about them. You will then receive a form on which you can fill out all sorts of particulars. Then you can send the form with any pictures you might have. The address is:

Mr. Tj. S. de Vries  
Rehorstplein 2, 3815 MK,  
Amersfoort, The Netherlands.

I am sort of looking forward to the appearing of this book. It will also be very good to have a thorough look at it to see whether at least the two smaller volumes could be translated and used at our schools and societies. I do not know whether there would be a market for the larger volume, but it would be worthwhile to look into it. We hope that, once the books have reached the market, we can see more about them.

### ITALY

An Italian judge has launched a suit against the archbishop of Florence because the latter called Italy's abortion law "a boil that ought to be cut out." According to the judge the archbishop is guilty of violation of the constitution by offending the republic and the constitutional institutions.

### BUSSUM, THE NETHERLANDS

Some information is given about the work which is going on in Spain. Especially now that Spain has severed the "official" ties with the Romish

Church, there may be more room for the activities of others. Two names have become well-known in the course of the years: they are the names of the Rev. J. de Segovia and the Rev. J. Ranéro. They both studied for some time in The Netherlands, if I am not mistaken, and they both have now for some time worked with an automatic telephone answering service. Good results have been achieved with that, it is reported.

Whoever dials a special number — which is brought to the attention of the public in various ways — can receive some kind of "spiritual help in distress" by means of an approximately four minutes long message which is changed regularly. At the end of the message the listener is invited to give his name and address in case he wants further help.

### SYNODICAL CHURCHES

The General Synod the Synodical Churches in The Netherlands has been adjourned. That in itself is already something noteworthy, for it has become a permanent institution.

Before the adjournment a critical report was handed out to the Synod by the so-called "Youth Synod," containing the result of one-and-a-half years of "accompanying" the work of the Synod by that group of young people who act as a synod in its own right.

At the presentation of that report, Evert Nieuwlaar, student at Groningen and chairman of the "Youth Synod," said that the notion that age also means wisdom should be discarded. Age and experience should become subject to discussion. At present it is still so in the church that the older ones determine the service.

Yes, that's how it goes nowadays. When the Holy Scriptures were written (inspired by the Holy Spirit, I thought — and that seems still to be in the confession) it was common conviction, "Is not wisdom found among the aged? Does not long life bring understanding?" but nowadays it is the other way around, for wisdom seems to be with the younger ones and understanding with the adolescents. Certainly, "better a poor but wise youth than an old foolish king who no longer knows how to take warning," Ecclesiastes 4:13; but that appears to be an exception. In olden days it was so that a wise son brought joy to his father; nowadays it seems that the discovery that a father has some wise moments brings joy to the son.

That young people take a lively in-

# The Healing Power of the Lord's Prayer

One of the greatest gifts our Saviour left behind when He ascended to His and our Father, is the gift of prayer. "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life, no one comes to the Father but by Me," John 14:6. "All that you ask the Father in My Name, He will give you," and so on. Because we have (N.B., "we *have!*") a great High Priest, "let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need," Hebrews 4:14-16.

But the Lord did more than give us a free access to the throne of grace; He also gave us a perfect *model* for our prayers, i.e., The Lord's Prayer. A model, and thus to be used as a model; not by endlessly repeating the words of the model, but by following its guidelines in our prayers. Our Heidelberg Catechism provides us with a beautiful paraphrase in Lord's Day 45-52, which,

put together, would make a beautiful if not perfect prayer.

This prayer, then, has a tremendous *healing power*.

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It may take some convincing to make us agree with that. We are surrounded, not only by sects and movements which put stress on healing powers, but equally by all kinds of psychological theories which claim that they can help man to get rid of his so-called *negative feelings*. We as Reformed believers do not have much room for "feelings." We love sound doctrine, stress faith, and sometimes act as though we are not plagued by "negative feelings," whatever that may mean.

Well, if that were true, so much the better. But then we are still surrounded by millions who suffer from

these negative feelings, which drive them to drugs, to mental hospitals and psychiatric couches, and . . . to suicide. The least that may be expected from us would be that we, who (as we claim) do not suffer from such feelings, may, as "the strong ones" help those who are weak in this respect; cf. Romans 15:1, etc.

But, is it indeed true that we do not suffer from them ourselves? Are we strangers to anything "human"? We may try to cover them with slogans, or try to suppress them, but they are there, nevertheless, and do us only more harm if and when we (try to) suppress them.

The Lord would not have given us His model of Prayer, if He hadn't known that we need it very badly. We do ourselves a service by acknowledging it.

Although we reject the medicine that is offered by much psychology and psychiatry as being purely humanistic, there is nothing wrong with learning from psychology and/or psychoanalysis how to define and name these negative feelings which destroy so many lives. Everyone who has ministered to God's people for a long or short period, knows very well that many among us, if not all, at one time or another, suffer from these destructive feelings, or from some of them. Let us mention them, and then see and experience the healing power of the Lord's Prayer for those who suffer in this respect.

The list is disturbingly long. Without laying claim to completeness, we mention *frustration*, a lack of *purpose*, a lack of sense of *significance* and *self-esteem*, *insecurity* and *anxiety* (the Lord had to say to His disciples, "do not be anxious," Matthew 6). Then, of course, there is the feeling or awareness of *guilt* (and we do not say "*guilt-feelings*," which only means that you feel guilty but you do not need to feel guilty, that you may blame others). Another self-destructive feeling is that of *resentment* against our fellow-men. The list may be concluded with *fear*, which is closely related to anxiety and insecurity.

When one looks at all these terms which in our day have become so popular, and thus hardly need any further explanation, one may discover one or more of these negative feelings in one's own life. If not, and yet we do not feel all that happy, and there are many clouds in our life that rob us from the sunshine, we might even need some

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## INTERNATIONAL — Continued.

terest in what is going on in the Church can only be a reason for joy and happiness; that the older and elderly people are not free from mistakes and shortcomings and, sometimes, foolishness, is a well-known fact. And yet the Scripture speaks as it did speak three thousand years ago and will be speaking until the last day.

### AROUND 1400

John Huss preached in Bohemia and administered the communion with both bread *and* wine. For this and other alleged "heresies" he was burned at the stake. Now the National Council of Catholic Bishops in the U.S.A. decided that celebration of the communion with both bread *and* wine would be permitted, although they maintained at the same time that this does not mean at all that they have abandoned the traditional belief that Christ is wholly and entirely present under either species. *Come Celebrate the Mass*, issued by the Winnipeg Catholic Pastoral Centre, (*Nihil Obstat*) contains the following information:

#### *Communion Under Both Species*

The Church has always affirmed its faith in the fact that the Risen Lord is present under the symbol of bread

and equally present in the same way under the symbol of wine. Therefore, the practice, in the Latin Rite, of giving communion to the faithful has been, and continues to be, under one species, usually that of bread. However, the Church has always recognized, that in adopting such a practice, the sign of eating and drinking suffers in its true manifestation. Therefore, in recent years, it has extended communion to the faithful under both species in celebrations where this seems most appropriate, and where the practical difficulties presented by large congregations are minimized.

Here it is as everywhere: the Romish Church may change its practices, it does not abandon its doctrines. And then people are speaking about an eventual unity of all Christians under the leadership of the pope . . .

When Pope Paul VI died, he was eulogized left and right. The radio brought us an interview with an archbishop who praised the late pope as a man "who was a spokesman not just for the Catholics but for the whole Christian community."

No, thank you, sir, not for me. vO

proper, pastoral help to discover that we, of all persons, are not completely free from them. Some of them may lie at the root of problems that we have with ourselves, with our family-life, with fellow-believers, with the church, and with the world of our day, with the news that nearly drowns us, and with the way we cope or do not cope with it.

\* \* \*

Let us now see how wonderfully the Lord has provided for healing in all these respects by giving us the perfect model for prayer. When we suffer from a lack of sense-of-purpose and significance, and thus also of insecurity, He teaches us to pray, "Our Father Who art in heaven, Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done as in heaven so on earth." That means that God has a plan! A plan with the world and with me-in-that-world. A plan that He most assuredly is fulfilling and will fulfil. And I, my life, is a part of that plan, has a place in that divine plan. Thus my life has meaning and significance and purpose, even though I do not always "feel" it. By praying these petitions I receive (thus promised my Saviour) the power to overcome my negative feelings by faith that His Kingdom is there, and that it comes. Also that His will is done, becomes history, and that my commitment is to do His will as far as I am concerned. Thus I may overcome my feeling of inferiority because I am obviously important enough for God to give me a place in His world, His church, and my name is written in His book. The world may not care about that, but He cares about me.

"Give us this day our daily bread . . ." — should this gift-of-prayer not help us overcome all feeling of anxiety? We have in Matthew 6 that wonderful paraphrase on this fourth petition in verse 25ff. He cares much more about us than about birds and flowers, and look how He feeds them, adorns them with beauty! Why should I then fear, with inflation running high, and with human predictions about a coming shortage of most-essential goods for mankind? "Do not be anxious"; that's not only a command, it is a most-precious gift coming from a loving and caring Father.

Feeling of guilt, yes . . . , a feeling that goes deeper than just a hackneyed empty repetition of a line we learned from our youth on, but a deep consciousness of falling so awfully short of doing Father's will. Could we only say with our Saviour, "It is my daily food to

do the will of my heavenly Father"! Even if we have been kept from serious crimes, there are all those sins-of-omission: things I should have done in love and gratitude, but didn't . . . — my life is sometimes so bare, so flat, so dry and empty . . . And then, my Saviour tells me, I may go to the throne of mercy every day and plead for forgiveness every day, and then my Father will look at me "as though I had never had nor committed any sin, yea as though I myself had accomplished all that Christ has accomplished", Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 23, and "that He will remember my sins no more," Lord's Day 21.

Not confessing these my sins, not praying this petition, causes many destructive, negative feelings, "rotteness of the bones" (Psalm 32) but confessing them sets me on a Rock!

The Lord added to this fourth petition (and thanks to Him for doing that!) "as we also forgive those who have trespassed against us." Oh, how thoughtful of Him, for here He touched upon the evil of resentment, and in the same act provided for healing. Notice how in Matthew 6 exactly this petition receives further explanation, verses 14, 15 ". . . if you do *not* forgive men their trespasses . . ." In that case, you yourself will have to live, and die, without divine forgiveness, but it also falls back upon your own soul as that bitter resentment that is no less "rotteness of the bones" than not confessing our guilt. It eats at your life; you yourself are the one who suffers most from the bitterness of resentment.

Again, if we accept this addition to the fourth petition, and by the grace of God are able to forgive others, the sun will again shine in our hearts and we will be freed from one of the most destructive feelings under the sun.

Finally, there is fear, not only the feeling of fear, but fear itself. It seems

to permeate all mankind today. Fear for war, terrorism, calamity, communist takeover, fear for the devil and his demons, the temptations that are so strong, and I am so weak; see Heidelberg Catechism Lord's Day 52, first answer. Our Saviour wants to deliver us from that fear. That's why He added, "and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one." I may say "Amen" to this last petition, not only because I really mean it, but because "Thine is the power and the glory forever!" No one can rob me of that. His plan stands, and I am part of it, even though the mountains should be moved into the heart of the sea. Study your Bible and you will find out how often He says, "Fear not!" Praying this prayer leads me out of my (real or imagined) fears, and into that feeling of safety and security that Moses expressed in his last song, Deuteronomy 32:11: "Like the eagle He bears us on His wings."

"And though this world,  
with devils filled,  
Should threaten to undo us,  
We will not fear. . . ." (Hymn 51.3.)

One more remark needs to be added. In this life we never come so far that we have left all our "negative feelings" behind us. Some may even attack us on our death-bed, when we, with David, remember "the sins of our youth," Psalm 25. That's why the Lord added the word, "daily" or "every day," and Paul added to that again, "pray constantly, without ceasing," I Thessalonians 5:17. That is the absolute pre-condition for "rejoice always," verse 16, and "give thanks in all circumstances," verse 18.

Prayer is a struggle, a constant and remaining struggle. In that way we will enjoy its healing power over and against all "negative feelings."

G. VAN DOOREN

### MATTHEW 6:25, 26

Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you shall eat or what you shall drink, nor about your body, what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?

# news medley

Quite a few of our readers always turn first to the pages with advertisements, to see whether someone has passed away whom they know, whether any babies were born, and so on.

Turning to those pages, we notice that the advertisements for teachers are already appearing with regularity. The need for teachers is great. Last year already the Guido de Bres High School could not add Grade XIII for lack of capable teachers. This fall at least one other school will be opened, the Lord willing, namely the one in the Brampton/Toronto area. In previous issues we reported on the acquisition of property in that area, and it is the serious intention and the wholehearted endeavour of the brothers and sisters there to start a school this fall. They are already advertising for teachers, and it would be a sorrowful matter, if, for lack of teachers, they would have to postpone the opening.

There is another Church where the members are working on their school. That is in Watford. The Watford Consistory received a letter from the Steering Committee of the School Society. In this letter, "they also asked the opinion of the consistory whether they would agree to some arrangement with the society to use the church building in setting up a school before long. The permanent board would have to work this out with the consistory. The consistory briefly discussed this matter, and favours the initiative of the society, and is willing to cooperate in any way possible to promote this very worthwhile cause."

It is my impression that the society would wish to use the facilities of the Watford Church. That would be a solution for the time being. The same was done in Winnipeg for some time. In Winnipeg the basement of the Church building was even finished with a view to having classes in there, if I am not mistaken. Whether the Watford facilities are suitable for the purpose is something I cannot judge.

The steering committee apparently has high hopes, for in a convocation for a meeting of the school society they insert the following sentence, "Perhaps the Lord will provide a way for us to get the school going this fall."

It would be beautiful if it were possible; but apart from the question whether proper facilities can be obtained, there is the above mentioned question whether we shall have a sufficient number of teachers. It is a remarkable fact that the majority of those who aspire to that "office" are girls; and we can only be happy when they enter into the holy marriage state. They should not, for the sake of our schools, stay single or prevent the birth of children. It would, however, be good when a larger number of our boys would prepare themselves for this task. I can well understand the hesitation with some to choose this profession: when you see the many difficulties which teachers have with unwilling and rebellious students, it does not look very inviting. But, on the other hand, when our young people realize the enormous value of Reformed education, that may induce them to let at least their thoughts go into that direction. And once the gears of thinking have been set into motion, who knows?

Neerlandia succeeded in getting another teacher from The Netherlands. He was expected to arrive in the begin-

ning of January, and that would enable him to start working right at the beginning of the after-Christmas holidays, give or take a few days.

In Neerlandia the Consistory also makes use of the presence of Reformed teachers. It is not easy to keep all things going when a Church is vacant. When, besides that, the position is somewhat isolated, that brings special difficulties. One of those difficulties is that it is virtually impossible to have a minister come over every week to conduct catechism classes. Thus the knowledge and experience of the teachers is being used in Neerlandia. We read, "The Consistory thought that the teachers should give the catechetical instruction. Last year it was divided up between the teacher and a consistory member. They thought it better if the teacher taught it only. The board fully agreed to this. This is what will be done. The consistory will be visiting these classes periodically." It is nice when in this manner a "vacuum" can be filled, at least partially.

We are jumping somewhat back and forth, as our readers can notice. The discussion today is arranged more topically than geographically. Let's bring some change into that.

We were in Neerlandia anyway; then it is only twelve miles to Barrhead, unless they shortened the route since I was there last. The Barrhead Consistory concluded its examination of the Acts of the Synod Coaldale 1977. "There were no objections to any decision made. Nevertheless, the Consistory is somewhat disappointed that this Synod in its decisions on several matters could not come to a decision. The consequence of this is that the next General Synod will be overloaded with work and certain appointed committees also."

That some committees are overloaded with work is already a fact; that is not something which will have to wait till after the next General Synod. And I may say that the committees which I know are working hard to fulfil their mandate(s).

I agree with the Barrhead Consistory that it is too bad that the previous Synod could not bring everything to a conclusion. On the other hand, there is also an advantage in that. We should not forget that we are still in the stage of up-building. It may, then, be more than twenty-eight years already since the first Canadian Reformed Church was instituted, but that does not mean that in these twenty-eight years we have been able to come to a well-settled Church-life as we were used to in the old country. I just mention the *Book of Praise* on which we have been working now for more than twenty years, actually already from the first Synod, the one in 1954 on. And since the decisions which we make may stand for many years to come, we had better be very careful. It is always better to discuss questions and proposals thoroughly before a decision is made than that we should have to change a decision which was made. Much will depend in this respect on the preparation in the Churches themselves, just as much as on the work and the reports of the various committees. And if we should be unable in 1980 to conclude most of the matters which have been under discussion and have been object of study now for quite a few years, then we work towards the 1983 Synod. The only disadvantage of that is that some of the older ones may have been taken home by the Lord before that and that others will have to work themselves into the matter; but that is a hurdle which has been taken more often in the past; it will not be insurmountable.

Meanwhile, I hope that our committees will make good

progress and that the Churches will be faithful in their studying the material submitted.

As for the *Book of Praise*, I expect to write something about that shortly, and for that reason I shall not elaborate on it right now.

The other time I mentioned already that the Wielenga family had the pleasure of embracing their household effects again after a lengthy separation. Now that they have their own "stuff" again, the owners of the various borrowed items are requested to come and get their lawful possessions back. There is just one exception. "It does not apply to the owners of lamps in the livingroom. We kindly request their patience till our own lamps are fixed, which takes time as they are more or less upside down, from down under." I hope not that they are like lamps put under a bushel.

We skipped Edmonton, and make up for that now: "The Consistory decided to purchase four Sony cassette recorders to tape sermons." In most Churches the services are recorded for use by those who are ill or who for other reasons were unable to attend.

It is too bad that no fewer than four separate recorders had to be purchased, and I wonder whether any one could give us some information about a set-up whereby we could do with just one machine. In Fergus we have a cassette recorder which records three cassettes at the time, but these recorders cannot be taken out of the "briefcase" in which they are imbedded. That is no problem nowadays, for most families have a little cassette player at home, either separately or in their stereo set, and if a family does not have one, there is always the possibility of borrowing one from a good friend or relative. It seems, however, that in The Netherlands the set-up for this kind of thing is far more elaborate and far more satisfactory than we have it in most instances. Perhaps we could improve on it and design or have a system designed which could be recommended to all our Churches for use as a recorder as well as a sound system, if not for the auditorium then anyway for those who are hard of hearing.

We move on to the Valley.

"It is a fact that the 'big' choirs are always short of men. Perhaps we could remedy that situation by starting a boys' choir," we read. Practice hours were already announced. Even though such a choir may not attain the status and stature of the Wiener Sangerknaben, it would be a marvellous thing if such a choir would prove to have a fair chance of survival. The change of voice could mean a rapid turnover, but when our boys have learned to love good music, they may indeed continue as members of the "big" choir. And the benefit for the singing on Sundays would almost be immeasurable. Much success!

Another happy note is that the Abbotsford Consistory decided to purchase the proposed pipe organ. That is another of the wishes which I cherish, fulfilled. Or, to speak with the *Church News* (in which we sometimes find a little bit of Latin), one of my *pia desideria* (pious wishes). That it was a *pious* wish is certain.

Some riddle which, perhaps, will be solved at some time in the future is a new year's resolution which the Rev. Vander Wel made. I have an idea that he refers here to a secret event (secret in so far that no one outside of Abbotsford is allowed to know it), but perhaps it will become clear in the near or far future. Here it comes: "One of my personal New Year's resolutions (do you have so many too?) was, to include once in a while some 'pastoral peppermints' in our *Church News*. Let's see what comes out of it!" Yes, we are

very curious to see what comes out of it. Don't keep us in suspense too long.

From New Westminster we report that the old manse has been sold. Too bad, on the one hand, for we have such good memories about that house and its location. When we came to New Westminster a goat-farm occupied the region; when we left it was one of the better neighbourhoods in the Royal City. Perhaps it has even improved since we left, seeing the price the Church got for the house. However, I'm not going to tell you.

From the Consistory report we further mention, Home Mission Committee requests permission to place a guest book in the church, and also a possible change in the time of the morning worship services.

It is suggested that the Committee first find out the best time for a Sunday School, which is to be held for the children in the neighbourhood of the church. When this information is available, it will be presented to the congregation and the consistory will do its utmost to support the Committee, if it is necessary to change the time of the morning service.

That is then about all the news from the Churches for this time. I could still mention that the Consistory of Guelph decided "to have the Mission Aid Committee collect the \$15.00 fee per communicant member." I could also mention that in Burlington preparations are made already for the Vegters who expect to come on furlough from Irian Jaya in this year.

As for personal matters, the Rev. H. Scholten has taken ill and is in the hospital right now. Initially not too much seemed to be wrong, but just on the day of this writing and even while I was typing the News Medley I heard that there was a set-back. Let me conclude with the wish that the Lord may restore our brother's health to such an extent that he can return home and also can again take up his work at our College, a work which he loves from the heart and which he has been doing with utmost dedication.

vO

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High,  
who abides in the shadow of the Almighty,  
will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress;  
my God, in Whom I trust."

For He will give His angels charge of you  
to guard you in all your ways.

On their hands they will bear you up,

lest you dash your foot against a stone.

Because he cleaves to Me in love, I will deliver him;

I will protect him, because he knows My Name.

When he calls to Me, I will answer him;

I will be with him in trouble,

I will rescue him and honour him.

With long life I will satisfy him,  
and show him My salvation.

- from Psalm 91



# A Day of Joy

## ORDINATION AND INAUGURATION OF REV. J. DE JONG

The congregation of the church of London, Ontario, greatly rejoiced when, on Sunday, October 22, 1978, Cand. J. DeJong could be ordained as Minister of the Word and installed as Pastor in London. It was a beautiful Sunday, and the church was filled to capacity as our Councillor, Rev. W. Huizinga, led the morning worship service. He delivered his sermon based on the text II Corinthians 5: 18-21, and the theme was:

"The Word of God through Paul about the Ministry of Reconciliation":

1. the God of this reconciliation
2. the message of this reconciliation
3. the ambassador of this reconciliation

God is the sole Author of creation, election, and reconciliation. Let the congregation remember that all a servant gives is from God, as the apostle Paul writes to the Thessalonians, "We constantly thank God that when you received from us the Word of God's message, you accepted it, not as the word of man, but what it really is, the Word of God, which also performs its work in you, you who believe." Let the critics beware lest they criticize God with human standards, for all that comes from the apostle is from God. That this is from God comes out very clearly in the message of reconciliation. God reconciles us to Himself in Christ, reconciliation being the removal of what alienates us from God: sin; reconciliation beginning and ending with God, through Christ. God's wrath against sin did not cause Him to destroy man as punishment, but even in His wrath He demands justice, and therefore Christ put on our sin, paying our debt to God, making us righteous before God. Then God sends out men trained in the Word, equipped by the Holy Spirit, and they go out and tell of this message of reconciliation. These ambassadors go on behalf of God and in the place of God. Yet these ambassadors are human, sinners, and not perfect. However, the congregation hears not the voice of a man but the voice of God and Christ the Saviour. The minister tells the congregation to accept this message of reconciliation and apply it in the heart. It is his tremendous responsibility for which he needs prayer.

He must persuade, with compassion for the eternal welfare of his sheep.

Ordination then followed according to the form. The congregation witnessed the ceremony of the laying on of hands, and after prayer of thanksgiving the congregation sang as a prayer for our new Pastor Psalm 134:1 and 3.

After the service was concluded, words of congratulations and welcome were spoken by delegates from various sister churches and Classis Ontario South. Then all had the opportunity to congratulate Rev. J. DeJong and his parents in the church meeting hall.

\* \* \*

In the afternoon service Rev. J. DeJong preached his inaugural sermon for which he chose as his text Matthew 13:52. The theme of his sermon was:

"The Lord Jesus entrusts to His disciples the treasures of the kingdom":

1. Content of these treasures
2. Administration of these treasures
3. Value of these treasures

The model which was used throughout the sermon was that of a householder taking out of a bag new and old treasures. The householder is the one trained in kingdom service and the treasure which the Lord Jesus speaks of is the Word of God, the gospel of the kingdom. The treasure is old in that the message of salvation is as old as history itself. After the fall into

sin, the promise of salvation is given; the whole gospel was given at the beginning of history. God continually called His people back to the message of life, and therefore what was old was continually new. Time and time again, the people are called back to the covenant requirements: love for God and love for one's neighbor. The Lord Jesus fulfilled the old promises, and therefore His works of redemption are the new treasures of the kingdom to the disciples. They didn't always understand the full implication of the fulfillment of the promises, because they hadn't yet witnessed His suffering and death, and the Holy Spirit had not yet been poured out, but they did receive insight through faith in Christ, as the Redeemer, the Son of God. He ordained them to become scribes of the kingdom. They were weak, humble men, called to be masters and teachers of the gospel. They were to be scribes of the old order, readers and teachers of the sacred writings; yet they were to be scribes of the kingdom, the kingdom conveying the new depth of the message of salvation, and the fulfillment in Christ. They were weak and sinful men, receiving understanding from above for the message of life, receiving power to heal and teach. We must not therefore concentrate on the ordained person, but turn in all humility of heart to the message of reconciliation, becoming learners in the school of Christ, to increase our understanding in the mystery of His ways. The treasure is always old and always new. We must all be scribes of the kingdom, grow in the fight against sin, boldly proclaiming the gospel. Then we will all partake of the reconciliation through Christ

## Welcome Evening

On the evening of November 23, 1978, the congregation at London met to welcome Pastor J. DeJong into their midst. Many brothers and sisters turned out, bringing along many children, and when everyone had finally found a place to sit in the meeting hall, the Vice-Chairman of the consistory, Br. U. Krikke requested us to sing Psalm 138:1, 2, and then he read II Thessalonians 2. In his opening prayer he thanked the Lord for showing His goodness in again blessing us with a pastor. After prayer he spoke words of welcome and

read several letters of congratulations from other congregations.

The Women's Society then assembled to read a poem written by Sr. R. Pieterman in conjunction with the Society's name "According to Thy Word." This was followed by a presentation of a gift to our Pastor by the Young People's Society, who thoughtfully presented him with a coffee-maker. On behalf of the consistory, Br. R. DeGroot then presented our "retired" member of the congregation, Br. C. Lindhout Sr., with a copy of "Ontario



*Children of the Covenant Christian School, singing.*



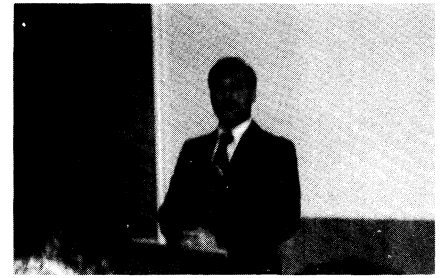
*Mr. J. Pieterman, Chairman of the Mens' Society presenting the desk lamp.*



*Mrs. T. Heyink, President of the Womens' Society, presenting the wall clock, aided by Br. U. Krikke.*



*John Nobel presenting the gift for the Young People's Society.*



*Pastor J. DeJong addressing the congregation.*

Since 1867" by Joseph Schull, in thanks for the assistance he gave in acquiring and redecorating the manse.

Then followed a very noisy but enjoyable intermission during which coffee and cakes were served, along with fruit juices for the children.

The meeting then reconvened in the church auditorium where the children of "Covenant Christian School" proceeded to entertain with several charming and humorous musical numbers. They introduced all the school children by family, all in rhyme and music.

The choir, "Deo Cantamus," then sang "The Lord Bless You" by P. C. Lutkin, "Prayer of Thanksgiving" arranged by E. Kremser, and finally Hymn 51 with the congregation.

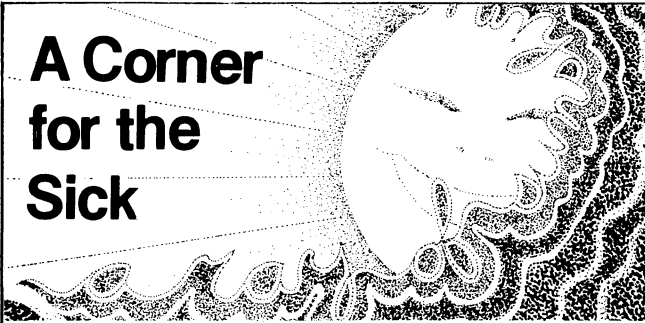
After returning to the meeting hall Psalm 145: 1, 2, was sung. The Men's Society, "Search the Scriptures," presented the Pastor with an antique desk lamp, and Br. J. DeVries spoke on behalf of the School Society. The Women's Society brought out their gift of a wall clock. On behalf of the catechism students John Krikke welcomed the Pastor to his new task of teaching catechism. The Young People's Society then read a poem written for the Pastor by Mrs. F. Smouter.

Finally, Pastor DeJong had the opportunity to address the brothers and sisters, and he thanked all for coming and participating, also the children for adding their contributions to the evening. The congregation sang Hymn 49: 1, 2, resoundingly, and Pastor DeJong closed the meeting with prayer.

We may thank the Lord for allowing us to share the communion of saints in such a heart-warming way. We must also pray constantly for our Pastor, for the strength and wisdom to carry out his task of ministering to the flock. We trust our heavenly Father for all things, also that He will bless us as Pastor and as congregation.

A member of the congregation

# A Corner for the Sick



"I keep the Lord always before me; because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved."

Psalm 16:8

How can David be so sure that God is at his right hand? He is so sure of it, he exclaims, "I shall not be moved"! Does this not sound self-righteous and self-satisfied? We may learn from all David's psalms that he is not self-righteous; his immovability is not of stubbornness over a self-opiniated point; but always in everything, he asks the Lord for counsel. "I bless the Lord, Who gives me counsel; in the night also my heart instructs me" (verse 7).

This counsel not only guides him and makes him assured of God's care. It provides him with such trust that "his heart is glad and his soul rejoices" (verse 9). He is not even afraid of what shall happen to him bodily, for to him to know the path of Life means everything. "I have no good apart from Thee" (verse 2). David did not have an easy life. He had many enemies. David shows beautifully how the Lord takes care. In Psalm 18 he sings of it. God's promises are true. He is a shield for all those who take refuge in Him (verse 30). In all of David's psalms we may notice his great love and respect for the Lord. He does not think little of God's might and promises. He is of a humble spirit, because he knows the Lord. In Psalm 19, he speaks of it beautifully, combining creation and redemption together. Our forefathers saw God's redemptive grace and power too, both in nature and in God's revealed Word. We confess it in Article 2 of our Belgic Confession: "We know God by two means: First, by the creation, preservation, and government of the universe; which is before our eyes as a most elegant book, wherein all creatures, great and small, are as so many characters leading us to see clearly the invisible things of God, even His everlasting power and divinity, as the apostle Paul says (Romans 1:20). All which things are sufficient to convince men and leave them without excuse. Second, He makes Himself more clearly and fully known to us by His holy and divine Word, that is to say, as far as is necessary for us to know in this life, to His glory and our salvation."

"The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell in it" (Psalm 24:1, 2). Should this not make us very humble, indeed? In Revelation we read that the redeemed will sing the

song of Moses (read Exodus 15). We may notice in this song that all glory and honour is given to God.

Exodus 15:13,

"Thou hast led in Thy steadfast love the people whom Thou has redeemed, Thou hast guided them by Thy strength to Thy holy abode."

Revelation 15:3, 4

"And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb saying: "Great and wonderful are Thy deeds, O Lord the Almighty! Just and true are Thy ways, O King of the ages! Who shall not fear and glorify Thy name, O Lord? For Thou alone art Holy. All nations shall come and worship Thee, for Thy judgments have been revealed."

.....

## HYMN 53

Musikalisches Handbuch, Hamburg, 1690



1. The Lord is King! Lift up thy voice,  
O earth, and all ye heavens, rejoice;  
From world to world the joy shall ring,  
"The Lord omnipotent is King."
2. The Lord is King! who then shall dare  
Resist His will, distrust His care,  
Or murmur at His wise decrees,  
Or doubt His royal promises?
3. The Lord is King! child of the dust,  
The Judge of all the earth is just;  
Holy and true are all His ways:  
Let every creature speak His praise.
4. He reigns! ye saints, exalt your strains;  
Your God is King, your Father reigns:  
Through earth and heaven one song shall ring,  
"The Lord omnipotent is King!"

Hymn 53, Book of Praise

Please send your requests to:

**Mrs. J.K. Riemersma**  
380 St. Andrew Street E.,  
Fergus, Ontario N1M 1R1.

# A Canadian Reformed School in the Brampton-Toronto Area

The need for such a school has been felt in both congregations for some time. A Canadian Reformed School Society existed in Brampton for many years while most of the children attended the Canadian Reformed School in Burlington. In Toronto, where most of the children attended the Willowdale Christian School, a similar society was started a few years ago. Both congregations had in mind the establishing of their own elementary school. However, limited membership and rising costs were great barriers. As a result, approximately two years ago, the two societies joined together to form the Canadian Reformed School Society of Brampton and Toronto.

The Board was given the mandate to find suitable central accommodation in order to open a school in September 1978. Finding such accommodation in an area convenient to both of our congregations proved to be no small task. It soon became apparent that whether we bought the minimum two acre parcel in a developed area or ten acres in an undeveloped area, the total land cost would be about \$100,000. In the undeveloped area (farm land) the smallest parcels of land that could be sold were ten acres. This seemed to provide the most flexibility and so an offer to purchase was made for ten acres a few miles to the west of Woodbridge. Since this piece of land was part of a forty acre section severance had to be obtained before the purchase could be finalized. This severance approval took a year to obtain. Some local resident farmers objected to our application because they did not want a "Reform" school in their area. Other minor objections were also raised, but thankfully the severance committee saw fit, by a 4-3 vote to grant our request, contingent upon us meeting certain conditions imposed by the Board of Health. One of these conditions was the finding of suitable and sufficient water. It took four drillings before a satisfactory well was located. The first drilling was done on our neighbour's property, which had been designated by the real estate agent as the land we were buying. The only trouble was we were supposed to be three hundred

feet further north. This method is not recommended as a means of getting acquainted with your neighbour.

By now, it was October 1978 and we were of course in no position to comply with the membership mandate to open a school in September 1978.

While the severance application was being pursued, a successful fund raising drive was held among the members to raise nearly \$50,000 so that half the purchase price of the land could be paid upon closing.

The design for a four classroom school was also completed during this period and at the time of this writing, tenders have been requested for its' construction. We expect that it will cost \$150,000. to \$175,000.

We hope to start in September 1979 with three teachers covering eight grades. The budget for the first year calls for about \$100,000 which will necessitate a parental fee of \$40 to \$45 per week and a membership fee of \$15. per week. These figures are based on 25 to 30 parents sending about 55 children to school, and about 30 non-parental supporters. From the time that the combined Society was established until the school opening September 1979, the membership, in addition to the special drive for \$50,000 will also

have contributed another \$50,000. to cover expenditures to be made prior to opening the school, purchase of two buses, purchase of classroom equipment and supplies, financing costs during construction, and mortgage payments, as well as having sufficient monies set aside to cover two months salaries.

Included in the first year budget is \$25,000 for interest payment on a mortgage of \$200,000 to \$225,000. Hoping to reduce this expenditure, we plan another drive in our congregations to raise a further \$25,000. which would be applied to the land purchase. In an attempt to wipe out the final \$25,000. owing on the land, we plan an appeal to the brothers and sisters in the Canadian and American Reformed Churches in order to raise the required money. We are faced with unusually high land costs largely resulting from minimum site size requirements and astronomical prices to be paid for an acre of land. Please consider seriously if you can help alleviate this when and if approached by your local school society. A contribution of about ten dollars per confessing member will provide the additional \$25,000 needed as well as lower the parental fee by five dollars per week.

Although our membership stands at only about 55, we are convinced that the Lord guides us and will also provide the means for us to open a school dedicated to Him where His children will receive an education based upon and in agreement with His word.

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## PSALM 54

1. O God, save thou me by thy Name And by thy  
pow-er vin-di-cate me From all my foes who  
loathe and hate me; In-cline thy ear: thy help I claim.  
A-gainst me haught-y men did rise And ruth-less  
foes are out to slay me: Be thou my help to  
save and stay me; All fear of God those foes despise.

## Letters-to-the-Editor

### SILENCE OR ARGUMENT?

It is a privilege to receive letters to the editor; it shows at least that your article received some attention. J.G. (not from Chatham but from Burlington) reacted to my remarks about the New International Version, and he did so in a sympathetic manner.

He first questioned the wisdom of expressing a personal opinion before the committee, appointed by Synod 1977, has published its report. I had thought about this point myself too, and had also considered the fact that in our small community editors and contributors of *Clarion* themselves are often members of one or more Synodical committees. To speak in a Pauline manner: I know of a man who is a four-fold synodical deputy and who at the same time is an editor of our magazine. Should we exclude him from publishing anything that is related to the work of deputies? Or should he use this opportunity to inform the members of the Canadian Reformed Churches about topics that are to be dealt with in ecclesiastical assemblies? I think in the last way, although *during* a General Synod I will refrain myself from making public statements concerning issues that are on the agenda and have to be decided on by our brother delegates.

Mr. Gelderman—he is the author of the letter to the editor!—also brings forward the fact that certain writers tried to influence their readers and to promote a certain opinion before anything had been officially published. I do not know which situation he refers to, but I gladly use his letter to point out that a publicist most often tries to influence his readers and to promote a certain opinion. He should do so, however, only on the basis of published material so that his readers can check his statements. As editor I suppose that the

### OUR COVER

*Grand River, Elora, Ontario. The abrasive effects of the water leaves its mark even on rock as can be seen here. This landmark has been officially called "the tooth of time." (Photo courtesy Leo Lodder, Fergus, Ontario.)*

readers of *Clarion* are mature Christians who can judge the arguments for or against in a certain issue. Even as editor I do not have to agree with every statement in this magazine. It is a good thing that in a living community brothers argue together, openly discuss those issues that have to be brought to a decision in ecclesiastical assemblies, and so try to build up the life of the Church of Christ, Who is our universal Bishop.

J. FABER

### RICH OR POOR?

Mr. J. Gelderman was struck by my recommendation that many families in our midst should use the availability of common Scripture reading at the table to compare translations. He is of the opinion that comparison by "laymen," who have no knowledge about the original language, tends to become an emotional issue.

I am thankful for his modesty and agree completely with the suggestion that nobody should make sweeping statements with respect to translation, if he does not know the original language(s). But I thought of families, e.g., with teenagers who by language study develop a certain feeling for smooth or stilted style. Comparison of different translations can provoke a good discussion about the meaning of a Bible text. Then there is "the analogy of faith": the Word of God is harmonious and every believer can compare Scripture with Scripture. A new translation may stimulate us to check a concordance and to find other Scripture passages where the same word is used or the same divine truth is expressed.

Theologians are nothing but Levites who have to prepare the tools of the priests. I would not be surprised if so-called "laymen" would be able to draw the attention of our deputies to certain flaws in a translation.

Another point that our correspondent brings up is the lack of unity in Bible reading at home, in church, and in the schools. He is afraid that, by using different versions, we lose the knowledge by heart of certain parts of the Bible. This remark made me choose the heading: Rich or Poor? Is the abundance of new translations our richness or our poverty? Every one will be in

favour of knowledge by heart of Scripture passages. Therefore, in our Reformed schools the same translation should be used as in catechism class and on the pulpit. Our regional schools should utilize the same version as (the majority of) the congregations do that form their constituency. The abundance of new translations may not lead us to the *poverty* of not knowing the Scriptures by heart at all anymore.

My correspondent is not in favour of a consistory giving a bridal couple another translation than the one in use on the pulpit. But if the wish of the newly married couple is born not from a spirit of rebellion but from the desire to study another translation beside the one they already possess; if this wish concerns a translation like the King James Version, the R.S.V., the N.A.S.B., or the N.I.V.; and if all other things (e.g., the costs) are equal, why should a consistory not comply with it and thus stimulate the interest for Bible study? Let school and church use the same translation, and let the home be the place where in personal and family Bible reading we compare some versions. The right strife for Scripture knowledge by heart should not make us neglect the *richness* of the availability of more than one translation of God's always surprising Word.

J. FABER

### THE BITER BITTEN

High up in air, the sea-new spies

An oyster lying on the strand,

Graping with open shell t' inhale

The summer breeze from off the land.

To seize the luscious morsel quick —

With sudden swoop and deadly pick

The sea-bird darts his horny beak

Between the oyster's shell:

But closing on it quick as thought,

The bird is by the oyster caught!

And nipped so tight and well

That strive and struggle as he may

To free his beak and get away,

He keeps him captive, firmly bound

Till with return of tide he's drowned.

Who to themselves would all appropriate

Of that they see, deserve the sea-mew's fate;

Nor doth he fail to meet it soon or late

Whose nose is thrust in everybody's plate.

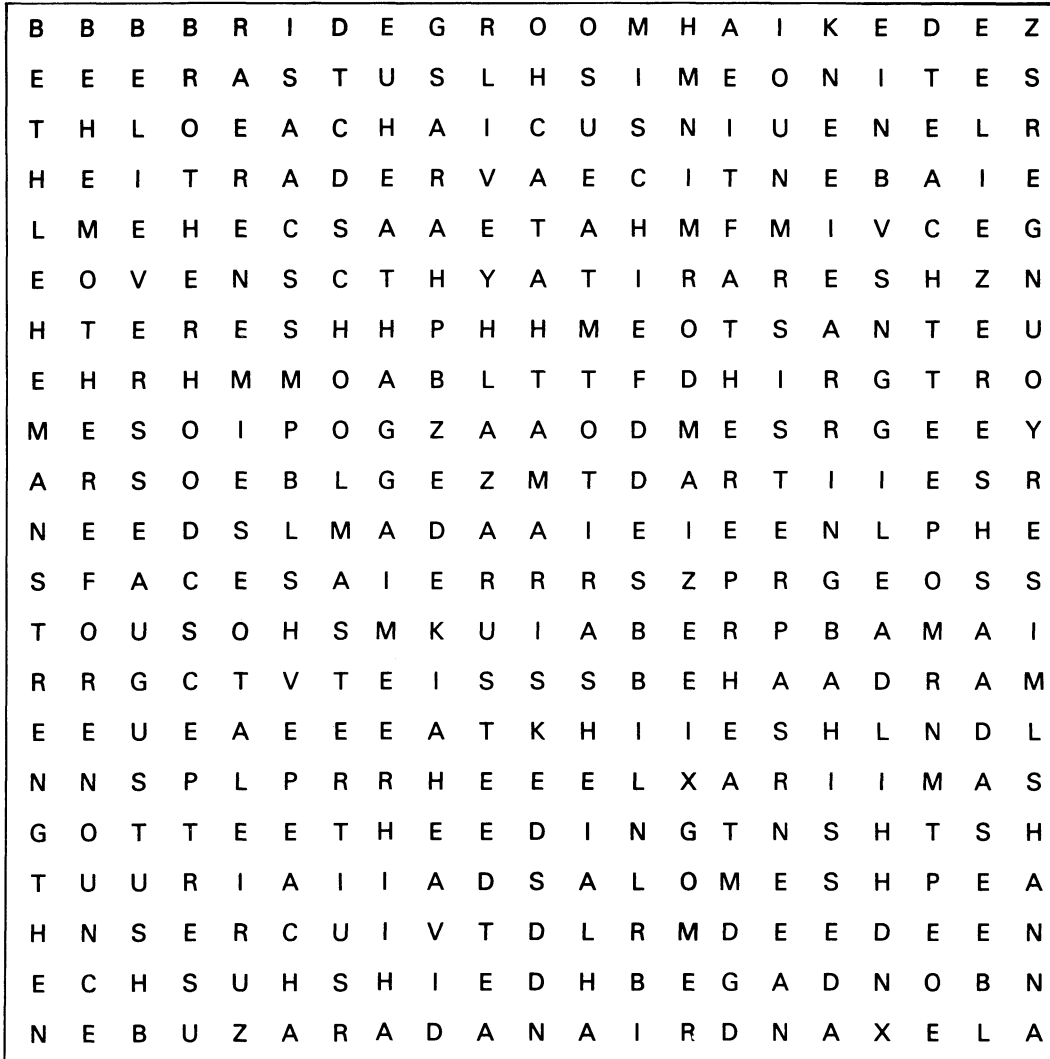
JACOB CATS, 1577-1660

Trans. R. Pigot (1860)



# Word Search - Puzzle No. 40

Words overlap, diagonally, across, up or down, and backwards. All letters are used up.



- |             |          |             |             |              |           |                  |
|-------------|----------|-------------|-------------|--------------|-----------|------------------|
| Alexandria  | Bondage  | Father      | Knee        | Ointment     | Sister    | Younger          |
| Achaicus    | Beor     | Faces       |             | Obscure      | Slaves    |                  |
| Arabians    | Beg      |             | Lappidoth   | Ovens        | Spirit    | Zedekiah (twice) |
| Augustus    |          | Gilead      | Lamented    |              | Sarah     | Zeresh           |
| Anised      | Captive  | Gomer       | Lazarus     | Philistia    | Shied     | Zuriel           |
| Ahlai       |          | Glee        |             | Palms        | Shush     | Zeeb             |
| Adah        |          |             | Ministry    | Peach        | Steed     |                  |
| Adam        | Dedan    | Handbreadth | Mischief    |              | Seth      |                  |
| Amen        | Deed     | Heeding     | Mathat      | Recovered    |           |                  |
| Anna        |          | Haggai      | Misery      | Renounce     | Therefore |                  |
| Asia        | Ezrahite | Hatach      | Mother      | Regards      | Tamarisk  |                  |
| Axle        | Earring  | Heath       | Maize       | Rages        | Thyatira  |                  |
|             | Elamite  | Hemam       | Moses       | Rash         | Testius   |                  |
| Beltshazzar | Eliezer  | Hoped       | Moab        |              | Teresh    |                  |
| Breastplate | Erastus  | Hate        |             | Schoolmaster | Trader    |                  |
| Brotherhood | Enemies  | Heth        | Nebuzaradan | Simeonites   | Teach     |                  |
| Bridegroom  | Easter   |             | Nephishesim | Strengthen   | Teeth     |                  |
| Beersheba   | Entice   | Ithream     | Nimrod      | Sceptres     | Tiras     |                  |
| Believers   | Each     | Isaac       | Nebai       | Sixteen      | Tribe     |                  |
| Bethlehem   | Edar     |             |             | Salome       | Tars      |                  |
| Behemoth    | Evil     | Keepers     | Ossifrage   | Siloam       | Tune      | Sjanie Bethlehem |

# our little magazine

Dear Busy Beavers,

Didn't I tell you there's good news about our BIRTHDAY FUND PROJECT?

We have already collected more than 1/3 more than last year!

I'm really happy so many Busy Beavers have sent in a contribution!

After all, don't you think our Theological College is very important to all of us?

We can show that by giving our present when the College's birthday comes in September.

So that's how long we have!

Wouldn't it be wonderful if EVERY ONE of our Busy Beavers participated in our PROJECT?

Just think what a wonderful present we could give!

I'm counting on lots of mail, all right, Busy Beavers?

\*\*\*\*\*

## Skiing

Mostly every Saturday  
A-skiing I will go.  
I go up the hill  
And come down with a chill.

When I come down  
I get watery eyes.  
Boy, I have fun  
When the day is done.

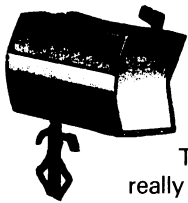
I wish I could do it  
Every day,  
In the winter  
And in May.

I'll do it in the east  
I'll do it in the west  
I'll do it  
Which ever place is best!

Can you tell how much Busy Beaver *Sharon Leffers*, the writer of the poem, enjoys skiing?

Are you having winter fun, too?

Thanks for sharing, Sharon!



## From the Mailbox

Thank you for your letter, *Jackie Kobes*. It was really nice to hear from you again. How far is it you travel to and from school every day? Thanks, too, for your contribution for the BIRTHDAY FUND PROJECT, Jackie!

Hello *Edith Hofsink*. How did you enjoy your Christmas concert? Thank you for making a puzzle for us. Will you send me the answers, Edith? Then we can share it with the other Busy Beavers.

How is your crewel work coming, *Joanne Hamoen*? And can you play your recorder already? What are you making in your sewing classes? Bye for now, Joanne. Write again soon.

Do you help to look after all those animals on your farm, *Theodore Kanis*? That's an interesting thought, Theodore, that you are uncle to our only Busy Beaver "down under"! Thanks for the riddles. I'm sure they'll amuse our Busy Beavers.

Who sits in your new chair the most, *Cecile Van Woudenberg*? You or your Dad? Have you skated a lot, Cecile? And do you have lots of snow to play in with your brother? Thanks for the poem! Keep up the good work!

I'm so happy your poem had a happy ending, *Jeanette Eelhart*. For a moment you had me wondering? It was nice to hear from you again, Jeanette. Write again soon.

## QUIZ TIME

Let me warn you, Busy Beavers!

You have to be sharp to answer these riddles!

Are you ready?

1. There was a man in a big box. There was no way he could get out. All that was in there was a desk and a mirror. How did he get out?
2. There was a man in a big box. There was a door with a lock on it, but it was locked. He wanted to get out because he was thirsty. All that was in there was a bed spring and a piano. How did he get out?

Answers: 1. Look in the mirror. You saw. Take the saw. Cut the desk in half. Half and Half make a whole. Climb out the hole and you're out. 2. Go to the spring. Take a drink. Then go to the piano. Take the keys. Open the door, and you're out.

Thanks for sharing Busy Beaver *Theodore Kanis*.

## Bubble Quiz

No school today? Play this game.

Find out how the children blowing these bubbles are keeping busy.

