

# Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

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## The Contents of Correspondence

Our attentive readers must have understood that I did not finish my discussion of the relationship of the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands and the Canadian Reformed Churches in connection with the recently-published Acts of the Synod at Groningen-Zuid (1978).

This time let us take our starting point at the decision of the Dutch Synod with respect to ecclesiastical fellowship or communion with the Canadian Reformed Churches. Article 189 is headed: "Besluit inzake kerkelijke gemeenschap met de Canadian Reformed Churches."

In passing, a previous decision spoke of the desirability of a new name for "correspondence with churches abroad." I have the impression that "kerkelijke gemeenschap" in the heading of Article 189 and in the decision with respect to the Igreja Presbiteriana Evangélica do São Paulo shows the direction in which the Dutch terminology goes: "ecclesiastical contact" for a preliminary or temporal relationship, "ecclesiastical fellowship (or communion)" for the permanent and more encompassing sister church relationship. The only difficulty will be that the Christian Reformed Church uses the term "ecclesiastical fellowship" for a relationship that is broader than our Dutch sister churches have in mind. One could ask "What is in a name?" and remark that the names "communion," "fellowship," "contact," "fraternal relations," "inter-church relations," and "correspondence with churches abroad" are all determined by the specific rules that are valid for a certain ecclesiastical relationship or the specific content that is given to it. The term "correspondence" has a historic background in the Church Order of Dort (Art. 48) and has the advantage that in our days it evokes the image of "churches abroad." Ecclesiastical communion is also maintained between sister churches within the same confederation. The disadvantage of the term "correspondence with churches abroad" is that it makes one think of a simple exchange of letters. It does not convey the deep meaning of a sister church relationship, in which the parties take mutual heed that they do not deviate from the truth, and in which they accept each other's attestations and permit each other's ministers to preach the Word and to administer the Sacraments. We wish the Dutch deputies wisdom; they have to come up with proposals for a more precise and clear English terminology at the next General Synod. Do our readers have any suggestions?

From the heading we come to the decision itself. With a blush we pass by the praise that our churches received for their accuracy in the correspondence, their delegation to this Synod (the Rev. M. Van Beveren), their appeal to the Christian Reformed Church, and their decision regarding "ecclesiastical contact" with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. "Let another praise you, and not your own lips." But what about the future? What charge did the Dutch deputies receive for the correspondence with the Canadian Reformed

Churches? Well, here it follows:

- a. de Canadese zusterkerken zo spoedig mogelijk van de uitspraken van deze generale synode inzake de 'inhoud van de correspondentie,' alsmede van bovenstaande op de hoogte te stellen;
- b. met de deputaten van de Canadese zusterkerken overleg te plegen om te komen tot voorbereiding van een Gereformeerde Internationale Synode;
- c. ook met het oog op deze Gereformeerde Internationale Synode de Canadese zusterkerken te verzoeken zo spoedig mogelijk een positieve beslissing te nemen inzake het aangaan van kerkelijke correspondentie met de Presbyterian Church in Korea;
- d. de Canadese zusterkerken te verzoeken hen op de hoogte te houden van de voortgang en de vruchten van haar 'kerkelijk contact' met de Orthodox Presbyterian Church en zo mogelijk ook zelf nader contact met de Orthodox Presbyterian Church te zoeken;
- e. diligent te zijn ten aanzien van wat de Canadese zusterkerken inzake haar nieuwe kerkboek aan informatie doen toekomen en haar deputaten inzake eventuele rapporten dezerzijds te informeren.

The first point instructs the deputies to inform the Canadian sister churches as soon as possible about the statements of this general synod concerning the "contents of the correspondence." This regards the distinction between a preliminary, temporary "ecclesiastical contact" and the full correspondence with sister churches abroad.

Although the terminology is taken over from the Canadian Reformed Churches themselves in their relationship with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, it will be good to discuss the report of Committee III, Acts 1978, pp. 529-535. This report deals with the contents of the correspondence with churches abroad and especially with "de nieuwe fase sinds Amersfoort 1967." It shows the clear difference between the Synod of Amersfoort 1948 and the one of Amersfoort 1967.

Amersfoort 1948 refused the invitation to join the Reformed Ecumenical Synod, among other reasons, on the basis of the considerations that "no ecumenical confederation is possible between 'churches' that do not live within one federation in their own country," and that "the basis for the 'ecumenical synods' as established by the so-called 'First Ecumenical Synod' cannot be ours because of the contradictions in the confessions mentioned."

The change came in 1967 with the request for correspondence with the Presbyterian Church in Korea. This Church had informed the Dutch churches of the following facts:

- a. it had adopted the Westminster Confession and the two Westminster Catechisms as confessional standards, and

- the Westminster church order as rule for its federation;
- b. it maintains fraternal relations with "The Orthodox Presbyterian Church" and "The Reformed Presbyterian Church (Evangelical Synod) in America," "correspondentie in ruimere zin";
  - c. it decided to become member of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod and to send delegates to its assembly in Amsterdam 1968.

Now it is remarkable that the Synod of Amersfoort 1967 embarked upon a new course. Let our Dutch brothers tell the story themselves:

Alleen het onder "c" genoemde was voor de generale synode van Amersfoort een verhindering, niet de beide andere zaken. Daarin verschilt Amersfoort 1967 duidelijk van Amersfoort 1948. Immers, voor haar afwijzing van deelname aan de Gereformeerde Oecumenische Synode noemde . . . 1948 . . . ook als een van de overwegingen: dat de grondslag van deze oecumenische synode de onze niet kan zijn wegens tegenstrijdigheden in de opgesomde belijdenisgeschriften . . . . De deze uitspraak voorstellende commissie noemde als bewijs: "De Westminster confessie spreekt anders over het verbond en over de regering der kerk dan onze Nederlandse belijdenisgeschriften."

De generale synode van Amersfoort 1967 refereert zich echter aan het oordeel der deputaten van de Groningse P.S. "dat de Westminster confessie een voluit gereformeerd belijdenisgeschrift is" . . . . Die was voor haar geen verhindering voor kerkelijke correspondentie. Hier gingen de Gereformeerde Kerken duidelijk een nieuwe phase in van correspondentie met buitenlandse kerken . . . . De in Amersfoort ingezette ontwikkeling heeft zich in de laatste jaren snel voortgezet, in contacten met presbyteriaanse kerken in Ierland en Schotland, in Japan en op Taiwan . . . .

Dat dan in deze Westminster confessie (evenals in de catechismi) hier en daar enigszins anders gesproken wordt over verbond, kerkregering en kerk dan in onze Nederlandse confessies, kan reden zijn voor verder kerkelijk gesprek, maar geen verhindering voor kerkelijke correspondentie naar de aangenomen regels en ook niet voor het *samenkomen in een Gereformeerde Internationale Synode*. Dit laatste ligt duidelijk in de lijn van Amersfoort 1967. Deze synode heeft namelijk de 'Presbyterian Church in Korea,' die de Westminster confessie heeft, als zusterkerk in de Here kerkelijke correspondentie aangeboden (Acta 1978, p. 530ff.).

It is a long quotation in Dutch but I deemed the issue too important not to insert it. Let me summarize it in English.

Amersfoort 1967 did not regard the Westminster confessional standards and Presbyterian Church government an impediment for full ecclesiastical correspondence. In the case of the Presbyterian Church in Korea, only the membership of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod would have been an obstacle. There is a clear difference between Amersfoort 1967 and Amersfoort 1948. The latter considered that the basis of this ecumenical synod cannot be ours because of contradictions in the confessions mentioned. The committee argued in 1948 that the Westminster confession speaks about covenant and church government in a different manner than our Three Forms of Unity. The General Synod of Amersfoort 1967, however, took over the judgment of deputies of the Regional Synod of Groningen "that the Westminster Confession is a thoroughly Reformed confession" and therefore no impediment for ecclesiastical correspondence. In Amersfoort 1967

the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands entered upon a new phase in the correspondence with churches abroad. Sure, the Westminster standards speak about covenant, church government, and church now and then, here and there, a little bit different from our Three Forms of Unity, and this may be a reason for further ecclesiastical discussion. It is, however, no impediment for ecclesiastical correspondence according to the accepted rules and also not for a Reformed International Synod. This is clearly in the line of Amersfoort 1967. This Synod acknowledged the Presbyterian Church in Korea that adheres to the Westminster Confession to be a sister church in the Lord and offered ecclesiastical correspondence.

The report now draws the line further and argues that membership of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod and relations to a third party may be an impediment for full correspondence but that in those cases the form can be chosen of a preliminary and temporary "ecclesiastical contact."

When I read this, I was amazed and also somewhat annoyed at the manner in which the differences between the Reformed and the Presbyterian confessional standards and church polity were taken lightly. To formulate it succinctly: while the Canadian Reformed Churches in the line of the Synod of Amersfoort 1948 take the differences in doctrine and church government seriously and therefore offer "ecclesiastical contact" *in order to discuss these differences* (and also to discuss membership of the RES, etc.) for our sister churches in The Netherlands, right from the beginning of the first contact with a Presbyterian Church in 1967, they were no impediment whatsoever for full ecclesiastical correspondence and for the formation of a Reformed International Synod. The only impediment could be the relationship to a third party.

Let me immediately add that I regret the way in which Committee III of the Synod of Groningen speaks about the confessional differences between the Westminster Standards and the Three Forms of Unity: "op enkele punten enigszins anders," "hier en daar enigszins anders over verbond, kerkregering en kerk." Did our Dutch brothers not study our Acts 1971, 1974, and 1977? Our deputies for contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church have dealt with the differences in confession and church polity in an extensive manner three times. Synod 1971 concluded "that divergencies in confession and in church polity are serious enough to remain the subject of further and frank discussion" and requested the General Assembly brotherly and urgently to regulate church government wholly in accordance with Scriptures. The 40th General Assembly of the O.P.C. in 1973 stated from their side that if the Canadian Reformed Churches are prepared to accept a fraternal relationship, "then a basis for continued, and potentially fruitful, talks on doctrine and polity may be established." Our last Synod thankfully recognized the O.P.C. as a true Church of our Lord Jesus Christ, and offered a temporary relationship called "ecclesiastical contact." At the same time, it considered further discussion on divergencies in confession and church polity to be desirable, and stipulated, among other things, the rule "to be diligent by means of continued discussions to use the contact for the purpose of reaching full correspondence." Committee III of Groningen-Zuid praised our churches for their caution and prudence, but it should have pointed out that these are caused not only by the issue of relations of the O.P.C. to third parties, but, first of all, by the existing divergencies in confession and church polity.

Let me also candidly add that I do not have qualms

*Continued on next page.*

# press review

## IN WHAT MANNER CAN THE COVENANT BE BROKEN?

In my previous Review we saw again that, according to Prof. H.C. Hoeksema, the covenant cannot be broken, for it is an eternal covenant with the elect. And I pointed to the fact that the Old Testament knows the term: "breaking the covenant," and that Prof. Hoeksema interprets this "breaking" the covenant as "violating" the covenant, as the verb "to break" is also used in connection with a commandment: "breaking" God's commandments means violating them, transgressing them.

I thought it would be good to go deeper into this matter. Therefore, this "Press Review" does not really have the format of a real press review. It has more the character of a word study. I hope that the reader, nevertheless, is willing to follow me. But let me first repeat briefly what Prof. Hoeksema wrote and what I quoted in *Clarion* of November 4, 1978. Here it is again:

In the first place, the term that is translated by "'break'" is the same term that is used more than once in Scripture with respect to breaking a commandment or breaking a law. Now, obviously, this cannot mean that the law as such is broken in the sense that it no more stands whole and complete and valid. The opposite is true. That law remains in force. The same is true with respect to the covenant. The term "break" refers to a violation, a transgression of the covenant, even as the same term can be used to refer to a viola-

tion or transgression of God's commandments . . . . In the second place you will notice, if you check up on the various Scripture passages, that they refer to the Old Testament situation. This too is an important factor to remember in connection with this entire question. We must bear in mind that the peculiar dispensation of the covenant in the Old Testament was the dispensation of the law. At Sinai, the Mosaic law . . . was the form which was given to God's covenant. This is undoubtedly a large factor in Scripture's speaking so often of the breaking of the covenant on the part of Israel. It was precisely because that covenant was under the dispensation of the law that it could be and was broken in the sense of not observing and keeping that law.

And

Both Scripture and our Baptism Form emphasize that God's covenant is eternal and unbreakable.

It was for a better understanding of what Prof. Hoeksema means that I did some studying up on that Hebrew verb "to break." And I would like to share this study with Prof. Hoeksema and the readers of *Clarion*, and, I hope, also the readers of *The Standard Bearer*.

The Hebrew word occurs forty-two times in the Old Testament. It is used in connection with different words: breaking a covenant, breaking the commandments, breaking plans and advices, and so on. Let us pay some detailed attention to these different matters that can be broken.

Three out of the forty-two times the verb "to break" is connected with

God's commandments or law. In the first place, Numbers 15:31: Someone who has sinned with a "high hand" must be cut off from among God's people, because he has despised God's Word and "broken His commandment." Then there is Psalm 119:126, where we read that it is time for the LORD to act, because His "law has been broken." And in the third place, there is Ezra 9:14; Ezra asks "Shall we break Thy commandments again and intermarry?" In these cases the meaning is violating and transgressing, while the law itself stands whole, according to Prof. Hoeksema. I will come back to these three texts later.

Let us first take the next connection. The verb "to break" is used together with the word "vow" in Numbers 30:8, 12, 14, 16. Moses speaks here about vows to the LORD made by daughters or wives. If a father or a husband hears it or hears about it and he disapproves, he can "break" this vow. Now "breaking" a vow does not mean violating against it, transgressing against it, but it means: making it void, annulling it, destroying it, so that it is no longer in force.

The verb "to break" is also used in connection with a plan, a counsel, or an advice. In II Samuel 15:34 and 17:14 we read that the LORD led matters so that the advice of Hushai "broke" the counsel of Ahithophel. Hushai did not only go against the counsel of Ahithophel, he "broke" it. It was not followed up. It had no effect. It was destroyed. And in line with this we read in Isaiah 14:27 that nobody can "break" the plans or counsel of the LORD. Nobody can annul them so that they are not realized, but destroyed and have no effect.

*Continued on next page.*

## EDITORIAL — Continued.

about our recognition of the O.P.C. as a true Church of our Lord Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, I regret that for this purpose our last Synod considered that "our Netherlands sister churches in 1967 accepted the statement of the Regional Synod of Groningen that the Westminster Confession of Faith is 'een *voluit* Gereformeerd belijdenisgeschrift' " (emphasis mine). This statement in my opinion — an opinion in the line of Amersfoort 1948 — is too abundant; it is inconsistent with the call for further doctrinal discussions, and it does not really help our Presbyterian brothers. Our Dutch sister churches entered a new phase in 1967 without sufficient investigation. Our Canadian Reformed Churches, however, should follow their own course. This also has consequences for the other points mentioned by Groningen-Zuid: Korea and the proposed Reformed International Synod. But let us leave those for the next time, the Lord willing.

J. FABER

## Pentecost

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance (1-4) . . . but this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: "And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; yea, and on my menservants and my maidservants in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. And I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth beneath, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; the sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and manifest day. And it shall be that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (16-21).

Acts 2

And Isaiah 44:25 and Job 5:12 say that the LORD "breaks" the omens of liars and the devices of the crafty. He makes them come to a quick end (Job 5:13). The same we read in Ezra 4:5 and Nehemiah 4:9, 15. In the first text we hear that Israel's enemies try to "break" the plans of Israel to rebuild the house of the LORD. In the latter we read that God "broke" the plans of Israel's enemies. In all these cases there is again a destroying at stake. Plans or counsels have no effect and have to be abandoned. It is no different with Proverbs 15:22.

The next group of cases where we find the Hebrew verb for "breaking" is one in which I have brought together those connections that occur only once. Here is Psalm 85:4: "Restore us again, O God of our salvation, and 'break' Thy indignation against us." "Breaking," here, clearly means doing away with God's wrath so that it is no longer there. Next there is Job 15:4. Eliphaz accuses Job that he is "breaking" the fear of God. He means that Job, by his way of speaking and acting, is doing away with, and is destroying, the fear of God. In the third place, we have in this group Job 40:8. The LORD Himself is now speaking to Job, who has called God to come and give account of His doings with respect to Job. Job had complained that God was wrong and did not do right to him. Now God comes to Job and asks him: "Will you even put me in the wrong? Will you condemn me that you may be justified?" Literally, the first part of God's question is: "Will you 'break' my right?" The word that I translate by "right" can mean "the decision" or "judgment" of a judge. It can also mean: someone's (legal) right that he presents to the Judge in order that justice be done to him. And this must be the meaning of the word here. It is God's legal right to do with His creatures what is pleasing to Him. And even when God goes a hard way with His children, He does not do injustice to them; He does not wrong them. Since Job said that God had done wrong to him, God asks: Job, will you deny, will you annul and destroy, My rights? In the fourth and last place, there is Ecclesiastes 12:5. The passage of Scripture of which this verse is a part speaks about old age, when everything loses its strength: so ears and eyes; and teeth fall out. And then we read: "and desire fails." The explanation which I read is: sexual desire fails. It is broken down. It is no longer there. So also

from these four cases we must conclude that the verb "to break" does not mean: "to violate" but "to destroy."

From here we continue with those cases in which the verb under investigation is connected with the word "covenant." And also here I would like to make a division into groups. The first group of texts speaks about men breaking the covenant with men. The second group speaks about God breaking a covenant. And the third group speaks about men breaking the covenant with God.

In the first group we have I Kings 15:19 and its parallel text II Chronicles 16:3. Asa, king of Judah, requests Benhadad, the king of Syria, to "break" his covenant ("league" in the RSV and King James; "covenant" in Hebrew) with Ba'asha, the king of Israel, and to make a covenant with him, King Asa. Breaking the covenant here clearly means: annulling it, destroying it, so that it does not exist anymore. In this group Isaiah 33:8 belongs, too, speaking about the deplorable situation of people and land. It says also then that "covenants are broken," which must mean covenants among people. And further . . . there is Ezekiel 17:15, 16, 18, speaking of Judah's king with whom the king of Babylon had made a covenant under oath. The accusation is that Judah's king did not keep the oath, but broke the covenant, the relation, with the king of Babel, by turning to Egypt for help. Also here "breaking" the covenant is not only transgressing and violating it (although that too), but it is also destroying the covenant relation: from his side the king of Judah severed it, did away with it; for him it did not exist any longer.

The second group of texts speaks about God's (not) breaking the covenant with His creatures. I would like to start with Jeremiah 33:20, 21. We read there: "Thus says the LORD: If you can break My covenant with the day and My covenant with the night, so that day and night will not come at their appointed time, then also My covenant with David, My servant, may be broken, so that he shall not have a son to reign on his throne, and My covenant with the Levitical priests, My ministers." What is at stake here is not that the LORD says that He will not break His covenant. That is clear. At stake here is the meaning of that verb "break" in connection with those covenants. What would happen if those covenants would be broken? The answer is clear from the text itself. If

God's covenants with the day and with the night would be broken, those covenants would be annulled. They would no longer exist. They would be destroyed. Day and night would no longer be there in time. And the same is true with respect to the covenant with David. If that would be broken, David would not have a son to reign on his throne. That promise, that covenant, would be annulled and destroyed. It would no longer exist. Here, I repeat, "breaking" the covenant clearly is: annulling it, destroying it; not only and simply: transgressing it or violating it. To be complete, we also mention Leviticus 26:44. We read here the promise of the LORD that He will not forsake His people in captivity. He will not utterly destroy them and "break My covenant with them." Also here "breaking" the covenant would mean making an end to the relation with

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Israel, destroying it. In this group is also Jeremiah 14:21, where the prophet prays: "Do not spurn us for Thy name's sake; do not dishonour Thy glorious throne; remember and do not break Thy covenant with us." What would happen if God would break His covenant with His people? Would He only transgress and violate against it? Can God violate and transgress anyway? It is clear: if God would break His covenant, He would annul it, so that it would not work any longer. God would sever the covenant relation with His people. That is the meaning of the word "break" here. And if the reader takes the trouble of looking up and studying Zechariah 11:10 and 14 he will find that also there the term "breaking the covenant" again has the same meaning: annulling it. There is only one place left. It is Judges 2:1(-3). There we read that the Angel of the LORD spoke to Israel: "I have said I will never break My covenant with you and you shall not make a covenant with the inhabitants of this land . . . . But you have not obeyed My command . . . . So now I say I will *not* drive them out before you, but they shall become adversaries to you . . . ." In Exodus 23 we read of God's promise that He would send His Angel and that the Angel would destroy the Amorites out of the land, for Israel, but that Israel, as God's instrument, had to slay the Amorites with God's ban; Israel was not supposed to compromise and make covenants with the Canaanites, and spare their lives. In that way of obedience, or faith, the Angel of the LORD appeared to Joshua as a warrior and said: "Now have I come." In the light of Exodus 23 this meant: to destroy the Canaanites and to establish Israel in the promised country. But in Judges 1 we read that Israel was unfaithful to the LORD. They spared the lives of the Canaanites and made covenants with them: the Canaanites had to serve the Israelites as their slaves. Then, in Judges 2, we read that the Angel of the LORD said: that covenant which He would never (literally: not in eternity) break, He now will not fulfil: He will no longer destroy the Canaanites. Those Canaanites will become a snare for Israel. The "covenant" here must be the promise of the Angel to completely destroy the Amorites. That "covenant" He now will not realize any longer because of Israel's sin of disobedience. So, that covenant, that promise, is destroyed. It is no longer in force.

And again we come to the conclu-

sion that when the Bible uses that word "break" in connection with the word "covenant," now also when God is the subject of the breaking," this verb does not simply mean a violation of the covenant, but an annulling, a taking away, so that it is no longer there and no longer works.

Now we come to the group of texts that speak about men, Israelites, who, on their part, break the covenant. There is, in the first place, the text already mentioned more than once: Genesis 17:14; one who is not circumcised has to be cut off from the people of God, the descendants of Abraham, because he has "broken" the covenant. We find it also in Leviticus 26:15, "If you spurn My statutes, and if your soul abhors my ordinances, so that you will not do all My commandments, but break My covenant," the LORD will punish you. In Deuteronomy 31:16 and 20 it is said that Israel will serve other gods and forsake and despise the LORD and "break" the covenant with Him. The connection between transgressing the commandments and violating the statutes of the LORD, and the breaking of the covenant is also found in Isaiah 24:5, in Jeremiah 11:10, 31:32; Ezekiel 16:59, 44:8. What to say now about this group of texts?

In the first place, it would be very strange that now, all of a sudden, the meaning of the word "break" would change, so that when the people "break" the covenant that the LORD made with them, the verb can only mean: violate, transgress, while in all other cases it certainly also means: severing, annulling, destroying.

In the second place, there is no need for such a change at all, when we see and maintain that the covenant of the LORD with His people is a mutual relationship between two parties, like a marriage, where both parties promise and demand. The LORD often has used marriage, that mutual relationship between a husband and his wife, as a picture of His relationship with His people. When Israel served other gods and was not keeping God's commandments, Israel from its side broke, that is, severed, the covenant relationship with God. Israel was annulling it. The relationship with the LORD was severed and no longer functioned from the side of the people.

But what, then, must we say with respect to the three texts with which we started, and which spoke about "breaking" God's law or commandment? It is my conviction that also here

we have to maintain the element of annulling or destroying, so that it no longer has any power or effect. Of course, everyone knows that the law of God as such cannot be annulled, just as His plans and counsel never can. But that law of God is more than a thing as such. It also comes into the lives of the people of the covenant; they are confronted with it. And what do they do with it, when they do not do it? As far as they are concerned they make it powerless in their lives; they destroy such a commandment for themselves. It has no power, no effect, in their lives. They, in their actions, for themselves do not leave such a commandment or law whole and complete. In transgressing it, they break it into pieces, so to speak, with respect to their lives. And so we conclude that our investigation into the word "break" in connection with the covenant means what it says: breaking the covenant is severing the covenant relation, either between men, or between God and men.

In the third place, why does Prof. Hoeksema take the verb to mean "violating," "transgressing," but not "severing"? That is because to him the covenant is not a mutual relationship of two parties, and because to him the covenant is an unconditional eternal promise only to the elect. If one constructs the covenant in this way, yes, then "breaking" the covenant cannot have its normal meaning any longer. Then it can only mean: violating, transgressing.

However, God made His covenant with His people. He spoke to the whole people at Sinai: I am the LORD your God. I have redeemed you. And He promised to all of them entry into the promised land. And why did they not enter? Because of their unbelief. And must we now not say that the covenant with the people included all the individual members? and, although God maintains His covenant with His people, that individual members *in* (!), and not outside, that covenant can break that covenant, that relation with God, from their side. They can sever it. And we do not have to assume a historic sphere of the covenant beside the covenant proper. When an individual member, or a number of members break the covenant, that covenant as such is not destroyed. Certainly not. Nevertheless, the transgressors break the covenant relation that existed between God and them! So far for now.

J. GEERTSEMA

# A Corner for the Sick



Those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion,  
which cannot be moved, but abides forever.

Psalm 125:1

*Are we able to live secure lives, without trusting in God's wisdom, care, and protection? Psalm 146:3, 5 reads: "Put not your trust in princes, in a son of man, in whom there is no help. Happy is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord his God." How easy it is for us to trust in the things we can see! When we read I Peter 1:24, 25 we are made to realize how perishable the visible things are. In contrast we may be reminded to trust in the God of Jacob, and that those who trust the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abides forever. His Word stands! He remains faithful even if we are faithless. Why is it so hard for us, Christians, to simply trust the Lord and leave the outcome of all things to Him?*

*We confess God's providential care, but often fear the unknown things, the future! When the psalmist reminds us to trust in the God of Jacob, we may learn from this that we should turn to the Scriptures for the answer. When we read about the history of Jacob, we may see it was not through Jacob's faithfulness but because of God's sovereign love and grace, which He confirmed again to Jacob as He had promised to his father Isaac and grandfather Abraham (read Genesis 28:10-18).*

*Jacob received wonderful promises for the future. He felt he was at the gate of heaven! We may know from God's Word how all God's promises were fulfilled. Is there any reason for us to doubt God's promises for the future? May we always have open eyes and ears, and may we have receptive hearts for the beauty of the gospel.*

*When Jacob was confronted with God's faithfulness and glorious promises, he stood in awe and felt himself at heaven's gate. Today we may still sing of it in many of the psalms.*

O bless the Lord, kneel at His feet,  
And worship Him with reverence meet.

.....

## He maketh no mistake

My Father's way may twist and turn,  
My heart may throb and ache,  
But in my soul I'm glad I know,  
He maketh no mistake.

My cherished plans may go astray,  
My hopes may fade away,  
But still I'll trust my Lord to lead  
For He doth know the way.

Tho' night be dark and it may seem  
That day will never break;  
I'll pin my faith, my all in Him,  
He maketh no mistake.

There's so much now I cannot see,  
My eyesight's far too dim;  
But come what may, I'll simply trust  
And leave it all to Him.

For by and by the mist will lift  
And plain it all He'll make  
Through all the way, tho' dark to me,  
He made not one mistake.

A.M. OVERTON

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**Mrs. Fred Hofsink** sent us a thank you note as follows: "We would like to thank everybody very much for the many cards Nelenia has received. She is in 'Bethesda' now, that is a Christian home for special people. She is happy there and learns a lot of things. Once a month she comes home for a weekend to stay with the family and enjoys it very much. She received cards from Australia, Holland and from all over Canada. Nelenia's present address is now,":

"Bethesda"  
6705 Satchel Road, Box 40,  
Mount Lehman, B.C. V0K 1V0.

Send your requests to:

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



# PRESS RELEASE

of Classis Alberta-Manitoba held at Edmonton, Alberta on April 17-18, 1979.

1. On behalf of the convening Church at Carman, Manitoba, Rev. J. Van Rietschoten calls the meeting of delegates to order. He requests the singing of Hymn 21:1, 2, reads John 21:1-19, and leads in prayer.

2. He extends a word of warm welcome to the delegates, as well as to the numerous audience, and expresses the hope that this Classis will receive the Lord's blessings and be fruitful.

3. The credentials are examined and found to be in good order. Rev. Van Rietschoten declares Classis constituted.

4. The executive officers suggested by the last Classis are requested to take their seats. Rev. D. Wielenga is Chairman, Rev. S. De Bruin is Vice-Chairman, and Rev. D. DeJong is Clerk.

5. With a few minor additions, the agenda is adopted.

6. The first and major point of the agenda is introduced by the Classical Advisory Committee. It consists of a Study Report prepared by Rev. Wielenga, C. Van Seters, and P. Van Dyk, in answer to Rev. D. DeJong's request to give a judgment about the fact that he was refused the pulpit by the Church at Neerlandia on June 4, 1978 when he endeavoured to fulfil his classical preaching appointment. It is also in answer to Neerlandia's request to approve of this action.

Rev. Wielenga reads the Study Report (open session), a motion followed by a notice of motion are read, after which Classis is adjourned until Wednesday morning.

After a lengthy and brotherly discussion of the Report and its recommendations, the following is adopted.

## CLASSIS: HAVING HEARD

Rev. De Jong's request for its judgment on the action of the Church at Neerlandia to prevent him from fulfilling his Classis appointment on June 4, 1978, and having heard the request of the Church at Neerlandia, that Classis will approve of the actions of the Church at Neerlandia as necessary and according to the accepted Church Order.

## CLASSIS OBSERVES:

1. that that action of the Church at Neerlandia is excluded, which already has been judged by the previous Classis (Acts Classis January 9, 10, 1979, Article 47, opinion 1).

2. that the Church at Neerlandia informs Classis of its decision re Rev. DeJong's Classis appointment for June 4, 1978: "That under these circumstances we consider it not wise that you will preach for us here in Neerlandia on Sunday, June 4, 1978." "By these circumstances we mean Rev. DeJong's refusal to take away our doubts and his accusing us of being a Church not abiding by Article 31, Church Order, as well as his accusing us of lording it over him and the Church at Calgary."

3. that the Church at Neerlandia has requested pulpit supply on the basis of the Classical approbation of the ministers and their signing of the Classical Subscription Form.

4. that the Church at Neerlandia also adduces for its decision to close the pulpit, the persistent and increased doubts concerning Rev. DeJong's views of Church and communion of saints, with consequences for his stand on the education of the youth of the covenant and the necessity for all believers to join the Canadian Reformed Church.

5. that the Church at Neerlandia, when requesting Classis to appoint ministers for its pulpit, has accepted Rev. DeJong's appointment in spite of its serious doubts concerning his doctrinal purity, and did not request Classis not to appoint Rev. DeJong, stating reasons.

6. that also at a later date, before June 4, 1978, while there was still time, the Church at Neerlandia failed to inform Classis of its cancellation of its invitation to Rev. DeJong, stating reasons.

7. that the Church at Neerlandia did not consult either Classis, the Church at Calgary, or Rev. DeJong for advice before making its decision.

## CLASSIS CONSIDERS:

1. that the local consistory has the final responsibility for the preaching to the congregation, and has the indefeasible and exclusive right to close the pulpit at any time in the fulfillment of its duty to protect the congregation entrusted to it against false teachings.

2. that the ministers of the Classis-churches have been accepted by all the churches in the Classis on the condi-

tion that they would adhere to the Three Forms of Unity.

3. that a distinction must be made between the Confessions of the Church (accepted by the churches as binding

*Continued on page 246.*

## Church News

Called:

by Smithville, Ontario:

REV. CL. STAM

of Burlington (West), Ontario.

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The Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad reports that Rev. C.J. Breen of Amsterdam-Centrum, who is planning to visit Canada this summer, is a minister in good standing in our Netherlands sister churches.

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Reserve the weekend of August 30 to September 3, 1979 and plan to come to the Fraser Valley in Beautiful British Columbia to attend:

**Convocation Day** (Thursday, August 30) — On this day we will commemorate the 10th anniversary of the Theological College and witness the graduation of three students.

**College Day** (Saturday, September 1) — On this day we hope to listen to the members of the Faculty as they deliver speeches on a number of relevant topics.

**Fellowship Day** (Monday, September 3) — On this day we will get together with the Faculty, the Governors, and their wives for a time of relaxation, exercise, and fellowship at Crescent Park.

More details will follow as soon as they become available.

## OUR COVER

*African Lions Safaria close to Freelon, Ontario. (Photo courtesy Leo Lodder.)*





*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.*

Rebel French Roman Catholic Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre says he will ordain another thirty-one men to the priesthood before the end of the year. Suspended by Pope Paul VI in 1976 for opposing Vatican Council reforms — the ban against celebration of the Latin mass in particular — Lefebvre has continued to ordain priests in defiance of the suspension — most recently last Christmas Eve after his audience with Pope John Paul II. (C.T.)

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Coptic Orthodox Christians are being harassed along with Evangelicals in Ethiopia, according to reports from the Lutheran World Federation and the Swedish Foreign Ministry. Those sources report: one Coptic Bishop was murdered, four were imprisoned, and nine were deposed after being forced at gunpoint to sign documents saying they were too old to continue in office. Observance of Sunday as a day of rest and worship reportedly has been abolished, and all public officials are compelled to attend Soviet/Marxist indoctrination classes twice a week. (C.T.)

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#### VATICAN CITY (CIC)

Again Pope John Paul II showed his deep dedication to Mary. During a general audience he dedicated the whole world to Mary. Speaking to a crowd of some 100,000 people, the pope declared, "to dedicate the whole world to Mary, mother of Christ and mother of the church." Mary, he said, is the mother of all the nations of the earth, of all people.

He exhorted especially the young people to venerate Mary, and places specifically students for the priesthood and those aspiring to enter a monastery "under her protection."

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A twenty-four-year-old school teacher has launched a petition drive to block a proposed sex-education course in Roman Catholic schools of the Archdiocese of St. Paul-Minneapolis. Religious News Service reported: "Miss Matt and her followers say that the only place for sex-education is the home. They see sex education in the schools as 'mass indoctrination' in a subject that shouldn't be discussed outside one's backyard." (C.N.)

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#### EMMEN

The Rev. J.A. Boersema of Middelam and Heerenveen, will be proposed for appointment by the Board of Governors of the institution for training for the ministry of the Reformed Churches on Sumba, Indonesia. Rev. Boersema accepted a call for this work extended to him by the deputies for correspondence with foreign churches. These deputies are in contact with two others for the position of missionary-professor at the Seminary of the Korean Presbyterian Church in Busan. Deputies also delegated two of their number (Dr. K. Deddens and Rev. P. Van Gurp) to visit the Churches in the Far East.

These deputies will deepen and extend the existing contact in Sri Lanka, gather as much information as possible in Taiwan about the establishment of the so-called Second Presbytery besides the existing one; in Japan, they will investigate the cooperation with the Christian Reformed Church and other churches, and the Reformed Ecumenical Synod; and finally, in Korea, they will discuss various matters regarding the correspondence, besides the contact with the churches and with the seminary. They also expect to attend the General Assembly which is to be held in September, as delegates from the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands. (N.D.)

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#### GRAND RAPIDS

At a Jewish-Christian dialogue held for 120 teachers of religion in the

North-Starkenburg district of the Evangelical Church in Germany, Christian scholars and a Jewish theologian from Israel found themselves in unlikely opposite camps.

In the dialogue, liberal Christian scholars took the side of the late Rudolf Bultmann of "Demythologization" fame and declared the Easter event a myth. The actual happening of the resurrection was defended by Dr. Pinchas Lapida, religious science and theology professor at Jerusalem University. "Without a factual historical event there is no act of faith," according to Professor Lapida. "Just as there would have been no Judaism without the Sinai event, so there would have been no Christendom without the Easter event." The Jewish scholar found factual proof of the reality and fruitfulness of the Easter faith "in the explosive spread of Christianity in the populated world, where more than a billion people became Christians." (RES NE)

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#### YOGYAKARTA

To prevent widespread influence of the practice of re-baptism, which is disturbing members of the Protestant Church in West-Indonesia, a pastoral letter has been issued by the church's Synod to all local churches. The letter reminds the church members that their only assurance for salvation and renewal is through faith in Jesus Christ. "Baptism is no basis for salvation, but is a symbolic act and a visible substance to testify that conviction. Therefore baptism, once it has been administered, though done in different ways, if it is based on true faith in Jesus Christ, need not be questioned." The meaning of baptism is not yet clear to many members of the church and many have been persuaded to accept re-baptism. (RES NE)

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#### FOR THE READER'S INFORMATION

This issue of *Clarion* was mailed from Winnipeg Central Post Office on May 26, 1979.

## PRESS RELEASE — Continued.

on the churches) and various views, which, though related to the Confession, are not part of the Confession.

4. that Rev. DeJong had not at that time (June 4, 1978) *per se* accused the Church at Neerlandia of lording it over him and the Church at Calgary (as he did in his later letter to the Classis of October 16, 1978). Neither is it evident from the correspondence between the Church at Neerlandia and Rev. DeJong that Rev. DeJong accused the Church at Neerlandia of being a Church not abiding by Article 31, Church Order.

5. that Classis, after a thorough examination of the correspondence between Rev. DeJong and the Church at Neerlandia, has found no deviation from the Three Forms of Unity in the teaching and preaching of Rev. De Jong.

Based on the foregoing,  
**CLASSIS DECIDES:**

that the preaching of Rev. DeJong concerning the Church and the communion of saints is in accordance with the Three Forms of Unity, and as such the doubts of the Church at Neerlandia were unfounded. Therefore the pulpit should not have been refused to Rev. DeJong on Sunday, June 4, 1978.

**CLASSIS FURTHER DECIDES** to send the foregoing to the Church at Neerlandia and Rev. DeJong, and expresses the hope that this decision will serve all the churches."

7. The Classical Treasurer's Report is received and adopted with a note of thanksgiving.

8. A number of minor proposals and instructions from the churches are dealt with.

9. Pulpit supply is requested by the Churches at Barrhead and Neerlandia. The following arrangements are made: On June 3, Rev. De Bruin will go twice to Neerlandia and once to Barrhead. On July 1, Rev. Wielenga will go twice to Barrhead and once to Neerlandia. On July 29, Rev. DeJong will go twice to Neerlandia and once to Barrhead. On August 26, Rev. DeBruin will go twice to Barrhead and once to Neerlandia. On September 23, Rev. Wielenga will go twice to Neerlandia and once to Barrhead. On October 21, Rev. DeJong will go twice to Barrhead and once to Neerlandia. On November 18, Rev. De Bruin will go twice to Neerlandia and once to Barrhead.

10. The next Classis is scheduled for November 13, 1979, with Coaldale as the convening Church.

11. Suggested executive officers for the next Classis are: Rev. Van Riet-schoten as Chairman, Rev. Wielenga as Vice-Chairman, and Rev. De Bruin as Clerk.

12. Appointments for the Regional Synod. Delegated from the ministers are: Rev. DeJong, Rev. Van Rietschoten, and Rev. Wielenga with Rev. De Bruin as alternate. Delegated from the elders are the brothers C. Bos, C. Veldkamp and T. Vanden Brink with alternates L.Toet, W. Van Assen and T. Termeer (in that order).

13. Question Period Article 41, Church Order. Advice is asked for in matters of discipline, advice is given.

14. In the Personal Question Period, no questions are asked.

15. Censure ad Article 43, Church Order. It is noted with thankfulness that censure is not necessary.

16. The Acts of Classis are read and adopted.

17. The Press Release is read and adopted.

18. After the singing of Psalm 87:1, 5, Rev. De Bruin leads in a prayer of thanksgiving and Classis is closed.

By order of Classis.  
Simon De Bruin, Assessor

## PRESS RELEASE

*of the Board of Directors' Meeting of Guido de Brès High School, held on April 16, 1979.*

The meeting is opened with the singing of Hymn 15:1, 3; the Chairman reads Isaiah 53 and leads in prayer. All present are cordially welcomed.

1. Agenda for the meeting is presented; minutes of the previous three meetings are adopted, and matters of the minutes are dealt with.

2. *Incoming Mail:* Letter of resignation of Mr. H. Ludwig.

3. *Outgoing Mail:* a) Letters to the teachers Mr. U. Krikke and Mr. P. VanderBoom concerning their appointment; b) Letters to some members in answer to their questions regarding students whose parents are non-members.

4. *Reports:*

a) Executive Committee proposes to change the date of the membership meeting. Adopted. The new date is May 11, 1979.

b) The Principal reports that the curriculum forms for grades 10, 11, and 12 are completed and will be handed out.

c) The Education Committee has no report, but a matter from a previous report is dealt with.

d) The Finance Committee Report is dealt with and adopted.

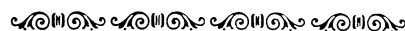
e) Transportation Committee. Contract to be signed regarding Toronto/Brampton/Burlington bus. The proposal to sign is adopted.

5. The Hamilton local recommends to the Board to accept as student a child of a non-member. After discussion of this recommendation, the Board accepts it.

6. Question period is held.

7. *Closing.* After we sang Hymn 15:6, 7, the meeting is closed with prayer.

For the Board of Directors,  
G. DEBOER



### THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

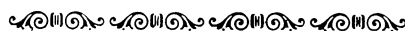
The Board of Governors of the Theological College hereby announces that the Rev. H. Scholten, M.Th., upon medical advice, has decided to relinquish his position as Lecturer in the Ecclesiological Department at our Theological College, effective September 1, 1979, at which date he will become Lecturer-emeritus.

The Board wishes to express publicly — on behalf of the Churches — its gratitude for all the Lord our God has permitted and enabled the Rev. H. Scholten to do in behalf of the training for the Ministry during the first ten years of the existence of our Theological College.

It is the prayer and wish of the Board that our heavenly Father may grant the Rev. H. Scholten strength and well-being to such an extent that he may continue to seek the edification of Christ's Church in any manner open to him.

In order that the work at our College may be continued, the Board — upon the advice of the Faculty — has appointed as temporary instructor in the Department of Ecclesiology the Rev. W.W.J. VanOene, M.Th., effective September 1, 1979.

For the Board  
W.W.J. VanOene, Secretary



# The Year of the Child? <sup>1</sup>

In our every-day lives we and our children are continually exposed to ideas and philosophies which often leave us confused and bewildered — concepts which affect the values and life-style of society as a whole, and, unwittingly, our own life-style and values as well. Do we, as parents, educators, and Reformed Christians, recognize and understand these dangerous philosophies, and are we able to refute them?

Some of the major areas that require our alertness and should have our attention are these (I do not pretend to have placed them in any order of significance):

1. Abortion and euthanasia;
2. Homosexuality and lesbianism;
3. Trends in education;
4. The influence of newspapers, radio, and television;
5. Alcoholism;
6. Pornography and obscenity;
7. Gambling;
8. Philosophies affecting family life, e.g., women's liberation movement, children's rights, etc.

To talk about them all in a meaningful way would be totally impossible. In fact, we could fill one issue with each of these topics. The first seven have already received a lot of attention in our circles:

— Have we not all signed petitions against the liberal trends towards legalized abortions? The writer of a recent letter to the editor of a local newspaper asks the question: How many thousands of children will be destroyed in Canada by abortion while we observe the International Year of the Child? Will our 1977 record of 57,620, an average of one every ten minutes, increase? Will politicians of federal and provincial governments responsible for this administration of death, appear smiling on public platforms?

— How repugnant we find homosexual behaviour! Yet . . . more and more closet doors are opened. God's commandments are being twisted, scorned, and laughed at. Unbelievable as we may find it, homosexuality is espoused and advocated, also in the schools, as an alternate and acceptable life-style;

— We are appalled by the present trends and philosophies in publicly-funded education systems — one of the reasons why we have started our own schools;

— We are often afraid to subscribe to the daily "family" newspaper, and more than once we have had discussions in Clarion and elsewhere regarding the use and influence of radio and television;

— Which consistory did not have to deal with the problem of alcoholism? How many more are the problems outside our protected little circle!

— Pornography and obscenities are finding their way into our homes either directly or indirectly via radio and television or the theater advertisements in the newspapers. Is the language used on our school buses and playgrounds a logical consequence?

— Gambling is now, it appears, one of the official government functions, promising that "everybody is a winner"!

I could go on and on in this vein. However, I would like to concentrate on some new and some not-so-new ideas affecting our family life, and, in particular, the Christian family.

In his booklet of which the Dutch title is *Verborgen mede opvoeders van de jeugd*, dr. Ulrich Beer quotes a proverb of Eastern origin which, freely translated, reads as follows: "He who has to provide for a year, sows grain. He who has to plan for seven years, plants trees. He who wants to look after the next century, concerns himself with young people." I don't think there is a people anywhere in the world that is not in one form or another concerned about the welfare of children. Especially God's people should be extremely concerned in this respect.

The question arises, however, in which direction this concern should extend itself.

The United Nations has proclaimed 1979 the International Year of the Child. In its Declaration of the Rights of the Child, it states that every child the world over has the right to love, affection, and understanding, to adequate nutrition and medical care, to free education, to full opportunity for

play and recreation, to a name and nationality, to special care, if handicapped, to be the first to receive relief in times of disaster, to learn to be a useful member of society and to develop individual abilities, to be brought up in a spirit of peace and universal brotherhood, and to enjoy all these rights regardless of race, colour, sex, religion, national or social origin. With the March Family Allowance cheque, a pamphlet was enclosed in which our Canadian government expresses its position and lists as its prime concerns for children: "the food they eat; safety standards governing toys they play with; their participation in sports and recreation; child care; their contributions to and involvement in the arts; and the injustices some of them may suffer in their young lives."

Next to a fleeting reference to religion we do not find mentioned anywhere the rights of the Lord or the role of the family. At no time, when we talk about children's rights and the upbringing and educating of children, should we ignore the rights of God our eternal Father. Not only does He have rights because He created us and our children, but also because He has made a covenant with us and because Christ has paid for us with His blood. When we as parents presented our children to receive the sacrament of Holy Baptism, we acknowledged these rights and with a simple "I do" we promised to bring up our children in the *fear of our Lord*. It is therefore that children's rights become secondary to the rights of our Father in heaven.

I am sure that I do not have to convince you of the seriousness of this promise and the responsibilities that come with it. We have as comfort, however, the knowledge that we are not left on our own to accomplish this difficult task.

Our Heavenly Father in His wisdom has instituted the family unit and has given certain guidelines by which the family should operate. Already in the first chapters of the first book of the Bible does the Lord reveal the origin of the family. In Genesis 2:21-24 we read: "So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh; and the rib which the LORD God had taken from the man He made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, 'This at last is bone

*Continued on page 255.*

# news medley

Where shall we start this time?

Any place will do, and therefore we go to Grand Rapids. There we find brother and sister A. VanderSluis who will celebrate their fortieth wedding anniversary on May 26th. From there we go to Burlington, where we find brother and sister F. Ludwig, who, one day earlier, will celebrate their forty-fifth wedding anniversary. From there to Orangeville is not all that far: thus we meet brother and sister A. Endeman who celebrated their forty-fifth wedding anniversary on May 15th. And from the Smithers bulletin we learned that brother and sister A. Jansen celebrated their fortieth anniversary on April 21, and did so in The Netherlands.

Hopefully I did not forget any couple that is deserving of our special attention. On behalf of all of us to all the above couples: heartfelt congratulations on this occasion. Much has happened during these forty or forty-five years, but the summary of all that is: Great is Thy faithfulness! May the Lord our God continue to show that same faithfulness which was your support during the past decades. Looking back, we speak of decades. Looking ahead, we receive each and every day as a gift from the hand of our God. And that hand is the hand of a Father.

Normally, we start in Ontario with our "Church News" and then work our way to the West coast. Let's do that this time too.

After I have completed this "News Medley" I will have to leave for Ottawa. Thus we begin with that city. The Consistory had to report: "The Steeple Hill property is reported on. Due to problems with subdividing the property, the necessary severances cannot be obtained. As a result the purchase cannot be completed." That is too bad, I should say. And the possibility of leasing from the National Capital Commission isn't there either, for we read, "Notification has been received from the National Capital Commission that there will not be any property available for the purpose of church building." Thus the brothers and sisters in our nation's capital are still as far as they were quite a while ago. Something may show up unexpectedly and the outcome may be such that we are glad and thankful that the Lord guided everything so that the other efforts ended in failure; but at the moment when we have to digest such disappointments we do not see that. I wish the brothers and sisters patience and endurance in addition to perseverance.

In Orangeville a meeting was held where the Rev. J. Mulder was scheduled to speak on "Mission and Election." That is a beautiful topic. To the one election and believing election renders mission work fruitless and useless; to the other faith that God has elected a definite number is a strong incentive to bring the Gospel to all who are able to hear and understand.

John Wesley did not believe election. If he had to believe that, he could not see how it would make sense to go out and call people to repentance. He rejected God's gracious election in the Scriptural sense.

However, I also read a testimony of a minister in Spain who at times was very discouraged since it seemed to him that all his work remained without fruit. The rocks on which

he tried to plow were harder than anything and no dent could be discovered. He wrote, "If I should not believe the divine election, I would quit right away; but it is my firm faith that the LORD God has chosen a definite number of people which keeps me going."

But then — I should not start writing about that topic. Perhaps the Rev. Mulder can let us all enjoy what he said by letting us read it.

Since I do not know whether any school bulletin is issued in Brampton or Toronto at the moment, I mention here that as name for the school-to-be-opened has been chosen the name "Credo Christian School." Further we are informed that "the construction of the school building is progressing well. This week the outside walls were put up. Next week it is planned to start the roof construction." Thus another school will be ready this coming September, barring unforeseen circumstances. There are not all that many Congregations left where no school can be found. Something to be very grateful for.

From Brampton our path leads us to Guelph. The Guelph Church has a permanent cover now for the bulletin. The name that has been chosen reads, *The Royal Banner*. Guelph, as our readers may know, is known as the "Royal City." (Make no fuss about that, New Westminster!) "Royal fits very neatly into the local milieu, while 'Banner' suits the purpose and task of the news bulletin as an easily and well-read communique." That's part of the explanation of the name.

Another thing from the Guelph bulletin which should be mentioned is that "the Consistory requested the deacons to contact the deaconry of Carman to see whether assistance is needed by flood victims in this sister Church." In this way, too, the communion of saints can be shown.

The Consistory of the Ebenezer Church in Burlington discussed extensively "the fact that members of the congregation are moving quite a distance away for a certain period. The consistory came to the conclusion that those members take the responsibility into their own hands, because the local church has no possibility of supervision over them anymore. They will receive a travel attestation for a period of six months. Renewal has to be requested after that period."

I do not think that I draw unwarranted conclusions when I assume that the Consistory dealt with the phenomenon that not a few of the members in Ontario Churches disappear for five or six or even more months every year and seek the warmer climates of central or southern Florida.

Perhaps I should use this opportunity to reply briefly to a letter which I received from a brother which letter deals with the question of holidaying in Florida and where to go on Sundays.

I shall quote two brief passages from the letter. "My question is: Why must a church here look after 'church accommodation' there? The last General Synod stated that the Orthodox Presbyterian Church may be seen as a true church . . . . Why are our people not directed there? . . . . I cannot believe that the synod said: *there* is a true Church and that Classis Ontario North (or whoever) says: but don't go there."

I do not wish to make an article out of the "News Medley," but the letter refers clearly to what I wrote in a "News Medley" about the classical decision in this respect.

Let me state, first of all, that personally I disapprove of going with holidays to places where one cannot attend a Canadian Reformed Church service or such a service in one of our sister churches. I do not condemn those who do go to such places, but I have the right to disagree with them and to disapprove of it.

That applies even the more in case one goes down south for six or more months each winter. Or — for that happens, too — when in the West one goes to the interior for two or three months during the summer. Affluence brings great dangers with it. And I seriously question whether the material wealth which the Lord God gives us is used well and in accordance with His will when one goes away from what one confesses to be the faithful Church of the Lord which one has to help edify within the communion of saints, and lives half of the year a couple of thousand of kilometres away without the possibility of using one's gifts "readily and cheerfully for the edification and salvation of the other members." I can well understand that the older ones sometimes think longingly and speak lovingly about the "olden days" when, generally speaking, we were all poor, lived far more in the profound conviction that we have to receive *every day* our daily bread and when, indeed, at times there was nothing more than the daily bread. No one could afford going down south for five or six months; but no one was thinking about doing so either!

Once again: I do not condemn anyone who does so. It is their responsibility. They are not sent away, they go away of their own volition and then also have to bear the consequences. One of the consequences is that they cannot come together on Sundays with those whom they have confessed to be their fellow-members within the faithful Church of Christ.

Now it is a fact that our latest Synod stated that it recognized the Orthodox Presbyterian Church as a true Church of the Lord. According to some, that decision was too hasty; according to others, that decision does not go far enough.

However, each and everyone should not read more into it than it says, or connect consequences with it which are not warranted. No one should jump the gun.

It is a fact that there is *no* correspondence between the Canadian Reformed Churches and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Thus a Consistory or a Classis would go farther than the synodical decision if it should direct Church members to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. One of the first things that we should do within the Church Federation is: honour the decisions made by the major (or broader) assemblies. That has nothing to do with hierarchy; that has everything to do with faithfulness to the promises given. And I am a strong believer in the jurisdiction (not "authority"! ) of the broader assemblies.

No major assembly has said, "Go there," neither has any major assembly said, "Don't go there." No major assembly would have the right to do so before a definitive decision has been made regarding correspondence. As long as we are at the stage where we are right now, no official advice should be given either way.

And thus, when a request reaches a Consistory, that Consistory has the full right to deal with it or even to ask Classis for advice and help. Then it may not be expected of such a Classis that it shall go beyond what the latest General Synod decided in this respect. The situation is simply so that there is no correspondence. The Orthodox Presbyterian Church has not been recognized as a sister Church.

Having thus elaborated on the point raised in the letter which I quoted, I continue with the news from the Churches.

Hamilton "decided to discontinue the Dutch services after Sunday, May 6th, as the average attendance does not warrant separate services. For those who cannot understand the English language other possibilities can be pointed out, such as taped Dutch sermons and Dutch services held by neighbouring congregations."

The very same decision was made in Smithers, where it was decided "to discontinue the Dutch services as of September '79." However, we'll come back to Smithers later on.

The report on the Consistory meeting of Lincoln contained a pleasant piece of information. "Notice that a cheque will be sent in the amount of \$5,685.09, being the tax rebate from the provincial government on the building materials needed for the completion of the Church." I wonder whether the timing of that cheque has anything to do with election time.

Yes, and that causes us to leave for Manitoba.

In Winnipeg they had again their Spring Concert, and, if I am not mistaken, the choirs of Carman and Winnipeg were combined for the occasion. Once again I noticed the variety of instruments that were being played: violin, clarinet, trumpet, organ. How beautiful when the gifts that the Lord has given are being used.

Our journey leads us to Coaldale. There "an agreement has been reached with Duff Sound Equipment to install a sound system on the basis that it must be guaranteed to work satisfactorily."

Further, "the question whether membership in secular unions conflicts with membership in the Church of Christ was discussed. All unions cannot be judged the same and should be judged on their constitution and by-laws only." There will be a report "in order to come to a proper understanding in this matter."

"To smoke or not to smoke." That, too, was a point at the Coaldale Consistory meeting. "The matter of to smoke or not to smoke in the church building was discussed. No action was taken regarding this as yet." There is still hope, I understand. We have changed in the course of the years, and we look at things somewhat differently than we did some twenty-five years ago. Nowadays when I see a picture of a minister in the *Nederlands Dagblad* with a thick cigar in his mouth, I think, "Man, how can you do that and how can you permit such a picture to be published!" Especially when our Dutch sister Churches extend their contacts with foreign Churches, they had better be selective as far as their choice of emissaries is concerned. I am sure that thick and fat cigars are not welcome with most of those contacts. And I am glad that gradually also among us the conviction grows that the dangers of smoking are such that Christians should refrain from doing it.

It does not happen very often that we are requested to take over certain parts from bulletins. The opposite holds usually true: some parts of bulletins are marked and accompanied by an emphatic "NO!" in red letters. That means: "don't react to that!"

This time, however, I have received a request to copy some lines. Here they follow; they come from Edmonton's bulletin.

Our friend, D.J. Zwart, will be back next February. Organ recitals and sing-songs are planned. In Edmonton - 3

*Continued on next page.*

evenings; in Vancouver/New Westminster - 3 evenings; in Fraser Valley Area - 2 evenings; in Lethbridge/Coaldale - 2 evenings; Winnipeg, Calgary, Smithers, Lacombe - 1 evening each; and the East should be good for 7 evenings. (Rev. VanOene: please copy. Thank you!) [You're welcome, Ralph.]

The organ in the Edmonton Church building seems to be in rather good shape right now, after all the trouble which they had with it.

Edmonton's bulletin also gives us some additional information about New Westminster's decision regarding *Mission News*, but we'll come back to that later on.

Oh, well, we may as well speak about that point first.

At the New Westminster Consistory meeting a proposal was made to have a combined *Mission News*, combined with Toronto's, that is. The New Westminster Consistory, however, decided not to enter into such an agreement for the following reasons: In the first place it would require layout and the development of print-ready copy; secondly the cost would be increased; and thirdly, there could be a delay of up to two months above the time at which the present *Mission News* is distributed. The Consistory continued, however, "In order that our present publication be improved the Board has been instructed to try to upgrade the format and quality of our *Mission News*, including that a point be made of periodically a printed page with photographs is included."

From Edmonton's bulletin we learn that there was another point which is of interest to us. That is, that "in order to promote general information to all the sister Churches, Council requests the mission board to look into possibilities to increase reports for publication in *Clarion*." It does not need any proof that we are happy with this last-mentioned sentence. We did deplore the printing of a separate *Mission News* by the Toronto Church, since we did our best to print the reports which we received as soon as possible and as faithfully as possible. We would, therefore, acclaim every effort to use our periodical to inform the membership about the work on the mission fields.

From New Westminster we go to Cloverdale. And we add to that a little piece from Langley's part of the *Church News*.

A letter is also received from the Ministry of Human Resources expressing their appreciation for the volunteers from our congregation. Some of our members faithfully visit Woodlands and give there a helping hand. The contents of this letter is noted with gratitude . . . We would like you to know that some members of your congregation are giving valuable volunteer service at Woodland, which is British Columbia's largest facility for the mentally retarded. Under the leadership of Mrs. N. the people (nine sisters of the congregation) come to Ward 55/60 every month to provide a birthday party for a group of residents. We feel, it would mean a great deal to these people if you, their minister, would recognize their dedicated service.

The first part of the above quotation is from Cloverdale; the letter itself was taken from the Langley information. There are also brothers involved, and they all have done this work for a considerable time.

The Rev. Visscher remarks that it is gratifying that brothers and sisters make themselves available for this sort of work; but he also mentions that there are many more things which are being done in the midst of the Church where brothers and sisters are active in all sorts of organi-

zations. That, too, is a point which we should bear in mind.

We spoke about Langley.

The consistory is able to inform the congregation that agreement has been reached concerning a property situated on 52nd avenue. The church will receive an area of 1.6 acres for building while parking facilities will be shared by the church, the school, and the Rest Home.

One acre is set aside for a future Rest Home.

It took quite a while and cost several evenings of meetings and discussions, but now an agreement has been reached with the two societies or associations which were also in the market for property. Especially the sharing of parking facilities will mean a saving.

There is only one thing which, in my opinion, won't work. That is the one acre set aside for a Rest Home. If I had a say in the Rest Home Society, I would say, "Let's not start that, but continue to look for property elsewhere. One acre is far too small. Once you start those homes, they keep expanding. We saw it when we visited the one in Clearbrook. And I foresee that the Rest Home Society will have to look for other property within five years after completion of a Rest Home on that one acre, if they ever start there. I wouldn't.

Speaking of building: "after hearing the Congregation," the Chilliwack "Consistory decides to go ahead with their proposal of offering a bid on the church at Chilliwack Central."

I don't know as yet what the result was. Perhaps next time.

We conclude our journey in Smithers, at the foot of the Hudson Bay mountains.

"The cause of the poor quality of printing of the bulletin has been localized: namely the typewriter, an excellent machine, but not suited for typing stencils." Well, I must say that the result is much better now.

I have also more light about parsonages. It is the Smithers parsonage which is going to be renovated, "because of future parking problems around the church building." Yes, there are more and more cars on the parking lot during the services. The economic condition seems to be improving all the time. On the other hand, in many a bulletin I read very sad figures, showing that in many instances the voluntary contributions came in very irregularly and fell short of what was needed and had been budgeted for that period. Hopefully the increase in the number of automobiles finds a reflection in a proportionate increase in voluntary contributions. In order to prevent misunderstanding: I do not refer here to Smithers. It was just those "future parking problems" which made me think of that. In all the bulletins which I read for this medley I found just one which showed that the amount of voluntary contributions was only one hundred dollars below the budgeted amount. And that meant only fifteen cents per member. I wished every Treasurer could say that!

"We also further discussed the possibility of a Bible Youth Camp, mainly for native children between the ages of 8 and 13 years, approximately. It was decided that if we could find from 15-20 children interested in this project, to go ahead with it this summer already."

And, last but not least: The Rev. Van Spronsen thanked a brother "who together with some other help built the greenhouse in our backyard which will certainly stimulate my hobby."

Grow 'em, colleague.

vO

# Covenantal Education <sup>2</sup>

## THE CHILD AS IMAGE-BEARER

If we cannot find in God and His Covenant the distinctive character of Christian education, we must necessarily look to man, to the child. And this is exactly what happened. Most authors examine what the child is by creation ("image-bearer") and seek to discover what is left of this image (the remnants) after the fall to which the educator might appeal. Based on the given fact of "image-bearer," we get elaborate explanations of the nature of the child and his psychological composition.

In the introduction to Rushdoony's *Messianic Character*, we can read that education hinges on the accepted *concept of man*. Man as the object must be analyzed before he can be educated. N. de Jong writes, Education "must be based on a Scriptural conception of the *nature of man*" (page 87 ff.). He also adds, correctly so, "Education must be based on a Scriptural conception of what man is to *become*."

I make this note: being created in the image of God is not exclusively the privilege of *our* children, but *man* (in general) was created in this way. So this approach could be used with respect to *all* children, and is not by definition to be reserved for our philosophy of education. Yet all children are not Covenant children; that is the special gift to our children.

The fact that *man* was created in the *image* of God is an undeniable Biblical truth. It is referred to not only in the account of *creation*, but also elsewhere in the Bible (Genesis 9; James 3), especially in reference to the fact that the *life* of man does not belong to himself or others, but to God Who made him after His likeness. But does this mean that we can *today* (in a postlapsarian situation) say, "*The Child* is a living creature in the *Image* of God?" (Albert E. Greene, Jr., in *Shaping School Curriculum*). Is that what characterizes our children? If so, what are then the implications of such a characterization?

There has been much discussion about this being created in the image of God. Some feel that this distinguishes man from the other creatures especially in his *characteristics* (Fennema calls this the "static dimension") such as: religiousness, rationality, creativity,

unity, responsibility, freedom, accountability, etc. Others feel that this represents the *calling* of man to be vice-agent of God, to exercise dominion and authority (Fennema calls this the "dynamic dimension"). K. Schilder especially went in this direction, explaining it as a matter of "office."

It certainly denotes that man's *origin and character and position* is different from that of the other creatures. In him is the "breath of God." He is suited for a Covenantal relationship. He is given a threefold Covenantal office of being prophet, priest, and king in creation under the sovereign God. Psalm 8:5, sums it up by stating, "Thou hast made him a little less than God, and dost crown him with glory and honour."

The Heidelberg Catechism gives a normative explanation when it says (in Lord's Day 3) "after His own image, *that is*: in true righteousness and holiness, that he might rightly know God his Creator, heartily love Him, and live with Him in eternal blessedness to praise and glorify Him." So here it is: two characteristics (righteousness and holiness) plus the calling: knowledge, love, yes, *communion* with God.

But now the question: What is *left* of this? Is there *enough* left on which to base a Christian philosophy of education? Article 14 of the Belgic Confession states, "he has lost *all* his excellent gifts which he received from God, and retained only *small remains* thereof." And these small remains (traces) are no basis really, for they function, says Article 14, "to leave man without excuse." All the gifts are lost. In the Canons of Dort (III-IV, Art. 4) we read, "There remain, however, in man since the fall, glimmerings of natural light, whereby he retains some knowledge of God, of natural things, and of the difference between good and evil, and shows some regard for virtue and good outward behaviour." True, man did not become a non-man or an animal after the fall. But let us not get our hopes up too high, for the Canons continue, "But *so far* is this light of nature from being sufficient to bring him to a saving knowledge of God, and to true conversion, that he is *incapable* of using it aright even in things natural and civil. Nay further, this light, such as it is, man

in various ways renders wholly polluted, and hinders in unrighteousness, by doing which he becomes *inexcusable* before God." We cannot appeal to these remnants or glimmerings; the gifts are lost; and if man, by God's government and providence (and not by something called "common grace") has not become totally animal, *he no longer shows the image of God* in this world.

Man is not righteous and holy, able and willing to do good. He does not, in himself, know God, although he may intrinsically seek higher powers. He does this because he is a slave to sin, not out of inbred religiosity. He does not love, but he hates. He has no communion with the heavenly Father, but is totally depraved. Instead of showing that God is his *Father*, being created in the *image* of God, does man not portray the *image* of *Satan*? Is this not what our Lord Jesus said to the Pharisees, "You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him."

In this light we must be very careful as to what conclusions we draw for *today* out of the fact of being created in God's image, and not too quickly state that "the child is image-bearer of God." I warn especially for some conclusions drawn by J.E. Fennema in his book *Nurturing Children in the Lord*, this warning based also on the fact that I have seen elements of this book *literally* reappearing in one of our Reformed school periodicals. I refer especially to these conclusions: that the child today is always so *rational*; that the child has the *freedom* to choose, and is *therefore* *accountable*. Freedom of choice may be said in a certain sense, of the prelapsarian state, but may we today say that the child has freedom of choice and is *therefore* accountable? Is he not rather already accountable by the fact that he was conceived and born in sin? Is proclaiming "some" freedom of choice for the child not a rejection of his depravity and moral corruption, his being enslaved in sin? Fennema works rather strongly with the distinction between *absolute* and *total* depravity, and says that while man is totally depraved (all his actions bear the taint of sin), nevertheless he is not absolutely depraved (common grace) and still shows "human qualities." There are some re-

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deeming features, it seems. I find this terminology to be dangerously *Arminian*, and we should reject it altogether. The distinction between total and absolute depravity merely functions as a vehicle for the doctrine of common grace and grants some justification to man.

A question: Does this force us into deterministic waters? Certainly not; in Covenantal terms, the child is truly accountable, and is responsive and responsible. He is accountable to the fact of his depravity, and accountable to the *appeal* which comes to him in the Covenant word of God, to which he must respond and does respond, negatively or positively.

No child is free. By nature he is a slave to sin, having lost all his excellent gifts. In the Covenant he is called to be responsible to God, and God does not work in him as in sticks and blocks, but renews his will to serve God. So, instead of following the terminology of secular and anti-Calvinistic philosophies of education, we should seek to develop our own. And if "the image of God" is going to *function* correctly in our philosophy, as it should, then we must stress that the child must come to *show* this image *again*. Covenantal education would stress not that the child *is* in the image of God, image-bearer by *nature*, but must again *become image-bearer*, putting off the old nature with its practices, and having put on the new nature *which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its Creator* (Colossians 3:10). It is *in* the Covenant, and by the blood and Spirit of the Covenant Mediator, that we are restored to our original office, that we receive the righteousness and holiness of Christ, that we may come to *know* God and love Him, having with Him eternal, blessed communion. That is the "Covenantal context" and function of being created in the *image of God*. In this education we do not seek what is *in the child*, but what God has said *to* the child, and *works* in the child by His Word and Spirit. I think that this must be the essential difference between Covenantal education and all other education. Our task is to seek the children's positive response to the promises and the demands of the Covenant, and constantly to place the children before both, stressing God's undeserved grace and their ongoing responsibility.

If we do not retain this prime principle, we will inadvertently slide into an

Arminian and ultimately humanistic direction, seeking in the child some redeeming feature to which we might address ourselves. K. Schilder has pointed out that the Covenant is the dominating factor in the relationship between God and man. Because the Covenant is "unilateral" in origin, the doctrine of the Covenant gives God *all the glory*. Before man can come to any Covenantal activity, God must "condescend" to us. Because in Roman Catholic and Arminian theology "the effort of man" gains emphasis, it is clear that the Covenant cannot play such a role there. The Covenant says: God acts first; therefore, *we* act. But such is not the viewpoint of much contemporary American theology. Therefore, all the more, we should preserve and think out this aspect of our faith (K. Schilder, *Het Verbond in de Gereformeerde Symbolen*).

#### THE COVENANT

If the Covenant (as Schilder said) is the dominant factor, we must know it well, also in view of the debates there have been concerning the Covenant. There is only *one* Covenant. This Covenant may have certain "dispensations," but it is one Covenant. In this Covenant God gives His grace and gifts, and also imparts a calling to His children to serve and glorify Him. When the gifts were lost and the calling was subverted, God set to restore this covenant relationship in Jesus Christ, renewing His children by His Spirit and Word. Our children are sent also to our schools to function in this Covenant, and for *no other reason*.

And I would say, this sets the climate in the school. The teachers are to regard their pupils as *co-heirs* of the Covenant who are to be instructed in the way of the Covenant, one with them in sin and sinfulness, one also in grace. The teachers are fellow-workers, whose combined goal in the different classes and subjects is to bring about Covenant awareness and responsiveness in the pupils. The pupils are to see one another as standing in a common heritage, under one calling, having responsibility to God, as His children, and to one another as brothers and sisters in Christ. There shall be a good working relationship among the staff and between the staff and the board, in which the duties are well-divided and the authority is clear. There will be emphasis on Christian conduct and fellowship; therefore, *discipline* must be a prime factor at Covenantal schools,

according to Biblical norms. The staff will strive to entertain a good relationship with the parents, and the Board will be "open" to the Society. In the criticism which can arise towards one another, we shall not become *personalistic*, but shall strive to better the education of the children. Covenantal fellowship stresses unity in faith and therefore mutual dedication and utmost cooperation. I realize that I am making general, well-known statements, but, nevertheless, I am convinced that seeing one another as fellow-workers in Christ, and the children as co-heirs of the Covenant, could use some emphasis. This will help to reduce some of the tension which nor-

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## Consulaat-Generaal Der Nederlanden CONSULATE GENERAL OF THE NETHERLANDS

10 KING STREET E.,  
TORONTO, ONTARIO M5C 1C3

#### OPSPORING ADRESSEN:

- BESIER, Jaenette, laatstbekende adres Pauwenlaan te 's-Gravenhage, naar Canada vertrokken in 1955.  
BRAAKHEKKE, Jan Hendrik, geboren 21-08, 1914 te Vorden, naar Canada vertrokken op 21 mei 1959.  
CLOK, J., geboren 24 juni 1914 te Polen, naar Canada vertrokken op 30 maart 1954.  
FISHER, Hendrik, geboren 15 juli 1914 te Kerkrade, naar Canada vertrokken op 20 januari 1979.  
VAN GIJN, Frans Hendrik, geboren 13 juli 1915 te Naarden, naar Canada vertrokken op 17 juli 1948.  
HERK, W., laatstbekende adres Fort McLeod, Alberta, naar Canada vertrokken eind 1977.  
HOPPENBROUWERS, Fransiscus Walterus, geboren 1 juni 1947 te Bergen op Zoom.  
HOPPENBROUWERS, Donna Marie, geboren 12 maart 1959 te Grande Prairie.  
SWAAB, Simon Lodewijk, geboren 18 januari 1914 te Samarinda (Oost Borneo), laatstbekende adres te Saskatoon.  
VAN WIJK, Gerardus Baltus, geboren 17 mei 1914 te 's-Gravenhage, naar Canada vertrokken 1 juni 1953.

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



mally occurs where adults and children must work together on a daily basis.

And if one thing is necessary, it is a mutual agreement on and understanding of the *purpose* of Covenantal education. I may say it, perhaps, with the words of Mr. T. vanderLeest, principal of the Reformed School Community in Rotterdam, "Our most important goal is to cause our pupils to choose consciously for the service of God, in acceptance of the promises which their *Covenant* God, their heavenly Father, has given them." Therefore the personal and communal relationship of the children with God in Christ must be made clear and emphasized.

We are to give the children "knowledge." And Geraldine Steensma (in *Shaping School Curriculum*) correctly points out that in the Bible "knowledge" is communion, "a personal relationship that commits." The children do not merely receive "knowledge" (facts and relationships) but *such* knowledge that commits them to their Covenant God.

The "personal" relationship with Christ in the Covenant, however, also means a mutual relationship within the people of the Covenant, the *Church*. The accepting of the "Covenant relationship," writes T. vanderLeest, implicates love for the Jerusalem from above, our Mother, the Church. Whereas it is not the calling per se of the school to instruct in the doctrines of the Church, certainly an integral part of this calling is to stimulate love for and participation in the Church. Therefore, I cannot agree with remarks in a previous edition of *Clarion* stating that "the School teaching and training is not to be Church-oriented, in the sense that the school is there to produce better church members and as a result better churches. The (Reformed!) orientation of Schools is towards Kingdom-service in the midst of this world." I might agree that the task of the school is not merely to be a "nursery" of the Church, but I cannot accept a dilemma between Church-worship and Kingdom-service; the two are inseparably related. There is more *unity* here than is suggested.

Attempting to formulate the *specific* goal of our Reformed schools, I would say that indeed the school will emphasize training in arts and skills with a view to the children's task as Covenant children in this world. This simply means that *all* subjects are to be approached from Scripture and Con-

fession. This is not too difficult with respect to most subjects. In the *sciences* we will attempt to show how all the earth is the Lord's, and was created by Him in wisdom with innumerable resources and possibilities to be developed to His glory and man's well-being. In the *historical subjects*, we attempt to show His providential care and sovereign government directing the history of mankind to His goal and glory in Christ, destroying all wicked designs of the evil one. *Language* shall be promoted as a God-given means and communication to serve Him and edify one another, while *literature* shall be examined and discussed in the context of the antithesis God has set between Christ and Satan. The subject with which we will perhaps in this connection have the most difficulty is *mathematics* (according to T. vanderLeest), the most "neutral" of all subjects. Yet here, too, we shall approach the mathematical laws as set by God, as belonging to the order of His creation; and especially (again according to

Mr. vanderLeest) Covenantal aspects will clearly emerge when we talk about the *application* of mathematics (in economics and science and statistics, etc.). In *physical education* we shall not promote the cult of the body, but certainly teach the value of physical fitness for a healthy functioning as children of God, and promote Christian attitudes in sportsman-like conduct.

In other words, in all subjects, in the use of language, in the study of literature, in the examination of creation, in the understanding of history, in the application of mathematics, the children are to become more and more "men of God," complete, "equipped for every good work." I just quoted I Timothy 3:17, which the well-known Prof. Waterink used as motto for Christian education, equipping the children with knowledge and skills to be men of God, excelling in the service of gratitude. In all this we seek to prepare the children for *maturity*, for an independent life within the one Covenant of

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## HYMN 25

*Cantica Spiritualia* (1847)  
founded on a melody by Georg Joseph (1657)



1. Come, Ho - ly Ghost, Cre - a - tor come,  
And vis - it all those that are Thine;  
Thou hast in - spired our hearts with life;  
In - spire them now with light Di - vine.

2. Thou art the Comforter, the gift  
Of God most high, the fire of love,  
The everlasting spring of joy  
And holy unction from above.
3. Thy gifts are manifold: Thou writ'st  
God's laws in every faithful heart;  
The promise of the Father, Thou  
Dost heavenly eloquence impart.

God, so that they may be "a new creation," more and more *being* conformed to the image of God. Independence, not in the humanistic sense that "man is norm unto himself," but knowing his own place again, in the Covenant under God, in the communion of saints, as a citizen of his country, being as Adam — now in the second Adam — a prophet, priest, and king, awaiting the full restoration of heaven and earth.

This does not elevate the teachers to clergy, nor does this make them servants of the parents. This does not mean that there should not be good communication between teachers, clergy, and parents. But you may introduce the Covenant children, as co-heirs with you of the promise, to the riches of God's creation, to the progression of His history, and show them: *This is God, your God, serve Him.*

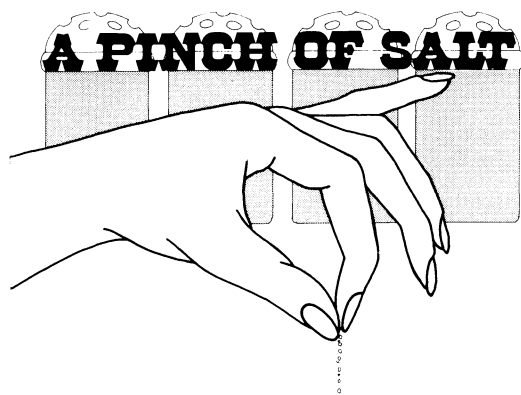
Then I ask you: "Is Covenantal Education so different?" This is *normal* education, as God intended it from the beginning, "normal" in the sense that it is based on and seeks God's *norms* for life, experiences His grace, and works for His glory. If in our education we *begin* with this God, we may *conclude* with this God.

*Literature* (and suggested reading):

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- A. Janse, *Het Eigen Karakter van de Christelijke School*, Kok, 1935.  
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CL. STAM



### OLD WIVES CAKE?

Not long ago some of us were wondering why a cake in Holland is called an "old wives cake." The suggestion was offered that perhaps it was because the old wives had no teeth and this was the only cake they could eat. Anyone else with a better suggestion?

#### Old Wives Cake

- 2 cups light rye flour
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1/4 tsp. baking soda
- pinch of salt
- 2 tbsp. anise seed or, 2 tsp. ground anise
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 4 tbsp. syrup
- 1 cup milk
- 1 egg

Mix brown sugar and syrup. Beat in egg. Add dry ingredients and milk alternately. Bake in a slow oven at 275°F. for 1 1/2 hrs. Yield: 1 loaf.

If you like, use 1 tbsp. anise seed and 1 tsp. ground anise.

### ISAIAH 9:2-7

## The People Who in Darkness Walked

1. The people who in darkness walked  
 Have seen a glorious light:  
 Now day has dawned for those who dwelt  
 In death's surrounding night.  
 To hail Thee, Sun of Righteousness,  
 They with rejoicing come  
 As when with joy they share the spoil  
 Or bear the harvest home.
2. For Thou the burden hast removed  
 That on their shoulders lay,  
 Hast broken the oppressor's rod  
 As once on Midian's day,  
 For boots by trampling soldiers worn  
 And garments rolled in gore,  
 The raging flames will all consume  
 To mark the end of war.
3. For unto us a Child is born,  
 To us a Son is given,  
 And on His shoulders He shall bear  
 All power in earth and heaven.  
 The Wonderful, the Counsellor,  
 The Mighty God is He;  
 Eternal Father, Prince of Peace  
 His holy name shall be.
4. His government and royal power  
 Shall without end increase,  
 And He on David's throne shall reign  
 In everlasting peace.  
 On justice and on righteousness  
 His kingdom He shall build.  
 The LORD of hosts will show His zeal:  
 His Word shall be fulfilled!

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 Committee on the Church Book.

## THE YEAR OF THE CHILD — Cont'd.

of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.' Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh." And going back to chapter 1 we read in verse 28: "And God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it.' "

Also all through the New Testament we will find references to the structure of the family, e.g., Ephesians 5:22ff. "Wives, be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the Head of the church . . . Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the Church and gave Himself up for her . . . Even so husbands should love their wives as their own bodies." And then in verse 31 again the same words we found in Genesis: "For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." We read further the admonition not only to children to honour and obey their father and mother, but also to the father not to provoke his children. Similar instructions can be found in Paul's letter to the Colossians, in chapter 3, with which you are all familiar.

Now someone will ask, "What makes a family a Christian Family?" I would like to quote W. Meijer in his book, *Leven met Christus in het Gezin*. In answer to this question he writes (and I translate): "Most of us will in all likelihood offer the following definition: The Christian family is that family where Christ figures in all activities, that family where, if at all possible, the Bible is read regularly, where the head of the family — and in most cases that is the father — leads in prayer, where the children attend catechism classes and participate in one form or another in Young People's activities, where positive Christian education is desired for the children, and where on Sunday the family attends church and, at that, preferably twice."

In this connection Dr. Jan Waterink, well-known psychologist and author, in his book, *Leading Little Ones to Jesus*, spends the better part of a chapter on the atmosphere in a Christian family. Atmosphere is not something which one can create at will. Atmosphere grows out of *what people are*. A Christian family or a Christian atmosphere is not created by hanging a

large number of Bible texts on the walls or by always having a Bible lying on the table. No, it is because of *what people are by the grace of God*.

It cannot be denied that all of the above are definite characteristics. It is important, however, that we pursue a little further what it really means to live with Christ in the family, in this world where temptation upon temptation is thrust at us and our children, and where everything that we hold sacred is being attacked from all directions. To stay with Meijer a little longer, we have to consider the mandate to teach our children to live with Christ *in the family* in order that as they mature and become independent, they can also live with Him *outside the family* — to prepare them for a life outside the security of a close-knit family structure.

Also to live with someone implies a close and intimate relationship. And this is what we have to strive for, to live daily with Christ in a close and intimate relationship. This is not being idealistic or a vain striving. No, it is the only positive response that is expected from us. That it is not an easy task, we all agree. Not only are we by nature inclined to hate God and our neighbour, it is further compounded by constant attacks from the devil. We are warned repeatedly by the Lord Himself to beware of deceivers and false prophets. "But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master Who bought them, bringing upon them swift destruction. And many will follow their licentiousness, and because of them the way of truth will be reviled. And in their greed they will exploit you with false words; from of old their condemnation has not been idle and their destruction has not been asleep" (II Peter 2:1-3).

In some cases these attacks are bold and clearly visible. In many others the deceit is disguised and it will require our constant alertness to recognize it as deceit. It comes in the guise of humanitarian concerns, protection of the underprivileged and minorities, the desire for a "just society" — all very attractive and appealing.

To Be Continued.

G.J. NORDEMAN

*Note of the Editor:* This was an introduction during the general membership meeting of Guido de Bres High School in Hamilton on May 11, 1979. We left it, as much as possible, in its original state.

## ANNOUNCEMENT



Henry Sieders

This is to announce that Southall-Sieders Funeral Service has joined Dodsworth & Brown at New Street, Burlington, Ontario. H. Sieders will continue to operate his Ontario Street funeral home as a branch of Dodsworth & Brown, Burlington to be known as Southall-Sieders and Dodsworth & Brown Funeral Home. H. Sieders can now offer Dodsworth's and Brown's other facilities at Burlington, New Street, or Hamilton to his client families.

H. Sieders is appointed assistant manager of both Burlington locations to be known as "Dodsworth & Brown and Southall-Sieders" Funeral Home. On or before December 31, 1979, H. Sieders will be appointed manager of both Burlington funeral homes.

On April 1, 1980 (10 months), Southall-Sieders Funeral Service will cease to operate from its present Ontario Street location and join with the facilities of Dodsworth & Brown at New Street, Burlington. The firm will then be known as Dodsworth & Brown and Southall-Sieders Funeral Home — H. Sieders, Managing Funeral Director. We will then be able to provide more spacious facilities, larger parking area and a more centrally accessible location in order to provide and render continued professional, efficient, and personal service to which Burlington families have grown accustomed.

# our little magazine

Dear Busy Beavers,

Some days ago it was ASCENSION DAY.

Very soon it will be PENTECOST.

Strange names, don't you think?

Strange names for very happy days!

Just stop to think! What a glorious day it must have been for the Lord Jesus! He had suffered so much. And now, on ASCENSION DAY, He went as a triumphant King to His glorious, holy throne in the highest heaven.

Yes, He went as a King.

But He is also our Good Shepherd.

He left His sheep, His disciples on earth.

But He did not leave them ALONE!

On PENTECOST He sent to them His Holy Spirit, the Comforter, to lead and guide them.

ASCENSION DAY and PENTECOST, they are miracle days!

The Lord, the Master and Creator of all, rising through space to His heavenly home.

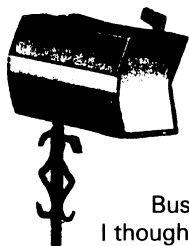
God the Holy Spirit living in the hearts of men — to make them listen to the Good Shepherd and follow Him.

Two wonderful miracles! Just think of it!

\* \* \* \* \*

All you lucky Busy Beavers who celebrate your birthday in this beautiful month of June, we all join in wishing a very happy day together with your family and friends. Many happy returns of the day! And may the Lord bless and keep you.

Henry Dekker	June 1	Norma Vander Pol	June 19
Theresa Bouwman	3	Jacob Jongs	20
Marcelle Lindhout	3	Catherine Smouter	20
Nick Boersema	5	Debbie Medemblik	21
Arlene Buist	6	Joyce Dalhuizen	21
Rosalinde Moeliker	7	Marianne Bergsma	22
Carina Ploeger	10	Joyce De Gelder	23
Calvin Lodder	11	Karen Gay Barendregt	26
Julia Huttema	12	Cathy Dalhuizen	28
Jason Klaver	13	Debbie De Boer	28
Linda Van Dyk	14	Harold Jansen	28
Cheryl Hansma	17		



## From the Mailbox

Busy Beaver *Marianne Hart* wrote something I thought you would all like to hear about — a royal visit by H.R.H. Prince Charles to Albany, Western

Australia!

Marianne wrote:

"Yes I did see Prince Charles.

All the Grade Sevens (only 13) piled into Mr. Fokkema's car. (We only just fitted.) Then Mr. Fokkema drove up near the High School. We climbed about half way up. Then a man told us to go behind a little picket where it said JOHN CALVIN SCHOOL. That's where we went. It took about a half an hour before Prince Charles passed us. Actually he wasn't that handsome. When he walked passed us he just looked at the sign and then kept on going."

Of course you may join the Busy Beaver Club, *Juliet Selles*. And a big welcome to you! Thank you for the poem, *Juliet*. Will you write and let me know your birthday so that we can include you in the birthday list?

And welcome to you, too, *Christina Oosterhoff*. How do you like celebrating your birthday on New Year's Eve? Will you write and tell us about yourself, *Christina*? Bye for now.

Thanks for the riddles, *Joyce Huinink*. The Busy Beavers will really enjoy them, don't you think, too? How did you do on your car wash? And are you looking forward to moving, *Joyce*? Be sure to let me know your new address!

Hello *Marianne Hart*. It was nice to hear from you again. Did you catch lots of fish on the holiday? You'll have to write and tell us about Anzac Day, *Marianne*. We have Victoria Day and Dominion Day but no Anzac Day. Bye for now.

### QUIZ TIME

Busy Beaver *Joyce Huinink* wants to keep us on our toes! Can you answer these riddles without looking up the answers?

1. What walks on 4 legs in the morning, 2 at noon, and 3 in the evening?
2. When does a cherry not have a pit?
3. When is a door not a door?
4. What comes up to a house but never goes in?
5. When is it easiest to read?
6. What never asks questions but must always be answered?

Answers: 1. A man. As a baby 4 legs when crawling, walks on 2 legs when grown, and walks with a cane (third leg) in old age; 2. When it is a blossom; 3. When it is a jar; 4. a sidewalk; 5. In autumn when nature turns the leaves; 6. a doorknob.

Busy Beaver *Mary Van Raalte* has a quiz for you. Can you match them all correctly?

- |   |                     |
|---|---------------------|
| A   | B                   |
| 1. a tax collector                                  | a. John the Baptist |
| 2. Jesus' best disciples                            | b. Judas Iscariot   |
| 3. the betrayer                                     | c. Peter            |
| 4. a disciple whose name means "rock"               | d. Mary             |
| 5. in the gospel Mark, "my messenger" is            | e. Lazarus          |
| 6. the mother of James                              | f. John the Baptist |
| 7. a poor man who ate from under a rich man's table | g. Matthew          |
| 8. who baptized Jesus                               | h. James, John      |

Answers: 1. g; 2. h; 3. b; 4. c; 5. f; 6. d; 7. e; 8. a.

Before I say "Good-bye" I just wanted to tell what a good idea one of our Busy Beavers had! She wrote: "Every week when we get our allowance we have to put 5¢ in a special can marked 'BIRTHDAY FUND'."

Good idea, right?

Now it's good-bye. Till next time, Busy Beavers.

With love from your,  
Aunt Betty.

# Puzzle No. 48

## BIBLE QUIZ

Start in the upper left-hand square of each grid and proceed square by square to spell the answers. Do not cross your path or enter a single square twice. Horizontally and vertically only. All letters are used.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In the Bible, who was the first man mentioned shaving?</li> <li>2. Whose army of 185,000 was destroyed in one night?</li> <li>3. Who had 12 fingers and 12 toes?</li> <li>4. Who were the first highway robbers reported in the Bible?</li> <li>5. Who walked naked for 3 years to fulfill God's command?</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Who cut up the word of the Lord with a penknife and burned it?</li> <li>7. Who had a bed 13½ feet long and 6 feet wide?</li> <li>8. When did women boil and eat their babies?</li> <li>9. Whose army had 700 left-handed men in it?</li> </ol> |
|--|--|

J	O	P	H	A	V
O	S	E	S	H	E
A	H	P	E	B	D
R	A	T	H	E	F
E	T	O	E	H	O
K	O	P	S	E	R

T	H	I	A	N	S
A	E	R	M	A	C
S	S	Y	P	I	B
I	W	D	E	R	E
T	I	N	E	N	H
H	K	G	S	A	C

A	P	I	N	E	S
I	H	T	F	O	T
L	I	S	G	A	N
S	E	T	A	I	G
C	D	H	D	F	M
E	N	D	E	R	O

1. _____	2. _____	3. _____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

T	H	B	I	M	H
M	E	A	D	E	C
E	N	O	E	L	E
H	S	F	P	L	E
E	E	M	O	H	H
C	H	W	H	A	D

I	S	A	H	A	S
A	A	I	A	S	I
I	P	G	A	N	G
I	O	A	I	N	S
H	D	N	P	Y	T
T	E	A	T	G	E

J	E	M	T	H	H
O	H	I	S	E	A
I	A	K	O	U	D
S	O	O	N	J	R
I	J	F	N	G	E
A	H	K	I	O	V

4. _____	5. _____	6. _____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

O	G	E	M	N	A
H	T	R	M	T	N
E	K	I	I	A	H
S	A	N	G	E	P
H	B	F	O	R	E
A	N	O	F	T	H

A	S	B	A	I	R
H	N	E	A	M	A
A	D	A	S	D	E
F	O	D	K	E	G
S	G	N	I	I	S
Y	R	I	A	B	E

B	J	A	A	T	W
E	N	M	H	A	A
I	N	I	B	E	R
T	D	G	I	I	W
E	N	E	A	T	H
S	A	L	R	S	I

7. \_\_\_\_\_ 8. \_\_\_\_\_ 9. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Answers*

- |   |                   |
|---|-------------------|
| 1. Joseph shaved before he spoke to the Pharaoh   | Genesis 41:14     |
| 2. The Assyrians camped with king Sennacherib     | Isaiah 37:36      |
| 3. A Philistine of Gath descended from giants     | II Samuel 21:20   |
| 4. The men of Shechem who had helped Abimelech    | Judges 9:25       |
| 5. Isaiah as a sign against Egypt and Ethiopia    | Isaiah 20:2, 3    |
| 6. Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king over Judah    | Jeremiah 36:20-23 |
| 7. Og the king of Bashan of the Rephaim remnant   | Deuteronomy 3:11  |
| 8. As Benhadad king of Syria besieged Samaria     | II Kings 6:29     |
| 9. Benjaminites and Gibeonites at war with Israel | Judges 20:16      |

S. Bethlehem

## Letter To My Daughter

*Dear Jean,*

*At the conclusion of my last letter a question came up in my mind, namely: "How much of the greatness and wonderfulness of God's deeds is preached in our churches? How dominating is this greatness in the sermons? How much impressed are we by those great and wonderful deeds of God after we leave church? And especially: If and when we take an unbeliever with us, or anybody for that matter, or such a one visits our services just on his own out of curiosity or otherwise, how much will he be impressed by it?"*

*These questions would not leave me and so I began to watch the sermons closely especially on that point.*

*Let me assure you beforehand that they were there; in the sermons; those great and wonderful deeds of God.*

*But I must say again as I said last time, that since we grew up in Christian families, etc., those things were so normal and so familiar. They were there alright, but very often "hidden" (or something like that) in a lecture. We do get a lot of intellectual knowledge, but what does it do to our hearts?*

*In one sermon about God's election it was stressed that man's will had nothing to do with it. For man was dead in sins and trespasses. And that dead man heard the Word of God and he revived! If that is not great and wonderful, I don't know what is.*

*But when we left church I did not see or hear anything about it. And I did not talk about it myself. See what I mean?*

*Another sermon was about the healing of the man with the lame arm. Two points this time: 1. The impossible required or demanded. 2. The impossible performed. The Lord Jesus commanded this man to "stretch forth his arm." And he did it. Just imagine*

*Jean, he did it. Do you imagine that man just standing there as if nothing had happened? Or perhaps just standing there looking at his arm, shaking his head and saying: "Funny! Just a minute ago I thought I could not do that!"?*

*I don't like Oral Roberts' shows and the like, don't get me wrong. I don't feel at ease and I have asked myself if perhaps the devil could use the Lord's Name that way to lead us astray. I have heard and seen meetings where "Hallelujah! Wonderful! and Praise the Lord" could not be counted anymore. I don't think we need that. Just like the Reverend said: "We don't do that here!" But the irony of it is: Do we do it at all?*

*Coming back to the man with the lame arm (and how many others were mentioned in the gospels?) I could just see that man there, tears of joy running down his cheeks, dancing about and shouting: "Wonderful! Great! Praise the Lord!" Or did I see wrong in my imagination and was he just standing there as if it was all so normal, so natural, so self-evident and everyday-ish?*

*Did I ever tell you the story I heard from an older member of the congregation, who broke into a county jail during the war to free two boys, who had been jailed for being on the road after curfew? When they were out of their cell they said: "Are we ever glad! Thanks a lot, gentlemen! How much do we owe you?" That's about how I can see those people healed by the Lord (some of them having spent a fortune with the doctors) (Mark 5:25). How much?! Nothing at all! Just faith! Come! Buy wine and milk without money and without price! Is that not great and wonderful? Let's shout it from the rooftops, then!*

*Love,  
DAD*