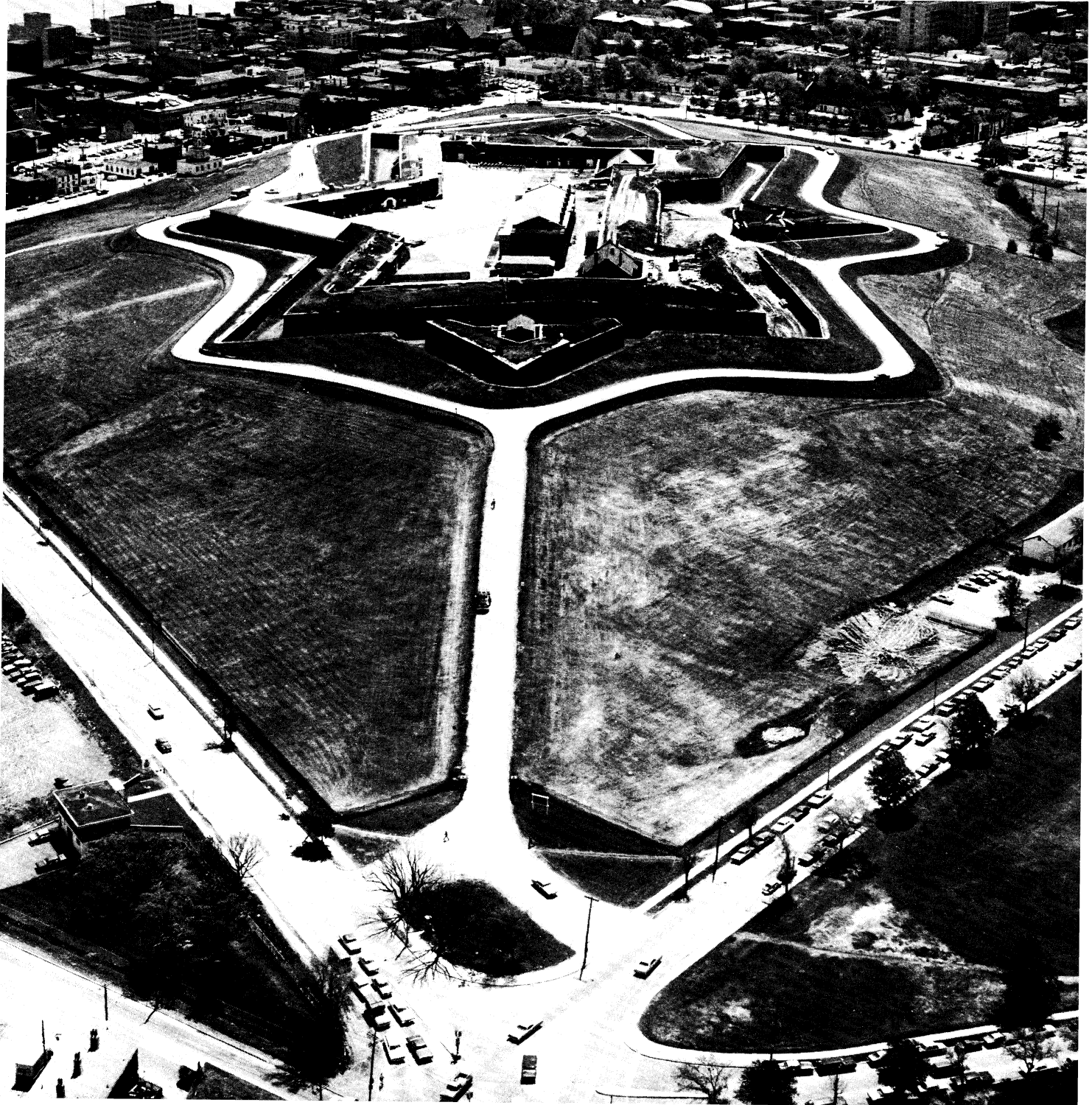


Clarion

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From Res to Ris?

We come to our last topic in this series concerning the worldwide correspondence between Reformed churches as dealt with in the *Acts* of the General Synod at Groningen-Zuid 1978 of "De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland." This last topic is the proposal to consult the Canadian Reformed Churches in order to prepare a Reformed International Synod.

Let me immediately prevent misunderstanding and state the obvious: the proposed Reformed *International* Synod (RIS) is distinct from the existing Reformed *Ecumenical* Synod (RES). One might say that there is a kind of negative relation. Those who now propose a RIS are no members of the RES, but they think of the one more or less as a counterpart of the other. Therefore, I chose the freedom to formulate the heading somewhat loosely: From RES to RIS? Should churches that avoid the Reformed *Ecumenical* Synod try to come to a Reformed *International* Synod?

As our readers possibly know, the Reformed Ecumenical Synod assembled for the first time at Grand Rapids in 1946. It was made up by four delegates of The (synodical) Reformed Churches in The Netherlands, three delegates of the Reformed Church in South-Africa (the "Doppers") and ten representatives of the Christian Reformed Church in North America. Since 1946 basis and membership broadened: among the members are now "De Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland" and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Some of the participants are at the same time members of the World Council of Churches, e.g., the Synodical Reformed Churches in The Netherlands and in Indonesia. This double membership and the deviation from the Reformed Confession, especially noticeable in the Dutch Synodical Churches, caused friction and difficulties within the RES. The latest reference to these problems is to be found in a report of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland at the end of May 1979 in Edinburgh. The Assembly expressed the hope that the difficulties encountered in the RES regarding the WCC membership of some constituent churches and the apparent toleration of heresy by the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands, may be resolved in a way fully honouring the constitution of the RES and preserving it from disruption. The Assembly's Committee on Ecumenical Relations was charged to keep the matter under review, to communicate with the GKN and the RES Secretariat, to maintain contact with other concerned member churches with a view to taking concerted action and to prepare recommendations to the 1980 Assembly as to the continued membership of The Free Church in the RES.

Similar decisions could be quoted from the Minutes of General Assemblies of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

One can be thankful for the fact that this concern is aired, although we who experienced the confessional struggle in the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands and are acquainted with the language and the situation of the Dutch Synodical Churches, sometimes have the impression that the seriousness of their deviation from Holy Scripture is still underestimated by our Presbyterian brothers. As long as the Synodical Churches are tolerated within the Reformed Ecumenical Synod, their actions and powerful spokesmen will influence the other members. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?

Committee III at the Synod Groningen-Zuid of our sister churches in The Netherlands mentioned this influence exercised by the unfaithful churches in the RES. "Die kwade invloed door middel van stukken van de G.O.S. in de Christian Reformed Church hebben de deputaten van de Canadese zusterkerken in hun laatste appèl op de C.R.C. uitvoerig aangetoond op het stuk van de Schriftbeschouwing." This Committee, therefore, referred to the appeal of the Canadian Reformed Churches to the Christian Reformed Church in which our deputies extensively proved the bad influence of the RES on the CRC by means of papers concerning the authority of the Holy Scripture. Our sister churches in the old country instructed their deputies to publish a pamphlet explaining the objections against the RES and to distribute this among their contacts abroad. I hope to inform our readers, as soon as it reaches Hamilton.

In the meantime, a truly Reformed International Synod is now thought to be even more desirable, "een werkelijk Gereformeerde Internationale Synode, die ook tot de verontruste deelnemers aan de G.O.S. een getuigenis zou kunnen doen uitgaan." So a RIS is seen as a testimony for concerned members of the RES. The idea of a Reformed International Synod is not new. In 1977 our Australian sister churches proposed an ecumenical synod, or a session of a general synod in which all corresponding Churches would be represented. Our deputies received information that the Australian Churches now have "full correspondence with the Presbyterian Church of Korea" and that they thought it worthwhile to consider "a sort of Reformed Ecumenical Synod with delegates from Africa, Australia, Canada, The Netherlands (and Korea, Indonesia?)," although they realized that it will be difficult to arrange such a meeting. The deputies of our Dutch sister churches produced a study report and took over the initiative of the Australian brothers. Now the Synod of Groningen instructed its deputies to consult the sister churches abroad about the preparation for a Reformed International Synod. According to the Synod decision the RIS can serve

the following purposes:

1. to proclaim unity and exercise ecclesiastical fellowship between the churches according to the command of Christ;
2. to encourage one another to keep the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints;
3. to consider common tasks, e.g., in bearing witness to the unity in true faith, and in carrying out the missionary mandate, with a view to contemporary developments in diverse areas of life in this world;
4. to consider contacts and relations with other churches.

For the first point the Synod of Groningen-Zuid considered that the Church of Christ is spread and dispersed over the whole world; and yet is joined and united in one and the same Spirit, and in the unity of the true faith.

It is the duty of believers and churches to strive for ecclesiastical fellowship with all who confess and maintain the same faith. This has to be realized "in eenheid van kerkelijk samenleven in elke plaats en land en waar dit door geografische afstanden, taalbarrières of andere oorzaken niet mogelijk is door kerkelijke correspondentie als oefening van kerkelijke gemeenschap." The calling to seek what is often called "organic union" is stressed. Church communion has to be established locally and nationally and if geographical distances, barriers of language or other causes make such unity impossible, ecclesiastical correspondence has to express the fellowship. One wonders what those "andere oorzaken" (other causes) beside geographical or linguistic barriers might be. Does the Synod of Groningen-Zuid think of ethnic differences? Another consideration of Synod is that it is the duty of believers and churches to reject ecclesiastical fellowship with churches that deviate from the doctrine and ordinances of the Word of God or that have seceded from the true church in a schismatic manner. A last important consideration reads as follows:

dat bij het vervullen van deze roeping er rekening mee gehouden zal moeten worden, dat de Here Christus Zijn Kerk vergadert onder verschillende volken en ook met Zijn Kerk onder die volken een weg van eigen historie van verdrukking en strijd tegen dwaling en reformatie is gegaan en nog gaat;

dat hierdoor tussen deze kerken ook verschillen aanwijsbaar kunnen zijn in de wijze waarop zij de waarheid Gods belijden en voorts in de uiterlijke inrichting en liturgische gebruiken en afspraken van kerkregering, terwijl ze toch samenstemmen in het belijden van het Woord van God en het handhaven van de ware leer en de bediening van de sacramenten en niet willen afwijken van wat Jezus als het enig Hoofd heeft verordend (vgl. art. 32 NGB en art. 86 KO).

The Synod of Groningen-Zuid states that the Lord Christ leads His Church among the nations through a specific history of persecution, struggle against error, and reformation. Consequently there can be divergencies in the manner of confessing the truth of God, in the external arrangements, liturgical customs, and rules of church polity, while there is, nevertheless, harmony in confessing the Word of God and obeying Jesus Christ the only Head of the Church. There is a reference to Article 32 of our Belgic Confession and Article 86 of the Church Order (our Article 85): "Foreign Churches whose usages differ from ours in non-essentials shall not be rejected."

What shall we say of all these things? I do not have the special report of the Dutch Deputies and cannot take it as an orientation for discussion. But the Acts of Groningen-Zuid

themselves lead us to remarks about the history, the confession, and the order of Christ's Church.

As far as the *history* is concerned, a Reformed International Synod would be something new. After the ecumenical councils of the early Christian church — they were not always as worldwide as the name seems to indicate — no international synod has been held. Even our Synod of Dordrecht was a "Synode Nationael," a national synod, although the discussion and decision with respect to the famous five doctrinal points took place in sessions that were attended by delegates from churches abroad. One could even ask whether the fact that the Catholic Church of Christ is now gathered nationally, only has historic significance. Should we stress that it is one great multitude or emphasize that it is gathered from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and tongues? Does the unity of faith in the one Spirit have to find external expression in an International Synod? Is there not the danger that by way of imitation the World Council of Churches was structured after the United Nations, the RES after the WCC, and that the RIS will copy the RES?

With respect to the *confession* the question arises what the Synod of Groningen means by differences "in de wijze waarop zij de waarheid Gods belijden en voorts in de uiterlijke inrichting en liturgische gebruiken en afspraken van kerkregering." In *Clarion* of June 2nd we saw that our sister churches entered a new phase in 1967. The synod of Amersfoort 1967 differed from the synod of Amersfoort 1948. In connection with the Reformed Ecumenical Synod the Committee of Amersfoort 1948 had declared:

Wat verder de opgesomde belijdenisgeschriften betreft, die de grondslag zullen vormen: deze geven niet eenzelfde geluid. De Westminster Confessie spreekt anders over het Verbond en de regering der Kerk, dan onze Nederlandse belijdenisgeschriften. Ook die Regering der Kerk is een deel van onze op Gods Woord gegronde belijdenis. Door deze afwijking van elkander in de belijdenisgeschriften is het hebben van een gemeenschappelijke grondslag al illusoir.

De bijlage bij de uitnodiging zegt: "Wegens de verscheidenheid in de vormen van regering der Gereformeerde Kerken, kan op de eenheid van kerkelijk handelen niet, als een fundamentele eis, de nadruk worden gelegd." Dit verschil van kerkelijk handelen vindt zijn oorzaak in het verschil van belijden in de verschillende confessies, die daarom onmogelijk om haar tegensrijdigheid voor alle deelnemers bindend kunnen worden verklaard.

The Westminster Confession differs from the Three Forms of Unity in the doctrine of the covenant and of the government of the Church. Also the government of the Church is a part of our confession based on the Word of God. Differences in Church polity and policy issue from divergencies in the confessions which contradict one another and therefore cannot be declared binding for all participants. Where Amersfoort 1948 saw contradictions in the *contents* of the confessions, Groningen 1978 — in the line of Amersfoort 1967 — sees only differences in the *manner* of expressing the truth of God. As long as the Canadian Reformed Churches have not made a final decision on this doctrinal point, we should not place the Westminster Standards and the Three Forms of Unity simply beside each other in the basis of a Reformed International Synod, if such Synod has to be convoked.

The last aspect of the issue is that of *church polity*. In our Church Order an international synod is unknown. Also our

Continued on next page

sister churches in The Netherlands did not make a provision for it in their revision of the Church Order. The Reformed Ecu-
menical Synod calls itself a Synod but is no Synod; it does
not make binding decisions. According to the familiar Article
31 a decision of a major ecclesiastical assembly shall be con-
sidered settled and binding, unless it be proved to conflict
with the Word of God or with the Church Order. Will this also
be valid for the proposed international synod? If so, would
there not be a danger that difficulties within a national con-
federation of churches are brought to an international level
and unnecessarily spread throughout other confederations?

According to my opinion there are questions enough to
exhort us to proceed with caution. Why not first of all strive

for an international *conference* of churches and have this *con-
vention* speak about the common affairs, to begin with the
matters of confession, church order and liturgy? We do not
want "to flee forward," to flee into the eschatological hope.
Nevertheless, we do not have to organize everything in this
dispensation, but may in faith rest assured that the world-
wide catholicity of the church is present in and through the
Spirit of Christ. It will be made completely manifest in the
eternal festival of Pentecost when the innumerable multitude
shall stand before the throne and before the Lamb.

J. FABER

Modernistic Bible Usage

Because of unbelief, modernism
has long subjected the Bible to the di-
secting knife of criticism. Take the
prophet Amos as an example. Did he
not in a clever manner heap invectives
on the heads of the rich, the usurers,
and the opulent, decadent city dwellers
with all their pomp and splendour?

Look at the Psalms! Many of them
may very well be appreciated as ut-
terances of deep Jewish religiosity.
They are also a treasury of literary
beauty. And isn't the Song of Songs a
beautiful love poem? Modern man
feels very attracted to the book of Ec-
clesiastes with its strong, visual lan-
guage, and its melancholic, philoso-
phical pessimism. "The Preacher is truly
modern," many say; thousands of
years ago he proposed the cyclic
theory which is in vogue with many
historical philosophers: the endless cir-
cle of rising, dominating, and declining;
the eternal return to the beginning;
the fast pace of time which in reality is a
treadmill. The melancholy which finally
turns into a philosophical quiescence
also has a strong appeal for many.

Amos is seen as a militant, social
reformer, the active focal point of
human life and strife, an inspiring figure
for the leftist revolutionaries of our
time. The Preacher is seen as a philoso-
pher of pessimism and relativism who
elevates himself above the futile strug-
gle and strife which do not bring a solu-
tion; he is the passive pivot, the ad-
mired forerunner of all those who have

come to the realization that struggle
and strife all lead to nothing and that
one has to be satisfied with the small
amount of happiness that may be tem-
porarily enjoyed. The modernists who
reason in this way curtail the word of
God.

Amos, like the other prophets who
are being used as examples by the
theology of revolution, is not a soldier
in the class struggle; he is a prophet
who preaches about the coming judg-
ment, a prophet who, in the first place,
calls back an apostate church to the
true worship of God and who, in that
context, also points out social injustice.
Likewise, the Preacher is not the
philosopher of pessimism, the philoso-
pher of the eternal cycle who teaches
the practice of quiescence. The
preacher purposefully draws a sketch
of the futile and vain life of this earth-
ly realm, the way it appears "under the
sun," for everyone who does not know
about the coming Christ; the ages are
hastening towards Christ, Who is the
only hope for the human generations,
the only guarantee of a perspective
that reaches into the new heaven and
the new earth. His book Ecclesiastes —
written during the dispensation of sha-
dows — is the cry for the second com-
ing, the return of Him Who will judge
all things. Modernism has closed its
eyes to these aspects.

The cyclic character of history is in
itself a fact. Age-old motives reappear
periodically in the thoughts and strug-

gles of humanity: revolution follows re-
volution, but the promised happiness
remains beyond reach; nations and em-
pires are founded, become powerful,
and then flounder. "The thing that has
been is that which shall be."

THE PESSIMISM OF THE FIFTIES

I still vividly remember the time
shortly after the Second World War.
The terror of the terrible bloodbath and
of the devilish exterminatory politics of
national-socialism still had a fierce grip
on the people. Although the tyranny
had been conquered and although
there was much official optimism,
there still lived among millions the fear
that totalitarianism and organized in-
humanity would return. Man had ex-
perienced the unbelievable possibilities
science and technology, when com-
bined with refined methods of mass
psychology offered. Where could the
spiritual and moral strength be found to
prevent another tragedy?

From those times stem the futuris-
tic novels of blackest pessimism. I
mention a few: Aldous Huxley's *Ape
and Essenco*, which pictures a world
maddened, inhumane, and totally dis-
eased as a result of atomic radiation
after the Third World War; Karin
Boye's *Kallocaine*, which is a sketch of
a state in which total domination has
been effected to an absurd degree —
everyone is a brainwashed slave; and
George Orwell's *1984*. This last novel is
perhaps the most well-known of the
futuristic novels. It deals with a theme
similar to that of *Kallocaine*: a modern
society of slavery totally dominated by
the lie, in which every human decency
has been turned into its opposite, and
where there is no resistance possible.

This last aspect is the most sad-
dening of these novels. The main

characters try despairingly to find a way out and to offer resistance, but they are, after terrible brainwashing, cut down without honour. There is no way out. In the novel of Virgil Gheorgiu, *The 25th Hour*, this is even evident in the title. You cannot find the 25th hour on any clock; it is forever too late.

A NEW GENERATION

Eventually, some time around the sixties this black pessimism receded somewhat. Man cannot live with such total hopelessness. A new generation had grown up which had not experienced the war and the occupation, and thus were not under the shadow of the terrible past. New prophets of the revolution had arisen: Fidel Castro, Che Guevara, Mao, Marcuse. Although Marxism in the Soviet Union was at a dead end in a Red totalitarian state, Marcuse taught that it had to be mixed with a large amount of anarchism in order to obtain maximum results. Furthermore, the motor of the revolution should not be the labour class, which had lost its revolutionary militancy and élan because of the portion of affluency which the capitalistic society had cast its way, but rather the students, who were still unspoiled, young, energetic, and without possession. They were the hope of the (red) future.

It was in that way that many big student revolutions at many western universities were started, beginning with a revolution at a university in Paris in 1968, which consequently also invaded the labour world. Holland was later also touched by the tail end of this revolution.

The revolutionaries were aroused. A new activist spirit appeared! The youth would demolish, through their spontaneous actions, the decadent capitalistic system and replace it with utopia! The red flags of the communists and the black flags of the anarchists flew side by side in brotherhood at the mass rallies in Paris and elsewhere. An unheard-of event! This was also the time of mass demonstrations against the "American aggression against Viet Nam" and the slogan "Johnson, murderer" was prevalent.

Now, that has all passed. The ideal world of which the revolutionary youth dreamt (one of the slogans was "Imagination in power") did not materialize. The Americans withdrew from Viet Nam and the "liberated" South Vietnamese escaped by the tens of

thousands, risking shipwreck and starvation rather than remaining under the terror of the Red rule. It appears to be even worse in Cambodia. There genocide is being practised, just as Hitler did with the Jews. But the demonstrators of the wild years of the past do not make a sound.

WITHOUT A HOPE IN THE WORLD

According to all kinds of enquirers, surveyors, and writers we are in a valley of apathy and despair at the moment. A large number of young people "don't see it any more," and the non-religious youth especially doubt the sense of existence. They no longer worry, because it does not matter any longer. For many, unemployment is the future of their social life. Absolutes in which they can trust they no longer see. Traditions have nothing to offer them, nor does the Christian way of life, but they have no replacement that will set their life aglow. "It is all vanity . . ." Therefore many young people escape to the drug scene.

In the United States events happened along nearly the same lines as those in Europe. However, in America thousands of spiritually-homeless people seek comfort and solace in the most bizarre sects, especially sects led by imposing, almost-hypnotic figures. This was the case with a religious-communistic sect; hundreds of its members committed suicide in Guyana. In America there are many such groups led by leaders who possess unheard-of powers over their followers.

WATER OF LIFE

Security cannot be found anywhere outside of God and His Word. Death and hopelessness reign, even when it is declared that happiness may be found elsewhere. Travellers in the desert who have become parched may see mirages, may visualize beautiful green oases with palm trees and water fountains. Rejoicing, they move towards it; just a short distance and then they will be there! But when they come closer the tableau disappears like smoke and vapour . . .

Comrades don't linger!

Only the last effort

And the Internationale

Bring happiness to all people!

Fata morganas! Illusions!

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat;

yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.

Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David" (Isaiah 55:1-3).

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press review

ONCE AGAIN: COVENANT AND ELECTION.

We continue our discussion with Prof. Hoeksema where we broke it off in our previous article. It was shown that Prof. Hoeksema's interpretation of Genesis 17:7 (that we have to read there "seed *within* the generations") can not be maintained, because it is linguistically unwarranted. Now he continued his article as follows:

And we have Scripture itself to teach us this [that fact of "seed *within* the generations," J.G.]. For in Galatians 3:7-9 we read: "Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." Or combine the thoughts of Galatians 3:16 and 29. In verse 16 we read: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He sayeth not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." And in verse 29 we read: "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." It is plain, therefore, that the "seed" is the believers, those who are Christ's, that is, the elect. And the line in which that seed is continuously found is the line of the generations of believers-generations which contain, indeed, more than that elect seed, contain also reprobate children, but in which indeed that elect seed, the heirs of the promise, are found.

Let me, first of all, say that I wholeheartedly agree with our Reformed Confession which confesses that only those who are chosen by God in Christ, and who, therefore, receive the free gift of a true faith, and who through faith are ingrafted into Christ, and who show themselves believers, will be saved. But that is not the issue. At stake is the question: Are only those elect in the covenant? Now Prof. Hoeksema reads this also in Galatians 3: the elect are the believers, and the believers are the seed of Abraham, so only the elect are in the covenant; the others are only in the historical sphere of the covenant.

But is that really what Paul says in Galatians 3? I doubt that very much.

Prof. Hoeksema presses this chapter into his view. What is the issue in Paul's letter to the Galatians? That is not election. That is not the connection of election and covenant either. The issue was: How is a person saved? In the way of doing the commandments of the Law of God as given in the Old Testament, in the way of faith in Christ? We can also formulate the question in this way: Is the address of the Church still in the old Jerusalem, in the old temple? Or is the address the New Jerusalem in heaven, or the New Testament Church of Christ Jesus (see chapter 4)? The apostle says that salvation is not in keeping the law, but in *faith* in Christ Jesus. And in line with this he teaches that the promise of salvation, the promise of the covenant, existed already before the law came, and that therefore not the law, but the promise, not the law, but faith in Christ, is the way to salvation. And the conclusion of Paul is: not those who expect salvation from doing the law, whether a Jew or a Judaist (a Jewish Christian who maintained the law as the way to salvation), but those who believe in Christ and so follow in the way of faith of father Abraham, are the true children of Abraham, and are the people of Christ.

And, thus, we cannot draw the conclusion that Paul says here that only the elect are *in* the covenant, and that the others are only in a certain historical sphere of the covenant. We cannot conclude from what Paul writes in Galatians 3 that the covenant promises were not at all for *all* the members of the covenant. In Romans the apostle says that the covenants were with Israel, as a nation. And the apostle Peter, addressing the Jews and proselytes on Pentecost day, — says to the crowd as they had gathered together: For you is the promise of the Holy Spirit. Believe in Christ, and you will receive the Spirit. So the promise of the covenant, the promise of salvation, is realized in the way of faith.

This view that the *covenant and its promises* cannot be confined to the elect, because the Scriptures do not do that, we find also with John Calvin.

In his *Institutes*, III, 21, 6 (translation of Henry Beveridge, published by Eerdmans) he writes: ". . . At first Ishmael had obtained *the same rank* with his brother Isaac, *because the spiritual covenant was equally sealed in him* by the symbol of circumcision . . . I admit that it was by their own fault that Ishmael, Esau, and others *fell from their adoption; for the condition annexed* was, that they should faithfully keep the covenant of God, whereas they perfidiously violated it" [The italics are added by me, J.G.].

From this quotation it is clear that according to Calvin the covenant was not only with Isaac and Jacob, but also with Ishmael and Esau. It is also clear from this quotation that according to Calvin we can speak of a condition in the covenant that has to be kept, and which Ishmael and Esau did not keep.

With this we have come to the matter of the condition. Prof. Hoeksema objects to speaking about a condition in the covenant which has to be met. According to him the covenant is eternal, with the elect, and is one-sided not only in its origin, but also in its continued existence. Therefore we cannot speak of a condition in the covenant. According to Prof. Hoeksema speaking of a condition in connection with the covenant is Arminianism. The Arminians spoke of conditions.

Besides the fact that John Calvin speaks of a condition that is not met in connection with the fact that Ishmael and Esau and many others in Israel were rejected and cut off by God, there is also our old Dutch *Staten Vertaling* (Translation of the Bible endorsed by the States General in The Netherlands, in the 17th Century). Having rejected the Arminian errors at the Synod of Dort in 1618/1619, our fathers spoke about the condition in the covenant. Prof. K. Schilder pointed to this fact in his comments on the Protestant Reformed "Declaration of Principles." We can read this in his booklet *Bovenschriftuurlijke binding — een nieuw gevaar* (Binding above the Scriptures — a new danger), page 12ff. He quotes there from the preface to the New Testament of this old Dutch translation. I give this quotation in translation (The capital letters are added by Prof. Schilder):

With this (i.e., the word *berith* or "covenant") in fact is meant the covenant itself, which God made with men, in order to give them eternal life on certain CONDI-

TIONS . . . The Old one is that covenant which God made with the first man before the fall (into sin), in which eternal life is promised on the CONDITION of a totally perfect obedience and keeping of the law . . . and is therefore called the covenant of the law, which God again gave to the Israelites, in order that they might understand from it that they have to seek their salvation in a different Covenant, which is called the New, and consists in this that God ordained His Son as a Mediator, and promised eternal life on the condition that we believe in Him; and is called the COVENANT OF GRACE . . . These two Covenants are one as to their essence, because in both the forgiveness of sins, salvation, and eternal life are promised on CONDITION of faith in the Mediator, but they are distinct as to the administration of both, which in the New is much clearer”

After he has given the above quotation Prof. K. Schilder says that it is not the use of the word “condition” in connection with the covenant that is as such the real issue, but that the point is: What do you mean by that word? For it can be used in a wrong way, but also in a correct way. Prof. Schilder then makes clear what he means, as follows (page 14 of the booklet):

- A. Do you mean by “condition” something which would bind God? Then we say unconditionally: “UNconditional be the device!”
- B. Do you mean by “condition”: something for which God has to wait, before He can go on? Then we say unconditionally: “UNconditional be the device!”
- C. Do you mean by “condition”: something that we have to fulfill, in order to earn by it? Then we say unconditionally: “UNconditional be the device!”
- D. Do you mean by “condition”: something which God has connected with something else, in order to make clear to us that the one thing cannot come without the other, and that we cannot be sure of the one thing unless, at the same time, we have been assured of the other? Then we say unconditionally: “conditional be the device!”

It is sometimes said that assuming the possibility that man can break the covenant that God has made means assuming that man can be stronger than God. This is not true in case “D.” If God makes things so that He leaves the possibility open that man, in his own responsibility, can disconnect what God has and wants to be connected, then man is not stronger than God when he does the disconnecting.

Prof. Schilder has worked this point “D” out on the pages 16 and 17.

From it I quote:

D. But now the fine point: God did give us PROMISES, but not PREDICTIONS. Thus, He does not say to N.N.: you shall get into heaven, and to another N.N.: you will remain eternally outside of it.

Therefore He gives a promise with a command, like the Canons of Dort say: the promise comes with the command of faith and conversion

And he who wants to call that Arminian, in my opinion does not read the Bible in the good way, with which [Bible, J.G.] the Arminians were defeated.

I can only say that I fully agree with Prof. K. Schilder: the use of the word “condition” in connection with the covenant does not make a person Arminian, because the Arminians used the word in the same connection: The question is: Do you use the word in an Arminian way or in a Reformed way?

Here I also want to make a remark about what Prof. Hoeksema has written about my statement in connection with what we read in the epistle to the Hebrews, e.g., 10:25ff. I said: “It is evident that people of the new covenant can fall away.” Pointing to the promise from Jeremiah that God will write the law in the hearts of the people of the new covenant, as quoted in Hebrews 8, Prof. Hoeksema calls my statement about a possible falling away of members of the new covenant “Pure Arminianism.” See the *Standard Bearer* of February 1, 1979, page 201.

However, this does not apply to me. And it is not true. If I should see the covenant as he does: only made with the elect; and if I should then say that there is a falling away of members of the covenant, then, in that case, my statement would be “Pure Arminianism.” But since I see, with Calvin and Schilder, that also not-chosen people have a place in the covenant, and that those not-elected members of the covenant can and will fall away, my statement is not “Pure Arminianism” at all. Prof. Hoeksema should have seen and considered this. And because he did not, he has misrepresented me before the readers of the *Standard Bearer*.

I would like to make another remark. Prof. Hoeksema also wrote (*Standard Bearer* of February 1, 1979, page 199):

At the conclusion of his article he [Geertsema, J.G.] *desperately tries* to bring in election and reprobation; and in doing so, he *vainly tries* to find support for his views in the Canons of Dordrecht. But he *corrupts* the Canons” [Italics added].

Prof. Hoeksema does not prove anything. He flatly states. Even without quoting anything of what I had written. Speaking about misrepresenting a person!! But again: his accusations about desperately and vainly trying and corrupting do not apply to me. They would only if I should have the same views as he has. But since I look at the covenant in a different way, I can simply say: there is nothing vain and desperate, and there is no corruption. There is no need for it. Calvin and Schilder were scriptural in their speaking. And fully Reformed. And so were our Reformed fathers both at the Synod of Dort, 1618-19, and when writing their Preface to the Bible translation. I have to come to an end. My reply is more than long enough. But one point is still left. Prof. Hoeksema challenged us (me) to

explain the Thanksgiving in our Baptism Form *in such a way that it includes the reprobate children*. I very boldly say in advance: he cannot do so! And yet he wants to have God say in baptism to every baptized child, “I make My covenant with you in Christ.”

After all I have written it can be clear that my difficulties with the Form of Infant Baptism are not as great as Prof. Hoeksema thinks they are. In fact, I have no difficulties at all. When in baptism the promise of the gospel, the promise of the covenant, is sealed (In Christ Jesus am I the LORD your God), then that *promise* is sealed. And this *promise* is the summary which includes *all* the *promises* of the covenant. And God realizes or fulfils what He has promised in the way of faith. That is how God has connected the promise and its fulfilment in the covenant.

I may point again to Hebrews. In 3:12 we read: “Take care, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God For we share in Christ, if only we hold our first confidence firm to the end” (verse 14). And verse 19 says: “So we see that they were unable to enter because of their unbelief.” This can only mean that the promise of the covenant — to enter the promised land — had been for all, but that their unbelief hindered them in receiving what was promised. This unbelief was disobedience at the same time. And this example of Israel’s unbelief, preventing the unbelievers from partaking and sharing in the realization of the prom-

Continued on next page

ise, is a strong warning for the people of the new covenant. Which means that the possibility is there, that unbelief still prevents a sharing in the realization of the promise of entering into a better rest (see Hebrews 4).

And when I baptize a child of believing parents, I can say to that child — and that is every child, not only the elect — that it has salvation in Christ. In Christ Jesus it has the forgiveness of sins. In Christ it has the adoption as a child of the covenant. See what Calvin wrote: he used that word “adoption” regarding Ishmael, Esau, and all the later Israelites. And that child that I baptize keeps what it has in Christ, except when, later, it rejects God’s mercy in unbelief. And so I can also wholeheartedly stand behind the Canons of Dort, Chapter 1, Article 17, speaking about the salvation of the children of the believers whom God takes away in their infancy. They have salvation in Christ. They have it in the promise. And they did not (could not) throw it away in unbelief. Therefore such parents who lose a child in infancy do not have to have any doubt with respect to the election and salvation of such children.

I want to conclude my reply. I do not say that I have solved all problems and answered all questions in connection with covenant and election. On the contrary. But I deplore the fact, even more after I dived more into this matter, that on the Protestant Reformed side the identification of election and covenant has been forced so much that church unity has been broken and sacrificed, both in 1951 with the Liberated Reformed people, and in 1953 with their own Protestant Reformed people that were with the Rev. De Wolf. We could and should have been one. It is sad that we are not. But the continuation of forcing the issue of that identification of covenant and election will continue to be an impediment on the way to a coming closer toward each other. However, I hope that this impediment will be taken away. Those whom the LORD has chosen and given to Christ, and whom Christ bought, and therefore are or will be regenerated by the Holy Spirit, will not fall away, but persevere in faith. Faith is the fruit of election, not the ground, to the praise and glory of our gracious God and Saviour.

J. GEERTSEMA

Books

New Testament in Modern Speech by the late Richard Francis Weymouth, Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49501. Reviewed by Rev. L. Selles, Hamilton, Ontario.

In 1885 a revision of the King James Version of the Bible was published in England, the so-called Revised Version. It’s North American counterpart came from the press in 1905 under the name *Revised Standard Version*.

The idea of revisions of the King James Version apparently did not meet with general approval, for since the beginning of the 20th Century a number of new translations, both by individuals and by translation committees, were published. The first one was *The 20th Century New Testament, A Translation into Modern English Made from the Original Greek*; the last one so far is *The New International Version*. There are many other versions inbetween.

One of them was *New Testament in Modern Speech* by Dr. R.F. Weymouth, a classical scholar who for many years taught at University College in London, England. Before translating the New Testament, Dr. Weymouth first published a new edition of the Greek text of the New Testament called *The Resultant Greek Testament*. As the word “resultant” indicates, this edition was based on the majority opinion of 19th Century scholars as to the best text. Dr. Weymouth did not live to see his next project, the translation of this Greek edition, published. A friend took care of the final editing and publication. Although it had to battle for acceptance in some doctrinal camps, according to the preface to the recent reprint, the translation was, generally speaking, well received and went through frequent reprints.

As to the recent reprint, Kregel Publications brought it on the market. It is, according to the publishers, unnecessary “to vindicate re-publishing this Weymouth classic translation of the New Testament. A work which has had such a ministry, such a host of critical acclaim and is a live entity on thousands of library shelves, deserves to be kept available to the public, especially the Christian community.” In spite of this reference to the success-story of

the book in the past, the present reviewer wonders whether that justifies a republication at this time. The modern speech of this translation is hardly modern any longer after more than seventy years have passed, even less so when the author himself wrote in the preface to the first edition that he also used words and phrases which were antiquated but still used at the time.

That, however, is not the main reason why I put a question mark behind the desirability of this republication. The author also wrote in the preface to the first edition that it was not his “ambition to supplant the Versions already in general use His desire has rather been to furnish a succinct and compressed running commentary (not doctrinal) to be used side by side with its elder compeers.”

Dr. Weymouth did exactly that. Reference to just a few texts may show that “. . . my ways in Christ” of I Corinthians 4:17 becomes: “my habits as a Christian teacher.” “For the kingdom of God . . .” of I Corinthians 4:20 is replaced, without even a semblance of translating, by: “Apostolic authority” “Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump” of I Corinthians 5:6 becomes, in a clear attempt to interpret: “Do you not know that a little yeast corrupts the whole of the dough.” “Now I write you” of I Corinthians 5:11 is rendered by “But what I meant was” It is a running commentary, indeed, but a commentary is something else than a translation.

Dr. Weymouth is one of the first scholars who paved the road for all sorts of paraphrasing which leaves us running commentaries but takes the Bible proper from us. Not recommended.

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Special Events
with
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by submitting
clear photographs
(with particulars).



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.

AMERSFOORT

Deputies for Correspondence with Churches Abroad of the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands have succeeded in fulfilling their mandate "to look for men fit and willing to go and teach as missionary/professor at the Seminary of the Korean Presbyterian Church in Busan." They found Drs. K. Batteau and Drs. N.H. Gootjes prepared to take on that work. Meanwhile, both candidates have been proposed for appointment to the Faculty of Busan.

Mr. Batteau is from the United States and studied for some years at Westminster Seminary in Philadelphia. In The Netherlands he came into contact with the Theological College in Kampen and followed doctoral courses with Dr. L. Doekes. He is a doctoral candidate.

The Rev. Gootjes is minister of the Church at Leiden. He, too, followed doctoral lectures in dogmatology, and is also a doctoral candidate (ND).

EDINBURGH

The Roman Catholic professor James Mackay of San Francisco has been appointed to the University of Edinburgh. The decision was made by the Board of the University after the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, by a large majority, had adopted a motion in which the Board was urged not to appoint Mackay. The university, which has close ties with the Presbyterian Church, simply ignored the motion(ND).

EINDHOVEN

The Ahmadiyya-movement was to hold a Muslim-Mission Day in Eindhoven. Members of the movement were to hand out pamphlets with the message of the Islam under the heading "Islam — the perfect and living religion." Libraries in Eindhoven and vicinity were to receive a Dutch translation of the Koran (ND).

EAST BERLIN(RNS)

More than 272,000 boys and girls in Communist East Germany will have sworn total allegiance to the state in a "Youth Dedication" ceremony by the end of May 1979, according to *Neues Deutschland*, the official government newspaper.

The paper said the figure represented 97.5 percent of all pupils in the eighth grade.

The ceremony, called "Jugendweihe," is a substitute ceremony for the Christian rite of Confirmation.

It goes back to the time of Hitler, who saw the value of a civil "liturgy" of loyalty to the state at the very time when both Protestant and Roman Catholic young people were getting ready for their Confirmation.

The Communists reinstated the ceremony after the war, and according to church sources, made it even more a parody of the Catholic and Evangelical rite of adolescent Confirmation(CN).

WASHINGTON(RNS)

A coalition which includes some major religious groups has expressed concern that the Carter Administration might make concessions on weapons development to gain Senate approval of the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty.

Noting that the accord with the Soviet Union contains many loopholes for future weapons systems, the Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy urged the administration "to make no firm commitments to procure such weapons in order to garner votes for the SALT treaty"(CN).

MINNEAPOLIS(RNS)

A major inter-Lutheran agency is not satisfied with the moves made by Rhodesia to a multi-racial government and says the United States should not

unilaterally lift sanctions against that African country . . .

The Lutheran agency warned that "any deviation by the United States from its historic commitment to the United Nations diminishes the possibility of a peaceful transition in Namibia." The latter country, South-West Africa, which has a large Lutheran population, is controlled by South Africa(CN).

PRETORIA(RTR)

The Nederduits Hervormde Kerk (Netherlands Reformed Church) in South Africa is the first of the three protestant churches in South Africa which will admit women to the ministry. The general synod of the Nederduits Hervormde Kerk which is the second-largest white church in South Africa took that decision after a fierce debate(ND).

GRAND RAPIDS — Noted Christian Leader Back in Uganda

A noted exile from Idi Amin's eight-year reign of terror in Uganda, the Rev. Kefa Sempangi, has returned to his native land. Having narrowly escaped from Amin's troops in 1973, Mr. Sempangi, a lecturer in Art History at Makerere University in Kampala and a pastor of a 14,000-member church, managed to flee to Nairobi, Kenya, and from there to The Netherlands. In Holland he met Dr. Edmund Clowney, President of Westminster Seminary, Philadelphia, USA, who arranged for him to study at Westminster and raised funds to bring the Sempangi family to the United States.

While in exile, the Rev. Sempangi founded the Africa Foundation, Inc. (formerly Fund for Uganda). Mr. Sempangi has been officially invited to participate in the transitional government of Uganda. He plans to stay on for about two years until democratic elections can be held and then to withdraw to devote himself to the gospel ministry. He is anxious to see a Reformed church established in his homeland and would like to start a seminary for the training of pastors (RES NE).

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FOR THE READER'S INFORMATION

This issue of *Clarion* was mailed from Winnipeg Central Post Office on June 23, 1979.

Elders and the Youth of the Church²

The following article was translated from the Dutch magazine Dienst, September/October, 1978. Translated by U. Krikke, London, Ontario.

5. WHAT ARE WE DOING AND WHO DOES WHAT?

5.1. *The pastor*

Some of us must have thought while reading section 4: Our minister does all that! Let us consider this for a moment.

5.1.1. *The pastor*

Does his preaching take into account the children and the adolescents? I am of the opinion that this should be done. It is up to every consistory to decide whether this is done or not. If the preaching of the Word is a yearly point on the agenda of the consistory, then the elders will admonish the minister in a friendly fashion if his sermons are out of reach for the young people.

5.1.2. *Catechism instruction*

When the elders visit the catechism classes they will have to do more than check to see if the pastor brings the true doctrine. Are the groups too large perhaps? If there are more than twelve or fifteen young people it cannot be expected that a discussion on the subject will take place, but then the catechism instruction will be reduced to a monologue by the minister of the Word. If the groups are too large, then the consistory has to take steps to remedy this situation. Catechism instruction does not necessarily have to be given by the minister.

5.1.3. *Open house*

It is custom in some congregations that the minister has an open house for the young people, for instance, on one or more Sunday evenings per month. There are indeed ministers' families which succeed very well in making the manse a meeting place for the young people as well. It is questionable, though, if this should be required of all ministers. I, for one, beg to differ!

Many ministers simply cannot do this. On top of this, when the congregation is a little larger we have to deal with from fifty to one hundred people,

which always means that a selection will take place. And this question should be asked: "Shouldn't the minister's family, especially when there are growing children, have *one* night per week for themselves?" When we, elders, are of the opinion that the minister has to take in the young people, don't we then too hastily shrink away from something that rests, at least as heavily, on our shoulders, too? We do not doubt the initiative of our pastors, but see at the same time the restrictions of their possibilities.

This is more important: the minister of the Word is not the only one who has a pastoral office; *so does every elder*. Christ gives the presbyters the command: "to be stewards of God" (Titus 1:7). Therefore it does not seem right to me to let the pastor do this work among the young people by himself. All the elders together, the whole consistory, have to care for the youth of the church. That task of caring, by the same token, may not be passed on to the boards of the leagues of the various Young People's Societies. They have an important task. I am thinking, in the first place, of the education of the cadre for our young people's societies, the renewal of the methodology, etc. The boards of the leagues and the societies have not been appointed as shepherds over the lambs of the flock.

5.2. *The elders*

When we check how the elders come into contact with the youth, then we see that this happens on home visits, visits to the societies, and in personal, intimate discussion.

5.2.1. *The young people at home visitation*

I think that it is a matter of course that the young people who are not in bed yet in the evening are present at home visitation. Quite a bit has been written about this. It seems to me a good custom that during home visitation there can also be a discussion with the parents *without* the children. W. Meyer describes in *Tonight home visitation* on page 87 that first a discussion with father and mother took place and that an hour later the chil-

dren could come in. According to me this seems to be the reversed order. If the children are not present during the whole visit, then surely they should be there at the beginning and the home visitation can *begin with them present*. This practise has pleased me and the families very much. It is a fact that through the answers of the children all kinds of matters pass in review, which can be discussed further with the parents. This is the way we go about it: The home visitation is started with prayer and then I ask the parents if it is alright to ask the children a few questions first. Several elders will remark at this point that the Bible reading has been skipped. That is correct. It is always difficult to state that you should *not* read the Bible, but I still plead the case of *closing* the home visitation with Bible reading. As bringer of home visitations and as receiver of home visitations I have always experienced that after the reading of a Scripture passage a more or less extensive explanation followed, which in most cases gave rise to a somewhat artificial question if the brother and sister had also experienced these things. The question should be asked if it is proper that we should use half an hour of the hour and a half which we have at our disposal to discuss a Bible passage.

Bible reading at the end of the visitation is more difficult because we would like to read something that is related to what was discussed. In this matter the minister and the elder can be a hand and a foot to each other by making up a list, as we know from old Psalm books. These prayers were entitled: about the surety of faith, in times of doubt, prayer for the sanctification of life, in sickness, in healing, in marriage, in old age, etc.

The questions directed to the children should be leading questions. Don't ask a question such as: "Do you love Jesus Christ?" because they could become confused or afraid to answer, but ask questions such as: "How do you like the catechism class?" etc. When you are dealing with the working youth I find it more important to start with their work. From the answers to all these questions it becomes apparent what lives in their hearts. From those answers it sometimes also appears that the parents do, or do not do, all kinds of things, and that surely forms the basis for a discussion when the visitation is

continued with the parents alone.

In order to put proper questions to the young people we should study the statistics of that family thoroughly. Then we'll know the names of the children, their ages, whether they are communicant or non-communicant members, what schools they attend, etc. I can understand that a young man speaks in a disparaging manner about a home visitation which took place more or less in the following manner: Elder: "Say, Peter, how are things at catechism?"

Peter: "I don't go to catechism anymore."

Elder: "Hey, what do you say? Don't you go to catechism anymore?"

Peter: "No, I did profession of faith two years ago."

Elder: "Oh, that's something else. How are things at Young People's?"

Peter: "I don't belong to the Young People's here."

One thing is clear to Peter: the elder who is visiting him does not know a thing about him, let alone that he would have a relationship with him — he did not even take the trouble to study the statistics. Therefore I would recommend the following:

— When you start as an elder, or get a new section of new families in your section, make their acquaintance first before you make a home visitation.

— Before the start of the home visitations invite the young people of your section to your home. Why should the elder not have an "open house" in order to get to know the young people of his section in an informal manner?

— It is important that the statistics are correct. When you are involved with this work it is beneficial to do this work well also.

— Make an appearance in the family when *something important happened to the children*; for instance, when they do public profession of faith, when they have earned a diploma, when they have finished their studies, when they are sick, when they enter military service, when they get a job, when they are laid off, or when they are going to be laid off. There are elders who also congratulate the older children on their birthdays.

— Do not climb on the pedagogical chair of the parents in your capacity as elder. In the aforementioned booklet of W. Meyer there is a description about the task of the parents in the education of their children; not only in

the *education* but also in the upbringing (pages 80-84). Surely you will meet families in which the parents have "modern" ideas about the upbringing of children: you should never forbid the children anything; you are not allowed to spank them; you should not bother them with things they do not understand anyway, things such as praying, Bible reading, teaching them songs, going to church. It is not the task of the elder on home visitation to teach these children, who have been brought up in this manner and in effect have been neglected. It is our task to stimulate these parents to render real service to their children. We have to confront them acutely with the message of God's Word pertaining to the upbringing and nurturing of the children by their parents.

5.2.2. *Elders and the visitation of the societies*

In nearly all the churches it is a custom that the societies are visited on a yearly basis by one or two elders. A report of these visits is brought to the consistory. And with that report the matter is closed.

If there is a blossoming society-life, I can understand that the consistory leaves it at that. Many consistories know that society-life languishes, if not worse. We want to investigate how we can utilize the elder-visitation to the Young People's Societies in order to stimulate the work of the Y.P.S., and also other societies, but this article does not deal with that.

The visiting elders, in the first place, could ask if it is possible to meet with the board after the meeting. Then such information could be gained about the situation, but what is more important: advice and aid can be given. Many societies are struggling with a leadership that is too young or incapable. When a board sees that it cannot manage by itself it surely would be inclined to listen to good advice. But that advice has to be accompanied by aid. One of the great difficulties of many societies is that *the participants are not motivated*. Preparation for the meetings is scarce.

I read in a survey: 59 members of several Y.P.S. were questioned and it appeared that 48 made only a little or no preparation at all. With such preparation the discussion is doomed to failure. Then the meeting becomes dull or boringly polite, or a number of

young people start to fool around, and that closes the vicious circle. If lack of motivation is a complaint, then the elders can offer aid by speaking about that motivation on home visitations. Then you will surely get the reply that you cannot be motivated for a society where they do this and that. Those answers have to be fed back to that board. Funny things do happen, although they are well-meant. At one society a certain series of outlines is covered during the course of a year, one outline per evening, and so it can happen that during the whole year the society deals with only one topic, e.g., the prophet Jeremiah.

If a society is at such a dead-end, it does not seem to be too meddling if the elders should ask what the roster looks like and then indicate how it could be done differently. In any case, they should take a membership list back to the consistory, with an indication of those present, if possible, in order to have an indication of the nominal members and the eternal guest-members. The clerk can sort out this material, providing much information for the home-visitations, especially now when more and more parents say: "The children don't have to go to society, as far as I'm concerned."

There is another matter in which the elders can be of help. In general, young people no longer get married at the ages of 26 to 30, as was the case before the Second World War, but at the ages of 20 to 25. And when they are married they no longer go to Young People's. That is a taboo that can be abolished. Why shouldn't capable married young people be asked to take the lead in the Y.P.S.? Or why shouldn't they be encouraged not to leave the Y.P.S. because they are married?

I want to break a lance for another measure with which I have had positive experiences. On the yearly agenda of the consistory there is one evening set aside in which a discussion is held with the boards of the various Y.P.S. (for instance, two delegates from every board). Such a discussion, in general, is very beneficial for both sides, for the consistory and for the Y.P.S.

I do not want to describe all the matters that can come to the fore, but I want to invite the consistories to do

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news medley

Again I learned about a fortieth wedding anniversary via a Church bulletin. Perhaps I could have known it even without that special information channel, but I did not know it. From the New Westminster part of the *Church News* I learned that brother and sister C.A. Vander Gugten celebrated their feast some time in April. Please accept our somewhat belated congratulations. Brother Vander Gugten was clerk of the Consistory when I received the call from New Westminster, and served many a time as an elder. That started (in Canada) in Lethbridge: you can see him on pictures which show the first Consistory of the Lethbridge Church. Coming from the "Westland," our brother found his life's fulfillment in the flowers and plants. We wish you both the Lord's blessing from now on as richly as you received it before.

This is the only couple I have to mention — at least to my knowledge. I don't know everything, and am well aware of that. We all have to learn every day anew. That applies also to the language which we write. And I should like to give a little contribution towards a better language in our bulletins. They are being read by others, too, and therefore we are to strive for perfection. Our children grow up and learn the language at school (at least, we hope they do) and should not have to laugh when they see some of the sentences and expressions which are found in some bulletins.

Sometimes the natives are too polite to tell us when we are wrong. Sometimes they love us so much that they tell us honestly where we made a mistake. I recall that my professor at Knox College was very frank with me, and sometimes started laughing loudly when he read the way in which I had put things. Patiently he corrected me and pointed out some of the more common mistakes which we oftentimes make because of our Dutch background. I should like to pass a few of those things on to our readers.

Almost all bulletins, when mentioning reports on family visits or when speaking about a family, write "the fam. N." That is wrong, and is translated Dutch. I was told that in proper English it should read: "Mr. N. and family," or "The N. Family." Could that not be changed in the reports and other publications? Ever since I was told that the way I put it first was wrong, I paid special attention to the manner in which it is put, e.g., by people speaking via the radio, and I have never heard one say, "The Family So-and-so." They always say, "The So-and-so Family."

In these months many of the younger members appear before the Consistories in order to receive permission to partake in the celebration of the Holy Supper. The act of professing their faith, I was told, is called "to make profession of faith." Frequently I read, "to do their confession," something which reminds me of the auricular confession which the Roman Catholic Church practises. Or I see the expression, "do profession of faith." But when we read the Form for the Lord's Supper, we find in the prayer before the celebration the following passage: "Strengthen us also by this holy supper in the catholic, undoubted, Christian faith, of which we *make profession* with heart and mouth." Let

A third point which I should like to mention is the name which is given to a minister who is asked to advise the Church in the vacancy that exists. Sometimes the word "councillor" is used. But a "councillor" is a member of a council, such as a town council. What we mean is a counsellor, someone who counsels, that is, who advises.

There are more things, but we should not give everything at once, isn't it? Let us, therefore, proceed with the news. If any of our readers has discovered any similar cases as the ones I mentioned above, perhaps he would be so kind as to give them to me, so that I can pass them on and thus serve the brotherhood.

Switching to a language which I know nothing about, I tell you that the Bible Camp which will be organized in the Smithers area will be called "*Yak'isda Bik'ah*." For those who do not understand those words, the translation be given, too. Rev. Van Spronsen tells us that the meaning is something like "Being in the ways of the Lord." They were taken from the Carrier language, the language of the Indians in the Smithers region. You will recall that efforts were made to organize a Bible Camp for young people of native ancestry. The Smithers bulletin reports that there will be no problem to get fifteen to twenty children together to participate in such a camp. "Most of these come through contacts made at the Youth Centre, language study, and indirectly some also through a contact made by way of the Information folder distributed through the mail." Some 2800 copies of the information folder were distributed, and several people reacted to it. We hope from the heart that the efforts in Smithers will be blessed.

From Smithers we go down through the Cariboo country and the Fraser Canyon to the Valley.

As general news we may tell that the committee which has been appointed to organize the Convocation is planning on something really big. No fewer than almost three days are dedicated to the event, be it that not each and every meeting and encounter is of a solemn nature. For Labour Day a picnic-style "celebration" is planned.

As for other meetings, the Sixteenth Annual League Day of the Women's Societies in the Fraser Valley has been scheduled for June 27th. The topic which will be discussed in the morning session read, "Our Calling in Being Married and Being Single." Have a good and fruitful day together.

There is quite some activity going on to have people elected to the Hospital boards who are "pro-life," opposed to "abortion-on-demand." Many people from the Valley Churches have signed up as members, and will be allowed to vote. May this action have the desired fruit.

Other activities in the Valley concern the acquisition of property for the building of a permanent roof over the heads of teachers and students at the High School. Purchase of property has now been approved by the membership, and the conditions which were set are disappearing one by one, having been met.

The Broadcasting Committee reports that some more information has been received concerning tapes from The Netherlands. Our readers will recall that the half-hour broadcast in the Netherlands language had to be discontinued temporarily because of "the lack of Dutch speeches available. We have been in contact with the Gereformeerde Omroepvereniging in The Netherlands, and they feel they can provide us with programs of ½ hour to 1 hour and 15 minutes." The Committee will look into that and come to a decision later.

"Another interesting possibility brought up was that

Western Cable Vision is interested in having some religious programs on the air. However, they are not interested in having a regular religious broadcast, but in an occasional program, for example, a seasonal-type program." The Committee will look into this point, too.

We are not yet at an end with the general news from the Valley. There is more to come.

On May 14th, the pupils of the William of Orange Christian School spent the day in the "Maranatha" Church, Surrey, singing biblical songs written and composed by our principal, Mr. S. Vander Ploeg. These songs were recorded by the same sound engineer who worked on the album of the Psalms, produced by two brothers of our "Valley" congregations. (He was very enthusiastic about the quality of the singing.)

These songs cover many of the well-known Bible stories and parables (the Creation, the Exodus, Daniel, the Ten Lepers, Palm Sunday, the Crucifixion, etc.) There are 12 songs altogether.

We are now ready to go to the presses. The tape has been edited and a master has been cut; the jacket is being printed; the insert has been prepared. In two to three weeks time the records will be ready for distribution.

We are also told where orders can be placed. The price per record will be \$7.95. For those who live outside British Columbia we shall ignore the 4% sales tax. Cheques should be made payable to "William of Orange Music Fund," and be sent to P.O. Box 1058, Station A, Surrey, British Columbia V3S 4P5. Well, how's that for a commercial!

As in more places, so in the Valley the mothers are thinking about a Kindergarten. A meeting was convened for June 11, to discuss the possibility. I do not know exactly what the sisters there have in mind, but frequently the thought lives among our people that Kindergarten is something like glorified babysitting. However, nowadays there is much more to it, and it ties in with the work done in the lower grades of the elementary school. If we can set something up like that, it will be a big help for our schools. We'll hear more about it, I presume.

Yes, and that really exhausts our general news from the Valley. Thus we proceed to the particulars about the individual Churches.

By now the Rev. Van Dam has been installed in New Westminster, and will be enjoying his beautiful house. "Except for some inside finishing and landscaping the manse is practically completed," we read a while ago. "One advantage of building a house to our specifications can be seen by the size and layout of the study. There is lots of room for books and there is a separate outside entrance." In spite of such advantages, it is amazing how soon one runs out of space for books! But it is a distinct advantage when a house is built to serve as a parsonage right from the start. At least the study receives due attention, and that is the most important room in that whole house.

In Cloverdale "a brief discussion takes place regarding the proposed addition to our church building. It is decided to propose to the Congregation to remodel the basement and to build an addition to our present building." Thus Cloverdale, too, will receive decent meeting-rooms. I know what it is when one has to do without and we are quite happy here in Fergus with our addition.

From Cloverdale we come to Langley.

As for singing the Apostolicum in the worship services, it is decided to limit this to the occasions of celebrating the

Lord's Supper. The reading of the Nicene Creed is left to the discretion of the minister.

I have the custom of reading the Nicene Creed in the afternoon services on Sundays when we celebrate the Holy Supper. Then we already had the Apostles' Creed in the prayer found in the Form which we read in the morning service; for the Congregation, too, it is a good change. When they hear something different, they are almost forced to listen; that is not the case when the same sentences are heard and repeated every time.

In Abbotsford, during a breakin, some articles were stolen; among them was also some wine which was to be used at the Holy Supper.

Further we read,

It was brought to my attention that lately a swallow has "deftly" built her nest into one of the light fixtures at the entrance of our church building. It made me think of Psalm 84.

I hope that this building activity will not be disturbed by the noise of the "ascending tribes," or has to be disturbed because of the noise of the young themselves.

We will see.

I have never heard the young of a swallow make so much racket that they had to be evicted. However, perhaps they are different nowadays, as they say all youth is.

In Chilliwack a meeting was held by the brotherhood to see what could be done for the Boatpeople from Vietnam. Just after I had read the notice in the "Church News," I heard that Malaysia threatened to tow those people out to sea and to shoot anyone who would try to land again. I was therefore the more happy that in Chilliwack definite efforts are made to bring some of those people over. Thus far they collected fourteen signatures, which means that they can almost sponsor three families. That is in addition to the quatum set by our federal government. I also hope that this example may be followed. Generally speaking, there is very little risk involved; if any of the sponsors should get into difficulties, our diaconal funds are far from depleted. I know that the deacons are soon scraping the bottom if something really serious comes up, but they could give quite some backing to the above efforts.

In Edmonton the three services per Sunday are now reality. And in connection with that I read something which really shows the style of the Church. One brother, apparently for health reasons, had to take the early service. He did not just go to Church early, for he was scheduled to go to the second service, the one at 11:00. No, he wrote a letter to the Consistory, requesting permission to do so. That's how it should be done in the Church.

When speaking of Smithers, we mentioned a Summer Camp. In Edmonton such a camp is in the planning stages, too.

In connection with the above, I might as well pass on to you a quotation from the London bulletin (*The Pilgrim's Voice*).

A Request

The warmer (or colder?) weather undoubtedly will lead people to spend an occasional Sunday visiting friends and relatives in different congregations in Ontario or perhaps in the States. It is only a matter of Christian courtesy that in such cases one of the office-bearers is informed; this facilitates the work of taking care of the

Continued on next page

flock. I think that *most* people do this, but it really should be *all* of us. Therefore we request that you keep this in mind.

I am in full agreement with this request. I know that there are brothers and sisters who will always inform the Consistory if for one reason or another they will not attend a service or the services. There are others who may disappear for three weeks without thinking about informing the Consistory of their absence. A little cooperation and thoughtfulness is very important.

We come closer to the end. A stopover in Hamilton will reveal that Hamilton has received permission to look for a mission field of their own. Now the Consistory appointed a Mission Board which will be asked to study the following subjects:

- a. Search for a mission field and present a proposal in August;
- b. Prepare a budget for 1980;
- c. Contact persons who are known to be interested in mission work and who may be sent out as missionaries, and search for other interested persons;
- d. Present a proposal for a co-operation agreement between the church of Hamilton and the supporting churches;
- e. Submit a proposal for the organization of mission aid work. For the discussion of this item one deacon will attend the meetings of the Board.

Taking leave of Hamilton, we move on to the Burlingtons, and specifically Burlington West.

A request by the Ministerial Association of Burlington to take advantage of an offer of Citizen's Cable 10 to air a religious 30 minute program, free of charge twice a year.

This suggestion and request was passed on to the Home

Mission Committee.

The Youth Council planned a summer leadership seminar in which the coming season will be prepared and discussed.

And the Consistory decided to sell the manse.

We finally end up in Ottawa.

The last time when I was there I heard already that the Congregation was planning on renting a building of the United Church. For everything it is much better when the Congregation comes together to worship in an official, a decent church building. That also impresses the children more. Thus the Consistory, realizing that, discussed the matter with the Congregation, and the conclusion was: Rent a Church building of the United Church on Merivale Road. For those who are somewhat acquainted with Ottawa I mention that it is not all that far from the Holtvluwer residence. From their place you could practically walk the distance. The 9:00 a.m. time may be somewhat difficult for people who are camping at a fair distance from our Capital City, since they are having holidays then anyway, there is nothing against going to bed a little earlier on Saturday evening, isn't there?

Hope to see you in Ottawa some day.

Change of meeting place also brings more possibilities. The system of ushers was advocated by some members. The question will be further investigated and a schedule be set up.

Returning to home base: Fergus, too, has instituted the system of ushers. We hope that visitors will feel even more welcome now.

You are welcome.

vO

ELDERS AND YOUTH OF THE CHURCH — Continued.

this by way of experimentation. In the consistory where I experienced this it immediately became a tradition!

Finally, a remark about a consistory which came to the conclusion that the young people's activity was at a dead-end. They were dealing with young people who could be found on the street, in cafes, and in disco bars, but not at society meetings. That consistory decided to hold a congress of all the consistory members with the youth as a whole. This congress became a success, in my estimation; all kinds of questions and problems were aired. The congress was continued; speakers were invited to answer questions and to deal with certain themes. For the congregation involved this was a new lease on life as far as a better society-life was concerned. We should not take away the independence of the societies in the contact we have with them, just as we do not go and sit in the chair of the parents at home visitations. It is very self-sacrificing but not very up-

building when a young elder says: "Shall I become chairman for a few years?" It is a case of stimulating towards independence and responsibility, towards self-motivation and effort. It is a difficult art, without being over-protective, and, while avoiding this, for the shepherds of the congregation, ministers and elders, to stimulate and offer aid if and when the young people themselves no longer see a way out.

5.2.3. The intimate dialogue with the elder

It is remarkable that the members of the congregation as a rule go to the manse with their questions and problems and seldom to their section-elder. I believe that this also goes for the boys and girls.

There are good reasons for this. The pastor has more time at his disposal for his work as office-bearer; perhaps he has greater expertise; the young people know him from catechism classes. But if the reason is that the section elder in reality is a stranger to the young people in his section, that they only meet him once a year at

home visitation (and then accompanied by another stranger), then something is wrong! The young people in his section should know their elder to such an extent that they have no apprehension when they want to discuss a serious matter. When that happens try to take as much time as needed for this, listen attentively, try to understand the other one, and try not to have the answers ready beforehand. Such a dialogue can be a rich blessing, also for you!

J.A. KNEPPER

OUR COVER

On a hill in downtown Halifax, the Halifax Citadel National Historic Park stands guard over Nova Scotia's capital city. There has been a fortress of some kind on this hill since 1749, the year the city was founded. From its ramparts, the visitor has a panoramic view of the city, its deep water harbor and the neighbouring city of Dartmouth. (Nova Scotia Communications and Information Centre photo).

Letter-to-the-Editor

THE END DOES NOT JUSTIFY THE MEANS

Much can be said in response to both the content and the tone of the letter of Mr. Albert Zuidhof in critique of my article on "Public Justice and Human Rights" (cf. *Clarion* April 21, p. 181, and May 19, p. 229). However, I will restrict myself to a few *basic* concerns.

First of all, the primary purpose of my short article was to initiate an open discussion around the proposed *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* in the light of every government's Biblical calling to promote and do justice; for example, by establishing legal equality of meaningful educational and employment opportunity for all citizens regardless of belief, so they can truly practice their respective faith commitments (ways of life) in genuine freedom.

It is still my view that the proposed *Charter* insufficiently protects the citizen's basic human rights and civil liberties. Section 25 clearly sets out that "in the interests of public safety or health, the interests of the peace and security of the public, or the interests of the rights and freedoms of others" limitations are justified. The *Charter* nowhere specifies when those "justifiable limitations" do not apply. Nor does it define which "limitations" are "justifiable" or which "interests" allow for such "limitations" to be imposed. This crucial section is altogether too sweeping and too vague to satisfy the norm of public justice, especially as that political life-principle should be honoured consistently in a democracy.

As a Christian, I am not at all prepared to advocate that a Canadian government (whether it's headed by Messrs. Trudeau, Clark, or Broadbent or, for that matter, by a Reformed politician) should have the constitutional right or power to limit or suspend the citizens' basic rights and fundamental freedoms without such a government being obliged to meet certain clearly-defined criteria normed by justice and equity for all and without such a government having to justify the real necessity for such crucial limitation or suspension either to the Parliament or to the courts, or to both. I know of no Biblical principle which would permit such a dictatorial attitude and action.

As I understand the Scriptures, every government has the God-given

task to serve the coming of public justice for all. In the execution of that unique responsibility, no government should have, demand or resort to special powers which are unjust in themselves and cause injustice to the citizens. The end does not justify the means.

In any event, it has been established that during the 1970 FLQ crisis neither the Government nor the police actually needed the arbitrary powers of the *War Measures Act* and that all persons who were jailed at that time could have been properly arrested without the unilateral suspension of our civil rights and liberties. While it is indeed true that the major political opposition to the Trudeau Government's unwarranted action mostly came from NDP MP's, it should be remembered that others, including senior PCs such as Mr. Robert Stanfield, later publicly expressed their deep regret for having voted in support of the invocation of the *War Measures Act*. As a result, it was replaced with the milder *Public Order Bill*.

Finally, especially in a deeply secularized culture such as our own, we should always be very careful in granting extra-ordinary powers to any institution whether it's a government, a business enterprise, a trade union, a school or even a church. We should obviously never grant any structure or person the kind of sovereign power that violates God's Word for righteous living. Christ is the only Sovereign. Therefore, every public office and all human rule should be exercised in obedience to Him in harmony with the unequivocal command "to act justly, to love tenderly and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8).

Unless I'm mistaken, none of our present political parties or their leaders are seriously committed to the kind of Christian political service that publicly reflects this unconditional command. If anything, this regrettable failure is all the more reason for all of us, individually and communally, to be engaged actively in a Biblically-obedient politics, either via CJL and/or other meaningful ways that radically seek to break with the power politics of our pragmatic age.

Yours, in the service of
justice and liberty for
all God's creatures,
GERALD VANDEZANDE
Public Affairs Director
Committee for Justice and Liberty

Book Review

"EVERY INSPIRED SCRIPTURE IS ALSO PROFITABLE FOR . . ."

JAY E. ADAMS, *Matters of Concern to Christian Counselors: A Potpourri of Principles and Practices*, Baker Book House, 1979, 100 pp., \$2.95; *Four Weeks with God and your Neighbour*, A Devotional Workbook, Baker Book House, 1979, 69 pp., \$2.50; *The Power of Error*, Baker Book House, 1979, 49 pp., \$1.50. B.W. WOODS, *Take Hold of Your Life: God has a Plan to show you How*, Baker Book House, 1979, 185 pp. \$3.45. F.B. MINIRTH, S.V. SKIPPER, P.D. MEIER: *100 Ways to Defeat Depression*, Baker Book House, 1979, 100 pp. \$1.95.

Reviewed by Rev. G. VanDooren.

The above words from II Timothy 3:16-17 are, to a greater or lesser degree, applicable to all five booklets; they may therefore be reviewed as a package.

First, very briefly, a word about what Paul writes there. Common opinion today is that this is not a "proof text" for the inspiration of Holy Writ in the first place. "Every inspired Scripture" points to what we would call: "every text of God's Word." The translation should not be, "All Scripture is inspired by God and *also* profitable . . ." The word "also" must be understood in the light of Paul's previous remarks. Timothy was brought up from his youth in the Word of God. That Word "instructed him for salvation," verse 15. He came to faith, and thus was saved. However, Timothy should know that "every inspired Scripture" has a *second* purpose for him as "the man of God," verse 17. This reviewer is convinced that the "technical term," "the man of God," should *not* (as some commentators, like H.N. Ridderbos, do) be applied to every individual Christian, but in the sense it always has: in the Old Testament more than thirty times; in the first letter to Timothy, chapter 6:11, "But as for you, man of God," i.e., a person sent by God with a special mandate, like Timothy and Titus, ministers of the Word in a special way.

Thus (cf. the word "also") the inspired Scripture has a *second* purpose for Timothy, namely, to "equip" (verse 17) him for using "every Scripture" as

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Books

Baker Book House has provided a reprint of the English translation of K. Schilder's trilogy *Christ in His Sufferings*. The three volumes are entitled *Christ in His Suffering*, *Christ on Trial*, and *Christ Crucified*. The price is \$24.95 (U.S.) for the three paperback books, a total of 1580 pages! Canadian price is \$29.95.

We confine ourselves to announcing the appearance of this reprint. The work itself has proved its worth ever since its appearance on the scene. For countless ministers it has been a practically indispensable tool with the preparation of sermons dealing with our Saviour's sufferings. Every time anew one is amazed at the riches which Schilder makes us discover in that part of the Gospel, and not in that part alone! Many a Church member made it a habit to read and re-read the above books. That was the case, e.g., with the brother who willed me his copy, since my own copy had been borrowed and never returned. Oftentimes surprising vistas are opened by seemingly unimportant remarks. And the words of praise written about this work of Schilder's are fully justified.

However, let me not lose myself into reviewing after all.

I am happy that also those who do not know the Dutch language or do not know it sufficiently have been able to benefit from the trilogy since the English translation appeared. That they are again able to own it as a result of reprinting is something I pass on with gratitude.

A work as the present one deserves to be in every library and to be there for many, many years. As far as that is concerned, I deplore the paperback-nature of the trilogy. Although the books will not be used every day or even every week, yet they are worth to be preserved for a long time, to be passed on even to the children. Personally I do not like paperbacks at all and will buy a book in hard cover whenever I have a chance, but I understand that many people might not be willing to spend that much more money on a book. For a publisher it might be too much of a risk to lay out a considerable extra sum of money for having a number of books clothbound which may be the last ones to be sold and could occupy shelf-space for many years. Thus we shall have to resign our-

selves to the situation that the paperbacks came, saw, and conquered.

Do not get the impression, on the other hand, that the above trilogy is of the same kind as the rows of cheap paperbacks which clutter the bookstands everywhere. I think that it is of the best available in this kind of binding.

And the contents . . .

Take, read, enjoy, be edified.

Available at your local distributor or Premier Publishing.

MINUTES

of the Office-Bearers' Conference held on March 24, 1979 in the Ebenezer Church building, Burlington-East.

1. The chairman, Prof. L. Selles, calls the meeting to order. He requests to sing Psalm 105:1, 2, 3, reads Colossians 3:12-4:6 and leads in prayer.

2. After some introductory words of the chairman the floor is given to the Rev. J. Geertsema to speak on "The Pastoral Care of the Youth of the Church."

3. Rev. Geertsema first calls the attention to the words in the title of his speech and stresses that the pastoral care is the care of the office-bearers as the shepherds of the flock and is based on God's care, namely, God's redeeming love in Jesus Christ.

As far as the youth is concerned, he stresses that the period between childhood and maturity is oftentimes a period of criticism and idealism. This idealism should not be suppressed, but is to be used! On the other hand, there may also be a period of apathy in which no idealism seems to exist. This apathy may be the result of the humanistic philosophies of the previous century. He mentions irrationalism with the symptoms of rock music, transcendental meditation, sex, etc.

With regard to the youth of our churches, Rev. Geertsema asks the question whether apart from the money and effort spent for Christian school and education, there is sufficient effort to guide our children personally by, e.g., discussing good books and topics. It is the task of the office-bearers to stress the significance of a Christian family and parental authority. Just like a father and mother in the family show good care for their children so should the office-bearer show love, care, interest, and be a shepherd, forgiving. Reading of books on coun-

selling may be very helpful for an office-bearer, but authoritative speaking on the basis of God's Word should not be abolished. It is important that the youth of the church be involved in work for the church. See activities in which young people are involved in The Netherlands such as evangelism.

The speaker concludes that it is a miracle of God's grace when the youth of the church hears the voice of the Great Shepherd and follows Him.

4. After the intermission for lunch br. G.J. Nordeman addresses the conference on the topic "Year of the Child?"

He mentions several of the modern and humanistic views on family and society with their unhealthy emphasis on the child and all too often undermining the authority of the parents. Of utmost importance for a child is that it lives in a family where there is a close and intimate relationship with Christ. A Christian family is a family in which the Lord is acknowledged.

5. Both speeches are followed by a lively discussion. The chairman thanks the two speakers for their work.

6. The next Conference is scheduled for Saturday, November 3, 1979 to begin at 10:00 a.m. in the Rehoboth Church at Burlington-West. Rev. J. DeJong will be invited to address the meeting.

7. The chairman requests to sing Hymn 53:1-4. Br. G.J. Nordeman leads in thanksgiving.

Secretary,
M. VAN BEVEREN

Proverbs 16:1-3

The plans of the mind belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the LORD. All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes, but the LORD weighs the spirit. Commit your work to the LORD, and your plans will be established.

Minister's Conference

A ministerial workshop was held on January 7, 1979, quite some time ago. It is now high time to report.

Rev. Werkman, our convenor and chairman, welcomed us all, especially the Rev. M. Van Beveren and Rev. J. DeJong.

In the morning Rev. G. van Dooren addressed us on the subject, "The Value of Canonics for Preaching." Hopefully this speech will be published in our ministerial paper, *Koinonia*. Since that does not help you much, I will try to outline his introduction.

Canonics is the study of a text within its context, of the text within the context of a certain Bible book, and of the text within the context of the whole Bible.

Rev. van Dooren pointed out some of the issues which Sidney Greydanus brought up in his book, *Sola Scriptura*. This book offers a survey of canonics as it relates to preaching. Also, it gave an appraisal of how canonics was used in preaching by Reformed (liberated) ministers after the Liberation. Previous issues of the then CRM have paid special attention to this book and its conclusions, which both Rev. van Dooren and Prof. J. Faber contested.

Our speaker then traced the late development of canonics in preaching. Actually the use of canonics is a late-comer in Reformed theology. The Dutch series of commentaries, *Korte Verklaringen*, and the Bottenburg series did much to introduce canonics into preaching.

General canonics deals with the study of all the Bible books in general while special canonics pays attention to the individual books. The latter must show the unity of the Bible, the special character, aim, historical background, and themes in the various books. It is important to know who wrote the book and to whom it was firstly written. All this must come out in the preaching. Ministers are like cooks in the kitchen (the study) where the meal (sermon) is prepared. They do not bring the "kitchen" to the dining room table but they do serve a well-prepared meal. Likewise, not everything a minister studies is brought to the pulpit, though the sermon must give evidence of a thorough preparation. A good portion of that preparation involves the use of canonics.

Our speaker asked whether canonics is a forgotten chapter in preaching. Preachers may view the text within its context, and Reformed preachers love to view a text within the framework of the whole Bible (they go from paradise to paradise), but what about the second step of seeing the text within the scope of the one Bible book? He quotes many Reformed writers who skip over this step or do injustice to it. Yet to study this second step will help to explain much. It will reveal the differences between parallel texts in Kings and Chronicles for instance, as well as parallel texts in the gospels.

Lastly, our speaker asked, "What is an historical text?" Are Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings historical books? The speaker reminded us that they are prophetic history. In the Old Testament canon they come under "the prophets." To show that they are prophecy and not a mere historical account one need only consider that not everything is included. Think of the recurring phrase, "Now the rest of the acts . . ." These books record history from the perspective of God's covenant with Israel. Thus they are prophecy.

A lively discussion followed. Some questions were: "How do you preach on the psalms, if no date or background material is given?"; "Were Jesus and the disciples as well instructed in canonics as we are?"; "How can special canonics be used in sermon-series?" Of course, an interchange of comments, suggestions, criticisms, and remarks resulted.

After a hearty lunch served by the professors' wives, we listened to Prof. L. Selles on "The Radical Commandments of the Sermon on the Mount." He spoke only about Matthew 5.

The explanation of verse 17 is pivotal for the interpretation of the whole chapter. Does "fulfil" mean to "bring out the full meaning of the law and the prophets" (so H.N. Ridderbos); to execute or to realize the law and the prophets (so Greydanus) or to realize their promises and prophecies (so Calvin)? Verse 48, "be perfect" hints at the fact that Jesus here teaches them to keep and to practise the full message of the Bible.

Another problematic phrase is, "you have heard that it was said to the people long ago/to the men of old" (NIV and RSV) or "you have heard that it was said by the men of old"(KJV). The latter suggests that Jesus corrects

the rabbinical teachers (the men of old) who misuse Moses. The former version makes us think of old Israel to whom Moses spoke. If this version is correct then the quotes from Moses become understandable. However, does a division between Jesus and Moses not arise then? For Jesus says, Moses said to the people long ago such and such, "but I say to you" something different. And indeed someone as C. Vonk does contrast the Old Testament laws with the commandments of Jesus. It is said that we here have a new formulation of the law in this sermon. But the introductory words, "I have not come to abolish the law and the prophets" militates against this view. Instead, we can understand the words as "and I say to you." Jesus is the voice of one greater than Moses. According to Deuteronomy 18:15 He stands beside Moses, explains Moses and teaches the full implication of Moses' words.

Our speaker then went through all the commandments which Jesus dealt with in this chapter. The radical (to the radix, root) demands were fully brought out.

In the discussion period it was asked whether in verse 33, "do not swear at all" must be explained as a radical commandment or as a figure of speech in which Jesus uses exaggeration for emphasis, because the people seriously misused the oath. Other questions were asked and answered. The clear and convincing arguments of our professor made the address and discussion very worthwhile. Hopefully it will be put on paper so that my skeletal notes can receive some flesh and blood.

Our chairman thanked everyone, especially the speakers. For the next workshop to be held June 11, 1979 Prof. J. Faber will speak on "The Apostles' Creed" and Rev. Huizinga on "Catechetical Instruction." We thanked our Sender for this refreshing and instructive day and we asked His blessing on our work.

These workshops help to keep the ministers fresh and alert; they offer a forum for discussion of practical aspects of our work; they stimulate our theological awareness and knowledge; and they allow us to see one another — which does not happen too often. The consistories are well advised to encourage their ministers to attend these workshops.

For the workshop,
W. HUIZINGA

BOOK REVIEW — Continued

profitable “for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,” verse 16, thus equipping him “for all branches of his work” as J.B. PHILLIPS paraphrases. Scripture equips them for preaching and teaching as well as for “pastoral counselling” by reproof, correction, etc.

The above-mentioned authors, convinced of this “second use” of the Scriptures, have, each in their own way, endeavoured to apply Scripture to the purposes mentioned by Paul. Adams, very productive in publishing, digs into his files and entrusts to print the one booklet after the other. *Four weeks . . .* presents as a kind of “dagboek” (daily Bible Guide) for general use what in fact “was designed for use with counselees to accompany and supplement counseling,” p. V. I Timothy 3:16, 17 is quoted throughout the booklet. He puts a “counselee,” i.e., a person with special problems, to work with the Scriptures, so that “a change” may be effected in his life and behaviour. That’s all fine, but it shows, at the same time, the weakness of this four-week guidance. Texts are selected (by the way, only one from the Old Testament: I Samuel 16:6-13; the abundant riches of the Book of Psalms remain totally untapped) for such a special case. Adams agrees with Paul, and thus we agree with Adams, that Scripture has (at least, I would say) a two-fold purpose: “to save and to change.” The danger is, however, that texts are selected only for the purpose of *medicin*. We do not hear much about the glory and renewing power of knowing the LORD in His greatness and mighty acts, as Calvin, quoting Augustine, would say, “to know God and myself is the highest purpose.” First, to know God. The Bible is God’s self-revelation, and in that way it saves sinners and heals them. Conclusion: this booklet has a very limited use, although we heartily agree with Adams and the other authors, that we must always “work with the Scriptures” trying to get out of them as much as we can also for personal application.

Matters of Concern . . . is indeed a “potpourri,” selected from Adams’ undoubtedly rich files. He had planned a larger volume, but couldn’t wait, because, “I have made it a practice to make as much help available as quickly as I can because I am anxious to see change [in Christian counselling, vD] in this generation. No less than forty-one

“counselling principles and practices” in 100 pages. Thus all very brief and sketchy; not always easily understood if one has not read his previous books, such as *Competent to Counsel, Manual for Christian Counseling*, and others. Yet, it is a rich volume. Especially office-bearers, social workers, etc., may find much (new) insight and practical help for “being equipped for every good work” as men of God. Recommended.

The Power of Error gives a detailed report of a case of counselling by a young pastor who, trying to help a man who knows his Bible but is scared that salvation is not for him, makes plenty of use of non-Christian psychiatry and its advices. Even after twenty-five sessions he makes no headway with the man at all. The reason is obvious: the pastor does not do what he does in the pulpit: use the Word of God as the only help available in such a case. It all ends in complete failure.

On the last page, the last line, we learn: “. . . that pastoral counselor’s name is Jay Adams”! Adams, when he had not yet found out that there is, and must be, a radical antithesis between biblical and “pagan” counselling. Thus the booklet serves as a serious warning that we should not contradict Paul’s teaching in II Timothy 3:16, 17: The Scriptures are profitable to equip the man of God for all branches of his work.

One cannot deny that there is still a great number of counsellors who mix the truth with error, and as such this booklet vents a serious warning that we should not under-estimate the healing power of God’s inspired Word.

In this context I want to quote Adams when he says: if a pastor does not dare to tackle a certain counselling “case,” he should not dare either to preach about (and against) a certain sin, wrong attitude, etc., in the life of his members! But, if a minister can, and must, preach against doubt, sloppy life, walking on two ways, etc. (and he must!), then he is also called and able to apply the Word when he meets such sins in an individual member who comes to him for help. This remark is made in the knowledge that too many ministers, who boldly climb the pulpit every Lord’s Day to warn and admonish the people in the pew, shy away from the same when they are to help an individual-in-trouble. Thus they turn their pulpit into a coward’s castle. If they “refer” such an individual to any available psychiatrist, Christian or not,

they might as well “refer” the task of preaching to the same address.

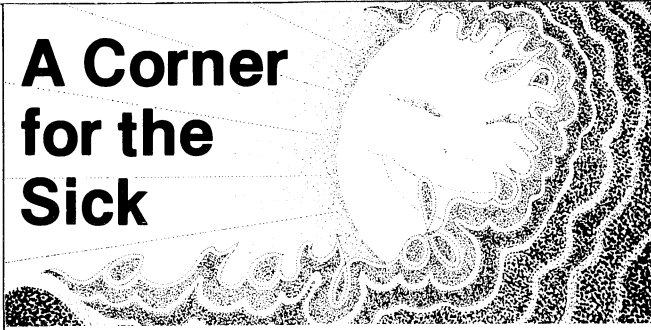
WOODS’ *Take Hold of Your Life* is a really nice little booklet. It is fully biblical, and, to that, the love of God for sinners is central. Exactly for that reason we must “take hold of our lives.” Woods, borrowing from God’s Word, points out how we may be able, by His grace, to “take control of your life,” “to learn to love,” “to discover the will of God,” “to love the truth,” and “to give yourself away.” These are some titles from 11 chapters.

One may, again, object that Scripture is used in a man-centred way; or, that no attention is given to the redemptive-historical meaning of a “text” and to the context. That cannot be denied. On the other hand, however, we must be on guard against another one-sidedness: to “forget” that “every inspired Scripture” is a word of God to me that I have to apply to my life, be it as comfort or as reproof and correction! As much as a preacher digs into his text and pulls out of it as much as he can for the benefit of those who hear him, so we should really “study” the Scriptures in order to get the most out of them, to God’s glory and our salvation, that we may be “trained in righteousness,” II Timothy 3:16.

Finally, three men were needed to find “100 Ways to defeat depression.” These “100 ways” are 100 texts with a very brief commentary, often shorter than the text itself. This booklet, as also the previous one, makes more use of the Old Testament, especially of the Psalms. The three men are called “competent Christian counselors” by the publisher, and we have no reason to doubt that. Still, while fully maintaining what we just said in the previous paragraph, the use of the texts sometimes sounds quite “exemplary.” The comment given is too brief to go into exegetical detail, context, the “date” of the text, etc. Some would say: “biblicistic business.” They may be right, although the intention is to help people in depression, so that they might see the many bright stars in the darkness of their depression. I wish our talk and conversation would be more leavened with biblical language. The lack of that is one of the most dangerous forms of worldliness.

The prices . . . they must be in U.S.A. dollars. Books are expensive today, as is everything else. That should not keep us out of bookstores — as little as it keeps us out of foodstores. Bookstores are foodstores!

A Corner for the Sick



So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.

Ephesians 2:19

Does the word saint make you rebel and make you want to show you are the opposite? Especially when we are young we seem to be very sensitive and do not want to be called a saint. Is this not so because we have the wrong interpretation of what this word really stands for? Do we think of a person with a halo around the head? When Christians are called saints do we think of them as the kind of persons who are depicted on pictures?

Again we have to turn to the Scriptures to find the answer. Let us read Ephesians. "He destined us in love to be His sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of His will" (verse 5); and in chapter 2:19, "So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God."

It is a privilege to be called a saint. It does not mean a glorified person, but it shows us the high position we are placed in. "Called out of darkness into His marvellous light, we have been destined and appointed to live for the praise of His glory (Ephesians 1:12). Paul, in his first letter to the Corinthians, chapter 1, writes, "For consider your call, brethren; not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth; but God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise, God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong, God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God."

David finds his delight in being united with the saints of God (Psalm 16:3), and, when he was despised by his own wife because he rejoiced with the people when the Ark of the Lord was brought back to

Jerusalem, his answer to her was, "I will make myself yet more contemptible than this, and I will be abased in your eyes; but by the maids of whom you have spoken, by them I shall be held in honour" (II Samuel 6:22). (Please read chapter 6.)

To belong to the holy congregation of saints brings with it contempt and derision, but a Christian who understands what it means to belong to the communion of saints would rather endure all things in order to belong to Christ and His saints.

*I love Thy saints, with them I am united,
And in their midst my soul will be delighted.*

Psalm 16:1, Book of Praise

CORINNE TEN HAGE

*30 Corby Crescent,
Brampton, Ontario L6Y 1H1*

Corinne is an eleven-year-old girl who has to undergo corrective surgery on her hip. She will need two operations, the first one on June 15th and the second one two weeks later. She will have to be in a body cast for approximately six weeks.

She loves cards with pictures of small pets or animals. She is a student at John Calvin Christian School at Burlington. Please remember Corinne, brothers and sisters, boys and girls, during your holidays!

JIMMY WANDERS

*Huron Regional Centre, P.O. Box 1000,
Orillia, Ontario L3V 6L2*

Jimmy will celebrate his 19th birthday, the Lord willing, on July 29th.

Jimmy has been away from home for fourteen years already and does not receive many visitors. His understanding is at kindergarten level; he loves pictures.

Brothers and sisters and teenagers, shall we remember our brother and give him lots of attention?

If you know of anyone lonely or sick or who would benefit from our attention, please send in your request (with permission of the person involved) to:

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

our little magazine

Hello Busy Beavers,

Summer holidays are here!

Great! What fun!

Oh, we're so thrilled we don't know what to do first or last!

Just what are we going to do?

Do you know?

What have you planned?

Or have you made plans?

Let's talk about it for a minute!

Who is going to take swimming lessons?

Who's helping on the farm this summer? Or in the house? Or maybe in the shop?

Who has a project to finish, maybe in sewing or wood-working?

I know some Busy Beavers are planning to do lots of **READING!**

Maybe your Dad or Mom has promised to teach you something new.

No matter what you're planning, I wish you all a very exciting and learning holiday, Busy Beavers.

And I hope you'll write and tell me about your good times!

Have a **HAPPY** and a **SAFE** holiday, Busy Beavers!

Roly-Poly Puppies in Spring

Roly-Poly puppies playing in the grass.

Roly-Poly puppies, watch out for the glass.

Roly-Poly puppies like playing in the Spring

'Cause roly-poly puppies think, "What joy does Spring bring!"

It was still spring when Busy Beaver *Yvonne Van Amerongen* sent in this poem. Hope you all enjoyed it as I did!

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

Do you know who should come first on our Birthday List, this time?

Our country, Canada!

Canada will be 112 years old, this July 1.

On July 1, 1867 the provinces of the Canadas, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick were united as the Dominion of Canada, and our country was born.

Maybe you have seen that famous old picture of the Fathers of Confederation who were there that important day in Charlottetown, P.E.I.

Let's always be thankful for the good times the Lord gives us to enjoy together with our families on holidays like Dominion Day (and every day).

And let's be thankful, too, for our beautiful country where we may serve the Lord in peace!

And now to all you Busy Beavers celebrating July birthdays: Happy Birthday! Many happy returns of the day! Have a really nice day together with your family and friends. Maybe you'll have a chance to play some of the games we talked about in the last issue of Our Little Magazine.

May the Lord, our heavenly Father bless and keep you always.

Jeannette Hoeksema	July 1	Jo-anna Flach	July 16
Ian Hulzebosch	1	Sharon Leffers	16
Theodore Kanis	1	Michael Wildeboer	20
Eric Jans	2	Alison Helder	21
Robert Feenstra	3	Henrietta Gansekoete	23
Plony Hofsink	3	Rick Leffers	23
Angela Linde	4	Eileen Salomons	24
Jerold Van Assen	4	Helen Vander Pol	25
Ingrid Feenstra	6	Judith Barendregt	26
Marion Van Grootheest	7	Cynthia Eenkhoorn	26
Sharon Van Grootheest	7	Jason Van Vliet	26
Joanne Hamoen	10	Corrie De Boer	29
Karen Schouten	11	Margaret Vanden Haak	29
James Slaa	11	Mary Van Raalte	29
Rosemary De Haas	12		



From the Mailbox

Hello *Carolyn Boeringa*. Thank you for your contribution to the **BIRTHDAY FUND PROJECT**, and also for your puzzle. Sounds to me as if you have a fun class, Carolin! And how is the baseball coming?

Congratulations on your baby brother *Lorinda Barendregt*. You lucky girl! I think he loves having you look after him. Does he smile already? Thanks for the picture too, Lorinda. Bye for now.

Thanks for your poem, *Yvonne Van Amerongen*. I think the Busy Beavers will really like it. Did you enjoy your field day at Guido de Bres High School? Did John Paul's friend recover all right from his bicycle accident? Write again soon, Yvonne.

TO SAN FRANCISCO!

by Busy Beaver *Jolette Moeliker*

"Hello, Sandra. This is Mr. Jackson. May I talk to your mother, please? . . . Yes, hello, Mrs. Wilson, Mr. Jackson speaking. As you know our family is going to San Francisco this summer . . . We have decided to take along a friend and our decision fell on Sandra. Would she be able to come? . . . We planned to leave on Monday . . . We'll be happy to take Sandra . . . Yes . . . See you on Monday. Thank you very much.

"Well, girls, she may come!"

"Yippi-yoo-hoo!"

Finally the long desired Monday came. Sandra was picked up at 8 o'clock that morning and at 8:30 they were heading toward the airport. Sandra was to go with Margie and Aunt Ingeborg as Mommy was called. Daddy was Uncle Harry. Just before leaving Margie asked Dad,

"When are you coming?"

"Tomorrow at 10:30," Dad answered.

Suddenly a voice said,

Puzzle No. 49

Match each of the following and write beside it where it is found.

1. Zeboim	Wife of Moses	16. Giddalti	Here disciples were for the first time called Christians
2. Peniel	"His glory is departed"	17. Diotrefes	Abraham's second wife
3. Ezion-Geber	Youngest son of Jesse	18. Zenas	A deaconess of Cenchreae
4. Agabus	He prophesied against Moab	19. Mark	The owner of the threshing floor
5. Malchishua	Father of Anna the prophetess	20. Chebar	Son of Izhar
6. Paltiel	Son of Heman	21. Petatiah	One of the murderers of Ishbosheth
7. Zipporah	A river	22. Eliphaz	A lawyer
8. Jochebed	One of the cities destroyed with Gomorrah	23. Gamaliel	Temporary husband of Michel
9. Mahalath	He foretold Paul's imprisonment	24. Antioch	Son of Benaiah
10. Keturah	A jeweller of Ephesus	25. Akeldama	He likes to put himself first
11. Phanuel	Cousin of Barnabas	26. Korah	Daughter of Ishmael
12. Ichabod	Solomon built a fleet of ships here	27. Jeremiah	One of Saul's sons
13. Araunah	"Field of Blood"	28. Demetrius	Haman's wife
14. Rechab	Mother of Moses	29. David	Place where Jacob fought with God
15. Zeresh	Teacher of Paul	30. Phoebe	A Temanite

Left side in order: 7. Exodus 18:2; 12. I Samuel 4:19; 29. I Samuel 16:10, 11; 16. I Chronicles 25:4; 27. Jeremiah 48; 11. Luke 2:36; 20. Ezekiel 10; 1. Genesis 10:9; 4. Acts 21:10, 11; 28. Acts 19:23-27; 19. Colossians 4:10; 3. I Kings 9:26; 25. Acts 1:19; 8. Exodus 6:20; 23. Acts 22:3; 24. Acts 11:26; 9. Genesis 25:1; 30. Romans 16:1; 13. II Samuel 24:23, 24; 26. Numbers 16:1; 14. II Samuel 4:6, 7; 18. Titus 3:13; 6. II Samuel 3:15; 21. Ezekiel 11:13; 17. III John 1:9; 10. Genesis 28:9; 5. I Samuel 14:49; 15. Esther 6:13; 2. Genesis 32:30; 22. Job 4:1.

Quotes from all over — Who said it, and to whom??

- "Am I my brother's keeper?"
- "Do not let his gray head go down to Sheol"
- "Behold your gods O Israel"
- "Do you now govern Israel?"
- "Let not him that girds on his armour boast himself as him who puts it off?"
- "Who do the people say that I am?"
- "Behold Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor"
- "Teacher what is the great commandment in the law?"
- "As for me and my house we will serve the Lord"
- "A foe and enemy, this wicked Haman!!"

Answers: A. Cain to the Lord; B. Bathsheba to Adonijah; C. Jeroboam to Israel; D. Jezebel to Ahab; E. King of Israel to Benhadad; F. Jesus to the Disciples; G. Zachaeus to Christ; H. A lawyer to Christ; I. Joshua to the people; J. Esther to King Ahasuerus.

Gordon Vandeburgt

"Attention, please. Will all passengers of CP Air go on board? We will be leaving in half an hour. Thank you."

Then everything was quiet again.

"Well, Sandra and Margie, time," Mommy said.

"Bye, Dad, Els, Jane."

And in reply:

"Bye, girls. Bye, Ingeborg, be careful, dear."

"I will, Harry."

"Bye, Margie, Sandra."

"Bye, Mommy, Sandra, Margie."

Then Mom and her girls went inside. A friendly stewardess welcomed them. She brought them to a window seat and

told the girls they could call her Daisy. Daisy told them they should put their seat belts on since they would be leaving in five minutes.

(Continued next time)

That's all for this time, Busy Beavers. I hope next time I'll be able to tell you some good news about our BIRTHDAY FUND PROJECT! Nobody is forgetting about it, right?

Bye for now.

With love from your
Aunt Betty