



# Clarion

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For here we have no lasting city

but we seek the city

which is to come.

HEBREWS 13:14

# Athanasius on the Incarnation

For He became man  
that we might become divine;  
and He revealed Himself through a body  
that we might receive an idea of the invisible Father;  
and He endured insults from men  
that we might inherit incorruption.

(d. 154)

Two names stand out in the history of the early Christian Church, Augustine and Athanasius, the former for the Church in the West, the latter for that in the East. Both are our brothers in the Lord, although we often call them church fathers, and both are beloved brothers because they fought against the secularization of Christ's congregation. Augustine battled in Latin for the doctrine of grace over against Roman moralism, and Athanasius wrote his fierce Greek treatises on the doctrine of Christ in order to ward off Eastern speculation. His name is attached to our third ecumenical symbol, the so-called Athanasian Creed, and our *Book of Praise* mentions not only his years 293-373 A.D. but calls him "the champion of orthodoxy over against Arian attacks upon the doctrine of the Trinity." Did he, the young secretary of the bishop of Alexandria, not attend the Council of Nicaea (325), and did he, soon bishop himself, not spend seventeen years in exile for the sake of God's truth?

In our worship services on Christmas we often hear the catholic confession about the only begotten Son of God, very God of very God, Who, for us men and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man. It is good to hear these words as an echo from Holy Writ: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father (John 1). It is also good to hear in these words a summary of Athanasius' teaching.

Let us together glance over one of his books. It is the second volume of an apologetic work. Our brother defended the Christian faith and tried to convince Jews and Greeks that Jesus is the Christ. This second volume is entitled *On the Incarnation of the Word, and his manifestation to us through the body*. It is one of the classics of the Christian Church and typical for the Eastern orthodox understanding of our Christian faith. Will it not be good to listen to our brother Athanasius? Let me tell you of some of the features that struck me when I reread this book in these weeks before Christmas.

First of all, it is characteristic of Athanasius that he stressed the harmony between God's act of creation and His work of redemption. Our Creator is our Redeemer and our Redeemer is our Creator. Right in the beginning, Athanasius states: "We must first speak about the creation of the universe and its creator, God, so that in this way one may

consider as fitting that its renewal was effected by the Word who created it in the beginning. For it will appear in no way contradictory if the Father worked its salvation through the same by whom he created it" (1). Time and again the author comes back to the same point: God the Word created and God the Word redeems. Who was needed, he asks, except the Word of God, who also in the beginning had created the universe from nothing (7)? He was needed not only to restore God's grace but also to make us know the Father. "So again who was needed but God the Word, who sees both soul and mind, and who moves all things in creation and by them makes known the Father? For it was the task of him who by his providence and regulation of the universe teaches about the Father, also to renew the same teaching" (14). In creation the providence God the Father operates through His Son, the Logos. Would redemption be possible, except through the same Word of God? Only God can restore us to the communion with God. In the Lord Jesus Christ we are redeemed by God Himself. Athanasius does not mention Arius once and therefore some scholars think that he wrote this book before the struggle against the Arians began in 318. I follow the opinion of those who date the book later (around 335). Be that as it may, it is clear how important this struggle was. We possess the text of a letter that Arius wrote to his friend and fellow student Eusebius. He complains bitterly "that the bishop greatly injures and persecutes us and does all he can against us, trying to drive us out of the city as godless men since we do not agree with him when he says publicly 'Always Father, always Son'. . . . We are persecuted because we say, 'The Son has a beginning, but God is without beginning.'" Arius spoke of the Son as a mere creature "constituted by God's will and counsel." But how could a creature bring us back to God? Athanasius was right: God Himself had to come and redeem us.

A second characteristic of Athanasius' book is his stress on the  *motive*  for the incarnation. Why did the Son of God become man? Answer: For our salvation. The Word of God came to our realm; he is incorporeal and incorruptible and immaterial but "in his benevolence towards us he condescended to come and be made manifest" (2). In his Greek the bishop of Alexandria uses for "benevolence" the word "philanthropy." The Word stoops down and shows his lovingkindness. Does it not remind us of the words of Scripture? When the goodness and lovingkindness of God our Saviour appeared He saved us in virtue of His own mercy (Titus 3:4, 5). In an illustrative passage Athanasius writes about a figure which has been painted on wood. He may have had in mind the portraits on wood, such as Egyptians attached to their mummies of the dead, as we may see in our museums today. The theologian from the land of King Tut used this illustration: "For as when a figure which has been painted on wood is spoilt by dirt, it is necessary for him



whose portrait it is to come again so that the picture can be renewed in the same material — for because of his portrait the material on which it is painted is not thrown away, but the portrait is redone on it — even so the all-holy Son of the Father, who is the image of the Father, came to our realms to renew man who had been made in his likeness, and, as one just, to find him through the forgiveness of sins; just as he said in the gospels: *‘I have come to save and find that which was lost’*” (14). Does this quotation from Luke 19:10 not indicate the motive for the incarnation of the Son of God? He did not come to Bethlehem to honour mankind, but to save it. We should know the reason for the manifestation in the body of the Word of such and so great a Father. We should not think that the Saviour put on a body as a consequence of His nature. “Although he is incorporeal by nature and Word, yet through the mercy and goodness of his Father he appeared to us in a human body *for our salvation*” (1).

When I read these passages I visualized those Greek unbelievers in Athanasius’ days. They saw a great contrast between spirit and matter. Was it not folly to Greeks to speak of the incarnation of the Logos? How could the Word become flesh? Could He not reveal Himself through other parts of creation? Why did He not use a better instrument such as the sun or moon or stars or fire or air, rather than merely a man? Athanasius has the answer: “The Lord came not to show himself, but to heal and to teach those who were suffering” (43). It is the task of a healer and teacher to be of service to those in need and to appear in a way that they can bear. Man had to be saved, and the Word, therefore, used a human body as an instrument for the true revelation of the Father. Who would not think of the text quoted somewhere by Athanasius, about the children who share in flesh and blood, and about the Son Who Himself likewise partook of the same nature (Hebrews 2:14)?

It brings us to a third aspect of Athanasius’ doctrine of redemption. He puts a strong emphasis on the contrast between death and life, corruption and incorruption. The Eastern Christian does not think primarily in relations of guilt and forgiveness, but in categories of death and immortality. Man in paradise, Athanasius says, had received the promise of immortality in heaven. But if he transgressed, he “would suffer the natural corruption consequent on death and would no longer live in paradise but in future dying outside it would remain in death and corruption” (3). If man would keep his likeness to God Who exists, he would have remained incorruptible. “Being incorruptible he would thenceforth have lived as God, as also somewhere the Divine Scripture declares, saying: *‘I said that you are gods and all sons of the highest: but you die like men and fall as one of the princes’* (Ps. 82:6-7).” But death entered the world and corruption took a strong hold on men. What should God have done? Allow corruption to hold sway over men and allow death to capture them? It would have been improper that what had once been created rational and had partaken of the Word should perish. Should what had been created “logical” by the Logos, return to non-existence through corruption? Here Athanasius pictures the work of salvation by the Word that became flesh and dwelt among us. “He had pity on our race, and was merciful to our infirmity, and submitted to our corruption, and did not endure the dominion of death. And lest what had been created should perish and the work of the Father among men should be in vain, he took to himself a body and that not foreign to our own” (8). He surrendered this body to death on behalf of all and offered it to the Father. But because of the Word Who was dwelling in it, the body remained incor-

ruptible, and so corruption ceased from all men by the grace of the resurrection. Christmas and Easter are directly related in Athanasius’ thought. Life and immortality have been brought to light. The bishop of Alexandria becomes lyric, when he meditates on the incarnation of the Word. The incorruptible Son of God became united to all men by His body similar to theirs. The corruption has been overcome.

As when a great king has entered some great city and dwelt in one of the houses in it, such a city is then greatly honoured, and no longer does any enemy or bandit come against it, but it is rather treated with regard because of the king who has taken up residence in one of its houses; so also is the case with the King of all. For since he has come to our realm and has dwelt in a body similar to ours, now every machination of the enemy against men has ceased and the corruption of death, which formerly had power over them, has been destroyed (9).

What shall we say? I hope that our readers have listened attentively to our brother from Egypt who lived more than sixteen centuries ago. I do not know of any Christian writing in which the coming of our Saviour is proclaimed so clearly as the way to victory over death. In this light I explain the famous expression that the Son of God became man that we might become divine. In the *Library of Christian Classics* you even read the translation, “For he was made man that we might be made God.” Athanasius literally wrote, “He was humanized that we might be deified” (54). To be sure, I think that the bishop of Alexandria misunderstood the words of Psalm 82 in which those to whom the word of God came are called gods (cf. John 10:35). We should prevent all misunderstanding and never use ambiguous words. Therefore, I would not advocate that our ministers should preach that the Word became man that we might become divine. It is dangerous to speak of a deification of man. But it is evident that Athanasius never meant to eradicate the boundary between Creator and creature. Man does not sink into God, and he does not lose his created nature. Athanasius tried to express for the Greek readers of his days what Paul had proclaimed as our wonderful expectation: the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God. We wait for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies (Romans 8). Deification with Athanasius means sanctification and glorification.

We may be thankful for Anselm and Luther and Calvin and all those other brothers who in the light of the Scriptures tried to answer the question *Cur Deus homo?* Why did God become man? We may be thankful for our Heidelberg Catechism and its pointed question: “What benefit do you receive from the holy conception and birth of Christ?” Answer: “That He is our Mediator and with His innocence and perfect holiness covers, in the sight of God, my sin wherein I was conceived and brought forth.” “The sight of God” indicates God as our Judge. Our Catechism knows about sin and guilt and the need of a Mediator between God and us. There was the need of reconciliation, and the Man Christ Jesus gave Himself as a ransom for all (I Timothy 2:5, 6). Christmas is connected with Easter, but, first of all, it is a preparation for Good Friday. The letters of the Apostle Paul are deeper and broader than the writings of Athanasius. Nevertheless, also our brother in Alexandria helped us to understand something more of the mystery of our religion: God was manifested in the flesh. Hallelujah.

J. FABER

*N.B. The quotations are taken from Robert W. Thomson (ed.) Athanasius-Contra Gentes and De Incarnatione (Oxford: Clarendon, 1971).*

# The Liberation: 35 Years Ago

What follows is, the translation of an article in *De Reformatie* of August 11 of this year. August 11, 1944, is the official date of the Liberation. Again this year quite some attention was focused on the Liberation in The Netherlands. A book was published: *Het Vuur Blijft Branden* (The Fire Continues to Burn). And in two consecutive issues of *De Reformatie* the two speeches of Prof. Dr. K. Schilder, held on that date before and after the reading of the Act of Liberation or Return, were published. It may be a good thing to have all the speeches with the "Act" translated into English and put together. What follows here is the first speech. I have taken this over in our magazine as a tribute here in Canada and the USA to the Liberation of thirty-five years ago — a gracious act of our Lord for which we here also can and must be thankful every day again. Without it we would not be what we are.

The Rev. W.G. De Vries prepared the speech for publication and gave it an introduction. I give that introduction first:

It is with great pleasure that in this issue of August 11, 1979, we can publish the speech which Prof. Dr. K. Schilder held thirty-five years ago at the well-known meeting in the Lutheran Church in 's-Gravenhage.

Until now only the speeches of Rev. H. Knoop, Prof. Dr. S. Greijdanus, and Rev. D. van Dijk, delivered at that historic meeting, have been published. The opinion took shape that nothing of Prof. K. Schilder's words at that meeting had been recorded. In 1970 Prof. H.J. Schilder wrote: "Miss Brandsen has not recorded anything of the words of Prof. Dr. K. Schilder, which he spoke at that meeting, because it was deemed advisable that nothing of his be put in print in order to avoid, as much as possible, further possible difficulties with the occupying power" (*Handboek 1970 ten dienste van De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland*, page 205).

Who, then, has made this report (obviously in shorthand), is not known to me. It has been "in hiding" in the Schilder-archives for years. We are thankful that it can be published precisely this year.

Thereby we also publish the explanation of the Act of Liberation or Return given by Prof. Schilder at the same meeting. It is set up in the form of a report, but it clearly renders what was at stake.

Besides the other things that have been and will be published this year in remembrance of what happened thirty-five years ago, these two speeches, in my opinion, are an important contribution toward the understanding of the lasting significance of the Liberation as a gift of the LORD to His struggling and — in faith — overcoming church.

After this the speech itself follows:

The Hague, August 11, 1944

Brothers and Sisters,

When I lectured to the students in Kampen for the last time in the month of June 1942, I never could have thought, at that moment, that this would be the last time that, in the name of the Reformed churches, the way to do so remained open to me and the charge was given. And when I had left the pulpit on Sunday, July 5, 1942, in a church of that time which was known to us all in the federation of our churches, I could not have suspected either that the next time I should see and mount a pulpit would be in the Lutheran Church on the Burgwal in The Hague. Nevertheless, God wanted it this way; and the first manner, the first condition, for speaking and for hearing rightly this afternoon and this morning is that we take our startingpoint here: in what has happened lies a decision of the LORD that we must begin to honour as being incomprehensible, in order to think of that other pillar which rules our thinking as well, and which must direct our way; that other pillar which stands be-



Prof. Dr. K. Schilder

side the one of "It happened," namely, "It is written." What has happened is, in as far as it is determined in God's counsel, unfathomably deep in wisdom and in justice, and, I believe, at the same time also full of grace. But when we, from our side, must take a step on the way we have to go every day, that next step can and may only be taken in complete obedience to the revealed Word, that is, to what is written. Only in this way does our deed, which remains *our* deed, correspond, in a God-pleasing manner, with His deed which we know from His counsel; and only in this way can we, with fear and trembling, usher in this day and tomorrow, and, if necessary, even ring it in as a new day in the fear of the LORD and according to His own will.

When we face the question today what must be done in our churches, a very short outline of the most important features of the picture of our churches of this time may be added, on one point, to the word of the chairman; and that one point is the life of the churches in their General Synod. When I, therefore, from my side, indicate with a single short word why, according to my positive conviction, a total corruption — "total" in the sense of "irrevocable for the present" — has entered the ecclesiastical synodical life, I point out several matters which, in my opinion, are decisive for knowing the situation. Personally and frankly, I consider the evil of *hierarchy* to be the main cause and the main sin of our ecclesiastical synodical dealings of late. When Dr. A. Kuyper brought the people together in 1886 for the church struggle of those days, he spoke of the second hierarchy. The first one was

at of Rome, against which the fathers fought in the Church reformation in the sixteenth Century; and the second was that of the Dutch Reformed Church of those days, in which God is possibly doing things today that can put us to shame. If I see things rightly, the third hierarchy is present today in our churches. I immediately admit, the circumstances are different, the manner different, the intentions also differ entirely in many respects, but it is and remains hierarchy, i.e., interfering from the top in the life of Christ's own church; and interfering, without being required to do so by God's own Word and will, in the free act of the believers who are gathered and organized in each place in the name of Christ. A typical mark of hierarchy is always that the board at the top places itself above the church assembled and gathered by Christ in each place. Who does not see that this is the characteristic and, at the same time, the sin of what people have tried to do these days in our churches? Men have been suspended and have even been deposed from office, while the local churches have not been reckoned with whatsoever, nor the bond between the church which calls in the name of the Lord, on the one hand, and the minister called by her, on the other hand, honoured. It is as if the Church Order no longer contains Article 79, in which the rights of the local church fully are acknowledged; or Article 85 in which is stated that no church nor office-bearer shall lord it over any other church or office-bearer.

When De Cock in 1834 saw the classical board as a summoning and prosecuting power, he still had a consistory that said, "Hear us, for he is our minister." When today in our liberated churches a different meeting comes — not even a classical one: the Classis is also bypassed; not even a regional one: the Regional Synod is also bypassed; but the General Synod — and starts to suspend and depose, the consistory no longer even get a chance to say: "Come and hear us." This is hierarchy in the most absolute form.

When in our church life today the question arises how, in practice, we have to recognize the synodical decisions, then on the one hand — and correctly so — we state emphatically: remember well, God is a God of order. With equal emphasis, we also say: Bear in mind, synodical decisions or synodical dealings must be recognized by the churches, as long as things go

according to the good, established order, in the church-orderly way; I emphasize: the church-orderly way. But when, at the same time, something else is being concealed, trouble develops from it; it causes the ruin (?) of our church life with regard to these matters. Our Church Order also contains that good, solid means of defence against all hierarchy, which states: A decision agreed upon by a majority vote shall be considered settled and binding, *unless* it be proved to conflict with the Word of God or the adopted Church Order. On the one side God's Word, and beside it, boldly beside it, also the Church Order; like two boundaries, both describable; for the obedience of consistory and individual, whoever he be, over against the decisions of major assemblies. God's Word and the Church Order; what goes against *that* will not be obeyed. If that statement had not been in our own Church Order, the floodwaters of hierarchy which always preys upon us like a spring flood, could not have been held back. But, thanks to God's grace, with this means of defence this flood has been held back up till now. But recently God has permitted that our churches fell short on this point in theory and practice, and that they have constantly and knowingly said: It indeed says, "considered settled and binding, *unless*, once again *unless*, it conflicts with Scripture and Church Order," but we make something else of it; we make this of it: considered settled and binding in any case, in any case until the next synod, until that synod may have changed it. If this would be true, then every Synod, or the very next Synod, that made a decision violating the Word of God and binding the consciences against the Word of God, would be able to break up the church and scatter its members. If we have to do what goes against God's Word, because the Synod says: I want you to; if we have to do that, in any case for three years, and even then still have to ask: Synod, please change it, otherwise we have to do it again; then reformation has been drawn to a halt; revolution has silently crept in; the church and her life have been poisoned, yes, paralyzed; and the life of the church misses the safe boundary behind which she has to seek refuge and, at the same time, has to appear, in order to take a firm stand against the stream of sin and enmity coming from all sides.



*Theological College in Kampen.*

You will say: Alright, hierarchy; here and there we see a small beginning of it. But perhaps you say: There are other things at stake, especially doctrinal decisions; and on that point hierarchy is not the stumbling block. I would love to do one thing: I wish I could say, "With regard to the doctrinal matters, that is a *doctrinal* matter, and only a doctrinal matter, and as far as that is concerned there is no hierarchy involved." If that were so, the matter would be much easier. Then I would have been deposed, not because of causing a schism, but because of false doctrine and heresy. Then Prof. Greijdanus, whom the churches owe so immensely much, also would have been suspended, not because of fighting against a doctrinal pronouncement, but because of false doctrine and heresy. Then would have been maintained, also afterward in the Acts of the meeting, and thus maintained before God's own countenance, what has been stated publicly by Synod and also has been in the newspaper; namely, that a candidate for the holy ministry, called by a church in the name of the Lord, a man whom we as professors have acknowledged as having passed his examination with full honour; that



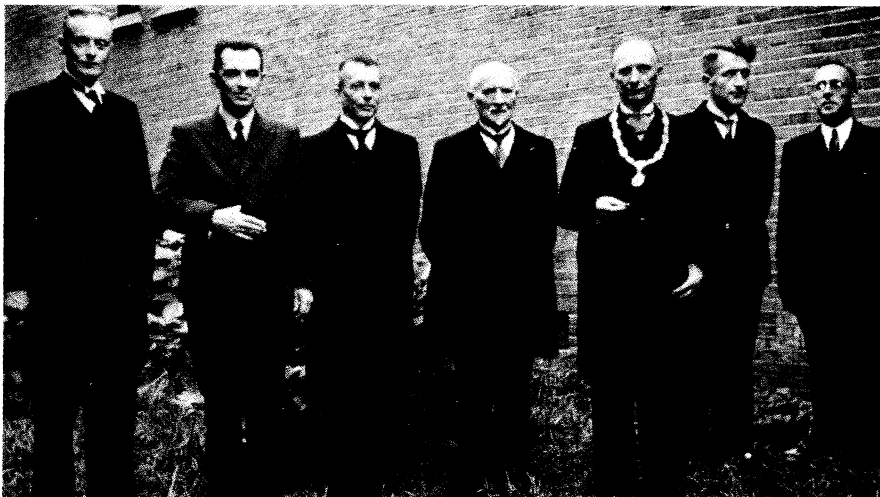
such a man was deviating, as it was called, from the confession, Articles 33/35 concerning the sacraments. I wish it were so that they said and maintained: Whoever does not fully accept the doctrinal pronouncement, is a preacher and importer of a false doctrine and heresy. Then everyone would know what he was up to. Then clarity would have been created, and then spirituality, with her sister, objectivity, would have gone hand in hand in our churches. But so deeply has the distress come over us and the sin been brought into our [church] life, that even these doctrinal questions are seen from the angle of hierarchical or non-hierarchical church-government. Prof. Greijdenus has been suspended because he fought the doctrinal pronouncement of Synod. If there is one man who, if the Synod had been right, these last years has deserved to be excommunicated because of false doctrine and heresy, it would be he. For during the past months and years already he has used his pen indefatigably to say loudly, frankly, and freely, "What is being said, is not true. For God says something different and the Lord speaks different words; and the binding on earth is [to be] different, for it is different in heaven." But even the man who said this loudly, repeatedly, emphatically, in public, has not been suspended because of false doctrine and heresy, but because he was fighting ecclesiastical [synodical] doctrinal pronouncements.

I admit, God is and remains a God of order in every church formation.

That is true for Prof. Greijdenus, for Rev. D. van Dijk; that is true for the candidates; that is true for me; that is true for all; that is true for elders and deacons; God is a God of order. But if the order which He establishes is indeed *His* order, not just a matter of putting our affairs in order; if it is *His* order, then it follows that the church which judges someone who has to say: "I cannot agree, I cannot do it, I may not be spared herein," does either one of two things: either she says: he who says he cannot do it comes in conflict with what we regard to be the revealed truth of God on the basis of His clear Word, and thus he is a heretic and importer of a false doctrine; or she says: we do not dare to do that; and if we do not dare to do that, we have confessed at the same time that we have said too much. Our binding was not God's binding; our conditions were not His conditions. We have said too much, and therefore we go back. We seek the brethren. We never bind on earth, unless we know, know for certain: our binding-on-earth is His binding-in-heaven. And since we do not dare to do this in the present situation, we go back for the sake of peace, knowing that the reward in heaven is great for those who are not concerned about prestige and about saving face but who ask what the revealed will of God is, and that alone. Fighting a pronouncement is what a revolutionary does, certainly; but also a reformer: he does so just as well. Fighting a pronouncement is what Beelzebul does, in the church; but also the Holy Spirit; the

servant of the One, the satellite of the other. Fighting a pronouncement can and may never be the ground for suspension and deposition, but that [ground] may only be that a person fights what the church states and pronounces and confesses in His name. And if that is missing, the suspending assembly, which evades that question and yet says: "I expel you, when it comes to the point, from the Lord's Supper," has put the stigma of hierarchy on its forehead — even if this assembly objectively is right, that its pronouncement was indeed according to the Word of the Lord. And that is why — alas — the conclusion remains that hierarchy is the great distress and sin of the church these days among us. Because of this hierarchy one begins to see bitter off-shoots; going here and there you can find them yourself: elders and deacons who are deposed in the final process, while no one can show that it is according to the Form for the Lord's Supper — suspensions and depositions, which they bound to the right and to the left with accommodation proposals and small pacification ideas, with efforts to trim and compromise.

In a time like this it is precisely the people who try to compromise who are the greatest stumbling-block that Satan places on the path of those who are led into the fire. Certainly, when it can and may be done for the sake of the peace and the unity of the church, everyone is in duty bound, for the sake of Sion, to yield where his own person can yield, and to give what he can give, with the recognition of the Lord's justice. But I say at the same time: Woe to him who, in order to save his own cause and to guarantee his own rest, no longer binds the church to her own words. If the church says: in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit I baptize you and later says: in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit I excommunicate you, then may God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit keep every man, whoever it might be, who wants to connect the one thing with the other by compromising and muddling. Let him say one thing: a people is lost when the golden standard is gone and the sound guilder; and the church is marred and violated and reviled and ruined from within when her papers are devaluated, when her oaths are looked at as if they no longer are oaths, and when her bans are looked at as if they were moves on a chessboard in order



*Faculty of the Theological College in Kampen in 1946. From left to right: Lecturer Ds. D.K. Wielenga, Prof. C. Veenhof, Prof. P. Deddens, Prof. Dr. S. Greijdenus, Prof. Dr. K. Schilder, Prof. B. Holwerda and Lecturer Drs. D.J. Buwalda. (Lecturer Dr. H.M. Mulder is missing from this picture.)*

to get rid of, or to bring in, whomever they want, according to the need of the party. And therefore, I have refused to accept any effort of mediation which would give in on the one point, but would deny the other, which would deny that a disciplinary measure is at stake and not simply a conflict between one party and another party.

And now, if this is the Lord's rule, you know how things stand in the matter of the binding of candidates to the pronouncement that the seed of the covenant must be considered regenerated and must be considered sanctified in Christ, until the opposite shows later when the child grows up. Against that binding we must continue to fight — precisely because binding, if done by the church, is not a matter of church-politics, but a matter of the justice of the Lord, or of violating the justice of the Lord; precisely because binding to such a formula, and to others, does not simply mean the possibility to impose silence upon a certain group for a certain time, but has to be and to remain an action with which the church, with God's authority, opens the pulpit and the pulpit-books for whom God opens them to administer, and closes for whom God closes the administering.

It is not the doctrinal pronouncement as such, therefore, that has been the cause of the division, although there are many who, objectively, cannot bring its contents, sharply analyzed, in agreement with the Word of the Lord, but it is the binding which causes the big trouble. For if the binding remains, the church of today, even though she adorns the graves of prophets in an excellent way with much eloquence at set times, nevertheless, with words of abuse, has hooted after many prophets in their grave who have served her with honour also in the years before and after 1892. If she is now going to bind to a formula, she has, through this addition to the confession, precisely as confession, placed an obstacle in the way of seeking unification with all those who have said in this church, drenched with the blood of the martyrs, that the believers have to come together in churches, and that the churches have to come together in a federation of churches, on the basis of the Three Forms of Unity, and of these only.

Certainly, we recognize the church's right to say, when the forms are violated, "It is not this way, but that way." Think of Assen 1926.

Without a doubt, the church has the right and even the obligation to tell a person who wants to teach something that conflicts with the Forms; "Your teaching is in conflict with the Forms of Unity, and therefore we throw you out. But then the church, saying this, must also dare to maintain that what she has put down here now in this situation as a new pronouncement has been drawn from the old. It is the old contents and not a new formula.

And I have already said: *that* is something the church today does not dare to say. She does not dare to say that this pronouncement of 1942 is so definitely, from a to z, the Word of God, revealed from above, that everyone who says it differently violates the Forms and is known by God and by us as a heretic. But, if she does not dare to say this, then every pronouncement, even if objectively correct, is still a stumbling-block in the church, because it is an addition to the confession and thus a narrowing of the basis on which everyone is obligated to join the true church. And if it pleases God, in the Dutch Reformed Church perhaps, or perhaps among the Christian (Free) Reformed (Christelijk Gereformeerd) brethren to prepare soil in which the plant of willingness can grow, namely, of the willingness to find under one pulpit all those who accept the confession in good faith, then we must not beforehand stand in the way of this holy duty of ours to say to these people: "Here we are," by binding above the confession where God does not bind and by putting in the block feet which are ready to preach, saying, "You may not preach," and by playing, with churches that call and classes that examine, a game of hierarchy, in which there is no seriousness any longer, and from where the rhythm of the Holy Spirit has gone, where it merely is and remains a matter of what the majority says. Safe in the arms of the majority. May God grant us to say: Safe in Jesus' arms; safe at Jesus' breast; Safe, where binding and ministry stand only on the ground and basis of His holy Word, of the unabridged, yes certainly, the unabridged confession, and in that way to call, to call together, to drive together, if need be, the church in the whole country which we may call catholic; that means the church of Christ Jesus, which never can and may be known from the tracts of sects with their narrowing and their particularization, but which we know and must know from the marks of the true

church, that is: the pure preaching of the gospel, the pure administration of the sacraments, and pure church discipline, which resounds in heaven, or actually: which sounds in heaven and resounds on earth a discipline which thus avails itself of God's own gospel with great grace, and which otherwise bears the mark of objectionableness and can be sure of the indignation of God in its consequences. I shall not say one more word now about the fact that, in my opinion, the principles of justice were used wrongly, principles which even the world knows and applies. Every bitterness and incident be contraband.

## Clarion

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*Prof. Dr. S. Greijdanus.*

We ask to see the line which God draws and nothing else.

But, having said all this, and sticking to the main issue, the question arises "What to do? What to do?" May we say: "Well, it is terrible, and we are very concerned, but we shall be on the look-out (uitkijken) for what happens further?" If you wish to replace the word "look-out" by "look" (kijken), "see," then I say: "Oh, yes; let us see what happens further." That means one thing in the first place: do not walk away obstinately in an angry mood, and never be the man of whom the angels can say that he, without necessity, has caused a schism, or that he has enlarged the schism. I am convinced that the schism has been made, not by some concerned person, but only by the decisive, maintaining action of the General Synod which rejected mediation. And in so far as we now see the schism which exists, and say, "It has happened," we simply do a Christian action.

However, I said already: we know two pillars for our actions. The one is: "It happened," and the other is: "It is written." The Synod caused the schism, and made it. This I take as the "It happened." Now I myself and you yourself. We today stand in a church and in the midst of a people which says: What are you yourselves going to do now? Then we, from our side, may not take the very next step on the way of the order and policy of the day except it be according to the written Word: "It is written." And what does that mean? Among other things also this: though others made the schism, you must say, "That deed has its

consequences and requires an answer and reaction from me," but you may never say, "They made that schism, and I now eagerly shall broaden it." May God almighty keep us from doing that! And every action from our side which broadens the schism for which we have to give account, comes from the evil one. But acting as if there is no schism also comes from the evil one; acting as if parents, who have to say at the baptism of their child this coming Sunday that they acknowledge the doctrine taught in this Christian church to be the true and complete doctrine of salvation, may say that, while they may not say it, also comes from the evil one. It is also wrong to act as if it is not possible that every office-bearer who administers baptism on Sunday asks: "Do you swear the oath that you will instruct and bring up your child in this doctrine," while those parents can and must say: "That I do not want to, and cannot, promise, according to my conviction." In other words, the schism which exists is urgent; with every deed the schism is present, making wry faces at us and asking, "What are you going to do now?"

When the Lord's Supper is administered, he who administers it and hands out the bread and wine to those who sit at the table must say, "This I do in the church of today, in that church-federation which excludes those whom we honour as brothers in Christ, who are not excommunicated by Him and are not expelled by Him from the table of the Lord." Yes, when it is Sunday morning, and there is no baptismal font and Lord's Supper table present, but the bells toll 10:00 o'clock, and a man ascends the steps to the pulpit, and says: in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and that man comes in this way (with the gesture of blessing), lifting up his hands, with authority, over the assembled people, and says: this gesture is not mine, poor soul, but Christ's, Who says through my service: I bless you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; then, at that moment, in which the minister comes in this way (with the gesture of blessing) to the church people, the question is appropriate: Man of God, how is it with the schism? In what federation are you standing here and are you coming so (with the gesture of blessing)? In whose name are you standing here and coming so? Who authorizes you to say: "I, a little man of flesh and blood, stand up with authority and say: 'He who

blesses is more than the he who is blessed.'" And, further, another question: You man who blesses, the federation to which you belong, and the name in which you are authorized excludes from the right to do so (gesture of blessing) brothers who are called your brothers according to your conviction, if you are concerned.

Has the federation been broken yes or no? On that question there must be an answer. And where the one line is: never cause a schism in a self-willed way, and the other line: never heal a schism in a self-willed way; or where the one line remains: If Thou dost not come along, LORD, do not make us break up from here, but the other line remains: If Thou dost not stay here LORD, do not make us stay here; if the one line says: keep what you can keep but the other line is concretely: break what God has already broken, so the breaking becomes your only answer according to God's Word, then you will understand that herewith the one line cannot be complete. And those who called you together today for this meeting are of the opinion that they must point out and say here that it must be possible to find the word and that it already has been found which answers and recognizes the double line. On the one hand, we may not, in a self-willed way, break down that work of God's grace, which God gave in this country and which I call the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands, and we may not cut off the possibility of a restoration of the breach. But, on the other hand, we may not resign ourselves to the situation for three years instead of marching as soldiers of the Lord, and so violate our prayers; we may not spend a few years muddling, trimming compromising, and saying, "It will be alright, medically and juridically," while we live under a preaching, every Sunday, which is only a matter of craftiness(?). But what has to be done now, is also, by virtue of the recognition of these two lines, pointed out in a draft act which has not been, and will not be, signed today by anyone; which also is not meant to serve as a mode for all; but which locally, here and there, and perhaps also at other places has served, and can serve, as a delineation of the two lines. I propose to read this draft act to you in order to say to you, "That is the way we see it, and that is the way in which we have to answer in the fear of the Lord, according to us."

J. GEERTSEMA





# A Pilgrim's Prayer

O God of Bethel, by Whose hand  
Thy people still are fed;  
Who through this weary pilgrimage  
Hast all our fathers led:

Our vows, our prayers, we now present  
Before Thy throne of grace;  
God of our fathers, be the God  
Of their succeeding race.

Through each perplexing path of life  
Our wandering footsteps guide;  
Give us each day our daily bread,  
And raiment fit provide.

O spread Thy covering wings around,  
Till all our wanderings cease,  
And at our Father's loved abode  
Our souls arrive in peace.

Such blessings from Thy gracious hand  
Our humble prayers implore;  
And Thou shalt be our chosen God,  
And portion evermore.

Philip Doddridge, 1702 - 1751,  
as in SCOTTISH PARAPHRASES, 1781

## THE CHURCH: THE BODY OF CHRIST

Here follows most of the last article from the hand of Prof. L. Doekes in his series about the Church. It appeared in the issue of June 23 of this year of *De Reformatie*. Above the article he placed the heading, "The Body of Christ." First we read:

The Body of Christ is constantly in motion: it grows every day. It will be clear that we mean His congregation which, in the language of God's Word, is named with that beautiful name: His *body*.

It strikes us time and again that Scripture uses this name very concretely and directly as an indication for the church as a totality in this world, but at the same time and not less of a local congregation.

Prof. Doekes then gives an example of the Bible's speaking of the body of Christ as a totality and points to Ephesians 1:23,

where the Holy Spirit speaks about the glory of the exalted Christ. The glory which God has granted to His Son as the Mediator finds its fulfilment especially in that He as the heavenly gift is given by the Father to His congregation to be her Head and Lord. Of that congregation it is said, therefore: she is His body, connected as completely with Him and belonging as much to Him as our human body forms a unity with our head.

Prof. Doekes writes that this name of the church is placed at the end of Paul's words in Ephesians 1 about the glorious gifts of God in Christ to His people. He continues:

In these riches the church may praise Him wherever, in His Name, the congregation is gathered out of this world. It is the universal bliss of that church in its totality, joined together by Jews and Gentiles who believe, the great multitude out of all the nations. Of that church it may fully be said: she is the body of Christ.

Before I continue with what Prof. Doekes writes about the local church's also fully being body of Christ, I would like to point out a very important aspect with respect to the church's being called the body of Christ. Some time ago I had the privilege to listen to a lecture by Prof. J. Faber at the College in Hamilton. It was a lecture on the church as the body of Christ. Now what I am going to render from that

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But Scripture uses the name of honour "the body of Christ" no less directly and concretely as predicate of a local congregation with her various members. What Paul wrote to the church at Ephesus and in other places he impressed, in a more elaborate way, on the members of the church at Corinth, the congregation in which so many spiritual gifts drew attention, but in which at the same time so many dissolving and destructive powers were at work. It is not by accident that precisely in the letter to this congregation he wrote so extensively about the reality of the body of Christ, and about the place and the task of each of the members of this body with respect to each other (I Cor. 12:12-27). As all the members of our body, however many they may be, form one body, so it is with the body of Christ, His congregation; and that are we, for by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, and we have all drunk of one Spirit.

One Spirit, one body — that is the reality in the church of Christ. Every member of the congregation has to be deeply aware of this. And in order to mark this once more as a direct reality Paul concludes his

explanation with the concrete word directed to all: You are the body of Christ and each one individually a member (I Cor. 12:27).

That is enough. The church has her hands full with this task till the last day. From I Corinthians 12 it is clear how the exalted Christ wants to give a place to the gifts and offices in His congregation, in good order, through His Spirit, in order that this body receive the care which it needs. To that body belongs the regular administration of the Word of God and the sacraments, and the faithful application of discipline, in order to nourish and preserve the unity of the church and to keep everything in obedience to God. Just love, true love to God and to the neighbour, will let itself be led herein by Christ's Word (I Cor. 13). He who does not reckon with this commandment of the Lord will experience his judgment: he is not acknowledged by God (14:38).

On the basis of these and other clear Scripture passages, our Confession speaks about "the body and the communion of the true Church" (Art. 29, B.C.) It is remarkable that this notion of the body of the church has a dominating place in our Confession, not only in Articles 28 and 29, but also further in Articles 30-32, where the instituting and establishing of a certain Church Order is called useful and beneficial for maintaining the body of the Church.

How plain and clear and real the body of Christ is depicted in our Confession, and how much it is reckoned with in faith, can be seen especially in Articles 28 and 29. Over against every intention of our flesh to keep ourselves away and to isolate ourselves from the life and struggle of the true church in pride or in dejection, it is emphatically confessed in Article 28 that all are duty bound to join and unite themselves with it and to maintain the unity with it "as mutual members of the same body." Separating oneself from the church, or for whatever reason not joining oneself to it, is not extenuated in a gentle way, but is frankly indicated as going against God's commandment. This type of language is offensive in our time of ecumenical and pluriformity thinking. It seems a daring pretension of the Reformed church to have the courage to put things so strongly. Nevertheless, Calvin and De Brès and their fellow-believers have presented themselves with this Confession. That was not the consequence of a kind of obstinacy and stubborn desire to voice a separate "Reformed" sound in the multi-voiced chorus of the many Protestants. They have brought this Confession to the fore as the *obedient answer to the revealed Word of the exalted Christ* [Italics mine J.G.]. For the church is not our business. She is His body, the temple of God.

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# Press Review

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In this connection it is also important that our confession, in Article 29, discerns clearly between the *body* and communion



of the church and the attitude and conduct of the members of the church.

Prof. Doekes points to the fact that the Bible teaches us that there are hypocrites and unbelievers in the church, and people who do not live a Christian life. Also the practice of life shows this. 'But,' says he,

on account of this, indicating and recognizing the body of the church does not become an unclear or impossible thing to do! That there are, temporarily, harmful elements in the church who have a disastrous influence, is a fact. But by it the existence and the upbuilding and the growth of the church as the body of Christ does not result in an unclear problem. For the Word of God is not unclear: It is a shining light, which makes the twilight and the shadow disappear and causes the contours of God's church-gathering work to be clearly evident.

In that light we learn to discern the body and the communion of the true church. Every doctrine and organization which does not accord with what Christ, our only Teacher, has taught us in His Word, does also not serve His body. The church is not being gathered and united through those (deviating doctrines and organizations), but is being scattered: they hinder the growth of the body. *Where a congregation or a group of churches permit themselves to be guided by a tradition or doctrine which does not serve the unity of the body of Christ, we are not allowed to say: that is another revelation of the body of Christ* [Italics mine, J.G.]. What really serves the formation and preservation of that body is not a product of human wisdom, but can only be learned from the revealed Word of God. Therefore, all proclamations, all organizations, and all ecclesiastical practices have to be measured according to the standard of that Word. And everything that does not accord with it has to be done away in humble obedience.

Prof. Doekes refers here to Ephesians 4:15. By way of binding us in obedience to the truth we build the Church. And he continues:

If we are guided by the data of the Scriptures as they come to the fore in our Confession we can and have to come, "diligently and circumspectly," to a judgment with regard to all kinds of ecclesiastical communities which ask our attention these days; and more than that: they try to legitimate themselves as the congregation of the Lord Jesus Christ and seek contact and ask for recognition.

We cannot avoid determining what our attitude has to be with respect to them. It is not by accident that we meet other Christians who press us to establish our position . . . . Our spiritual isolation does not mean that we hide in this world. Our Confession about the church as the body

of Christ is precisely meant to be a public testimony and a call: Come and go with us in the way of the church, the way of God's Word.

What Prof. Doekes writes here is important. He places the emphasis on the local church and the federation of local churches when he speaks about the church as the body of Christ — that in the first place; and in the second place, the emphasis is on the obedience of the church to the Word, which characterizes the body of Christ. In this connection I would like to come back to what was dealt with in the first *Press Review* in this series about the church. It was about the fact that many do not seek and find the Church or the communion of saints in the local church and a church federation, but precisely beyond the walls of the denomination and outside of that church. Prof. Doekes stated that that was not right. It was not the royal way of the Holy Spirit, the way of obedience to the Word of God: every one who calls upon the Name of the Lord must break with iniquity, and, in that way of obedience, must maintain the unity of the church. Other ways of seeking unity and the communion of saints, across the church walls, he called "by-ways." We may say: "human by-ways."

Therefore I am of the opinion that also we must not seek the communion of saints and the body of Christ elsewhere than in the church which we indicate to be the true church, whereof we are, and believe we must be, members: that church that can be discerned from other communities by the norms of the Bible as confessed by the church. Let us bind our calling to practice that communion of saints to that church, to that body of Christ, which is the true church according to Articles 28 and 29 of our Belgic Confession. Even though we do not deny that we find sincere believers outside our church(es); and even though we can say that they also belong to the true church of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the sense that they also ought to be fully members of that church now and should not separate from it — they should come and join the true church because they actually belong there; and even though that faith in Christ Jesus joins and draws the members toward each other, at least when there is the sincere willingness to go the obedient highway toward true unity in the truth; we should not use this fact as

cornerstone for building the communion of saints on it.

This will have its consequences with respect to all kinds of organizations. There is, for instance, the school matter. I consider it not right to be separate in the matter of church membership on the ground of what one sees as obedience to the norms of God's Word for gathering the church as we confess that in our Creeds, and say, therefore, that the communion of saints must be practiced here in this true church; and then to use the "communion-of-saints" as the basis for cooperation in all kinds of organizations, like, e.g., a (more or less general) Christian education. With respect to the church we say we cannot be one, one communion of saints, because of certain deviations and disobedience; can we, then, in the school matters turn around and be one, one communion of saints, while also there the same people, members of an unfaithful and deviating community, lead and teach?

The reader should keep in mind that I do not judge Canadian Reformed parents who send their children to a (general) Christian institution of learning, because, e.g., there is not an own Canadian Reformed institution of learning available. That is not the point. I do not object to the fact that parents would much rather send their children to a Christian school than to public school. No; I object to the fact that some do this on the basis of the communion of saints that they think they have with others with whom we are not one on the point of church membership. I could also cooperate with my Roman Catholic neighbour in fighting against the legalization of abortion, and against abortion anyway. But I do not cooperate here with him on the basis on the communion of saints. I want to keep the practicing of the communion of saints to the church, and to together listening to the preaching of the gospel and to receiving the sacraments together, and so to that concrete body of the church.

Prof. Doekes continues his article by pointing to the situation in The Netherlands: In the Dutch Reformed Church there is doctrinal freedom, like in the Synodical churches, so that there cannot be cooperation with them, since there is no unity in true faith and in obedience. He also points to the fact that the Netherlands Reformed Churches do not maintain the Reformed Standards, nor a Reformed Church

Order. He speaks about the negative and disappointing attitude of the Christian (Free) Reformed (=Christelijk Gereformeerde) churches which still have not shown from the Word of the LORD why there cannot be unity on the basis of having and maintaining the same confession. Further he mentions the contacts that are made with believers and churches abroad and the communion sought with them. He then writes:

Also here apply the above-mentioned marks of the body of Christ as He has revealed them to us in His Word. Our feeling of amazement and joy about the discovery of a communion which calls itself after

Christ may not prevent us from having the Word of God enlighten and lead us. A communion which, e.g., reverently keeps and maintains the Lord's Supper, but rejects the sacrament of infant baptism which also is given by God, obstructs the growth of the body of Christ. In such a case one cannot confess gratefully: one body, one Spirit. That is also an impediment to taking part in the celebration of the Lord's Supper there. We may not overlook this when we are invited to take our place at the table there. It seems hard and loveless, but for the sake of the truth in Christ we may not create the impression of a unity which really is not there.

Is, herewith, everything said about the body of Christ? Fortunately not! For

His Spirit works not only there where, in obedience of faith, the communion of this body is revealed. The Spirit also works to the outside in order to penetrate in erring communions, and to open eyes and hearts there for the truth of the gospel. He calls unto reformation, unto leaving ways of error, and unto the practicing of the true communion of the church according to the Scriptures. Also with regard to that we may say: the body of Christ grows every day.

That is how Prof. Doekes concludes his series of leading articles. I hope that taking most of them over in *Clarion* has been useful and instructive.

J. GEERTSEMA

## A Letter from the Publisher

The year 1979 is rushing to its end. It has been a year in which we as citizens of this country were able to do our work in peace and prosperity. Despite all the disturbances, politically, socially, or otherwise, we live in a country where we still can enjoy freedom and a great measure of prosperity. Unlike the great majority of mankind who are deprived of these blessings which we take so much for granted, we may enjoy freedom of worship; freedom to educate our children in our "own" schools — a privilege we so often carry as a burden; freedom of the press or printed word; etc.

With this copy you receive the last issue of *Clarion* of the year. Many have contributed to *Clarion* by submitting either articles or advertising. Their efforts enabled us to publish regularly. Although hesitantly, we have decided to maintain our subscription rate at \$19.50 for another year. The increase in advertising revenue and in the number of subscribers in the past year will continue, we hope, in the coming year. A special "thank you" is due to Dr. J. Faber, Rev. W.W.J. VanOene, and Rev. J. Geertsema, who, among many others, faithfully filled the columns of our magazine. We hope that many more will contribute in the future to help improve *Clarion* for the instruction and edification of its readers.

With respect to publishing *Clarion* it has never been our goal to realize a profit, nevertheless it is our aim from year to year to come to a balanced result. Prompt payment of subscriptions and advertisements will reduce administration costs tremendously. We solicit your family and business advertising, for it is a great source of income.

Although still in the infant stage, great strides have been made in publishing literature — a joint undertaking of Paideia Press and Premier Publishing. We have been privileged to send our books to countries such as Bangladesh, The Philippines, Korea, and many other countries in Asia, Africa, and South America; and, of course, to the United States and Western Europe.

May we conclude by wishing each and everyone a happy Christian holiday season and a blessed New Year.

*Walk about Zion, go round about her, number her towers, consider well her ramparts, go through her citadels; that you may tell the next generation that this is God, our God for ever and ever. He will be our guide for ever.*

Psalm 48:12-14

G. KUIK

# Raising Children by the Book\*

"Parenting is probably the most demanding and challenging occupation in modern society, and yet little or no training is provided for it other than that of example." These words form the introduction to a recent newspaper article on the growing popularity of local child care clinics and information centres. These organizations offer advice to anxious parents who feel inadequate and ill-prepared for the difficult task of rearing their children. Many books have also been written by self-styled experts in the field, including pediatricians, child care workers, and psychologists. So uncertain have many parents felt about their own abilities, that an entire generation of children has been raised on the wisdom of the well-known Dr. Benjamin Spock. Each crisis was met by a quick perusal of the well-worn volume *Baby and Child Care*, and the appropriate advice was zealously followed. Many of today's parents, however, have become disillusioned with this method of raising one's children "by the book," but their search for answers continues. Parent Effectiveness Training (P.E.T.), a program pioneered by a Dr. Thomas Gordon, has attracted thousands of parents by promising to reveal the hidden secrets of their difficult task. From all of this it is evident that we have become a child-centred society, as is being so clearly demonstrated in this "International Year of the Child."

No one should be more keenly aware of the difficulty of being a parent than they who wish to raise their children by Biblical standards. Living in a society that has largely abandoned the traditional "Judeo-Christian" values, we are faced with the formidable task of equipping our children to serve their Creator amidst the decadence and apostasy of these modern times. They face life in an age of unprecedented moral and spiritual decay, where abortion, pornography, homosexuality, atheism, and political and social revolution are not only openly advocated, but regarded by many as a natural and healthy state of affairs. The mass media have shrunk our world to a glob-

al village, so that the problems of hunger, poverty, and racism confront us as never before. Without solutions for the suffering around them, and having no hope or faith in the future, many of today's young people have entirely rejected all traditional values. Some, in rebellion, turn to violence and crime. Others withdraw into the escapist world of the drug addict. Still others, and their numbers are increasing in alarming proportions, give the only answer they know to the futility of their existence — they commit suicide.

Faced with the task of preparing their children for life in such a world, it should not surprise us when also many Christian parents feel inadequate and ill-prepared. Is being a good parent a skill that is acquired by observing others, such as parents and friends? Is it something we develop through experience, so that we improve with practice? (This would suggest that the youngest child should turn out much better than the oldest, something which the members of my family would be quick to disprove.) Or is there perhaps a good reason for us to look outside of ourselves, and also attempt to raise our children "by the book"?

For Christian parents the primary sourcebook must, as in all areas of life, undoubtedly be the Bible. It is in this book that we find the basic guidelines for all our relationships, including that of parent and child. In the first place, the Bible reveals that both we and our children are by nature sinful, inclined to evil rather than good. This knowledge should make us more realistic in our expectations, both of ourselves and of them. It also helps us to refute the popular stimulation and environment, the innate goodness of the child will predominate. Rather than being "blank tablets" upon which society in general, and parents in particular, make their impressions, we know that our children are "born and conceived in sin." While the world may continue to blindly believe in the innocence of childhood, there are few parents among us who have not been confronted by the willfulness of even a newborn infant, and

amazed at the speed with which such a small bundle of joy can become a tyrant in the home.

In Hebrews 12 we are confronted with the sobering thought that the parent's relationship with his child should be modeled after God's relationship with man. This implies a great responsibility — one which we can only hope to fulfil through the aid of the Holy Spirit. The task demands not only much fervent prayer for divine assistance, but also great diligence and effort on our part. It is no part-time job, a fact which was long ago pointed out by Moses to the people of Israel in Deuteronomy 6:6, 7. "These words which I command you this day shall be upon your heart, and you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise." From this it is evident that the primary task facing the Christian parent is to educate his children in the knowledge and fear of the Lord. It is urgent that this is begun at a very early age, for Proverbs 22:6 instructs us to "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." A modern saying echoes this sentiment when it states: "As the twig is bent, so the tree inclines." The early formative years are seen as vital in determining the future course of a person's life.

Although it provides the essential framework for the parent-child relationship, the Bible does not always give specific answers for the many problems involved in the everyday aspects of child-rearing. Even though they understand and believe the Biblical injunctions concerning their role, many Christian parents may yet feel bewildered when confronted with the complex demands of parenthood in today's world. It is in this context that I would like to discuss some of the books which may prove helpful in relating Biblical principles to our daily responsibilities as parents. I would like to focus particular attention on the work of two men, namely, Dr. Jay E. Adams and Dr.



James Dobson. Although they differ in style and approach, these two authors possess unusual insight into the problems faced by Christian parents. Keeping in mind that all human endeavour is bound to be far from perfect, it is important that we test also these works as to their reliance on God's Word.

In his book *Christian Living in the Home*, Jay Adams deals first with the primary relationship in the home, which is that between husband and wife. Since our children learn far more from our example than from our words, it is vital that the renewing power of the Holy Spirit be evident first of all in our marriage. We must not demand more of our children than of ourselves, for it will soon become apparent that they follow, not the path we have indicated, but the footsteps we ourselves have made. This matter of example is especially important in teaching our children one of the most vital skills necessary to their future spiritual and mental health, namely, the ability to solve their problems in a Christian way. Children do not need to regard their parents as perfect, but need to see them confessing sin and solving conflicts in a Biblical way. Rather than blaming his sinful behaviour on others, or on circumstances, the Christian must focus on his own reaction to the problems of life. The early years of a child's life offer parents an excellent opportunity to counsel him in this regard, both by word and example.

It is the father who must, according to Adams, accept the primary responsibility for the instruction and discipline of his children. This may sound somewhat unrealistic today, when many mothers undoubtedly spend much more time with the children than do their husbands. Although children are commanded to honour both parents equally, the authority of the mother is none the less delegated to her by the father. As the head of the household, he is held responsible by God for all that happens in his home, even during his absence, and this responsibility extends also to the education of his children by others. Although this principle may be accepted in theory, it is often sadly neglected in practice. Fathers are often too busy providing for the material needs of their children to become personally involved in their education and discipline, whether in the home or at school. By abdicating their position of leadership, they have neglected the words of Ephesians 6:4 which instruct them to



bring up their children "in the discipline and instruction of the Lord."

In regards to discipline, Adams emphasizes that it must be characterized by dignity. A parent's position of authority may never be abused, for it does not depend on superior strength, size, or even wisdom, but is delegated directly from God. As a child matures, he should become increasingly aware that obedience to parents means submission to the will of God. The dignity of discipline can only be maintained when it is exercised according to Biblical standards, and Adams therefore stresses that the extremes of both underdiscipline and overdiscipline must be avoided.

Parents are guilty of underdiscipline when they fail to be clear and consistent in their demands. Children may be "provoked to anger" when the rules are arbitrarily changed according to parental whims and moods. To be consistent is one of the most difficult requirements of parenthood, and once again it may benefit us to pay heed to the example which God gives in dealing with His people. Throughout the Old Testament He made very clear to Israel the laws they were expected to obey. Secondly, both the blessings of obedience and the punishment for disobedience, were fully understood. And lastly, when rebellion against His commands occurred, the predetermined penalty was applied. In this connection, Adams suggests that, with older children, parents may wish to discuss with them beforehand a definite "code of conduct," so that the rules are clearly

established and mutually agreed upon. In this way, parents will avoid the pitfalls of a haphazard approach based on anger and frustration.

Overdiscipline is the opposite side of the coin. In their eagerness to be good parents, many Christians overreact against the permissiveness of the secular world. They equate discipline with punishment, rather than seeing it as a training process which includes both love and authority. Such parents may make too many rules, all of which cannot possibly be enforced, or they inflict penalties which are not appropriate to the infraction involved. For example, the use of the rod, although Biblically sanctioned, is not appropriate in all instances, especially when parental demands are unrealistic in terms of the capabilities and maturity of the child. Adams also reminds us in this regard that Christian discipline should involve rewards as well as punishment. According to Ephesians 6:2, "honour your father and mother" is the first commandment with a promise. By the use of rewards, we should not try to manipulate our children, but should attempt to reflect the blessings which God also promises his people when they live in faith and obedience before him. In this way, the rewarding of good behaviour may be as effective a method of training our children as is the rod.

The second author whose works would like to discuss is Dr. James Dobson. His first, and perhaps most well known book, is *Dare to Discipline*. In it he issues an urgent appeal for disillusioned parents to abandon their

hands-off" policy, and again accept the responsibility of instilling in their children a healthy respect for authority. Although he agrees with Adams on many issues, his training as a psychologist predisposes him to different methods. For example, there is some controversy about his strong emphasis on the use of rewards in discipline. He urges parents to employ the "Law of Reinforcement," which states that "Behaviour which achieves desirable consequences will recur." For instance, if Johnny finds that each time he cleans up his room he receives a candy, he is likely to keep up this "good" behaviour. Dobson advocates the reward system because of its effectiveness in obtaining the desired results, implying hereby that the end justifies the means. But should children obey simply to obtain a material reward, or should parents strive to develop in them a sense of responsibility, as well as an understanding of why they must be obedient? Unlike Adams, Dobson tends to neglect the spiritual development of the child in this regard, especially when he is mature enough to understand the motives for his behaviour.

Criticism of some of Dobson's methods should not obscure the fact that he shows great insight into the difficulties faced by both parents and children. He is not an abstract philosopher, but deals plainly and frankly with the everyday problems of life. He deserves a special sympathy and concern for parents involved in raising two of the most difficult age groups — toddlers and teenagers. During the first years, the basic rules of discipline and behaviour must be formulated. If properly established, such early patterns will hopefully carry the child through until he reaches one of the most difficult stages of his development — the transition from childhood to adulthood. Because these two periods of child-raising seem to present the most tensions and problems, Dobson devotes much of his time, in both this and subsequent books, discussing how they can become a little less turbulent for all concerned.

Dobson feels that the most vital aspect of a child's personality which determines his development in his self-image or self-esteem. In his second book, entitled *Hide and Seek*, he warns parents that, while it is essential that they mold the will of the child, they must take great care to protect the spirit. The will may be as strong as iron,

even in an infant, but the spirit is delicate and easily damaged. In his work as a pediatrician and child psychologist, Dobson has seen scores of children whose characters have been permanently scarred by the abuse or neglect of their parents. The horrors of child abuse are regularly and graphically described in our daily newspapers, and the psychological and emotional damage inflicted on children in this way can well be imagined. Although Christian parents are, hopefully, not guilty of such extremes, it is possible that they do fail to instil in their children a healthy sense of security and self-confidence. This may be due to one or both of the following reasons. 1) Parents may place far too much emphasis on the worldly standards of beauty and intelligence, rather than on the unique importance of each child in the eyes of God. Children who are physically unattractive, or who cannot compete at school, are thus placed at a great disadvantage. 2) Parents may fail to separate the child from his misbehaviour, directing their displeasure at him personally rather than at what he has done wrong. Consequently, the child does not feel the love that should permeate all aspects of discipline, and the resulting insecurity may have long-term effects.

At a very young age, children become adept at building defences, so that their insecurity and feelings of inadequacy will not be obvious to others. Just like adults, they often wear masks in public, in order to protect themselves against criticism or ridicule. Some children withdraw into themselves, while others become loud and belligerent. Dobson feels that both parents and teachers must learn to see life through the child's eyes, in order to recognize these defences for what they are. To say that misbehaviour is always a matter of wilful disobedience is to greatly oversimplify a complex issue. This does not imply that we should excuse such behaviour, but that we should try to understand the reasons for it in order to deal with it effectively.

All children have strengths and weaknesses, and, like adults, they are often much more conscious of the latter than of the former. As parents we must try to see our children objectively, difficult as this may be. Rather than making unfair demands of them, because of what we would like them to be, we must help them develop *their* particular, God-given talents. In this way, children can learn to compensate

for their failures in other areas, while at the same time they obey God's command to develop their talents to His glory.

Dobson's last book, entitled *The Strong-Willed Child*, is not concerned with a special category or group of children, for he feels that the child with a strong will is not the exception, but the rule. After again emphasizing many of the points we have already discussed, he has some special advice for the parents of that most trying child — the troubled teenager. Although many older people like to reminisce about the carefree, happy days of youth, they forget that for many the adolescent years are among the most difficult and turbulent of a person's life. Although Dobson feels that tensions during this period are inevitable, if parents keep in mind the following points, the conflicts during this time can be greatly reduced.

1) The teenager desperately needs the acceptance and security of his family. Peer group pressure is strongest during this time, and there are daily assaults upon his dignity and self-esteem.

2) There must be an open line of communication, so that the problems he faces can be shared. In order to give the necessary guidance, parents must be interested in, and well-informed about, all matters affecting the lives of their children. Rather than shying away from sensitive topics, they must accept their responsibility in preparing their children for the often traumatic physical and emotional changes of puberty. It is not enough to say, "Children today know too much already," for it is often the wrong kind of knowledge from the wrong sources.

3) Parents must be prepared to grant their children progressively more freedom and responsibility as they mature. The aim of all discipline should be self-discipline, so that the young adult is prepared to make his own sensible decisions in life, rather than remaining overly dependent on his parents. Authority should gradually be replaced by equality, although this does not imply a decrease in respect on the side of the children, or of concern and interest on that of the parents. The time for "letting go" may be a frightening one for parents, for they realize the kind of world into which their children are going. It is a comfort at such a time

*Continued on page 579*

# Report on a Marvelous Tour<sup>9</sup>

*The seventh day:  
Around the Sea of Galilee;  
The Golan Heights;  
The Galilee "Panhandle"*

## THE SEA OF GALILEE AND SURROUNDINGS

On the afternoon of the sixth day, Tuesday, the group was kept in suspense once again. Just as on Friday of the week before as we approached the Dead Sea, another surprise was ahead: the first view of the Sea of Galilee. On the way from Nazareth and Kafr Kana once again we were going down through the hills to well below sea level. As in the vicinity of the Dead Sea, a sign indicated the point, but this time the Sea was already close by. "Sea of Galilee" is its official name. You may also say: Lake of Tiberias. Writing for a Canadian reading public, acquainted with their magnificent lakes, some of which belong to the most extensive on earth (the Great Lakes), I had better speak of "Lake of Galilee" I hope you don't hold it against me that I keep speaking of the Sea of Galilee.

Let me provide you with some figures first. The Lake, I mean the surface of the water, is only 208 m below sea level; *only* 208, if compared to the Dead Sea. Its depth is from 42-48 m; its greatest length from the north to the south is 21 km; the breadth where the western and eastern shore are farthest from each other, 12 km; and the surface 144 km<sup>2</sup> (if I am well-informed; the data provided in the various handbooks vary here and there). Our tour guide, Amos, seemed like he was juggling figures when he told the group that — I quote him — "300 million m<sup>3</sup> of water are taken out of the lake annually and sent all through the land as far as the Negev desert over against 1,000,000 m<sup>3</sup> the Lake receives from the Jordan river." In other words, this sweet water reservoir is the main supply of the whole land. The Jordan water project was completed in 1964, and on our tour we have seen a part of the concrete-lined canal carrying the fresh water to Megiddo, from where it is led farther to its destination via pipes.

Following the way from Kana to Tiveriya (= Tiberias), we saw on our



right hand the lovely valley of Jabne'el, one of the valleys of Lower Galilee. Right in front of us Qarn Hattin (Arab name meaning: the Horns of Hattin), a ridge shaped like the profile of animal horns, arose. At the foot of this inactive volcano is the alleged Tomb of Moses' father-in-law, Jethro, and his daughter. Anyway that is what the Druzes say; the Druzes are that peculiar sect that broke away from the Islam and which we were going to meet more often on our way through Galilee. Once a year Druze pilgrims come to visit this spot. The place is also known for the crushing defeat the Crusader army suffered at the hands of Saladdin in 1187 A.D. It heralded the beginning of the end for the Latin Crusader kingdom in Palestine. As we descend through the hilly region, the western suburbs of Tiberias begin to take form, and when we rounded a corner we came face to face with another of those superlatively beautiful views in Israel: the Sea of Galilee.

There it lies, the harp-shaped lake of blue. It is said that the name by which it was known in the Old Testament, "Sea of Kinnereth," is borrowed from its particular form, that of a harp (Hebrew: kinnor), but we cannot tell for certain. Although it may diminish to insignificance if compared to the many large lakes Canada can boast of, I still

would like to ask the reader which of them all is swept by such a great history. No sooner does the traveller realize what area he is entering, than the history of the Gospels rises before his eyes. It is mentioned only three times in the Old Testament — Numbers 34:11; Joshua 12:3; 13:27 — but in the New Testament it is really in the centre of interest. It is here that our Lord Jesus Christ began to preach: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near!"; that He called His first disciples; that He performed His miracles; that He uttered His blessings; the beatitudes, and . . . His "woe" to the cities that would not repent: Chorazin, Bethsaida, Capernaum (Matthew 11:20ff.).

The historic sites along the shore were visited by the two groups in a different order. In my report I take the liberty to mention the cities and towns in a geographic order beginning from the southern-most point. The second group was taken here already on Tuesday afternoon, right after its arrival in Tiberias. Instead of going to the hotel, the bus crossed the city and left it again. Passing Poriyyah we are in the neighbourhood of such very famous kibbutzim as Deganya, named the mother of all kibbutzim, founded in 1909 and birth place of Moshe Dayan. Soon we have reached the point where the Jordan leaves the Lake, at its west-

ern rather than at its southern shore. You can hardly speak of a southern bank, because the Lake tapers down toward the south. The bus had a stop here, and the group left the bus to go across the bridge on foot to enjoy their stay on this unforgettable spot by walking on its two banks. At the other side of the Lake is the country of the Gerasenes (Luke 8:26ff.), the beginning of the Golan heights, once part of Syria, now Israelite occupied territory. Looking southward, just distinguishable is the course of the Yarmuk river, which empties into the Jordan south of the Lake, the boundary between Jordan to the south and Syria and (since the 1967 war) Israel to the north. Someplace at a distance is the point where the three nations meet (*het Drielandenpunt*).

Back from the Jordan the group is now taken by bus through the city to the hotel, after a stop in the centre of town for banking and shopping purposes. The Golan Hotel was the place where both groups stayed for two nights. It seemed to be right at the edge of the sea, but, in reality, if you would go for a walk down there, it would take some time before you reached the beach. Whether close or not so close, the hotel commanded a wonderful outlook, which all of us enjoyed immensely, be it from the window of the hotel room or sitting on the sun deck, staring out over the water even after it had become dark, taking in the scene. Is there any experience comparable to the quiet of a summer evening? This applied the more now that it was enjoyed here.

The Golan hotel, comparable to a high-rise apartment building, towered over the Lake, the other bank of which was clearly visible. For one thing En Gev, the first settlement on the eastern shore, was visible. One of the founding fathers of this settlement was Teddy Kollek, currently Mayor of Jerusalem. During the night the windows had to be kept open a little, because the air conditioning did not work properly, but, consequently, the guests of the hotel were bothered by the mosquitos Tiberias is notorious for. Early in the morning many of us were awakened by the many-voiced choir of the roosters of Tiberias. While some took it ill of them, I learned of one in our group who benefited from it, receiving the opportunity to take surprising pictures of a sunrise over the Sea of Galilee. I've seen his slides.

Let me now tell a little about

Tiberias. At present a city of some 24,000 inhabitants, centre for recreation and water sports, and a well-known health-spa, it was founded in New Testament times by Herod Antipas. In honour of the then-emperor Tiberius, he gave the city the name it has borne ever since. Founded by heathen, it was shunned by the orthodox Jews since the foundations of the city had been laid on a cemetery, in clear contradiction to the law of Numbers 19. Grave sites had been laid open and the bones of the dead exposed. You read no where in the New Testament that our Lord has been in this city. Born under the Law, He kept the Law. He has had his followers here though, for Joanna, the wife of Chuzas, Herod's steward (Luke 8:3), must have lived here. However, later things would take a turn, as Jews who survived the devastation of Jerusalem apparently took a different view. The name of the city was reinterpreted and explained as going back to the Hebrew word *Tabur* = navel. Settling here and overcoming the scruples of the forefathers they turned the place into a centre of Jewish learning and scholarship (*'t Kan verkeren!*). The Jerusalem Talmud was written here between 200 and 400 A.D. The Masoretes lived and worked here from the eighth to the beginning of the eleventh century, to whom we owe so much for the study of Hebrew. They were the men who provided the Hebrew script, written only with consonants so far, with vowel signs in order to safeguard the correct reading for coming centuries. They did an unbelievably painstaking work, by which they really have indebted us to them. It is here that you find the tombs of famous Rabbis, of whom I would like to mention Yohannan Ben Zakkay, founder of the rabbinical academy of Japhne;

Rabbi Akiba and Me'ir Ba'al Hanes, giver of light and worker of miracles as he was believed to be, both of the second century; and of Moses Maimonides, the renowned philosopher and physician of the twelfth century. In the sixteenth century a wave of new immigrants, Jews expelled from Spain, moved into the then-ruined city, permitted to do so by decree of sultan Suleiman the Magnificent — a nice gesture of the magnificent sultan! The destruction was due to a terrible earthquake, one of many this area was afflicted with throughout the centuries. One may consider that wave of immigrants as the forerunner of later Zionism; a kind of Zionists *avant la lettre*, as they say in French.

This leads me to another subject, related to this area, which I cannot pass over in silence: the Hot Springs. For what reason was a city founded right here? All because of the hot springs! Apart from a strange legend linking the place with the name of King Solomon — which we leave for what it is: a legend — Herod Antipas, the founder, was the first to build a bathhouse here, with its lush facilities. He must have known how much the Romans loved them. He did everything to please the Romans. On our tour we passed the Roman bathhouse and saw school children lining up in front of it. The waters of these hot springs are volcanic in origin and naturally heated to 60°C, and are rich in various minerals. Ever since the first bathhouse was built some 2000 years ago a tradition of remedies against rheumatism, infertility in women, and all sorts of ailments, has been established. The curative baths together with the tropical climate of this sub-sea-level lake make Tiberias a popular health spa. We did not visit the baths nor the ancient synagogue with



*Ruins of a synagogue  
in Capernaum.*



*Restaurant on kibbutz  
in Golan Heights.*

its fantastically well-preserved mosaic floors. Tiberias served as point of departure for us for trips in the area, rather than as a goal in itself. Well, the reader will understand, you have to be selective in your visiting; during a tour to a land like Israel, I mean.

You can leave Tiberias by bus and by boat. Both groups have made the boat ride on the Sea of Galilee, the first in the morning on the way to Capernaum, and the second in the afternoon on the way back from Capernaum. It was an experience by itself and a sight we'll long remember. Unimaginable! Unbelievable to be around, and now on, the Lake where we meet our LORD and His disciples so many a time; to see all those scenes from the pages of the Gospel come alive before our eyes. To many it is the most beautiful spot in the land. A cruise by launch across the mirror-like Sea of Galilee is something for which there is no substitute, in order to truly relish the tranquility of this lake. However, from the Gospels we know that this placid body of water can turn into a tempestuous sea. By what is that caused? The reason is that deep in the bowl of this lowest-fresh-water lake in the world, because of the heat above the surface, the air expands and ascends with a depression resulting. Since around the lake the surrounding hills come down to the shores on almost all sides, it is the winds rushing down from the hills that cause the sudden storms. The air from the high atmospheric pressure area is sucked in through the valleys, so to speak, "and a great storm of wind arose and the waves beat into the boat" (Mark 4:37).

During the first tour we shared the boat with another "religious" group from the U.S.A., whose minister sat in

the cabin beside the helmsman, reading passages of the Bible related to this part of the land and then closing with a long prayer. All was spoken into the mike. "Helmsman," I said, but it might have been a helmslady just as well, for during the boat ride we noticed our tour guide, Luba, at the wheel, proving her mastership in many fields. Well, be it a he or a she, the boat was piloted to the Capernaum landing stage without problems. From the boat we had an excellent view of the coastline.

Beginning from Tiberias, going to the north, we first see the remainder of Arbel, where the Jews put up a tough resistance against the Syrians (in the time of the Maccabees), and, a hundred years later, against Herod's army, but this time in vain. Following the coastline our eye discerns the ruins of Magdala, encircled by a stone fence. Mary Magdalene was born here. It was the most important town on the lakeshore before the building of Tiberias. Turning our gaze farther to the north we discover Tabgha, the traditional site where the Lord Jesus performed the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes. A church is built on the site of an old Byzantine church. Of this old church the mosaic floor and a remnant of the original altar remained. Some time on this day, whether in the morning or in the afternoon I cannot remember, our groups could visit the church. We were quite impressed by the mosaic we could see in the semi-dark, of which I would mention the basket with loaves and the fishes, the peacock, the heron, and the goose.

We are already on the northern shore here, for the harp-shaped lake does have a northern shore. Rising above Tabgha is a gently sloping hill,

which also has its links with the life of our Saviour; the Mount of the Beatitudes is the traditional place where He opened His mouth and taught His disciples, saying: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, etc.": the Sermon on the Mount. The round chapel on the top was built by an Italian order of Franciscans in 1937 and financed by the Italian government and its leader: the Duce Mussolini. Our tour guides were not so pleased, as was apparent from the face they pulled in passing on this piece of information. When I, in the most casual sort of way, remarked that Mussolini himself had never persecuted the Jews, Amos retorted: "That may be . . . although I'd say: Tell me who your friend is and I will tell you what kind of a man you are." I could only agree with him. We did not enter the church, we only cast a quick glance through the windows. I wonder whether it would have been worthwhile. Moreover we needed our time for Capernaum.

In New Testament times Capernaum was a thriving town. People living here had mainly two means of subsistence: Fishery and levying of taxes; the latter because one is close to the Jordan River, once the boundary between the tetrarchy of Antipas and that of Philippus (cf. Luke 3:1). It was here that our Lord had His domicile for some time (John 1:39); that His prominent disciples plied their trade; that they were called and made fishers of men; that He entered the synagogue and preached. That was Capernaum in times long ago. Today it is "a graveyard of stones worked by the hand of man," as I read somewhere as a striking characterization. There are still clear traces of the layout and size of a second or third century synagogue, probably erected over the one where the Lord preached. The synagogue is built of white limestone and is for that reason conspicuous amid all the black lavastone used for the other buildings. Amid the ruins, the elaborately carved capitols and friezes of Biblical and other motifs meet the eye. The large rectangular room was divided by columns into nave and aisles. Best known among the finds is a base relief of the Ark of the Covenant in the form of a temple on wheels. That is the representation the Jews of 1600 years ago had about the journey through the wilderness of their ancestors another 1600 years ago in that century. Of the other symbols I mention the seashell, about the background of which our



tour guides had their questions; e.g., Was it originally heathen or Jewish? They had the same question with respect to the Star of David, wondering whether it was originally a star or a combination of two triangles, a superstitious use of an amulet to avert the evil eye; the menorah or candelabrum, etc.

The members of the second tour certainly will remember the meeting with the young man from Jamaica. He was on a holiday trip or pilgrimage, and, accordingly, was dressed very casually, and for that reason refused admission to the holy site of the synagogue. Our group was not so surprised about it, since some of them had experienced the same at the holy sites in Jerusalem, where bare legs and shoulders had to be covered before they were admitted to some church or chapel. This applied to men just as well as to the ladies, and we had learned how to help ourselves in such a situation with a shawl or wrap. Outwardly, they submitted to the rules on the Via Dolorosa and now again in Capernaum. But the young Jamaican wouldn't stand for it. He raised a loud protest, and, standing in the midst of our group, professed his faith along the lines of the Apostles' Creed, winding up by saying that the Lord did not care how someone was dressed and that Jesus loved him in his shorts and knapsack. Leaving this scene, we noticed a little farther to the east, a nice, small Greek Orthodox Church with five cupolas, which we had seen already from the window of our hotel room.

Less than three miles northwest of Capernaum is Chorazin, and eastward, just across the Jordan, is Bethsaida, where Philip came from (John 1:44). Only ruins are left.

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## THE GOLAN HEIGHTS

Later that morning, at around 10 a.m., we crossed the Jordan River, just north of the Lake. A great moment, not only because we could see, close-up, the river we'd heard so much about — the bus had a stop and the passengers went down to the river to try its water by tasting and paddling, enjoying the river landscape and each other's company by splashing or other innocent surprise attacks — but also because we had the opportunity to become acquainted with Trans-Jordan. In the days of the Old Testament this was the territory of the tribe of Manasseh, in the New Testament its name was Gulanitis, at present arabized to Dzjolan or Golan, a part of Syria now occupied by Israel. The land east of the Jordan river rises to a height of over 1000 feet above the valley floor. It is a black basalt area, the western edge of Bashan which stretches farther to the east. The soil is volcanic, and therefore very fertile. In olden times it was renowned for its particular breed of fat cows (Amos 4:1) and sturdy bulls (Psalm 22:12), great oak forests and succulent fruit. Today the southern district of the Golan Heights is covered by wheat, while in the northern district apples are grown.

In this occupied territory the Israelis have established no fewer than twenty-six settlements, fifteen of which are kibbutzim. Asked why the Israelis had done so and whether it was wise — it might create extra problems in the course of negotiations — our guide answered: "Sure! Now our army, encamped here, has something to care for, namely, a civilian population." However, the kibbutzniks themselves know the ropes when it comes to defensive works. Every kibbutz here is surrounded by two fences of barbed

wire with a mined area in between and a watchtower at the gates.

"It will take quite some doing before Israel will cede this territory," Amos went on. "Why? Strategically, it dominates all the land in the Jordan valley below and the narrow strip along the river — what I would call the Galilee Panhandle — for nineteen years the Israeli settlements were sitting ducks for Syrian artillery and snipers. This lasted until June 1967 when the Israeli army and air force hit at the heights. It seemed like a suicide mission; for, in addition to the bunkers, the heights were sown with hundreds of thousands of mines. Under a continuous cannonade the Israelis managed to punch through in two sectors. Casualties were heavy. The Syrians agreed to a cease-fire when the Israelis were less than forty miles from Damascus. The subsequent battles were followed by peace talks . . . which are still going on," the guide told.

The first group saw only a small part of the heights, but enough to get an impression. The bus made a stop, and the group followed Luba on a narrow path leading up to a military monument on top of a hill, commanding a wonderful outlook over the Jordan valley, the waters of Huleh as far as Mount Hermon. For safety reasons we were not permitted to go further that day, so the bus returned, crossed the Jordan via the "Bridge of the Daughters of Jacob" and went to Hazor. As to the name of the bridge, according to a tradition it is named after the daughters of the patriarch who wept on hearing the tidings of their brother Joseph's end, whereas, in the opinion of others, the name is borrowed from a convent of nuns, the daughters of St. James.

The second group went as far as the farthest frontiers of the Heights. The area and its history set Amos off on Syria (*Hij zat op zijn praatstoel*). Of all Israel's enemies it was Syria he had the poorest opinion of. The Syrians were the ones who had had no scruples about torturing Jewish P.O.W.s, some to death, while others, who returned alive, had to be taken to a mental institute. The Syrians are beasts, he said. Yet, we could live in peace with all our Arab neighbours. But for the superpowers, there would be peace. However, it is impossible as long as Russia keeps pumping guns and tanks into Syria. We cannot give up this area! After passing the sign to



Bridge over the Jordan.

Ortal, he remarked: "Do you see in front of you those three inactive volcanoes?" Yes we saw them, clearly recognizable by their typical, cone shape. "Well," Amos continued, "those are the three lousy hills of Henry Kissinger. You have heard of him. In my opinion, he is a brilliant scholar, but a bad diplomat. We should return the three volcanoes to Syria," he said. "What is the fuss all about? It is just three lousy hills! But Israel cannot return them. They are our eyes and our ears. As soon as a plane takes off from Damascus airport we notice it by means of the radar installations we have built here. If it is a war plane heading for, e.g., Haifa, it can reach its target within seven or eight minutes. Now we are able to do something about it."

Meanwhile the bus goes on. We pass the kibbutz El Ram, and now we see the majestic Hermon right in front of us. The Hermon is a spur of the Anti Libanos mountain range. One part of the triple-peaked Mt. Hermon lies in Israeli-administered territory. The highest peak is almost 7000 feet.

Our way now really leads through the high mountains. We pass several Druze villages. I mentioned the Druzes already before in my first article. Now I return to the subject. Although they revere Jethro as a prophet, their actual origin does not lead us farther back than the tenth or eleventh century; more precisely: the time of the mad caliph Hakim of Egypt, who died in 1021. This caliph was proclaimed as an incarnation of Allah by a certain Darazi, after whom the Druzes are named. In the odour of heresy he (or his competitor Hamza) had to flee (from Egypt?) and managed to reach northern Palestine. Departing from the Qor'an, they developed their own canon, which contained a secret doctrine. The Druzes are recognizable by a white head shawl wound around the head and a black cloak. They are loyal subjects of the State of Israel and serve in the Israeli army. Another part of the Druzes is settled in Lebanon and in Syria.

At the foot of Mount Hermon the bus had a stop in a Druze village for some refreshments. We were at a height of 3000 feet here. It was in this vicinity that we saw a volcano with a lake in its crater; the level of this crater lake never gets lower, no matter how much water is drawn from it. It is a geographic riddle not solved so far. During this stop — I forgot the name of the place. Was it Majdel Shams? — many

pictures were taken, now that the opportunity was offered.

From here the bus took us to the sources of the Jordan, through a land of huge mountains, springs, and falls. This is the area where the author of Psalm 42 was once forced to sojourn (cf. verses 6-8 of this Psalm). He did not enjoy what the modern tourist enjoys. "I remember Thee from the land of Jordan and Hermon, from Mount Miz'ar. Deep calls to deep at the thunder of Thy cataracts; all Thy billows and waves have gone over me."

\* \* \*

#### THE GALILEE "PANHANDLE"

Yes, we are entering the Jordan area again. Crossing the border, we leave the Golan Heights and enter Israelite territory. The northernmost part of the land is lifted up like a long finger. That's why I like to speak of the Galilee panhandle. Readers on this continent know what to understand by it, a narrow strip of a state clasped between two other states: like the Texas, Oklahoma, or Idaho panhandle. I think it does not mean so much to citizens of the U.S.A. whether they live there or not, but to the Israelis it is a matter of life or death, to be surrounded by enemy territory. Squeezed into the northernmost tip of the uplifted finger is Metullah, which we did not visit. To go there would have implied a detour made for the sole purpose of seeing a comparatively young town. The first historic site we met on our way was Banais, the Arabic corruption of the old Greek name Paneas, named after and consecrated to the god of the forests, Pan. (Our word "panic" is derived from this name, since people who happened to see the wild deity out in the woods were seized by panic.) Earlier in the Old Testament there must have been a sanctuary here of Ba'al Gad or Ba'al Hermon (Joshua 11:17; Judges 3:3). In Roman times, Herod the tetrarch honoured the Roman emperor and had a shrine built here. To distinguish it from the Caesarea at the Sea of Herod the Great, it was called Caesarea Philippi. It was in this place of idolatrous worship that, face to face with the Canaanite Ba'al, the Greek Pan, and the Roman cult for Caesar, the Lord Jesus was professed by His disciple Peter: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God" (Matthew 16).

Walking over the small bridges spanning the little stream, the visitor

can approach the small cave cut into the face of the high mountain. The spring gushing out of the cave is one of the sources of the Jordan River: Nahr el Banias. The temples for Pan and the Caesar were destroyed by an earthquake. There is a legend about this water: If women drink of it they give birth to twins.

On our way down along the river — whose name "Jordan" also means "the going down," we pass the ancient Tel Dan at our right hand, situated at the second source river of the Jordan: Nahr el Leddan. Here was ancient Laish of Judges 18, and a little farther down the road is the modern kibbutz Dan; then we pass Kibbutz Daphne, and the third source river of the Jordan.

One of the cities whose population knows what a life in the panhandle is all about is Qiryat Shemonah, with 15,000 inhabitants. In the course of its existence, quite a few of its citizens have sacrificed their lives repelling attacks of the Arab enemy. Maybe the reader remembers the Arab terrorist massacre of April 1974, when members of the P.L.O. crossed from Lebanon and murdered eighteen people, including women and children. Each apartment has a concrete bomb-proof shelter, we were told. People must be very courageous here.

We now are taken south through the bottleneck, the Jordan valley. At our right hand are the very high mountains of Upper Galilee; sometimes they look enormous; at our right hand is the water of various springs.

We are going straight on into the former marshlands of what once was Lake Huleh. My readers acquainted with an atlas of the Bible, especially, the Map of Palestine in olden times, know that north of the Lake of Tiberias there is another small lake: Lake Huleh (not the waters of Merom as long has been assumed). It is one of the greatest land reclamation schemes undertaken in Israel. The Jordan River was deepened and straightened so that water could be led into it from the valley. In 1957 the marshes were drained. Finished in 1958, drainage has criss-crossed the landscape with a seven-mile network of canals. That is not the only thing. It is still a paradise of wild geese and ducks and many migratory birds. Malaria, the curse of the marshlands, has disappeared altogether.

H.M. OHMANN

*(To be continued)*

# A Minister Again!

Sunday, October 28, 1979, was a day on which there was much joy among the members of the Church at Houston. For, ever since March of 1967, this congregation had been without its own pastor and teacher. But now that Candidate G.H. Visscher had accepted the call extended to him, he was to be ordained.

In the morning service, his brother, the Rev. J. Visscher of Cloverdale, officiated. He chose as his text the words of Isaiah 62:6, 7:

"Upon your walls, O Jerusalem,  
I have set watchmen;  
all the day and all the night  
they shall never be silent.  
You who put the LORD in  
remembrance,  
take no rest,  
and give him no rest  
until he establishes Jerusalem  
and makes it a praise in the earth."

Rev. J. Visscher has summarized his sermon for us as follows. "This is a special day for you, members of the Church at Houston, and for you, Candidate Visscher. The former sees her long vacancy of over twelve and a half years filled, whereas the latter sees his many years of study crowned. In light of this event I have chosen this portion of Isaiah 62 as my text. The theme is *Through Isaiah the Prophet the Lord Comforts Jerusalem By Promising Her*

*Faithful Office-bearers and a Glorious Future:*

- a) the watchman's proclamation guards Jerusalem's foundation;
- b) the recorder's imploration insures Jerusalem's continuation;
- c) the earth's adoration greets Jerusalem's consummation.

This text is found in one of the most marvelous portions of all of Scripture. The prophet Isaiah proclaimed it in a special time and under special circumstances. Judah is about to go into exile because of her unfaithfulness to the Lord. Isaiah had reprimanded her repeatedly and predicted what her end would be. But then in the latter part of his ministry and his book, he also reveals that God will not totally forsake His people. There will come a time when Judah — the remnant — will return from exile, and then God will give to His people faithful watchmen, faithful office-bearers, to watch over His Church. It will be their task not only to proclaim good tidings but also to warn the people against the dangerous influences of sin. They must watch over the flock and raise the alarm when danger threatens. As such this responsibility still rests with the servants of God, the office-bearers of the Lord, especially the ministers.

Yet they have a task not only to raise the alarm in the face of false doctrine and sinful living; they also have a

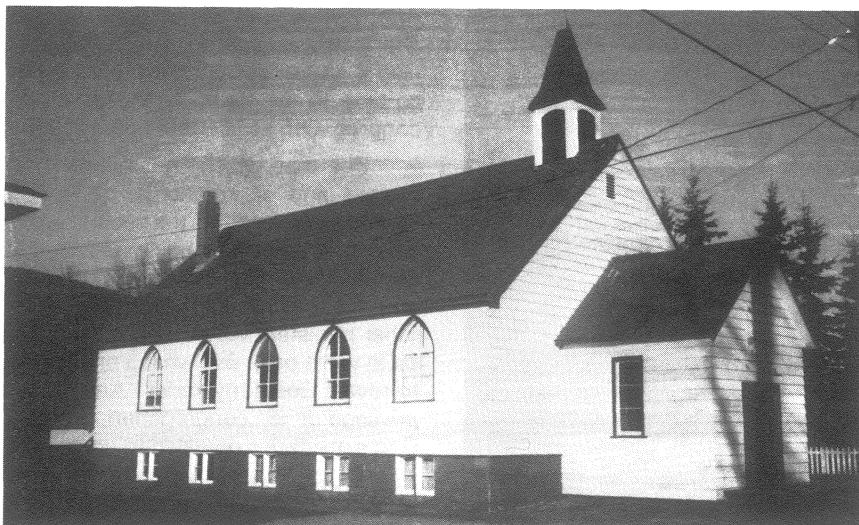
duty to bring the needs of the congregation continually before the Lord. The words of our text "who put the LORD in remembrance" refer to an ancient track of what royal promises have been made, what decisions have been implemented, and then to remind the king of these things.

With reference to our text, it is the office-bearers in the Church who must act as recorders with respect to the Lord. They must keep on reminding Him of His promises and calling for their fulfillment. They must do this in such a persistent way that the Lord is not left to dwell in silence. Silence on the part of God means inactivity. It means that He no longer intervenes on behalf of His people. To prevent this from happening the prayers of God's children must continually ascend to the throne of His grace. Indeed, especially the prayers of the congregation at worship are of great value in this regard. There, the office-bearers have a sacred charge to remind God of His promises and so to keep Him active.

Yes, and this is a constant calling. It must continue until such a time as Jerusalem, the city of God, is established forever and made a praise in the earth. Only then does this calling expire. For then the people of God, the Church of God, the new Jerusalem, will finally have reached her point of consummation.

Nevertheless, at the present time we are not that far yet. No one sings your praises, O Church at Houston. But that day will come. In the meantime, continue to work and pray, sure and certain in the conviction that the Church-gathering work of Jesus Christ continues. As minister and congregation, labour faithfully in anticipation of that day of glorious fulfillment that is coming."

In the afternoon service, Rev. G.H. Visscher chose as the text for his inaugural sermon I Corinthians 4:1, 2: "This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God." The following is his summary of that sermon. "In the early chapters of I Corinthians, we often find the expression "power of God" (1:17, 18, 24; 2:4, 5; 4:20). Yet it is striking that Christianity as a whole does not seem to exert that much power today. For how much impact has the cross of Christ had on the town of Houston? How much influence has it really had among us? Undoubtedly, this is caused by a number of factors. One of the



Canadian Reformed Church of Houston, B.C.

main causes lies in the fact that people have failed to see the offices correctly; that was actually the crux of the problem at Corinth and it is still a great problem today. Therefore it will be beneficial for us to re-examine the whole matter of the offices in the Church. We do so under the following theme: *The Lord Jesus Christ, the only universal Bishop and only Head of the Church, cares for His Church by appointing Ministers of the Word.* They are to be 1. servants of Christ, 2. stewards of the mysteries of God.

Our text should be seen in the context of the preceding chapters. There Paul deals with the tendency of the Corinthians to form parties within the Church. In itself that tendency was not surprising, for in Greek society there were many different schools grouped around different philosophers. And in Jewish society, the leading rabbis had their particular followers. So in the Church at Corinth too, the one preferred Paul, the other Cephas, the next on Apollos; and some even had the nerve to say that they, in particular, were of Jesus Christ.

But Paul attacked that kind of reasoning vehemently when he asked: "Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you . . . ? What then is Apollos? What is Paul?" (1:13-17; 3:5ff.). And Paul contradicts that line of reasoning in our text when he says that these apostles are *servants*. They are not masters, or leaders who are to attract



*The children say it with cards and gifts.*

their own followers, but they are servants of Christ, and they are to direct everyone to Him. They are instruments whereby Christ gathers His Church. So in the Church such party-spirit may never be tolerated. There is only one Master, Who is the only Bishop and only Head of the Church. That is what also underlies the words of 3:21-23 where Paul means to say that you do not belong to Paul, Apollos, or Cephas, but they belong to you; they "all are yours; and you are Christ's; and Christ is God's"!

Moreover, ministers are to be "stewards of the mysteries of God." A

steward was one who was to manage the household affairs of a wealthy landowner. We read of such figures often in Scripture; Joseph had a steward under him while he was in Egypt; Daniel and his friends were committed to the care of a steward while in Babylon; and Christ tells us much about the lives of such stewards in His parables. The fact that ministers are to be such stewards, has many implications for their task. Just as a steward does not feed the household with his own goods, so a minister does not bring his own message. Just as a steward is to take care of the goods entrusted to him, so the minister is to guard the gospel. Just as the steward has an abundance of food which he must dispense to the household, so the minister may not ride his own hobby-horses, but he must declare "the whole counsel of God." And just as the steward will wisely change the diet from time to time, so God's steward ought to preach according to the particular needs of the congregation at a certain time.

But that which the minister dispenses and is in charge of is "the mysteries of God" — the secrets which have been and are being revealed in Christ. That may be nothing new to you; for that has been done by all the other ministers who stood on this pulpit in years past. But what a privilege — to reveal God's mysteries! And what a privilege it is, congregation, to have God's mysteries revealed to you!

And what is required of such stewards? Well, if we had to answer that, the list would surely be long. But the Lord puts only one thing on that



*A pen for one of your many tasks.*



list: "it is required of stewards that they be found *trustworthy*"; that is, faithful. Faithful to Him; Him alone do we strive to please.

May it be that, when the Lord Jesus returns, He finds servants through whom the power of His cross has been manifested! May He find that His stewards have been faithful!"

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On Monday evening, October 29, the congregation, together with many visitors, gathered to welcome the new minister and his wife.

A letter extending congratulations and best wishes was received from the family of Houston's former minister, the late Rev. H.A. Stel. Delegates were present and asked for the floor. Rev. C. van Spronsen spoke on behalf of the classical region, on behalf of the neighbouring Church at Smithers, and he spoke as Houston's former counsellor. Later Rev. D. van der Boom had some witty as well as serious words to say on behalf of the Church at Langley, and Rev. J. Visscher relayed a message on behalf of himself and the Church at Cloverdale. Brother J. van der Linde, a former member of Houston, also expressed his congratulations on behalf of the New Westminster Church.

Brother van der Linde had also brought along a movie which had been made by Br. R. Byzitter, another former member of Houston now belonging to the New Westminster Church. The movie was about the building of the Houston Church some years ago. It was surely enjoyed by all! A brother in the congregation, Hank Visscher, had a slide show with accompanying music to present. The pictures were taken all over the world as well as, best of all, here in the Bulkley Valley. Very well done!

Speeches were also made by representatives of the study societies; and some showed us their musical and poetical skills.

The congregation also expressed their "welcome" to Rev. and Mrs. Visscher by means of gifts. They were presented with many fine plants and with a screen for the fireplace. The young people provided them with two fine budgies and a beautiful lamp. And the young children each presented a gift as they carried a letter of the phrase WELCOME REV & MRS VISSCHER.

In all these ways, we could rejoice in the Lord's goodness to the Church at Houston.

R. FENNEMA



*In the box? Birds!*

## Wij en God

*Kerstfeest*

Wat hebben wij ervan gemaakt?

Een feest van witte kaarsen, dennebomen,  
verloren zonen, die juist die dag komen  
naar huis — want Kerstfeest heeft hun hart geraakt.

Wat hebben wij ervan gemaakt?

Een feest van lekker eten, van geschenken,  
waarop we en passant Uw komst gedenken.  
Maar onze eerste liefde werd verzaakt. —

Wat hebben wij ervan gemaakt?

Een feest van tere liedjes en gebeden,  
van medemenselijkheid, van vrede  
die komt, wanneer de oorlog wordt gestaakt.

Maar hoe hebt U het feest gewild?

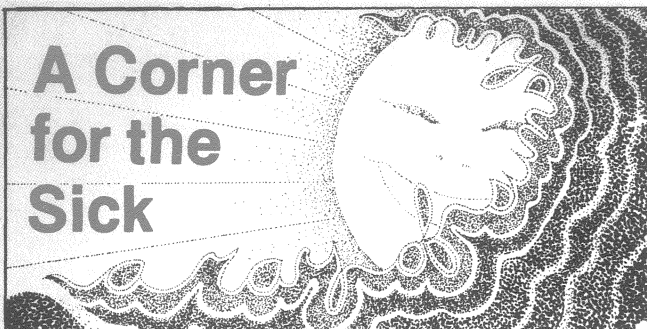
Een feest van boete, van vergeven,  
van liefde, zonder vrees en beven,  
van't vallend kind, door U omhoog getild.

— NEL BENSCHOP

(From: *Een vlinder van God*, published by KOK KAMPEN)



## A Corner for the Sick



And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall its sovereignty be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand for ever.

Daniel 2:44

*In the book of Daniel we may read how God used Daniel and his three friends as instruments in His plan, to reveal the future to King Nebuchadnezzar and to show him His power. God gave Daniel and his friends abilities, ten times better than all the wise men in Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom. This was the Lord's doing, in order to prepare them for their task.*

*When Nebuchadnezzar is given a dream, which none of the wise men is able to interpret, as is acknowledged in verses 10 and 11 of chapter 2, Daniel is given an answer by the Lord. He has summoned his three friends, and together they had pleaded with the Lord to show them His mercy. For they, too, were to be killed together with all the other wise men, as the king had decreed.*

*Daniel was used as an instrument in God's hand, to make known to the king what was to happen in the future. Notice Daniel's reaction! (Please read chapter 2:20-24.) We may read how Daniel told the king his dream, and, when we come to verse 36, we read how Daniel starts by pointing out to King Nebuchadnezzar his responsibility, showing him what great powers the Lord of heaven has given to him. Several kingdoms will come and go, and even if King Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom is superior to all the other kingdoms, it is still perishable and will not last. In his dream the king sees a stone, cut out by no human hand, and it smote the image, meaning all the kingdoms. In verse 44 we read how King Nebuchadnezzar is made to understand that an everlasting kingdom will be set up by the God of heaven, which will never be destroyed, nor shall its sovereignty be left to another people.*

*The king was so impressed by Daniel's wisdom that he gave him high honours and many gifts, making him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon. Does all this honour go to Daniel's head and make him proud? Let us read Daniel 9:20. We will see here that Daniel is aware of his responsibility, and that he is only an instrument in God's hand, used for the upbuilding of the Everlasting Kingdom. In chapter 8 we read how Daniel feels after experiencing another vision. He was sick for*

*some days and appalled by what he had seen and could not understand, but, he went about the king's business. Just doing his daily work, faithfully!*

*Time has progressed since Daniel's time. At the appointed time God gave His only beloved Son. Many of the visions Daniel was allowed to see were fulfilled and are being fulfilled.*

*We, like Daniel, may be appalled by the visions we may read about in the book of Revelation. We do not understand them. The future may scare us, especially when we think about the next generation.*

*Let us then look to Christ. We may notice from recorded history that His kingdom and power was always there, it is today, and it will be for ever. Let us also continue to do our daily work faithfully, entrusting all things to God's hand. He is in control!*

Now thank we all our God  
With hearts, and hands, and voices,  
Who wondrous things has done,  
In whom His world rejoices;  
Who from our mother's arms  
Has blessed us on our way  
With countless gifts of love,  
And still is ours to-day.

O may this bounteous God  
Through all our life be near us,  
With ever joyful hearts  
And blessed peace to cheer us;  
And keep us in His grace,  
And guide us when perplexed,  
And free us from all ills

Of this world in the next. Hymn 65 (Revised)  
Book of Praise

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*Brothers and sisters, we have received a request from a Clarion reader in Australia to send cards to a fifteen-year-old boy who has a heart condition and who also has developed rheumatoid arthritis. It is really hard on him. Brian is a member of the Free Reformed Church of Armadale. He cannot attend church. He has been in the hospital for several months, but now is able to be at home and to go for therapy treatments. Shall we cheer him up by sending him many cards and well wishes? His address is as follows:*

**BRIAN RYSTENBERG**  
118 South-West Hwy.,  
Armadale 6112, W. Australia

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*We have three birthdays coming up, the Lord willing, in January. Please mark them on your calendars.*

**LIZ KONING**  
c/o Michener Centre, Cedarville, Box 5002,  
Red Deer, Alberta

*Liz will be celebrating her 19th birthday on January 2nd. She is very dear to her family but away from home. She is confined to her wheelchair and physically and mentally severely handicapped.*

**GRACE HOMAN**

R.R. 2, St. Ann's, Ontario L0R 1Y0

Grace will be 24 years old on January 17th. She loves organ music and singing and will be thrilled to receive cards.

**JANINE SMID**

R.R. 1, Arkona, Ontario N0M 1B0

Janine will be celebrating her 10th birthday on January 19th. She is a mentally-handicapped girl. She will love to receive many colourful birthday cards.

Shall we make it a very memorable and happy day for them, brothers and sister?

Send your requests to:

**Mrs. J.K. Riemersma**

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

P.S. If there is any change in address or in the condition of our birthday calendar children please notify me, otherwise I will go by the old information which I received.

## League of Canadian Reformed Women's Societies in Ontario

It was a cold morning October 10, 1979, but for the sisters from Ontario no reason to stay home. They came by bus and car to Fergus, where their annual convention was to be held in the Maranatha Canadian Reformed Church. Soon the halls were filled with laughter and greetings, because it is always nice to see each other again.

It was a little after 10 o'clock when the president, Mrs. Riemersma, opened the meeting and asked us to sing Psalm 67:1, 2. Scripture reading was from Ephesians 2. She then led us in prayer. Her word of welcome was from Ephesians 2: "And you He made alive." Every year we may come together in freedom. We are fellow citizens; let us so enjoy this day and go home enriched. Everybody is welcomed, especially guests from The Netherlands and one brother. Announcements are made.

Mrs. Boot from Toronto is chosen as our new secretary. The cause of the collection today is for the Canadian Reformed Association for the Handicapped. The next convention will be held in Hamilton. A thank you letter is received from the Netherlands sister societies for the greetings sent them for their convention in Assen. A few days later we received the following letter:

"We wish you a nice and educational day under God's blessing. It will be for you who live so far apart a happy reunion and stimulus to start your society work again. May the Lord work with His Spirit to enlighten and deepen your study of God's Word, that also through this work His Church be built and He receive from us the glory. Greetings from all sisters in The Netherlands."

A letter with greetings from Mrs. Werkman of London was read; the president announced that cards for three sick ladies will be passed around to be signed. The book stand from Mr. Den Bok is present again in the church hall.

Mrs. Bergsma is then given the opportunity to read the minutes from the last League day held in Chatham. She is thanked by the president for her work also done over the last five years. The hosting societies have a surprise for Mrs. Kuntz, one of the oldest members of the League: she is presented with a nice corsage. The treasury report is given by Mrs. Stieva, and the books are found in good order.

Roll call is held and 351 ladies are present — a full house. A few lunch-time announcements are made. After the singing of the League song Mrs. R. Van Raalte had the opportunity to read her essay on I Corinthians 12: "Varieties of gifts by the same Spirit within one body." She showed us how Paul used to proclaim the gospel also in Corinth, a centre of activity and also a centre of sin. Paul had planted there, and the Lord had given growth, but there was also a falling away. The spiritual gifts were given them for the upbuilding of the church, but by many these gifts were used for their own honour. The members can only exist if they live in the body the church founded in Christ. There are apostles and prophets, but the corner stone is Jesus Christ. Therefore we have to use our gifts in word and deed for the glory of God and the upbuilding of the members. After singing Hymn 46:2, 3, the discussion followed, many questions were brought forward and answered by Mrs. Van Raalte. We sang Hymn 62:1, 2, 3, during which a collection

was held, and the meeting adjourned till after lunch.

Everybody went by bus or car to a big hall just outside Fergus where a delicious lunch was enjoyed by all and not to forget the talking with friends and relatives.

At 1:30 p.m. the meeting was reopened with the singing of our national anthem. The president announced that tapes are available for anybody interested. The collection brought the nice sum of \$456.00.

A note of entertainment was provided by the Fergus Societies: "Women in earlier days and today." They showed us that whatever has changed, the task of the women stayed the same. Two ladies, a guest from Smithers and a member from Grand Rapids, are welcomed.

After Scripture reading from James and the singing of Psalm 42:5 the president gives the pulpit to Rev. Van Oene who speaks to us on "Prayer." We have read his speech in the last *Clarion*; it was a very educational topic, and indeed no "stampot" of old sermons. After we sang Psalm 145:5 a discussion followed. Many sisters used this to ask questions; Rev. Van Oene gave some more explanation. Mrs. Riemersma then has some closing remarks. She thanks all the people involved, the hosting societies. We all know how much work is involved. The organist for today, Mrs. Lodder, Rev. Van Oene, and Mrs. Van Raalte, for their contributions. Mrs. Ludwig then comes forward to thank our president who leads us so well that we all look forward to next year. We sing Psalm 145:1, 3 yet after which Rev. Van Oene closes with prayer, and the president adjourns the meeting. Everybody has time for coffee or tea and some more talking, and then it is time to go home, more strengthened by the many gifts within the one body, Christ our Lord.

The Board, J. Dekker

# Official Opening of the New Building of Immanuel Christian School in Winnipeg

"Immanuel": God with us. This was indeed true on Saturday, October 13, when the school society of Winnipeg could officially celebrate the opening of its new school building.

The evening began with the singing of God Save the Queen. The master of ceremonies, Mr. Gerry Kuik, then asked the audience to sing Psalm 89, stanzas 2, 13, and 20. He read from the Scriptures Psalm 89, verses 1 to 18 and 52. In these verses we were again reminded of the steadfast love of our Father in heaven towards those who walk in the light of His countenance, who exalt in His name and extol His righteousness. Our shield belongs to the Lord. Mr. Kuik led in prayer, thanking the Creator of heaven and earth that we could be together, by His grace, at the opening of Immanuel's new building, a school instituted by parents to educate their children in the fear of the Lord.

In his opening remarks Mr. Kuik welcomed all and invited them to partake in rejoicing before the Lord and not to boast about our own efforts, that after a number of years and many details involved in the planning and construction we could be here now. After many meetings with the community planning committee, BACM, and with the help also of the Transcona-Springfield School Division, a permit was ob-



*Immanuel Christian School.*

tained and the building could proceed. We thank God that He has given the grace, faith, and strength to undertake this project. The word of God is the basis of Immanuel Christian School and by this basis our children will be taught to love the Lord and also our neighbour, thereby training them to become good citizens of this country.

We could then join in singing Hymn 52, stanzas 1, 4, and 5: "Praise to the Lord, the almighty, the King of creation!"

Following singing, the Chairman

of the School Board, Mr. Henry Slaa, was invited to come forward. He stated that this day could be considered the crown upon our prayers and labour. He gave a short history of the school society's journey from thirteen years ago to the present. In 1966 a school society was formed not only to maintain the existing Saturday School, but also to begin plans for our own day school. From old minute books Mr. Slaa told of an important meeting held in December 1971 where it was decided to bring both the church and school facilities together in the new church building. In February 1975 aspects of opening the school were decided, and the opening was set for September 1976. On September 6, 1976, the school was started in the basement of the church building with Grades 4 to 9 with a staff of 2, Mr. L. Hoogerdijk as principal and Mr. Jack Marissen. The next year Grades 1 to 3 were added as well as two more staff members, Mr. P. Groenwold and Mr. J. Harthoorn, and teacher's aid, Miss C. Koster. But, faced with a lack of space, we were thankful to the Lord that it was possible to rent the Blessed Sacrament Parish School, where the school operated until June 1979. At this point gratitude was expressed for the cooperation received from the Transcona-Springfield



*The Principal, Mr. H.J. Ludwig, and guests roaming the hallway.*



School Division and the Manitoba Federation of Independent Schools to come to the establishment of our own school building. After all the careful planning, the building is ready for use, but now it needs prayers, care, and dedication to operate it. The school cannot operate without the responsibilities of parents who seek the best for their children. This can only be done in true sincerity and faith, with confidence for the future. We also ask God to be with the teachers in their difficult task of working as a true extension of the Christian home.

Following Mr. Slaa's address we could enjoy a presentation by the staff and children of the school. Mr. Groenwold in his introductory remarks stated that this was both a solemn and a joyous and festive occasion which we can celebrate only with the guidance of our Heavenly Father.

In the first part of their presentation the children sang and acted out the history of the accommodations of the school. We were informed by their humorous presentation about the first year, the audience was even asked to join in singing.

Mr. H. Ludwig, the principal, delivered an interesting and informative address entitled: "The Year of the Child in the Year of Our Lord." I will not elaborate on the speech, for it is to be found elsewhere in this issue of "Clarion."

The children then came back on stage to sing once more of the solemn event we were witnessing in the history



*A presentation by the Students under the direction of Mr. P. Groenwold and Mr. J. Harthoorn.*

of Immanuel Christian School, following which the audience was asked to join in singing Psalm 66, stanzas 1 and 4.

A number of special guests were introduced to us: Mr. and Mrs. Quail (Mr. Quail is present chairman of the Transcona-Springfield School Division), Mr. and Mrs. John Vaags (Mr. Vaags is former chairman of the school division), Mr. Allen Judd, (representative of the Manitoba Federation of Independent Schools), and Mr. and Mrs. Terry Veenendaal (Mr. Veenendaal is

president of Carman's School Society), and our many guests from Carman.

Mr. Allen Judd spoke a few words of congratulations, stating that the MFIS is happy to have our participation, along with the fifty-nine other independent schools in Manitoba. He congratulated us on our new building and sent us their greetings.

A congratulatory word was also spoken by Mr. Terry Veenendaal, who expressed the wish that the new building become profitable for the children and that its growth will result in the up-building of the church of Jesus Christ.

Mr. Kuik asked us to sing Hymn 62, stanzas 1, 2, and 3, and Dr. C. Poppe ended the program with prayer.

The assembly then moved to the rather cool and windy outdoors, meeting at the front of the new building, where the official ribbon-cutting ceremony took place. The ribbon was held by Mrs. E. Bruinsma and Mrs. L. M. Toet and was cut by Miss Fenny Kuik. As the flag was unfurled and waved in the wind we all sang with pride "O Canada." Everyone was then invited to enter and view the beautiful new school building and enjoy refreshments.

The evening was truly one of rejoicing and thankfulness to our Father in Heaven Who has blessed us and upholds us in His grace. We now have our own building in this free country!

"Yes, Amen, Amen! Blest be God the LORD for ever!"

(Psalm 89:52)



*Enjoying a cup of coffee in the basement of the school.*

# The Year of the Child in the Year of our Lord\*

1979 has been declared the "International Year of the Child" by the United Nations Organization. It is one of many such years proclaimed as a way of focusing international attention on a group or on a certain problem. Usually such events are accompanied by a great deal of publicity and hype—articles in newspapers and magazines, books, conferences galore — not to mention the commercial spin-off.

In many ways it seems rather ironic that so much attention is paid to the child in 1979. Much time and money is being spent at the same time to try and relax the laws concerning abortion in order to get rid of unwanted children. The UN itself has as goal Zero Population Growth. Children are fine, but let's not have too *many* of them. The Biblical injunction, "Happy is the man whose quiver's full of them" has been forgotten. In some countries people are paid not to have them and in others they are fined when they exceed their quota, e.g., in China.

In spite of improved hygiene, medicines, safety measures, schooling, legal protection, etc., it is doubtful whether a child's chances of survival are any better today than they were, say, fifty years ago.

Think only of the many children who have died in Cambodia recently in a war which has decimated the population by the millions; or the many children of Vietnamese refugees who did not make it to safety. What of all those who never saw the light of day because they were cut off from their mothers before they had an opportunity to see? Think of the plight of all those children who have to sleep on the streets of the urban ghettos in Latin America and who are forced to forage through garbage for food. What of all those North American children abused by parents or other adults, not to mention the rising tide of child pornography and the easy availability of drugs? The list could go on and on.

This is what we can witness in the "Year of the Child" which comes on



Miss C. Koster and her students.

the twentieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Children's Rights. This Declaration states that "every child the world over has the right to love, affection, and understanding, to adequate nutrition and medical care, to free education, to full opportunity for play and recreation, to a name and nationality, to special care if handicapped, to be first to receive relief in times of disaster, to learn to be a useful member of society and to develop individual abilities, to be brought up in a spirit of peace and universal brotherhood and to enjoy these rights regardless of race, colour, sex, religion, national, or social origin." These are indeed fine sounding ideals. It's true that, historically, children have not always been well-regarded. Often they were mere economic chattel necessary for survival and self-perpetuation or they were neglected and left abandoned in the streets, to be taken up in foundling homes or orphanages.

It wasn't until about the eigh-

teenth century that children were regarded as anything more than mini-adults. Throughout the years children have been celebrated in song, poetry, art, and music. Also in our language certain sayings reveal something of the humanistic perception of children. For example, "poor child," "innocent child," "childhood is unspoiled" and so on reveal what many think of that period. Many adults show an exaggerated reverence for the child and childhood — perhaps expressing their own longing for a past which they imagined they had.

*Historically*, as societies became more industrialized and less dependent on child labour, the schools grew. Since a connection was perceived between schooling and economic advancement and the road to an easy life, parents put a great deal of emphasis on education. Politicians and educators responded to this by setting up more and bigger schools. Millions of dollars were spent on the construction



of luxurious buildings and providing all the latest in educational technology. Schools for every type of child were set up — the education of the child from a very early age became the business of educational institutions and governments. Parents were quite content to leave the task of education (whatever its definition — we leave that for the moment) up to the so-called “experts,” the teachers.

What have been the results of all this money and attention bestowed upon the school system? Students graduating from high school who are functionally illiterate, crime in the schools, militant teachers’ unions, parents worried because “Johnny can’t read” and so on. The well-equipped schools are being attacked by the very persons who are supposed to benefit from them. We all know of the increasing vandalism in schools *especially*. We have experienced this even with our own building before it was occupied.

Frustrated youngsters are hitting out at the institutions which are, to them, the hated symbols of authority . . . or so many think! What have we done for and to our children? Do we copy the world or do we choose a different path?

We are here tonight to celebrate the opening of our new building. It is a justifiably proud moment for many of you who have worked long and hard to achieve this goal. You are to be congratulated. It would be unwise, however, to think that now we have arrived. The task has just *begun!*

#### A SCHOOL IS MORE THAN A BUILDING

One of our neighbouring schools is called a “community” school. It is perceived as a kind of neighbourhood service centre where the social and cultural needs of the individuals and families living in the area are looked after. In an increasingly depersonalized world there is an attempt to foster a “community spirit” via the schools. But what is the *basis* of such a community? We should rather ask, What is the basis of a *true* community? Is it not that we have a common basis shared by all? We say that the root of our community is Jesus Christ. We are all members of the one body, brothers and sisters in the Lord. And if all men do not confess Christ, *He* cannot serve as the root of a great community. Therefore we will feel ourselves excommunicated from that great community — sometimes

put under the label of the “democratic way of life”!

If I were asked to characterize our school, it would be to call it a “parental” school. For our school is controlled by the parents of the children who attend it, since the school is seen as an extension of the education received at home (as well as in the church). There is a common calling and bond for home, church, and school, dealing with a common denominator: “covenant children.” To quote from a speech given by Rev. Cl. Stam on *Covenant Education*: “In the home basic attitudes and skills will be developed; the church will lead the children into the doctrine of the Scriptures as a credal unity; the school will concentrate on arts and skills necessary so that children can adequately function as God’s children according to their talents and gifts.”

That is what distinguishes our schools from many others. In the eyes of many our efforts would appear to be foolish and vain. What can you expect to do with such a small group and with so few talents? Yes, indeed! “The wisdom of man is the foolishness of God,” the Scriptures say.

How do we perceive the education given at this school? To refer once more to the article of Rev. Stam mentioned previously, in this education we do *not* seek what is *in the child*, but what God has said *to the child*, and

*works* in the child by His Word and Spirit. This is the *essential* difference between Covenantal education and all other education. Our task as teachers is to seek the children’s positive response to the promises and demands of the Covenant and constantly to place the children before both, stressing *God’s* undeserved grace and *their* ongoing responsibility. In other words, in all subjects, whether language, geography or science, the children are to become more and more “men of God,” “complete,” “equipped for every good work.” That is what characterizes the education we may be privileged to give in our new school building.

There was once a Child Who was adored by the wise men. He was a very special child and He profoundly affected the education of today’s child. It is on account of the Child of Bethlehem Who became Man for us and Who renewed us in the covenant of His blood that we call our school “Christian.” In Him and through Him we have our being — Immanuel. *That* we may celebrate here tonight. The Year of the Child, indeed! But only “Anno Domini,” in the Year of our Lord.

H.J. LUDWIG

*\*Speech held at the Official Opening of Immanuel Christian School Building in Winnipeg, Manitoba on Saturday, October 13, 1979, 8:00 p.m.*



*A peek into Mr. J. Harthoorn’s classroom.*

# Graduation at Guido de Brès — Another Milestone



*"And so I would like to thank . . ."*

Thirty-nine students of Guido de Brès High School received their High School Diploma on October 26, 1979. Like those of two previous years, this graduation was a very impressive event, but this time there was something special about it. Most recipients of this diploma had entered our school in Grade 9 when Guido de Brès opened, and could therefore benefit from the total program of a Canadian Reformed High School. And again, a very large percentage of these already had received eight years of education in one of our own elementary schools. Who would ever have believed, say twenty years ago, that this could be done? If we ever had any doubt about the faithfulness of our Lord toward His children, I am sure that this event would quickly erase the thought.

The joyful event started with an excellent buffet dinner for graduates and parents, staff, board members, and guests. The large auditorium was filled to capacity, and in spite of the fact that more showed up than expected, the ladies from Smithville and Lincoln had made sure that there was enough to

eat for us all. Mr. Nienhuis was in charge of the protocol. Mr. Pert surprised us all with a "limerick" for every graduand. I will give you a sample:

Go West, young Jackie, Go West,  
For she heard life there is the best.  
We are certainly glad  
Of the travel she's had  
And is now safely back with the rest.  
There was a young lady named Helen,  
Whose favourite school subject was  
spellin'  
The lessons she'd take  
Caused her to meet up with Jake,  
And that's all the news that I'm tellin'.

Willing hands had converted the dining room into an auditorium, which filled up to capacity at 8:30 for the more formal Commencement Exercises. It was very impressive to watch the graduands' procession, the young ladies in their best (long) dresses, and the young men in a good suit. What a difference in appearance with what our teenagers would like to wear (sometimes). Since the graduation is an official event of the Canadian Reformed High School Association of Ontario, President J. Schutten conducted the opening with reading of Scripture and prayer. We sang Psalm 103:1 and 7.

After a word of welcome he announced that this was the first gradua-

tion where our students had the opportunity to get into our school at Grade 9. He also mentioned that we have our first three graduates in the two-year program, two of whom were present.

Dr. F.G. Oosterhoff, our Principal, addressed the students: "A last and final word with you" . . . dealing with the attitude of a Christian during his sojourn in this world. For the believers there are no truly mundane callings. We may not withdraw from the world. It is all service to God. Our service to Him is not optional. God wants to be acknowledged as King to the end that we may be told by Him: Well done you good and faithful servant, enter into the Glory of your Lord.

The meeting responded to this with the singing of Psalm 8. One of our students Anita Vanderee, played the piano, and did it very well.

The President of the Board proceeded with giving the diplomas to those qualified; they came to the podium when called and lined up after for the many parents who wanted to take a picture of the happy event. It was sad that Anita Koster could not attend due to a serious illness.

Our keynote speaker, Rev. J. Mulder of Toronto, was introduced by Mike DeBoersap, and Margaret Tenhage spoke a word of appreciation



*"The large auditorium was filled to capacity."*

afterwards. The speech was entitled: "Gladly to Serve." He started with an illustration of a road map. What good is it to you if you do not know your position? Find your spot, mark it with a red arrow, and then you go from there. Guido de Brès is behind you now, but don't let the faith the school stands for be left behind you.

We are different from the rest inasmuch as we have learned Christ as children of the Almighty God. This is our goal, as we are a chosen race, God's own people. We should always know our position on the map. The main road, the road signs, God has given us: Love Me, Serve Me, Keep My Name, Honour Me. Then, without having to worry about the details — like small side streets, city streets — we will reach our goal.

Rev. Mulder, like a good minister, gave us some points on which he gave some detail: God is around you, like a circle around a dot. We are His unique possession. He gave us a place of privilege, protection, responsibility, and finally of fellowship.

Rev. Mulder also had a good word for our teachers: You have given much of yourself to these graduates, and may look back with mixed feelings at the four years you have taught them. Once the Lord will judge the work of students and teachers and will look for loyalty. Rev. Mulder's final words were on behalf of the parents: "Let the Light of God shine upon the life of the children of the Lord."

The two-year diplomas were presented to Alice Bosscher and Dan Linde, followed by the proficiency awards for Grade 12:

Drafting and  
Electricity . . . . . Alan Bethlehem  
English . . . . . Wilma Hopman  
French and Latin . . . . . Ron Faber  
  Jake Ruggi

History and  
Geography . . . . . Margaret Tenhage  
Mathematics and  
Science . . . . . Margaret Tenhage  
Shorthand . . . . . Mary Oostdyk  
Typing . . . . . Janice Hartman

The Student Council Award went to Shelley Lof for outstanding service.

The evening would not have been complete without a word from the graduates. They had elected Ron Faber to deliver the Valedictory Address on their behalf. He turned the clock back to the first day of Guido de Brès at the old building on Wentworth Street, which was either too hot or too cold,



"An excellent buffet dinner."

and illustrated the differences between this old school and our beautiful new one. He had seen a lot of changes, also with respect to teachers and policies. "The most important things that have remained through the years of change are the lessons that our parents and teachers have taught us. And so, I would like to thank our parents, who gave their time, effort and money, to send us to Guido. The graduates thank all the teachers who were patient enough to see us through. And all of us thank God, Who allowed us to study the subjects from Math to Phys. Ed. in

a way He prescribed for us. It is through His will that the first four years of Guido have been a success."

We sang from Psalm 107. Rev. Mulder offered the closing prayer. And what had been a beautiful and joyful evening was ended with our National Anthem. There was time left for some socializing, shaking hands with graduates, and meeting old friends from other congregations, and we could leave for home with a thankful heart. The Lord is always faithful.

Arie J. Hordyk

## The Graduating Class of 1979

Paul Aasman  
Alan Bethlehem  
Andy Blokker  
Wilma Bos  
Jim Buist  
Joyce DeBoer  
Mark DeBoer  
Richard Degelder  
Anne Denbok  
Ron Faber  
Janice Hartman  
George Hofsink  
Wilma Hopman

Jackie Hordyk  
Andrew Kampen  
Ed Knegt  
Elaine Knegt  
Anita Koster  
Randy Kuntz  
John Ligtenberg  
Jeannie Linde  
Shelley Lof  
Nick Mans  
Mary Oostdyk  
Carl Oosterhoff  
Nettie Post

Jake Ruggi  
Herma Selles  
Helen Speijer  
Henry Tenhage  
Margaret Tenhage  
Henry Togeretz  
Mark VanAndel  
Phil VanAndel  
Ann Vandembos  
Stan Vandembos  
Greta VanNeutegem  
David VanZandwyk  
John Werkman



# Canadian news medley

Time and again it appears that our medley is read well and that, in fact, it is scanned to see whether any remark could be made about it showing a deficiency. I don't mind that, for whoever writes can only be grateful for the fact that what he writes is being read and discussed at all. That is something which we most certainly can say about our medley. Recently I was even introduced at a meeting as "the medley-man," something which sounded to me somewhat like "the ice cream-man." Seeing that some ice cream can be very welcome, we'll assume that our medley, too, sometimes functions as cool water upon a hot forehead or a cooled drink for a parched tongue.

It drew the attention of a brother that I am not very good at calculating. I readily admit that, and hasten to add that ministers do have a reputation that they are no good when it comes to finances and to business matters; the few among the ministers who are good in those points, on the other hand, run the risk of being accused that they are too worldly and should rather stick to their task proper. You can't win, can you?

In any case, the calculations concern the various classes held in British Columbia. I put that it would be more economical to have the classes (with an e, please. That will please the Rev. VanderBoom) held in the south of the Province. One of the northern brethren comes with the following correction: There are seven Churches in Classis Pacific. 2 Churches x 2 delegates x 5 times go south = 20 delegates. 5 Churches x 2 delegates x 2 times go north = 20 delegates. What's the difference?

I tried it with a calculator, but pushed the wrong buttons. That gave me such strange results that I hastily went back to pencil and paper, but I could not come to a different conclusion than my brother did, and thus have to concede defeat. One point for you!

There is still a sort of P.S. to that letter. It reads, "To which one does Rev. VanOene refer when talking about the Valley: The Bulkley Valley or the Fraser Valley?"

When I speak of The Valley, I am not referring to the Kootenay Valley or the Okanagan Valley or even the Bulkley Valley, but to the Fraser Valley. It may sound somewhat chauvinistic, but to me the Fraser Valley is The Valley. I hope that all our readers can bear with this weakness of mine. Anyway, I have taken away the possibility of misunderstanding and have clarified the term used. Now we can proceed.

We find brother and sister Luiten in Carman celebrating their forty-fifth wedding anniversary on December 7th. I recall that at their fortieth wedding anniversary we were told that our brother was very active in leading the choir. I wonder whether he is still doing that. Anyway: our sincere congratulations on this occasion and many blessings for the future.

Remaining in the personal sphere for a moment, we mention that the Rev. W. Loopstra was admitted to the hospital for back trouble. He is having physiotherapy at the moment and we hope that this may bring the desired relief and improvement. We wish our brother also patience and a good confidence in our faithful God and Father.

Other news from the Hamilton Church is that the societies and the whole congregation were "cordially invited to listen to two speakers and participate in a discussion on *Family Planning*. The two speakers, namely Rev. G. Van Dooren and Dr. L. Loopstra, have agreed to speak on the Biblical and Medical aspects of the topic respectively."

From Lincoln comes a word of advice for the Committees of Administration. The following paragraphs are of interest.

The use of the Church building is free for all Church members of Lincoln, for Weddings, Banquets, etc.

There is, however, a charge for the cleaning of the building afterwards.

Due to the forgetfulness of many of us the consistory has instructed us not to consider the building booked until paid for.

So, avoid being locked out!

That may be something to be considered by other Committees and Consistories, too. There is indeed a large measure of forgetfulness in this respect.

The Lincoln and Smithville Congregations are going to part in the matter of the *Family Post*. That is their weekly bulletin, and at the beginning of the new year they will issue separate bulletins for the two Churches. I do not know what the reasons are for the discontinuation of the cooperation, but I always deplore such a thing. From the Valley (and that means: the Fraser Valley!) I always have good memories concerning the excellent cooperation that we had. There are five Churches in the Valley now, and they still have their combined *Church News*. In this manner each and every Church keeps abreast of the news in the other Churches. For the Church members it is one of the means to remain well-informed about the things going on, the well-being and the illnesses of their friends and relatives who moved away. Why can that not be done everywhere? Then I have in mind especially those Churches which were one at one time, but which became too large with the result that they now are two.

Personally I cannot see why such should not be possible. We had the same here in Fergus and Guelph, and I deplore until the present day that separate bulletins are issued. Combination would also prevent much duplication of messages and work. In practically all bulletins which I received I found the piece sent by some Toronto members concerning the action against abortion. You know what I mean. That means that in even so many Congregations the whole letter was retyped for the bulletin. The same is the case with messages from the Federation of Canadian Reformed University Students. Combined bulletins could contain a column "General News," as is the case in the Valley.

Apparently I am too idealistic, although the examples are there to prove that it is a workable idea. I even think that the Churches in the Valley would not be prepared to terminate their cooperation in this respect. I wished that the cooperation was extended to the *Mission News*.

Enough of that. I've had my say and hope that it meets with much agreement.

We move on to Burlington. Both bulletins (another case where combination would be only beneficial, I think) contain information about the possibility of using Cable T.V. When I quote from only one bulletin, I do not in any way wish to discriminate against the other. "En passant" we insert some information about activity in radio broadcasting.

The "Voice of the Church" is continually expanding, as you perhaps know. Since Fergus-Guelph (and Orangeville, vO) has joined in and London/Watford is on the brink of signing a contract with a radio station in their area, the feeble beginnings of our broadcast committee have changed into a complex set-up. For a smooth operation in all areas the Committee is contemplating to change its format and appoint sub-committees to look after the regular routine. We anticipate that the participating churches will approve our proposals.

As you know, the taping for the forthcoming T.V. program took place last Friday in the Rehoboth Church. We are told that the program usually is aired 7 to 10 days after taping and will try to give you accurate day and time in next week's bulletin.

The bulletin prior to the one I quoted from above tells us the following.

The theme we have chosen is "The Lord . . . Our Shepherd," and the program consists of organ and recorder selections, narration, poetry, children, and congregational singing."

It is beautiful when the opportunities are given to us to speak the Word of God in every possible way and that we have the brothers and sisters who are willing and able to give their time and talents for that work. Personally I have been "toying" with the idea of the purchase of a video-recorder and camera, so that we can record whole services and broadcast them via Cable T.V. Recently I received a letter from a brother dealing with that topic. I hope to pay attention to that in the near future. For the moment let it suffice to bring the point to the fore and to remind each and every one that there may be more possibilities which we are not aware of but which definitely are being used by the enemies of the Lord.

Once in a while I listen to an all-news station, and about a week ago I heard a tape being broadcast via that station which was sent from Russia. It was a tape on which questions concerning Russia were answered. You can well imagine in what vein that was being done. Could we not in the same manner air tapes which answer questions about the Word of God and about the Church of Christ? I only make a suggestion.

Our new Hymn Section has been received by the Churches and in various ways it is being tested. The book with four-part music is available now, and that takes away an obstacle which was in the way of some. In Brampton "it is planned to have an evening of singing and fellowship in the church building on December 9, 1979, at 7:30 p.m." Then the Hymns will be sung and tried out. In by far the most cases this will not cause any difficulty. There are, however, songs in which the rhythm has been changed or where changes have been made in the tune. Don't forget that it is all provisional, and for that reason criticism is welcome. I expect that I'll be able to write a separate piece about our *Book of Praise* and all things involved in revising it, and to do so for the next issue of *Clarion*.

In Fergus we started with the singing of the "Credo" on the first Sunday of the month. The "practice-run" did not go too badly, and thus we dared to set out on this path.

One last piece of information from Ontario.

The Ottawa Consistory heard a report from its chairman "on the bid on the property in Kanata. Due to a misunderstanding with the real estate agent, our bid was unreasonably low. The property was, in fact, priced beyond



## 45th Wedding Anniversary



*On December 7th brother and sister J. Luiten celebrated their 45th Wedding Anniversary. From Enschede, The Netherlands the couple moved to Canada in 1954. Upon arrival they took up residence in Carman, Manitoba, where they still live today. Although many people at their age become residents of a senior citizen's home, the Luitens, who for many years worked in the Boyne Lodge, Carman, were able to continue to live in their own cosy home upon retirement. Both remain active in the life of the Congregation.*



our reach." That is too bad, for suitable properties are not all that numerous.

In one jump we land in Alberta's capital. The matter of to split or not to split still occupies the minds. We wish the brethren wisdom in this respect.

At one of the meetings of the Consistory a complaint was voiced with regard to a certain confidential matter having "leaked out" of the Council meeting. Since the name of the guilty party remained unknown, all the members were reminded of their promise contained in the Subscription Form, i.e., to keep all matters dealt with in Council or Consistory in the strictest confidence, unless they have been published in the Press Release.

At first I frowned when reading that of the "Subscription Form," but then I thought I remembered that Edmonton did



add that provision to their Form of Subscription. If I am right in this, I must say that it is indeed a serious matter when such a confidentiality as required in a form to which one subscribed is violated. That should not happen. Even without a signature it should not be that matters which are to be kept confidential are "revealed" to the one or the other. In by far the most instances such revelation is not to the up-building of the Church.

The Edmonton Consistory also received

a request from our Korea Relief Committee to approve a cessation of financial support to the Hapchon Orphanage in Korea. This is due to the fact that this orphanage is able to receive sufficient support in Korea from government, churches, and other agencies in the country. Permission was granted. The committee will receive a note of gratitude for all the work done in its many years of existence.

That support to that orphanage is discontinued does not mean that the committee is rendered inactive. No, other ways will be sought to show mercy to those far away.

In the Edmonton bulletin the Rev. DeBruin discusses the question whether a Teachers' College would be of benefit to the societies and schools other than those in Ontario. He comes to the conclusion that such benefit would be only indirect. There is one paragraph in his article in which I found incorrect information. That is in the following paragraph.

"Forget about the government grant," you say: That is easy talking for those living in Ontario who have had their high school paid for by the brothers and sisters in Holland. For the isolated congregations in the West the foundation grant is a God-send. Without it, secondary education would be a virtual impossibility.

In those lines I do not find a description of the factual situation.

In the first place: it is not true that the brothers and sisters in The Netherlands paid for the Guido de Brès High School. They did bring together a considerable amount of money, and this paid for by far the largest part of the total cost of the building. That certainly was a tremendous boost, saving a considerable amount on the yearly budget, but it did not cover the total sum needed for the building.

Secondly: the Guido de Brès High School is not the only one in Ontario, as is sometimes thought in other parts of the country and as was also assumed in The Netherlands by some.

The two congregations of Fergus and Guelph maintain a high school which by now numbers twelve grades, and they have never received even one penny either for purchase of a building or for their current expenses. Stating that "that is easy talking for those living in Ontario" ignores completely what has been done and is being done in parts of Ontario other than Hamilton and surroundings. It can, of course be understood as "those living in Ontario who have had their high school paid for," but who would ever read that as a restrictive clause? Someone reading the sentence simply understands it as: "the people in Ontario." Our two combined Congregations number just about 600. Our total School budget for the year 1979/1980 is some \$180,000.00. Without a cent of subsidy or foreign help. Easy talking?

Further I happen to know that Smithers had its twelve grades long before the Province of British Columbia gave any grants. Secondary education did not appear to be a "virtual impossibility" there.

I could mention more cases, but the above will suffice, I think, to show that there is more to the matter than the above quotation would suggest.

Let us end up in the Bulkley Valley for this time. Yes, the Bulkley Valley is indeed a valley and a beautiful one at that. In the shadow of the Hudson Bay Mountains we find a brother who "passed on a large jar with coins as a donation for the Home Mission work. At first count it contained no less than \$140.00." Good for Smithers. Did you check whether there were any rare coins in the pile? However, I do not think that I need to draw the attention of the brethren to that possibility.

This then, beloved readers, is the last medley in 1979, the year of the child, nay, the year of our Lord. Grateful for the attention which you have paid to these pieces, I bid you an "old year's farewell" and express the wish that we may meet again regularly in the year 1980, also the year of our Lord. Thank you for your patience with me which may have been sorely tried at times. If these pieces have contributed even in a small way to the upbuilding of the Church and to a keeping everything in the right way, the many nightly hours spent in writing them will have borne a rich fruit.

The Lord our God bless you all.

vO

## Hebrews 11:8-10

By faith  
Abraham obeyed  
when he was called  
to go out to a place  
which he was to receive  
as an inheritance;  
and he went out,  
not knowing  
where he was to go.

By faith  
he sojourned  
in the land of promise,  
as in a foreign land,  
living in tents  
with Isaac and Jacob,  
heirs with him  
of the promise.

For  
he looked forward  
to a city  
which has foundations,  
whose Builder and Maker  
is God.

# mission news

Since we have informed you of the telegram of the Rev. P.K. Meijer that his visa had been denied, more information of further developments has been received, so that the whole situation can now be seen in a somewhat more favourable light. In a letter dated September 12, 1979, the Rev. Meijer wrote that his visas had not been granted due to "lack of professional qualification! Rev. Meijer writes:

When I asked the same police officer whether I could send in a new request, he said I could, but I had to do it within eight days . . . . At the end of the short conversation he gave me the address of a so-called *despachante*. *Despachantes* are people who try to find the proper channels in the bureaucratic tangle of departments and offices. They can be very helpful. So, we went immediately to the *despachante* (the Kuiks were with us). The *despachante* appeared to be a female lawyer, specialized in cases of foreigners as to passports, visas, etc. This lady gave us new hope by saying that sending proof of graduation in Kampen and a new declaration from the church in São José, stating that the church still wants me as their minister, would solve the problem. The next day she would go to the Police to study the process.

Two days later we went again to Recife to the lawyer with some documents. She made up the text for the new declaration of the church. We also decided to send in the declaration from Council of June, 1978 stating that I am an ordained minister. The lawyer explained that the Federal Police does not like missionaries any longer since many of them are doing things other than preaching. Many of them are not ordained ministers. Besides that, there are many foreigners illegally in the country. So, the government is restricting the number of visas. In our case, however, she said there should be no problem. 99 to 1 that I would get the visa. Let's hope she is right.

The next day, August 30, I went again to the lawyer with the new declaration. She made a declaration by which we authorized her to handle our case before the authorities. This declaration, signed by the notary public in São José, I brought back on September 3. Three days later, when we were in Recife again, we heard that the Police were analyzing the new papers. Up to now we do not know for sure whether the Federal Police in Recife have accepted the documents, which is an important stage in the process. I think they did, because otherwise we would have had word

from the lawyer. She expects an answer from Brasilia within one month . . . .

This was quite a story, brothers. A story with a lesson, namely, to continue our prayers and to continue thanksgiving that we are still here.

(Thus far Rev. Meijer's letter.)

Rev. Boersema's papers requesting permanent status in Brazil were accepted by the Federal Police in Recife, so that they can now stay in the country until word is received on their application. The *despachante* expects that they will hear about those papers within two months. It is encouraging to note that the Rev. J.P.C. Simpelaar, called to serve as missionary in Curitiba by the church at Assen, has received a temporary visa for two years. (When applying from within Brazil you can only apply for a permanent visa.) They expect him in Brazil very soon.

Considering all the news and information we have received we can indeed be very thankful to the Lord that the total picture seems less dark now than it did a month ago. May He bless the work for His Church with the granting of visas.

Weaving through the bureaucratic maze in pursuit of visas and other necessary documents has devoured much of the missionaries' time. This issue of *Mission News* therefore carries no regular reports of their activities from their hand. We do, however, know that our missionaries and their families are doing well and that the work does go on. We also do have a very welcome letter from Mrs. R.F. Boersema.

Rev. and Mrs. Meijer have now moved to Maragogi, although missionary activities there have not really started in earnest as yet. Please note their new address elsewhere in this *Mission News*.

As you can also read in this issue, the work of the Mission Aid continues as well. There is concern, however, about the drop in income received this year as compared with the previous twelve months. Let us (continue to) remember also this important work, not only in prayer, but also in deed.

C. Van Dam  
J. VanderLinde

## ADJUSTING

After receiving first impressions of a new land, one has a certain time of adjusting to some changes in his lifestyle and surroundings. Because I wrote to you before about first impressions, I would like this time to share with you some of our adjustments.

*Adjusting to the weather.* We came here to Brazil in April, which is during the spring in Canada. April is during the fall here in Brazil. The temperatures, however, were like summer in Canada. They still are and it's winter here now. (I've just succeeded in mentioning the names of all four seasons in as many sentences!) The humidity is quite tolerable, though we have yet to experience summer here. Though there have been some rainy days this winter (we have to adjust to no snow), the sun shines brightly most of the time. It is quite different to us to spend a day on the beach in the middle of winter. Indeed, it feels like August to us. We will have to adjust to not seeing the leaves on the trees change colour in the fall and watch as the wind blows them to the ground and, instead, see our skin change colour and watch as the fans blow!

*Adjusting to the people.* The people here in São José are as human as you or I. They have emotions and feelings, though theirs may not be expressed in the same way as ours would. They also have sin, as do you and I. But we also experience God's love, and the salvation we have received is the same salvation we preach in São José.

It is easy to become depressed here by the poverty and to feel sorry for these people. Wouldn't it be nice if they could live in houses like ours, instead of mud huts with dirt floors? Maybe not. They have so little, but maybe we have too much. Because these people are so poor, they live day by day, taking one day at a time. While on the one hand it looks like just a matter of survival, one could call it for our brothers and sisters, a *daily* dependence on God to supply their needs. Maybe we are sometimes too secure in our material goods to depend on God for our daily bread. If you had nothing today, wouldn't you ask God to supply you with what you need for the moment, and not worry too much about 15-20 years from now? We must be thankful for *everything* we receive from the Lord, each day anew. So, we are adjusting to seeing the "poor"

people here and are learning that we do not need many material goods to live daily, as well as to be thankful for *all* things. Wealth is not measured in material, but spiritual, goods. We are rich if we have salvation through the death of our Saviour, and then He promises to supply all our needs, day by day.

As is a North American custom, we always want to rush to get a job done so the next job may be done, etc. The people here seem to move very slowly to us. But, what's all our rush? Is it to make another dollar? Is it because we have to do everything ourselves or the job won't get done right (so we think)? Sometimes the people here could and should go a bit faster. Things go slowly because people are affected by the weather, poor health, much bureaucracy, etc. However, these delays teach us patience. We are, therefore, adjusting to a slower pace of living.

*Adjusting to new eating habits.* Some of the foods are different here. We eat brown beans. We eat *chuchu* (pronounced "shoo shoo") which is the kind of yellow-green squash with a thin peel. By our own choice we eat less meat and get our protein instead from beans, eggs, cheese, etc. We eat less food, in general, because of the heat. We eat our "warm" meal at noontime, whereas we used to do so at night. We cannot yet eat raw vegetables, since they cause us various digestive difficulties. Sometimes we cannot buy what we would like to eat, because it is not available for one reason or another. Some foods which we could get in Canada are not at all available here, and we sort of miss them. The list includes: celery, raspberries, whipped cream,

broccoli, and cheddar cheese, to name a few. But, we still feast compared with those here who do and don't come to our gate begging for food.

*Adjusting to the "wildlife."* Well, if I mentioned before my first impressions of all the animals and insects here, I should take the time to tell you how I am (and we are) adjusting!

It is so easy to find the bad points in something. We need rather to look for the good points. For one thing, it seems that all the animals and insects I've been "bothered" by are really harmless to me. I'm still suspicious of new insects in the house, but try to be reasonable with these guests by telling them that I won't hurt them if they don't hurt me.

As far as the ants go, as soon as the house was cleaned regularly, the ants seemed *almost* to disappear. Becky also had a way of using the ants for her good. If she didn't want some food on her plate, she'd say, "That's okay (not to eat it). The ants will eat it!"

*Adjusting to the distance.* The distance I'm referring to is the distance between here and Canada. Though we are very busy, we are still quite aware that we are far away from home. We anxiously await news of Canada and the U.S. through letters which tell us about what is happening in our families, through church papers and publications which tell us about what is happening in our churches and with their members, and for *Time* magazine to tell us of national news.

Yet, we realize that we're here for a purpose, and we're certainly not alone. We are surrounded by the fellowship of brothers and sisters of like faith and are in the care of our Heavenly Father Who helps us to overcome any loneliness we may have. Some

things are very different here, and it takes time to adjust, but we are trusting in the Lord that He will guide our paths and help us to adjust to whatever He brings our way. He does not forsake us.

We hope that you are all in the same way encouraged to do whatever work God has called you to do and to make adjustments in your lives as they are necessary.

In Christ's service,  
Lucille Boersema

\* \* \*

## MISSION AID NEWS

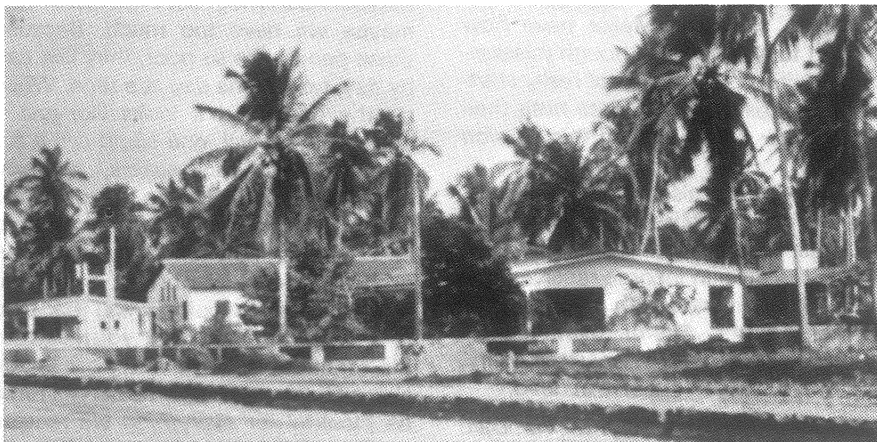
Report No. 81

Report for the month of July, 1979

The month of July already belongs to the past, and it is therefore time to write a few things about all the activities of the mission aid. At the time of this writing we have been in Brazil exactly seven years (8th of August 1972). We are thankful that the Lord has been with us in all these years and that He called us to do this work also on behalf of you who are supporting this work of mercy.

From the committee at Cloverdale we always receive encouraging letters, encouraging in the first place as far as the financial support of the people is concerned. We sometimes feel that we have spent a little too much when the financial statement is made up by the end of the month. We have expressed this feeling several times to the Committee, because we know that our people have more to support than the mission aid. We like to thank all those who contributed to the fact that the Committee in Cloverdale is able to say: Do not worry about it, we are well supported by the churches. We are very thankful that you all are willing to share some of your riches with those who often have none, although we realize that for many of you it probably means to sacrifice something.

We have enjoyed our first holiday in seven years, from the 9th to the 14th of this month. The first day we spent shopping in the city without rushing to get ready in time so that you can be back home before dark, and that was an experience by itself. The remainder of the week, four days, we visited some places in the interior of this state coming back to the apartment at night in Recife. Back home on Saturday we picked up our job again, because the people soon found out that we were



The Mission Post — In the foreground the home of Rev. Boersema; in background the home of the Kuiks; and the church building in between.

back home again. Rev. and Mrs. Meijer lived in our home during that time and are still living in with us until they will move to Maragogi in the near future. At present we are working in a house they have rented for one year. Many things have to be done in order to make it a livable place. I am sure that they themselves will write more about it.

The nursery is in operation again. *Alzeni Maria* came back again right away in order to undergo a worm treatment. She was sent home under the condition to come back right away after our holiday. She is just doing wonderfully now and is a really healthy girl again. Next week she will go home for good.

*Ronildo José* came on the 16th. He is a brother of *Regildo*, a boy who went home last month. Ronildo was skinny and sick when he came here and is presently following a treatment for intestinal parasites. He is doing very well now and will go home in August.

On the same day *Joao Ferreira*, a boy of six years of age came. Joao is a very sick boy. After a few days in the nursery he took a turn for the worse. He is very anemic, and because of this many parts of his body are badly swollen, making it hard for him even to walk properly. We took his case to a doctor in B. for a private consultation and she decided that he needed blood transfusion right away in order to save his life. After a few days he was back in the nursery again. However, after a couple of days he went back to the hospital for another blood transfusion. He is now back with us again, and the swellings are slowly disappearing, making him look very, very skinny. We have now good hopes that he will pull through, although it will take a long time yet before he will be healthy again. He needs good food, but the problem is that he cannot stand it, so we have to go very slow with him. Joao comes from a big family and lives in the town of Abreu in this same municipality. Uncles and aunts, some of them younger than he is, are already going to the Sunday school for years, and, if the Lord spares his life, he will probably go too in the future.

*Resiane Maria* is seventeen days old. She came on the 25th of this month. She came down with diarrhea and vomiting. At present she is doing well and will go home very soon.

On the last day of the month *Antônia Henrique* came back into the nursery. You have read his name be-

## Brazil SÃO JOSÉ DA COROA GRANDE and MARAGOGI

To all our brothers and sisters in Canada and elsewhere: May the Lord bless and keep you throughout the New Year.

A todos os nossos irmãos em Cristo no Canadá e em qualquer outra parte: Que nosso Senhor lhes abençoe e guarde através do Ano Novo.

ALCINA MARIA da CONCEIÇÃO  
 ALBERTINA MARIA da SILVA e família  
 ANTÔNIA MARIA da CONCEIÇÃO  
 AMARO BARROS LINS e  
 MARIA ANGELITA CALACO LINS e família  
 CLARINDA MARIA da CONCEIÇÃO  
 CREMILDA do NASCIMENTO VIEIRA e família  
 ESTER TENÓRIO CAVALCANTE e família  
 JAIME GONCALO dos SANTOS e família  
 JOÃO e ÁRDIS KUIK e família  
 JOAQUIM GOMES da SILVA  
 JOSÉ ANTÔNIO VIEIRA  
 JOSÉ PAULINO GOMES e  
 MARIA JOSÉ da SILVA e família  
 JOSÉ RODRIQUES de BRITO  
 JOSEFA TEREZA VIEIRA  
 MARIA ALVES de SOLIDADE  
 MARIA AURENICE TENÓRIO FERREIRA e família  
 MARIA CASSIMIRO dos SANTOS e família  
 MARIA de PENHA BARBOSA e família  
 NOÊMIA SANTANA da SILVA  
 PASTOR PEDRO e DONA ALIDA MEIJER  
 PASTOR RAFAEL e DONA LUCILLE BOERSEMA  
 e família

fore, because it was only last month that he was released. That can happen, although in his case it is also the mother who is kind of careless. Even with the proper aid it is hard to instruct her to do a good job. This boy also comes from the town of Abreu and the problem there is that this town has no running water yet, so they go to a town-well which everybody is using. Good water is a big problem there, and this means that the water which is available has to be boiled, and I doubt that they always do this. After all, their parents and grandparents never boiled water, so why should they?

So far I have only mentioned the cases we admitted to the nursery. However, there were many others we have assisted in some way or another. People who choose to live in the country-side often live under the most miserable conditions, even though they could do something about it themselves if they had some kind of education. It seems that some of them no longer care about how they live. Such a case we met last week yet. In this case

the father came for help, carrying a seven-year-old boy who was seriously anemic. Working in Maragogi that day, Rev. Boersema and Ardis brought him to the hospital where he died a few days later. We picked up another child of the same family the same day, but also this child died a few days later in the same hospital. Twins of the same family died last year, the parents told us. That makes four within two years. But life is like that, they say, and if that is what the Lord wants, well, what can you do about it? No tears in this case. *Deus é bom!* (God is good). In the meantime, something could have been done, if they had only looked for help in time. We see here something of the tremendous guilt of a church which has baptized them all without any instruction from her side.

I would like to end this report now. We hope that it will reach you in due time.

Receive our sincere greetings and best wishes in the Lord.

Yours in Christ's service,  
 John Kuik



# How Happy...

No Year-End Issue is complete without a long or short review of the year that passed by and disappears all too quickly into the haze of history.

It would show ingratitude towards the LORD if we should not recall at least some of the events that took place, some of the blessings we received, some of the difficulties through which the Lord guided us by His wisdom and power. Are God's children not always exhorted in Scripture to remember the deeds of their God? Are they not always urged not to forget what the God of the covenant did?

During the changing of the watch, at the transition from the old year into the new, people love to look back, and they are eager to look into the future. The former they can do, the latter appears to be impossible every time anew.

But who is there who lets his expectations and his hopes be determined by what did happen in the past? Almost everyone hopes that things will be better, and his "better judgment" tells him that, on the ground of his experiences in the past, his hopes are too high. Did he not have the same hopes last year, and was it not one big disappointment?

We, too, base our expectations for the future on what we received and experienced in the past, for we do not "forget" the blessings of the Lord; that is: we let ourselves be guided by those deeds; they determine our outlook on the future.

Christians certainly look towards the future: it is the future of Christ. But they look in the first place to the past, for what they can expect in the future is based on what they received in the past. Thus we "remember" and look back: that gives us courage to look towards the future, and we do so with confidence.

No one should expect new things in a review of the past year. In such a review we can only repeat that which we heard and read before; we can mention only known facts. We do so, however, in order that the blessings may stand out clearly before our eyes.

Blessings we have received indeed.

Let us recall some of them.

\* \* \* \* \*

Although in some instances Worship Services had to be cancelled, either because of snow and cold or because of flooding, there was no major disruption, but we could come together to listen to God's Word, to sing praises unto His Name, to call upon Him, to give Christian alms, without having to be afraid of persecution or harassment. What that means is something we realize when we hear or read about the hatred which Christians in other parts of the world often have to endure. Sometimes we wonder how long we shall keep this privilege, and we wonder about that especially when we see the growth of iniquity and the increase of sin, the unashamed display of perversity. We do not wonder why God can tolerate all the *misery*; we rather wonder how long the Lord will still tolerate all the *iniquity*.

In some regions reading services were the exception, in

other parts they are almost the rule. Classis Ontario South will soon have no vacancy left. I do not know how long ago that could be said. Or was there always at least one vacancy? The fruits of the work at our College are thus seen to the joy of the Churches: one of the three Candidates who completed their course of study at our College this year was ordained as Minister of the Gospel in the Watford Church: Candidate P.K.A. De Boer, and his arrival filled the last-existing vacancy in Ontario South.

Classis Ontario North, on the other hand, saw another vacancy created when the Rev. Cl. Stam went to Smithville from Burlington-West. The latter Church, on the other hand extended a call to the Rev. W. Pouwelse of Bergentheim, The Netherlands, who accepted the call. When he has arrived and has been installed in his service in Burlington, there will still be a vacancy in that Church, for the decision was made to call a second minister. Together with the vacancies at Brampton, Guelph, and Ottawa, that makes four vacancies in Ontario North. Help from the Professors at our College and from the minister-emeritus of Burlington-East, the Rev. G. Van Dooren, alleviates the problem of pulpit supply somewhat. Still the situation remains far from ideal.

The other ministers-emeriti in Ontario had some health problems lately. The Rev. Roukema was experiencing a setback in his health, the Rev. Loopstra was even hospitalized with back problems, and the Rev. Scholten saw himself compelled to resign as lecturer at our College because of ill health. Even though those brethren are not able to conduct services or to be otherwise engaged in the work in the Congregations, they do keep abreast of the news, and, by their prayers and interest, by their advice and discussions with others, they still contribute towards the upbuilding of the body of Christ.

Some of the other Ontario ministers, too, were under doctor's care for some time. Rev. Stam was hospitalized for a brief period of time, and others had to rest for a while at home. Yet they are all back in service and do not seem to have serious health problems.

Going to Manitoba, we mention that the Church at Winnipeg will also see the vacancy filled when Candidate B.J. Berends is ordained as their minister. We hope that brother Berends may receive strength and wisdom to serve the Winnipeg Church for many years to its upbuilding, for this Church has gone through severe trials during the years since its institution. When the Rev. De Bruin left for Edmonton, Winnipeg was left vacant again, and is therefore very happy that they received another Minister of the Word out of the Lord's hand.

In Edmonton another vacancy was created by the decision to split the Congregation, for the time being into two wards, with the intention that they will become two autonomous Churches. The vacancy is there already. And Barrhead and Neerlandia are still vacant, too. That makes for three vacancies in the classical region of Alberta/Manitoba.

British Columbia, on the other hand, has no vacancy at



all, as is the case with Ontario-South. Candidate G.H. Visscher was ordained as minister of the Church at Houston, and the Rev. C. Van Dam exchanged the Brampton parsonage for the one which the New Westminster Church built for its new minister.

One of the ministers in the Fraser Valley, the Rev. D. VanderBoom, celebrated the completion of twenty-five years in the ministry, a fact that was gratefully remembered by the Langley Congregation in a festive assembly.

Now that we are speaking of ministers anyway, we may as well mention our Theological College, our Seminary, from which three Bachelors of Divinity emerged this year who all have found a place in the midst of the Churches. That is a great blessing, and we are grateful to the Lord that He has enabled the Faculty and students to continue the work at this institution. In order that the work might not be interrupted, the Rev. VanOene was appointed temporarily to take care of the Department of Ecclesiology. Two new students were admitted in September, so that the total number of students at the moment is five. We do know of others who are preparing themselves for admission; and thus the future does not look bleak, but somewhat brighter than it did a few years ago.

For their own development the ministers organized some workshops. Those in the West came together in Calgary, and it appears to have been so successful that they are already looking forward to the next get-together.

The Ontario ministers have their workshops in the College. The advantage is the presence of the Faculty. It has become customary that one member of the Faculty lectures on those days, and that the second lecture is given by a non-Faculty member. It is a pleasure to be able to sit down and listen, drinking in and being taught instead of having to give and to teach.

This past year our Theological Seminary was brought closer to the brotherhood in the West, since the Convocation was held in the Fraser Valley. The reasons for this were that two of the three Graduates come from the Fraser Valley and that it was deemed good to celebrate the tenth anniversary of this Institute for Higher Learning with the brothers and sisters in the West. The benefits of that decision clearly outweighed the extra costs by far.

When we speak of ministers, we do not forget those who have been sent out to preach the Gospel to those far away.

Rev. Boersema and family left for Brazil, where the Rev. and Mrs. Meijer had gone earlier. Both missionaries are still waiting and working for their permanent visas. Meanwhile they do preach the Gospel, and the work goes on. The Kuiks still take faithful care of the needs of the people on the Brazilian mission field; the Vegters from Irian Jaya were over and spent part of their furlough in Canada, but are back in the field, much to the joy of the Rev. Versteeg and his family.

\* \* \* \* \*

From preachers to preaching-places is only a small step. Thus we proceed to the building activities in the midst of the Churches.

In Langley definite plans are being discussed and drawn up for a Church building. Some sort of cooperation exists between the Church, the High School Society, and the Resthome Society.

New Westminster built a new parsonage to provide shelter for the Van Dam family; Houston purchased a new parsonage for its minister; Smithville sold Manse number 2, but had to purchase another one now that the Rev. Stam

moved to that Church from Burlington West. Watford purchased a house for its new minister.

Abbotsford decided to go ahead with the purchase of a pipe organ for its auditorium; Cloverdale built an annex to the Church building, an annex which is partially financed by the School Society; for the use of this annex an arrangement has been made with the William of Orange School. Chilliwack had intentions of purchasing an existing Church building, but could not yet succeed in its undertakings. Carman is talking about a new Church building and has made quite some progress in this respect, whereas Ottawa tried a few times to acquire some property but did not get its wish.

\* \* \* \* \*

As for the activities in the midst of the Churches: the work of mission (both foreign and home) had the almost-constant attention of the Consistories and Congregations. Hamilton received permission to undertake mission work on its own, in cooperation with the Churches of Ontario South. Hamilton decided to seek a mission field in Brazil.

Burlington-East, on the other hand, decided to support Toronto again in its mission work, a work which is now practically the work of the Churches in Ontario North.

As for the spreading of the Gospel round about us, the work of broadcasting speeches grows. In the Fraser Valley the 12½-year jubilee was celebrated; in Ontario the work was expanded by adding more stations to the group over which the programs are aired.

The possibilities which Cable T.V. offers have also been explored and are being used.

Another form of contact with a view to spreading the Gospel has been found in Smithers, where special ties are being sought with young people of our native population, the Indians.

In this connection we may also mention the work of mercy, done for people far away. The support which was given to Korea has diminished to a trickle, if it has not stopped altogether yet. Help to orphanages and children's homes in other parts of the world has been continued and even expanded. Add to that the help which is given to refugees from Southeast Asia, and we can see that the mercies which God has shown to us are not hoarded as if they were our private possession which we are allowed to limit to ourselves, but that they are shown to others. We hope that those who are being helped in this manner may discover the basic reason behind our actions, and may also learn to know the Lord Jesus Christ.

\* \* \* \* \*

As for our schools, they are expanding without much fanfare and advertisement, both in number and in extent. One new school was opened this year: the Credo School of Brampton/Toronto. Other schools added grades and thus came closer to their ideal coverage or even reached the limit they had set for themselves.

Our teachers had their curriculum days, their study sessions (not a camouflaged strike!), and their conferences. The latter was the case in the West for the first time. A Teacher's Convention was held in Coaldale, and the reports confirm that it was a very useful experience — a fact which calls for a repetition of the event.

There are not many places left where no Canadian Reformed School is found. Therein, too, we see the rich blessing of the Lord.

Our Young People's Societies had their study weekends, our Men's and Women's Societies had their League Days. Sometimes such a League Day involved only two societies, as was the case with the one in Winnipeg; sometimes there were four or five societies involved, as was the case with the League Day in Calgary; sometimes a whole province was upset when wives and mothers left their homes and families behind and travelled to a central meeting-place, as was the case in Ontario where they came to Fergus, or in the Fraser Valley where they met in Chilliwack. The men did things in a somewhat more modest way, for I recall having read of only one League Day, the one in Ontario, held in Guelph.

\* \* \* \* \*

Attention was given not only to those of youthful age or of middle age; the elderly also received due attention. Rest Home Associations are still active in their discussions and search; until now, however, no resthome has been built either in the east or in the west.

Associations for the Handicapped are equally active; realizing that especially this work is in the beginning stages, we cannot expect too much as yet. Let it suffice that we mention it.

Political associations display their activity in conducting meetings, in organizing campaigns to urge upon the Members of Parliament the God-given obligation to protect life, also the life of the as-yet-not-born infants, and in supporting candidates for various offices.

Contact with others was found in Toronto, where the Consistory met with the Consistory of the Willowdale Christian Reformed Church to discuss the differences which exist between them and us. Hamilton decided to take up contact with the Free Reformed Church in that place; in the Fraser Valley discussions took place between the Consistories of the Churches at Cloverdale and Langley and the Consistories of the Free Reformed Churches at Aldergrove and Pitt Meadows.

Little-known is the contact which we in Fergus have been having for some time now with the members of the Christian Reformed Church who have broken with the latter because they can no longer take the responsibility for the deviation from the Scriptural path which they see within the Christian Reformed Church. It is hoped that this contact may strengthen the brothers and sisters and that from this humble beginning a rich blessing may be received. One can never "plan" a reformation; one can only follow from step to step where the Lord leads and guides.

\* \* \* \* \*

We realize that the above review is very incomplete. There are hundreds of things that could have been mentioned. The above has been written in order that we should remember with gratitude all the blessings which the Lord our God has bestowed upon us, and that we should continue, having good confidence in Him Who in the past has bestowed upon us so many undeserved benefits for the sake of Christ His Son.

To say it with the words of the rhymed Psalm 144: "May all those blessings to Thy praise incite us."

Or, to say it with the words of the unrhymed Psalm 144:

"Happy the people to whom such blessings fall!  
Happy the people whose God is the LORD!"

v0

## Hebrews 11:13-16

These all died  
in faith,  
not having received  
what was promised,  
but having seen it  
and greeted it  
from afar,  
and having acknowledged  
that they were strangers  
and exiles  
on the earth.

For people  
who speak thus  
make it clear  
that they are seeking  
a homeland.

If they had been thinking  
of that land  
from which  
they had gone out,  
they would have had  
opportunity  
to return.

But  
as it is,  
they desire  
a better country,  
that is,  
a heavenly one.  
Therefore  
God is not ashamed  
to be called  
their God,  
for He has prepared  
for them  
a city.

## Letters-to-the-Editor

Esteemed Brother,

In the October 6th "News Medley" you comment on the handshake "trial" in New Westminster. You write: "Until this present day I have not been able to discover the actual meaning of such a handshake."

This somewhat amazes me.

I remember that, many years ago, when I still was an inquisitive lad, I asked my father about this meaning. And the explanation which I received from him was, as I remember it, basically the same as the one which I read years later in Rev. G. Van Rongen's book *Zijn schone dienst*.

Now when one of your colleagues devotes an entire chapter of a book on this very subject, then I don't think that it is proper for you to write that you have not been able to discover the actual meaning. You certainly should have been able to "discover" the book and the chapter mentioned above.

You may of course not agree with Rev. Van Rongen on this "issue" but that is a different matter from not having been able to discover what apparently in the churches of the Reformation has been generally understood to be the meaning.

During my "sojournings" on three continents I was a member of a considerable number of Reformed churches. I have also been visiting many worship services in sister churches. Only in a few places in Canada did I notice that the handshake was a problem. Which always struck me as strange, to say the least. It always gave me the impression that the minister (or elder) was ascending the pulpit on the strength of his own authority, instead of by a "given" authority, symbolized by a "given" handshake. If only that impression can be avoided, I would think that this handshake serves a useful purpose.

Even in Canada!

All the same; what seems to be the difficulty with the explanation given by Rev. Van Rongen?

With brotherly regards,  
Len Van Zandwijk

### COMMENT

The topic is not new. I do not know whether brother Van Zandwyk saves his copies of *Clarion*. If he does, he can find some remarks on this very

same point on page 307 of Volume 25 (September 4, 1976).

I am certainly aware that the Rev. G. Van Rongen wrote about the handshake. I also know that he "devotes an entire chapter of a book on this very subject," as brother Van Zandwyk writes. However, that "entire chapter" covers only three and one-third pages and that shows that not all that much can be said about it.

Besides, the above-quoted book (*Zijn schone dienst*) does not give any historical *proof* for the statements made or for the explanation given. The author himself writes, "We cannot say when this custom came into existence. From the following lines it will become evident that it was known already before the Secession. Why it was introduced is an open question."

When it is an "open question" why a certain action or gesture or custom was introduced, it is clear to anyone that it is also an "open question" what that gesture or action or custom means. If it is known what some action means, we can also draw conclusions as to why it was introduced at that specific moment or in that particular period of history; and when, on the other hand, we know why a certain action was introduced, we also would be enlightened as far as the meaning is concerned.

Now we know neither "the reason why" nor "the meaning of."

Conclusion: "Your guess is as good as mine, and my guess is as good as yours."

I do object to the thought that the minister is "authorized" (symbolically) every time anew; and I deny emphatically that the minister goes on the pulpit and does there the work of a minister "by order" or "by the direction of the Consistory."

I say this because brother Van Zandwyk closes his letter with the question, "All the same, what seems to be the difficulty with the explanation given by Rev. Van Rongen?"

Neither a minister nor an elder nor a deacon does his specific work "by order of the Consistory." These brethren have received their office *via* and *through* the Church of Christ, as it is "represented by" the Consistory (Form for the Ordination), but they receive their charge from Christ and do

their work only by order of *Him*. Neither ministers who preach and teach, nor elders who bring family visits, do so "by order of the Consistory," something which, allegedly, is expressed in a symbolic manner on Sundays by the handshake. Why then not a "handshake" when elders bring family visits?

The only time I do something "by order of the Consistory" is when the Consistory sends me to a brother or sister or to a family to convey a message from the Consistory and charges me to do so in person. As for the rest, I have not been, neither am I being, authorized by the Consistory in any way. My authorization (like that of each and every office-bearer) comes from Christ, not from any Consistory.

I can well imagine that in the days of the Reformation, with persecutions raging and people fleeing left and right, a handshake would make sense, viz. to make clear to the Congregation that this unknown preacher was indeed no intruder, no imposter, but a legitimate minister of the Gospel. This stranger was then not "authorized" but only *identified* as a true and faithful servant of the Lord. If anyone should wish to use the word "authorization" in this connection, he should use it only in this sense, that that unknown preacher was shown to be authorized to conduct this particular service in this specific Congregation. It will be clear that such would not apply to the local minister.

From the above it will be clear that I disagree with the explanation which the Rev. Van Rongen gives in his above-quoted book.

From that book it is also clear that the Rev. Van Rongen himself, in spite of his investigations in this field, "has not been able to discover the actual meaning" either. He does not tell us what it meant originally and admits frankly that he cannot do so either, because he doesn't know, has not been able to find it out. It is an "open question," he says.

Thus I think that I was not making an improper statement at all when writing that, as little as the Rev. Van Rongen was able to do, so I have not been able to discover the actual meaning.

If someone can give more light, I shall be grateful for such elucidation.

However, before anyone climbs behind the typewriter to give his opinion, let me mention a few things which will not help at all with finding

out what the original, actual meaning of the handshake is.

First: if someone tells us what he thinks about it, or what so-and-so says to be the meaning of the gesture.

Second: if someone tells us what they did then and there in the course of history.

The only thing that will be helpful is: When we hear from the works of those who lived in the days when the custom was introduced, or who lived shortly after its introduction, and who can tell us *when* and *why* it was introduced.

As long as we remain in the dark regarding those points, any (later) "explanation" is doubtful in scholarly respect, since it is not historically founded, is *qua* explanation subject to justified criticism, and is not "binding" on anyone for his understanding of the "handshake."

vO

\* \* \*

Dear Mr. Editor,

May I have space for a brief (belated) response to the "Meditation" by Rev. M.C. Werkman in the July 19 issue of your magazine?

I am really kind of surprised, Mr. Editor, that you continue to allow writing of this kind in your magazine. What Mr. Werkman is saying is that it's only possible to have the communion of saints when that communion is seen and *visibly* expressed with members of the same church. And those who do not belong to the visible communion of that "true church" are not brothers. The implication is quite clear.

First of all, I would like to ask Mr. Werkman how it is possible, on that basis, for him to have the communion of saints with brothers and sisters of his sister churches in The Netherlands and Australia?

I would further like to ask him what the Heidelberg Catechism means when it says "that believers, *all and everyone*, as members of Christ . . . must know themselves bound to employ their gifts readily and cheerfully for the advantage and salvation of other members"? That is the explanation of "the communion of saints." Is that possible only with those believers whom we actually see, and who are members of our particular church? And if, as Mr. Werkman seems to imply, there are "true believers" in other churches,

are these "true believers" not part of the communion of saints?

I not only do not understand this kind of talk, but it is also patently unbiblical. The Belgic Confession says that the church is composed of all true, Christian believers who expect their salvation in Jesus Christ, and that this church "is not confined, bound, or limited to a certain place or to certain persons, but is spread and dispersed over the whole world." But they are still joined by the power of faith in one Spirit. That is the communion of saints.

When the Psalmist expresses the beauty of brothers dwelling together in unity, then he implies that this does not always take place. When our Lord prays for the unity of His Church, then He realizes that such unity is not yet complete. And when Paul urges us to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, then the reason for that admonition is that believers don't always do that. We wouldn't have to pray and work for unity if that unity already exists. And so it's possible (and actually happens) that believers belong to many different manifestations of the body of Christ, but are still one in Christ, and can still have communion of saints together, albeit in an imperfect way.

I sincerely hope that Mr. Werkman avoids writing which borders on sectarianism in the future.

Sincerely,  
J. TUININGA  
Lethbridge, Alta.

REPLY:

I point out that *all* believers are members of Christ and are partakers of Him and of all His treasures and gifts. Then I pointed to and elaborated on the second aspect that all believers must also be members of each other! Everyone, every believer is bound by the Lord to join himself to the true church of the Lord. Communion of Saints is not something that hangs up in the air. It must be visibly expressed. Why does Psalm 133 start with "behold"? Because there is something to see! The first question is therefore not: how can I have this communion with brothers and sisters of sister churches far away, but: how do I practice this communion with the brothers and sisters here where I live. Communion of saints is practiced visibly first of all in the local church. Then also in a wider sense with the brothers and sisters in the same country. And if possible we will also seek that same communion with

brothers and sisters in different lands. Is all of that then visible? Of course not. Most of us will never visibly have that communion with thousands of brothers and sisters, for many, practical reasons. But we have and acknowledge the same communion in the unity of the true faith with others across the borders. That means also concretely that when I make a trip to Australia, I take an attestation along from my local consistory and celebrate the Lord's Holy Supper visibly in the communion of saints over there. That is no problem.

The problem arises when other true believers do not want to join the communion of saints in a visible way in the Church of Christ. Are they not my brothers and sisters? I say: if we are brothers, why then do we not "dwell together as brothers?" Why is it always so much more important to talk about and praise the communion of saints in various different ways *outside* the Church while the *visible* communion around the Table of the Lord is ignored or minimized? Is that sectarian? I would like to ask: who were sectarian when we came to this country as Reformed brothers and sisters but were not welcome in the Christian Reformed Church, except on the condition that we be silent about the communion of saints in, for example, The Netherlands? Rev. Tuininga's church chose to have communion of saints with the churches in The Netherlands that have become unfaithful to the Word of God and the Confessions of the Church. Were we and are we sectarian when we seek the communion of saints in the unity of faith? Apparently the communion of saints with false teachers like Dr. Kuitert to mention only one, is more important to the Christian Reformed Church than with the Canadian Reformed Churches. Rev. Tuininga writes that the Belgic Confession says that the church is "composed of all true, Christian believers . . ." That is not what our Belgic Confession says. We confess in Article 27 a church that is "a holy congregation of true Christian believers . . ." That is not the same. The Church is not the total number of all believers. It is the *congregation*, the *gathering* of the true Christian believers. Christ is gathering His Church here and now and it is every believer's duty to join himself to that congregation. If the Church is already composed of all true believers, why would it still be necessary to *join* the Church?

Rev. Tuininga speaks of "different manifestations of the body of Christ." But neither the Confession nor the Scriptures speak that way. In I Corinthians 12 Paul says to the members of the local church of Corinth that *they* are the body of Christ and members in particular. He addressed his epistle to the church of God at Corinth. To that particular church that body of Christ (not the manifestation of it) Paul says that there should be no schism in the body but that the members should have the same care one for another. That is a church with office-bearers. That is where Christ gathers the sheep. That is why it is the duty of all true sheep to gather together with Christ in that local church. There he must readily and cheerfully employ his gifts for the advantage and salvation of other members. Is all this "patently unbiblical?"

In the Form for the celebration of the Lord's Supper we confess: "Besides, that by this same Spirit we also should be united as members of one body . . ." United as members of one body! And then it follows: ". . . and show [visibly! MW] this towards one another, not only in words but also in deeds."

It is rather easy to say in words that we have communion with all true believers. But why don't we show this in deeds? What then holds us back from showing this in the proclamation of the Lord's death around that one Table? Our Lord Jesus Christ prayed in John 17 that they all may be one. Indeed. But He was praying first of all for the unity of His disciples. Then He also prayed for those who would believe in Him through the Word of the apostles (John 17:20). Is what Paul writes in I Corinthians 12 excluded from that Word?

Paul urges us to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. He does not say that we should try to establish or work that unity ourselves. No, we

should *keep* the unity that is there. That unity is the work of Christ by His Word and Spirit. There is one body. And one Spirit. And one faith. The Church of Christ is one. Let us keep that unity.

Much more can be said about the Communion of Saints. But let the above be sufficient for now. I hope that Rev. Tuininga and many other true believers in the Christian Reformed Church will come to understand that their speaking of the various "manifes-

tations" of the church weakens the call to *join* the true Church of the Lord. True, not because its members are so true. But true because the Church is true, faithful to the Word of God.

If we are brothers, let us then also show that not only in words, but also in deeds. Let us then dwell together and use our gifts readily and cheerfully for the advantage and salvation of each other as members of the Body of Christ.

M. WERKMAN



## Raising Children by the Book

*Continued from page 551.*

to know that they do not go alone, for they are accompanied by many prayers and by God's eternal, watchful care.

Although time does not permit us to discuss them in detail, there are several other books written on this subject which some of you may find useful. *Marriage in Honour* by W.G. de Vries is already well-known to most of you. Like Adams, de Vries places the raising of children within the entire framework of the Christian family. When God's guidance is continuously sought in all matters, then also the discipline and instruction of children becomes more meaningful and rewarding. In this context it may be appropriate to mention that our children are given to us by God, not as a burden, but a blessing (Psalm 127, 128). We can become so obsessed with our responsibilities as parents, that we forget to relax and enjoy our children. An emphasis on firm discipline need not exclude a sense of humour, as well as an appreciation for the joy and pleasure our children often bring into our lives. This aspect of raising children is somewhat neglected in such a book as *Withhold Not Correction*, by Bruce A. Ray. Although it gives much valuable, Scriptural advice, some parents may well object to its rather severe tone, with its stern emphasis on the use of the rod. Ray also advocates that Bible texts be quoted to children in order to reinforce disciplinary measures, an approach which many may feel is as likely to make them resentful of Biblical authority as it is to create in them a submissive obedience.

Another book with which some may be familiar is *The Christian Family*, by Larry Christenson. Since this book is largely based on the writing of a German pastor who lived in the middle 1800's one may rest assured that it does not promote any modern, untried notions about child rearing, but emphasizes the traditional, old-fashioned approach that has withstood the test of time.

Lastly, a book written especially for teachers is *Nurturing Children in the Lord*, by Jack Fennema. Written as a doctoral thesis, this book discusses the implications of the teachers' authority in the classroom, although much of it is equally applicable to parental discipline.

In closing, I would like to say that it has not been my purpose to offer any deceptively simple solutions to the many complex issues involved in rearing and educating children. What has become most clear to me, however, through studying this topic, is the fact that as Christian parents, we do have a great advantage. Rather than being tossed to and fro by the changing tides of modern child psychology, we have the guidance of the unchangeable, infallible Word of God. Rather than being left to our own feeble resources, we have the promise of the help of the Holy Spirit. May that encourage us to approach this challenging task prayerfully, with hope and confidence in the faithfulness of our Heavenly Father.

(MRS.) JANEY VAN SETERS

*\*Speech given at one of the Wednesday evening courses in the Fraser Valley.*



ACCEPTED:

the call by Rehoboth Canadian Reformed Church at Burlington West, Ont.:

REV. W. POUWELSE

of Bergentheim, The Netherlands.



## PRESS RELEASE

*of Classis Ontario-South held November 14, 1979, at London, Ontario.*

1. *Opening.* On behalf of the convening church at Chatham, Rev. J. Geertsema calls the meeting to order, requests the delegates to sing Hymn 17, reads Ephesians 4:1-16, and leads in prayer. He welcomes the delegates and the deputies ad Article 48, Church Order, Rev. J. Mulder and Rev. W.W.J. VanOene, and especially candidate P.K.A. DeBoer, who will be examined today. The church at Watford is congratulated with the fact that candidate DeBoer accepted the call to Watford. The church at Smithville is congratulated with their new minister, Rev. Stam, and also the church at Chatham, whose minister declined a call.

2. The delegates of Grand Rapids examine the credentials and report that all churches are duly represented. The church at Watford has delegated an elder and a deacon, while of the church at Grand Rapids an alternate is present.

3. Classis is constituted. Chairman: Rev. P. Kingma; clerk: Rev. J. Geertsema; assessor: Rev. M. Werkman. The chairman wished a good recovery for the child of Rev. Stam. He also congratulates the church at Hamilton who started the action to become a missionary church.

4. The agenda is adopted. Since the Subscription Form is not present yet, Rev. Stam will sign this form later in the day.

5. *Peremptory Examination* of candidate P.K.A. DeBoer. The required documents are found to be in order. Candidate DeBoer delivers a sermon proposal on I Peter 2:9, 10. In closed session Classis concludes with thankfulness that there is no objection to continue the examination. He is examined in the following subjects:

- sermon proposal on I Peter 2:9, 10; examiners Rev. W. Huizinga and Rev. M. Werkman;
- exegesis Old Testament — II Kings 2, Psalm 8; examiner Rev. J. Geertsema.
- exegesis New Testament — Philipians 3, Hebrews 1; examiner Rev. W. Huizinga.
- knowledge of Holy Scripture; examiner Rev. M. Werkman;
- knowledge of the doctrine of the Church, its history, its defence and

- its explanation; examiner Rev. P. Kingma;
- knowledge of the commandments of the LORD in their meaning for a Christian life; examiner Rev. J. Geertsema;
- knowledge of the history of the Church; examiner Rev. J. DeJong;
- knowledge of the Church Order; examiner Rev. J. DeJong;
- knowledge of the requirements for holding the distinct offices in the Church; examiner Rev. P. Kingma.

Classis meets again in closed session and gladly concludes, with the concurring advice of the deputies ad Article 49, Church Order, that candidate DeBoer can be admitted into the churches as a Minister of the Word. After candidate DeBoer and the guests enter the meeting again, the chairman addresses fitting words of congratulations to candidate DeBoer and also to the church at Watford. The chairman then reads the Subscription Form, which is signed by candidate DeBoer and also by Rev. Cl. Stam. The chairman expresses the wish that the Lord will use His servants to keep His Church Reformed. Classis rises and sings Psalm 134 after which the delegates personally extend their best wishes to candidate DeBoer and Rev. Stam. The chairman thanks the deputies ad Article 49, Church Order, for their presence and advice, after which they leave.

6. *Approbation* of the call to Watford. The required documents are found in good order and the call is approved by Classis.

7. *Regional Synod.* The church at Lincoln has made the proposal to Classis to urge the convening church at Burlington-East to convene the Regional Synod in the spring of 1980 in order to give the delegates to the General Synod adequate time for preparation. This proposal is adopted.

8. *Reports.* A special Church Visitation is reported.

9. *Question Period* ad Article 41, Church Order, is held.

10. *Appointments.* Convening church for the next classis: Grand Rapids. Date: March 12, 1980. Place: London, Ontario. Time: 10:00 a.m. Chairman: Rev. Cl. Stam, clerk: Rev. P. Kingma, and assessor: Rev. J. Geert-

sema. Classis decides to continue the Church Visitors till the next Classis.

11. *Personal Question Period* is held. The church at Watford invites Classis to send a delegate to the inaugural service of their new minister on December 2nd. Classis appoints Rev. J. Geertsema, with elder S. Breukelman as alternate.

12. The Acts of Classis are adopted.

13. The Press Release is approved.

14. Censure ad Article 43, Church Order, is not necessary.

15. *Closing.* Classis sings Psalm 147:1, 6. The chairman leads in prayer, after which Classis is adjourned.

For the Classis,  
M. Werkman, assessor.

## PRESS RELEASE

*of the Classis Pacific of the Canadian Reformed Churches meeting in the Maranatha Canadian Reformed Church on Wednesday, October 17, 1979.*

1. *Opening.* On behalf of the convening church, the Church at New Westminster, the Rev. C. VanDam calls upon the brothers to sing Psalm 92:1, 2 and reads Psalm 100. He then leads in prayer. He welcomes the brothers, especially Candidate G.H. Visscher and the Deputies ad Article 49, Church Order: the Revs. D. DeJong and J. Van Rietschoten. He also welcomes sr. G.H. Visscher.

2. *Constitution of Classis.* The delegates from the Church at Langley report on the credentials. All of the churches are duly represented. Classis is constituted. Serving officers: Rev. M. VanderWel, chairman; Rev. J. Visscher, vice-chairman; Rev. E.J. Tiggelaar, clerk.

Rev. M. VanderWel urges the Classis to remember the brothers labouring on the mission field and welcomes the Rev. C. VanDam to his first meeting of Classis Pacific.

3. *Adoption of the Agenda.* After some additions are made, the agenda is adopted.

4. *Signing of the Subscription Form.* This form is signed by the Rev. C. VanDam, pastor of the Church at New Westminster, B.C.

5. *Peremptory Examination of Candidate G.H. Visscher.* All the documents required for this examination to

proceed are found to be in good order. Candidate G.H. Visscher receives the opportunity to deliver his sermon proposal on Genesis 28:12-15 and John 1:51. After discussing this sermon and hearing the advice of the Deputies, the Classis declares that it has no objections to proceeding with the examination.

The Rev. C. VanSpronsen examines Candidate Visscher on Exegesis Old Testament (II Samuel 7; Psalm 8). Rev. M. VanderWel examines him on Exegesis New Testament (I Thessalonians 4, 5). Rev. E.J. Tiggelaar examines him on knowledge of Holy Scripture. Rev. D. VanderBoom examines him on Doctrine and Creeds. Rev. C. VanSpronsen examines him on Church History. Rev. J. Visscher examines him on Ethics. Rev. M. VanderWel examines him on Church Polity. Rev. J. Visscher examines him on Diaconiology. After each subject the other delegates receive the opportunity to ask questions.

After hearing the favourable advice of the Deputies ad Article 49, Church Order, the Classis decides with thankfulness to admit Candidate G.H. Visscher to the ministry of the Word and Sacraments in the Canadian Reformed Churches. The Chairman communicates this decision to the Candidate and congratulates him as well as the Church at Houston. Psalm 134:3 is sung as a song of blessing to Candidate G.H. Visscher.

The call of Candidate G.H. Visscher to the Church at Houston is approved. All the documents are in order. The Candidate signs the Form of Subscription.

**6. Request — Houston.** The Church at Houston requests financial assistance from the Classis to the amount of \$5,000.00 for the year 1980. This request is granted.

**7. Proposal — Cloverdale.** The Church at Cloverdale proposes that Classis adopt a ceiling on classical expenses for the delegates. This is adopted.

**8. Reports.** a) The *Committee for the Revision of Classical Regulations* submits its report. After some changes are made the revised regulations are adopted.

b) The *Church for the Inspection of the Archives*, the Church at Houston, reports that the archives are in good order.

**9. Question Period ad Article 41, Church Order.** Two churches ask for advice.

**10. Appointments.** a) The Church at Smithers is appointed the Convening Church of the next Classis, to be convened on Tuesday, April 15, 1980. Suggested Officers are: Rev. C. Van Spronsen, chairman; Rev. E.J. Tiggelaar, vice-chairman; Rev. M. VanderWel, clerk.

b) *Church Visitors.* The Co-ordinator for Church Visitation, the Rev. D. VanderBoom, proposes that Classis increase its number of Church Visitors from three to four persons. The Classis agrees with this and appoints the Rev. C. VanDam as the fourth Church Visitor.

c) The Classical Treasurer, brother

P. VanEgmond, is re-appointed.

d) The Representative of the Classis at the ordination of Candidate G.H. Visscher will be the Rev. C. VanSpronsen of Smithers.

11. *Question Period* is held.

12. *Censure ad Article 43, Church Order* is not necessary.

13. *The Acts and the Press Release* are adopted.

14. *Closing:* The Chairman thanks the brothers for their co-operation and requests the brothers to sing Hymn 50:1. He then leads in closing prayer.

For the Classis,  
J. Visscher (vice-chairman)



## SHORT REPORT

*Meeting of the Board of Governors, Theological College, held in Cloverdale, B.C., August 31, 1979.*

1. The president, the Rev. D. VanderBoom reads from Scripture, Hebrews 6:1-12 and leads in prayer.

2. The Board of Governors meets with the Board of Trustees.

a. It is decided to allow continued operation of the Book Centre in its present form, with the understanding that the trustees shall have final responsibility and set up regulations.

b. Since brother A.H. Oosterhoff has resigned as member of the Board of Trustees, the Board of Trustees will appoint another person to fill the vacancy for the balance of this term.

c. As to acquiring other property for the College building, the Trustees report that no progress has been made.

3. The Board of Governors meets with the Faculty.

a. Interviews with Mr. E. Kampen, B.A., and Mr. B. Nederveen, who wish to be admitted to the College are arranged. Prof. Ohmann, Prof. Selles, and Rev. M. van Beveren are appointed.

b. Report on course work for the academic year 1978/1979 submitted by the Faculty is read and discussed.

c. The Series Lectionum for 1979/1980 is discussed and approved.

d. From the Library report it appears that during the past year the number of books increased with 425 acquisitions.

e. In connection with the vacancy in the ecclesiological and the coming vacancy in the diaconological department, the Board of Governors requests the faculty to serve the Board with advice in order that Synod 1980 may fill these positions.

4. After faculty left the Board continues to meet. Officers are elected: Rev. D. VanderBoom, president; Rev. W.W.J. VanOene, secretary; Rev. J. Mulder, vice-president.

5. Correspondence sent and received is reported on by the secretary.

a. Reports of visits to the lectures are submitted by governors. The Board thankfully noted that the instruction given is biblical and scholarly.

b. Visits to the lectures are arranged for the coming year.

6. Arrangements for the College Evening are made; date, September 13, 1980. Speaker for the Board of Governors, Rev. D. VanderBoom, M.Th. The faculty appoints the other speaker.

7. Acts are read and adopted; short report is read and approved of. The meeting is closed with thanksgiving.

For the Board of Governors,  
J. Mulder.

### FOR THE READER'S INFORMATION

This issue of *Clarion* was mailed from Winnipeg Central Post Office on Thursday, December 13, 1979.

# our little magazine

Dear Busy Beavers,  
Christmas is coming!  
Even your very small brothers and sisters know about  
Christmas, right?

They know about the baby Jesus and His little bed in the  
hay in the stable.

Maybe you have a smart little brother or sister who  
knows "Jesus came to die for our sins."

We sing songs about the Saviour born in Bethlehem.

We remember how God loved His people so much that  
He gave HIS Son to die for OUR sins.

It's true. We sing songs of the King born in Bethlehem.

But He is no longer small, He is not even here on earth  
any longer.

He went back to His heavenly glory.

And what are we waiting for now?

Not like God's people long ago for a Saviour to be born!

No, the Bible tells us the Lord Jesus, the Baby of Bethle-  
hem will come back as Lord of lords.

Then everyone on earth will bow to Him, the King of  
kings.

And He will bring with Him His everlasting kingdom, so  
beautiful you can't imagine it!

To think we may be there, too!

\*\*\*\*\*

Busy Beaver *Irene Schoen* has a Christmas poem for us.  
Thank you, Irene.

### *Some Shepherds*

Some Shepherds in the field at night  
were blinded by a heavenly light.

A light so bright

lit up the night.

It filled their hearts with fear.

It was an angel of the LORD  
who brought to them God's Word.

A Word of joy  
because a boy  
was born in Bethlehem.



The shepherds ran to Bethlehem  
as it was told to them.

There on some hay  
the Christ Child lay,  
all wrapped in swaddling bands.

On their way back they praised the LORD  
for what they'd seen and heard,  
God's Son was born  
this early morn,  
just as the angel said!

We have another Christmas poem, too. This one is from  
Busy Beaver *Marcella Veenman*. Thanks for sharing, Mar-  
cella.

### *Christ is Born*

Christ is born;  
Swaddling clothes by Him were worn  
Mary was so happy  
They wanted to pray,  
on Christmas Day.

Three wise men looking at the stars  
Saw a new one out afar.  
"This must be the King."

They wanted to sing.

Glory to God  
in the highest  
and on earth peace  
good will toward men.



### *Clothes Tell THE Story a Christmas quiz*

If you want to, you may use your Bible to do this quiz.

1. She gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped Him in \_\_\_\_\_, and laid Him in a manger. Luke 2:7
2. . . . He Who is mightier than I is coming, the thong of whose \_\_\_\_\_ I am not worthy to untie . . . . Luke 3:16
3. . . . the appearance of His countenance was altered, and His raiment became \_\_\_\_\_. Luke 9:29.
4. . . . and throwing their garments on the \_\_\_\_\_ they set Jesus upon it. Luke 19:35
5. He . . . rose from supper, laid aside His garments and girded Himself with a \_\_\_\_\_. John 13:4
6. And they stripped Him and put a scarlet \_\_\_\_\_ upon Him and plaiting a \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ they put it on His head . . . . Matthew 27:28, 29
7. And when they had crucified Him, they divided His \_\_\_\_\_ among them by casting lots. Matthew 27:35
8. . . . Joseph took the body, and wrapped it in a clean linen \_\_\_\_\_, and laid it in his own new tomb . . . . Matthew 27:59, 60



9. An angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone, and sat upon it. His appearance was like \_\_\_\_\_, and his raiment white as \_\_\_\_\_. *Matthew 28:2, 3*
10. . . . in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long \_\_\_\_\_ and with a golden \_\_\_\_\_ round His breast; . . . and His face was like the sun shining in full \_\_\_\_\_. *Revelation 1:13, 16*

(Answers on next page)

\*\*\*\*\*

Soon you'll be home for Christmas holidays and wishing for:



**SNOW!**

Snow is puffy.  
 Snow is fluffy.  
 Snow is white  
 and very bright.  
 I love snowflakes  
 all the day.  
 Oh the snowflakes  
 are so gay.  
 Snowflakes falling in my hair.  
 Snowflakes falling everywhere.



by Busy Beaver,  
 Mary Van Raalte

\*\*\*\*\*

These are the people who first celebrate their birthday in 1980! From all the Busy Beavers "Happy Birthday" and "Many happy returns of the day." May the Lord bless and keep you in the brand new year ahead!

Heather Van Middelkoop	January 1	Marie Huttema Henrietta Selles	January 20
Brenda Kobes	2	Aneta Van Seters	22
Nick Mans	3	Gerald Bosscher	23
Cathy Wendt	3	Clarence Blokhuis	23
Gerlinda Buist	4	Yvonne Byker	23
Nancy Van Raalte	5	Marnix Sikkema	23
Tim Togeretz	7	Dianne Holtvluwer	24
Debbie Knol	11	Hilda Tams	24
Marian Lof	11	Helena Onderwater	26
Brian Vanderhout	11	Judy Jansen Van't Land	27
Helena Blokhuis	12	John Paul Van Amerongen	27
Joan Veldkamp	16	Marcella Veenman	28
Ena Beijes	17	Diane Breukelman	29
Linda De Boer	18	Janetta Gelderman	29
Walter Geurts	19	Peter Van Woudenberg	30
Debbie Hartman	19		



**From the Mailbox**

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Sharalee Terpsma*. We hope you will really enjoy sharing in all the Busy Beaver activities. Do you help look after Toby, Sharalee? And did you start your piano lessons yet?

And a big welcome to you, too, *Lisa Harsevoort*. We hope you'll like being a Busy Beaver, reading *Our Little Magazine*, doing the quizzes, joining in the contests, saving money for the BIRTHDAY FUND for our Theological College. Do you help look after the little piglets, Lisa? Bye for now.

Hello, *Darlene Lodder*. A big welcome to you, too, Darlene. I see you are a real Busy Beaver already sending us a big word search puzzle! That will keep the Busy Beavers busy for awhile. Thanks, Darlene. Write again soon.

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Mary-Ann Van Woudenberg*. We hope you will really enjoy joining in all our Busy Beaver activities. Did you receive your membership card already? Thank you for a nice chatty letter, Mary-Ann.

Did you get a good snowfall already, *Paul Kuntz*? Thanks for letting me know your new address and also for the quiz. Hope you enjoy *Our (Christmas) Little Magazine*, Paul.

Look here, Busy Beavers!

**I would like a pen-pal!**

I am 8 years old, in Grade 3 at school.

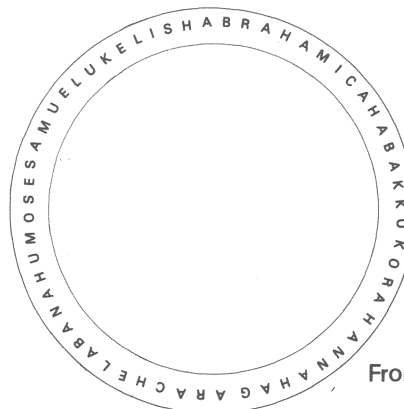
*Roslyn Fokkema*

Lot 13, Bushby Road, Lower King 6332, West - Australia.

**QUIZ TIME**

Can you find the names?

**BIBLE PEOPLE**



From Busy Beaver  
*Linda Knol*.  
 Thanks, Linda.





A Riddle in Code

Code

Q - 10	N - 36
T - 9	R - 16
P - 7	E - 11
O - 6	I - 20
W - 8	C - 19
A - 12	Y - 17
H - 26	V - 21
U - 15	L - 18
S - 14	G - 22



9 6 8 26 12 9 10 15 11 14 9 20 6 36 19 12 36  
 17 6 15 36 11 21 11 16 12 36 14 8 11 16 17 11 14 ?  
 12 16 11 17 6 15 14 18 11 11 7 20 36 22 ?

From Busy Beaver *Greg Hofsink*. Thanks for sharing, Greg.



STORIES FOR YOU

*How I Spent New Year's Eve*

Our family and our Oma had a fondue. My family and Oma loved it! We had to put a fork with chunks of meat or mushroom into the pot. Whoever let meat or mushroom fall off the fork had to kiss a girl. I sometimes (while no one was looking) sneaked them off. Then our Mother and Father spoke in Dutch because our Oma can't speak English very well. The fire was so hot I backed away. I was reading an "Encyclopedia Brown, Boy Detective" story. It has lots of cases and at the end of each one it says: "How did Encyclopedia know? Turn to page 102 for the solution of the case of "the

Missing Roller Skates" or something like that. Then the weather changed and it started snowing. I went to bed at 9 o'clock.

by Busy Beaver *Paul Kuntz*.

*How I Spent New Year's Eve*

On New Year's Eve our cousins came to our house. We had fun. We were running around. We played games. We played touch tag. It was fun because we had a party. We had all kinds of things to eat. I like New Year's Eve because you have a party.

But on New Year's Eve we went to our uncle's place to stay for supper. When we went home our uncle and aunt came along. When we got home we turned on the radio and listened to the Voice of the Church. A little later another uncle and aunt came with five cousins. That is when we were running around and having most of the party.

At twelve o'clock we wished each other a Happy New Year and then our cousins went home. I went to bed at about twelve thirty.

So we really had fun!

by Busy Beaver *Cecile Van Woudenberg*



Answers:

*Clothes Tell THE Story:*

1. swaddling cloths;
2. sandals;
3. dazzling white;
4. colt;
5. towel;
6. robe, crown, thorns;
7. garments;
8. shroud;
9. lightning, snow;
10. robe, girdle, strength.

*Riddle:* To what question can you never answer yes? Are you sleeping?

Did you get them all right? Good for you! Keep up the good work.

Have you sent in your entries for our POETRY CONTEST?

Don't forget!

You have the month of December, but time goes fast!

I hope you will all enjoy your holidays very much.

Bye for now. Keep busy!

With love from your Aunt Betty



# Puzzle No. 58



Move the initial letter of the answer to the first clue to the end of the word to get the answer to the second clue.

Example: Caesar's city: Rome — omer: dry measure.



- |   |       |       |                           |
|---|-------|-------|---------------------------|
| 1. Son of Shem                                    | _____ | _____ | cripple                   |
| 2. Man who divorced a foreign wife                | _____ | _____ | cures                     |
| 3. Father of Jehozabad, II Kings:12               | _____ | _____ | weights                   |
| 4. Unclean animal                                 | _____ | _____ | fruit of the vine         |
| 5. Paul hoped to reach there                      | _____ | _____ | aches                     |
| 6. Babylonian god of science                      | _____ | _____ | black (poetic)            |
| 7. Wilderness stopping place                      | _____ | _____ | citrus fruit              |
| 8. Resting place for Joseph and family            | _____ | _____ | dining surfaces           |
| 9. Village of the tribe of Simeon                 | _____ | _____ | domesticate               |
| 10. Skin disease                                  | _____ | _____ | summons                   |
| 11. Son of Shem                                   | _____ | _____ | Town allotted to Asher.   |
| 12. Bird mentioned in Psalm                       | _____ | _____ | a pig in mud              |
| 13. Vegetables mentioned in Numbers               | _____ | _____ | smooth                    |
| 14. Samuel placed a rock<br>between it and Mizpeh | _____ | _____ | fowl                      |
| 15. City of Judah's lowland                       | _____ | _____ | title                     |
| 16. Reubenite, I Chronicles                       | _____ | _____ | Jerahmelite, I Chronicles |
| 17. Town of Judah                                 | _____ | _____ | at that point             |
| 18. Jacob's son                                   | _____ | _____ | wicked                    |
| 19. Father of Esau's wife                         | _____ | _____ | solitary                  |
| 20. Son of Seth                                   | _____ | _____ | pry                       |



S. BETHLEHEM





## Thy Law, My Guide

Thy servant, blest by Thee, shall live  
And keep Thy Word with awe;  
Lord, open Thou my eyes to see  
The wonders of Thy Law.

A pilgrim in the earth am I,  
Thy will to me reveal;  
To know Thy truth my spirit yearns,  
Consumed with ardent zeal.

Thou dost rebuke the proud, O Lord,  
Who hate Thy holy Name;  
But since I keep Thy righteous law,  
Deliver me from shame.

I on Thy statutes meditate,  
Though evil men deride;  
Thy faithful Word is my delight,  
My counselor and guide.

Psalm 119:17-24

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