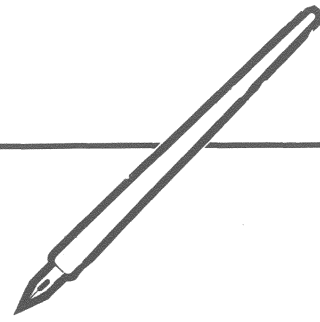




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The miracle of the nineteenth century: the Secession

The first part of the title of this editorial is the title of a book written in the Dutch language, *Het Wonder van de Negentiende Eeuw*. H. Algra is the author. It also has a subtitle: "About free churches and little people." This book describes in a fascinating way how two reformations came about in The Netherlands during the nineteenth century, how these two movements, "back to the Word of God and to the Confessions of the church" fared, and how they joined at the end of the century. In an article in this issue Rev. C.L. Bouwman writes about the first of these two reformations, the Secession of 1834, now 150 years ago. This article is written to commemorate this important event in the history of the church in The Netherlands, as well as in the churches of North America, South Africa and other parts of the world.

What I ask your attention for here is the subtitle of the book by Algra. It characterizes the reformational movement of the Secession so very well. Not many, rather hardly any, of the higher classes of the Dutch society were involved, unless by opposition. Those who involved themselves in this reformational movement were people of the lower levels of society; laborers and farmhands, hard working trades people and small businessmen. Often they had little education, and were sometimes recalcitrant and narrowminded. They could split concerning the matter of the clothes which a minister had, or had not, to wear. Nevertheless, in spite of their "smallness" in many ways, the LORD worked His miracle with these people. In their human weakness His power was shown. This is why this movement had such a great impact on the Dutch nation, and, via immigration, could spread all over the world, and also in North America.

What was the secret of these often "small" people? That secret was what the apostle Paul writes about in I Timothy 3:16, "Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of our religion:

He was manifested in the
flesh,
vindicated in the Spirit,
seen by angels,
preached among the nations,
believed on in the world,
taken up in glory.

As you understand, that secret is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the church.

We can also say that their secret was their true faith in Christ Jesus as their Master and their holding for true all that God has revealed to us in His Word, while trusting that this gospel was also for them. This faithfulness to the Scriptures

as the Word of the Lord also made them faithful to the Confession of the church. And so they "separated themselves from those who do not belong to the church" (Art. 28 B.C.), forming a true church. This is one of the main points in the article of Rev. Bouwman.

It is remarkable that this phenomenon returns time and again in the history of the church. When there is a reformational movement it is usually not the rich, nor the rulers of the world or of the nation, nor those with an important position in the field of education but the "small" people, many of whom are poor and without any power or authority in the world, who follow a reformation in the church. In these circles are found those who seek to be faithful to the Word of the LORD in spite of their weaknesses. We see the same in the Old Testament prophetic books: the poor and lowly are the faithful. This does not condemn the rich. However it does contain a message for both the rich and the lowly in our days as well: let us be, and remain, and turn back to that humble faith which makes us faithful to the LORD and His Word in humble submission.

The Lord builds and preserves His church with those who are humble and poor and meek. Christ says: Blessed are the poor, the meek, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness (Matt. 5:3ff.). This does not mean automatically all the poor of the world, as is proclaimed in revolutionary movements of our days. No, these are the poor who hunger and thirst for the righteousness which God gives in Christ Jesus. These poor are the same as the poor of whom the Old Testament prophets spoke and to whom they promised God's redeeming kingship.

The same line is continued in I Cor. 1:26ff. The apostle Paul addresses the Corinthian believers with these words: ". . . not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth, . . . God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God."

Indeed, commemorating the Secession of 1834, we boast in the LORD. We give thanks to Him for His grace in the Secession, His preserving of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, His preserving us who are children of the Secession. At the same time, let us remember God's church-preserving work in the past in such a way that it stimulates us to remain faithful in knowing and abiding by God's Word. Then we may not be powerful and mighty in the world, but we will be useful for God's kingdom.

J. GEERTSEMA

Test-tube babies.

1. A brave new world?

In 1932 Aldous Huxley first published his fantasy of the future. In this novel he describes, in a science fiction fashion, how human beings are “produced” in the “Central London Hatchery and Conditioning Centre.” Marriage, family life and pregnancy have become things of the past. In a huge and medically clean laboratory human eggs are fertilized and, in bottles, “raised,” until they have “grown” to “perfectly formed embryos.” During this growing process they are “conditioned” in such a way that the “produced” human beings exactly fit the requirements set by the “World Controller.”

They “produce” basically five “classes” of human beings, the so-called Alphas, Betas, Gammas, Deltas and Epsilons. The Alphas are the most excellent intelligent scientists and the Epsilons are the lowest class to human beings without any intelligence. They are only “predestined” to do simple physical work.

During the growing process all embryos are “conditioned” in such a way that they physically, as well as mentally, fit the task they are “produced” for. The “lower class” people have less desires and everyone is perfectly happy and satisfied with his own situation and his own task. Social stability is maintained because no one has any desire to take over someone else’s place or change his own circumstances. There are no such things as labour conflicts any longer. The lower class individuals, like the Deltas, the Gammas and the Epsilons are “produced” in identical series or batches, according to a so-called “bokanovskification” procedure. That means that from one egg not only an identical set of twins can be developed but up to 96 identical persons. In this way they can provide a work place or a factory with “identical” workers who will never cause any problem among each other.



Some groups of people are “conditioned” to work in an extremely hot environment and others can stand extreme cold. In short, they “produce” all kinds of people exactly according to the customer’s specification, just as nowadays the equipment for a factory is developed.

This policy seems to create a completely new society with perfect happiness. Everyone is satisfied with his own circumstances. It is called the “Brave New World,” in which human life comes out of a bottle. The favorite song of the children, “grown” in these bottles is:

Bottle of mine, it’s you I have always wanted!

Bottle of mine, why was I ever decanted?

Skies are blue inside of you,
The weather’s always fine;

For there ain’t no Bottle in all the world

Like that dear little Bottle of mine.

It is a terrible situation and a terrible

book. Finally the author shows the vanity, also of this seemingly perfect society. When people feel less satisfied they have to take a “pill” to have a “holiday” in a dream of perfect happiness. Especially the “low class” people find their “entertainment” in such drug-induced dreams. Although the author shows, in a rather sarcastic way, the vanity of this “Brave New World” he does not see the real purpose of human life, namely, that we are created as God’s image and as His Ambassadors in this world, and that our aim and purpose is, and always has to be, to glorify Him in our whole life.

You might wonder why we refer to this book at all. It is certainly not to encourage you to read it as a matter of entertainment. It is rather to show the tremendous impact this book has had and still has upon the way of thinking of modern scientists. The book has been reprinted many times, sometimes twice a year. The expression “test-tube baby”

which is so common nowadays, finds it origin in this book.

At the time this book was first printed most people did not pay too much attention to it. It was considered to be "science fiction" and more fiction than science for that matter. However, nowadays it seems that we have arrived at a point that it becomes almost reality. How close are we to such a "Hatchery and Conditioning Centre," in which human eggs are fertilized and "hatched" in an artificial way?

In this article we will try to pay attention to the recent bio-chemical development and we will try to determine our Christian point of view and approach with respect to these matters.

2. Science fiction or reality?

We will first mention a number of remarkable stories which have recently come in the world news.

In Australia a couple tried to receive a "test-tube baby." During the so-called "in vitro fertilization" some eggs were fertilized and one of them was implanted in the mothers womb, but this ended in a miscarriage. Some other fertilized eggs were "frozen" and, in this way, "stored" for a possible next attempt. However, the couple died in a traffic accident and now physicians and lawyers are fighting about the question whether the fertilized eggs are "persons." The couple left behind an estate worth millions. Many women have offered to serve as "surrogate-mothers" to carry a fertilized egg to delivery and claim the child as the heir of the estate.

In France a man had to undergo treatment that would make him sterile. Before the surgery some of his sperm was "frozen" and kept in a laboratory.

“. . . the modern IVF is . . . too much of an intrusion into God’s creation of new life, to be acceptable for believers.”

Later on this man got married and shortly after the marriage he died. Now his widow asked to have the sperm artificially inseminated to receive, as yet, a child by her former husband, although the sperm was "frozen" before they got married. Her claim was denied by the doctors but a court granted her request.

In the past, artificial insemination was something only practiced on animals. Nowadays it is common practice in most countries. Not only artificial insemination with the sperm of the own husband (from now on called AIH) but also insemination with sperm of an anonymous donor (from now on called AID). According to statistics

every year about 10,000 women in the USA receive a child via AID.

Apart from the problems mentioned above we are confronted nowadays with cases of "surrogate motherhood." Couples who can not receive children in the normal way can use a "surrogate mother" to have "their" child implanted in the womb of a "hired" person. Some women are willing to make money in this way and some couples are willing to pay a lot of money for such "services."

“According to statistics every year about 10,000 women in the USA receive a child via AID.”

However, these practices have far reaching consequences. We mentioned already the legal problems which have served in court cases. There are legal questions like "who is the heir of the estate?" or "who is the owner of the frozen eggs or the sperm?" We are not interested in the first place in those legal matters, but rather in what the Word of God teaches us about human life and the origin of it. In how far are we allowed to use or to be involved in these kind of things?

Before we determine our attitude and approach to these matters, we first should have a closer look at what really is going on, because much confusion and misconception seems to exist as to what a "test-tube baby" is. The name is misleading, because no test-tube is used. The name "test-tube baby" is, more or less, a reference to A. Huxley's novel. The proper name is "in vitro fertilization" and from now on we will refer to it as IVF.

3. In vitro fertilization

What is IVF all about? Without going into too much medical detail we will try to explain what happens. As a rule every month one egg leaves the ovary of a woman and moves slowly via one of the fallopian tubes into the womb. If, on its way, the egg meets sperm one spermatozoon can penetrate the egg. If that happens the egg is "fertilized" and no other spermatozoon can penetrate it. We call this conception. It means that a new human being has been created, intricately wrought by the Lord, as Psalm 139 says. This egg moves on into the womb,

where it imbeds itself in the wall of the uterus to grow in about nine months into a full-grown baby. That is the "normal" process of conception and birth.

IVF means that in a surgical way some eggs are removed from a woman's body and, in a glass dish, brought together with sperm, in an attempt to fertilize the eggs. (The expression "in vitro" means literally "in glass") After a number of days one of the fertilized eggs is implanted into the womb of the mother, to

develop there in the normal way. The reason for such an operation is oftentimes a blockage of the fallopian tubes. The egg can not reach the womb, to be fertilized, in the normal way.

So far there seems to be nothing wrong with it. It is just another operation to overcome a physical obstacle in the body of the mother. It is sometimes compared with artificial insemination, by which the sperm of the own husband with medical instruments is brought into the womb of the mother, because a physical defect prevents it from coming there in the "normal" way. Apart from the objection which even can be brought forward against such artificial insemination, there is a great difference between AIH and IVF. In the first place the fact that the conception takes place outside the human body. The question has to be asked whether or not that is too much of an intrusion into the natural process of conception, described in Psalm 139 as: "intricately wrought" by the Lord Himself.

Moreover, during such an IVF oftentimes more than one egg is fertilized. The doctor has to make a choice, to pick the "best" of them to implant into the womb and to destroy the other. However, when we believe that after the conception we are dealing with human beings, it means the destruction of human life and a form of abortion.

Although we realize that the modern IVF is a far cry from the test-tube babies described in A. Huxley's book, we consider it too much of an intrusion into God's creation of new life, to be acceptable for believers. When we accept this kind of manipulation, we are on a dangerous and slippery slope. The most recent publications can show us how close we have come to the development and the manipulation of human life described in Huxley's novel.

—To be continued.
W. POUWELSE

The Secession of 1834: defense of *sola scriptura*

Since the days of the post-war immigration, the membership of the Canadian Reformed Churches has, by the grace of God, found a new homeland on a new continent. With the passing of the years, another generation has emerged, one that is very much Canadian, one that can barely make itself understood in the native tongue of their parents. As time goes on, that close bond between the new homeland and the old country has relaxed and continues to relax.

Yet it is in The Netherlands that our roots lie. Even though we may be far removed from the Low Countries in a geographical sense, we must recognize that spiritually we are not at all far removed from The Netherlands; in fact, in Holland we have a rich spiritual heritage which we today may neither forget nor deny.

It is this month one hundred and fifty years ago that the Secession occurred: one-and-a-half century since the Lord God shook the sleeping State Church in Holland, and granted once again to His people the faithful preaching of the Word. Since we on the North American continent may be spiritual descendents of this Secession from the Dutch State Church, we do well to inquire what it is that we may learn today from this event of one hundred and fifty years ago.

As we recount the events of the Secession, a number of basic lessons will emerge. We note three:

- a. The Secession demonstrates, as does all of church history the truth of Jesus' words that the gates of hell shall not triumph over the church of Jesus Christ.
- b. In the Secession, God instructs His people anew concerning the importance of defending the *sola scriptura* principle as inherited from the great Reformation. Since Scripture is the inspired Word of salvation from the Living God to sinful man, is it necessary that Christians approach that Word with reverence. This reverence for the Word of God will imply that the Confessions summarizing Scripture are also held in high esteem.
- c. Central to the well being of the church

is not intellect and great ability; basic is instead childlike faith and the desire to follow — blindly, as it were — the voice of the Shepherd, wherever the Shepherd leads.

Background

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the official State Church in The Netherlands, the Dutch Reformed Church, wallowed in liberalism and secularism. Although officially bound to the Word of God as confessed in the Three Forms of Unity, the church permitted and condoned preaching that denied the depraved nature of man, and contradicted the doctrine of salvation by grace alone through faith in Jesus Christ. Man, it was officially taught, was not totally corrupt, but knew by nature what was good and evil. Sin was not disobedience

against God, but rather a moral defect. Christ had not come into the world to save sinners through His substitutionary suffering and death, but came rather to preach and encourage moral perfection. Christ was Himself the example which men were to follow; by leading a virtuous life as did Christ, one was on an open road to heaven.

This approach to the gospel had, in essence, been propagated some two centuries earlier by Jacob Arminius. The teachings of this man the Dutch churches had emphatically rejected at the Synod of Dort 1618-1619. In fact, at this synod, the Dutch church bound itself officially and firmly in the Canons of Dort, to the Scriptural teaching of man's total depravity and God's gift of salvation through grace alone in Jesus Christ.

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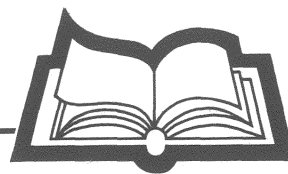
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“In the paths of Thy judgments, O LORD, we wait for Thee; Thy memorial Name is the desire of our soul.”

Isa. 26:8.

Enduring Memorial

After announcing the great reversal of reality and the glorious future for Jerusalem, the prophet here pauses to offer the prayer of the besieged to the LORD. In his prayer he echos the sentiment of the faithful remnant who, in exile and defeat, reach out in eager longing to the coming salvation of the LORD. They plead that in their situation the LORD might do for them what He had so often done for His people in the past — send forth the wonder and glory of His deliverance for them. And although these words belong to a specific situation, they also belong to that portion of the prophecies of Isaiah in which he reaches out beyond his own history, and draws universal lines applicable to all time. That gives this plea its timeliness for the church today as well.

For one sees who forms the central figures in this prophesy. Jerusalem, the city of the LORD, is under siege. This may refer to the time when Sennacherib attacked Jerusalem, as we read about it in II Kings 18, or may refer to a later siege. At any rate, it was a time of intense struggle for God’s people, a time when their freedom was taken away, and the threat of annihilation was so near that their future hung in a balance. In Jerusalem, however, we see the struggle of the church of all ages, and Jerusalem’s deliverance forms the hope and assurance of God’s people throughout history.

Where then does the prophet receive the assurance concerning the coming deliverance? He finds it in the *memory* of the LORD and His great Name. In fact, here the LORD’s Name is associated with remembrance, and is itself described as a memorial. The LORD’s Name is the LORD’s “memory,” the LORD’s remembrance. In other words, remembrance is pictured here as part of His being, His character. And this implies that His glorious acts of salvation and deliverance, which consistently add to the exaltation of His Name, are never forgotten, but remain recorded as a memorial for Him. He holds on to the glorious wonders of His hand, for the sake of His glorious Name.

And the prophet’s hope and expectation is that the LORD will continue with His glorious deeds; what He has done He will do in the future. In the early deliverance of His people the LORD announced His glorious Name as an everlasting memorial, Ex. 3:15, signifying that as the Almighty God He was ever the same. He gained glory over Pharaoh, Ex. 14:18, and so made a Name for Himself, Neh. 9:11. Would He not continue to work His wonders for His people?

We know how the LORD did answer this prayer with

His mighty deeds of deliverance; in fact the greatest of God’s redemptive works follows this prayer when — so many years later — the LORD sent His Son Jesus Christ our Saviour to grant deliverance to His Jerusalem. In Christ, the new Zion, the new Israel, receives a complete deliverance from all the power of her enemies, and she is exalted on high, while all opponents and enemies of the LORD are cut down and cast away.

Our God is the same for us today, a God of remembrance. Memory and memorial belongs to the greatness of His Name. That is why when we look back in our history, as we do every year on Reformation and Remembrance Day, we must look not at ourselves, but at the glorious hand of the LORD, who came to the aid of His people, and had compassion on them in their miserable plight. For in looking back to *His* acts in history, we look back to events that belong to Himself, events recorded for all ages in His Book, and which therefore have enduring significance. In all of them He adds to the glory of His Name. And will He allow anyone to take anything away from this?

And it is only in the true spirit of remembrance that the words of this plea can still be living for us today. Indeed, we may rest assured that the LORD’s mighty deeds of deliverance will continue for His people, in our time as well. Christ always watches over His own, and comes to their rescue. But He comes with His Word and Spirit particularly there where the plea for His coming is heard, and where the *desire* for the redemptive deeds of the LORD burns with ever-glowing firmness in the hearts of God’s faithful children. Such is the expectant plea of sinners in the church today — a plea that the LORD may *add* to the glory of His memorial Name — and so exalt Himself in greatness all the more, by saving His own, and destroying the powers of evil.

Does this plea still find a place on our lips? Shouldn’t it be there today, and every day? Then — and only then — we will see the glory of His great Name, and His mighty deeds of salvation for us as well. Then we see how we may be spared from defeat and judgment, and may find deliverance in Him, sharing the wonder of His majestic and memorial self-glorification, the complete and enduring exaltation of His Name. For He comes upon the clouds, and soon the *final* drama will be ushered in. In that battle, all glory will be to Him, and to the Lamb, forever and ever, Rev. 11:17ff. Then His glory will spread over all the earth, and will endure forever.

J. DEJONG

The Secession of 1834, cont.

Yet now, some two hundred years later, that very doctrine, once so emphatically condemned by the fathers, was warmly received by the children as a true and complete doctrine of salvation.

Three official decisions serve to demonstrate how far the church had strayed from the Word of God as con-

required that every office-bearer declare his firm belief that *all* the articles and doctrines of the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons of Dort *agree in everything* with the Word of God.

The Form of Subscription of 1816 changed this. Office-bearers were now requested to declare that they believe and

homes to edify each other. Conventicles were formed in which the faithful encouraged each other and their children with the riches given by God in His Word, treasurers which the church of old had carefully echoed in her Confessions. These meetings were simple, under the direction of the simple people, without the guidance of ministers of the Word. Thus,



The first "Teachers" of the Theological College at Kampen, The Netherlands: T. F. de Haan, S. van Velzen, A. Brummelkamp and H. De Cock

fessed in the Confessions.

a) Hymns — In 1807, a selection of one hundred and ninety-two "evangelical hymns" was introduced into the churches, to be sung alongside the existing one hundred and fifty psalms. Typical of these evangelical hymns, however, was the emphasis on the religious man, with his emotions and experiences. These hymns sang not primarily of Christ's redemptive work for man, but encouraged rather the religious man to follow the example of Christ, and so to lead the virtuous life leading to salvation. Thus a doctrinal heresy was officially introduced into the churches, encouraged by the church's leaders. And the membership basically accepted these hymns.

b) Church Order — A further indication of deviation from Scripture and Confession became evident in 1816. The Church Order of Dort was laid aside, and a new form of government was laid on the churches. In this new form of government, the secular authorities had the ultimate control. In agreement with the desire of the king, the synod became an instrument of the state. No longer was the Word of God the final court of appeal in the church; it was rather the secular government.

c) Form of Subscription — Also in 1816, a new Form of Subscription was agreed upon for the office-bearers in the church. The previous Form of Subscription, dating from the time of the Synod of Dort,

would diligently teach the truths of the adopted Forms of Unity *insofar* as these Forms of Unity agreed with the Word of God. It is clear: a wedge is driven between Scripture and Confession. The Confessions adopted by the church as proper summaries of the Bible no longer had any binding authority. They were valid only insofar as the preacher thought them to agree with Scripture. That meant in reality that the pulpit was legally open to every wind of doctrine. It meant that the Canons of Dort, with their doctrines about the depravity of man and the atoning work of Jesus Christ, could be officially denied as not agreeing with Scripture. It meant that every man could interpret Holy Scripture as was good in his own eyes. The ultimate judge of divine truth was not the Word of God as given to us in Holy Scripture, as confessed in the Confessions; the ultimate judge of truth was rather man himself. Changing the Form of Subscription meant that the Church was no longer bound to adhere to the Confessions. And that in turn officially loosened the ship of God's Church from her anchor in God's Word, and set her adrift in the uncertain seas of human rationalism. With this decision, the *sola scriptura* principle of the great Reformation was cast aside.

Faithfulness

While the pulpits provided stones instead of bread for the children of God, believers across Holland gathered in

in spite of official apostacy, the faith once for all delivered to the saints was kept alive by God in the hearts of our ancestors, although it was often mixed with erring subjectivism.

De Cock

Hendrik de Cock (1801-1842) was the instrument God chose to reform the preaching of the gospel. Not an outstanding student, he received his theological training in agreement with the spirit of the times. As a young minister, he zealously proclaimed the gospel of man's goodness, of his ability to win salvation from God, provided he follow the virtuous example of Jesus Christ.

Such was the man who became minister of the divine Word for the Church at Ulrum in 1829, his third congregation. He was received as pastor by the congregation with a measure of dissatisfaction on account of his known liberal slant.

But Rev. de Cock developed a warm relationship with his flock. Upon the advice of elder Beukema, the young minister began to study Reformed literature which he had never before read. This included, (surprisingly!) an abridged edition of Calvin's *Institutes*, as well as the Canons of Dort. This prayerful reading, together with further talks with the simple of faith in his congregation (particularly a word of the farm labourer Kuipinga remained with him: "If I am to add even one sigh to make my salvation possible,

I would be lost forever”) was used by the Lord to work an upright faith in this chosen instrument. The style of his sermons changed; he preached now not the goodness of man, but the gospel of free grace in Jesus Christ for the lost sinner. From far and wide the hungry came to Ulrum to be fed by the bread of life as preached by Rev. de Cock. Although the labourers on the farms worked long hours six days per week, it was not uncommon that these faithful of the conventicles walked ten miles Sunday morning in order to hear de Cock. They came in masses, by foot, by horse and buggy, by boat, so that for many there was no room in the church itself; they stood outside to listen, to learn, to still their gnawing hunger In preparation for a spiritual reawakening in the sleeping church in Holland, the Spirit of God prepared a people who hungered for the preaching of the Word, and a faithful preacher with a childlike faith.

“Looking to the command; blind to the future”

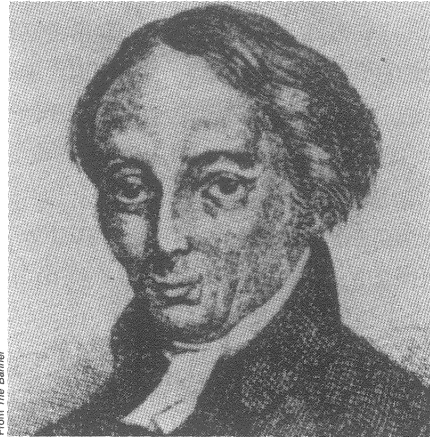
Rev. de Cock was not a pretentious man. He did not systematically attack the wrongs in the church by writings or sending appeals. He simply preached the full doctrine of salvation each Sunday anew, and prayed publically that God would graciously raise up a person capable of spearheading the attack against the liberalism in the church.

Meanwhile, de Cock did what he could to teach the people. Those ancient publications, the *Canons of Dort* and the abridged edition of Calvin’s *Institutes*, which had been so instrumental in opening his own eyes to the riches of the riches of the gospel, he republished and made available to his country men. The simple of faith greeted this effort with gladness.

But in the circle of de Cock’s colleagues, the republication of these old Reformed heirlooms was greeted with apprehension. For the theology of these relics agreed not at all with the free spirit of the day. To state that man was lost, deserving of eternal punishment, totally at the mercy of a just God, did not fit with the enlightened views of the nineteenth century. Consequently, other ministers published counterbrochures in which the theology of the *Canons of Dort* was discarded in favour of the modern consensus, and the church membership encouraged to ignore such primitive narrow-mindedness.

Particularly two of these publications were sharp in their attacks on the *Canons of Dort*. These two brochures, authored respectively by the Revs. Brouwer (*Necessary Warnings and Salutary Advice to my Congregation*) and Reddingius (*Letters Concerning the Current Divisions and*

Movements in the Reformed Church) offered attacks at times sharp and sarcastic on the Reformed doctrine and its defenders. They claimed that the doctrine as contained in the *Canons of Dort* was “un-Biblical, passive and unfruitful.” And the pastor of Ulrum was made out to be a schismatic, a misleader of the flock and in league with the Jesuits.



Hendrik De Cock

It was when de Cock learned that all his colleagues in his classical area agreed with Brouwer and Reddingius, that de Cock felt himself compelled to write. He published a brochure, *Defense of the True Reformed Doctrine and the True Reformed People*. The subtitle made a reference to Brouwer and Reddingius: “The Sheepfold of Christ Attacked by Two Wolves and Defended by H. de Cock.” In this brochure, he did as was his wont on the pulpit. He defended from Scripture the doctrine of salvation through faith alone in Christ for the lost sinner. And large numbers of people were delighted with this publication.

But the church was not amused. In response to this brochure, the authorities in the State Church summoned de Cock to appear before a classical board (Dec. 1833). Because he refused to retract what he had written about the Scriptural faith, he was suspended from office for a period of two years. The official ground for suspension was: he “overthrows the good order in the Church.” Peace and quiet in the church was considered to be of greater importance than proper reverence for the holy Word of the Living God.

De Cock’s suspension did not lead to his silence. In April of 1834, he wrote a preface to a pamphlet written by a certain Jacobus Klok, *The Evangelical Hymns Tested and Found Wanting*. In his preface, de Cock charged that these particular hymns of 1807 deprived the Reformed people of the true faith, for they applauded the goodness of man. Clearly, the issue was not the use of hymns as such; the issue was rather the attacks

which these hymns made on Scripture, and therefore on the Confessions drawn from Scripture.

In May, 1834, the provincial church board deposed de Cock as minister of the Church at Ulrum, on the ground that he had again broken the good order in the church. Once again, it was not doctrinal honesty nor respect and love for God and His revelation that prompted this decision. The church leaders desired but one thing, and that was peace and quiet. To achieve that goal, they felt de Cock must go.

Appeals by Rev. de Cock to the higher church courts, even to the king, were vain. It became abundantly clear that the ecclesiastical leaders were not willing to bow before the Word of God as confessed in their three Forms of Unity. So there remained no alternative for de Cock but to separate himself from the Reformed Church in The Netherlands.

Secession

Upon the urgings of his consistory and congregation, de Cock agreed, in October of 1834, to break his bonds with the church which refused to bow before the Word of God. In the course of time, it had become apparent that a hatred had developed within the Dutch Reformed Church, a hatred for those who defended the adopted Confessions, and, hence, also a hatred for the Scripture as summarized in the Confessions.

Consequently, on Tuesday, October 14, 1834, the congregation of Ulrum met together to sign an *Act of Separation or Return*. By signing this Act, the faithful of Ulrum gave testimony to their desire to uphold the Confessions. Not only did they embrace wholeheartedly the *Canons of Dort*, with its articles on the corruption of man and his absolute need for God’s grace; they clung also to the *Belgic Confession* with its marks of the true and false church. This *Act of Separation or Return* notes the fact that the State Church has lost the marks of the true church; in fact, it displays rather the marks of the false church (Art. 29, B.C.). As a result of this observation, the subscribers to this Act concluded their duty to “separate themselves from those who are not of the church” (cf. Art. 28, B.C.), and “declare at the same time their willingness to practise communion with all true Reformed members and to unite with every assembly based upon God’s infallible Word.” Again, that is in strict harmony with the Word of God as echoed in Art. 28, B.C.

It was this love for God, this respect for His holy Word, that characterized those who seceded from the apostate State Church. That was evidenced also by their decision, as recorded in the *Act of Separation or Return*, to “abide in all

things by God's holy Word and by our time-honoured Forms of Unity, based in all things upon that Word, viz, the Confession of Faith, the Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons of the Synod of Dordrecht." Their's was a desire to manage all things according to the pure Word of God, to acknowledge Jesus Christ as the only Head of the church. So they acted in faith, following the command of Christ, knowing that the future would not be easy, but aware that those who follow the Shepherd wherever He may lead will not be disappointed.

They had loved the church in which they had grown up. But the people of the Secession loved the Word of God and the God of the Word more than that institution which had begun to show less and less love for the Holy Scripture. Consequently, when the public defense of the true and complete doctrine of salvation was no longer appreciated, they walked the only road open to them; as people of God, they "came out of her" (cf. Rev. 18:4). Of this they were convinced: God wished to provide them with the living preaching of the Word, for the strengthening of faith. And that faithful preaching, together with its necessary consequences (as the adherence to the Confessions and the removal of the evangel-

ical hymns), were not tolerated in the State Church. A healthy esteem for Scripture and the God of Scripture left them no choice but to secede.

Struggle and triumph

For those who separated themselves from the State Church, life was indeed not easy. Internally, the seceders were a motley group, with different emphases and few leaders. Six young ministers (the average age was 27) served in the Secession churches. All six had received their theological training from liberal professors, all had to orientate themselves properly in the works of bygone Reformed writers. Yet on these six the Lord laid the mantle of leadership. Together they struggled to comprehend the riches of Scripture as the church had known it some two hundred years ago. Together they struggled to feed the sheep in the growing number of seceded congregations (by 1836, the six ministers served some one hundred and twenty-eight congregations!). Together they struggled against the hostility of the government and of the State Church; they encouraged the faithful in the face of persecution and oppression.

It was a time of struggle for the rejuvenated churches. But by the grace of

God, they persevered. Young they were, and inexperienced, and the truths of Scripture as confessed in the Three Forms of Unity lay buried under centuries of dust. But God used the faithful, including the six young ministers, to work a miracle, the miracle of the nineteenth century. God used them with their desire to be faithful, with their bowing reverently before the Word of God, and their high esteem for the Confessions.

And they did not struggle in vain. God blessed them and multiplied them, yes, made the people of the Secession to be a blessing for The Netherlands and even for the world. The people of the Secession, together with men as Dr. A. Kuyper, reached for the highest offices of the land, putting into practice Christian principles for the good of the nation. And for decades in America, the Christian Reformed Church, the daughter church of the Secession, carried high the banner of *sola scriptura* for the good of their country.

God blessed them, and made them to be a blessing for many nations. It could all happen because the men of the Secession desired total obedience to God alone.

C. BOUWMAN

PRESS REVIEW

Thankful for sufferings



The Presbyterian Journal of August 15, 1984 was devoted to suffering and its positive result in the lives of Christian believers. It is shown that God uses sufferings in many forms, in illness, death, persecution, to purify faith and make His children on earth steadfast and more and more perfect, or, rather, whole in their faith. I thought it good to take over part of an article about the suffering for the name of Christ in China and its positive effect. It may help some readers of *Clarion* as well, and it is good for all of us to be aware of the sufferings of God's children and the goal that He has with it.

The author of the article, Jonathan Chao, is director of the Chinese Church Research Center in Hong Kong. He starts with a short history of Christian life in China after 1950, when the communists had taken over. Not so long ago a Press Release dealt with it. It may not hurt to read about it once more.

1950-1958

During the first eight years of the Com-

munist takeover, 1950-1958, the Protestant church was brought under the full control of the party through the Three-Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM). "Three-Self" stands for self-support, self-government, and self-propagation. These are former missionary and Chinese goals for developing indigenous Chinese churches. In 1950, however, a liberal Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) leader worked with Chinese Communist Party officials to form the TSPM in order to break the ties between the Chinese church and the West and to bring the church under the control of the party. This was done so that the church would support the political programs of the party, which is the meaning of "patriotic" in Communist China.

All pastors and Christian leaders were forced to join the TSPM as a declaration of their support for the new China. Those who refused to join the state-backed TSPM organization were regarded as non patriotic and labeled as antirevolutionaries. Most of these were arrested in 1955 and again in 1957. Those pastors who refused to bow to the state were imprisoned for 15 to 23 years and were not released until 1978-1981.

1958-1966

During the years of 1958-1966, only a few TSPM churches were allowed to open. Sermons were censored and included political propaganda. The people, getting nothing from such sermons, began to meet secretly. Those who were caught suffered interrogation and were frequently imprisoned. Adults were sent far away to reform camps; their families were left without income, and their friends and relatives would have little to do with such families. Only fellow believers stretched out a helping hand, sharing their meager resources with them.

1966-1976

When the Cultural Revolution broke out in 1966, Christians throughout China suffered unprecedented persecution. Even officials of the TSPM were attacked. Red Guards stormed every believer's home searching for Bibles, hymnals, and all other types of Christian literature in order to confiscate or burn them. In Amoy, the Red Guards gathered all the Bibles they could find and piled them in a large heap in the city public square. They then forced the

Christians to kneel in front of this mountain of Bibles and they set fire to it. Red Guards stood behind the Christians and forced them to stay on their knees so that, as the flames soared into the sky, the heat severely scorched the faces and bodies of many of the kneeling Christians. Some, in desperation, fled to the second floor of nearby buildings and jumped to their deaths. Only those whose faith was exceptionally strong endured this fiery ordeal.

After the initial repression of the Cultural Revolution, no open church activities were allowed. China became a "religionless society." But now, almost 20 years later, we have learned that Christians did not stop meeting for worship even at the height of the Cultural Revolution. They conducted their prayer meetings secretly, in homes. This state of affairs continued until the death of Chairman Mao in 1976.

1976-1982

After Mao died, China began to change politically, but Christian activities remained illegal until 1979 when the former policy of limited toleration was restored. Churches began to reopen for public worship in September 1979, and, to date, there are 300 churches open for worship. The present policy is a return to what it was during 1958-1966; the TSPM has been restored and has become the main agency for controlling the churches.

With the reorganization and expansion of the TSPM, since 1980, house church activities have again become the target of control. Recently a house church meeting in East China was stormed and its leaders were beaten with electrified rods and the Christian sisters were stripped of their clothing. In Henan, two old pastors who had come from Nanking to preach the gospel were beaten on the spot, arrested, and taken back to the Nanking Religious Affairs Bureau. There they had to write confessions for preaching without TSPM permission. The conflict between the house churches and the TSPM is taking place right now.

The history of the church in China raises several questions. Why, then, did God allow the church in China to go through such prolonged period of suffering? What has God done through the suffering church? What can we learn from the sufferings of the church in China? These are profound theological questions that all Christians in the world should reflect upon.

From the viewpoint of an historian of the church in China, I have discovered, after four years of research, that the Protestant church in China has increased by nearly 500 percent or 50 times over. In 1950 there were fewer than a million Protestant communicant members, 840,000 to be exact. Today, the Chinese Church Research Centre estimates that there are about 50 million believers. The suffering church, tested by many trials, has been purged of its impurities and weaknesses and has become a missionary church that is trying very hard

to reach the 950 million nonbelievers in China.

In my opinion, the church in China is growing by leaps and bounds because it has suffered for Christ's sake and has learned that suffering is central to Christian maturity and to church growth. This is one of the important lessons that can be learned from the church in China.

After this brief historic overview, the author mentions a number of texts from the New Testament that teach us how God uses the sufferings of His children for His glory, for the purification and strengthening of their faith and for bringing others to Christ. He illustrates the truth in these Scripture words with examples.

Learning obedience through suffering (Hebrews 5:8-9)

There was a young preacher in Shanghai who was greatly used of God in the 1950s. Through one week's evangelistic meetings, 500 came to know the Lord. In 1960 he was arrested and imprisoned for preaching the gospel. He served for ten years in a hard labour camp. In 1970 he was released. He began to preach the gospel again, this time in Henan, his home province. After four years of secret itinerant preaching, in 1974, he was arrested and imprisoned again and was not released until late in 1979.

Five months after his release my wife interviewed him. In the course of the conversation he reflected upon the meaning of his suffering. He said that the 16 years of imprisonment taught him two lessons: (1) suffering enabled him to know God more profoundly and (2) suffering helped him to learn obedience to God's will. This is the experience of our Saviour. God also intends for us to experience suffering that we may learn obedience and hence be perfected in our obedience.

Sharing in Christ's suffering (Philippians 1:29)

Recently 14 young preachers were arrested in central Henan for preaching the gospel without permission. They preached in a town where 5,000 came to hear them. The police forced them to stay in a kneeling position with their hands tied to the back of their necks and feet for three days and three nights. One of them, a girl, fainted and was released earlier, but the rest suffered nine days of imprisonment.

Knowing the Lord through suffering (Philippians 3:8-10)

The Chinese preacher who suffered imprisonment for 16 years says that he did not really know Christ as fully as God intended until his second imprisonment. He told us that his knowledge of God and of Christ and his style of ministry were all limited by tradition. Through suffering, he said, "My

religious traditions, like a jade jar, were broken and the ointment of Christ came out. Now I have come to know the depth of the love of God, the mercies of God, and the faithfulness of God through suffering. I came to know what it means to be identified with the death of Christ and to enjoy the power of His resurrection." Suffering, for Christians in China, has become an avenue for knowing God. "You don't know the holiness of God," they say, "until you have suffered."

Suffering liberates from sin (I Peter 4:1-2)

One house church leader in central China used to be bound by the sins of adultery and stealing. One day he was caught stealing a fellow farmer's savings and was imprisoned. This imprisonment led him to have a conviction of sin. After he became a Christian, he was still bothered by these two sins until he was imprisoned again for the gospel's sake. Now he testifies that the second suffering released him from the lust for women and the desire for money. He is now pastoring a house church that is more than 400 strong in his village. He is completely preoccupied with preaching the gospel.

Suffering tests and refines faith (I Peter 1:6-7)

Before the Communist takeover there were many "rice-Christians" in China who joined the church for material benefit: like free education, free medicine, and possibly church employment. Persecution separated the genuine believers from the false believers, who quickly denied that they were Christians. Persistent persecution has preserved the purity of the church in China because it has made it costly to confess Christ in a socialistic country.

A believer in Peking was arrested in the early 1950s because a fellow Christian betrayed him to the government. After 20 years of imprisonment he was released and came to Hong Kong. I asked him, "How do you now feel about the man who betrayed you?" He replied, "I have learned to forgive him after hating him for the first ten years." Such is the kind of refined faith: one which forgives and is displayed in a gentle spirit.

Suffering leads to maturity (James 1:2-3, Romans 5:3)

Wang Ming-Dao was the best known evangelical Chinese pastor before the "Liberation." He was arrested twice, once in 1955 and then again in 1957, for not supporting the TSPM. Altogether he served 23 years in prison. He testifies to visitors that there was a time when he, too, was weak and even "denied" Christ. But he took courage from Peter's failure and is repentant now. After prolonged suffering, he tells his fellow believers that there is nothing in the whole world that would ever shake his faith or destroy his loyalty to Christ. Suffer-

ing has made him more steadfast in the Lord than ever before.

If you had fellowship with house church leaders in China, you would be impressed by their strength of character. Their characters are marked by strong faith, boldness in preaching the gospel, breadth of love for fellow co-workers, and a self-sacrificing attitude. One of the itinerant preachers told me that he is a target for arrest by the Public Security Bureau (the police) in the district where he ministers. He preaches every day in different villages. As soon as the local police learn of his arrival, they attempt to arrest him. One day as he was preaching in the courtyard at a house church meeting, a police chief arrived suddenly. The believers immediately encircled the police chief and meanwhile led the preacher away to a hiding place. Local believers, at first, didn't know where to take him for safety. But suddenly they got the idea of taking him to the home of the police chief, because the policeman's mother,

wife, and children were all believers. There he stayed with the policeman's son until he was escorted away at midnight to another village. "Repeated deliverances like this incident," he said, "have made me bold in the Lord because I believe that the Lord will protect me." Christian character is built in the heat of trials where we experience the power of God.

The first part of the author's conclusion is:

Are you suffering in some way? Are you suffering because you are following Christ as a faithful disciple? Rejoice and be glad in it because God is being gracious to you, giving you supervised training for greater Christian maturity and preparing you for glory (James 1:2; I Peter 4:13).

I like to conclude with another word from Scripture that shows so clearly that our heavenly Father has His wise and good purposes with the sufferings He brings

upon His beloved children: Hebrews 12:5 and 6 in the context of v. 3-11.

My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the LORD, nor loose courage when you are punished by Him. For the LORD disciplines him whom He loves, and chastises every son whom He receives.

James also says how God's children can fulfil their calling to suffer. Accepting suffering in faith and trust for the Lord's sake is possible in a total surrender to God, in which God's child gives himself totally and with an undivided heart to his Father in heaven. This total surrender through faith comes through *love* for the LORD.

Blessed is the man who endures trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life which God has promised to those who *love* Him. James 1:12.

J. GEERTSEMA

A favourable judgment

On August 24, 1984, Mr. Justice F.C. Muldoon of the Federal Court of Canada rendered his verdict in the case of Lyle McBurney versus the Queen.

Our readers will know the issue.

Revenue Canada had disallowed deduction of considerable portions of the total amounts paid by Mr. McBurney to independent Christian schools where his children received their education.

The result of this act of Revenue Canada was that many of our parents, too, received notice of reassessment and that they had to pay large amounts of back taxes when significant portions of their deductions in previous years were disallowed. And for the years following they sometimes were not allowed to deduct any amount since the "cost-per-pupil" multiplied by the number of their children attending school exceeded the total amount they contributed to the school.

Mr. Lyle McBurney, supported by the C.J.L. Foundation, appealed the ruling of Revenue Canada.

His appeal was sustained by the Court and Revenue Canada was ordered to pay the costs of the appeal.

Somewhere I read that Mr. Justice Muldoon's verdict "reads like a sermon," and we can well agree with this expression. The language used is very simple, as far as it can be in a legal judgment, and the whole verdict can be followed by

practically everyone who knows English.

In his verdict, Mr. Justice Muldoon considered that the plaintiff and others who are participating members of the three charitable school corporations are, on religious grounds, not satisfied with the nature of the education provided by the tax supported schools of Ottawa and Toronto, respectively.

"Neither," the verdict continues, "are those parents, who are not members of the three Christian School corporations, but whose children are enrolled in the particular schools. That is to say, the public schools, providing a necessarily secular education, do not impart that hour-by-hour, subject-by-subject infusion of Christian values and interpretation of subject matter which the plaintiff and his fellows seek for their children's education. Neither do the Roman Catholic Separate Schools. Although the plaintiff testified that one Roman Catholic family had enrolled their child in the OCSA school, neither the plaintiff nor the other supporters of these Christian Schools is a Roman Catholic apparently, and so the Roman Catholic Separate Schools are not ideally appropriate for their children's education."

Mr. Justice Muldoon appears to have an excellent grasp of the character of a Christian school, for the verdict continues:

"Studies of the Bible and of the

Christian religion are not merely core subjects of these schools, because, transcending the teaching of particular subjects, Christian thought, perceptions values and works permeate the entire educational formation (of) the young people who are enrolled in those schools. The charitable quality of the schools operated by the three nonprofit corporations could well be characterized as both educational and religious."

Both these elements, the advancement of education and the advancement of religion are firmly and favourably rooted in the public policy of our law. "Moreover," Mr. Justice Muldoon continues, "it is not stretching matters to say that even in the modern, secular age the advancement of religion is rooted in our law and in our Constitution."

"That policy is readily discernable in the declaratory preambles to the Canadian Bill of Rights RSC 1970, Appendix III and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms which both affirm that Canada 'is founded upon principles that' acknowledge and recognize 'the supremacy of God' and 'the rule of law.' That is not to say that our country is even remotely similar to a theocracy such as have been established in past ages and in the present day in some countries. Far from it. We do not have any established church or State religion. Those Canadians who profess atheism, agnosticism or the

philosophy of secularism are just as secure in their civil rights and freedoms as are those who profess religion. So it is that while Canada may aptly be characterized as a secular State, yet, being declared by both Parliament and the Constitution to be founded upon principles which recognize 'the supremacy of God,' it cannot be said that our public policy is entirely neutral in terms of 'the advancement of religion.' (On the other hand it seems now more than ever before to turn away from any purported 'charity' in the service of atheism.)"

Charitable organizations must, of course, clearly aim and work at the advancement of education or of religion. The verdict quotes a case in which a bequest to a Dominican convent, whose cloistered religious engaged solely in private prayer without any wider scope or public element or objectively provable purposes of public utility, was disallowed as a charitable bequest.

If anyone should wish to claim that a charitable organization must necessarily minister to all of the public, or bring to the fore that a charitable donation is only such a donation from which the donor does not derive any personal benefit, he had better listen to Mr. Justice Muldoon's verdict.

"It will be convenient here to take the example of a Christian parish or congregation, about which the plaintiff testified from personal knowledge and experience and about which there is some mention in the jurisprudence. Of course, no one parish ministers to all of the public. Such parish churches are inevitably supported by their own parishioners. Some parishioners contribute more than their numerically proportionate share of the upkeep and expenses of the church. In truth, those parishioners contribute for other less affluent or less generous parishioners. Some parishioners, whether through lack of means or lack of generosity, contribute nothing to the upkeep and expenses of the church. These latter parishioners are 'carried,' so to speak, by the others. And while the parish council, board, trustees, or churchwardens, (however styled) are always trying to drum up at least a fair share from those noncontributing parishioners who are thought to be more affluent, or less generous, yet it is generally observable that no one is turned away from public acts of worship, or excluded from the homily only, or denied pastoral counselling, or barred from youth groups, Bible studies, or parish picnics or social functions only because he or she contributes less than a proportionate share or even nothing.

"It is only natural that people will support the parish church of their choice or that parish which canon law suggests

is theirs, partake of all it offers (or less, by choice) and make their charitable donations to that parish. The Department of National Revenue quite rightly does not purport to assess the benefits which parishioners derive from their parish church in order to disallow a portion of their donations"

Not only the question whether a donor derives some benefit from his donation and whether this could disqualify a gift as being charitable, came to the fore. There was also the question of whether the three schools which Mr. McBurney's children attended, levied a tuition fee or not. Tuition fees — as we know — are deductible only as legitimate expenses to those who paid them for themselves. Parents are not allowed to claim tuition fees paid for their sons or daughters who attend schools of any kind, including universities. Students themselves may deduct their fees, not as a charitable donation but as legitimate expense. Should the schools where Mr. McBurney's children went levy tuition fees, then Revenue Canada might have been correct in disallowing moneys paid for them as charitable donations.

There was some argumentation about this point, since one of the schools did speak of "tuition fees." The following year, however, it changed the term to "Donations from parents of students."

Mr. Justice Muldoon came to the conclusion that "It is clear that having characterized parents' donations as tuition fees in the first year, the board considered that it had made a semantic slip and simply changed the terminology to conform with its ideals, its practices and the reality of the matter." In other words: it is simply a matter of terminology, but from the whole set-up and practice of that school it is evident that it does not charge (separate) tuition fees. It is all a matter of wording.

As for the question whether nonpayment ever resulted in a child's dismissal from the school one witness testified "that a parent who is also a member could have his or her membership terminated 'for financial delinquency,' but he reiterated that loss of membership by the parent cannot be equated with barring the child from the school simply because, as he explained, parents of children enrolled in the school are not absolutely required to be 'members.'"

Mr. Justice Muldoon's conclusion is: "OCSA levied no tuition fees as consideration for furnishing a Christian education, and no part of the plaintiff's gifts is to be so characterized." In another passage of his judgment, Mr. Justice Muldoon denies Revenue Canada the right to "vivisect" contributions of church members to their parish or congregation.

"It is clear," the verdict states, "that the plaintiff and other like-minded contributors banded together in a community (or congregation) in order to support each other's ideals of Christian Education, to develop or maintain each school and to meet, as a community, the common expenses entailed in their project. In that regard they were and are indistinguishable from the congregation of a parish, about the deductibility of whose gifts there is no doubt. Upon the evidence it is clear in any event that the charitable status of each of the three corporations may be based as much upon the advancement of religion as upon the advancement of education. In regard to both modalities of charitable status no material consideration and no tuition fees were charged or given." "What the plaintiff received here is not qualified and is indistinguishable from what a parishioner-contributor receives from and through a parish church, and especially if that parishioner-contributor's children attend the church."

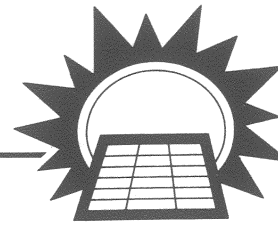
"The body which authoritatively sets, declares or varies public policy in Canada is still Parliament, even though some important matters of public policy are now expressly entrenched in our Constitution. Parliament has spoken on the matter, thus far, by enacting in subsection 110 (1) of the Income Tax Act that the aggregate of gifts made by a taxpayer in each year to registered charities, up to 20% of the taxpayer's income, is deductible. Any refinement of that policy and those provisions ought to be specifically debated in, and effected by, Parliament — not by the minister and not by the court."

Mr. Justice Muldoon's conclusion was that plaintiff was and should be allowed his full claim for deductions.

In the meantime word has been received that Revenue Canada is going to appeal this decision (one of the last acts before the Liberals had to surrender the reigns of government to Mr. Mulrooney and his Conservatives) and we shall have to wait for a final decision perhaps even until the Supreme Court has decided on the case.

Thus far, however, we are grateful for it that there are magistrates whose eyes have not been blinded by unwillingness to understand but who receive the wisdom from the Lord to perceive things and to judge correctly and fairly.

For the rest, we leave this matter in the Lord's hand, meanwhile doing what we are able to do and remembering in our prayers those who have to do justice and to judge also in this case.



"Teach me Thy way, O LORD, that I may walk in Thy truth; unite my heart to fear Thy name."
Psalm 86:11

To submit oneself to God's will requires a tremendous amount of struggle. This is what the Lord wants. He wants us to love and obey Him with our whole heart and mind and soul. Our own will is often opposed to this surrender, that is why we are our own worst enemies. The pull of sin is so great, that if we were left to ourselves we would be ruining our lives. But, God mercifully sends His messengers to reprove, comfort and guide us through the preaching of the Word.

David's psalms show us his continual struggle of heart, but they also show us his confession that it is better to fall into the LORD's hands than into the hands of men. When in verse 14, he prays to God about "a band of ruthless men" who seek his life, he trusts God to help and deliver him. He also asks God for "a sign of His favour, that those who hate me may see and be put to shame because Thou, LORD, hast helped me and comforted me."

Paul in Romans 7 also shows us the deep struggle he had to go through, "but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin which dwells in my members." In Romans 8 he continues, "For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law."

It is not easy to submit oneself to God's will. God sometimes tests us, but at the same time He also makes us hear. Therefore our continual prayer should be for guidance, in order that our hearts may be united to do God's will.

* * *

"Let me hear what God the LORD will speak, for He will speak peace to His people, to His saints, to those who turn to Him in their hearts."
Psalm 85:8

* * *

*"Faith is a force that is greater
Than knowledge or power or skill . . .
And the darkest defeat turns to triumph
If we trust in God's wisdom and will."*

Helen Steiner Rice

On our birthday calendar for November we have:

MR. C. SPEYER

*c/o St. Peter's Hospital
88 Maplewood
Hamilton, ON L8M 1W9*

The Lord willing Mr. Speyer will celebrate his 65th birthday on November 2. He is chronically ill and his condition did not change much since last year. He really appreciates to receive cards for his birthday.

WILMA VAN DRONGELEN

*31827 Forest Avenue
Clearbrook, BC*

The Lord willing, Wilma hopes to celebrate her 27th birthday on November 3. I have no updated information on Wilma.

We have been requested to remember a sister who suffered a stroke last year and who is recuperating very slowly. Mrs. Post is in her mid fifties. She is bound to her home mostly. She would love to receive some attention and encouragement. Her address is:

MRS. H. POST

*Ebenezer Villa
337 Stone Church Road East
Hamilton, ON L9B 1B1*

We have been requested to save stamps for the Association for the Handicapped. Mr. Hank Post of Grimsby, Ontario, has been collecting stamps for several years; he is able and willing to handle 500-1000 lbs. of stamps. The profit will go to the Association for the Handicapped. If everyone starts saving stamps it should be possible to collect many. It can become a very good habit and it takes very little effort. Shall we all participate and start saving now? It can be done personally or in groups. For more information the chairman of the Canadian Reformed Association for the Handicapped can be contacted. His address is as follows:

CAN. REF. ASSOC. FOR THE HANDICAPPED

*c/o Mr. P. Feenstra
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The opening of the Fraser Valley Study Center

The first two weeks of June proved to be interesting, instructive and inspiring for some residents of the Fraser Valley. The study center opened its doors and hosted two Reformed professors, both principals of their respective colleges. Professor J. Faber from our theological college in Hamilton led an intensive seminar on the doctrine of the church, while Prof. C. Graham of the Free Church of Scotland College in Edinburgh gave a series of lectures covering cultural, ethical and ecclesiastical topics.

The first Friday evening of June was the official opening of the Fraser Valley Study Center (FVSC). A group of approximately one hundred and thirty-five people crowded into the annex of the Langley Canadian Reformed Church to attend our first seminar entitled "The Doctrine of the Church." The next few hours Dr. Faber kept us busy with Scriptural data concerning the church. He began by focussing on the Biblical names and images used to typify the church, proceeded to paint its

dimensions, delineate its marks, outline its structure and concluded with answering queries from the audience.

The next day's topics built upon the previous evening's work. The areas discussed included: Augustine and the Donatists, Calvin's battle with Rome and the Spiritualists, the church in the Reformed confessions, a comparison of A. Kuyper's and K. Schilder's view of the church, and finally Vatican II and modern Roman Catholicism. The seminar covered the various topics in a thorough and interesting manner. The lecturer interacted well with his audience and they in turn felt that the time spent was worthwhile, both academically as well as socially.

The following week the FVSC hosted Professor C. Graham. Our Scottish guest was in Vancouver to lecture for the Vancouver International Theological Academy (VITA) and since the objective of this organization is somewhat similar to our own it was agreed Professor Graham



Prof. C. Graham

would serve both groups. His series of lectures covered the following timely topics: A Christian view of Culture, Marriage and Divorce, and Introducing the Free Church of Scotland. This series was well received and attended. It was also a unique event because it allowed Prof. Graham to meet the Canadian Reformed community and us to learn more about our Scottish brethren.

During the summer months the FVSC planned for the coming season. Programs of study offered to the general public include: A Survey of Romans (14 lectures), Introduction to Reformed Evangelism (6 lectures) and Biblical Prophecy (7 lectures). Another seminar dealing with a Christian view of property rights will be given in the spring of 1985. We thank God for the freedom to learn and pray that He will convince us all of the need for continuing Christian education.

THE FVSC BOARD

Note: Photographs courtesy of Mr. Peter Vandergugten



The audience—undivided attention

“Anchor”

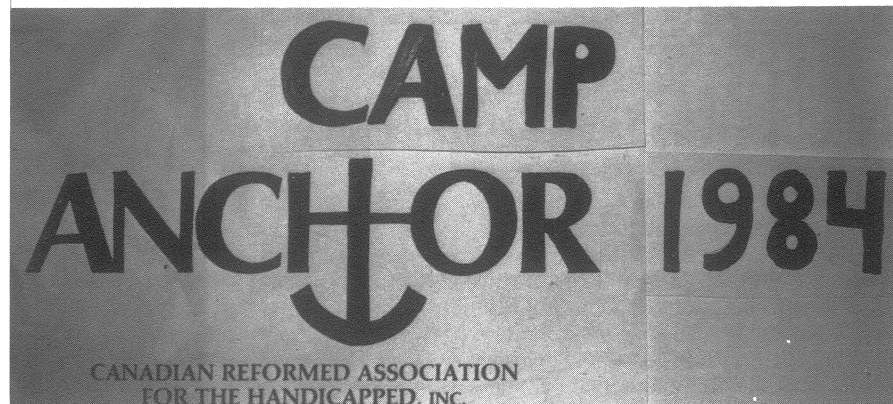
Summer camp for the Handicapped, July 2 to 14, 1984 at Valen's Conservation area in Freelon

Sometimes we woke up early, for various reasons: then it was the drip-drop of the rain, then it was the early runner to the washroom, other times it was the birds with their clear songs of joy and also: a declaration of territory.

The cooks of camp were generally the first risers for work. A few others, who were early risers, usually managed to sneak in an early cup of coffee. At 6 in the mornings, the tent zippers started to make their music, followed up by a peeking face topped off by a tousled pile of hair. One of the little boys caught the early worm, put it in a perculator with coffee and said with a winning smile to the kitchen chief, “You cook it, he?”



A lot of planning and ingenuity had already been at work, before the 8:30 a.m. — call of “breakfast” sounded. There was much variety in the food; some well-known things, like spaghetti, called “sketty” for short; some new and stranger things too, like the one dish that came under the exotic, hard-to-pronounce name of “STOETJE-PAP”. That was good! Don't change the recipe . . . !



Anchor camp 1984

Chorus

The camp was fun thru rain or shine, We laughed a lot and had a good time. From early morn to the fire at night.

1. (Daniel Stroop) There's Daniel, Daniel, sweetheart of the camp for a week . . . at Anchor Camp.
2. (George Ross) There's George, George, being wheeled around by the rest . . .
3. (Marsha Moesker) There's Marsha, Marsha, loving mud and puddles everywhere . . .
4. (Charlie Beintema) There's Charlie, Charlie, scaring the young chicks in the pen . . .
5. (Jack Dieleman) There's Jack, Jack, talking without end to the girls . . .
6. Paul Dieleman) There's Paul, Paul, catching all the fish in the lake . . .
7. (Janine Smid) There's Janine, Janine, looking at the screens, at the films . . .
8. (Derek Kok) There's Derek, Derek, carrying firewood on his chair . . .
9. (Jerry Bontekoe) There's Jerry, Jerry, diving off his raft in the lake . . .
10. (Connie Van Amerongen) There's Connie, Connie; Derek is her honey at the beach . . .
11. (Jim Buikema) There's Jim, Jim, running off again to dress up . . .
12. (Philip Schuurman) There's Phil, Phil, wearing cherries on his bril and his ears . . .
13. (James VanderHeiden) There's James, James, bringing water in for the dishes . . .
14. (John Feenstra) There's John, John, falling off his chair with Sikke . . .
15. (Grace Homan) There's Grace, Grace, giggles to herself in her bed . . .
16. (Clarence Zwiep) There's Clarence, Clarence, eating the leftovers at meals . . .
17. Marinus Foekens) There's Marinus, Marinus, saying “hi!” to the guests when they come . . .
18. (Cora Schoonhoven) There's Cora, Cora, oh, we all adore her when she asks . . .
19. Here we are, we are, sitting round the fire one more time.

Authored by Janette and her friends.

At a staff meeting on June 15, the list of names of volunteers that were to lead in the devotions had already been established. The Bible reading at meal times and the story telling at day closing were under the theme: God's care for His people, mainly from the Book of Exodus. There was a marked difference between professional teachers and lay-persons in such leads; yet it all witnessed to the Saviour of the world, and to His daily care for His children.

After breakfast, the plans for the day were announced, and an applause from small and big hands followed. Corvee folks were then appointed to clear up after the meal. Tents and trailers had to be tidied and cleaned. Ladies seem to do better in that job than boys and men.

There were a few days with either much or very much rain, and the schedule for such days had to be changed. We prayed afterwards for forgiveness for anyone that might have grumbled and complained about the rain. The chief cook protected herself with a hooded rain jacket made from a plastic garbage bag.

On one rainy day we went to the basement of the church building of Burlington South. It was an enjoyable day, with film, cartoons and games. With a visit to McDonald's, supper was taken care of. In general we had lots of company from mosquitoes. We killed about 11,600, while many of them escaped with severe injuries. This was the reason that so few of the guests on the closing evening were stung

A couple of times, some young ladies from the Conservation Management came to teach the participants to make things from paperbags, paper plates, pieces of string, beads and other materials. Real pieces of art were produced and proudly displayed.

Hikes and canoe trips were made; Lions Safari and Mountsberg Wildlife Centre were visited; soccer was played; firewood was to cut up, hairdressing ex-



ercises were displayed, fishing trips were made, and, of course, as many days as was possible we went to the beach with



three vans and one or two cars. Wheelchairs with their passengers were loaded on and off with a routine.

Conservation management showed great dedication and cooperation for our group. The participants that won prizes with the fishing were Jim Beukema, Paul Dieleman and Derek Kok.

On one of the fishing trips there were two more fishermen than rods. Fortunately, someone found at the river a long piece of loose line with a hook and sinker on it. Another hook was tied to the other end and two persons held each an end of that line . . . guess who caught the most fish that evening! One of the older boys caught a fish for the first time in his life. When one of the boys came home with a 16 inch pike, the welcome at camp was deafening; many of the mosquitoes fled in terror

During a very heavy thunderstorm the whole big tarp, under which we always had our meals, came down; the springs had stretched out from the original 12 to about 48 inches; a sorry sight! But with joy and vigor the job of restoration was tackled, and in a little more than "no time," it was back in its former "unfulness." The "Person in Charge" (called pic for short) took it all in stride, and never showed dismay. Rain or shine, *he* always shone. The shower after supper was a must, but not always a bust. It took the eagle eye of a counselor to keep the job going to a good and clean end.

At 7:30 p.m., closing time arrived. The Bible story was told, whereafter all the participants had their turn to name a Psalm or Hymn that we would sing together. Often they just named "their own" song. The day was then closed with thanksgiving, whereafter the little ones went to bed. The campfire was then lit, and the rest sat around till about 9 p.m. Some of the older boys had taken musical instruments along, and they played for us every evening. Then it was bedtime for all the other participants.

Staff then made the circle around the



fire a little smaller and discussed the events of the day with remarks and suggestions, and also the plans for the next day.

Evening guests made us happy during the two weeks of our camp, especially the large number that came on closing day.

On Sunday, July 8, we went to church at Burlington South. For every participant and volunteer there was a home and family that received them over noon. It was a great way to make or renew acquaintances. In the afternoon there was celebration of Holy Communion, in which some people of camp participated. The Rev. DeJong said in his sermon that there would be no wheelchairs in heaven. This saying made a strong impact on some participants. After church, a supper had been prepared for us. More contri-

butions and help for the meal and the accommodations had been offered by the church members than could be made use of. It was great to notice that enthusiasm for "Anchor" and its participants.

Many people had again made contributions towards our camp weeks: trailers, tents, firewood, cherries, doughnuts, strawberries, and other gifts of labour and dedication.

It was such a joyful time; eighteen participants and twenty-one volunteers brought together from all sides; several had never met before; it was such a great thing to meet for this occasion. Bonds developed between everyone; bonds that will last. All the first year volunteers vowed to be back next year, the Lord willing. The frequent rain did not wash away the enthusiasm, neither did the sun burn it away, nor did the few real cold nights

freeze it out, not even the mosquitos could chew it away. Hope to see all you folks again.

"UNCLE BILL"

Farewell Song

Camping was fun, Camping was fun,
Yes it was! Yes it was!
Ev'ryone was happy, ev'ryone was happy,
We'll be back! We'll be back.

(This was sung in the way "Father Jacob, father Jacob . . ." is sung, dividing the singers in four groups.

Authored by "the ladies."

INTERNATIONAL



AN APPEAL

JOURE, The Netherlands. Twenty-seven members of the Synodical Reformed Church in Joure, Friesland, sent an appeal to the Regional Synod against one of their ministers, the Rev. J. Wagenmakers and against his consistory. They claim therein that this minister denies, among other things, the virgin birth and the divinity of Christ and that he does not recognize the Holy Scripture as the Word of God.

For a considerable time already there have been difficulties surrounding this minister. Last year a number of concerned members withdrew and formed a separate congregation. Another part of the congregation, however, tried to come to a solution by following "the ecclesiastical way." An appeal to the consistory and to classis remained without effect. Now they decided to address themselves to the Regional Synod.

Rev. Wagenmakers declared that he does not lose one minute of sleep because of the appeal. He is of the opinion that the growing apart of concepts of faith and of experience of faith is a process which is general within his churches. "We talked with these people without end," he said, "but at a certain moment you have grown apart to such an extent that further discussion makes no longer any sense. You cannot continue to spend all your energy on this kind of discussion. There are more things to be done."

Is it not a mere forty years ago that left and right ministers, elders, and deacons were cast out and forbidden to continue in office because they refused to abide by certain "divine truths" which had been established by certain synods?

Was the Liberation of 1944 indeed a breach occasioned by personal matters as those who caused it want us to believe? Were *persons* and their honour at stake, OR the Truth of God and the solidity of His covenant?

If we did not know the answer as yet, it becomes clearer than the noonday light what the issue really was.

SUPREMACY THREATENED?

Several of Mexico's Roman Catholic bishops have expressed alarm at the growth of "sects" in their country. The bishops say the groups — including Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Presbyterians, Methodists, and Pentecostals — are undermining religion, patriotism, and culture in Mexico. The Mexican press has criticized Protestant groups, calling them US spies or agents of the Central Intelligence Agency.

TOBACCO LIFELINE

An association of fifty-one Southern Baptist Churches in North Carolina has taken its denomination to task for adopting an antitobacco resolution. Southern Baptist Convention messengers (dele-

gates) in June urged Congress to terminate subsidies to tobacco farmers and encouraged Southern Baptists who grow tobacco to switch to another crop. A recent resolution adopted by the Johnson Baptist Association in North Carolina calls the crop "the lifeline for many of our people and the majority of the churches" in the association.

RULING EXPECTED

The United Methodist Church's highest court will rule next month on a ban against the ordination of practising homosexuals. The denomination's Judicial Council will rule whether the ban, approved by the church's general conference in May, is in accord with the United Methodist constitution. The ban is scheduled to take effect January 1.

NOT LIKE THIS, MR. GRAHAM

The Hague (ANP) "We deplore it very much that Billy Graham is visiting the Soviet Union upon invitation of the recognized Union of Baptists and of the Russian Orthodox Church, for this happens at the cost of the truth. We have nothing against his plans to evangelize within the Soviet Union, but we have grave doubts about his methods.

"He will be unable to work there where our brothers are working, in prisons, among the younger ones and among students."

This was said by an exiled Russian, Walter Penner. Penner left the Soviet Union nine years ago and he took it very ill of Graham that the latter concerns himself only with the recognized churches. "During his first visit of two years ago, he turned away from our brothers."

REFORMED CHURCHES MEMBER ICRC

The Reformed Churches in The Netherlands decided to join the International Conference of Reformed Churches which will have its first official meeting next September in Edinburgh, Scotland. The General Synod of Heemse took this decision with only one dissenting vote. Some discussion was held on the name for such a Conference. As was the case at our Synod Cloverdale 1983, so at the Synod of Heemse the discussion also centered around the question what the meaning is of expressing agreement with the basis of the Conference. According to the committee which advised Synod, whose proposals were adopted, expressing such agreement means that the delegates declare thereby that they have found nothing in the confessions of the participating churches which would constitute an impediment to full participation in the Conference.

VO

OUR COVER

The church in Ulrum, The Netherlands — H. De Cock's place of ministry at the time of the Secession.

Inter-League Publication Board

Activities of the ILPB

The committee of the ILPB continues to meet on a regular basis once a month. One of the things that comes back on the agenda is our Planning Report. We have to continue our work not only for now but also for the years ahead. We are already working on outlines which will probably not be printed until 1986 or 1987.

Because there is so much involved in the total work on one book we have to start years before it is published. It begins with the search for suitable material. Next we have to obtain copyrights. We need it translated, typed, edited, input into the wordprocessor, edited, corrected in the wordprocessor, proofread (usually two times) typeset and then we are ready for our appointment with the printer.

All of this work is done by everyone involved, in spare time. Although a small amount is paid for the work which is being done, all the workers will tell you that no one gets rich on the job. We are therefore very thankful and happy that there are still so many people willing to do so much for so little.

As stated before, we plan well ahead of time. And so it was in 1982 that we began to look into the publication of books other than outlines.

In 1983 we visited De Vuurbaak in The Netherlands. This organization publishes Reformed books and Bible study material. They have pledged their full cooperation in supplying us with

books which may qualify for translation. They have been very generous with the copyright arrangements enabling us to get a better foothold. These efforts have now made it possible for us to publish these books for the year 1984 — 1985. You can read elsewhere in *Clarion* about these books and how you can obtain them.

There are two prices for these books. The one price is for those people who are presently supporting us either through their association with one of the three leagues or who are a member of a society who supports us directly with their dues, as well as those who support us by paying the \$5.00 annual support fee. The other price is for those who are not yet supporting us at this time. It is slightly higher than the member price and we hope it will encourage many to become "friends" of the ILPB.

Of these books we are going to print only a limited number, in order to find out the demand for these books. So to avoid disappointment, order early. They also make a perfect gift.

Outlines in the planning stage and which are presently being translated are on: The Minor Prophets, Romans, Luke, Numbers and the Belgic Confession. But don't hold your breath waiting. It will be one, two and for some possibly three years, before they are printed.

Please read our book offer and subscribe to the series 1984 — 1985. We welcome your support.

OUR LITTLE MAGAZINE

Hello Busy Beavers,

October 31 . . . and what do you think of?
Check one or both:

- kids dressed up for Halloween
- a picture of the monk Martin Luther, hammer in hand, nailing the paper with his Ninety-five Theses to the church door at Wittenberg

Halloween and Reformation Day on one day!

"How come?" you ask.

Well, I was wondering too, so I "looked it up."

You remember Martin Luther was a *Roman Catholic* monk. The *Roman Catholic Church* had made November 1, the day after October 31, *All Saints Day*. That day everyone had to come to church.

That's why Martin Luther nailed his Theses to the church door that October 31 before the big crowds came.

Then everyone could read his complaints against the church.

We remember this action of Luther's as the start of the Great Reformation.

That's why October 31 is Reformation Day.

But why is it also Halloween?

Well, you remember November 1 was *All Saints Day*.

So the night before was called *All Hallow's Even*, later shortened to "Halloween."

Now you know the "connection."

Don't let Reformation Day get crowded out.

It is a most important "birthday" for God's people to remember!



Busy Beaver *Helena Hopman* has sent in a poem to share with you. Thanks, Helena!

THE CLOCK OF LIFE

The Clock of Life is wound but once,
And no man has the power
To tell just when the hand will stop,
At late or early hour.

Now is the only time you own.
Live, love, and toil with a will.
Place no faith in tomorrow
For the clock may then be still.



From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Kristy Van Meeteren*. You're a real Busy Beaver, I see, sending us such a big puzzle. Thank you! I think you had a good time at your cousin's house. Am I right?

Hello, *Cherie Schulenberg*. Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club. We are happy to have you join us. I think your little sister likes having you look after her, right? Please write and tell me your birthday, Cherie.

Sounds to me as if you had a good holiday, *Helena Hopman*. I'm glad you enjoyed doing the quiz. Bye for now, Helena. Write again soon.

Hello, *Heather Vandenberg*. Nice to hear from you again. Were you very busy during the summer? How did you feel about going back to school? Thanks for the quiz, Heather.

I'm glad you had such a nice holiday to look back on *Corinne Schulenberg*. How was your family party and church picnic, Corinne? And how is your baby brother doing?

Thanks for sharing the jokes, *Teena Buzeman*. Sounds to me as if you had an interesting holiday this year. How did you feel the first day of school, Teena?

Hello, *Carol Witteveen*. Will you write and tell the Busy Beavers about your holiday in Alaska, and about your new computer? How do you use it, Carol? I think everybody would love to hear!



JOKES



Now Busy Beaver *Teena Buzeman* has some jokes to share with you.

Teacher: Freddy, give me a sentence using the word "fascinate."

Freddy: I have nine buttons on my jacket, but I can only fasten eight.

Duck: I want to buy some Chapstick.

Clerk: Will that be cash or charge?

Duck: Just put it on my bill!

Joe: Did you hear the joke about the bed?

Priscilla: No

Joe: Neither have I. It hasn't been made up yet!

Busy Beavers we need a *Pen Pal* for a 10-year-old:

Corinne Schulenberg
Ontario St.
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Quiz Time!

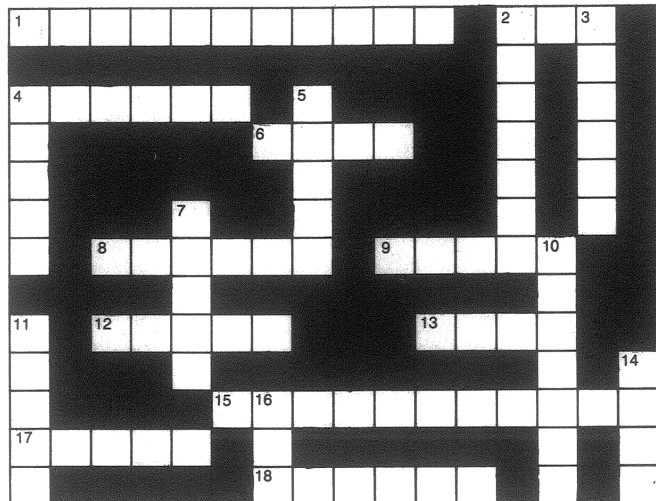
Unscramble the names of Bible People

by Busy Beaver *Nicole de Haas*.

1. zbjeele = _____
2. yomhitt = _____
3. ahejonhiic = _____
4. haojus = _____
5. valid = _____
6. didva = _____
7. oidegn = _____
8. aauzlmnn = _____
9. sairse = _____
10. hoaredb = _____

A cross-word puzzle made up by Busy Beaver *Henry Sik-kema*. Keep up the good work, Henry!

FOODS IN THE BIBLE



Across

1. "I have given every _____ for food."
2. This pear-shaped fruit is called a _____.
4. Five _____ loaves and two fish fed 5000 people.
6. When the _____ was boiled then the priest could eat it.
8. small game birds
9. Abram had cattle, goats, and _____.
12. Jonathan put his staff in a _____ comb to eat.
13. "You are the _____ of the earth."
15. _____ : a fruit grown around the Mediterranean Sea.
17. "As an _____ tree among the wood . . ."
18. John the Baptist ate this insect in the desert.