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Questions concerning the Jews₃

The state of Israel

Now that we have discovered that the history of the Jews is not concluded after all and that God did not close off the road for His old covenant people, we must answer the following question: How should we view present developments in the state of Israel? For as D. Holwerda states in his outlines on Romans, we do not face an ethnological problem but rather an eschatological event. The constitution of the state of Israel in 1948 is not a coincidence or an interesting geographical phenomenon! No, it is a sign of the times, a fact which is very closely related to the prophecy of the Scriptures. For even when we strongly reject the millennialist theories, do we not face the prophecy of the Scriptures with regard to the developments in present-day Israel, and should all these events not be regarded in the light of prophecy, especially in the light of Christ's prophetic speech concerning the future and Paul's hymn of praise to God's mercies in Romans 11?

Dr. G.Ch. Aalders, who in his pre-war commentary came to the conclusion that there is no future for Israel, still maintains in his post-war article "The Old Testament Prophecies and the State of Israel" (published in 1949, a year after Israel became a state) that what has happened in Israel, and whatever still may happen, has no connection with divine prophecy. Also the book *Israel*, published in 1955 by Dr. G.Ch. Aalders and Dr. H.N. Ridderbos, expressly emphasizes: Israel is rejected as a nation — and that is that. Yet after reading the many books available on Israel today, we strongly feel that this is an eschatological question. All events proceed to the fulfillment of the prophecy, to the fullness of times. However, and that is the other side of the coin, let us not rejoice prematurely. For example, when we recall the attitude of the Dutch Reformed (Hervormde) Synod in the Netherlands regarding the so-called "dialogue" with Israel, we might conclude that now already a large-scale, massive and even national return of the Jews is in effect. They expressed agreement with Dr. Karl Barth's statement: "The glory of the risen Lord is reflected in the church, but His suffering is reflected in Israel." They even go so far as to say (Dr. Miskotte) that Israel has been set among the nations as a mirror in which we see our inability to live by God's grace and power, and also as a mirror which shows the judgment of God. Israel judges itself to be the Messiah of the nations and for that reason the church and Israel are not two independent entities which exist beside or over against each other. No, the church and Israel are one in Christ. For that reason there is to be no more mission work *in* Israel but dialogue *with* Israel.

Special function?

We will not dwell on this except to remark that in this way the accent has been shifted completely. They have taken as their basis that the Jewish people has to fulfill a special func-

tion in history and believe that now the era of complete brotherhood and spiritual unity has arrived. Such a conclusion is premature, to say the least. The facts give us a different picture. Since the people of Israel after the defeat of the Bar-Kochba uprising in the years A.D. 132-135 were permanently sent away from Palestine, the prayer for the peace of Jerusalem has never ceased. The wish expressed after every Passover, "next year in Jerusalem," originated many centuries ago. Originally this desire was strongly religious in character without any political overtones. Jerusalem became the city of pilgrimage. Many Jews travelled there to visit the holy city. A portion remaining of the old temple wall was used especially on Fridays to mourn and to pray (the so-called wailing wall). Great was the desire to be buried on the Mount of Olives in order to be among the first to greet the Messiah when He returned to raise the dead. In the 14th century there was again a Jewish congregation in Jerusalem which maintained itself there and became the centre for studying the Mosaic laws. The congregation concerned themselves with nothing else and existed from the gifts and donations sent by other Jews outside Palestine.

Beside this religious Zionism, the previous centuries saw the origin of a political Zionism which arose mainly because of anti-semitism. As long as the Jewish people lived in segregated areas (ghettos) they were not too badly off. But in the French Revolution, when the rights of man were proclaimed, the situation changed. The Jews also liberated themselves from old custom and ties. Then followed the disillusionment. Many people felt that a Jew always remains a Jew, and of course the latter experienced the results of this belief. This state of always being isolated promoted nationalistic feelings and created a desire for a national home of their own, a native country. In 1897, a Zionistic organization was established with the aim to establish a home in Palestine. Through the blazing hatred against the Jews and the terrorism of the Nazis, the Jews all the more considered a national existence of their own as the only solution. This resulted in the great Exodus; a stream of Jews travelled from their dwelling-places to the old homeland. Although in 1932 there were only 180,000 Jews in Palestine among a general population of one million, this number quickly increased after the war to one million Jews. The hatred, the enmity and the attempts to wipe them out completely, became the strongest motives to seek an independent existence in Palestine.

No conversion

Originally there were great contrasts within the Jewish people, especially with regard to the Zionistic aspirations. The orthodox Jews kept themselves aloof from Zionism, especially because it has a political background. Radical elements were not satisfied with a national homeland but wanted a complete Jewish state. Others supported the idea of co-existence with the Arabs who lived there already. Most of the differences have

gradually disappeared because of the need to present a united front to the world outside. There are still important differences between religious and political Zionism, and whereas the latter is liberal, the former is typically Jewish and conservative in the Jewish sense. In no way therefore do the events of today indicate a total conversion of the Jews. That is still out of the question. We will return to that point when discussing the third question. As far as political developments were concerned, when the English decided on May 15, 1948, to give up their mandate, the Jews proclaimed the state of Israel in the area designated by the U.N. The Arabs, however, who had long felt threatened by the massive invasion of the Jews, had also not been idle. The Arab countries had formed a coalition with Egypt, and on the same day that England gave up his mandate, Arab troops entered Jewish territory. After a fierce conflict, in which the Jews suffered severe losses but to everyone's amazement stood firm and even gained territory, the armistice was concluded at the end of 1948 and the Jewish state could consolidate itself. Practically all the Arabs had fled Jewish territory. It continues to be an uneasy peace with an explosion every so often.

Aside from that, in the years following 1948 steady progress has been apparent, especially in the economic sector. The accomplishments of Israel during these years are almost unbelievable. A tremendous amount of Jewish capital has entered the country. Modern cities have been built, electrical generators, oil refineries, and all kinds of other industries were established. An enormous amount of work is still being done and the energy of the Jewish people demands our admiration.

Blood and soil

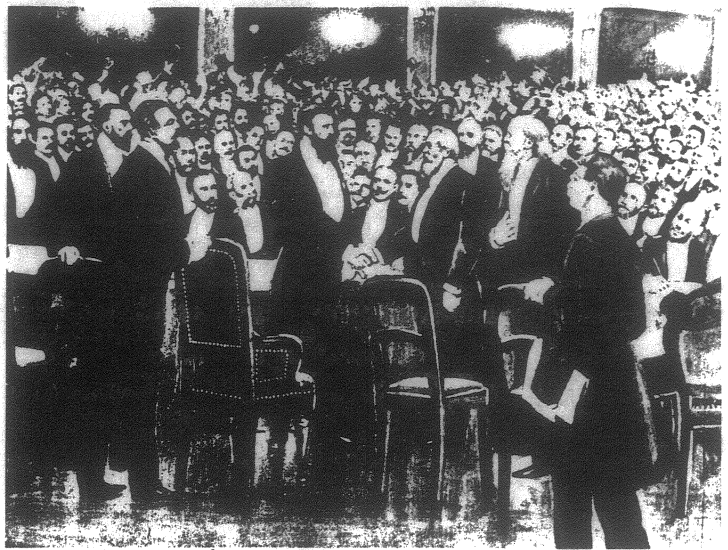
And yet, and that is the last point, does the return to the *country* of the fathers also mean a return to the *God* of the fathers? We have already expressed our doubts about such a conclusion and now at the end we want to justify our doubts. We have previously mentioned the war between Israel and the Arabs. That war is considered a holy war by the Zionists, which fact unites the Zionists in Palestine together today. It is the conflict of yore between Ishmael and Israel, about which Israel already sang in the Middle Ages when they feared the threat of the Arabs. Today, however, it is no longer the fearful cry of those days, but now it is a cry for self-assertion. It is the same contours of hatred and enmity against the Arab world, the enemy of ancient times, which control the Israel of today. Present-day Israel does not praise God's mercy as Paul did in Romans 11 but praises itself, in total contrast with the praise of Romans 11. Today Israel sings of blood and soil. While the destroyers of this people, the Nazis of Germany, gloried in German blood and German soil, the Jews now glory in Jewish blood and Jewish soil. They sing of self-vindication and of salvation by their own efforts. For now I touch upon an essential point in the present Jewish development: they are full of . . . themselves, of national values and national pride. And they even go so far that they imagine themselves as nation, as people, to be the messiah who was to come. This Israel does not differ from the Christian faith in that it places in the future what for us has already happened. No, they see the messiah incorporated in the people, the nation, "blood and soil." That is why their fighting is so fanatic. Today Israel sings:

A generation that wants to be saved;

Only then do you rise to your task and are delivered,

Only then do you rise to your task and deliver!

Please note: what is said *passively* in the second line, has become *active* in the third. They are delivered, yes indeed, but because they save themselves. The nation is its own saviour, its own messiah. And when does this happen? When they *want* it themselves. The will power of a people is the actual power of salvation.



The First Zionist Congress in Basle, August 1897

Conclusion

I could underline this thought with more examples, but we should come to an end.

Today's Israel has a messianic theory which flatly contradicts the Scriptures. It does not follow the way of the covenant and the grounds for pleading which the covenant provides. By saying this we do not wish to imply that this is the last word from Israel, and even less that this is our last word *about* Israel. The dismissive formula — "once rejected as covenant people, always rejected" — does not fit within the framework of the Scriptures. However, we do say: let us beware of premature conclusions regarding the return of the Jews to Palestine. The last word concerning the Jews, also about the future of this people, has not yet been spoken. Who knows what the future may bring, also for this chosen people of old. As long as we now speak up. With the return of so many Jews to the old homeland perhaps possibilities for a true conversion may be given — possibilities which cannot as yet be imagined. For let us not forget one thing: conversion must always come through prayer and work. Yes indeed, it is God's doings from A to Z, but the LORD uses people in His kingdom and those people may not be idle. They must approach God in prayer, also for this nation. Do we still remember this old covenant people in our prayers?

However, they and we must also come together through action. That does not mean a dialogue in which two parties simply come together to supplement each other. No, in this age of levelling off and of syncretism we are again called to confess the antithesis. We must confess the antithetical word that our only salvation lies in the Christ of the Scriptures. Therefore our work among this people must be done from a missionary viewpoint. In the Netherlands a new initiative is being undertaken in that direction, and I believe that there indeed lies a task, no matter how difficult. Dr. C. VanDam, in his article, "Mission work among the Jews?" in *Clarion*, September 19, 1986, has also pointed to this task. May the LORD, the God of His people, who propels the history of the nations, also of the old Jewish people, to the end of times, still give us the time, the power, and the desire, so that this nation may again as people of God find in Jesus Christ the promised Messiah who has come and will return. Then they will no more sing of blood and soil, not even the song of Moses only, but together with all the saved ones sing the song of Moses *and* of the Lamb, the song of His blood:

Thee, holy Lamb of God, we bless;

Thou'st through Thy cross redemption sent us.

K. DEDDENS

The saving work of the Holy Spirit in Calvin¹

Introduction

B.B. Warfield, the well-known Princeton theologian, in 1909 called Calvin the theologian of the Holy Spirit. In an address entitled "John Calvin the Theologian," published at the fourhundredth anniversary of Calvin's birth, he argued that Calvin's interest was most intense in the application to the sinful soul of the salvation wrought by Christ. The doctrine of the work of the Holy Spirit is a gift of Calvin to the church.¹

When we try to develop the theme of the saving work of the Holy Spirit in Calvin, we must restrict ourselves greatly. At least two full-scale theses have been written about the doctrine of the Holy Spirit in Calvin, one by Simon van der Linde (1943) and another by Werner Krusche (1957). Van der Linde's main division is between the general operations of the Holy Spirit and the special operations. Krusche deals with the work of the Holy Spirit in three areas: the Holy Spirit and the cosmos, the Holy Spirit and man, the Holy Spirit and the church. In this paper, we deal mainly with what Van der Linde calls the special operations, or with the third area in Krusche's book: the Holy Spirit and the church.²

We will briefly direct our attention to the following topics:

1. Spirit and Scripture, 2. Spirit and Christ, 3. Spirit and Word, 4. Spirit and faith, and 5. Spirit and Christ's benefits.

1. Spirit and Scripture

In the first book of the *Institutes*,³ Calvin writes about Holy Spirit and Scripture, and especially about the testimony of the Holy Spirit, a characteristic doctrine of Calvin. Holy Scripture is for Calvin the school of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the Author of Scripture and takes men into His service. They are notaries of the Spirit (Book IV.8.9). Scripture must also be confirmed by the witness of the Spirit: "Thus may its authority be established as certain: and it is a wicked falsehood that its credibility depends on the judgment of the church." This heading of Book I.7

shows the anti-Romanist tendency of Calvin's teaching concerning the testimony of the Holy Spirit. The question is simple: how do we become certain with respect to Scripture? Through the church? But the church itself is grounded upon Scripture. Calvin says:

We ought to seek our conviction in a higher place than human reasons . . . The testimony of the Spirit is more excellent than all reason. For as God alone is a fit witness of himself in his Word, so also the Word will not find acceptance in men's hearts before it is sealed by the inward testimony of the Spirit. The same Spirit, therefore, who has



spoken through the mouths of the prophets must penetrate into our hearts to persuade us that they faithfully proclaimed what had been divinely commanded (I.7.4.).

Note well, Scripture is self-authenticated. The testimony of the Holy Spirit is not the ground of our faith in Scripture; the ground is Holy Scripture itself. But the witness of the Holy Spirit is the cause of our certainty with respect to Scripture. "For even if it wins reverence for itself by its own majesty, it seriously affects us only when it is sealed upon our hearts through the Spirit." Illumined by His power, we affirm with

utter certainty that Scripture has flowed to us from the very mouth of God by the ministry of men (I.7.5).

Now the testimony of the Holy Spirit makes us not only certain with respect to the authority of Holy Scripture as the very Word of God, but also the respect to the contents of God's Word, the promise of salvation in Christ, or our adoption as children of God through Christ.

2. Spirit and Christ

This leads us to the second topic, the Holy Spirit and our Lord Jesus Christ, and then especially in His relation to the church. Chapter one of Book III is entitled: "The Things Spoken Concerning Christ Profit Us By The Secret Working Of The Spirit." Already in this title we see the indissoluble connection between Christ and the Holy Spirit. Christ works through the Spirit and the Holy Spirit works for Christ. The Holy Spirit is the bond by which Christ unites us to Himself: Christ works through the Spirit. At the same time the Holy Spirit makes us by His secret energy to enjoy Christ and all His benefits: the Holy Spirit works for Christ.

In the beginning of Book III, Calvin poses the question: how do we receive those benefits which the Father bestows on His only begotten Son? As long as Christ remains *outside* of us, and we are separated from Him, all that He has suffered and done for the salvation of the human race remains useless and of no value for us. Christ had to become ours and to dwell *within* us. Here we meet with Calvin's important doctrine of our communion or fellowship with Christ. It is the Holy Spirit who, in the words of Lord's Day 20 of the Heidelberg Catechism, makes us partakers of Christ and all His benefits. We are to be grafted into Christ, and to grow into one body with Him through the Spirit.

Calvin now comes back to the testimony of the Holy Spirit and he reminds us, in the words of I John 5, that Christ so came by water and blood that the Spirit may witness concerning Him. We feel,

Calvin says, the testimony of the Holy Spirit engraved like a seal upon our hearts, with the result that it seals the cleansing and sacrifice of Christ. We come to possess cleansing and justification in the name of Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God (I Cor. 6:11). For Calvin this means that the Holy Spirit is the bond by which Christ effectually unites us to Himself.

In John 16:14, our Lord Jesus Christ says of the Spirit of truth: He will glorify me, for He will take what is mine and declare it to you. Calvin writes in his commentary: "Christ now tells them that the Spirit will not come to set up a new kingdom, but rather to confirm the glory given to Him by the Father. For many dream that Christ taught only the elements and then sent the disciples on to a higher school." What then is the purpose of the Spirit's teaching? "Not to lead us away from the school of Christ, but rather to ratify that voice in which we are commanded to listen to Him; otherwise, He would detract from Christ's glory."⁴ The Spirit bestows on us nothing apart from Christ, and Christ bestows on us nothing but through the Spirit. The Holy Spirit and the Lord Jesus Christ are distinct but at the same time they are inseparable.

3. Spirit and Word

Calvin's remark about the purpose of the Spirit's teaching brings us to our third topic: Spirit and Word. It is related to what we said about the relation of Holy Spirit and Holy Scripture, but Word is now especially meant as the preached Word, the gospel. Also in this respect Calvin maintains an equilibrium: the Spirit is not without the Word, and the Word is not without the Spirit.

A. The Spirit is not without the Word

Already in *Institutes* I.9 Calvin strongly attacks the fanatics who, abandoning Scripture and flying over to revelation, cast down the principles of Godliness. One may also think of his treatise against the Anabaptists and against the Libertines. In 1982 the latter was for the first time translated into English by Benjamin Wirt Farley.⁵

With an appeal to Isaiah 59:21 — My spirit is upon you and I have put my words in your mouth — Calvin says that the church is ruled no less by the voice of God than by the Spirit. And with reference to John 16:13 — the Spirit will not speak on his own authority — he says:

Therefore the Spirit, promised to us, has not the task of inventing new and unheard of revelations, or of forging a new kind of doctrine, to lead us away from the received doctrine of the gospel but of sealing our minds with that

very doctrine which is commended in the gospel (I.9.1).

Paul calls his preaching the ministration of the Spirit (II Cor. 3:8). Only when its proper reverence and dignity are given to the Word does the Holy Spirit show forth His power. By a kind of mutual bond the Lord has joined together the certainty of His Word and of His Spirit (I.9.3, cp. IV.1.5). The Word is the instrument by which the Lord dispenses the illumination of His Spirit to believers (I.9.3).

B. The Word is not without the Spirit

But precisely because there is a mutual bond, we have immediately to add that the Word is of no avail without the Holy Spirit.

Again, when Christ declares that it is the peculiar office of the Holy Spirit to teach the apostles what they had already learned from His own mouth, it follows that outward preaching will be useless and vain unless the teaching of the Spirit is added to it. So God has two ways of teaching. He sounds in our ears by the mouth of men; and He addresses us inwardly by His Spirit. These He does simultaneously or at different times, as He thinks fit.⁶ The Spirit confirms the teaching of the gospel, as if He were signing it.

Right at the beginning of Book III,

Calvin says: "Yet since we see that not all indiscriminately embrace that communion with Christ which is offered through the gospel, reason itself teaches us to climb higher and to examine into the secret energy of the Spirit, by which we come to enjoy Christ and all his benefits" (III.1.1). The Word becomes efficacious through the Holy Spirit. Calvin writes even this strong statement: "Without the illumination of the Holy Spirit, the Word can do nothing." One commentator has tried to argue that this statement does not apply to the germination of faith, rather to the assurance of faith.⁷ But I take it of both the germination of faith and the assurance of faith. Calvin speaks indiscriminately, and in the context he even uses the expression "to engender faith." He says that the "bare and external proof of the Word of God should have been amply sufficient to engender faith, did not our blindness and perversity prevent it." (III. 2.33). The fact that the Word can do nothing without the illumination of the Holy Spirit does not downgrade the Word but shows the depth of our depravity. Our mind has such an inclination to vanity that it can never cleave fast to the truth of God; and it has such a dullness that it is always blind to the light of God's truth. Therefore, no Word without Spirit! "Hence we infer that this

Continued on page 271



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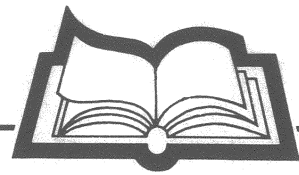
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“Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will not return to me.”

II Samuel 12:23b

“Brethren, I may say to you confidently of the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.”

Acts 2:29

Royal Confession

David's reaction to the death of his first child by Bathsheba was a surprise to the elders of the house, and may also appear that way to us as well. He appears to adopt a pessimistic and fatalistic attitude, suggesting that despite his prayer there was really little hope not only for the child but also for himself. Yet this reading of his response is decidedly incorrect. In actual fact, these words form a royal confession of faith! This is the royal confession of a king who has been brought back to the path of service and obedience to the coming Messiah.

This is clarified when we recall the root of David's sin with Bathsheba. It occurred at the height of his power, when he had defeated all his enemies. The Ammonites were destroyed and the Syrians became subject to him. In a sense, he enjoyed universal recognition and unprecedented strength. Under David, Israel became a world power to be reckoned with! And for David this meant that there was hardly a thing he could not do. He was invincible. And it was the sin of *pride* that led him to take the wife of one of his soldiers. Who can withstand the will and command of the king?

Through the grace of God David is brought back to his senses, and made to see his sin. Now he is confronted with his limitations and weaknesses. He is confronted with what he cannot do. Great as he was, he knew he could not bring back his lost son from the dead. Indeed, David admits that he is also but dust and ashes, and that his own reign is limited according to the time God allows.

Yet hope and confidence underline his words. What hope does he confess? His realization that *he* is dust and ashes, and that he is not the Messiah implies that he must *wait* for another. The son whom the LORD had taken also could not be the heir. David must plead only on the ground of God's promises! But he is not without hope! For he knew that although the LORD punishes sin, He is also disposed to mercy and grace. So he prayed for the life of his son even when Nathan the prophet had told him that the child would die.

What then was David's hope? In admitting that he was not the one to save Israel, and that he — along with his wife — deserved only eternal death, he looks to another. He prayed that the LORD might send Him whom He had promised, the Messiah, and that the LORD might none the less establish his throne, through His grace alone!

And as Peter says in Acts 2, the LORD answered this prayer. Peter states definitely that David went to his son, and that he died and was buried. There is no reason to embellish and glorify David! He was not able to bring his son back to life. Much as he could do great things, death was the end point for him in this dispensation. But David's great Son had come, Jesus Christ. And He was able to do what David, through sin and weakness, could not do.

This was the royal Son that David prayed and hoped for! And through the shadows of the dispensation in which David lived we can — however faintly — see the lines of the new dispensation! For he believed that he would see his departed son again. And he believed and confessed that even though he would have to go to death, that death was still not the end for him! Indeed, he would have to die, and wait for the Messiah. But he also believed in His coming and saving work! He foresaw and confessed the resurrection of Christ also in these words concerning his departed son. For in confessing that he was not able to bring him back, and that he also could not bring himself back, he looked in faith to One who was coming, who not only would “bring Himself back” through God's power, but also be able to bring back all those who in repentance and faith took refuge in Him! He could not bring back one from the grave, and his own grave was a living testimony to his impotence. But the possibility of coming back, and the eventual reality of being brought back by another, his great Son, *this* he still confessed!

And did not the LORD also confirm his confession with an immediate reward? For after the child died, David comforted his wife, and she bore another son, Solomon, of whom Scripture says that “the LORD loved him.” He was the son of hope for David! Having taken his first child, the LORD also showed His steadfast love and favour in giving another, who could and would be the heir. Through the comfort given to his wife by the penitent David for the sorrow of God's just punishment against his sin, another son is born! In seeing true repentance, the LORD hastens to act!

So David, the royal king, learned to trust in His great Son, Jesus Christ. He learned to hope and long for the king whose power would far exceed his own because it would rise even beyond sin and the grave. To be sure, this was a struggle to the end of his life! The suspense mounts in David's old age, for one sees how Solomon is only barely crowned before David's death. But God's faithfulness is sure, and David may depart in the confidence that his sin is forgiven, and that the LORD was going forward to fulfil His promise of redemption!

How much more do we not have today! We also cannot bring back a loved one from the dead. The grave is still the place where we all must go. But we have One in heaven who has been there, and come back, and who assures us that He will also bring us back from there again! We have a sure pledge that He will take us to Himself! And we have His Spirit as a sure pledge that we will be strengthened to triumph over death's power in Him. He makes us alive! So we may follow in the same royal confession, and expect the day of His coming with rejoicing!

J. DE JONG

The saving work of the Holy Spirit in Calvin — continued from page 269

is a most valuable treasure of the church, that he has chosen for himself a habitation in it, to dwell in the hearts of believers by his Spirit, and next to preserve among them the doctrine of his gospel.⁸ The preaching of the gospel can therefore only be done in humility and constant prayer for the efficacious operation of the Holy Spirit: Veni Creator Spiritus!

We could now continue to speak of Calvin's teaching about the Spirit and the sacraments, or about the Spirit and the church, to which the administration of the means of grace has been entrusted, but I prefer immediately to deal with the relation of Spirit and faith.

— To be continued
J. FABER

²S. van der Linde, *De Leer van den Heiligen Geest bij Calvin* (Wageningen: Veenman, 1943); W. Krusche, *Das Wirken des Heiligen Geistes nach Calvin* (Goettingen: Vanderhoeck & Ruprecht, 1957). See further J. van Genderen, "Het werk van de Heilige Geest volgens Calvin" in *Dienst*, X (1960), 4-6; H.J.J. Th. Quistorp, "Calvins Lehre vom Heiligen Geist" in *De Spiritu Sancto* (Utrecht: Kemink, 1964), pp. 109-150.

³Quotations from *Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion* are from the F.L. Battles — J.T. McNeill edition (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960). The Old Testament *Commentaries* are quoted from the edition of the Calvin Translation Society (Grand Rapids: Baker, repr. 1984), the New Testament *Commentaries* from the Torrance edition (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972).

⁴Commentary John 16:14.

⁵John Calvin, *Treatises against the Anabaptists and against the Libertines*, tr. B.J. Farley (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1982), esp. pp. 221-229.

⁶Commentary John 14:26.

⁷W. Neuser, "Theologie des Wortes — Schrift, Verheisung und Evangelium bei Calvin" in *Calvinus Theologus* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1976), pp. 27f.

⁸Commentary Isaiah 59:21.

¹B.B. Warfield, *Calvin As a Theologian and Calvinism Today* (London: Evangelical Press), p. 6.

CHURCH NEWS



CLASSIS ONTARIO-SOUTH OF JUNE 10, 11, 1987, has declared that candidates:

M. KELLIE MARREN
of Hamilton, ON

GEORGE VAN POPTA
of Hamilton, ON

ROBERT SCHOUTEN
of Hamilton, ON

are eligible for call within the American/Canadian Reformed Churches.

C. Bosch
Vice Chairman

* * *

CALLED by the Church at Smithers, BC

CANDIDATE
M. KELLIE MARREN

of Hamilton, ON for Home Mission Work in the Smithers and surrounding area, primarily among native people.

* * *

CALLED by the Church at Calgary, AB

CANDIDATE
ROBERT SCHOUTEN

of Hamilton, ON

* * *

CALLED by the Church at Kelmscott, West Australia

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INTERNATIONAL



CANADIAN SCENE

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And then visitors still have to feel welcome?

NEW YORK (RNS)

There was no Jewish trial of Jesus before His crucifixion, according to a group of Scripture scholars trying to determine the authenticity of the Gospel accounts of Jesus' life.

Other conclusions of participants:

— It is unlikely that Jesus' conversations with His disciples at the Last Supper were those recorded in the Bible.

— Jesus' words on the cross, asking why God had forsaken Him, probably were not spoken by Him.

— Jesus, while on the cross, probably did not speak the words asking God to forgive His persecutors.(CN)

Some scholars!

And then they still claim to be studying the Scriptures?

And then they still claim to be Christians?

They are even bigger fools than those who try to deny that there was a holocaust!

WASHINGTON (RNS)

Widely publicized reforms in the Soviet Union have not extended to religion, according to a celebrated Orthodox Christian poet released from a Soviet prison last October.

Irina Ratushinskaya said at a news conference that Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev has made much of his policy of "glasnost," which means openness in Russian.

"But I have not seen in the Soviet media anything about religious believers," said Ratushinskaya, who is 33. "The topic is forbidden." (CN)

FAREWELL

Rev. Van Spronsen and Family

On April 11th, 1987, the congregation of Smithers, BC, bade farewell to the VanSpronsen family, who since 1978 had made their home and found their work there. A special evening, emceed by the Rev. Berends, was organized to wish them well on their departure to Vernon, BC. Especially for Jolene and Conrad, but also tremendously enjoyed by all, the grades one and two gave a performance of "The Three Little Pigs." Other winners, presented for the other children and the ministerial couple were a garbled BVLVD radio programme and a song for "charming Teddy boy." The board of the school gave us a look at what happens at their meetings, which left us wondering whether here too we have responsible government . . . ? The Ladies Society performed a musical meeting where they deliberated what to present to sr. VanSpronsen. After many had raised their voices, in the end they choose to present a book with pages filled in by the members. In a minute the result (written with knitting needles . . . ??) was ready and joyfully received as a precious keepsake by Rev. and Mrs. VanSpronsen. Then it was the YPS' turn. After a "trip to the ZOO" skit, some fine plates were presented to remember them. The junior choir, under the direction of br. Huisman, sang appropriately, "God be with you 'till we meet again." The Ladies Auxiliary had spent busy moments embroidering a tablecloth with their signatures, presented after a declamation of sr. Klaver.

Also the "senior" choir employed their talents with "Boom-dee-dee boom boom," an Ontario song also appropriate for the Bulkley Valley, specially adapted for the occasion. Other songs were Psalm 146 and "The Lord bless you and keep you."

The Home Mission Board, in the person of br. Bandstra, expressed gratitude that under the Lord's blessing the reverend had been enabled to start and expand on the work of bringing the gospel to the native population in the area. After initially serving the Smithers congregation, the last years had been fully dedicated to this work amongst the Indians. This will now hopefully be taken over by another. This, God's work, has become dear to us and



not in the least has this been an educational experience for the Canadian Reformed Churches.

A congregational gift, a BBQ gas grill, was presented in the hopes that it would be put to good use. (The Mrs. was quickly assured she didn't have to learn this art — that's *his* domain!)

On behalf of the Church at Houston, Rev. Kampen addressed the leaving family. He also expressed thanks and the desire that Rev. VanSpronsen may be faithful and fruitful in the Okanagan vineyard. The Rev. Berends, on behalf of Smithers' consistory and council, bade farewell to our "ambassador," who had been so instrumental in stressing the importance of spreading the good news among the people in our own country.

In closing, the Rev. VanSpronsen spoke to us. He expressed, also on behalf of the family, thanks for the good many years and the support of the Smithers congregation, as well as for the nice evening.

The next day, in the afternoon service, we were also assured by God's Word, in the farewell sermon, of God's care for us. As text was chosen II Thesalonians 2:16, 17.

" . . . Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word."

The church is never a mere human project. Humans are used, sometimes for a short time (Paul in Thessalonica), yet it is our God who will give growth. The theme of the sermon: "May God encourage and strengthen you in faithful service to Him." God will do so as, 1. Divine Helper, 2. Loving Redeemer, and 3. as Perfect Finisher.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is given to the body of the church as its Head. His gathering work, as well as defending and preserving, is His concern — also in the native ministry. He loved us and keeps loving — what grace! What comfort! The Holy Spirit's sanctifying work is realized when God equips us totally, perfectly, in His service. In work and word this kingdom-work is to be from, in, and unto God! So we may commend our lives unto Him. And so we say farewell to the Rev. VanSpronsen and family. God bless you all in Vernon!

J.W.K.

By Rev. W.W.J. VanOene

The Consistory "bringing all these things once again to the attention of the male members of the Church at Kootwijk, wishes to learn whether there are any male members in this Church who desire to lodge preponderate objections to either the calling of Mr. Houtzagers;
or the cutting off of the Synodical power;
or the return of the old Church Order.

"Further, after this information, those who have come to the meeting receive the freedom of bringing in their objections, of which none of them made use, so that the whole assembly" approved the above actions.

All who were not at the meeting received two weeks' time to lodge their objections in writing. Not one member of the Church made use of this.

From various quarters encouraging messages were received.

We'll mention one of them.

The Classis Amersfoort of the Christian Reformed Church unanimously decided to express to the Church at Kootwijk its heartfelt joy and to the Lord its profound gratitude for "the courageous act of faith to which the Lord in His grace has given you the strength." This Classis further expressed "the fervent desire for re-unification of all Reformed Christians in our country."

3. Voorthuizen

a. "Mother" and "Father"

Kootwijk was the first Church of the Doleantie.

Yet it is Voorthuizen which is called the "mother Church of the Doleantie."

What is the reason for this?

The reason is that the brothers of Kootwijk received much support and guidance from the Church at Voorthuizen and particularly from its minister, Mr. Dr. W. van den Bergh.

When Voorthuizen is called the "mother Church," the title "Father" certainly applies to its minister.

That we speak of Mr. Dr. W. van den Bergh is because the title Mr. (Master) in the Dutch language shows that someone has received a Master's degree in Laws. (LL.M)

Willem van den Bergh was born on February 25, 1850, at the Hague, where his father was a prominent notary public. The piety of his mother — who died when young Willem was ten years of age — made a deep impression on him and certainly was a factor in his desire to dedicate his life to the Lord and to become a minister of the Gospel.

Once, during a Catechism lesson, he confided to his students that at the age of twelve he looked with a certain measure of jealousy at Roman Catholic children whom he saw going to their first communion all dressed in white, as those consecrated to the Lord.

It was his father's wish that Willem should become a lawyer, and thus he registered as a student in the faculty of law at the University of Leiden on September 16, 1868. When he had obtained his father's permission to study theology as well, he registered in the faculty of theology

one year later, meanwhile continuing his study of law.

During his student years he became the friend of Prince Alexander, son of King William III, a bond which was maintained throughout their brief lives.

In 1872, van den Bergh received his B.D. degree, soon followed by the LL.B. degree. He continued his studies, travelled abroad, and received the degree of Doctor of Laws in 1878. The title of his doctoral thesis was *The Battle against Prostitution in The Netherlands*. He received this degree with first class honours.

September 30, 1879 was the day on which van den Bergh obtained the Doctor of Theology degree on a thesis entitled *Calvin on the Covenant of Grace*.

Having accepted the call to Schaarsbergen, van den Bergh's ordination and inauguration took place on December 7, 1879. The text for his inaugural sermon was Ezekiel 33:10,11.

During his whole ministry Dr. van den Bergh remained faithful to one of the theses which he added to his doctoral dissertation: "Improvising in the pulpit should be the exception, not the rule."

From the outset he aimed at the reformation of the Church, and he did not shrink back from conflicts, even though he sought to avoid them.

One conflict could have had serious effects if not the person in question had resigned himself to the decision of the Consistory.

The Consistory had, namely, refused to receive as member a teacher who could not decide to express agreement with the doctrine of the Church. Had this teacher insisted on being registered as a member, a conflict similar to the one in Amsterdam would certainly have been the result.

Forty-three times Dr. van den Bergh was called by another Church.

Haarlem, e.g. desired a Reformed minister, but Dr. van den Bergh asked, "Do you there also have a Reformed Congregation for me?" Rouveen offered, in addition to the stipend, "forty pounds of butter and two fat geese."

Voorthuizen's Church, too, sent a few brethren from their midst to go and listen to Dr. van den Bergh on May 25, 1884. They asked him whether he could consider a call to Kootwijk. The minister's reply was that they should not extend a call to him. Only "in case the Consistory had the courage to call him on the condition that he could teach and govern the Congregation according to God's Word and that this Word would be upheld above the Synodical Regulations which conflict with it, only then he trusted that the Lord would loose him from Schaarsbergen's Church."

When the same condition was put before the brothers from the Church at Ylst which had called him, and when they immediately agreed to it, Dr. van den Bergh understood that they did not realize the consequences of their willingness, and declined.

Kootwijk's Consistory received two weeks' time to ponder his condition. Several meetings were held and discussions took place. Finally, in its meeting of June 12, the Consistory adopted the following declaration.

The Undersigned, members of the Consistory of the Reformed Church of Voorthuizen, of the conviction that all human word has to yield to the Word of God and that all human authority directly flows down from King Jesus, declare that they will recognize and receive the Rev. Dr. Mr. W. van den Bergh as their minister, even if he should make changes in the letter of call sent to him and after this sign it, on the condition that these changes are in accordance with Art. 32 of the Confession of Faith of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands.

Upon arrival of the brothers and upon receipt of the declaration, Rev. van den Bergh promised that he would decide on the call that very same day. While the brothers visited a few places in Schaarsbergen, he withdrew into his study and, when they returned, they were told, "I have accepted the call to Voorthuizen."

Dr. van den Bergh had added the following statement to the Letter of Call.

The Undersigned declares that he may not decline the above Call, declaring meanwhile emphatically that I consider that, being faithful to the King of the Church and as Minister of the Reformed Church, I am not permitted to bind myself to do everything which according to the ordinances of the Netherlands Reformed Church is prescribed for Consistories and Ministers. I make this declaration with an appeal to Art. 32 of our Belgic Confession of the Reformed Churches, reading as follows: (Follows this Article)

Feeling myself compelled by the Lord to make this declaration on the ground of Isaiah 10:1, Matthew 15:9, Acts 15:10, and other places from God's Holy Word, and with the prayer that the Lord may also enable the Consistory of the Reformed Congregation at Voorthuizen to fulfil the calling laid upon it, the Undersigned declares that he accepts the call to the Congregation at Voorthuizen.

On three consecutive Sundays it was announced to the Congregation that and in what manner Dr. van den Bergh had accepted the call. No objections were raised.

As the Classis Harderwijk was favourably inclined towards a reformatinal trend, it approved the call, and on Sunday, October 12, 1884, Voorthuizen received its new minister.

b. The Step Is Taken

Already in Schaarsbergen Dr. van den Bergh was profoundly concerned about the condition of the Church. Also in Voorthuizen he continued to point out the sad deterioration of the Church. Words were not sufficient, actions were to follow.

One of the first things that was done was having special prayer services for the restoration of the Church. The first such service was held on February 2, 1885, followed by many more.

Especially the new Synodical provisions about "receiving as members" and the Proponent Formula were considered to be attacks on the Ministry of the Gospel as well as on the sacraments, whereby the door was thrown wide open to admit members as well as ministers who

rejected the Lord Jesus Christ as the only Saviour and the Scriptures as God's infallible Word.

The Synod had received a request from seventy ministers to return to the old Proponent Formula, but on August 22, 1885, this request was rejected.

Again a prayer service was held in Voorthuizen, now on September 7, 1885, and Dr. van den Bergh preached on Psalm 119:126: "It is time for the LORD to act, for Thy law has been broken."

Also as a fruit of this sermon, each of the Consistory members declared at the meeting of September 10, 1885, that the Consistory was disobedient to Christ, the King of the Church, by possessing regulations conflicting with His authority. The Consistory considered it its duty and a command of the Lord to return in the way of obedience. The only thing was that they were uncertain as yet in which way this obedience in the faith was to be put into practice. For this reason they did not reveal for the time being their decision to cut the bond with the Synodical Boards.

The new synodical provisions came into force on January 15, 1886. The struggle in Amsterdam resulted in the suspension of 5 ministers, 42 elders, and 33 deacons. And further, there was Kootwijk where Rev. van den Bergh had been the faithful adviser and where the strong arm of the Ecclesiastical Boards was felt.

In its meeting of February 4, 1886, the Consistory deemed the moment to be there to make this decision of the previous September known.

According to the provisions of the Law which regulated the supervision over the various Church organizations (September 10, 1853), notice was sent to the King that the Consistory had decided to cut the bond with the Higher Church Boards and to return to the Church Order under which the Church at Voorthuizen had been living from 1592-1816, and whereby it had fared well.

To the Synod a letter was sent informing it that it was no longer recognized as Board over the Church at Voorthuizen on, among other grounds, the following: 1. that it denied Christ Jesus as the King of the Church; 2. went by Regulations instead of by God's Word whenever a decision was made; 3. believers and unbelievers were accorded equal rights; 4. the rights of Consistories were violated.

An *Open Letter* was delivered to the members of the Church in which the Consistory declared that "by continuing any longer in the way of unfaithfulness to the King of the Church without doing anything, aggravation of the already existing judgment of God would be invoked."

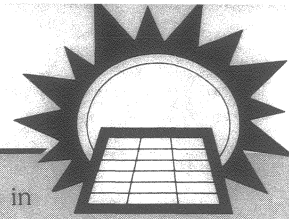
The same letter was sent to the Churches in the Classis; an extensive communication was sent to all Consistories of Reformed Congregations in the Netherlands, and Dr. van den Bergh wrote an article in *De Heraut* in which he pointed out the duty of the Consistories.

As could be expected: in due time the Church at Voorthuizen was deprived of its buildings and other assets.

At the age of forty the Rev. Mr. Dr. van den Bergh was taken home by the Lord after a brief but very fruitful life in the kingdom.

— *To be continued*

RAY OF SUNSHINE



"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may comfort those who are in affliction. . . ."

II Corinthians 1:3,4

Dear brothers and sisters,

Sometimes we find it difficult to cope with the troubles, sorrows and pains of our brothers and sisters. In our attempts to comfort and encourage those in distress, we often feel so helpless and inadequate. Can we, who are not in the same circumstances ourselves, really give any comfort to those who go through times of trial and sufferings?

The Apostle Paul teaches us in this chapter that we truly can be of help to our brothers and sisters. He directs our attention to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Remember, Paul says, what He has done for you! He has shown Himself to be a God of mercy and love. He made us His own through Jesus Christ, who freed us from the power of sin and death and transferred us into the realm of life.

In Psalm 119:50 we read, "And this is our comfort in our affliction, that God's promise gives us life." That promise of God that He is for us and not against us gives us hope and comfort in all situations of our life, even in the valley of the shadow of death. For those who trust the LORD, His promises are the only source of all consolation.

And having experienced the LORD's constant love, mercy and support in our own lives, we will be able to also comfort others in times of need. For we don't have to speak empty words, which have little or no effect. We may remind those who suffer of God's reliable promises which found their fulfillment in Jesus Christ. Therefore they are true and sure! Trusting them you will never be disappointed. For those who believe, there is always hope and a future; something to be excited about: the Almighty God is for me and He carries me through!

Then the circumstances of pain, suffering and discomfort may not change. But your outlook is different; you realize that all this is not ultimate. God is faithful! He is our shield and our strength!

He starts now already to wipe away the tears from our eyes by directing our faith and trust to Him. He is preparing us for that day when death shall be no more, neither mourning, nor crying, nor pain. But He will be all in all! Therefore comfort one another with these words. (I Thessalonians 4:18)

From the Mailbox

Mrs. Hanneke Bol from Edmonton wrote me on behalf of Margot who lives in Berkel, the Netherlands to tell me that Margot was pleasantly surprised to receive so much mail from Canada. Margot is improving although she is still unable to walk.

From Albert Dorgeloos I received a nice letter in which he also expresses his thankfulness for all the cards (65) you sent him. Albert turned 28 and not 18 as it said in Clarion. Sorry Albert! That was my mistake!

Birthday calendar for July:

JIM BUIKEMA

"Anchor Home"

30 Road, RR 2

Beamsville, ON L0R 1B0

Jim will be 26 years old on July 4th. Since he moved to Beamsville, I do not meet him that often anymore. But I know he enjoys singing in the choir, biking and visiting!

CHARLIE BEINTEMA

401 Park Street

Chatham, ON N7M 3S7

Charlie hopes to celebrate his 12th birthday on July 20. He keeps all his cards in a scrapbook. I am sure there is room for more!

JIM WANDERS

Huron Regional Centre

P.O. Box 1000

Orillia, ON L3V 6L2

Jim will also be 26 years old, just like the other Jim! His birthday is on July 28th. His hobby is sports, especially watersport.

I wish all three of you a happy birthday and the Lord's blessing in the year to come!

Who trusts in God, a strong abode
In heaven and earth possesses;
Who looks in love to Christ above,
No fear his heart oppresses.
To Thee alone, O Lord, we own
Our hope and consolation,
Our shield from foes, our balm for woes,
Our great and sure salvation.

In all the strife of mortal life
Our feet shall stand securely;
Temptation's hour shall lose its power,
For Thou shalt guard us surely.
O God, each day direct our way;
Renew us by Thy Spirit
Until we stand at Thy right hand
Through Jesus' saving merit.

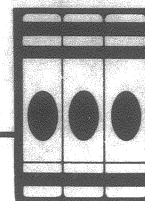
(Hymn 43:1,3)

Greetings to all who read this and please send your requests to

MRS. J. MULDER

1225 Highway 5, RR 1

Burlington, ON L7R 3X4



The Reformation of 1834. Essays in commemoration of the Act of Secession and Return. The Faculty of Mid-America Reformed Seminary, Peter Y. DeJong and Nelson D. Kloosterman, editors. Printed by Pluim Publishing, Inc. Orange City, IA., 1984. \$ 6.95. Available from Church Music and Records, Box 154, Neerlandia, AB, TOG 1R0

Recently I received the request to review the above-mentioned booklet of eighty-five pages. In the course of the years less pleasant requests were received than the present one, for it is a pleasure, indeed, to announce this contribution by the faculty of Mid-America Reformed Seminary.

They undertook it to do something "to provide some appropriate materials in the English medium," concerning the Secession of 1834 in the Netherlands, "since all primary and the best secondary sources which tell this story are found only in the Dutch language."

Everyone will understand that it is quite an undertaking to give useful information in eighty-five pages of print about a subject which could easily see one thousand pages dedicated to it without danger of repetition.

We find an overview of the time which preceded the Secession, about the spiritual climate of the age, about the Secession itself, its influence, its effect on the Michigan colony, its influence west of the Mississippi, with some pages about South Africa and ecumenical contacts added. This would be sufficient material to fill a much larger volume.

The result of the undertaking is that we do receive a general impression of the reasons for and the character of the Secession. The picture drawn before our eyes is a fair and — what is more important — accurate description of what was at stake.

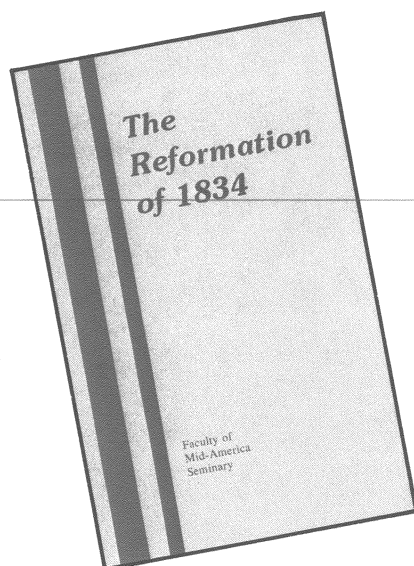
In case a reprint is needed, a few things should be changed.

On page 13 we are told that the committee which was to approve the new organization of the Netherlands Reformed Church had to do its work with haste. Actually, they did not have to work at all. Already in 1809, during the time of Louis Napoleon a plan for reorganization of the Church had been drawn up, but it was shelved when the Netherlands were annexed by France. Basically the same plan

was dusted off by the Senior Clerk J.D. Janssen under Napoleon Bonaparte in 1812, but the ill-fated campaign against Russia caused the shelving of this effort as well. When King William I put his weight behind renewed efforts, it was the old plan which was presented, with a few changes, and all the appointed committee had to do was: approve what, in fact, was an already five-year-old plan.

On page 26 we are told that H.P. Scholte was forbidden to preach by the "moderator." It was the counsellor who refused permission.

The difference between Secession and Doleantie is described on page 49, alas in very shallow terms. The basic dif-



ference was the attitude towards and the action to be undertaken with respect to the Netherlands Reformed Church. The Secession said: we separate from the false Church; the Doleantie said: we separate from the false Boards. We fail to find this basic difference described in the present work. It is reduced to a difference in "emphasis."

It was not after the decisions of Utrecht 1905 that Churches were designated as "A" and "B" so that these additions show whether they agreed or disagreed with Utrecht's decisions.

It was at the Union or Merger of 1892 that this designation came into use: if at a certain place there was a Church originating with the Secession and one from the Doleantie, and if these Churches did not merge completely right away, the former was designated as the Reformed Church A while the latter was called the Reformed Church B at that particular place. To my knowledge it has nothing to do with the decisions of 1905 which came thirteen years later.

What is stated on page 51 about the lack of awareness of the need for Christian education underlines the correctness of the title of a book by the Rev. H. Bouma, who describes the struggle of the people of the Secession to provide their children with such education in a work which he named *A Forgotten Chapter*.

Dr. K. Schilder was not sent to a concentration camp in 1940, but was imprisoned in Arnhem as a "reward" upon his faithfulness.

What is written on page 56 about the Liberation and the reasons for the deposition of many office-bearers is inaccurate and totally inadequate. The Conclusions of Utrecht 1905 were mentioned only "en passant" in the decisions of 1942, and the real trouble started only when the Explanatory Memorandum was issued and the Church members were expected to read the decisions of 1942 in the light of this Explanation.

Although we are very much aware of it that in a limited number of pages not more than a summary can be given, yet such a summary must be accurate and to the point. In the case of the Liberation of 1944 the present work falls short.

The above remarks were made because the booklet deserves it that good attention is paid to it and that it is read and used.

When noticing the gratitude with which the authors spoke about the Secession and their endeavour to continue in that line, I also felt the pain that we are separated. This work shows that we not only have common ancestors but that we also look at and evaluate what happened to and was done by these ancestors with the same thankfulness towards the Lord.

Is there no way that we can also follow the path which our forefathers trod in 1886 and 1892?

Genuine interest = communication

Perspectives on teaching and learning⁵

“Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?” Luke 2:49

When I tell about something that has happened to me, I might become so involved that I relive that event in my mind. I see it happen again right before my eyes as I search for words to tell the story. I might even become so excited that I make gestures without realizing it. Yet I also notice whether the listener pays attention or not. If he asks a question or voices a reservation I am able to react and respond to those comments. I am able to relive an experience in the telling of it, while at the same time closely observing the listener.

These elements — the story of the event itself, and the interaction between speaker and listener — are characteristic of meaningful communication. It is, in fact, correct to suggest that the more we are “in” our subject, the better we are able to communicate with the listener. A good speaker knows how to bring about reactions in his listeners. In those spontaneous reactions we show who we are, we betray our interests and concerns. An examination does not lend itself to get to know the person who is being examined. At best we discover how much or how little information such a person has available. If we want to know what someone really thinks, it is much better to engage him in a discussion about a topic which is important to him. If we want to know how someone thinks about politics, we should not ask him to write an examination in political science; instead, we should discuss with him current events and issues — and see how he reacts. A minister or elder learns to know the “sheep” of the congregation not by a formal examination of their “spiritual health,” but by their reaction to the Word which is brought during the home visit.

This rule applies equally at the school. A Christian teacher knows that the main principle for all subjects is the telling of God’s great deeds so that his students learn to see the beauty which he himself has already discovered. Such a teacher loves his work. He will come to know his students in their spontaneous reactions to his teaching. Although he lives his subject, and is fully involved in it, he also gains entrance into the secrets of the child’s soul. Unnoticed often, the children become interested, involved, start asking

questions — sometimes those questions reveal lack of understanding; sometimes the teacher discovers that they did understand far beyond his expectations; sometimes those questions of the children help the teacher discover new aspects he himself was not aware of; sometimes they betray what is in the child’s heart.

Indeed, this was the way of the ancient Israelites. The children would ask, “Why these stones?” And that question provided the fathers with the opportunity to explain God’s great miracles of the past. That was the way in which the 12-year-old Jesus investigated the things of His Father, to the great amazement of the scribes. At that moment — in the midst of the discussion of things which so vitally interested Him — the Lord showed Who He was, and the scribes recognized this, even though later they would reject Him. The business of His Father, that came first. And in that way we may know Him, too!

Scripture rejects the foolish glorification of the wisdom and skill of persons. People can only be called great in as much as they have tried to respond to their calling with their whole being. The list of faith heroes does not include those who have tried to improve themselves and impress others in the process. That list includes those who fought for God’s justice, people who gave all to proclaim God’s great deeds, people who sang psalms with bleeding backs and bound feet, people who received strength in weakness.

Scripture teaches us that we do not get to know a person on the basis of his personality, but on the basis of his actions in response to God’s call. God can change a heart which is interested in farming and cattle into a heart which is interested in kingship and government — Saul! Genuine interest in the business to which God calls us is a most critical element in the exercise of our vocation (*vocare* = to call).

How can we discover such interest in others; how can we get to know what really moves the other? Show interest in the activities, in the business itself, and do not admire the person! Talk about the work, not about the worker; talk about the study at hand, not about the cleverness

(or lack there of) of the student. Share your interest in the work, rather than admiring the skill or cleverness of the person who accomplished it.

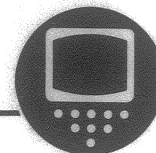
Our age sees much glorification of persons with little thought for the work itself. This makes healthy and necessary criticism difficult, since criticism is often considered an attack on the person rather than a suggestion for improvement or correction. This attention for the person also makes a healthy cooperation often difficult (Delegation or sharing of responsibilities? Sure, but is he able to do this as well as I can?). Yet working together on a given task, studying together, discussing things together — these are all opportunities which allow us to get to know each other well because our attention is on the business, the task at hand. But if the persons involved become the focus of our attention, then a pleasant, perhaps even a stimulating experience often becomes a terrible frustration.

Friendship is built on interest in and love for a common cause; frustration and antipathy result from the lack of such interest and love. The simple elder who speaks during home visits about the business of God’s kingdom discovers that love or the lack of it in the reaction of his “sheep,” and therefore comes to know the members of the congregation better than his colleague who inspects “souls,” or a minister who collects psychological data. A teacher who simply tells the children of God’s great works and who together with his children is busy with schoolwork knows his pupils better than his colleague who constantly uses drills and repetitions, and at every opportunity gives marks towards the grade on the report card.

Are we known by our actions, as people who are genuinely interested in, and busy with Father’s business? Are we genuinely interested in our children, in our students, in our brothers and sisters as (co-)workers in Father’s business?

T.M.P. VANDERVEN

Based on A. Janse: *Het Eigen Karakter der Christelijke School*. Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1935. Hoofdstuk VI: *Echte of Voorgewende Belangstelling*, pp.84-89.



“Anchor” Canadian Reformed Association for the Handicapped, April 24, 1987

The chairman, br. J. Witten opened the meeting with Scripture reading and prayer, and then welcomed all the members present.

After the minutes were adopted the Anchor Home director's report was read, outlining the past month's activities and progress at the Anchor Home.

The Anchor Association is gratefully receiving more recognition and consideration from our community. The women's societies in Burlington again donated money that they had collected, and as well the young people attending a recent youth conference collected and donated over \$1,350.00. Without these generous donations “Anchor” would have much more difficulty operating.

The Advisory Committee reported that it has placed an ad in the *Clarion* for a counsellor for the Anchor Home because Rene Beijes has decided to resign her position.

The Building Committee informed the board that the lawyer has started the

rezoning process, which we expect to take several months. The committee is also starting to get prices for the proposed addition, which we project to begin building in the fall.

The treasurer, Jack VanderHorst, distributed copies of the proposed budget for 1987 to the board members. The budget will be presented and voted on at the general membership meeting, to be held on May 8th in the Cornerstone Canadian Reformed Church at Hamilton. The proposed budget shows a deficit of over \$11,000, but we hope this will be compensated by increased donations.

After a question period the meeting was closed with the singing of a psalm and with prayer.

K.J. SPITHOFF
Correspondence secretary

“Anchor” Canadian Reformed Association for the Handicapped, May 15, 1987

The chairman, br. J. Witten opened the meeting with Scripture reading and prayer, and then welcomed all the members present, especially the new represen-

tative from Toronto, Mrs. Alida Teistra.

The director of the Anchor Home, Daryl Kooiman presented an extensive report on the past month's activities and progress at the Home. Now that spring has come and grass has to be cut, arrangements were made for the Home residents themselves to help maintain the property. Overall things are running smoothly at the Home and substantial progress seems to be made in teaching the residents more responsibility, courtesy and maturity.

The Summer Camp Committee reported that the camp will again be held this year at Valens Conservation Park from July 6 to 18. About 25 people have volunteered to help at the camp.

We are still trying to locate a lift to install in the Anchor Home van. We hope to have one installed before the summer camp, because there are a number of participants who are confined to wheelchairs.

The meeting was closed with the singing of a psalm and with prayer.

K.J. SPITHOFF
Correspondence secretary

Consulaat-Generaal Der Nederlanden CONSULATE GENERAL OF THE NETHERLANDS

One Dundas Street West
Box 2, Suite 2106
Toronto, Ontario M5G 1Z3
Phone: (416) 598-2520

BELANGRIJKE MEDEDELING

Tussen Canada en Nederland is onlangs een verdrag over sociale zekerheid gesloten, dat dit najaar in werking zal treden.

Het omvat o.a. regelingen voor ouderdoms — en weduwen — en wezen — pensioenen. In verband hiermede zal een vertegenwoordiger van de Sociale Verzekeringsbank te Amsterdam op enige nader te organiseren bijeenkomsten h.t.l. voorlichting geven over de gevolgen van het verdrag.

In Toronto en omgeving zal e.e.a. plaatsvinden omstreeks 20-23 juni 1987. De regeling is voor U interessant:

1. Als U 65 jaar bent of wordt en:
 - een Nederlands AOW pensioen heeft. Dit pensioen kan dan worden verhoogd met 2% van het volledige AOW pensioen voor elk jaar dat U (en Uw echtgenoot en echtgenote) voor 1 januari 1957 in Nederland heeft gewoond of gewerkt.
 - nog geen AOW pensioen heeft. Dan kunt U zo'n pensioen krijgen als U 65 jaar wordt, als U ooit na Uw 15e verjaardag in Nederland heeft gewoond of gewerkt.

Om AOW pensioen over de jaren voor 1957 te kunnen krijgen, moet U na Uw 59ste verjaardag 6 jaren in Canada en/of Nederland hebben gewoond.

OUR COVER

Gods River, Manitoba

Photo courtesy of
Travel Manitoba

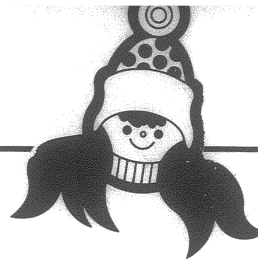
2. Als U weduwe bent, dan kunt U een Nederlands weduwepensioen krijgen als Uw man op de dag van zijn overlijden voor het Canada pension plan verzekerd was en hij na 1 oktober 1959 ooit in Nederland heeft gewoond of gewerkt.

Voor beide situaties genoemd onder 1 en 2 maakt het niet uit, of U de Nederlandse of Canadese nationaliteit hebt.

3. Een eenmaal in Canada toegekend Canadees pensioen behoudt U bij terugkeer naar Nederland.
 4. Een Nederlandse AOW — of AWW pensioen moet worden aangevraagd bij de Sociale Verzekeringsbank, Postbus 77000, 1007 MG Amsterdam. Daar kunt U ook terecht voor een eventuele verhoging van Uw pensioen.
- Het Department of Health and Welfare kan U daarmee behulpzaam zijn.

Een nadere aankondiging omtrent datum, tijd en plaats van de bijeenkomst(en) volgt nog.

De Consul-Generaal
voor deze:-
Mevr. G. SCHNITZLER
Fgd. KANSELIER



Hello Busy Beavers,

The sun is shining so brightly.

The grass smells lovely.

The flowers are just "throwing" their colours out at you!

It's great to be outside!

So what do you do outside?

Can you guess where you would find me?

I'll tell you a little secret.

You'd find me out in the garden with my gloves, and my rake, and my packages of seed.

Sometimes when I put those teeny, tiny seeds in the soil (with a little pat) I think,

"Poor little seed. How are you supposed to grow into a big plant?"

And then I remember only God can make things grow!

But not everybody likes gardening.

One Busy Beaver I know would rather hop on his bike for a long, long ride when the weather is great.

And maybe some of you would rather spread a blanket on the lawn and read!

So what do you do when the weather's great, Busy Beavers?

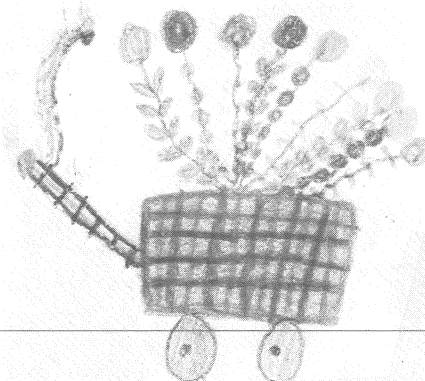
Write us a little note how you spend time outside. Would you like to include a picture? Great!

Aunt Betty's address is

Aunt Betty
c/o Clarion
Premier Printing Ltd.
1249 Plessis Road
Winnipeg, Manitoba R2C 3L9

"FLOWER CART"

by Busy Beaver *Esther Hordyk*



EYE SAY!

by Busy Beaver *Karin Vanderveen*



I smashed the car again, dear!



Oh, no! She has the same dress!



That last course was too much for me!



I told you not to have that drink!



Psst! Can you keep a secret?



Don't move! It's crawling up your leg!

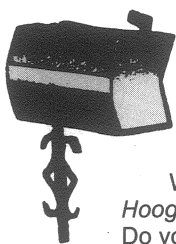
Quiz Time!

Pretty soon it will be *Father's Day*. Can you name the father of each of these Bible people?

NAME THE FATHER

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Ham _____ | 11. Samson _____ |
| 2. David _____ | 12. Jehu _____ |
| 3. Abel _____ | 13. Saul _____ |
| 4. Joshua _____ | 14. Esau _____ |
| 5. James and _____ | 15. Absalom _____ |
| John _____ | 16. Isaac _____ |
| 6. Rachel _____ | 17. Isaiah _____ |
| 7. Samuel _____ | 18. Gideon _____ |
| 8. Abner _____ | 19. Jemima, Keziah and _____ |
| 9. Benjamin _____ | Karenhappuch _____ |
| 10. Elisha _____ | 20. Methuselah _____ |

(See answers)



From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Shannon Hoogstra*. We are very happy to have you join us. Do you like writing stories, Shannon. I hope you will write us again soon! Bye for now.

Thank you very much for your letter, and the riddles, too, *Linda Stam*. How did you enjoy your visit with your grandma? Did you do things together (so you wouldn't get bored). Write again soon, Linda.

Hello, *Heather Krabbendam*. It was nice to hear from you again. I really enjoyed the way you illustrated your letter! Keep up the good work, Heather. Bye for now.

Sounds to me as if you had a great time with your friends on Good Friday, *Karin Vanderveen*. And I see you've been very busy, too. Keep up the good work on the calligraphy, Karin! And thanks for the "jokes" and poem!

Hello, *Esther Hordyk*. It's nice to hear from you again. I see you've been keeping busy. And I really enjoyed your colourful letter! Keep up the good work, Esther.