



Clarion
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Again: Shall Women Vote in Church?

By J. Geertsema

Three Letters to the Editor

The November 5, 1993 issue of *Clarion* contained a Press Review which presented to the readers the grounds of the Synod of Ommen of our sister churches in the Netherlands for adopting the active voting of the sisters in the congregations. In *Clarion* of January 28, 1994 a letter to the editor appeared from Br. Reinink expressing great concern about this decision in the Netherlands. We received three other letters in reaction to that of Br. Reinink. Rather than just printing these three letters, I would like to present them here (in chronological order) and comment on the matter itself.

The first letter is from Br. E.A. Numan in Telkwa, B.C. He agrees with Br. Reinink and writes that

"the young ministers in the Synod of Ommen 1993 were warned by the professors of the Reformed University in Kampen not to go that way. (It is) an unbiblical way, but they want also to have elders pronounce the greeting and blessing in the church services. You wait and see the elders want also to administer the sacraments and be equal with the ministers who studied for five or more years. The revolution of feminism is here penetrating De Gereformeerde kerken Art. 31 in the Netherlands. Everything has to go. Well, they have a good example in the synodical churches which, under the leadership of professor Dr. H. Kuitert of the Free University, declared the first chapters of Genesis a myth."

Br. Numan mentions further other professors of the same university who rejected the historicity of the miracles in the Old and New Testament denied the death of Christ at the cross as a satisfaction for sin. Br. Numan is afraid that the sister churches in the Netherlands are following the synodical churches. He connects the decisions of the Synod of Ommen with the co-operation of the Reformed Political Party (GPV) with other parties and the adoption of editors from other Reformed churches in the editorial board of "Nederlands Dagblad." He asserts that our sister churches go even further than the Christian Reformed Churches in the matter of allowing elders to pronounce salutation and blessing. And he hopes that the professors in Hamilton will show the true doctrine and meaning of the Bible as it speaks in Genesis 1-3, in Gal. 3:28, in Timothy, etc.

The second letter comes from Br. M. Kamphuis in Orangeville. He writes that if Br. Reinink had a valid reason for his concern, it would be correct to make this known to our churches in order that we "in brotherly love warn the (Dutch) churches in an orderly way." Br. Kamphuis has objections against the manner in which Br. Reinink writes when stating that the Dutch churches "are playing the har-

lot" in the light of Ezekiel 16:44-56. "This is passing judgment." For "when churches become spiritual harlots then they are false churches." Br. Reinink's formulation reminds Br. Kamphuis of the time of the Liberation when such language turned many people off.

Br. Kamphuis does not think that the Synod of Ommen meant to say that its decision was necessary because "we live in a different time" and that, therefore, it was led by "the spirit of our time." He writes:

This decision about women's voting rights has gone on for a long time already, even long before the Liberation. I read once that Prof. L. Lindeboom (1845-1933, J.G.) was in favour of it. After the Liberation it was brought up for discussion again at a synod, but rejected. At the Synod of Ommen some ministers were convinced by the report and changed their mind so that it was unanimously adopted. It is not easy to say who is right and who is wrong. So, is there no concern for our sister churches? I think there is. When we read the article from Prof. Van Dam "Living in Faith," then we see that there is concern about the life style of especially the younger generation and that counts for all of us too. However, I hope that articles like that of Br. Reinink, which is of an extreme nature, do not appear among us again. It will not and does not benefit anyone but only serves to hurt feelings.

The third letter comes from Br. Harry Alkema in Burlington. He complains about the selection of letters to the editor, and refers in particular to the letter of Br. Reinink. With respect to the publication of letters to the editor he asks:

Was it the lack of letters, their lack of quality, or just the fact that *Clarion* was to tow the line of Reformed theology? I can only conclude, after reading the above letter that it is a matter of choice or selection! It is apparent that very conservative view points are more important than timely, current and perhaps controversial points of view. Your policy of selection reflects gross immaturity.

To get on with W. Reinink's letter, his extreme view points and slander of the churches in Holland are wanting. And, additionally, his quoting of Scripture was grossly misplaced. Surely, what he writes is not representative of our churches! I would be ashamed if someone from outside our churches would read such a letter in our "official" church paper.

Would you please use a more mature approach in your letters to be published? Actually the letters to the editor could easily be expanded to reflect Reformed opinions of our people in Canada. It would generate quite some interest as we have many opinionated people in our midst.

A Response

I begin with the last letter because it shows total dissatisfaction with the editor's policy. The writer assumes that *Clarion* has a policy of selecting only certain "conservative" letters for publication. I can assure him that this is indeed his assumption combined with a number of accusations and judgments on the basis of assumptions. *Clarion* does not have such a policy. Yes, after some hesitation and discussion the "extreme" letter of Br. Reinink was published. It is with the same hesitation that this letter of Br. Alkema is published, because it expresses concern in a manner which assumes and accuses on the basis of just assumptions. I would like to ask Br. Alkema: is this the correct Christian way?

Why did we publish the letter of Br. Reinink? We were of the opinion that his concern is genuine and understandable. Br. Reinink has seen the development in the Christian Reformed Church: first there was a decision to give the women the right to vote, and now this is being followed by decisions (leading to) giving them the right to be voted into the offices. I am sure that Br. Alkema agrees with Br. Reinink and with me that, while we can discuss the matter of active voting, the matter of passive voting rights must be rejected on the basis of, among other texts, 1 Timothy 2:12. We do not want to follow the Synodical churches in the Netherlands or the CRC in North American in adapting our way of doing things in the church to the "spirit of our times." We want our churches to abide by the doctrine of the Scriptures as we confess them.

Br. Kamphuis writes in a careful manner and shows the picture that also our churches in their decisions so far have shown. Br. Numan is in agreement with Br. Reinink but does not argue from Scripture but rather with suggestions and exclamations about what will happen further on this way of deformation and he points to other matters and churches that have turned or are turning liberal.

A Protestant Reformed voice

Professor D.J. Engelsma of the Protestant Reformed churches gives his comment on the decision of our Dutch sister churches in *The Standard Bearer* (vol. 70, no. 12: March 15, 1994). He sides with the brothers Reinink and Numan in being critical of this decision, but is not as radical. He begins his comment with a proverb of the Arabs. It says that "one must keep the nose of the camel out of his tent." Failing to do so, "the Arab will soon have the whole camel in his tent." This proverb expresses the same as a Latin saying, "*Obsta principiis*," which means: "Resist the beginnings." Prof. Engelsma adds,

Applicable to all of life, the rule is especially urgent for the church. If the beginnings of corrupt doctrine, impure worship, unsound government, or any unholy life are permitted in the church, later it will prove to be impossible to withstand the evils in their fully developed forms.

This expresses the same concern as the two brothers have.

Prof. Engelsma discusses the grounds of the Synod of Ommen. The first ground deals with what the Bible says. Engelsma writes:

The ground begins with the statement that "the Scriptures do not give a direct answer to the question whether or not the sisters are to participate in the election of office bearers." In an important section, the first ground adds yet another negative declaration: "The Scriptures do not give a general order for the women to be silent in the congregation."



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Prof. Engelsma shows how Ommen's argumentation refers to a number of texts in the New Testament that speak of active involvement of the sisters in church life. The promise of the Spirit is also for them (Acts 2:17,18), they prophesy (Acts 21:9, 1 Cor 11:5), and are active in the service of the gospel (Acts 18:26, Rom. 10:16ff, Phil. 4:3, 4). Engelsma also refers "to passages of Scripture that are fundamental, not only for the issue of women voting at the congregational meeting but also for the issue of women holding office in the church." The one passage is 1 Cor. 14:34-36, the other 1 Tim.2:11-15. In the first, according to the synod, the apostle Paul says that it is not proper for women to judge prophets during the worship service. The second "only prohibits women from exercising authority during the worship services of the church."

Prof. Engelsma gives the impression that he disagrees with restricting this apostolic instruction to the worship services. Here is an important exegetical point. In my opinion, in both 1 Cor. 14 and 1 Tim. 2, the context speaks about what is to take place or not in the public worship services of the congregation. One cannot just make what Paul says here into a general rule for all of life. It appears to me that it is difficult to conclude from these texts that a voting by the sisters together with the brothers is forbidden. The question is: what is the character of voting? Is it, for instance, a form of governing? Our Canadian Reformed synods have dealt with this point. In former days it was often considered to be linked to ruling. Our synods have put a question mark here. This matter is dealt with in the second ground of the Synod of Ommen. Ommen also disconnects voting and ruling. Engelsma presents the older view when he writes:

The Reformed have looked at the congregational meeting, in fact, as not truly a "congregational meeting" but rather a "public meeting of the consistory at which the members of the congregation are present" (Joh. Jansen, *Korte Verklaring van de Kerkenordening*, in explanation of Art. 29 of the Church Order of Dordt concerning ecclesiastical gatherings).

The question is: is a meeting of the consistory with the congregation just what the words indicate: a meeting of the consistory together with the congregation for the purpose of voting for of-

fice bearers? Or is it a consistory meeting with active ruling involvement of the members of the congregation, since the consistory gives ruling power to the members in their voting? I am inclined to say that in such a meeting of the consistory with the congregation the consistory, in its responsibility to rule the congregation, asks the congregation to express its choice of new office bearers. Here the consistory rules, not the members of the congregation.

Engelma then presents the third and fourth ground. The third is that "the women may participate in the congregational meeting since the Spirit chooses officebearers through the 'voice of the congregation.'" This 'voice' is made up of women as well as of men." The fourth ground is that permitting the sisters to vote in a congregational meeting must not be seen as giving in to the spirit of feminism. In spite of this assurance Engelsma is of the opinion that this decision is made under the pressure of the times since "the General Synod of Ommen spoke a good word for 'the spirit of the times': 'The spirit of the times does not necessarily always have a negative impact.'" This is why he concludes with saying that our sister churches in the Netherlands "plainly do not want the camel of feminism in their church tents" but that they have "accepted her nose."

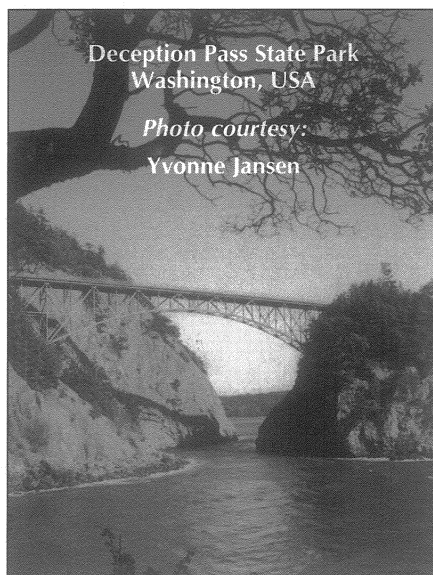
Some concluding comments

This fourth point I find a very important matter. At this moment I do not

see any clear indication in the Scriptures that either calls or forbids the sisters in the congregation to participate in the voting for office bearers. (Elsewhere in this issue a brief overview of the decisions of our Canadian Reformed synods in this matter is given.) It is different with the matter of being voted into an office. Here 1 Cor. 14 and 1 Tim. 2 are clearly saying no, not on the basis of the cultural thinking of the time of the apostle Paul but on the basis of God's Word in Gen. 1-3. (See Acts Synod Smithville, 1980, p. 216, conclusion sub g) of the report of the study committee.) However, if the decision of Ommen is a matter of the pressure of the spirit of our modern age with its humanistic equality thinking and human rights philosophy, then there is reason for fear, and the term itself "Women's Voting Rights" is humanistic. If it becomes a matter of our human rights and total equality, then we are on a worldly track. In the church it is not a matter of "our human rights but of serving each other as slaves for each other, just as Christ did not come to be served but to serve in humbleness (Mt. 20:28, 11:28-30). And for serving actively in the congregation neither men nor women have to be in a special office or have special rights.

The Synod of Cloverdale, BC, 1983 (Acts, Art. 160, p.118) considered that in our churches there are two opposite views in this matter, that the matter does not live in the midst of the churches and that "granting women's voting rights would definitely cause great concern and even division." I would not make the general statement that the matter does not live in the midst of the churches. There are churches where it does live. But I heard someone say that there are more men in favour of granting "voting rights" to women than women. Of course, this statement is hard to verify. But I know many sisters who like to keep things as they are, among others, for fear of setting a trend in the wrong direction. However, fear is not the main point. The main point is that of service. It is still true, as I see it, that granting our sisters that they can participate in the voting for office bearers would "cause great concern and division." If the voting of the sisters were a clear command of the Lord, we should decide accordingly, even if it could cause division. Now that it does not appear this way, it looks to me that serving the peace and unity of the churches will still be leaving things as they are. **C**

OUR COVER



A Bit of Canadian Reformed History on Women's Voting

By J. Geertsema

Our *Synod of Toronto, 1974* began to deal with this matter (Acts, Art. 84, p. 30-32). There was an overture from the church at Toronto proposing that the Synod "recognize the rights of active participation of women in the life of the churches of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to acknowledge their privilege to take part in the election of office bearers." The church at Toronto had six grounds for its proposal. The church at London offered "objections against the grounds given by Toronto." There was also the report regarding "women's voting rights" that served at the Synod of Kampen of our sister churches in the Netherlands of 1975.

The synod of Toronto judged that the "remarks of Toronto. . . do not provide a thorough study of all the relevant Biblical teaching." With regard to the objections of London, the Synod said that, "although there is value in this communication" there were also "several weak spots in its reasoning," of which three examples are given. As for the report to the Dutch Synod of Kampen, the committee judged that also in it there were "several weak spots, statements subject to doubt and incorrect dilemmas."

The synodical advisory committee became convinced that the study materials were "not sufficient to lead to a responsible, clear decision, which takes all Biblical (as well as church political) aspects into account." It recommended to the Synod to "appoint a committee with the mandate to:

- a. thoroughly study the Scriptures on the right of active participation of women in the life of the congregation, including their taking part in voting.
 - b. thoroughly study whether such voting can and/or must be considered an act of governing the church. . . ."
- This recommendation was rejected, and the Synod decided that the study material offered was not sufficient to come to a clear decision and that therefore the request of the church of Toronto could not be granted.

When one thinks about the first recommendation, taking over the wording of the church at Toronto, one

can only say that this formulation is much too general. Who will doubt that the sisters in the church have "the right" (a wrong word) "of active participation. . . in the life of the congregation." Who will deny that every member has the calling to participate actively in church life?

The *Synod of Coaldale, 1977* (Acts, Art. 27, pp. 13-14) had a letter from the church at Edmonton on its table expressing its disappointment with respect to the decision of the Synod of Toronto in this matter and requested that as yet a study committee be appointed. The church at Toronto showed its agreement. A majority report of the synodical advisory committee recommended to accept Edmonton's request. A minority report advised against it. The majority proposal was adopted.

The *Synod of Smithville, 1980* (Acts, Arts. 80 and 83, pp. 51-59, cf also the extensive study report, pp. 205-225) first correctly rejected the motion "to leave the matter of Women's Voting rights in the freedom of the churches." Such an important matter concerns all the churches in the federation. But then, in Art. 83, the Synod, guided by its advisory committee, concluded that the resulting conclusions of the report of the study committee were not sufficient for coming to a definite conclusion. The study committee recommended to the Synod to state "that the right for women to vote 'cannot be deduced from Scripture.'" But the Synod concluded that "this recommendation is not supported by the Scriptural data presented and therefore does not substantiate the proposed decision 'not to grant women the right to vote'." The synod concluded that also the church-historical data in the report was not sufficient for a definite conclusion. The same was stated again by the Synod on the point of church-political data (of Acts Smithville, pp. 54, 55, 57). The Synod also rejected the view of Rev. D. DeJong that voting is a matter of exercising one's prophetic calling and that, on that ba-

sis, women should have the right to vote (p.57-59). The result was that the matter had to be studied again. A new report was prepared by other people for the next General Synod.

The *Synod of Cloverdale, B.C. 1983* (Acts, Art. 160, pp 114-118; cf also the report of the study committee on pp. 388-409) considered that the recommendation of the new study committee was the opposite (acknowledge the right of the sisters to vote) of the recommendation presented by the previous study committee (do not give the women the right to vote because it cannot be sufficiently substantiated). These contradicting recommendations showed the "lack of consensus on this matter" in the churches. The Synod further considered that the study committee's explanation of a number of Scripture passages are basis for the recommendation was "rather unusual if not questionable." The third consideration dealt with the consideration of the Dutch Synod of Groningen, 1978, namely that voting is not a matter of governing but does have a binding character, and that "the submissiveness of women does not allow an independent vote." I may insert a remark here. The outcome of a congregational vote is not absolutely binding, in my opinion. There can be circumstances that compel a consistory not to appoint a brother who has been elected. Further, even if the vote would be binding, this is not a personal vote of one member but the result of the voting as a whole. The fourth consideration reads:

Various churches have expressed the conviction that the matter of "Women's Voting Rights" does not live in the midst of the churches and that granting women's voting rights would definitely cause great concern and even division" and that, therefore, it would be "unwise to grant such voting rights."

In accordance with this the Synod decided not to accede to the recommendation of the study committee to grant the right; it also decided not to appoint a new committee. C

REMEMBER YOUR CREATOR

By R. Schouten

Call Upon God⁴

(In the last article, we spoke about the content of our petitions to God. We saw that prayer is the mining of God's promises which are revealed in the Scriptures. In this article we proceed to speak about the right attitudes for prayer)

If you have faith

If we turn now to necessary attitudes for godly prayer, we must speak first about the condition of *faith*. Faith is the confidence that what we have asked, God is able and willing to give. Christ says to His disciples, "And whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive, if you have faith" (Mt. 21:22).

We may listen also to the apostle John in his first letter: "And this is the confidence which we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have obtained the requests made of Him" (1 Jn. 5:14-15).

Also the word of James is here important: "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives to all men generously and without reproaching, and it will be given him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. For that person must not suppose that a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways, will receive anything from the Lord" (Jas. 1:5-8).

Why can prayer be full of expectation? Only because God has commanded our prayers to attach themselves to His promises. We know that God is truth, that He hates all lies, that He is faithful to His Word. Therefore, He fulfills all promises. He is ready to hear, His ears turned to us. What an inducement to prayer! After we pray, we don't simply hope for the best, but we start to watch with expectation for the Lord to implement His promises in our lives and in His Church.

From the heart

Furthermore, true prayer must be from the heart. Anything less than *sincere* prayer is a violation of the third commandment. If we pray without focus or seriousness, we take the Lord's Name in vain. When out of custom or superstition people draw near with their lips while their hearts and minds are far from God, He is insulted and will not hear them (cf. Is. 29:13). For these reasons, the often helpful use of standard form prayers, whether in home or church, must be balanced with prayers which express in our own words the desires of our heart.

With a pure conscience

A further condition of prayer is a life of integrity. John says that we receive whatever we ask of God, "because we keep His commandments and do what pleases Him" (1 Jn. 3:22). In the previous verse, John taught that "if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God." In Ps. 34, verse 15, the poet states, "The eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous, and His ears toward their cry."

Consider, too, Ps. 66:18: "If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened." On the other hand, Prov. 28, verse 9 informs us that, "If anyone turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination." Based on his knowledge of the Old Testament, the blind man who was healed by Jesus could state categorically: "We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, God listens to him" (Jn. 9:31).

Taken together, these and many other texts inform us that only those who are truly repentant can really pray. The Psalmists often seem to boast of their righteousness and to use it as a ground for prayer. What they mean, however, is not that they are perfect and that God must hear them on account of their

complete obedience to the Law. Instead, the meaning is that they are fully committed to the Law of God. They love God's Law and want to keep it. When they nonetheless break God's Law and fall short of perfection, they trust in the Lord's forgiving covenant love. In this sense they are righteous and can pray to God with a clean conscience (cf. Heb. 10:22). The point is that they do not pray to God with pious words while in their hearts they still love evil.

A further condition here is the need for reconciliation with other people. Peter states that if a husband does not live in a considerate manner with his wife, then his prayers will be hindered (1 Pet. 3:7). And Paul adds in 1 Tim. 2, "I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands *without anger or quarreling*" (vs. 8). When we wish to bring to God the sacrifice of praise from our lips, a condition is that as much as we are able, we live at peace with all men (cf. Mt. 5:23f). **C**

to be continued



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Theonomy and Christian Reconstructionism₃

By R. Aasman

CRITIQUE

2. Church and State

Bahnsen's thesis that Old Testament law is not only for Israel but also for the surrounding nations and thus for civil government today is seriously flawed. His use of Deut. 4 to prove this holds no water, because the point is not that the nations would be impressed with Israel's political economy and want to take that over, but that they would be impressed with Israel's God and want to worship Him by joining the covenant people. Moreover it is clear that the law is specifically given to God's covenant people and defines the nature of God's covenant relations with His people. Note that in the opening words of the decalogue the Lord says: *I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. The law is specifically given to those whom God has delivered.* Bahnsen misses the purpose of the law which is designed to make the covenant community a kingdom of priests and kings to God.

As for Bahnsen's important distinction of Israel as church and state, that is artificial. It is untenable. In the Old Testament, church and state were one, as the Lord Himself states in Ex. 19:6: *you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.* Even a sojourner or stranger in the land could witness and experience God's blessings for His covenant people. Even secular rulers were employed as servants of God for the benefit of His covenant people. What God did for the sojourner or how He used a secular ruler does not demonstrate a separation of church and state in Israel which existed independently of each other, but shows how He is fulfilling His one plan of salvation. Also the distinction which Bahnsen makes between Moses and Aaron as a support for the distinction between church and state is artificial. These two men worked side by side for the same goals within the one covenant community of God! And is it not true that on the one hand Moses had to intercede for Aaron and on the other hand the Levites had to act as judges at times? Does this not under-

mine the thesis of a separation of religious and political lines in Israel?

We understand of course that Old Testament Israel in its combination of church and state was not an ideal situation. This too is a part of the Old Testament shadows which point to a heavenly reality. It was but an ectype of the archetype. It finds its fulfilment — through Christ — in the church of the New Testament. As Peter writes: *you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people.* There is no parallel between Israel as a state in the Old Testament and the civil government today. There is no support for that in Scripture. Such an idea is based on a non-christological approach to the Old Testament.

Therefore to transfer the penal sanctions from Old Testament Israel to the hands of the state today also does not follow. The discipline in Old Testament Israel is now fulfilled in the discipline of the New Testament Church. Whereas the punishment for a number of sins in the Old Testament is the death penalty, in the New Testament it is excommunication from the church and so from the kingdom of God. What should be done to homosexuals, adulterers, incestuous people? Paul says you preach to them and admonish them, and if they remain unrepentant then they are to be excommunicated. Think of the incestuous young man in 1 Cor. 5. In fact, the wrath of God expressed against such persons in Rom. 1 does not culminate in the death penalty but in everlasting condemnation. This does not make God's law less effective and disciplinary as Bahnsen charges, but it does the very opposite. Only read the letter to the Hebrews, especially the latter part of chapter 10. Here we see that Mosaic penology is fulfilled and heightened in the increased responsibility and condemnation of the new covenant. How terrible is the wrath of God against those who have come to know Jesus Christ and yet deliberately sin. Heb. 10 makes it clear that the capital punishment of the Mosaic law is fulfilled in the consuming wrath of God. This wrath of God is displayed today in the excommunication from the

Christian church, for then God locks a person outside His everlasting kingdom.

Bahnsen is very careful to distinguish between church and state. However by taking the laws for Israel, including the punishments, and placing that in the hands of the civil authority, there is a danger of confusing the work of the church and the state. There is a danger of placing more emphasis on the state restructuring a Christian society, than on the church proclaiming the gospel of redemption in Jesus Christ. There is a danger that the discipline of the civil authority gets greater emphasis than the church. It also leads to confusion: in the case of idolatry, is it the task of the state to punish idolaters? Moreover, should someone who is not a member of the covenant community be punished, even executed, for worshipping other gods? Are Biblical punishments not based on one's covenant relationship with God and one's answerability for that? Even some theologians realize that there is confusion in their own line of reasoning.

Clearly there is also a misunderstanding of Mt. 28 and an improper distinction between church and kingdom, especially in the teachings of Gary North. This leads to an impoverishment of both church and kingdom. The church is not the agency which enables Christians to go out and do kingdom work, namely the restructuring of society. Dr. J. Faber speaks about the dangers of making too much of a distinction between church and kingdom in *Essays in Reformed Doctrine*.⁷ There is no sharp distinction between the two: the church is the assembly of obedient citizens of the kingdom. The kingdom is spread through the proclamation and the institution of localized churches throughout the world. Therefore Mt. 28 should not be understood as Christ's program for a Christian reconstruction of society, but as the proclamation of the gospel and the institution of the church where obedient citizens of the kingdom are gathered. Then those redeemed and renewed in Christ may also cultivate the earth to the glory of their King!

For a proper understanding of church and state today, we should study article 36 of the Belgic Confession, which goes back to Calvin's *Institutes*. In keeping with Rom. 13 and 1 Tim. 2, it is the task of the state to preserve the true religion and create conditions in which the church can flourish. Bahnsen likes Calvin because Calvin says the civil government should base its laws on the polity of Moses. But a careful reading of Calvin in his *Institutes*, IV xx 14-16, shows that he understands the Mosaic law is unique for Israel but now we can take the substance and truth of such

laws to make good laws for today. Calvin makes clear that every government today will have to make laws which are expedient for its particular situation. Therefore to say, as some theologians do, that Calvin advocates a reinstatement of Mosaic laws and penal sanctions is misinterpretation. It is true that Calvin advocated the death penalty for adultery and blasphemy (think of Servetus) but not because Moses said so, rather because the moral law demands it. As Christians we will naturally approach society and government from the perspective of what God has taught us in His Word. But we will not simply hand the ten words of the covenant to them. We must show that the basic underlying principles (Westminster Confession: general equity) which God has revealed to us in His Word also makes sense for the world: not blaspheming the name of our God, granting a day of rest, honouring authority, forbidding every form of sexual immorality, etc. Even an unbelieving government and an unbelieving society can be made to recognize the benefit of such order in society, as history has shown us.

3. Postmillennialism

Reconstructionists typically are postmillennial. Their emphasis is on the final victory and triumph of Jesus Christ which will be brought about by worldwide evangelization and by the establishment of the kingdom of God in all areas of life. But the victory of Christ is exactly what they are undermining. The point is, right now the church is victorious – this is the golden age for the church where Satan is bound and Christ is the Head over all things for the church as Paul writes in Eph. 1. We are already in the last days, where nothing can supersede the present except the return of Jesus Christ.

The exegesis of Mt. 24 and Revelation by theologians is faulty. To see the gloom and suffering of these passages in the light of the fall of Jerusalem is not correct. The fall of Jerusalem is but the aftermath of Good Friday and the great shakeup that Christ's death and victory brought about. In the New Testament, quite frankly, the fall of Jerusalem is no big deal. Instead, what Christ is speaking about in Mt. 24, in 2 Thess. 2 and in Revelation refers to the history of the New Testament church before His second coming. To be realistic, the last days of the church will not be a time of mass conversion and of a Christian restructuring of society on earth. It will be a time of persecution and suffering, a time when most men's love will grow cold, where we can expect the very type of ungodliness in our society which theologians say should not be

there. The New Testament speaks over and over again about the tribulations for Christians. And yet the church is victorious and the kingdom of God is thriving because the gospel is proclaimed and people believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. Even when society becomes progressively more godless and Christians are terribly persecuted, Jesus Christ gathers, defends and preserves the obedient citizens of His kingdom – and not one will be missing when He gathers them on Zion.

One great danger of postmillennialism is that the idea of a future golden age becomes a theology of glory rather than a theology of the cross. The emphasis is on what we can and must do. We have to reconstruct the world as the kingdom of Christ, making His enemies His footstool and then He can return. It's almost as if we have to do what Christ unfortunately did not do. What this overlooks is that Christ is victorious, He has liberated us from the power of Satan, sin and death, and as soon as all the elect are gathered, He will return in His perfect victory.

The other great danger of postmillennialism is that it undermines the church's watchfulness. There must be an expectation of Christ's imminent return. We cannot count on an extended period of time where our lives can be better prepared for Christ's return. The church has to be ready now – Christ could come at any moment. Moreover we must realize that we are a wilderness congregation. Like Abraham, we are not looking for an earthly city. Ultimately our commonwealth is not in this world but it is above. In the midst of a broken and ungodly world we look with eager expectation to the world to come on Christ's great day.

IV CONCLUSION: LAW AND THE CHRISTIAN

In conclusion, we should observe that among some critics of theonomy there is the impression that theonomy has a wrong hermeneutic but at least it is on the right track and it gets us thinking. Let us be clear: theonomy or Christian reconstructionism has a wrong hermeneutic, wrong exegesis on essential passages and it is a wrong theology. Note that this is not saying that anyone who holds some of the tenets of theonomy is a heretic and unreformed. However, let the differences be clear and let us stand on guard lest we unwittingly go along with it.

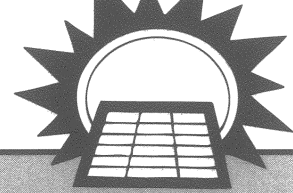
One explanatory note may be in order here. I have focused on what I would call "first generation" theologians. Some of the "second generation" theologians may be pushing the basic tenets of theonomy to more radical extremes.

I have refrained from dealing with the more extreme varieties of theonomy. However we should be aware of the fact that a new generation of theologians can be more radical than what has been described in this article.

Having said this, it should be pointed out that there are good elements among theologians, in particular, Greg Bahnsen. The emphasis on the sovereignty of God, the infallibility of the Scriptures, the continuity between the two covenants, the importance of living holy and obedient lives of thankfulness to God – this is great. Also of value is their emphasis on the fact that we should not have a quietistic or escapist attitude to life, in the way that many dispensationalists and premillennialists do, who desperately wish to escape the problems of an ungodly world. We need to be a salt and light to the world. As articles 25 and 36 of our Belgic Confession show, we can and should take the truth and substance of the laws of Scripture and use them for guidelines in our society. Even the substance and truth of Old Testament penology can help us deal with the matter of problems in our prisons and restitution for victims. There must be a greater awareness in our society that murder is terrible and it is not justified even in the case of unwanted unborn children or in the case of women who murder oppressive husbands or other men. Homosexuality and all kinds of sexual immorality must be condemned, for instance, in the light of Rom. 1. In every way the church should work for morality and peace in society so that in this way there will be a good atmosphere for the preaching of Jesus Christ to flourish, and in this way the kingdom will come. Clearly a lot of thought and study has to go into these matters. Theonomy does not have the answers, indeed it has some dangerous ideas. However to go to the opposite extreme and say that the church has nothing to do for the world or the state is equally untenable. A lot more study has to go into this matter by Reformed people.

And of course, there should be a deep respect in our personal lives for the law of God. We who have been redeemed by Christ and have the law written on our hearts by His Spirit, will daily meditate on this law, Old Testament and New Testament, seeing its deepest and widest applications to everyday life, and by the grace of God we will keep that law in thanksgiving to Him, the King of kings and Lord of lords, to whom is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever! **C**

⁷J. Faber, *Essays in Reformed Doctrine* (Neerlandia: Inheritance Publications, 1990), pp. 131-178.



By Mrs. R. Ravensbergen

"But thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ"

1 Cor.15:57

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Every first day of the week is Sunday, the day of rest, a gift from God to His children. In the Old Testament the Sabbath day was celebrated on the seventh day of the week, and celebrations were held in the Temple. In the New Testament the people came together in the synagogues. The day of rest switched from the seventh day to the first day after the Lord Jesus rose from the dead on the first day of the week. Thus we remember Christ's resurrection every first day of the week, and not only on Easter Sunday.

Christ's resurrection is a sure fact. Everybody knew Jesus of Nazareth, and also that He died on the cross. But when they heard that the Lord Jesus had risen from the dead even the disciples had a hard time believing that. Nobody had ever heard anything like that. Only in faith, through the Holy Spirit, can anybody accept and believe that Jesus Christ rose out of the grave and lives. It is very important that we believe this, for without the resurrection, the birth and death of Jesus would have been senseless. Nobody could have been saved through Jesus Christ, had He only died on the cross. But we are saved by Jesus Christ who conquered death because He conquered satan. His resurrection was a consequence of that victory. In Christ's resurrection the Lord God showed that He accepted Christ's payment. This payment was sufficient for all our sins.

Because of the salvation Christ obtained for us, our relationship with God has been restored. We do not have to be afraid of Him, we are allowed to call ourselves believers. When we ask the Lord for forgiveness He promises us eternal life. With Christ our sinful desires are buried and we may live in righteousness.

It is easy to say that all our sinful desires are gone so that only good desires reign our lives. But until Christ's return to earth there is still sin left in us. Yet Christ's power renews us every day again. Even though we sin every day, still that power of Jesus Christ can be visible. Not only on Sundays, but every day of the week. Not only at home, but also at work. Not only when things go well, but also when we are faced with difficulties in our lives. We cannot do that on our own. It is only possible with the help of Jesus Christ. With His resurrection the Lord opened the gate to a new life. We can enter that gate with the help of Him Who opened it for us. He is our hope and our power. Our power supply needs to be recharged constantly. An abundant supply is available through the preaching of God's Word. When we listen to that as often as we can, the Holy Spirit will work faith into our hearts. In faith we are awaiting the return of the resurrected Christ. Do we sometimes despair because of our sins, and become discouraged because of all our failures to do right? But Christ has risen to help us in our struggle

against our sins and save us. He Who is stronger than death will certainly be able to help us.

We, God's children, are on our way from death to life. The world is not going in the same direction, it is on its way to death. The Holy Spirit shows us to go the opposite direction. It is not easy to go against the main stream of the traffic. We have to watch where we are going, otherwise the world might drag us along. We have to be careful not to get hurt, or to be trampled underfoot, for then we will never reach our destination. But we can hold on to the hand that leads us against the traffic. That hand the power of the Holy Spirit, is our stronghold. It will lead us forward, to the end of the road here on earth. Then our bodies will perish and go back to dust. But the promise of the resurrection is there. Our soul will be taken up to Christ. We will arise from death, and receive back our own body. Maybe you have a handicap, or other physical burdens now in your life, and you don't want that handicapped body back after the resurrection. We do not know with our limited understanding how God will give us back our own bodies, even when they are so imperfect now. But we do know that we will be "like his glorious body" (Phil. 3:21). Not only all sin, but also all the consequences of sin have been washed away by our Saviour. There will be no sickness, no handicaps, no old age. We do not know how, but we do know that it will be more wonderful than we can imagine today!

*Thy praise I will record.
I love Thy house, o Lord,
The place where all Thy glories dwell.
O let my voice not falter
When I before Thy altar
The wonders of Thy might retell.*

Psalm 26:5

Birthdays in May:

Debbie Veenstra
RR 1, Sherkston, ON L0S 1R0
Debbie's 20th birthday is on May 4th.

Dan Hlozyk
c/o R. Ravensbergen
7462 Hwy 20, RR 1, Smithville, ON, L0R 2A0
It will be Dan's 41st birthday on the 26th.

To both of you: Happy Birthday.
Until next month

Mrs. R. Ravensbergen
7462 Hwy 20, RR 1
Smithville, ON, L0R 2A0



The Faber-Holwerda Bursary Fund

On September 8, 1989, Dr. Jelle Faber announced the establishment of the *Faber-Holwerda Bursary Fund*. This Fund was initiated at the time of the retirement of Dr. J. Faber as Professor of Dogmatology at the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

At this time, we wish to remind the reader of the existence of the Faber-Holwerda Bursary Fund. We thankfully report that several donations to the Fund have been received during the five years since its inception. The current capital amount in the Fund stands at approximately \$36,000.00.

The intent and aim of the Faber-Holwerda Bursary Fund is to provide some financial aid to students at the Theological College. This assistance is in addition to monies received from other sources, and is not intended to replace assistance received from ecclesiastical and/or government sources.

All students admitted to the Theological College on a full-time basis are eligible to apply for financial assistance. Stu-

dents wishing to apply, proceed to complete an application form. Upon receipt of the application forms, at least two members of the Faber-Holwerda Bursary Committee and the Dean of Students arrange an interview with the applicants.

The Faber-Holwerda Bursary Fund is described in the By-Laws governing the operation of the Theological College. The Fund is administered by the Faber-Holwerda Bursary Committee consisting of a member of the Faculty of the College (Prof. J. Geertsema), the Treasurer of the Finance and Property Committee (Mr. C. G. Heeringa) and a representative of the Faber family (Mrs. C. van Halen-Faber). The Bursary Committee is accountable to the Finance and Property Committee of the Theological College.

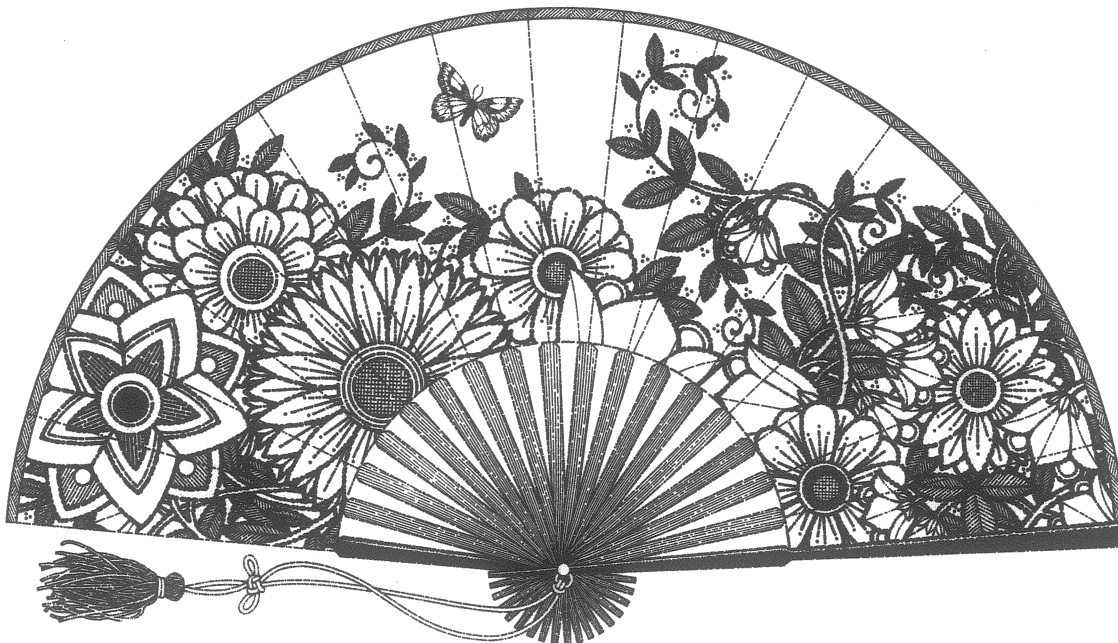
During the past five years, the Bursary Committee had the pleasant task of providing some limited financial aid to Theological students. In some cases, this assistance was intended for special circumstances and in other cases, the

allocation of funds was meant to assist the student in the purchase of books.

Allotment of the annual disbursement of funds is limited to eighty percent of the interest earned on the capital. The remaining twenty percent of the interest is added to the principal amount in order to allow for an inflation factor as well as a modest increase of the capital.

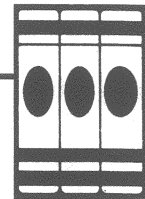
We remind the reader that tax-receiptable personal and corporate donations to the Faber-Holwerda Bursary Fund are most welcome. In addition, we urge you to consider this Fund as you prepare your last will and testament. Responsible Christian stewardship includes planned giving!

Donations and/or requests for further information may be directed to:
Faber-Holwerda Bursary Fund
c/o Theological College of the
Canadian Reformed Churches
110 West 27th Street,
Hamilton, Ontario
L9C 5A1



BOOK REVIEWS

By C. Van Dam



Calvin on Daniel. A New Edition

John Calvin. Daniel 1-6. Translated by T.H.L. Parker. *Calvin's Old Testament Commentaries*. The Rutherford House Translation. Vol. 20. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993. (300 pages; hard cover \$34.99 US; paper \$24.99 US)

With this volume, we have the beginning of a new translation of Calvin's Old Testament commentaries. The New Testament ones were retranslated earlier (1950-1971) and happily the time for the Old Testament has come.

The aim of this new translation from the original sixteenth-century editions is "to let Calvin speak in his own words, as far as translation into another language allows" (p. vii). Veteran Calvin scholar, T.H.L. Parker has certainly succeeded in doing this in the volume before us. Further attractive features include brief but very helpful editorial notes, the inclusion of all marginal text references, and detailed indexes at the back (subjects, names, Biblical references, and foreign language words).

Calvin's commentary on Daniel is in reality a series of Latin "lectures to older schoolboys and students in training for 'missionary' work, principally in France" along with auditors from Geneva and area (p. ix). This gives Calvin's exposition the freshness and immediacy of the classroom, with all the advantages of it. For example, we have Calvin's translation of the Hebrew or Aramaic text interrupted now and then with a comment on his translation, before continuing. Now and then there is repetition to drive home a point. These features enable one reading these lectures to have the sense of being there and listening to Calvin first hand.

These lectures ran for almost a year, from June 12, 1559 to early April 1560 and when published in 1561 were dedicated to "to all God's faithful servants who long for Christ's kingdom to be well ordered in France." Many of Calvin's students would also end up in France and it is touching to see how he applies the text to the type of situations they face or will encounter in the future.

For example, when Calvin discusses Dan 1:8-9, he writes:

So we learn to cast our cares upon God when terror threatens us from the world or when men would menace and prevent us from living by God's standards. We know that it is in the hands of God to turn the hearts of those who rage against us, and to deliver us from every peril. (p.34)

And elsewhere (on Dan 3:18),

Since, then, we have protection enough in God, let us realize there is no better way to save our lives than by putting ourselves entirely under His protection and casting all our cares upon Him. (p. 132)

And on Dan 3:23, Calvin notes that we should not be afraid to die in the service of God. If we are not finished our calling, God will preserve our life. He then continues:

So often as is expedient, God will use His power and save us; but if He leads us to death, let us make up our minds that there is nothing better for us than to die, and that it is harmful to prolong our lives. (p. 139)

Also in other ways the times in which this instruction took place is mirrored in the exegesis and again this enhances the reading experience. In commenting on Nebuchadnezzar's desire to have the Hebrew boys properly schooled, Calvin notes Nebuchadnezzar's own agenda in this, but also acknowledges the positive side; namely an appreciation for the liberal arts which were despised in Calvin's day. Comments Calvin: "If any nobles have been trained as scholars, it was for no other end than to gain bishoprics and abbacies" (p. 25)! Also in other ways one notices the times; for example, on Calvin's view of the role of the state over against heretics (p. 154).

Reading through Calvin's expositions of Daniel 1-6 was a rich experience. I was struck especially (again) by his emphasis on the sovereignty and greatness of God for whom we live and have being and his emphasis on the important place that the church has in all God's dealings. Calvin's sound exegesis makes reading these lectures im-

portant also for our day. He lets the Word speak and the Word does not return empty.

Another aspect of these expositions that make reading them so rewarding are the prayers of Calvin that conclude each lecture. These are model prayers in the simple piety and dependence on God that they display, as well as the clear yearning and living for the day of Jesus Christ which they show. One example (after a lecture on Dan 2:36-43):

Grant, almighty God, that we may so remember that we sojourn in this world, that no splendour of worldly wealth and power and wisdom may dazzle our eyes; but let us always direct our gaze and all our senses to the kingdom of your Son and utterly cleave to it. Then nothing will hinder us from hastening on the course of our vocation until at last we pass through immeasurable space and arrive at the goal which you have set before us and to which today the proclamation of your gospel invites us. And at last you will gather us into that blessed eternity which has been won for us by the blood of the same your Son, nor shall we ever be eroded away from Him but, upheld by His power, we shall be raised above all the heavens by Him. Amen. (p.99).

Read this volume for yourself and let study societies start purchasing these newly translated volumes as they come out. Highly recommended! C

By R. Gleason

Communion with God

John Owen, *Communion with God*, abridged and made easy to read by R.J.K. Law, Edinburgh, *Banner of Truth Trust*, 1991, £2.95 or \$6.95 (US)

It is a rare exception when the Puritans don't make for excellent devotional reading. This little book by John Owen is certainly no exception. The sixteen volumes of *Owen's Works* (in the Gould edition of 1850-53) have been kept in print on account of their

importance ever since they were reprinted in 1965.

This little book is an excerpt taken from Volume 2 of Owen's Works. Mr. Law has done every one a great service by abridging this work and making it easier to read or, as they say in Sudbury, "easifying") for it is patently true that the Puritans could exhaust any text of Scripture and the reader in the process.

This treatise speaks about the very important spiritual topic of the communion that all the saints have with God.

In an introductory chapter, Owen introduces his subject by speaking of the Christian's communion with each Person of the Godhead individually. Thereafter, he embarks on a thoroughly Biblical exposition of what it means for the believer to have communion with the Father.

The chapters 5-17 deal with the nature of the communion of the Christian with Christ. The reader is asked to meditate upon "What streams of grace, purging, pardoning, quickening and helping, flow from Christ's love every

day!" (pg.64) The real communion of grace by Christ, however, is His sending the Holy Spirit to regenerate us, to create all habits of grace in us and to supply us daily with grace in our hearts. (John 14, 15, 16). Christ is our treasure for "in Him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. 2:3). One of the great strengths of Owen is his thorough acquaintance with Scripture. He is constantly providing the reader with a feast of Biblical references. For example, in his discussion of Christ as the wisdom of the believer he makes reference to the truth that "God's law is also to be admired as an expression of his wisdom" (Deut.4:7-8, pg. 85).

Owen's little chapters on "Knowing Ourselves" and the "Consequences of Fellowship between Christ and his Saints" (chapters 10 & 11) are a delight to read and must cause the heart of the believer to well up within them as they read how this Puritan writer so beautifully and personally applies Scripture.

One note must be added about Owen's chapters on the Holy Spirit

(chapters 18-24). Owen believed that the "extraordinary" gifts of the Holy Spirit has ceased with the closing of the New Testament canon. That did not prohibit him from speaking about the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit in such a manner that I am now convinced that a complete Christian ethics could be written taking each of the nine various aspects of the one fruit of the Spirit. In just a few pages (pp. 190-193) Owen gladdens the heart of the believer as he discourses on "The Holy Spirit and the Hearts of Believers."

I often recommend works of the Puritans to the members of the congregation in Toronto and included quotations from them in a rubric called "Food for Thought." I would like to encourage all who have never read from these giants to take the time today to let them spiritually feed you. Their writings are filled with Scripture, devotion, scholarship and practical application. I would heartily recommend that you begin with John Owen's *Communion With God*. C

Inter League Publication Board

It seems like such a short time since the Men's, Women's, and Young People's Societies began another season of Bible study. By the time this report is published and distributed, the season will soon be drawing to a close.

Many societies have completed their roster, and will be in need of new study material. The I.L.P.B. would like to remind the societies of the many outlines that are available. Also, each congregation has an I.L.P.B. representative, who would be pleased to take care of orders. Please call them for information and assistance.

A new brochure is being made, which outlines the books available, including prices. When this brochure is completed it will be sent to the local I.L.P.B. representatives. The societies will then have the opportunity to choose and order materials in time for the new study season.

The first new publication to be printed this year is a booklet entitled *Both in Life and in Death*, by Prof. N.H. Gootjes. We are thankful for this work; it deals with the timely topic of euthanasia.

Another reason for thankfulness is that one of our professors has taken time out of his busy schedule to write for the I.L.P.B. We sincerely hope it will not be a final contribution for Prof. Gootjes. We would also like to encourage more of our professors and/or ministers to follow his example. While the I.L.P.B.'s largest task is translating study material from Dutch into English, it remains very time consuming and expensive. It would be a very positive progression if outlines could be written directly in the English language.

The next publication to come out this year is *Christ in the Family*, by W.

Meyer. This book, previously published by the I.L.P.B., has been out of print for some time. It has been revised, updated, and will be reprinted this summer.

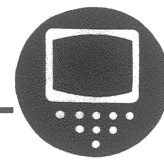
Other titles will follow soon, dependent on feasibility.

With regards to the questionnaires, the I.L.P.B. is looking for input from societies. Is there a particular Bible book for which the societies would like to see an outline in print? Please send in your responses as soon as possible.

Trusting that the societies are pleased with the service of the I.L.P.B., we close with a request for your continuing prayer for this often difficult, but important work.

Wishing the societies
God's blessing
on their studies,
for the I.L.P.B.,
Mrs. E.M. Schutten

C



Meeting of the Inter-League Publication Board with the Administration Committee, held on March 4, 1994 at Pilgrim Canadian Reformed Church, London, ON

Present at the meeting:

George Helder and Keith Sikkema for the Men's League

Lies Schutten and Jane Oosterhoff for the Women's League.

Ted VanRaalte for the Young People's League.

Administration Committee:

Pete Engbers, Irene Boeringa, Bonita VanderLinde, Rennie Pieterman, Linda Schouten, and Elaine Spriensma.

Absent: Cynthia VanRaalte, Young People's League

- The chairman, George Helder, opened the meeting by reading Isaiah 55, he led in prayer, we sang Psalm 27:2 and all were welcomed.
- The agenda was adopted.
- The minutes of the Board meeting of February 11, 1994 were read and corrected.
- The Administration Committee was informed on communication with the author of articles on Church History.
- *Numbers*: The Board explained in more detail why it felt that the project should be postponed for a while.
- The computerization of the sales part of I.L.P.B. will begin after some analysis and customizing of software. Administration will report to Board how ownership and depreciation will be arranged. Computer and software is owned by I.L.P.B. until a decision is reached.
- Budgeting and Planning: two members of the Board will meet with the Administrator and Co-ordinator to discuss better long term planning and budgeting for the I.L.P.B. This subcommittee will make proposals con-

cerning ways of improving I.L.P.B. output.

- Minutes of Administration Committee meeting of January 24, 1994 were reviewed.
- The two new Administration Committee members: Mrs. Irene Boeringa: the new Administrator; and Mrs. Linda Schouten: Treasurer, were added to the Personnel List. The address list was updated to correct a few errors.
- Progress report: *Ecclesiastes*, M.J.C. Blok. (reprint) available since December 1993. Books in Progress: *Both in Life and in Death*, Dr. Gootjes *Colossians*, DeVries (reprint) *Luke Vol. 1*, C. Hagens *Luke Vol. 2*, C. Hagens *Luke Vol. 3*, C. Hagens *Acts Vol. 1*, VanderBerg *Acts Vol. 2*, VanderBerg *1 Corinthians*, L. Selles *2 Corinthians*, L. Selles *Believe and Confess Vol. 1*, C.G. Bos *Believe and Confess Vol. 2*, C.G. Bos *Christ in the Family*, Meijer *James, 1&2 Peter*, Harksen, Smelik, (reprint) *Daniel, Redeemer v.s. Destroyer*, Bremmer, (reprint) *The Church Art 27-29*, Rev. deWolf, (reprint) *Wat is hierop uw antwoord*, M.H. Sliggers
- Sales report: Report was presented. Sales are consistent but slightly down from last year.
- Marketing report: Draft copy of new brochure was distributed. All Australian publications have increased in price.
- Financial report: Reports were presented and reviewed.
- General Discussion

At future League functions. I.L.P.B. wishes to have the only book sale table.

Ted VanRaalte will be Young Peoples League representative until September 94.

Fifteen out of 93 questionnaires have been received to date. A report will be generated when more are mailed back.

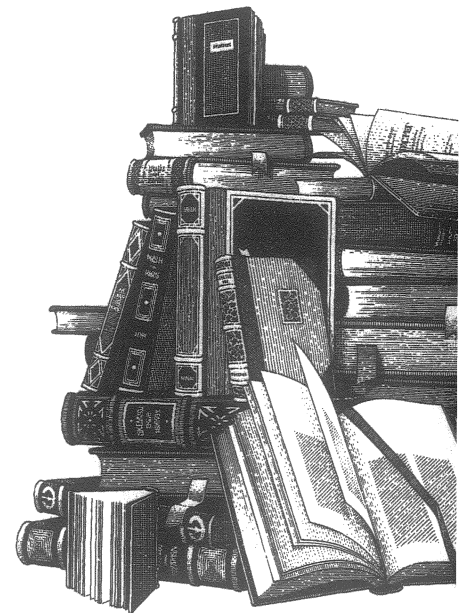
Are our book prices competitive? It is hard to compare prices with different types of publications.

Should we look at *Korte Verklaring*, Bible student's Commentaries? More background information will be researched.

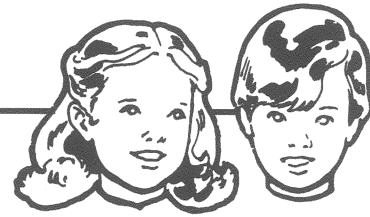
- Next meetings:
 - Board Meeting, September 16, 1994 at W. Oosterhoff residence.
 - Combined Meeting, Friday, October 7, 1994, Hamilton church, 7:30 p.m.
- Pete Engbers led in closing prayer.

Jane Oosterhoff
secretary, I.L.P.B.

C



By Aunt Betty



EASTER 1994

Dear Busy Beavers,

On Easter morning, angels were sent by God to the earth again. Only at very special times did this happen.

Heavenly messengers came to earth with a glorious message. Jesus Christ was *alive* again!

An angel came down to Jesus' tomb. His appearance "was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow" (Matthew 28:3).

When the guards saw this angel, they became "like dead men" (Matthew 28:4). They trembled, and watched him roll the stone away from the tomb where Jesus was buried. Then, he sat on the stone.

Those men were supposed to guard the tomb, but there was nothing they could do to stop that angel!

A little later, the woman who loved Jesus came to visit their *Lord's* tomb, and to anoint His body with spices. When they got there, the tomb was open. They went inside, but didn't see Jesus' body.

All of a sudden, the women saw two men in very bright clothes. They were frightened, just as the guards were. The men asked them why they were looking for the *living* where the *dead* are buried!

The angels reminded the amazed women that Jesus had told them He would die, then *rise* from the dead!

The women believed those words, and hurried back to tell the good news to the disciples.

The angels were sent to the earth on that first Easter morning to tell people that their *Lord* had conquered death for ever!

What wonderful news for them, and also for us today!

Quiz Time!

RIDDLES AND JOKES

from Busy Beaver *Michelle Hordyk*

1. What's the difference between a egg and a skunk?
2. What's the best way to catch a squirrel?
3. If the 3 little pigs were all under one little umbrella, why didn't they get wet?

Knock Knock Jokes:

"Knock, knock."
 "Who's there?"
 "Pig."
 "Pig who?"
 "Pig up your feet or you'll twip."

"Knock, knock."
 "Who's there?"
 "Candy."
 "Candy who?"
 "Candy elephant fly, or can't he?"

PICTURE CODE

By Busy Beaver *Tamara VanderBruggen*

A Δ	G ∩	M ✕	S ⊗	Y ☞
B ∇	H ∞	N ⊞	T ∥	Z ∅
C ⊙	I ∇Δ	O ⊕	U ⊙	
D ∴	J ∙	P ∴	V ⊕	
E —	K ∙∙∙	Q ⋄	W *	
F O	L ♡	R □	X ☆	

R

□ — ✕ — ✕ ∇ — □ ✕ ⊕ ⊙ ⊞ ∥

∅ ∇Δ ⊕ ⊞ * ∞ — □ — ∥ ∞ ⊕ ⊙

∞ Δ ⊗ ∥ ∴ * — ♡ ∥

CRACK THE CODE!

By Busy Beaver *Tim Sikkema*

Find out what the title of the verse is by finding out when trees blossom. Put the 6-letter word you have chosen in the spaces above the code letters. Find all the "D's" in the puzzle and put the letter that you have above the "D" in the title above all the "D's" in the puzzle. When the whole word is done like this, there are still more spaces open. Put letters in these empty spaces so that the words make sense. Every time you find out what another letter stands for, you fill in all the spaces of that same letter. If you need some help you will see another clue at the bottom. Have fun!

When trees blossom.

D E J S B W

DEJSBW SD IXHVJ GSBHVJ RMUK,

IBK OVXMJV HLV DCQQVJ LMH. SH SD

GLVB IUU HLV DBMG QVUHD IGIP IBK

GLVB HLV XUMMKD RMQV SB MCJ KIP.

OCH, SH IUUD SD QP OSJHLKIP, LMMJIP!

Need help?: X I U U A season.

PRAISE

Many people show their joy, excitement and sorrow by praising the Lord.

Match the person with his or her statement of praise.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 1. Mary, Luke 1:49 | a. "Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever, to whom belong wisdom and might." |
| 2. David, Ps. 136:1 | b. "I blessed the Most High, and praised and honoured Him who lives for ever." |
| 3. Paul, 1 Corinthians 15:57 | c. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By His great mercy we have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." |
| 4. Daniel, Daniel 2:20 | d. "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation." |
| 5. Jesus, Matthew 11:25 | e. "To the only God, our Saviour through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and for ever. Amen." |
| 6. Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel 4:34 | f. "I thank Thee, O Father. . . that Thou hast hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to babes." |
| 7. Simeon, Luke 2:29, 30 | g. "But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." |
| 8. Peter, 1 Peter 1:3 | h. "and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen." |
| 9. Jude, Jude 1:25 | i. "for He who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is His Name." |
| 10. John, Revelation 1:6 | j. "O give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, and his steadfast love endures for ever." |

See answers below

"FELINE FRENZY"

by Busy Beaver *Marian Wierenga*

Unscramble the letters to find the names of some cats.

1. ALCOCI
2. BBYAT
3. RPSINEA
4. IESEMAS
5. OANGRA

See answers



FROM THE MAILBOX:

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Robin Bosscher*! How do you like Grade 1? Who is your teacher? What did you do in your spring break? Bye, Robin.

A big welcome to you, too, *Danielle deJong*! What kind of books do you like to read? Why did you

move to a new classroom in school? Hope to hear from you soon, Danielle! Bye.

Welcome to you, *Tamara VanderBruggen*. Thank you for the nice picture you sent me. Your cousin sure has red hair! It must be fun to have a baby cousin! Yes, I am looking forward to summer, too! Bye, Tamara.

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Christa Raap*. It must be fun to have a dog, and to live right close to miniature horses. Are the horses friendly? Could you send me your address, so I can send you a membership card? Bye, Christa!

Welcome to you, *Kaylie Raap*. Thanks for your neat letter! What kinds of things do you like to do in school? I need your address, Kaylie, so I can send you a membership card. Please send me a letter with your address on it. Bye, Kaylie.

Hello, *Michelle Hordyk*! Yes, I get quite a few letters. I'm glad you like the book markers. Bye, Michelle.

Hi, *Tim Sikkema*. I hope your fish are doing okay. Thanks for the very challenging code you sent in! Bye, Tim.

Hello, *Marian Wierenga*. Thanks for your nice long letter. You must go to see your little cousin often, if they live next door! Bye, Marian.

1. Calico, 2. Tabby, 3. Persian, 4. Siamese, 5. Angora
 Answers to "Feline Frenzy"
 1. i, 2. j, 3. g, 4. a, 5. f, 6. b, 7. d, 8. c, 9. e, 10. h.
 Answers to "Praise"
 3. It wasn't raining.
 2. Climb up into a tree and act like a nut.
 eggs.
 1. If you don't know, never remind me to send you to buy
 Answers to Riddles and Jokes

Love to you all,
Aunt Betty



Aunt Betty
 c/o The Busy Beaver Club
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