

Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

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Understanding the Old Testament

NAHUM [6]

Chapter 1:11-14

Now that we have come to the last verses of this chapter, let us cast a glance back at the preceding ones for a moment.

In this oracle against Nineveh we first of all saw YAHWEH, revealing Himself in His wrath. This wrath was motivated by the appearance of His enemies. It is those enemies the Lord is aiming at right from the beginning, and He keeps watching them. He has those adversaries in view when approaching the earth. And it is because of the enemy that the appearance of the earth undergoes such a change - as mentioned in vss. 3b-6. It is characteristic of the clouds that they are high above our heads, but now they turn to "the dust of His feet". It is characteristic of the sea and the rivers that they are full of water, but now they are dried up. It is normal for Bashan and Carmel to be in flourishing condition, but now they wither. It is a matter of course that mountains and hills are firmly established. At least, man takes it for granted. But now they quake and melt. Everything is in disarray and upheaval! "Terrible!" we say. And we ponder: "What's the point of it?" "Is it such a gladdening thing that His wrath is poured out like fire and the rocks are broken asunder?" man wonders, and God's children wonder.

"No," I answer. Rather, it is horrifying; but, nevertheless, it is *necessary* in view of the people who are adopting a high tone; people mounting their high horse! It is necessary in order to make them sing another tune! Shuddering at the very thought of an earth that is turned upside down, we should not blame the Lord for it, but, on the contrary, we had better blame those who are responsible for the affliction. What was it that they brought about on earth? About clouds, seas, beautiful scenery, mountains we hear no more in this book. They serve only to accompany the Lord's revelation. But the devastation, the damage brought about by Assyria, would be everlasting, and for that reason it is said about Nineveh, the place of the enemy (vs. 8 A.V.),

that God will make an utter end of it and that its inhabitants shall be consumed by fire (vs. 10).

Moreover, we have discovered that in this way Yahweh shows His goodness toward those who wait for Him; who take their refuge in Him; who are sometimes sceptical about their GOD (cp. vs. 9), pondering and wondering as the author of Psalm 77 does: "Will the Lord spurn forever, and never again be favourable?" Which is understandable in the light of what it says in the first part of vs. 10. Nineveh, the Assyrian empire, was indeed very successful in those times. DID ONE NOT COME OUT FROM YOU, WHO PLOTTED EVIL AGAINST THE LORD, AND COUNSELLED VILLAINY? (vs. 11)

In vs. 11 we hear Yahweh address Himself to Nineveh directly. We ask: Who are the ones that "plotted evil against the LORD"? We have here the same verb as in vs. 9 (A.V.: "to imagine"; R.S.V.: "to plot"). But in Hebrew the preposition, rendered as "against" in both translations, is a different one(1). And that makes quite a difference. Here, in vs. 11, it must be translated as "against". Apart from that, it would still be possible for the pronoun "you" to refer to Judah, in such a way that the enemy, who had hitherto been the oppressor, had left Judah's territory. "But this view does not suit the context. After the utter destruction of the enemy has been predicted in verse 10, we do not expect to find the statement that he will have gone away from Judah, especially as there is nothing said in what precedes, about any invasion of Judah." (C.F. Keil)

Yahweh addresses Himself to Nineveh. The word "you" refers to a land or city, always represented as feminine in Hebrew. The Hebrew language can make a distinction between a masculine and a feminine personal pronoun. Here we have the latter: "you" is feminine. But then the "one . . . come out from you" is in its turn to be distinguished from the city. Of course: A city cannot come out from a city. A person, on the other hand,

can. What does it mean: "to come out from"? "To originate from"? Or: "to depart from"? I prefer the latter. But can such a departure be named a plotting of evil against the Lord? Sure. "The meditation of evil against Yahweh refers to the design of the Assyrian conquerors to destroy the kingdom of God in Israel" (Keil). One who wants to destroy Judah and Jerusalem, aims at the destruction of Yahweh's dwelling-place, service, and name.

We can be more concrete here. The reference is very likely to Sennacherib, who went forth from Nineveh, his beloved city, to attack Jerusalem. And that this king knew about the GOD, worshipped in Jerusalem, is a fact to which the words of the Rabshakeh (Is. 36:18; 37:10, 17) bear testimony. In the days when Nahum prophesied, it was some fifty years ago. When he fought against Israel, he was in reality fighting against Yahweh. It was throughout a spiritual warfare.

In this connection the words "and counselled villainy" or "a wicked counsellor" (A.V.) are significant. Literally it says: a counsellor of, or one counselling what is *belija'al*.

We are reminded of the well-known expression "man of Belial". We meet it in Deut. 13:14; 15:9; Judges 9:4; 19:22; 20:13; 2 Sam. 16:7; 1 Kings 21:10, 13 - texts which together are helpful in getting a clear picture of the category of people to which it applies. In 2 Corinthians 6:15 it is the designation of the devil. So Sennacherib is portrayed as a man of utter wickedness and godlessness.

THOUGH THEY BE STRONG AND MANY, THEY WILL BE CUT OFF AND PASS AWAY. THOUGH I HAVE AFFLICTED YOU, I WILL AFFLICT YOU NO MORE. (vs. 12)

In vs. 12 it is *Judah* that is addressed by the LORD again, just as in vs. 9. According to both form and content vs. 12 bears resemblance to vs. 10. The first part of both verses consists of a concessive clause, introduced by "though"(2). So in vs. 12 we read: "Though they be quiet and likewise many" (A.V.); "Though they be strong and many" (R.S.V.). The question however is: Where does the second part of the sentence, the main-clause or principal clause, begin? Well, you say, after "many". Thus in the A.V. it starts off with "yet"; in the R.S.V. with the second "they". I agree, but the problem is that in the Hebrew text, before "many" as well

as before that second part of the sentence, it twice reads *kēn*, a word usually meaning: "so", "this way", "thus" - which presents difficulties in translating because twice consecutively we come across the same word but in a completely different sense. Connected with "many", it must mean something quite different than when connected with "cut off". The A.V. has tried to get out of the difficulty by rendering the first "*kēn*" as "likewise", the second "*kēn*" as "yet thus". But how about the transition from "quiet" (A.V.) or "strong" (R.S.V.) to "many"? Is the enemy's being many a consequence of, or something to be compared with, his being strong or quiet? I do not think so. It does not satisfy, anyway. That is why I for one am inclined to think of a case of dittography in vs. 12; i.e., that the writer of the manuscript wrote the word "*kēn*" twice through an oversight!

"So, an alteration of the text?" somebody asks. "Yes", I answer, "and one that is justified so far as I can see." And it is a slight one, in comparison with others proposed by other scholars - e.g., "Verily, the days of my contention are completed" (Powis Smith), or "who has power over many waters" (Septuagint). The intention is clear. The prosperity and numerousness of the enemy need not stand in the way of his being cut off and passing away. As far as text-criticism is concerned, there is one more point in vs. 12. In reading this verse in the A.V. the reader may be struck by the fact that the first verb is in the plural: "*they* shall be cut down", and the second in the singular: "when *he* shall pass through". The A.V. concludes that there is a difference in subject: "*they*" and "*he*". There is however no reason for this in the text. I agree, the Masorete text of the Hebrew Bible the first time has verb-form in the plural, the second time in the singular. But the solution to this problem is easily found if we pay attention to the letter *waw* preceding the first word of vs. 12c(3). This letter *waw* is confusing there, for it suggests that this word indicates what GOD is going to do in the future. And there are some who render and explain it this way: "And I shall afflict you". So: there would be an unpleasant shock awaiting Israel.

But is it necessary to read and explain this way? No. The Hebrew letter *waw*, connected now with the

verb "to afflict", may be added to, joined to the end of the preceding verb, "to pass away," so as to yield the plural form which means: "they pass away", just as we have it in the R.S.V.(4). I for one am in favour of this solution, the more so because vs. 12c is a separate sentence. Vs. 12c begins with a concession: "Though I have afflicted you" - i.e., in the past - "I will afflict you no more," says the Lord. Obviously Judah is addressed here.

That holds good also for vs. 13, where Judah is comforted by Yahweh: "And now I will break his yoke from off you and will burst your bonds asunder". Yoke and bonds are the symbols of dominion and oppression. Judah is represented as bowed down under the iron yoke of Assur but Yahweh is about to come and break it asunder.

NO MORE SHALL YOUR NAME BE PERPETUATED (A.V.: NO MORE OF THY NAME BE SOWN); FROM THE HOUSE OF YOUR GODS I WILL CUT OFF THE GRAVEN IMAGE AND THE MOLTEN IMAGE. I WILL MAKE YOUR GRAVE, FOR YOU ARE VILE. (vs. 14)

In vs. 14, finally, the Lord is going to tell Nineveh - there is a continuous change of address in these verses - what He has ordained concerning her.

First: "that no more of thy name be sown" (A.V.). Is there not something curious about this expression? Is it possible, imaginable: a name that is sown? Some exegetes deemed an emendation of the text necessary. Instead of "sown" they would like to read: "remembered". But it is not necessary. The text does make sense if we consider that one's posterity ("seed" is the term used in the Bible), bears its ancestor's name. The idea, common in the Near East, was that a person after death survived in his name, borne by his descendants. On the other hand, the extermination of the name is the strongest expression of annihilation. In this connection I point at 1 Sam. 24:21; Isaiah 14:22, Isaiah 66:22: "So shall your seed and your name remain".

To whom does Yahweh speak? The personal pronoun "you" is masculine here. So, it refers not to Nineveh, the city, which is represented as feminine in Hebrew, but to its *king* as masculine. The curse is laid upon him. It was he who had plotted evil against the God of Israel. In these evil designs

he felt himself backed up by his gods. Therefore the Lord goes on: "From the house of your gods I will cut off the graven image and the molten image." He will do so not only because the Assyrians sinned against the first commandment, so that the LORD Yahweh felt passed over by those heathen, but also because the Assyrians relied on those idols and were shielded by them as they committed their cruelties and bestialities. They were acting under orders. Assyrian emperors declared, repeatedly that in the name of their gods they subdued other countries, to show the power of their gods over all the earth. The Assyrians are to be deprived of their support. That is why Yahweh speaks of Assur's idols. They lent their moral support to Assyria's undertakings. (Please do not underrate the influence of religion in the life of heathen peoples.) But the evil will be destroyed, root and branch.

Deprived of this support the king of Assur will come to a bad end. The grave, that is where he will end up. And it serves him right. "For you are vile," a man of little account.

H.M. OHMANN

- (1) Vs. 9: *'el*; vs. 11: *'al*.
- (2) See previous issue, p. 14.
- (3) The Hebrew word is "*'sinnitik'*".
- (4) I.e., the letter *waw* may be added to the verb *'abar* to yield the plural form *'aberu*.

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Everlasting Youth

Second of Two Parts

HUMANISM

Our Heidelberg Catechism was written and taken into use as a textbook for the religious instruction of the young members of the Church because - as we have seen - the man who took the initiative, Elector Frederick III of the Palatinate, was of the conviction that the natural wickedness which is in everyone, the children included, must be fought in time with salutary doctrine, lest it would pervert life in the Church and public life.

I think we all may understand now why our fathers - even in wartime! - kept guard over the pure doctrine of the Church in the days of "Dordrecht". They upheld and defended the pure Scriptural doctrine of the Church against the vile attacks of the Remonstrants.

The latter did not only deviate on the point of election and reprobation, but their main error was this that they expected something good from man himself. They denied the total depravity of man and taught something peculiar about the free will of man.

Well, was this not a dangerous and unscriptural way of thinking and teaching? Was not this dangerous for the Church, also for the youth of the Church? And would not this have its consequences for the life of the nation? At the same time we arrive back in the days in which the Catechism was written. Did not the authors of the Catechism notice that the Church of Rome was full of Pelagianism, which also said - fundamentally the same thing as later on the Remonstrants would teach - that there is still some good left in man, so that he must try to do as many good works as possible? Did not they see that this was a big lie? And that even in spite of these nice theories corruption could be seen everywhere, so that a popular saying said: The closer to me, the worse a Christian?

URGENT

At the same time we learn to see

that Catechism preaching and teaching are still relevant and even urgent in our own days.

We are living in the midst of a world which is destroyed by modern humanism of all kinds and shapes. Man expects much of himself. He is really promising.

Even among the members of many churches there is a sort of humanism which is gaining influence. We call it "horizontalism". It propagates that we have to be good to each other and that this is true religion. God is no longer in heaven, for you can find him in your neighbour. Let us rather stop praying and other forms of worship, for the true way of worshipping God is showing love for your fellow-men. It is no wonder that the preaching in those churches dealt intensively with the Vietnam war, and is still dealing with racial discrimination and subjects like that. The propagandists of this sort of "religion" claim that they have found the way to the improvement of life.

What, however, does our Catechism say? This, that our only comfort is not in ourselves and in our capacities. Our only comfort is this that we belong to Jesus Christ, that He has bought us and now also transforms us, makes us different by His Spirit.

Our Catechism says: It is a matter of free grace exclusively. It is all a matter of the work of Jesus Christ.

For look, it is already in the hearts of our little children, that natural wickedness. And you can see it all around you in this rebellious era: as soon as this natural wickedness is given a free hand things go wrong everywhere, in the Church as well as in public life. Our children must be taught the salutary doctrine in time. They have to be taught the main parts of the Christian Doctrine and instructed in the true Christian faith and conversion.

Conversion - indeed, the Preface mentions this word literally. The doctrine of the Scriptures is also the doctrine concerning our conversion!

This is what we need, all and

each of us, also our children.

And here already, by this simple word "conversion", it is proved that it is our *only* comfort, to belong to Christ in life and death, the only one!

TRUE FAITH

Surely, this means that we practically are on our own in everyday life and that we are called extremists and intolerant. People say that we put ourselves in a lonely corner. However, let us not be afraid of this and quietly continue to be "radicals". For this is in accordance with the Scriptures. The Preface of our Catechism speaks without any hesitation of the contents of this booklet as of the "true Christian Faith".

Just as our Belgic Confession of Faith speaks about the true Church as to be distinguished from the false one.

Of course, it could be expressed in some different words - as it is done in other writings of our own Churches, e.g. the Belgic Confession. Yet we find here the explanation of true faith. All that deviates from it is false, a falsely so-called gospel!

This is the point: whether we accept the Lord Jesus as our perfect and complete Saviour. Lord's Day 11 is very important in this context: He is called "Jesus", that means Saviour, so that we cannot seek our salvation and welfare of saints, of ourselves or anywhere else. Our salvation and welfare, this does not only include "heaven", that we go to heaven, but this also, that we are renewed by the Spirit of Christ.

BLOOD AND SPIRIT

Yes indeed, this is another striking mark of our Catechism - which is closely related to our comfort in life and death - that we do not only hear about the blood of Christ by which our sins are forgiven, but also about His Spirit.

We are not going to sum up the respective places where we find this "twin set" mentioned. It is, however, remarkable that this also happens in the explanation of the meaning of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

This sacrament was instituted not only to assure us of the forgiveness of all our sins, but also to strengthen us in our faith, the faith which we have to show in the midst of everyday life.

To belong to Christ includes also

Continued on page 6.

1911 - 1973

Hendrik Albertus Stel

Verbi Divini Minister

It has pleased our gracious God and Father to take away another of His servants in the ministry: the Reverend Hendrik Albertus Stel is no longer with us.

This loss is felt first of all by his wife, children, and grandchildren, but also by the Congregation which he served and by us all.

With him another of those first ministers who came to Canada from the Netherlands has disappeared from the earthly scene. Slowly, but surely, the ranks are thinned; yet the work goes on.

Arriving in Canada together with the Loopstra family, the Rev. Stel was the second minister to serve in Classis West: Jules Van Popta was there already as the very first minister in the Canadian Reformed Churches. Now they both are gone, both after a painful illness, neither one of them having reached retirement age. It is not up to us to decide when the end of our earthly labours has come, nor how long we shall serve. Neither is it up to us - praise be to God! - to determine whether there shall be any fruits and what they shall be or are. All we have to do is: do our work and fulfil our tasks. That's what colleague Stel did, too.

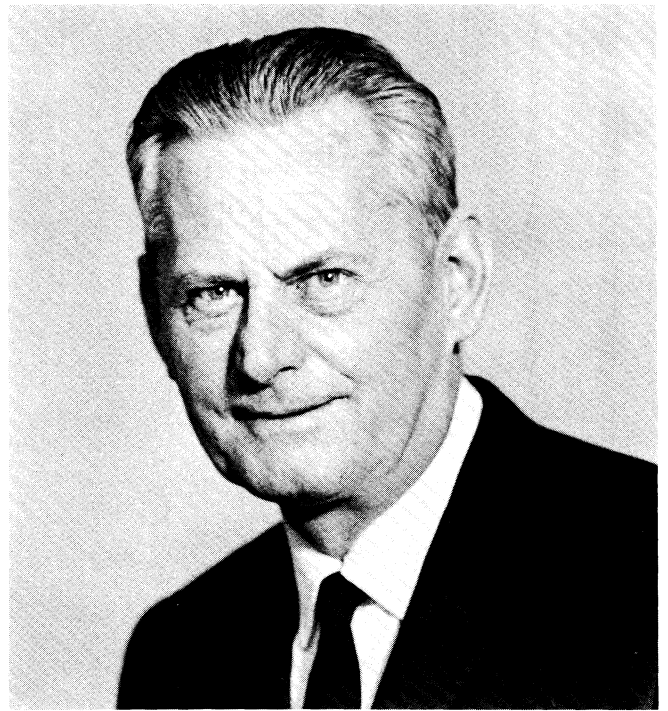
More than a year ago the illness which became the cause of his death showed up. At that time we did not expect him to live much longer. But the Lord, in His wisdom, used treatments and medicine to leave him with his dear ones and with us all for more than a whole year. Also of this added year we do not understand the meaning: for much of the time he was unable to do any work. He did preach several times and brought visits, but his activities were very limited. And amidst all that, he oftentimes was in pain and very uncomfortable. To a large extent it was his willpower that kept him going.

Now the Lord has relieved him of all his duties, his pain, his troubles, his difficulties, and his shortcomings.

Our late brother's life was far from easy. Oftentimes I tried to understand why he acted the way he did, why he seemed so many times to be in the opposition, why he was not more flexible; but he was hard to understand. One remark he once made appeared to me to be the key. Talking about his life and his experiences, his difficulties and ministry, he said, "Ik heb me altijd al overal tegen af moeten zetten." (I have always had to stand up against everything.) He frequently felt himself threatened and therefore felt called upon to take a rigid stand. Having taken a stand, he also defended it to the limit. And yet there were the occasions when, after lengthy discussions, he was willing to go along with you in order to present a united front.

As I wrote on the occasion of his twenty-fifth anniversary in the ministry, we did not always agree, but we always were and remained friends. The bonds, formed in those early days, remained and proved to be strong. Being without relatives in Canada, we considered each other to be members of the same family, and the children did not speak of Rev. Stel, but they spoke of him and addressed him as "Uncle Henk". He was well-like by them and had a special way of dealing with children.

I have known him as a man who endeavoured to do



the things which he had to do and to do them thoroughly. To a large extent he was a perfectionist. About many ministers the complaint may be heard that they either do not react to letters and requests at all, or reply long after their answer should have been received. Stel always replied, and within the time-period set for it. When something was submitted for his evaluation and judgment, you could be sure of it that he went through it and made his remarks. We noted that especially with the correspondence of the Board of Governors of our College: he always was on time with his remarks, and thus contributed towards decisions to be made.

About his work in the Church where he served last I cannot say much. It is not up to me to do so either. He came in Winnipeg after that Church had gone through many difficulties. His was the task to build up and to guide the Congregation in the Truth, to show the richness of the Reformed Confessions, and thus to promote the real unity of Christ's Church. For such a task the Rev. Stel was well suited. After years of having heard many questions posed and few answers given, the Winnipeg Church heard positive sounds again. That in itself is already a great blessing. Thus the Lord provided for His flock in Winnipeg through His servant Henk Stel.

The task has come to an end; the servant has been discharged.

We continue for as long as our Lord and Saviour gives us place and breath, opportunity and strength. For our late brother it is all over.

During the last period of his life on earth, he was very much occupied with Psalm 119, the Psalm which sings of the beauty and sufficiency of the Word of our God. It was especially the 17th stanza of this Psalm which was foremost in his mind. There is no more proper manner to conclude these lines than by quoting that particular verse:

O let thy servant speak the truthful word;
Let nothing me from thy commandments sever.
Thy ordinances hope to me afford;
I vow to keep them always and forever.
Then shall I walk in liberty, O LORD:
I've sought thy law as guide in all endeavour. vO

EVERLASING YOUTH - Continued

to have been endowed with the gift of the Holy Spirit, Who renews us, regenerates us.

And the implications thereof, which are they? They are of the greatest importance for the life in the Church and for public life. For only Christ's Spirit is able to take away from us our natural wickedness and transform us to become people who really edify the life of the Church and take a positive stand in public life!

Faithful instruction of the youth of the Church may have wide consequences, under the blessing of the LORD.

CHRIST-CENTRED

Lord's Day 1 is really a beauty, also as a summary of the whole Catechism.

We hear there about the work of God the Father: Without the will of our heavenly Father cannot a hair fall from our head.

We hear about the work of God the Son: With His precious blood He has fully satisfied for all my sins, and delivered me from all the power of the devil.

We hear also about the work of God the Holy Spirit: By Him Christ assures me of eternal life, and makes me heartily willing and ready henceforth, to live unto Him.

The work of the Triune God as it is described in the Scriptures is "covered" by our Catechism and summarized in the beautiful answer to the first question.

But let us not forget: All this is put in the light of the leading idea or theme of the Catechism: I belong to my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ!

In other words: Our Catechism does not contain a dull exposition of a dry sort of doctrine. But all that the Scriptures teach us is put in a Christ-centred way. We owe all this to Christ, our Saviour. It is indeed great to belong to Him!

A LESSON FOR US

Please, let our children be taught all this, in the same lively and heart-warming way. Let this be taken into account by Catechism-preaching ministers. Then nobody will be entitled to say: Catechism preaching does not interest me; I am not very happy with this dull and dry explaining of the Christian doctrine; I am not even in-

terested in doctrine at all; please let us do away with that! There are several church groups of Reformed origin that have - more or less - abolished Catechism-preaching, or even the second Church service.

I am afraid that this has been caused by the fact that they no longer see what it means and how great it is to belong to the Lord Jesus Christ, and that - for example - this settles the matter of the sense of the existence of a church and of all that takes place and is done in the church services, the preaching of the Gospel of Christ, the administration of the sacraments, praying, singing, etc.

As long as the Christ of the Scriptures is preached nobody will get bored in Church, unless by his own fault!

I am also afraid that at the background of all this lies the tragedy that the redemption which is in Christ Jesus has been narrowed to e.g. a certain spiritual and super-real set of feelings; in other words, that they do no longer know the true Christ of the Scriptures.

This is no wonder, of course, when one has done away with the acceptance of the Bible as the inspired Word of God, and replaced this with one's own theories.

When we get down to the bottom of the whole thing, the point of the true Church, true doctrine, and true faith is a matter of acknowledging the true Christ of the Scriptures. We must learn our lesson from what we observe all around us. Let him that standeth be on his guard, lest he fall!

In particular, let us see to it that the true Christ of the Scriptures is preached among us, from the pulpit and also to our children at Catechism-class.

Then there will be no difficulties concerning certain parts of our belief, as, e.g., the true Church, true faith and such.

COMPREHENSIVE

We have to conclude our remarks on the "everlasting youth" of our Heidelberg Catechism.

What we finally would like to point to is this, that the teachings of our Catechism cover the whole of our life in all its aspects. At this stage we will not elaborate on the fact that our life as a community is dealt with in the Catechism, e.g. in Lord's Day 21, where it gives a very fine exposition of

what the Christian Church is and how it can be called the communion of saints.

We will only refer our readers to the accent which is put on the riches of the leading idea of the Catechism, that we belong to Christ *body and soul*. Also in this respect our only comfort is comprehensive. Further on in our Catechism it is worked out what this means and includes.

This is done e.g. when we are told what the seventh commandment means: our body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, and consequently we have to show that we belong to Christ also in this sphere of life. Courting and marriage, it is all part of it. It is all included in that great privilege: We belong to Christ Jesus; we have been saved by Him; and therefore our life has sense, even with respect to other people.

When the eighth commandment is explained we hear that we have to do our daily work with diligence, amongst other things to be able to give something for the needy.

As for the ninth commandment, even our tongue belongs to Christ, our Saviour. I have to promote the name and reputation of my neighbour and should not defile it.

When we take it altogether we must admit: It is great, to belong to Christ; this includes everything!

It is great to belong to Him, even in these days!

CONCLUSION

Therefore, is there any reason to be pessimistic? Could not we better withdraw into a pious corner far from this "wicked world"? No, but let the Catechism be preached and taught. Let us be told that our only comfort is comprehensive.

As long as Christ leaves us in this life, we have to stick to this comfort and confess it. To show - even to this modern world in which the natural wickedness of man comes to the fore in a very impertinent way and is even more and more legally protected - that there is something else, something different from these things which pervert Church life and public life, namely the riches of belonging to Christ and being sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

There is still plenty of room and opportunity to profess our faith, to show others the riches of the Gospel's comfort.

Continued on next page.

Sometimes the question is asked: What sense does it make that we are here, in such a large country, we with our very small number? What actually are we doing here?

I would like to answer this: Try for a moment to realize in what sort of a world we are living here. It is a more and more secularized world. Even the last remnants of Christianity are going to be lost and put overboard, consciously and wittingly. The large churches cannot stop this process. On the contrary, they sometimes speed it up - e.g. by making official statements on the abortion issue and such things. They no longer act - to use the terms of the Preface of the Catechism - in a salutary way. This is no wonder, because they no longer maintain the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, which is a radical one. They no longer believe the natural wickedness of man which is already in the hearts of our little children. They no longer fight this with the salutary doctrine of the Scriptures. They no longer know what it means, to belong to Christ the Saviour, to have been bought by His blood and changed by His Spirit.

The first part of our Catechism - which is also the first part of the true self-examination which is required before we participate in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper - is really essential. The doctrine of "total depravity" and that of "original sin" cannot be dropped. Arminianism, Pelagianism, or whatever form of Humanism, they all are ruinous, not only in the churches but also in public life.

Although we are a very small group we could be of great value. If only we remain faithful to "the true religion", that of the Scriptures which is confessed also in our Heidelberg Catechism, ever young!

Salt is not used in great quantities. Compare it with the material which it is mixed into. Yet it works. It does the job!

Therefore, let us try to see time and again, also during Catechism preaching, the great riches of the majestic theme of our only comfort in life and death, that we belong to Christ the Saviour, and consider all the parts of that doctrine: sin, grace, gratitude.

In particular: Let us live accordingly! Who knows what blessing we may spread to others, with this confession!

G. VAN RONGEN

Do We Have Only Half The Truth?

The Challenge of
Neo-Pentecostalism [5]

"Christianity Today" or "Present Truth"?

Hardly any church periodical or magazine appears in print nowadays that does not, in one way or another, pay attention to the present growth of the Pentecostal Movement.

The one is obviously a bit embarrassed by it and does not know whether to be glad or unhappy about it. The other hails it as a new chance for the church to update itself and be counted. A third welcomes the movement as an escape from world problems and frustrations. Some periodicals warn that Pentecostalism will lead hitherto orthodox churches into a limbo of uncontrollable emotionalism. Again others welcome it as the key to overcoming church partitions, leading us into world-wide evangelism.

From this mixture two magazines should be singled out as opposite representatives.

The one is *Christianity Today*, the other *Present Truth*.

Nomen est omen. The names are representative of their attitude in general towards present-day developments, and of their stand with regard to Pentecostalism.

Christianity Today, the name says it, wants to represent what is going on in "Christianity" today. Although its stand has generally been anti-sectarian, it wants to make room for Pentecostalism.

In the September 1973 issue Dr. Clark H. Pinnock comes with "Proposals for doctrinal rapprochement" between Churches and Neo-Pentecostalism. He sees a possibility of compromise and offers suggestions for it. Recognizing tongue-speaking as "a genuine movement of the Spirit of God", he wants both parties in the conflict to contribute to "filling the gap" and to give in in various respects. Pentecostals should tune down their stress on the "second work of subsequent grace". Their weakness is that they come to speak of two different levels of Christians. They should change their vocabulary and from now on rather speak about

"the actualization" of what we have by faith, in being "filled" with the Holy Spirit.

Evangelicals stress that there is only one condition for salvation: faith. The "unfortunate result of undue emphasis" of the Pentecostals on the "second blessing" is that some Christians obviously "deserve" the second blessing, while others do not.

Pentecostals are one-sided in stressing that tongue-speaking is the only real proof of the second blessing, while Evangelicals, though they should recognize that glossolalia is a legitimate proof, want to stress that there are more signs of the baptism with the Holy Spirit, like calling "Abba, Father" (Rom. 8).

Then he submits his compromise in this way, "Would it be out of the question for its leaders (Pentecostals) to drop the teaching of the normativeness of tongues, if in return (!vD) non-Pentecostal evangelicals were to admit freely the full range of gifts and evidences that the Spirit has given?"

He cautions Pentecostals not to appeal too strongly to personal experience, thus leading to subjectivity. Human emotions are changing, but God is always with us. That cannot be proven, that has to be believed. And there are "not two movements of faith", one in Jesus Christ for salvation and another in the Spirit for power.

In the October issue Howard A. Snyder warns against "Misunderstanding spiritual gifts". He sees two dangers. One with the Pentecostals in over-individualizing spiritual gifts. Another with Evangelicals in denying or discrediting them. Spiritual gifts should not be divorced from the Cross.

One may appreciate the willingness to listen to both "parties" without condemning either right away. We must, however, reject this method of trying to reconcile two opposing positions by asking the one to lessen its specific stress somewhat and encouraging the other to abandon

Continued on page 10.

news medley

It will not surprise anyone that we begin this time by speaking about ministers. In the first place we refer to the Rev. H.A. Stel, whom the Lord took away out of this life, away from his family, his congregation, from us all. Elsewhere we publish an "official" In Memoriam and for that reason shall tell here some more particulars. Our brother was still planning to preach on Sunday, December 16, and had a sermon ready for that day. But when he got up in the morning, he felt already that he would not even be able to go to Church. When he was brought to the hospital, he even took a radio, some reading material, and a few letters along, which shows that he did not expect the end to come that soon. He did expect the end, however, and this is evident from several requests he made. Yet it came sooner than he thought. On Monday afternoon he lapsed into a coma, and that evening he passed away at 9:30.

With a view to possible presence of colleagues, the funeral was set on Saturday, December 22. The Rev. J. Mulder went to Winnipeg on Tuesday, this being practically the only flight he could get; I myself went on Friday, and the Rev. J. Geertsema came on Saturday morning. Rev. D. VanderBoom had to conduct a funeral in Toronto on Friday, and had succeeded in making reservations for Saturday morning. He was to arrive at 10:15, but since the plane would arrive after a delay of about two hours, he cancelled the flight: it would make no sense to make such an expensive trip while he knew that he would be too late for the funeral anyway.

The part of Scripture which was the message for the day was taken from Psalm 119:33-41. There were many brethren and sisters, also from Carman and even from other places, who attended. Our late brother was carried to his last resting place by the three colleagues present and by three members of the Winnipeg Congregation.

With him, another of the first ministers here has disappeared from the earthly scene. Now there is another vacancy in the midst of the Churches. Various Church bulletins which I received paid special tribute to our late brother. This Medley would become too long if I should mention everything. In the next issue we may give a selection from the In Memoriams as I found them in the bulletins.

Turning to other ministers: the Rev. A.B. Roukema left for a stay in the Netherlands of approximately three to four months. He has his brothers and sisters there and even if he visits all his relatives for one week he will need more than four months. We wish him a pleasant time and a return in good health.

The Rev. H. Knigge delivered a few lectures on "The Theology of Mission", and the Knigge family left for the Netherlands, from where they intend to leave for the mission field.

The Van Spronsen family also returned to the Mission field and arrived there in good shape. They found their house full of flowers and the news of their arrival spread so fast that it seemed as if the whole town came to welcome them back. That is a good sign.

Rev. J. Mulder was a patient in a hospital for a few days; apparently his one arm was somewhat "frozen" and had to be loosened. When he told us of the exercises he had to do under supervision of a nurse, we got the impression that a drill-sargeant could not have done a better job.

How happy I was when I read in the press release of the latest Classis Alberta/Manitoba that candidate Boersema, whom Calgary called, would be ordained on December 9 and that Classis, having heard this, decided to examine him. But how disappointed I was when a bulletin of one of the Classis Churches informed me "that he will start his actual work in June 1974 after completing his studies for his Master's degree." With the best will I cannot see the sense of examination and ordination at this moment. However, I said enough about it a previous time. No one can say that I have failed to warn against something which I deem to be wrong.

Our readers will have had a good time with our Christmas issue seeing how well-printed it was and how pleasant to look at. As for the contents: let our readers themselves judge. In this issue we saw also a few photographs of couples whom the Lord spared for each other for forty or more years.

We start with the ones who were married for 40 years: brother and sister D.J. Vandergugten, better known to many as Oom Dirk and tante Riek. I have known them for as long as I have been in Canada and have witnessed many of their steps taken to reach the point which they have reached now. How worried was our brother when they moved to the larger property on Scott road, and how the Lord has paved their way. Not only tulips were brother Vandergugten's "hobby": there were also the dahlias which he grew professionally. But let me not go into too many details. We are grateful with them for the blessings they have received.

Brother and sister J. Kuik of Carman celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary. When we met on the occasion of Rev. Stel's funeral, I congratulated them already, and promised that I would do it again via **Clarion** on behalf of the whole community. In this community brother and sister Kuik occupy an important place. The Lord used them to have a Church instituted also in Carman and, as a result of that, in Winnipeg. Originally, the family was supposed to go to the Lethbridge area when they immigrated, but upon arrival in Halifax were told that they were to go to Homewood, Man. From this change of destination much good has come. From all the members: heartfelt congratulations. Be blest and be a blessing also further.

Remaining in the personal sphere, we mention that the Fraser Valley Churches received a long letter from the Rev. P.K. Keizer, who spent several weeks in their midst during this past summer. This letter was published in the **Church News** and shows that they had a good time together.

Burlington West is still trying to get a minister and they listened to a tape in order to form an opinion about the sermon supposedly being on the tape. Whether it was the strange manner in which the sermon was recorded or the minister himself trying to be "up to date" in his delivering the sermon, I don't know. I read: "A letter with information about a minister was read and discussed and a sermon heard from a tape. Because of interference on this tape like weather reports, sports, reports, advertising, etc., it was very hard to listen to." I am glad that it was

interference; that makes me to think more highly of the minister involved. I know he would not try to be that popular.

Stranger was what I found in another bulletin: "Moving messages must be mailed to Mr. N." Is he easily impressed or is he too softhearted?

At another place, the minister informed the Consistory "that the brick on the manse are leaking with driving rain. Will be looked into." Something for the Smithsonian Institution?

Another strange thing, in my opinion, is what one Church decided concerning the beginning of the services. As is customary in many of the Churches, so it was there: when the Consistory enters, and before the Votum, the Congregation rises. In most cases the Congregation rises as soon as the minister is standing behind the lectern or on the pulpit. I have never found this to be unorderly or chaotic. It may not go with military precision, but generally speaking it is not bad at all. In one Church, however, the Consistory decided the following: "To arrange for a more orderly way for the congregation to stand up at the beginning of the service, it is decided to ask the congregation to remain seated until the minister speaks the words 'Lift up your heart to the Lord'." When the Congregation is to rise after those words have been spoken, it leaves me with the impression that you mean something different from what you say. You say "Lift up your heart to the Lord" but you mean actually: "Will you please all rise?" What will happen if a minister is not used to speaking those words? Let's not make things more complicated.

I still have a couple of pages with notes about what happened in the Churches during the past weeks or sometimes even months, but I have been advised by our always diligent Mr. Helder that I should not make it too long. Thus we had better come to a close, although also in bulletins received at the very last minute there are many interesting particulars. However, you know how it goes with stories and cartoons: they break off at a very critical moment, to keep the members in suspense and to cause them to look forward to the next issue. That's what I am going to do now.

To be continued.

vO

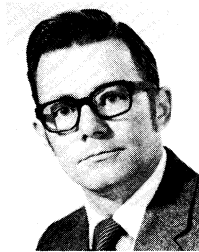
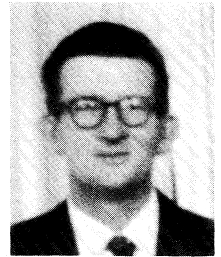
TO OUR READERS

As we begin the twenty-third volume of our publication, we are pleased to be able to add the names of the following to our list of regular contributors.



Professor H.M. OHMANN is planning to continue the column "Understanding the Old Testament" on a fairly regular basis. We hope that his articles will be of value to our readers as an aid to becoming better acquainted with Holy Writ. Professor Ohmann teaches Old Testament at the Theological College of our Churches.

C. TENHAGE is the author of the contributions regularly published under the heading "Country Walks", in which he writes about certain aspects of God's creation. Seven years ago he started a weekly outdoors column for the *Brampton Daily Times and Conservator*. Mr. Tenhage has been a mailman in Brampton for the last twelve years.



Rev. M.C. WERKMAN has contributed a number of articles throughout the previous year. He has also agreed to look after "School Crossing" (Our readers are reminded to send school bulletins, teachers' publications, etc., to his address: 103 Chippewa Dr., Chatham, Ont. N7M 2B3.) Rev. Werkman is the minister of the Chatham congregation.

We are grateful to all three for their commitments of cooperation. May our heavenly Father enable them to serve the brotherhood also by means of their contributions to Clarion.

EDITORS AND PUBLISHER

DE BOODSCHAP

Zeg aan het volk: Er is zwaar weer op til!
- Maar Heer, het is al jaar en dag zwaar weer -
Nochtans: Er is nog zwaarder weer op til!
- Maar, Heer, geloven doet men het niet meer.

Dit is een volk, dat brood en spelen wil;
niet voor één keer, maar telkens, telkens weer.
En hoeveel woorden ik er ook aan spil,
het licht en danst . . . en taalt naar U niet meer.

Wel zie ik hier en daar nog enkele getrouwen,
maar ach, zij zijn zo weinig in getal
en meestal zijn het kinderen en vrouwen.

Profeet, sta op! Profeet, ga profeteren,
want voordat Ik als Rechter komen zal,
moet zich mijn volk geheel tot Mij bekeren!

Andries Dongera

THE MESSAGE

Say to my people, "Heavy storms at hand!"
- But, Lord, there have been heavy storms before -
Yet: heavier storms are threatening the land!
- But, Lord, they don't believe it anymore.

The only thing these people understand
Is bread and gambling, as it was of yore.
No matter how I put Thy great command,
They laugh and dance . . . and stupidly ignore.

There are still faithful ones, I guess, in places,
But, ah, so few of them! They just won't do;
They're little ones and women, in most cases.

Prophet, arise! Not meekly speak, but lordly!
Before My time to come as Judge is due,
My people must completely turn toward Me.

Translation by Ewoud Gosker

NEO-PENTECOSTALISM - Continued
(that's what it boils down to) Paul's stress on the Cross alone.

* * *

Present Truth brings us in a totally different climate. It is dedicated to the restoration of the central doctrine of the Reformation, justification by faith only, "in this time when that truth is being threatened by humanism, Pentecostalism and ecumenism." Its name is borrowed from II Peter 1:12, that men may "be established in the present truth." Subscription is free but donations are welcome. The address is, *Present Truth*, P.O. Box 1311, Fallbrook, California, 92028, U.S.A. A special issue was published, Justification by Faith and the Charismatic Movement. Other titles are, "Is the charismatic movement catholic or protestant?", "The false gospel according to the holiness movement," "The centrality of justification by an imputed righteousness."

Any confessor of Heidelberg Catechism Lord's Day 23 cannot but rejoice in reading this magazine. In every issue all the stress is laid on the teaching of the new obedience, and all our treasures are in Christ who is about to be revealed from heaven.

Present Truth cannot but vehemently condemn Pentecostalism for its false teaching that that great central fact of salvation, as preached by Paul and re-discovered by Luther, is "only introductory" and not "the real thing".

Its danger is that it puts all stress on what is, or has to be, in man, here and now, instead of on what we "have in Christ". Experience is central, instead of the imputation of Christ's righteousness, even if I do not feel it. I believe it!

We do not have to fulfil any conditions in order to be accepted as a "complete" christian; Christ has fulfilled all conditions for us.

It is of special importance to note that, according to *Present Truth*, in Pentecostalism we must see a return to Romanism! R.C. theology has always stressed "*gratia infusa*", infused grace, as though it is some kind of physical liquid. Small wonder, therefore that we see in our day how Roman Catholics and Pentecostals find each other so well.

It is quite a statement, but we must agree with it, that Pentecostalism in the final analysis is a denial of the heart of the Reformation and a

return to Roman Catholicism. *Present Truth*, therefore, foretells a tragic disillusionment for many christians, a further abandoning of the true gospel, and an undermining of the strong longing for the return of Jesus Christ.

"Unpaid Bills . . . ?"

The reader knows the saying, "Sects are the unpaid bills of the Church." I have heard a strong defence as well as radical rejection of this suggestion. The idea is that, if the Church is not what it should be (in whatever respect), people turn away from it disillusioned and try to find in sects what they missed in the Church.

A radical rejection of this statement will not do, in my opinion. There is no reason to boast, or to be proud and haughty. If we confess that the individual believer has only a small beginning of the new obedience, I suggest that the same is true when you put one hundred or two hundred believers together. One does not need to tell me that the (local) Church is more than the sum of two hundred individuals. I also confess L.D. 21 of the Catechism.

People have been and are being turned off by a lack of joy and a lack of love and a lack of zeal in witnessing.

It cannot be denied that being a christian is, next to sorrow about one's sins and "small beginning", also a joy in Christ.

Every worship service, and especially when it includes the Lord's Supper, is (to be) a feast of joy that we have been delivered from sin and devil and death and are heirs to unspeakable, eternal joy. In the worship service singing is an integral and most important part. Singing together about God's mighty acts of redemption, not only in the old dispensation, but also in the words of the New Testament, brings us closer to glory than anything else.

Sure, the pulpit has to warn, to admonish, even to curse the sin of unbelief and indifference, but that pulpit is never allowed to become a gloomy place, creating a funereal atmosphere. We have passed from death into life, from darkness into light. It is always the "high mountain" of which Isaiah 40 speaks, from whose top are proclaimed the good tidings for Sion. *Sola fide, sola Scriptura, sola gratia* - that's its message!

Having climbed that mountain every first day of the week, we then

"get out" to our homes and jobs and conversation among people. We cannot but speak to others, who still lie in darkness, about the good news we have heard.

Then the fruits of the Spirit will grow and be seen.

Our best, and only sufficient, answer to Neo-Pentecostalism is a whole-hearted dedication to the faith as rediscovered by the Reformation, and being a happy people, happy together, loving each other instead of biting and eating and defaming each other. Then we (again?) become "the people of the One Book", and thus become a magnet for others who hunger and thirst for the righteousness of the Kingdom.

Thus we need not fear Neo-Pentecostalism.

To them we say: one hour of Catechism instruction is more important than ten thousand words in a tongue that no one can understand.

Thus fed by true and real "preaching and teaching" of the justification by faith only, and of the knowledge of the three parts of the Catechism, we will, by the grace of God, more and more become a real "pentecostal church"!

How was it again?

What is necessary for you to know in order to *live happily* . . . ?

G. VANDOOREN



New Year's Prayer

For thy mercy and thy grace,
Faithful through another year,
Hear our song of faithfulness;
Jesu, our Redeemer, hear.

In our weakness and distress,
Rock of strength, be thou our
stay;
In the pathless wilderness
Be our true and living Way.

Keep us faithful, keep us pure,
Keep us evermore thine own,
Help, O help us to endure,
Fit us for thy promised crown.

Business and Economics

XYZ COMPANY Statement of Income

	Reported	Adjusted for Dec. 1972 \$
Sales	\$100,000	\$102,504
Current Expenses	50,000	51,252
Capital Cost Allowance**	20,000	28,920
General Price-Level Gain on Monetary Items		2,450
Taxable Income	30,000	24,782
Taxes at 50%	15,000	15,376
Net Income	15,000	9,406
Effective tax rate	50%	62.0%

INCOME TAX BUSINESS UNFAIR TO BUSINESS!

With the Turner-Stanfield proposal to index personal income tax changes accepted by parliament, the government has, as we saw in our previous article, put its first hesitant step on the path towards neutralizing inflation in its own dealings with the public. A next step, that of allowing businesses to restate their income for general price-level changes before calculating their annual tax bill is also long overdue and, as promised in the last article, we now focus our attention on this step.

PRESENT ACCOUNTING PRACTICE

Net business income, as presently determined for taxation purposes, consists of a combination of numbers representing dollars which vary significantly in terms of purchasing power. An income statement for 1972 may blithely add together dollar amounts of sales and certain current expenditures such as labour and materials which originated in various time periods during 1972 as if these dollar amounts were comparable. In fact, because of inflation, the dollar of December was worth only 95% of the January dollar. The income statement then shows further deductions, such as amortization of prepaid insurance, which expense might originally have been incurred in 1970 and therefore would be stated in terms of 1970 dollars and depreciation (Capital Cost Allowance for tax purposes) which relates to assets denominated in dollars which may date back many years when the dollar was worth twice what it is today. The final result is taxable income assumed to be stated in 1972 dollars - a somewhat far-fetched assumption.

THE PROPOSED CHANGE

Although so far relegated to the domain of the academics, accountants do have the methodology to properly adjust financial statements for general price-level changes and restate them in terms of a fixed measuring unit instead of an elastic one. In fact, the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales is now suggesting that the application of these techniques be a requirement for all listed companies. Greater prominence for the method is thereby assured.

The suggested method consists essentially of restating all revenues and expenses in terms of the current dollar using some index of general purchasing power such as the Consumers' Price Index. A new gain or loss category is also added to show the amount gained by owing debt during inflation and being able to repay it in cheaper dollars, and the loss incurred by holding monetary assets such as cash and receivables while the value of the dollar dropped.

The following example shows the restated income statement:

In this example real taxable income in terms of the 1972 dollars is almost \$6,000 less than that reported in spite of a general price-level gain that has been obtained on debt. Proper restatement of capital cost allowance to reflect the fact that the dollar was worth significantly more in 1960, the year in which the related asset was purchased, has meant an additional charge to income of almost \$9,000. At present, the government does not allow a company to deduct this real cost for tax purposes but levies taxes on the unadjusted earnings of \$30,000. In effect then, for this example, the effective tax rate comes to 62% instead of 50%.

STUDIES OF ACTUAL COMPANIES

This example is, however, not merely a pedagogical example but reflects the real situation. My dissertation research,(1) in which the financial statements of two average size U.S. companies were fully adjusted for general price-level changes, showed the following results:

EFFECTIVE TAX RATES

	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970
<i>Total Company</i>					
Unadjusted	0%	8.4%	50.0%	51.2%	36.3%
Adjusted	0	11.1	52.0	58.4	Loss
<i>Every Company</i>					
Unadjusted	49.2	49.9	54.8	51.5	Loss
Adjusted	50.1	53.2	54.7	55.7	Loss

For Total Company in all years, and Every Company in three out of the four profitable years, the real effective tax rate was more than that supposedly charged.

As part of this study, past general price-level case studies were reviewed and the results were found to be consistent with the above two companies. Twenty-four companies were covered for periods varying from one to ten years. The analysis strongly suggested that in most cases the effective tax rate is higher when the financial statements are properly adjusted for general price-level changes. The average understatement of the actual tax rate was found to be approximately 34%.

However, great diversity was noted among the companies: At one extreme a real tax rate of 423% versus the supposed rate of 39%, at the other extreme a 21% real rate versus a supposed rate of 27%. Such a large variation strongly suggests that our tax system is grossly inequitable in taxing business profits. Companies with longer-lived assets are paying an unequal share of the tax-load because

present legislation does not permit them to adequately recover their invested capital but rather taxes them on part of that capital as it is recovered.

CAPITAL GAINS TAX

While inflation, therefore, causes inequity in taxation within the business sector, the business sector as a whole is discriminated against as compared to the wage earner who has no investment to recover. With the introduction of capital gains tax this inequity has been extended to all investment income since no allowance has been made for inflation in the calculation of such gains. The example below shows the effect of inflation upon the rate of return on an investment in shares purchased in January 1972 and sold at the end of the year.

THE EFFECTS OF INFLATION UPON CALCULATIONS OF CAPITAL GAINS

	<i>Unadjusted</i>	<i>Adjusted</i>
Value of shares Jan. 1, 1972	\$10,000	\$10,514
Value of shares Dec. 31, 1972	<u>11,000</u>	<u>11,000</u>
Gain on sale Dec. 31, 1972	1,000	486
Income tax at 40% on half	<u>200</u>	<u>200</u>
After tax gain	800	286
Rate of return on capital invested	8%	2.7%

It appears that a \$1,000 gain has been made on this sale. If, however, proper allowance is made for the fact that the \$10,000 invested should have been equal to \$10,514 merely to retain equivalent purchasing power, a gain of only \$486 is made. Yet the government will tax not the real gain of \$486 but the supposed gain of \$1,000. The actual after tax rate of return is then 2.7% rather than a supposed 8%. If taxes had been equitably calculated, the tax bill would have been only \$97 rather than \$200 and the rate of return 3.7%. Instead, the government has confiscated \$103 of property without any legislation authorizing such expropriation.

Since it is not expected that the rate of inflation will be reduced but rather that it will go up - a 10% annual rate has even been forecasted - it is high time to ensure that inflationary effects upon the tax system be neutralized by allowing taxable income to be calculated after these inflationary effects are considered. In the present political situation such neutralization will no doubt mean an increase in the effective tax rate to ensure that the tax revenues from the corporate sector remain the same. Nevertheless, equity within that sector will then be assured. Moreover, the proposed adjustment in capital gains calculation will ensure fairness to all investors.

JOHN M. BOERSEMA

(1) "Accounting for Inflation, The Techniques Revisited", University of Pennsylvania, unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, 1973.

Letter-to-the-Editor

Dear Editor,

In the News Medley of Nov. 17th, it came once more to the fore that different churches, and undoubtedly countless church-members, are still wrestling with the self-made problem "How much does the Lord require of us (me) for His service?" We can talk about it, write about it, and if we leave the Bible closed we'll never come out of it with a satisfactory answer.

I write from experience; before we came to Canada we had no rule to go by in our church donations and were never sure if we gave in accordance with how the Lord blessed us. A discussion with a br. and sr. in our new country opened our eyes and for the last 20 years or so that problem has belonged to the past, not only for us but also for our children and grandchildren, and hopefully for generations to come, unless the Day of the Lord comes which we pray for and expect.

The first we read about the tithes (or tenth) is in Genesis 28, explained in Hebrew 7. We also read about it in Lev., Numb., Deut., Nehemiah, and Proverbs, and I'm sure this list is not complete.

I would especially like to put a finger at 2 Chronicles 31 and Malachi 4 (please read it). Our God is still the

same Yahweh; His promises are forever sure!

Lately my sons have argued that in the tithes could also be included reformed education, as the Levites were also teachers! For ourselves, my wife and I have always seen the school as separate, but I won't argue the point.

If we acknowledge that everything we have and are is the Lord's, and we show this by giving to His service the tenth of our pay-cheque, we can do away with all the shrines (*heilige huisjes*) we have built into our communion of saints, such as ladies' auxiliaries, tins for the college, collections on congregational meetings, bazaars, etc. We could have church-dinners without paying extra for it, but using it as received out of the hand of the Lord.

And let the consistories worry about how to use all the donations received to the furtherance of His Kingdom.

(Name withheld on request).

P.S. Even the small wage-earner with a big family will discover, when they faithfully acknowledge, in giving the tithe, that they receive everything out of the hand of the Lord, that their worries are over as to how to make ends meet, because Father will make them lack nothing. Also the paperboy who makes \$10.00 and gives the tithe will have exceeding great joy, and will learn how to live in thankfulness with the Lord's gifts.

Press Release

PRESS RELEASE of the *Classis Pacific of the Canadian Reformed Churches*, held on November 8, 1973, at *Smithers B.C.*

Art. 1 On behalf of the convening church, the Church at Smithers, the Rev. J. Muider calls the meeting to order. He requests to sing Psalm 138:1 and 3. After having read from the Scripture Psalm 96, he leads in prayer and welcomes the brethren, especially Cand. J. Van Rietschoten and the Deputies ad Art. 49 C.O., the Rev. D. DeJong and the Rev. J. Geertsema.

Art. 2 Report on the credentials is given. All churches are lawfully represented. None of the churches has an instruction.

Art. 3 The *Classis* is constituted. The officers of the moderamen are: Rev. M. VanBeveren, chairman; Rev. J. Muider, clerk; Rev. M. VanderWel, assessor.

Art. 4 The chairman opens the *Classis*. He extends congratulations to the Church of Smithers with the fact that Cand. J. Van Rietschoten accepted her call, and to the Rev. J. Muider, who received a call from the Church at Tasmania. He further wishes the *Classis* and Cand. J. Van Rietschoten true wisdom in the coming examination.

Art. 5 The Agenda is adopted.

Art. 6 The Peremptory Examina-

tion of Cand. J. Van Rietschoten takes place first. The documents, needed for this examination, are read and appear to be in good order. Br. J. Van Rietschoten holds a sermon proposal on I Cor. 2:11, 12. After a deliberation, held in closed session, the Candidate is informed, that the Classis has no objection to continue the examination. First is dealt with the Exegesis of Numbers 14:1-25 and Judges 2.

Art. 7 After an intermission for dinner, the Classis is reopened. The chairman requests to sing Psalm 84:1, 2 and welcomes the higher grades of the Can. Ref. School at Smithers, which meanwhile have joined the audience.

Art. 8 The examination is continued. Cand. J. Van Rietschoten is successively examined in the Exegesis of James 1 and 2 and in the subjects: Knowledge of the Holy Scripture, Church History and Polity, the Reformed Doctrine, Ethics, the Knowledge of the Creeds and Pastoral Theology. After a deliberation in closed session, the chairman informs Br. J. Van Rietschoten that the Classis has thankfully admitted him to the Ministry of the Word and the Sacraments in the Canadian Reformed Churches. Cand. J. Van Rietschoten now signs the Form of Subscription, after which the Classis sings to him a blessing with the words of Psalm 134:3 and concludes the examination with thanksgiving.

Art. 9 After an intermission for supper, the chairman re-opens the Classis. Roll call is held. All delegates are present.

Art. 10 Reports are given on the Church Visitation, held in the Churches at Chilliwack, Cloverdale and Houston.

A report on the auditing of the books of the Quaestor is thankfully received. The books appear to be in good order. The balance shows that at the moment the Quaestor does not need more money.

The Church of Houston reports, that the Church for the Archives, the Church at Smithers, still could not achieve a copy of the Acts of Gen. Synod Homewood-Carman 1954. (If anybody is in possession of these Acts, he is kindly requested to donate them to the Church of Smithers.)

Art. 11 Question Period ad Art. 41 C.O. is held.

Art. 12 For the forthcoming Regional Synod in Western Canada the following delegates are appointed: the *ministers* J. Mulder, M. VanBeveren and M. VanderWel; as their alternates: Rev. J. Van Rietschoten, being the first in replacing a minister, and the elders W. H. Bredenhof and J. Hendricks in alphabetical order; the *elders*: J. DeVos, alternate: D. M. Barendregt; L. Terpstra, alternate: C. DeJong; T. VanLaar, alternate: H. VanBostelen.

Art. 13 The Church of Houston requests to have Rev. J. Van Rietschoten appointed by Classis as her counsellor. This is granted.

Art. 14 The Church at Chilliwack asks for an increase of preaching engagements, to be fulfilled by the ministers of the Fraser Valley. This is granted and arranged.

Art. 15 Convening Church for the next Classis will be the Church of Abbotsford. Classis will be convened on April 10, 1974, at 9:30 a.m., in Abbotsford.

Art. 16 Question Period. The delegates of the Church of Houston as well as of the Church of Smithers express their thanks for the work which has been done respectively by the ministers M. VanderWel and J. Mulder as counsellors. The delegates of the Church at New Westminster

pass on a suggestion of their Church, that travel expenses made for a Classis in the fall shall be remunerated at the rate of plane fare. This suggestion is not taken over by Classis. The Rev. J. Mulder is appointed to represent the Classis at the installation of Cand. J. Van Rietschoten in the Church of Smithers.

Art. 17 Censure ad Art. 43 C.O. is not necessary.

Art. 18 The Acts of the Classis and the Press Release are read and adopted.

Art. 19 The chairman speaks some words of fare-well, requests to sing Psalm 84:6, leads in prayer of thanksgiving and closes the Classis.

For the Classis,
M. VanderWel

Press Release

PRESS RELEASE of the Classis Ontario-South held on December 12, 1973, at London Ont.

1. On behalf of the convening Church of Smithville, Rev. P. Kingma opens the meeting at 10:10 a.m., requests the delegates to sing Hymn 11:3, leads in prayer and reads from Luke 1:1-18. He speaks words of welcome and extends the gratitude of classis to Rev. W. Huizinga, who has declined the call to the mission field.

2. The delegates of Watford check the credentials and report that all the churches are represented by their primi delegates with the exception of the Church of Grand Rapids, whose delegates are unable to attend because of the weather conditions.

3. Classis is constituted. Rev. W. Huizinga takes the chair on the request of classis, since Rev. G. Van Rongen is not present. Rev. P. Kingma is the clerk and Rev. M. C. Werkman the assessor.

4. The Agenda is adopted.

5. Reports.

a. The Church of Smithville asks the advice of Classis (according to art. 47 C.O.) to set an early date for the Regional Synod. Classis advises the Church of Smithville to set the date for the Regional Synod on May 15, 1974.

b. Report of br. C. Ouwersloot, classical quaestor. With a view to the costs of the next General Synod, \$2.00 per confessing member is requested. Classis decides to request the Churches to send \$2.00 per confessing member for the year 1974.

c. The Church of Chatham reports on a request for financial support (art. 19 C.O.) and explains why this request was not granted. Classis approves the decision of the Church of Chatham.

6. Classical Examiners. The following appointments are made: 1. Deputies for examina: Revs. Huizinga and Werkman, 2. Sermon proposal: Revs. Huizinga and Werkman, 3. Old Testament: Rev. Werkman, 4. New Testament: Rev. Huizinga, 5. Church History and Church Polity: Rev. Van Rongen, 6. Pastoral Theology: Rev. Van Rongen, 7. Contents Holy Scripture: Rev. Dekker, 8. Doctrine of the Church: Rev. Kingma, 9. Ethics: Rev. Kingma.

Church Visitors: Chatham: Revs. Dekker and Kingma, Grand Rapids: Revs. Kingma and Werkman, Hamilton: Revs. Dekker and Kingma, Lincoln: Revs. Huizinga and Kingma, London: Revs. Van Rongen and Werkman, Smithville: Revs. Huizinga and Van Rongen, Watford: Revs. Van Rongen and Werkman.

7. Question Period ad art. 41 C.O. The Church of Chatham asks the advice of classis in a case of discipline. Classis advises to proceed with excommunication. The delegates of Hamilton inform the classis that a call has been extended to Rev. Geertsema of Carman, Man.

8. Classis is adjourned for lunch till 1:45 p.m.

9. Classis resumes at 1:45 p.m.

10. Personal question period.

11. Appointment of convening Church, date and place of next classis: convening Church: Watford; date: March 13, 1974; place: London; praeses: Rev. G. Van Rongen; clerk: Rev. W. Huizinga; assessor: Rev. P. Kingma.

12. Acts of this classis are read and adopted.

13. Press Release is read and adopted.

14. Censure ad art. 43 C.O. does not have to be held.

15. Closing. The chairman requests classis to sing Hymn 11:2 and leads in closing prayer.

On behalf of classis,
M. C. Werkman, assessor.

our little magazine

Hello Busy Beavers,

Did you enjoy your holidays? What did you do? Was there lots of snow and ice for tobogganing and skating? And for shovelling maybe? Drop me a line and tell me about yourself and your holidays.

Now we have a little poem for you from Busy Beaver *Carl Mulder*.

I like winter

I like winter snow.
Because we sing carols we know.
We can make a snowball now.
And throw it at a lazy cow!



From The Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Julia Huttema*. We hope you'll enjoy all our Busy Beaver activities. Did you do as well in your other subjects as you did on your arithmetic, Julia?

Thanks for your letter and poem, *Jeanette Vandeburgt*. How did you do on the quizzes? Did you help your mother bake during the holidays?

Hello, *Mary Vandeburgt*. I think you're clever to be able to make your own dress! Did you enjoy your school bazaar? And did you make something for it? Bye for now, Mary.

Is your sick cow all better now, *Beverly Schouten*? How did you do on your Christmas quizzes? Did you get them all right? Write again soon, Beverly.

Thank you, *Lorraine Heres*, for your crossword puzzle. I'm sure the Busy Beavers will enjoy doing it. Did you like studying Africa, Lorraine? And are you glad you have the same teacher again?

You sure had lots of company from Holland last year, *Grace Bosscher*! Do you like being in Grade 5? And does your new canary sing better than the first?

Hello, *Geraldine De Boer*. Is your kitten behaving better than your dog did? I'm glad your brother has so many friends at school. What do you do with all the pictures he brings home?

Thank you for your letter, *Carl Mulder*. You sure crammed it full of information! I hope your father is all better again. And how are your gerbils doing?

Have you had any more trouble with your birds, *Arlene Schulenberg*? Are you and they all better now from last time? Bye for now, Arlene.

Thank you for your contributions to the Birthday Fund, *John and George Hofsink*. You did well on your quiz,

George, but Luke was the doctor, and Paul the tent-maker, remember? Did you enjoy your school bazaar, George?

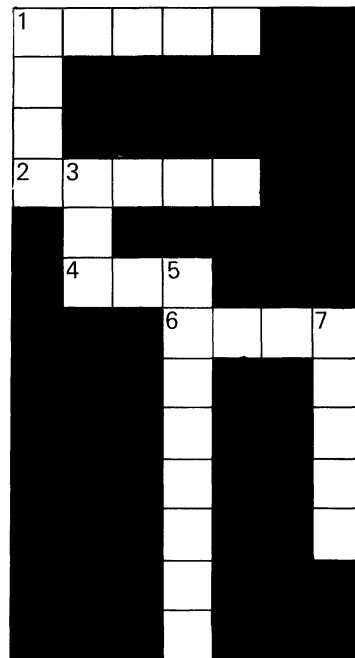
Hello, *Hilda Tams*. What do you think? Will you have a birthday party? Thanks for your poem, Hilda. It really was a funny one.

How did you do talking Dutch for your grandparents, *Margaret Eelhart*? You sure had a lot of celebrations! And did you like the tobogganing party, Margaret?

Thank you, *Leona Dam*, for your puzzles. If you send me the answers we can have the other Busy Beavers do them too, all right? And how did you like your holiday in B.C., Leona?

Thank you, *Ena Beyes; Cathy Wendt; Jeannie, Tony, Lorraine, and Elizabeth Linde; Grace Bosscher; Margaret Eelhart* and the beautiful Christmas cards I received from you!

Here is a crossword puzzle for you from Busy Beaver, *Lorraine Heres*.



Across

1. the President of the United States.
2. the Nile River is in
4. the opposite of no
6. the opposite of push.

Down

1. famous river in Egypt
3. you can be happy or
5. subject in school.
7. in the dark you need a

And here are the answers to our Christmas quizzes. How did you do?

Christmas "Lights"

- | | |
|-------------|----------------|
| 1. world | 6. Gentiles |
| 2. Gentiles | 7. God, Christ |
| 3. light | 8. Lord |
| 4. children | 9. light |
| 5. world | 10. feet, path |

Christmas Puzzle

Christ
BetHlehem
HeRod
Gabrlel
WiSemen
Temple
Manger
MAry
JoSeph

Before I say good-bye, Busy Beavers, there's just one thing I'd like to remind you of. Remember last winter I asked you to send in the name of anyone who was sick or shut-in? Then all the Busy Beavers can join in mailing this person a card, or a little letter, or picture, or what-ever to help brighten the long days of such a person. If you know of someone we could help this way, please tell us right away. Remember my address is: *Aunt Betty, Box 54, Fergus, Ontario N1M 2W7.*

Bye for now, Busy Beavers, With love from your,
Aunt Betty

For the many expressions of sympathy and comfort extended to us on the death of our late husband and son:

ALLEN METZLAR

we wish to express our sincere thanks and appreciation.

Mrs. A. Metzlar
Fam. H. Metzlar
Fam. A.D. van Dongen

With gratitude to the Lord we hope to celebrate the 25 Wedding Anniversary of our parents:

KLAAS AIKEMA

and

ANJE AIKEMA (nee - Kamstra)

on January 12, 1974.

*Gary and Corrine
Peter*

*Joanne and Marten
Teresa - Margaret -
Matthew - John - Dorothy*

487 Elwood Rd.
Burlington, Ontario.

With great joy and thankfulness to the Lord we announce the birth of our daughter:

MONICA DEANNE

December 8, 1973.

Harry and Freeda Werkman
#203, 10615-113 Street
Edmonton, Alberta

Mr. and Mrs. Peter Linde are pleased to announce the engagement of their daughter:

EVELYN

to

FRED VANDERVELDE

November 24, 1973.

R.R. #1, Smithville, Ont.

With great joy to God who has made everything well, we announce the birth of our daughter:

JULIE LYNN

December 4, 1973.

A sister for: *Teddy and
Randy*

Clarence and Ryma van Raalte
199 St. Patrick St., W.
Fergus, Ont., N1M 1L4

With great joy and thankfulness to the Lord we announce the birth of our first child:

BRYAN ALBERT

Born December 2, 1973.

John and Ann Jongbloed
(nee - Tamminga)
9 Dover St., Chatham, Ont.

Engaged:

TOLLIENA STIENSTRA

to

GERALD VAN GROOTHEEST

January 6, 1974.
Fergus, Ontario.

OUR COVER

*Plain of Six Glaciers, Banff.
[Courtesy Alberta Government
Photograph Services].*

Smithers— *Wishing you the Lord's blessing for the New Year.*

MR. G. ANTONIDES
D. BANDSTRA and Family
C. BARENDREGT and Family
ANDREW BARENDREGT and Family
AUGUST BARENDREGT and Family
MR. D.M. BARENDREGT
D. BARENDREGT and Family
N. BARENDREGT and Family
P. BARENDREGT and Family
J. DEJONG and Family
B. DEVOS and Family
W. DEVRIES and Family
W. DEN HOLLANDER and Family
P. DIJKSTRA and Family
H. DOORNBOS and Family

J. HAMELINK and Family
MISS J. HARMANNY
BEN HOFKINK and Family
BILL HOFKINK and Family
F. HOFKINK and Family
GEORGE HOFKINK and Family
H. HOFKINK and Family
MR. and MRS. J.W. HOFKINK
J.J. HOEKSTRA and Family
MISS J. HOOGLAND
W. KANIS and Family
T. MEINTS and Family
D. ONDERWATER and Family
R. PAIZE and Family
MRS. C. PIEFFERS

H. PENNINGA and Family
J. PENNINGA and Family
P. PLUG and Family
E. PRINS and Family
MR. W. SIEBER
C. STAD and Family
MR. and MRS. T. STAD
MR. and MRS. H. VAN BOSTELEN
MR. MARTIN VAN BOSTELEN
I. VANDERDEEN and Family
A. VANDERGAAG and Family
W. VAN GROOTHEEST and Family
REV. J. VAN RIETSCHOTEN and Family
M. VANVELDHUIZEN and Family
A. VIERSEN and Family
L. WIERENGA and Family

It pleased the Lord to take into His heavenly glory our former minister:

REV. H.A. STEL

who has served our congregation from 1956-1967.

May the Lord comfort those who are left behind with the words of Rev. 21:4:

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying. Neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

On behalf of the consistory and congregation of Houston, B.C.,

J. Ten Brinke, pres.

A. Meints, clerk

The LORD took into His eternal glory our dearly beloved husband and father:

PETER SCHOONHOVEN

at the age of 54 years.

His faith in Jesus Christ our Saviour is our great comfort.

Helena Schoonhoven - nee VanderGaag

Cora

Carol and Peter Dekkema

Michael

The funeral service took place on December 17, 1973, in the Bethel Canadian Reformed Church at Toronto, Ontario.

December 14, 1973.

223 Pleasant Ave. Willowdale, Ontario.

Heden nam de HEERE van ons weg mijn innig geliefde man, onze lieve vader en grootvader:

WYBE SMID

op de leeftijd van 64 jaar, na een gelukkige echtvereniging van 37 jaar.

H. Smid - Komdeur

M. Smid

D. Smid - Drost

Joanne - Evelyne

J. Bouwkamp - Smid

J. Bouwkamp

Peter - Debby - Paul - David

De rouwdienst werd gehouden op Vrijdag 21 December in de Bethel Canadian Reformed Church, Thornhill, waarna de teraardebestelling plaats vond in de "Highland Memorial Gardens", Willowdale, Ontario.

18 December, 1973

194 Holmes Ave.

Willowdale, Ontario.

In His infinite mercy, the LORD took His servant into His heavenly domain, our minister:

REV. H.A. STEL

He was permitted to serve our Canadian Reformed Churches for 22 years with six years at Winnipeg.

For the Consistory:

D. Teitsma, vice-chairman

E. Bruinsma, clerk

December 17, 1973

Winnipeg, Manitoba

The Lord took unto Himself and into His glory, our beloved Mother and Grandmother, on Dec. 11, 1973:

CORNELIA KNEGT - nee Vanwingerden

Widow of Jan Johannes Knegt, in her 79th year.

Psalms 73:23-26 incl.

This was her comfort, and is ours.

Her thankful children:

Rockwood, Ont.: J.J. Knegt
G. Knegt - Hart

Wainfleet, Ont.: H. Feenstra
J.C. Feenstra - Knegt

Canboro, Ont.: H. Linde
J.N. Linde - Knegt

Burlington, Ont.: L. Knegt
M. Knegt - Rioux
and 26 grandchildren.

The funeral took place from the Ebenezer Canadian Reformed Church at Burlington, Ontario, Interment Chapel Hill Memorial Gardens, Dec. 14, 1973.

R.R. #1 Wainfleet, Ont.

On December 23, 1973, the Lord took unto Him our Friend:

MR. A. FLIER

at the age of 75 years.

May the Lord comfort his older brother, Gerrit Jan, his sons, John and Bob, his daughter-in-law, Betty, and his three grand-children.

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.

His Friends:

Mr. H. Van der Linde

Mr. and Mrs. B. Breukeleman

Mr. and Mrs. D. De Vries

Mr. and Mrs. S. Kobes

Mr. and Mrs. J. Van de Burgt

Mr. and Mrs. T. Crediet.

Abbotsford, B.C.