



REFORMED

Perspective

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CHRISTIAN
FAMILY

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Is our
growing
population
too many people
for too few resources?

Or are we a growing
source of resources?

Marriable men

Qualities dads should be looking for in anyone who wants to date our daughters

Jon Dykstra

Here's a topic that's best to get to too early rather than too late - what sort of men should our daughters marry?

Dads are going to have a lot of input in this decision, one way or another. If we actively try to influence our daughters – by example, through conversation, and by requiring interested young men to talk to us first – we'll point them to a certain sort of man. And if we don't talk about what makes a man marriable, if we aren't a good example of a godly man and good husband, and if we have no role in our daughter's dating life, then we'll point them to another sort of man.

What kind of man *do* we want for our daughters? The answer is simple when we keep the description broad: a man who loves the Lord, and will be a good leader to his wife and children, who's hardworking, and also active in his church.

But what does this type of man look like as a boy? If our daughters are dating, and getting married young, they'll unavoidably have a "work in progress." That's a description that fits all of us – sanctification is a lifelong process – but which is even more true for a boy/man in his late teens who hasn't yet shouldered the responsibilities of providing for himself, let alone a family. It's hard, at this point, to take the measure of the man he will become. How do we evaluate potential suitors when there isn't a lot of track record to look back on?

We need to find out how they react to light and to leadership.

1. Light

And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. But whoever

does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God. – John 3:19-21

Does a young man love the light?

This is a characteristic that is easy for us dads check up on. It's as simple as asking his parents if they know where he is on Friday and Saturday nights. Does he think it's no big deal to tell his parents where he will be? Or does he want to keep what he's up to a mystery? Does he have a problem with having his parents around when friends come over? Or has he introduced all his friends to them? When he goes out to other friends' houses does his group pick homes where parents are home? Or do they want their privacy?

Many young men in our congregations are planning or attending events that take place late at night and far away from parental or any other type of supervision. They may not have a specific intent to get drunk or do other foolishness, but by fleeing from the light they've created the opportunity. A teen who tells his parents that it is none of their business where he is going is a boy who loves the dark.

Another question to ask: does he have monitoring software on his computer – Covenant Eyes, for example – and would he be willing to show the reports to you? Would he be happy to let you know where he's been on the Internet? This would be a young man who is unafraid of, and loves the Light.

2. Leaders

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, – Ephesians 5:25

There's a reason that young women are attracted to "bad boys." When the other young men they know are doing nothing all that bad, and nothing at all remarkable

then an arrogant kid who doesn't care what anyone thinks can look like leadership material. He, at least, is not lukewarm. But this is the last man we would want to marry our daughters. His "leadership" recognizes no authority but his own. In contrast God tells us that as heads to our wives we are called to serve, imitating Christ. Godly men don't dominate their wives; they die for them.

So how can dads spot this sort of servant leadership in young men? It shows itself in big ways and little.

In a church service, does he hold the songbook for his sister? Or does he have his hands in his pocket while his sister holds it for him? Does he sing? Or is he too cool (too lukewarm) to praise God with enthusiasm?

How does he treat his mom? If he treats her with respect – if he readily submits to authority – that is a good sign that he can be entrusted *with* authority. If he treats his mother shamefully, yelling at her, and ignoring what she asks, every young lady should beware! If he's a terror to someone placed *over* him, we don't need to guess how he will treat those *under* his authority.

Another question to consider: did he take the servant-leader role in the relationship right from the beginning? In any boy-girl dynamic, someone has to be the first to say "I like you" and with that comes the very real risk of being the *only* one to say it. When that happens, it stings. So was this boy willing to stick his neck out for your daughter? Was he willing to risk looking the fool, so she wouldn't have to? Or did he wait for her to take the lead and ask *him* out?

How does he take correction? Any boy who dates our daughter is going to be, at best, a godly man

partly formed. While we are all works in progress, not all of us recognize this – arrogant young men think themselves beyond the need of correction. If a potential suitor bristles at any suggestion from his elders, or if he's unwilling to apologize when he's wrong, then he is definitely the wrong sort for our daughters. We instead want the young man who, as we read in Proverbs 15:32, "heeds correction [and] gains understanding."

Conclusion

Young men hoping to get married are aspiring to a leadership role. But while marriage makes a man a leader, it won't magically make him a good one.

Fortunately leadership is a skill that can be learned, and love of the Light, something we can grow in. So fathers shouldn't be expecting perfection. But we also shouldn't settle for lukewarm. It's one thing for a young man to not yet be the leader he could be, and something else entirely for him to not be aspiring to this role or preparing for it. It's one thing for a young man to not be seeking the Light as consistently or vigorously as he should, and another for him to be fleeing from it.

Fathers, we want our daughters to marry young men who love the Lord, and want honor Him in their roles as husband, father and elder. Let's be sure then, that we teach them to look for true leaders who love the Light.



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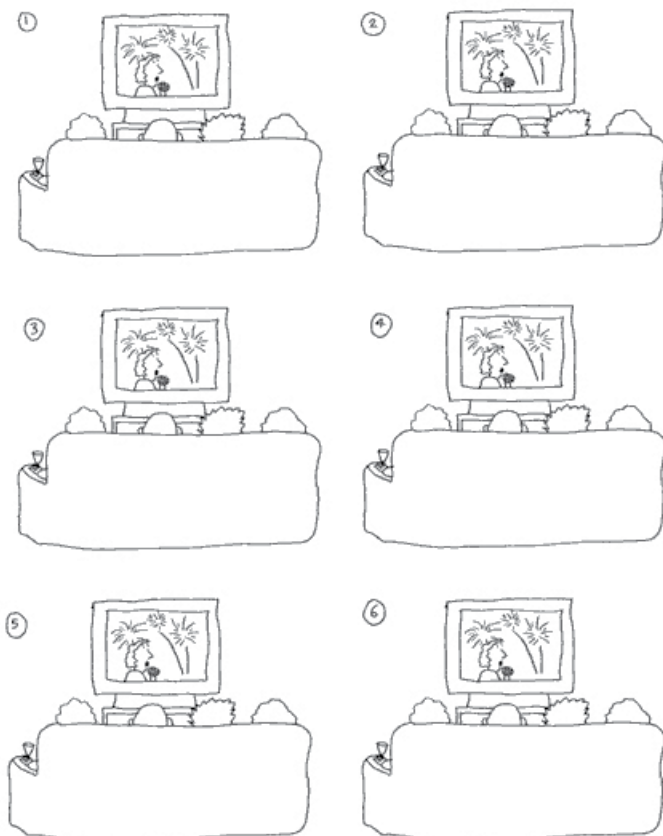
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CARDS
I HAVE
RECEIVED

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TO LIVE IN
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For Subscriptions or to Change your address, contact:

Reformed Perspective, 322 Caradoc St N., Strathroy, ON N7G 2N2
 subscribe@reformedperspective.ca
 1-888-773-7780

For Letters to the Editor, Advertising and Submissions contact:

Reformed Perspective, 503A Forest Circle, Lynden, WA, USA 98264
 E-mail: editor@reformedperspective.ca

Editor: Jon Dykstra

Regular Contributors:

Sharon Bratcher, Christine Farenhorst, Margaret Helder, Anna Nienhuis, Michael Wagner

Board of Directors:

John Voorhorst (Chairman); Henry Stel (Managing Editor);

James Teitsma (Secretary/Treasurer); Bob Lodder

Secretarial Address (Board Matters):

James Teitsma
 449 Almey Avenue, Winnipeg, MB Canada R3W 1P6

Contact Address for South Africa:

Arie Roos, Box 584, Kuilsrivier, 7580 Republic of South Africa

Contact Address for Australia:

Pro Ecclesia Publishers, PO Box 189, Kelmscott, W. Australia 6111

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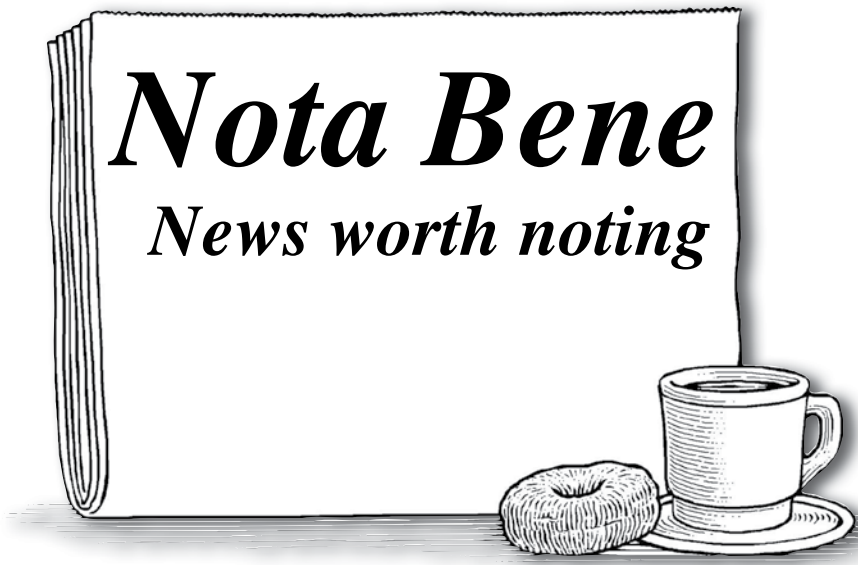
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Oh Canada! True North is freer

by Jon Dykstra

It's official - Canada is now more capitalist than its southern neighbor. In the Fraser Institute's annual *Economic Freedom of the World* report Canada tied with Australia for fifth in the rankings, up one spot from the previous year.

Meanwhile the US, with its reputation for freedom and free enterprise, has dropped to 18th, from a high of 2nd in 2000. The index measures economic freedom in five broad areas: Size of government, respect for property rights, soundness of a country's money, the freedom of its citizens to trade internationally, and finally how much regulation businessmen have to contend with.

For more see FraserInstitute.org.

When the Storm Comes

by Wes Bredenhof

No one who lived through it will ever forget Hurricane Sandy, the devastating tropical cyclone that hit the American northeast in late October. At least 113 people lost their lives in the United States alone. There is an estimated \$50 billion in damage. It took days for the lights to come back in many neighborhoods. A week afterwards opportunists were reportedly even selling gasoline for \$20 a gallon on the black market.

Before a storm like this hits the US coast, various government agencies issue warnings loudly and publicly by every means available. Mandatory evacuation

orders are issued. Most people listen, but there are always a few stubborn people who won't abandon their homes. It happened again with Hurricane Sandy. It was the same story back in 2008 with Hurricane Ike. After that storm hit Texas, a survivor was interviewed on a live TV newscast. The reporter asked her, "Given what you know now about sticking it out through a hurricane, what advice would you give to others when faced with a hurricane warning?" Not hesitating for a second, she replied, "Run!"

When faced with major destructive storms, this is surely good advice. But

there is a bigger storm coming – the wrath of God upon the sin of the human race. While no one can say that these hurricanes are a definite judgment of God upon specific human sins, they certainly do remind us that such a judgment is coming. In advance God has told us what we need to know to prepare: "Run! Run to Christ for safety. Don't get caught in this storm." This is the message we need to share with all we can. We need to be faithful weather forecasters out of love for our neighbors. We need to be just as persistent and vocal as the National Weather Service.



Hurricane Sandy's impact as seen on a street in Brooklyn, NY, on Oct 29.

Photo credit: Anton Oparin / Shutterstock.com

Toronto schools promote polygamy

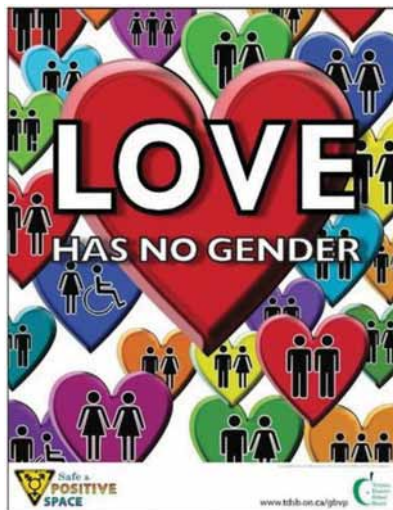
by Jon Dykstra

A poster made several years ago for the Toronto District School Board's "Safe and Positive Spaces" campaign caught the public's attention at the start of this school year. It featured a series of stickman couples, including homosexual couples, and, in the bottom right corner, also showed one triplet made up of a stickwoman holding hands with two stickmen. Critics questioned whether the Toronto Public Schools were trying to promote polygamy.

Board spokesman Ryan Bird clarified that "the reason for depicting two women and one man was meant to show that a person can be attracted to more than one gender." The board "does not support polygamy," just bisexuality.

But why this distinction? On what basis is the school board for the one, and against the other?

These are questions that Christians need to ask; these are questions that expose the inconsistent and nonsensical standards with which the world has tried to replace God's Standards. The truth is, when we do away with His standards, we



aren't left with different standards, but soon enough no standards at all. There is no logical basis the board can promote bisexuality, and not promote the full expression of that, which can only be found in polygamy.

With some pointed questions Christians can point out this foolishness, and point out the chaos that results from abandoning God.

SOURCE: Megan O'Toole's "Threesomes on Toronto school board posters not intended to promote polygamy, spokesman says" *National Post* Sept. 26, 2012.

Pro-life heroines given medals

by Jon Dykstra

To honor our queen's 60th year of rule, 60,000 Canadian citizens were awarded "Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medals," including two pro-life heroines, Linda Gibbons and Mary Wagner.

These two women, Mary Wagner and Linda Gibbons, have been repeatedly jailed for speaking up for the unborn, in front of abortuaries. Gibbons, a 64-year-old great grandmother has spent a total of 8 years in prison, for repeatedly violating a temporary court injunction that barred demonstrators from the area around the Morgentaler abortuary on Hillside Avenue in Toronto. This "temporary" injunction was put in place 18 years ago, after Morgentaler's previous clinic was firebombed.

Gibbons protests have always been peaceful, and usually involve her carrying a sign with a picture of an infant on the

front, and the words "Why Mom? When I have so much love to give?" She was given her medal in mid-October, and by October 30 she was back in jail for returning to the abortuary once again.

Mary Wagner, 38, was in prison, awaiting a court appearance for her own pro-life acts of civil disobedience, when she heard she was been given one of the medals.

Each member of Parliament had the opportunity to nominate 30 people, and Conservative, and very pro-life MP Maurice Vellacott chose to nominate the two women. This has led to the obviously ludicrous situation in which, as LifeSiteNews.com writer Andrea Mrozek put it "the state is both persecuting and applauding two individuals at the same time."

Universities oppose free speech

by Jonathon Van Maren

The 2012 "Campus Freedom Index" was released last month by the Justice Centre for Constitutional Freedoms (JCCF). Only three out of thirty-five universities received an "A" for freedom of speech practices, while twelve universities received an "F." The average grade for Canadian universities was a "C."

This does not come as a surprise to any pro-lifer who has engaged in a discussion surrounding abortion on a campus (I myself have faced censorship on three universities while setting up pro-life displays: Simon Fraser University, the University of British Columbia, and the University of Calgary.) The report indicates that it is often student unions who take it upon themselves to censor groups whose views they dislike – ten student unions refused to certify student clubs because they disliked their message. Among them were a number of pro-life clubs, which John Carpay of the JCCF indicated are the most popular target of student unions.

The silencing of pro-life clubs on campus is also not surprising. We have science and a consistent human rights philosophy undergirding our activism, and support from a variety of off-campus pro-life groups, while the left-wing pro-abortion cabal has little left in their quiver besides censorship. If they can make the pro-life groups shut up, they hope, perhaps they can silence our message.

But we're not going anywhere.





The “Age is More” campaign says the elderly should be honored because they can still do everything the young can, including, it seems, hulu-hooping. The Bible gives us different, and better reasons to respect our elders.

An old problem of discrimination

by Raoul Kingma

A recent Leger Marketing poll indicates that ageism, prejudice against the elderly, is the most tolerated form of social discrimination in Canada – even more than gender or race-based prejudices. Of the seniors surveyed, 63 per cent had experienced age-based bias. And of these:

- 41% said they had been treated as invisible,
- 38% had been treated as being unable to contribute
- 27% had been treated as incompetent.

This trend is particularly alarming when one considers that the number of seniors (65+) in Canada is projected to double by 2036, and expected to comprise one quarter of the population by 2051.

Jeff Lozon of Revera (a company providing care and accommodation for seniors) aims to change the negative perceptions of seniors through the *Age is More* campaign, profiling seniors with an “ageless spirit” and generally emphasizing that seniors are not much different than the younger generations. Ignoring or downplaying differences is a typical approach used to fight discrimination and cultivate equality (the gender wars being an obvious example). Similarities are exaggerated and differences are neglected, with the result that important distinctions are overlooked.

Therefore a biblically informed

approach is needed to deal with the issue of ageism. While we shouldn’t underestimate the capabilities of the elderly we must especially honor them in those things that *distinguish* them from the youth. Solomon tells us that “the glory of young men is their strength, but the splendor of old men is their gray hair” (Proverbs 20:29). In their many years on Earth some seniors have gained great spiritual wisdom. They may have lost strength in their hands but gained the strength of a wise, prophetic voice.

But what about elderly people who have succumbed to the ravages of Alzheimer’s? They have lost physical strength, but are also unable to provide wise counsel. So why do we honor them?

Because they still bear the image of God. Furthermore, Jesus calls us to love our neighbors as ourselves, and this certainly includes the elderly. Within the church, two additional principals come into play. First, we are called to honor the weaker member, remembering that those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are in fact indispensable (1 Corinthians 12). Secondly, as per the 5th commandment, we are to honor our father and mother regardless of their physical or mental state, and this should include our spiritual fathers and mothers.

The church then, should be the first to fight against ageism. Only let her do this in a way that does so by honoring the elderly in the way that God intended.

SOURCE: Misty Harris’s “Ageism is the most tolerate social prejudice in Canada, poll finds” Vancouver Sun, November 2, 2012

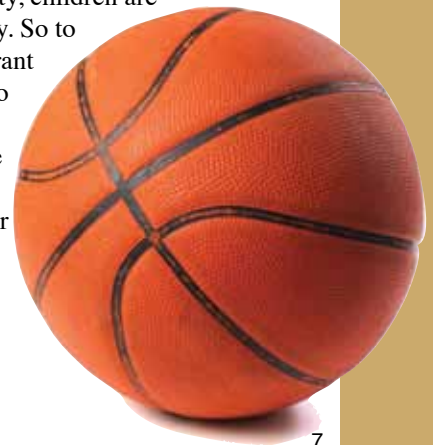
“Child-free” is childish

by Jonathon Van Maren

Anne Langdon of Peterborough, Ontario, has reported her neighbors to the authorities because their children were practicing basketball on their driveway “frequently.” Langdon threatened to sue and demanded \$25,000 from the family. She claimed that she could “develop cardiovascular disease because of the stress, and that repetitious noise from a basketball can cause mental health problems.” And she has now petitioned the Ontario environmental commissioner, arguing that this basketball practice constitutes sound pollution.

Langdon is representative of a generation that has not only decided not to have children but won’t tolerate even hearing them. The *National Post* and a host of other media outlets have reported recently on the trend of “child-free” zones, many of them on the heels of adults who complained about the fact that children inevitably bring noise with them. Many restaurants and even some airlines are designating themselves “child-free.”

Now, I understand that being trapped on an airplane with a crying child sitting behind you can be frustrating and annoying. I think everyone has experienced their restaurant dinner being disturbed by a temper tantrum or by raucous shouting. But here’s a news flash: *That’s life*. Children laugh a lot. They’re rambunctious. Sometimes they cry. What childless adults like Langdon need to understand is that if they hope to have someone there to care for them in their when they retire to an assisted-care facility, children are a necessity. So to the intolerant adults who can’t handle the presence of younger humans – dare I say it? – grow up!



Older Men

Still Have A Job To Do

Teach the older men to be temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled, and sound in faith, in love and in endurance. - Titus 2:2

by Clarence Bouwman

Faithful children of God may look forward to sharing Jesus' glory in the presence of the Father. "To live is Christ; to die is gain." Why, then, does the Lord God not take people home to Himself as soon as they become empty nesters or, perhaps, when their spouse dies? Why does He let the older become old?

The question is important, if only because there are numerous older men in the churches who feel they have no task to do, are out to pasture.

In this article we will consider Paul's instruction concerning the "older men" as he words it to Titus 2:2: *"Teach the older men to be temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled, and sound in faith, in love and in endurance."* To give you the punch line right away, God keeps older men on earth because He uses them to build up His church.

Men are not women

God created two genders in the beginning, but did not make them at the same time. He first made a man, and placed him in the Garden with the command to work it and take care of it (Genesis 2:15). He was, in other words, *responsible*, and commissioned to take initiative in fulfilling his duties before God.

The Lord saw that it was not good for the man to be alone, and so made a "helper" (Genesis 2:18) to be with him. In the relation between the man and the woman in Paradise, he was the leader and she was not; she was the helper and he was not. So when God came to the Adam and Eve after their fall into sin, he sought out the *man*: "where

are you?" (Genesis 3:9). When the Lord sought to call a family from Ur to go the land of promise, He did not call Sarah to take her husband and leave her mother's household, but He summoned Abram to take his wife and leave his father's household (Genesis 12:1).

The point is that the man is, by God's ordinance, the leader in family and society. As leader, the man invariably gives leadership, whether active or passive, where positive or negative. When Paul, then, tells Titus what to teach the older *men*, he's instructing him in relation to *that part of the human race commissioned to take responsibility and give leadership.*

How we view older men

The men Titus must teach are "older." The term "older" is, of course, relative, and really depends on how old Titus is and perhaps depends too on the average age of the congregation where Titus ministered. Paul uses the same word to describe himself when he was some 60 years old (Philemon 9). Irrespective, though, of what age one wishes to peg to the term "older," the term certainly describes a person who has been around the block a few times. The "older" have, in other words, spent years in the school of life and so are in a position to show others how to *do* life.

Our Canadian culture says that "older men" deserve the opportunity to kick back, enjoy life and play with the toys they've accumulated. Beneath this seemingly generous attitude is the thought that the older men are actually out of touch, can't keep up with the fast pace of the younger, and are beyond their "use by" date, so

they should be retired from any leadership roles.

There is an echo of this thought in the church, to the effect that the older men (are made to) feel passed by and even uncertain about their purpose. The result is that they retreat into their seniors' circle... and become an untapped resource.

Their role

This was not the intent of the Lord God. He created the first man (and woman) in His image, and gave the command to "be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over..." (Genesis 1:27f). Children born in Paradise, however, would not know by instinct how to rule over God's world in a way that imaged God; the older generation was to teach the younger how to do this. Of course, the longer Adam lived, the better He'd know what God was like, and so the better equipped he'd be to teach coming generations how to "rule over" God's creatures in a way pleasing to God. Clearly, as the God-appointed leader, the responsibility to train those after him was primarily Adam's.

The fall into sin obviously complicated the task enormously. But it didn't change the expectations God had for Adam as he grew older, or for the subsequent generations of older men. So God told Moses that He poured the plagues on Egypt "that you may tell your children and grandchildren how I dealt harshly with the Egyptians... that you may know that I am the LORD" (Exodus 10:2). Moses, we need to know, was more than 80 years old (see Exodus 7:7) at the time God gave him this instruction. Talk about the role of "the

older men”!

Fully in line with this command is the prayer of the psalmist: “Even when I’m old and gray, do not forsake me, O God, till I declare your power to the next generation, your might to all who are to come” (Psalm 71:18).

Because of this God-assigned role of the aged, the Lord commanded the youth of Israel to respect the seniors (and not just the grandparents). As an older man approached them, the youth were to “rise” and “show respect for the elderly” (Leviticus 19:32). Here was recognition that the older have learned so much in God’s school-of-life and were a reservoir of experience and wisdom for the younger to tap into.

Sadly, not all older men speak only wisdom. Job’s three senior friends spoke the language of fools in their reprimands to Job (cf Job 42:7; 32:6ff). Solomon advised older folk not to say, “Why were the old days better than these?” (Ecclesiastes 7:10). Young people live in the present (not the past), and in the challenges God gives today they need encouragement – and not the signal that today is too hard. Older men, in other words, need to make it their business to be careful how they analyze the present in relation to the past; their analysis requires ongoing Bible study and thought.

All this Old Testament material comes along in Paul’s instruction to Titus. For the benefit of the churches of Crete, Paul draws out the implication of the role God has assigned to the “older men.” Given that role, those “older men” are “to be temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled.”

Temperate

The term “temperate” translates a word that appears elsewhere as “sober” or “sober-minded.” The term is often used in relation to drink and so becomes instruction in being moderate in how much you drink. Yet Paul’s point is not that older men are simply to exercise moderation in drinking. Rather, in all of life one is to be moderate, not indulgent, not extravagant, not into excess or glut. Herein the “older men” of the church would contrast with the typical attitude of the Cretans around them, who were “always... lazy gluttons” (1:12).

What, though, is wrong with excess? Why must Titus make a point of telling older men to be moderate?

Older men (should) have learned the truth of Solomon’s words in Ecclesiastes 2, when he tried all sorts of excess in his attempt to make sense of life. As many young men do, Solomon sought fulfillment

in wine, houses, gardens, women, song, parties, and more. But the more he tried, the more he realized that *things* do not lift us out of the thorns and thistles of a life outside Paradise. His conclusion was this: “when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind” (Ecclesiastes 2:11). That was the advantage of older age: Solomon could tell the younger of his realm that he’d been there, done that... and they should take instruction from him and not repeat his futile search.

This is the message Titus was to instruct older men to convey to the younger. Those older men had been around the block, had tested the value of *more and more stuff*, and so were in a position to vouch for the truth of Ecclesiastes 2. These “older men” have “fought the good fight,” “have finished the race” (2 Tim 4:7), and now await the summons of the Lord to enter the presence of their Father. So their lifestyle was to model that life is not about food, property, looks, degrees, music, chocolate, gin or women. Instead, their lifestyle should reflect the delightful fact that “the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared” (Titus 2:11); Christ has come to redeem sinners, take away the *cause* of our eternal hunger and misery, and through His self-emptying on the cross restored sinners to



Older men can be and should be an example to the younger generation.

Paradise.

Since that's so, one needs to be consistent and say "no" to ungodliness and worldly passions (2:12), "no" to more toys, more drink, more "buzz," etc, and live instead "godly and upright lives in the present age, while we wait for the... glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ" (2:13).

When a "temperate" lifestyle is in place, a man will be moderate in his demand for food and drink, for wealth and holiday. "Older men" have learned through the school of life to get their priorities right, so that their emphasis lies on *service* to the neighbor, a service that reflects God's love for us in Jesus Christ.

Worthy of respect

Titus is also to instruct "older men" to carry themselves in a dignified manner. Again, the point is not so hard to grasp. Older men have buried parents, and perhaps also a spouse or a child. They have been through war, sickness, fire, flood, drought and more – and so learned through the hard knocks of life that life is not a joke. They've learned that trials come from God as so many divine teaching moments whereby the heavenly Father would train us in the school of life for further service and to be more fruitful for His glory. Older men (ought to) know this, and so take God's reality seriously in the hard knocks of life; always the question presses on their minds: what is God teaching me through this?

No, this does not make the older boring or gloomy (as if life is not enjoyable). On the contrary, living every step of life in the awareness that you live every moment in God's school makes life exciting and fun. Older men model this awareness – for the

benefit of the rest of congregation. That's the sort of leadership they are to give.

Self-controlled

Finally, Titus must tell "older men" to be disciplined. They, after all, ought to have learned how to get the passions and instincts of youth under control. As a result, they act less out of impulse, with decisions more thought through. They've learned to live life sensibly, seriously, and so with fitting restraint. So their lives displays good health (not necessarily in body but) "in faith, in love and in endurance..."

The same need today

This, then, is what Titus was to encourage the older men to exemplify among the Christians of Crete. But the sort of lifestyle this behavior encouraged, contrasted with the excess that Cretans typically celebrated. Recall Paul's summary of what Cretans were like: "Cretans are always liars, evil brutes, lazy gluttons" (Titus 1:12).

We can imagine the "lazy gluttons" of the island; we know the type: shrunken biceps and ample waistline assembled in the coffee shops and beer parlors, talking about the latest horse race, hockey game, cruise, property deal, woman. How thoroughly North American; truly, there is nothing new under the sun.

The new Christians of Crete were raised in that culture, and remained greatly influenced by what was accepted around them. How tempting, then, to adopt the same attitude; "eat, drink, and be merry..." Hence Paul's instruction to Titus: since older men are by God's ordinance to be leaders, *instruct them to be temperate to be examples for the*

women and younger men to follow. This, Paul figures, is necessary to build up congregational life (1:5a)

Value

The Lord has prepared a glorious

future for His (older) children, yet leaves older brothers on this earth for a purpose; they remain here to be *examples* for rest of congregation. So, older men: take up the task, with confidence! You've been through the school of life, and so know that neither *things nor pleasures* give fulfillment, salvation, or purpose; by faith you know that Jesus Christ has restored us to God. That being so, *model* the gospel for the benefit of the rest of the congregation: be moderate, dignified, self-controlled in a manner that the younger of the flock can see. This is the service to which you remain called, until such time as God Himself relieves you and gives you the crown of glory.

Conclusion

There is definitely so very much in the congregation for which we may be thankful. That includes the large number of older brothers in our midst. They are here, by God's providence, for a reason. My conviction is that *they are under-utilized.*

No, I'm not thinking now of consistory work; it may be that the Lord is no longer calling the (much) older brothers to this task anymore. I'm thinking instead of how the older, without exception, have a role to play in relation to the younger. Let the older men take their mentorship role seriously, being deeply aware that God leaves them in this life in order that they might model the gospel for the benefit of the younger and even seek out the younger to speak to them of the works of the Lord as they experienced them over the years. It's a privileged fact: *the younger need your leadership, example, and instruction.* Recall Psalm 92: "the righteous...will still bear fruit in old age...*proclaiming*, 'The LORD is upright; He is my Rock, and there is no wickedness in Him'" (vs 14f).

Healthy church life needs the continued involvement of the older men.

Rev. Bouwman is a minister for the Canadian Reformed Church of Smithville, Ontario. If you would like to join his email list and receive articles like this one on a fortnightly (one every couple of weeks) basis, you can make the request by emailing him at clarence.bouwman@gmail.com.



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STOP USING THE WORDS ABORTION & CHOICE!

by Tommy De Seno

Onomasiology (n) - the study of choosing words to best express a concept.

The left has proven far more adept than the right at renaming unpopular ideas to make them palatable in conversation. Racial quotas become “Affirmative Action.” Terrorism becomes “man-caused disaster.” Contraception becomes “women’s health issue.”

To kill one’s child becomes “choice” or “abort.”

The left’s rule of rhetoric can be thusly stated: When specifics are uncomfortable, hide them within generalities. The goal is misdirection. The listener’s brain does not have to process slicing a baby into pieces

to kill her, having it replaced instead with visions of parents making an unspecified choice.

Shame on the rest of us for playing along.

It’s evasion

The English language prefers the specific to the general. This is true in creative and technical writing. In law, specific terms are deemed controlling over general terms. Only in the sophistry of politics can horrible images be hidden behind flowers and the speaker applauded for facing the

issue and not avoiding it.

The word “abort” standing alone does not describe the procedure of killing your daughter. A mission can be aborted. A game can be aborted. “Abortion” is an inappropriate descriptor of tearing your son limb from limb until he dies. So why use that word, other than to avoid the real topic?

What is the “choice”?

“Choice” is by far the heavyweight champion of political diversion. How the rest of us let it come so far in the lexicon of debate escapes me. The word choice is so broad it involves itself in the most mundane of



daily forks in the road – boxers or briefs; work or play; shaken or stirred. Choice itself is never a problem. What specifically is being chosen – killing an innocent child – is the problem. No one is anti-choice as a general principle. We should all be anti-*that choice* specifically.

Words mean things, and it's time for us to enlist the correct words. We can't let the left pretend there is a polite way of talking about this. Never again should we allow in conversation the concept of violently killing a baby to be represented by intentional distractions like "choice" and "abortion."

Stop and challenge

It's time to "stop and challenge." Stop the conversation and challenge the misnomer. Don't continue the conversation without this fight.

When someone mentions the "right to choose" ask them, "Choose what?" The initial response may be that you are taking the conversations off the rails or being facetious. Continue. Insist upon a response. The agitated answer you will

get is, "Choose an abortion." Respond that this is too broad a term because a mission or a game can be aborted. Then insist, "Describe what you are choosing to do so I know exactly what you are talking about." Make them say it.

This is the place in the conversation where you can take control of the description, because proponents of child killing will never, ever, describe it. They can't face what they favor. You can then describe the insertion of a saw into the womb to cut a baby to pieces. They won't.

You will be accused of anything from being intentionally inflammatory to crude and inappropriate (particularly if you are at a dinner table). This is what is most perplexing about the left: They can't bear to hear someone speak of stabbing a child to death but actually letting people do it doesn't bother them.

If the left is going to allow the mass killing of innocent children, make them say it.

Posted to Ricochet.com Oct. 18, 2012.

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Stop using the words "black market"!

by Jon Dykstra

After Barack Obama was re-elected Douglas Wilson post a short piece on his blog (dougwils.com) on the need to use the right words on economic matters too:

As we head deeper into the madness of socialism, we need to swear off any use of the phrase "black market." *There is no such thing as a black market.* There are free markets and there are rigged markets. Those who rig the markets with their guns and lies try to rig them further by describing the free markets as being black markets. To the extent that you call them that also, you have joined forces with the oppression.

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People we should know

JULIAN SIMON

& the scientific case for optimism
about Mankind's future on the Earth

by Michael Wagner

The world is overpopulated and resources are becoming increasingly scarce! Soon there won't be enough food, oil or other resources to support earth's population; people will begin dying in large numbers and the scale of suffering will be unimaginable! It looks like the end of the world as we know it is near!

Um, actually, no. That's not really the case. The commonly heard view above is not based on the evidence. The world is not overpopulated, nor are resources running out. And yet we keep hearing these sorts of dire warnings expressed by leading figures in society and even taught in schools.

One man, more than any other, has exposed the erroneous nature of the overpopulation scare: the late Julian Simon (1932-1998), a business professor at the University of Maryland. Simon had been working on his autobiography in 1998 when he died unexpectedly. His wife edited his autobiographical writing into a book entitled *A Life Against the Grain: The Autobiography of an Unconventional Economist*. This book describes his life journey as well as how he came to his controversial and counter-intuitive views.

Early life

Julian Simon was born in New Jersey and grew up there as well. Since he was Jewish he participated in Jewish children's and young people's groups. This didn't prevent him from becoming an atheist,

however, ("I am a radical atheist," he wrote).

During the first part of his life he experienced subtle forms of discrimination due to being Jewish. For example, as a student at Harvard University many of the female students would not date Jews. His family was not wealthy, so his stint at Harvard was only possible because he enrolled in a US Navy officers program that paid his way through university. Then he had to serve in the Navy for a number of years, part of that time on assignment to the Marines.

After leaving the Navy he divided his time between further education and entrepreneurial activities. His main field of interest was advertising. He worked at an advertising agency for a while during the 1950s. His girlfriend of the time unexpectedly got pregnant, so she had an illegal abortion. Unfortunately, Simon always supported the legalization of abortion.

Academic life

After graduate studies at the University of Chicago, he became a professor of advertising at the University of Illinois in 1963. He then moved to the Department of Marketing in 1966, and then to the Department of Economics in 1969. In 1983 he moved to the University of Maryland where he ultimately ended up in the College of Business and Management.

Simon began his academic career

working in the field of advertising economics. But by the late 1960s he didn't believe he had anything more to contribute to the field of advertising, so he decided to look for another academic field in which to specialize. Being convinced that the world was overpopulated, and that rapid population growth was the main obstacle to the world's economic development, he decided to focus his energies on population economics. As he put it,

I began this work with the prevailing popular view: that population growth is a menace to the world. It was this concern over that supposed menace that led me to the study of population economics in the first place.

People are a resource

As he delved into the subject in detail, he became confused. The empirical evidence did not indicate that overpopulation was a problem. He began to realize that rather than being a problem, population growth spurs economic development. An increase in population increases the demand for raw materials and finished products. This demand drives up prices on resources and even leads to shortages.

The increased prices trigger the search by business and scientists for new ways to satisfy the demand, and sooner or later new sources and innovative substitutes are found. Eventually

these new discoveries lead to cheaper natural resources than existed before this process began, leaving humanity better off than if the shortages had not appeared. Increased productivity of land and the development of new sources of energy moving from wood to coal to oil to nuclear power exemplify this process.

One of Simon's central insights is the importance of people to economic development. The most important "resource" in economic development is not oil, gold, uranium, or some other material; it's humans and their creativity.

Whereas so many scholars see humans as a drain on resources and therefore a damper on economic development, Simon demonstrated the opposite: human activity drives economic advancement and the improvement of living standards. Minerals in the ground don't amount to anything aside from human ingenuity to get those resources out and use them.

Small, crowded countries like Hong Kong and Singapore become rich, not because they have lots of natural resources, but because their people work hard and exemplify good character. It's people, not things, that are most important for economic success.

Of course, the development and implementation of ingenuity requires freedom, and so Simon was a strong proponent of free enterprise. Nothing stifles human creativity and productivity like socialism does. (Note to the Occupy Movement: socialism is a major cause of poverty).

Simon summarizes his scholarly opinion on economics this way:

For some years now, there has been ample statistical proof that planned economies are far less efficient than are market-oriented economies, which, in addition, provide the most

Manure into mattresses

Man can "create" resources!

by Jon Dykstra

Julian Simon's key insight is that man's creativity – his brainpower – is a resource that creates other resources. So while some view a rising population as a threat to limited resources ("We're going to run out of oil!") Simon viewed a growing population as a *growing resource base*. Our brains, when properly applied, could in a reflection of God's own creativity, turn nothing (or next to it) into quite something.

For example, when copper – a key element in our phone lines – started getting very expensive, this motivated some smart chaps to develop a much cheaper alternative: sand! That's what our telephone fiber optic cables really are: Sand (silicon) + Human Creativity!

Making sand into something is amazing enough, but a much more impressive example of "resource creation" is the way some farmers have turned cow manure into cow bedding (or if you prefer alliteration, manure into mattresses). It is quite a story!

Rising prices prompts creative thinking

Down where I live, in the Northern Washington/Southern BC area, some dairy farmers used to use sawdust as a

cheap bedding material for their cows. The cows could sleep in it, poop on it, and the farmer could then come along, clean it out, and put a new layer down. Sawdust clumped together, making it easy to scoop away, but perhaps its most attractive quality was its cheapness. Sawdust used to be viewed as a waste product from the lumber industry – they couldn't give it away and would even bury it. But then creative farmers created a market for this castoff. Or to put it in more mathematical terms: Sawdust + Human Creativity = Cow bedding.

However, then different creative folk started to see more ways that sawdust could be used, included as fuel. Because it originated as a lumber waste product it was cheaper than many other fuel options. Greenhouses in this area started to outbid the farmers. This result was this waste product – previously nothing more than garbage before human brainpower got involved – had so increased in value that farmers needed to find a cheaper option for their bedding!

And then it happened. Some ingenious dairy farmer, probably sitting out on his tractor staring out across his manure lagoon, started thinking about the possibilities in all his poop. The result was a separation system that used the

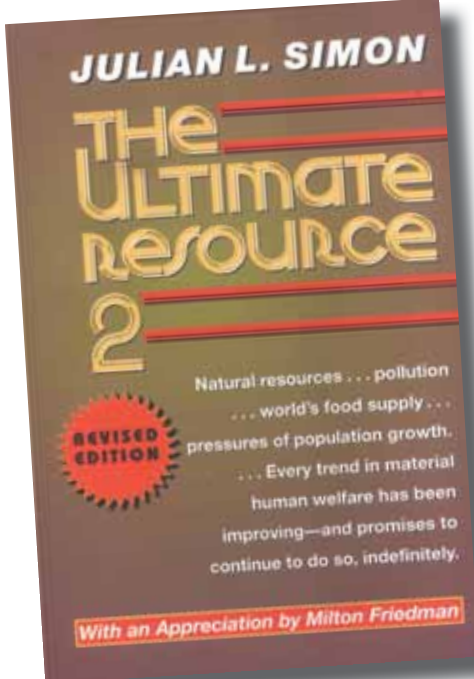
undigested fibers found in cow manure. This is fed into a rotating drying drum, where high heat kills the germs, and the output is bedding material for the farmer's cows. Manure has been turned into mattresses!

Conclusion

Julian Simon was an atheist, so he didn't understand *why* we have this capacity – why we have a mysterious, awesome ability to use our brains to create something out of nothing. But Simon did recognize Man was more than his mouth; he understood that Man wasn't best understood as a consumer of scarce resources, but that instead Man has an ability (and Christians would add, a calling) to be a producer of plenty. So, in this limited way, Simon has a more accurate understanding of Man than any of his critics.

So where does our creative capacity come from? It is a reflection of God's creative Genius. We can't create *ex nihilo* – out of nothing – like God does, but when we take what was once useless, and put it to productive use, we show ourselves to be His image-bearers.





important benefit of freedom. But with the collapse of the Eastern European economies in the 1980s, the abysmal failure of Communism became unmistakable.

Publishing his views

Simon's first book on his new discoveries in the field of population economics was published in 1977 as *The Economics of Population Growth*. Unfortunately, this book was basically ignored by the academic community, probably because it was so out of step with the prevailing overpopulation hysteria. Simon thus decided to write a book that would appeal to a broader, popular audience to spread his views.

In the course of writing this second book, he summarized some of the main points for an article that appeared in *Science* magazine in 1980. This article received considerable attention. Simon writes, "Immediately upon publication there was an explosive reaction, the sort of thing every author dreams about." People were finally beginning to notice his work.

Then his book, *The Ultimate Resource*, was published in 1981. This book changed the field of population economics forever. The evidence for Simon's views was overwhelming, forcing a re-think among those academics who were willing to take an honest look at the evidence. Some finally began to doubt the conventional wisdom about overpopulation.

Simon's views about the importance of people also made him into a strong

Simon got one key thing right. He realized that people weren't best understood as consumers of limited resources, but that we are instead resource developers and resource producers.

supporter of immigration. Some of his academic work argued in favor of immigration. Ironically, this led to accusations that he was left-wing, even a "Commie." This was ironic because his pro-immigration views were part of his anti-statist, libertarian worldview. How could someone who wanted to reduce government restrictions and controls be considered a "Commie"?

His central book on this issue, *The Economic Consequences of Immigration*, appeared in 1989.

The Simon-Ehrlich wager

Strangely, Simon does not include in his autobiography information about his famous bet with the gloom-and-doom leftist academic Paul Ehrlich. In 1968 Ehrlich published a book entitled *The Population Bomb* that predicted a soon-coming catastrophe due to overpopulation. Among other things, *The Population Bomb* predicted mass-starvations of hundreds of millions of people during the 1970s. This event did not materialize, but Ehrlich has continued his fear-mongering ever since.

Ehrlich's view is that over time (due to too many people) resources becoming increasingly rare and therefore more expensive. Simon's view is that over time (due to human ingenuity) resources become more abundant and less expensive. So in 1980 Simon challenged Ehrlich to select five commodity metals that he believed would experience price increases from 1980 to 1990. Simon bet Ehrlich that the prices of those metals would all decline over that decade. Ehrlich accepted the challenge.

Simon won the bet because the prices of all five metals selected by Ehrlich (copper, chromium, nickel, tin and tungsten) did, in fact, decline from 1980 to 1990. This was clear evidence that Simon's views were superior to Ehrlich's views. Ehrlich mailed Simon a check to settle the bet.

It's important to note that the population of the world grew by hundreds of millions over the course of the 1980s. Yet the prices of key metals went down. If overpopulation is depleting the earth's resources leading to an impending crisis, how is it possible that the prices of key metals (carefully selected by someone who believes the world is overpopulated) would decline?


Conclusion

The presence of people in the world is not a problem to be solved. When God gave the command to Adam and Eve to "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it" (Genesis 1:28), he wasn't putting them on the path to the degradation of the world and the ultimate suicide of the human race. People are good for the earth, for developing it and making it better.

Although Julian Simon was an atheist, his academic work supported the idea of being fruitful and multiplying, by demonstrating that the human capacity to invent and adapt was the "ultimate resource." People are not a damper on economic growth; they are essential for economic growth. Thus countries like China which deliberately inhibit population growth are harming themselves. Simon points out that:

Millions of Chinese who would otherwise be brought into life are not born each year because of Chinese government policies based on unsound ideas about the effect of numbers upon the rate of economic development.

In this respect, the overpopulation hysteria has led to the deaths of millions of unborn children.

Julian Simon has been the central academic figure in the attempt to counter the efforts of those who believe the world is overpopulated. His work thus supports the Biblical Christian view about population, even though that wasn't his intention. Christians who are concerned about the rhetoric of overpopulation could do no better than to consult Simon's most important work, which was republished in 1996 as *The Ultimate Resource 2*. 

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So much to celebrate... and to do

Court victory means we are still free to share the Gospel in Canada

by Mark Penninga

The Reformed church community needs to take note of the victories that we had a direct hand in achieving. It is not about pride. It is about witnessing, and being thankful for, God's grace. Far too often we bemoan what is going on in society, when we could be challenging it and winning.

Boissoin's 10-year odyssey

Ten years ago, Stephen Boissoin wrote a letter to the editor of the *Red Deer Advocate*, calling on his fellow citizens to take a stand against the promotion of homosexuality, also in the education system. As a pastor who worked with inner-city youth, including homosexuals, he knew the harm they were experiencing because of what they were being taught. That letter resulted in a human rights complaint to the Alberta Human Rights Commission.

The commissioner ruled that not only did Reverend Boissoin have to pay thousands of dollars in fines, he had to publicly recant his beliefs about homosexuality, and he was further ordered never to communicate them again, including off the pulpit.

This was one of the first cases that woke Canadians up to the power that our human rights commissions and tribunals have to censor free speech. Boissoin's story spurred Ezra Levant to take up the cause, and he devoted the following years to raising public awareness about these "kangaroo courts."

Boissoin was not left hanging out to dry. The now-defunct ECP Centre stood beside him from the beginning. Through the ECP Centre, the Reformed church community donated substantial sums of money to defend Boissoin by appealing this decision to a real court. They also provided legal assistance and strategic advice throughout the ordeal. The ECP Centre woke up many in the Reformed community to the need to protect our fundamental freedoms, even in

21st century Canada.

The first victory occurred in 2009, when the Alberta Court of Queen's Bench overturned the tribunal's decision. But the case was appealed again, to the Alberta Court of Appeal. At this point the legal expenses were well over \$100,000.

Just this past October this court upheld the decision of the lower court, a second victory. Not only did it uphold Mr. Boissoin's freedom to live his faith, it also lashed out against the tribunal. "Matters of morality, including the perceived morality of certain types of sexual behavior, are topics for discussion in the public forum," said Mr. Justice Clinton O'Brien, according to the *National Post*. "Freedom of speech does not just protect polite speech."

This victory is huge. It makes it clear that Christians still have the freedom to proclaim God's Word in the public square, even if it is controversial. We must stop assuming that we will always have that freedom, or that its eventual withdrawal will be inevitable. It must be actively defended – by us.

Whatcott decision coming

But we aren't done. Just last year a different case (*Whatcott vs the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission*) went all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada. ARPA Canada gave legal arguments to the Court in this case. The decision has not been released at the time of writing this article, but it is expected soon. Given that this is the highest court of the land, the decision will be very important. Please continue to pray for the judges, that they might uphold our freedom to publicly express our faith.

The next fight

There is one more victory that needs to be shared. The real problem lies with the human rights codes that give these

commissions and tribunals their power. In 2010, ARPA Canada launched the *Stand Up for Freedom* campaign (www.HumanRightsCommissions.ca). Since then, thousands of letters have been written to our public officials, urging reforms. One MP answered the call. Brian Storseth introduced a private member's bill that would eliminate a section of the Canadian Human Rights Code that was most responsible for its censorship.

This summer, his bill passed through the House of Commons!

It was one of only a handful of private member's bills to pass in this session of Parliament. It still has to be rubber-stamped in the Senate. But it is another huge victory.

Mr. Storseth spoke at an ARPA event in Alberta this summer. He said "thank you" for standing up for freedom. He thanked ARPA for our efforts. But really, it is not just about ARPA, or the ECP Centre. It is about individuals who were willing to pray, get off their butts, talk with their MPs, and donate some money. Our freedoms are that much more protected in Canada today thanks to your efforts.

Now it is time to reform the provincial commissions and tribunals. Who will stand with us?

Mark Penninga is the executive director of ARPA Canada (www.ARPCanada.ca).



I Was A Stranger and...

by Christine Farenhorst

Although based on historical fact, the little town of Diestadt is a fictional town, and its characters are fictional characters.

CHAPTER 1 - A piece of freedom

“God is our very present help in every time of trouble...”

The dominee, familiar and black-robed on the high wooden pulpit, preached with dedication and zeal as he alternately gazed at his notes and at the flock in front of him. The church was crowded to capacity. It had been crowded for a number of Sundays. And although most of the people had their eyes on the dominee, a great many had their thoughts elsewhere.

“God loves His people with an everlasting love. This is something we cannot always fully grasp with our finite minds. But, dear people, we can understand, and indeed we are specifically told, that He dwells in His church – that He dwells in you and me – by His Spirit. If then He dwells in us His people, and if then our present rather bleak circumstances are brought before Him through the intercession of His Son, how can we think that He ever loses sight of us – ever forgets us?”

Someone coughed, and several others followed suit. The sound echoed.

“The truth, I fear,” dominee Raadsma continued, bending over the edge of the lectern, “is not that He forgets us, but that we forget Him.”

It was quiet now. The dominee paused – paused for a long time.

“There are a host of things to think about these days,” he finally continued, “a host of things. What we must strive to remember is that in everything that happens, whether that be good or ill, it is for us to say with conviction, ‘The Lord is in this and He is in control for our good and for His glory.’”

Again he paused before repeating, “The Lord is in this and He is in control for our good and for His glory. Amen.”

Most Dutch people were taken by surprise when the Nazis invaded their country. Perhaps that is because ordinarily most people do not like to think of or contemplate the worst. Their neighbor is the one who is diagnosed with cancer; the person across the street is the one whose wife leaves him; and Germany, although it had undeniably attacked Poland, would never attack Holland. Indeed, the Germans would respect Dutch neutrality, as they had done during the First World War. This was a commonly held sentiment and one most devoutly hoped. Consequently, the sentiment became an almost truth. But an almost truth, sweet as the word truth may ring, remains a lie. Within a week of the

initial German onslaught, on May 10, 1940, after a devastating and horrible bombing of the city of Rotterdam, Dutch resistance collapsed.

In contrast to their neighbor, Belgium, and not at all in conjunction with the country across the border, France, where only military occupation prevailed, the Netherlands almost immediately experienced both military and civil control by the Nazis. Five German commissioners were appointed as quasi-ministers to supervise five different departments of the Dutch administration. All these departments were headed by an Austrian, the wicked and cruel Dr. Seyss-Inquart.

Diestadt was a medium-sized village of about three-and-a-half thousand people. Among its inhabitants lived some one hundred Jewish families. They were devout families for the most part – families who faithfully attended a solid wooden synagogue every Friday night, each Shabbat morning and the occasional time when someone wanted to make a minyan during the week and the quorum of ten was met for that service. There was also cheder, an elementary Hebrew school, for the Jewish children. It was open from four to six every weekday. The synagogue and its members were an accepted part of the landscape in Diestadt. No one thought much of it either one way or another.

Many but certainly not all the people of Diestadt were moralistic. A great number of them were staunch Calvinists who had little tolerance for scandal or the unusual. When May 1940, rolled in, as thunder rolls across the sky – once they had absorbed the shock – the population of Diestadt realistically contemplated the events as the beginning of a bad storm. Indeed it was a bad storm. Most of them, however, did not take the necessary precautions to sit out the storm. Perhaps that was because, initially, there were no serious repercussions for the Jews. Initially.

Several streets over from the synagogue, Cornelis Goedhart – “Nelis” to all who knew him – ran a grocery/dry-goods store on Rechte Weg. By nature a cheerful, talkative man, he loved his wife and three children dearly. Each morning, swinging his thin, pajama’d legs over the edge of the four-poster bed he shared with Dora his wife, his first thought was: “Good-morning, Lord. Thank you for another day in which I may praise You.” And praise God he did by singing much. Sometimes, in the estimation of his beloved Dora, he sang too much, hummed too loudly, and gave away too many candies to neighborhood children.

The couple’s two boys were both married and out of the house. The only one still living in the family home was their youngest

daughter, Tilda. Tilda had turned seventeen in January of 1940 and was the apple of her father's eye. To say that she was a beautiful girl was an understatement. Brown hair curled naturally around a sweet-looking face – a madonna-like face. Great greenish-brown eyes, a flawless complexion, high cheekbones and a gentle smile all made people look at her twice. She carried herself straightly, almost regally. Nelis often reflected as he watched her, that she seemed like a princess. Then, a few seconds later, he would grin at his pride and ask God to forgive him.

It was over the counter of his grocery store, a counter more informative than the local newspaper, that Nelis heard that violence had erupted in the Jewish quarter of Amsterdam. A number of Jews had defended themselves against attacks by a member of the NSB¹, the Dutch Nazi movement. Himmler, head of the SS, reacted swiftly. On February 22, 1941, four hundred and twenty-five Jewish youths were picked up randomly, beaten brutally, and shipped off to camps.

"Camps?" Nelis asked, bewildered, eyes wide, "What camps?"

"I'm not sure," his informant answered, "But I don't think they'll come back."

"But..."

"Oh, Nelis! Don't be so naive, man!"

Rabbi Heyman frequently stopped by the grocery store to purchase one thing or another for his wife. A short, squat man



In May 1940, Austrian Dr. Seyss-Inquart was appointed by the Nazis to oversee the Netherlands.

in his early forties, he got along well with the thin, wiry Nelis.

"Shalom, Nelis."

"Shalom, Rabbi Heyman. What can I get you today?"

The rabbi looked sad, or perhaps grave was a better word. "A piece of freedom," he said, and then smiled at the absurdity of his request.

Nelis smiled back and a moment later reached under the counter coming up with a piece of gingerbread. "A piece of friendship," he answered, "and that goes a long way towards freedom."

The rabbi smiled again, took the gingerbread, turned and walked out of the store without buying anything. Nelis began to sing. Singing usually calmed him. He knew with a sickening feeling that the piece of gingerbread would do nothing to really help the rabbi and his family. It would not procure a radio for the man; it would not take care of the increasing number of signs appearing on more and more buildings reading, "Jews forbidden"; it would not erase the yellow star which he and his family were forced to wear; and it would not take away the fear of the deportations, news of which was becoming more and more distressing. Nelis increased the volume of his singing. Instead of calming him, however, the emptiness and sadness reflected in the rabbi's eyes echoed through the notes, flattened the harmony, and finally gave way to silence.

As the months went by, the selection of goods rapidly disappeared from Nelis' grocery shelves. Items were simply becoming unavailable. Clothes and shoes and food were rationed. It was all part of the German control system. Ration books were distributed from a Distribution Office. There were coupons for everything – bread, meat, sugar, clothes, shoes, oil, gasoline, coal, and tobacco. In order to get these coupons a citizen had to register. And once a person or household was registered, the Nazi authorities had access to their names and addresses. Jewish ration books were stamped with a large "J."

"I intend to maintain," Dr. Seyss-Inquart had broadcast in a speech, "Dutch laws as far as possible and to work with the Dutch civil administration, and I guarantee the independence of the judiciary. We have no desire to enforce a foreign ideology on the Dutch, but, of course, we do not consider Jews to be Dutch."

At the end of 1941, the NSB was the only political party allowed in the Netherlands.

Adept at bartering, Nelis had initially established a system with a number of local farmers, two of whom were his sons, in which he traded goods such as cloth for flour. It worked – for a while – but the future worried him. And it was not only the emptier shelves that worried Nelis. Late in 1942, Tilda worried him as well.

"I don't want to go to church anymore," his daughter told him.

"Why not?" Nelis had countered the rebellious words spoken within the privacy of the Goedhart livingroom, quietly.

"Because..." Tilda stopped, seemingly unable to continue.

Nelis cautiously repeated the word, "Because?"

"I just don't want to."

There appeared to be an indecision, an apathy, in the girl's words, an underlying mystery that Nelis could not grasp. Consequently, when cleaning his depleting shelves, he could suddenly stop singing in the middle of a psalm.

"What is it Nelis?" customers would say, "Why did you stop?"

But he would only shake his head, unable to explain the nagging fear in the pit of his stomach and in the core of his heart.

It was also on a day late in the fall of 1942, as he stood with his back to the door working his shelves, that the customer bell clanged noisily. Turning away from the shelf he had been stocking with some flour, eggs, and potatoes that he had just carefully bartered from a farmer, he faced his daughter – his daughter accompanied by a lanky youth.

"Vader?" Tilda's voice was nonchalant with a touch of bravado in it.

"Yes, Tilda."

"Vader, this is Dolf. He walked me home from Tante Klara's."

"Yes?" For Nelis his "yes" was a question. Dolf who? And why had he walked Tilda home? Actually he knew why. After all, was not his daughter beautiful? But the who was more troublesome. There was something about the boy that immediately struck him as unwholesome.

"Dolf's father, Marinus Wilman, runs the accounting business on Walen Street."

"Oh?"

Tilda's information, openly given, struck a chord of remembrance. The boy, tall and awkward in length, strode up to the counter after her words – strode up with an air of self-assurance and offered his hand. Nelis considered for a moment before he extended his own.

"How are you, Dolf?"

"Fine, thank you, sir."

The lad's grasp was hard, almost too hard, too cocky. Nelis withdrew his hand first.

"Your father, I think, is the town clerk. And now he also owns the accounting business on Walen Street?" he questioned slowly, "Wasn't that the business run by Karel Winter?"

"Yes," Dolf was quick to answer, "but my father bought him out last month."

It had come to Nelis, via the grocery counter, that Karl Winter, who was a Jew, had been forcibly liquidated before being

deported.

"I see," he answered and gave the boy a thin smile, absently turning back to his shelves.

"Vader!" Tilda's voice was irritated.

"Yes, child." Nelis did an about face.

"Dolf came in to buy some coffee. Didn't you, Dolf?"

The boy nodded.

"Coffee," Nelis repeated slowly, "You know, that's a much wanted commodity and I'm sorry to tell you that I'm all out right now."

He turned back to his shelves and heard the customer bell clang angrily behind him. And he began to sing.

CHAPTER 2 - Curfew conversation

There was an underground in Diestadt – a strong underground. Nelis' two sons were members and he himself was also involved. Hands-on sabotage, smuggling, and falsifying identification papers – these things were outside of his realm but he helped in other ways. The underground group often met in a hidden room beneath the store and he allowed them to keep a printing press there. Forbidden pamphlets were stacked neatly against the wall until they were distributed to the people of Diestadt and the surrounding district.

Rabbi Heyman visited the store less and less frequently and when Nelis did chance to see him on the street, his friend and neighbor seemed to have shrunk – shrunk into a small, almost invisible, black-coated figure whose yellow star nevertheless



Many wanted to help the Jews... in small ways. But as the Germans continued to isolate them, requiring them to wear the "Star of David" whenever they went out in public, it became clear the help they needed was of the big sort.

screamed identity. It was in the early days of December in 1942, that the rabbi came into the store one last time. Nelis was startled to see him. He had expected that the rabbi and his family would be gone – gone as most of the Jews of Diestadt were gone – gone somewhere safe. Standing with his black-coated arms at his side, Rabbi Heyman told Nelis that his wife was expecting again.

“Mazeltov, rabbi,” Nelis said, supporting his chin on his hand as he leaned on the counter, “and how is she feeling?”

“Tired.” The answer itself sounded tired and bedraggled and the rabbi stroked the yellow star of David on his black coat as he spoke.

“And how many...” He did not have to finish his question.

“Six, friend. It will be baby number six.”

“Well,” Nelis commented thoughtfully, stroking his chin, “you will have three more than I have. Children are a blessing from the Lord God.”

Then, feeling he was being much too glib with his words and wishing to interject a more personal comment, he added, “And how do the other five children feel about having a baby brother or sister?”

“Miriam, your Tilda’s age, is not home right now. She has gone to stay with... with relatives. So have Rachel, Aaron and Job. There is only our little Rosa left to us now.”

“Ah,” Nelis breathed, “only Rosa.”

“Yes, only Rosa. We were to go away very soon ourselves... to... relatives but...”

“But,” Nelis encouraged.

“But they will not take us with the new baby due in the summer.” The rabbi’s black coat rose and fell with agitation. His hands were clenched. The tendrils in his black beard trembled and he eyed the door behind him furtively.

“I see.” Nelis did see. Reaching under the counter he took out a package of tea. It was the last one he had left. “Here. For Anna.”

“I did not come here to beg for food, for drink. But beg I do. I came... I came to ask...” He stopped and looked directly into Nelis’ eyes.

“I know, old friend. Let me think on it.”

Nelis did think on it. He spoke at length that very day with Dora, with his sons, and with the other leaders of the resistance. It was true. Not one of the addresses in their district, or surrounding district, was presently willing to harbor a Jewish family expecting a baby. A newborn baby meant extra risk.

“But Nelis,” Dora said, “we really cannot do it either. You know that the Germans come into the store often. They know who lives in this house. And then there are the underground meetings... We cannot... Surely you see.”

She was right, his Dora. Too many of the enemy visited his store, chatted around the counter and eyed everything going on about his house. This was encouraged by the underground. Often Nelis could pass on information that some loose-lipped German soldier had dropped. But it was already a tricky business and to add to it would be foolish and would jeopardize the underground meetings in the basement. At least that is how everyone viewed the situation. Dora, straightening out imaginary creases in her

blue-checked apron, gave Nelis a kiss on his cheek. He smiled at her. She was not a coward, his wife, and often ran risks by carrying messages, as well as illegal newspapers, to a number of homes.

“It will turn out, Nelis. Don’t worry. God will provide.”

“God helps those who help themselves,” he automatically answered.

In the days that followed, his sons, particular his oldest son Frans, reinforced their mother’s refusal.

“She is right,” Frans said, “there would be too much risk involved for all of us. Besides that, we actually just found an address that is willing to take the rabbi and his wife and Rosa. Willing to take them immediately.”

Nelis was extremely relieved and sang more than usual that day, until Tilda walked in, arm in arm with Dolf.

“Hello, *Vader*.”

“Hello.”

He had spoken with her at length about not seeing the boy anymore. Dolf’s father had predictably metamorphosed into an outspoken member of the local NSB and had been responsible for rounding up a number of Dutch patriots who had since disappeared from the face of Diestadt. Dolf himself showed every sign of following in his father’s footsteps. He was reported to be frequently looting, in the company of German soldiers, the homes of those who were arrested. Nelis could not understand what his Tilda, his once so sweet and kind daughter, saw in the fellow. Looking from her to the boy, he could not help the feeling of loathing that overpowered him. The sight of Dolf’s arm, now possessively draped around Tilda’s shoulders, made his blood boil. Through the open coat, he could see that the boy was wearing the blue shirt and black pants that the youth branch of the NSB party doled out to its members. The astrakhan cap with the emblem of a stormy petrel, was perched jauntily on his head.

“I heard you were down on Tweede Straat last week, Dolf, helping the SS soldiers ransack a home that belongs to Willem Parelman.”

“Ransack?” Dolf repeated, dropping his arm from Tilda’s back. Underneath the coat, his blue shirt rose and fell in agitation.

“Yes, ransack,” Nelis repeated as well, his voice quiet and steady, his gaze never leaving the boy’s face.

“I was certainly there when the empty home of Willem Parelman was being checked out and I am proud that I can help the ruling authorities in this city,” Dolf answered stiffly, “if that is what you mean.”

“No, that is not what I mean,” Nelis continued, oblivious of Tilda’s warning eyes, “Windows were broken in the Parelman home, books were burned, and I recall being told that soldiers urinated on the furniture. There seemed to be no one taking the part of those who were gone. The Jews are helpless, at least that is what some people like to think, as life becomes more difficult and more intolerable for them.”

He paused for breath, his cheeks turning red. Dolf took the opportunity to interject a reply. “You are the father of a girl I really like, so I will not report what you have said,” he parried rather smoothly, “and as for the Jews, they are guilty of many



The Dutch Nazi party, the NSB, used a bird common to Dutch shores, the stormy petrel, as a mascot. This propaganda poster reads:
What do you want: freedom or servitude?
Freedom only come through the NSB

crimes and do not deserve to continue living in our city.”

Those words were too much for Nelis. “Not deserve? Out of this store, boy! Out before I kick your...” Stepping threateningly from behind the counter, Nelis moved towards Dolf as he spoke, rolling up his sleeves at the same time. “And remember that there is a God in heaven Who sees everything.”

Dolf walked backwards towards the door. There was a glint of fear in his eyes. Tilda still stood where he had left her in front of the counter. Her hands were twisted together.

“Goodbye, Tilda.” Dolf’s voice registered a slight squeak.

“And by the way,” Nelis said as the boy turned to open the door, the bell clanging noisily over his head, “you are forbidden to see my daughter ever again.”

After Tilda had gone up to her room without saying a word

to her father, he remembered – remembered how she had that previous spring confessed her faith; how she had stood in front of the church, in a dress especially sewn for the occasion by Dora, a pale red dress.

“Do you... Tilda Goedhart...” dominee Raadsma’s voice had boomed resoundingly as he read off the questions, “heartily believe the doctrine contained in the Old and New Testament?”

She had looked very frail, but also very strong. What a contradiction! And that was the nub of faith, wasn’t it – strength in weakness.

“Do you... confess ... that you seek life not in yourself but only in Jesus Christ, your Savior?”

She had worn a brown hat, a brown hat on top of her brown curling hair. It had been a shame, actually, to cover that pretty hair.

“Do you declare ... to forsake the world, to mortify your old nature, and to lead a godly life?”

Nelis remembered Dolf’s arm around Tilda’s shoulders and swallowed with difficulty.

“Do you promise... to submit to the government of the church and also, if you should become delinquent either in doctrine or in life, to submit to its admonition and discipline?”

She had answered, “I do.” She was eighteen years old and what did she know, he had thought at the time, of delinquency in doctrine or in life. But her answer had rung clear as a bell and he knew, that is to say, *thought* he had known, that she meant it – meant it with all her heart. Dominee Raadsma had then given her a text, as he had given everyone in the class a text. It had been from Matthew 25: “Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”

She had been so happy that Sunday, had exhibited an inner delight that in turn had delighted himself. But he was mystified now and did not know what to do with his thoughts.

Hans, the second oldest of Nelis’ and Dora’s sons, dropped by that evening. It was not easy to visit in the evening. Curfew was early and sneaking around the streets of Diestadt after curfew had its hazards. Hans patiently listened to his father’s bristling tirade of what Dolf had said, what danger Tilda was in, and how he wished the war was over, not interrupting with even a single word until Nelis had completely vented his grief and anger.

“Marinus Wilman, Dolf’s father,” Hans offered by way of information, as he sat in the livingroom of the grocer’s shop, “who, as you know, is also the town clerk, has been ordered to compile a list of all the men in Diestadt born between the years of 1897 and 1924. Birth dates and complete addresses have to be handed in to the Nazis within a week.”

“Why?”

Both Dora and Nelis stared at Hans.

“So that the Germans can call up anyone they would like to

ship over to Germany for employment in factories, mines, or wherever they fancy.”

“I’m sure that Marinus Wilman will be happy to comply with his overseers.” Nelis spoke dryly and absently ran his hand along the edge of his chair. Dora nodded in agreement.

“Well,” Hans smiled, “we’re going to make it a little difficult for him to do that.”

“How?” Dora’s voice was just a trifle shrill.

“The card index system – the system that Wilman will need to compile the names – will possibly end up in ... well, maybe in the belly of a stove.”

“He’s not going to give it to you for use as firewood of his own free will.”

“No, he won’t.” Hans grinned and added, “Well, don’t worry about it. And don’t worry about Dolf either. He’s just a young boy and I’m sure that after this dressing down that you gave him, he won’t come back.”

“I sincerely hope so.”

“And before I go,” Hans said as he stood up, “why don’t I go up to Tilda’s room and talk to her for a bit. Maybe she’s willing to take advice from an older brother.”

CHAPTER 3 - Johannes

The rest of December passed peaceably enough, and there was fervent hope in everyone’s heart that 1943 would see an end to the war. Then, early in January of 1943, all of Diestadt was suddenly abuzz, not with the news of the raid on city hall, but with the news that both Marinus Wilman and his renegade son had been found dead in a field south of the city. There was much speculation as to who had committed the murders. Some suggested the underground, as it was widely known that Wilman was NSB and had been involved in many shady deals with the Nazis. But others thought that perhaps the Nazis themselves had turned on the man and his son.

Nelis’ grocery counter heard it all, and he was silent, not commenting but just listening. Most of the folks that came in were curious, well aware that Nelis’ daughter had been seen “stepping out” with Dolf. Tilda herself had taken the news quietly, but her green-brown eyes had been suffused with a sad light. Nelis had longed to take her in his arms but could not bring himself to walk across the room to her. And when the paralysis that had seemed to creep into his bones finally disappeared, it was too late. She had left to go up to her room where she stayed for most of that day and the next and the next.

“Does she eat?” Nelis asked Dora.

“Some,” Dora answered, looking at him, he thought, rather strangely.

“Do you think she’ll get over it?”

“That remains to be seen.” Dora spoke rather sharply and Nelis sought retreat in the store.

“Women,” he commented irritably a little later, furiously cleaning the counter before turning disconsolately to his mostly empty shelves, “who can understand them.”

He could not tell when he first thought that Tilda was

pregnant. But suddenly it seemed quite apparent to him. The clothing worn looser, the lack of appetite, the listlessness – all those things added up. It gave him an infinite sadness. He did not speak of it to Dora, but he knew that she also knew. Indeed, he felt that she had been aware of this development much longer than he had. He pondered about it. And then it seemed to him that everyone knew, and the whispers and innuendoes reaching his counter became myriad.

“When... when is the child due?”

“The beginning of July, or thereabouts.” Dora spoke rather loud, almost cheerfully, Nelis thought.

“Is she... is Tilda all right, do you think?”

“She seems to be fine, Nelis.”

He sighed.

She turned to him, and took his hand. “You know, Nelis, I think it would be a good idea if Tilda went to stay at Frans’ and Hilde’s farm until the confinement. She wouldn’t be subject to as many eyes as she is here and they still have lots of milk and eggs.”

“Away from us?”

“Well, we could easily visit her. They don’t live far. But the country air would be good and... and she can come home after the baby comes. What do you think?”

“Does she want to go?”

“I think she does. She gets along well with Hilde and she can help with the children and the chores on the farm.”

He nodded. It would be a solution of sorts. It was the beginning of March now. There would some time to think of what to do later – what to do with the child after it was born. But what was he thinking? It would be his own grandchild – a child related to him by flesh and blood, even as the other grandchildren were. But there was no denying that it would be a traitor’s grandchild as well. The idea tortured him. It took his sleep. It ate at him. And all the time the days crept by.

Before Tilda left to stay at the farm, dominee Raadsma came for a visit. No elder accompanied the dominee. He remained closeted privately with Tilda for more than two hours. Nelis had offered to be part of the discussion, part of the strong admonition which he was certain his daughter would receive. But dominee had shaken his head.

“No, Nelis, I think I had better speak to her by myself. You need not worry. But I think this is best.”

That was all he had said but Nelis did not reckon those words enough. What exactly it was that he had wanted dominee to say, he could not rightly define. And then life went on.

After the birth register disappeared from city hall, a new ruling was implemented. Cards called “Ausweisen” became available. People were told that if they possessed such a card, they would be exempt from being sent away for forced labor in Germany, as well as being pronounced safe from the ongoing house searches. To obtain an Ausweis, one simply had to go to city hall, fill in an application with one’s name and address, and wait.

“It’s not true!” Frans exclaimed heatedly to his father, “It’s

just a ploy to get more people's names and addresses. I hope you haven't applied."

"As if they don't know my name or where I live," his father replied.

Frans looked at the furrows on his father's forehead and walked over to him. "Hey, Tilda is fine. You needn't worry about her. Dr. Verstar has promised to come by when the time comes and Hilde looks after her very well."

"But later..." Nelis responded, looking at his son, "what about later?"

"Well, don't you want her back home?"

"Yes," Nelis answered hastily, "of course I do, of course I do." And so he did. Only, not with the child – not with the ill-begotten child.

Nelis and Dora were notified by Frans on June 24, that a child had been born and that mother and baby were doing well.

"What is it?" Dora's curiosity knew no bounds and Nelis thought her enthusiasm a trifle unbecoming regarding the situation. She was virtually dancing with excitement, her eyes sparkling and her mouth beaming a broad smile.

"It's a boy, *Moeder*. A healthy boy, 6 pounds and 3 ounces."

"What..." Nelis said slowly, "What is she going to name the child?"

He had been thinking about that for a long time. If the circumstances had been normal, he might have longed to have a namesake, a little Cornelis. So far, after all, all the grandchildren were girls. But circumstances were not normal and he knew that he did not want the baby named after himself.

Frans, who was bringing them the news, laughed at the question: "It's going to be called Johannes, father."

Johannes was a beautiful name. As a matter of fact, if Tilda had been a boy, they would have called her Johannes. He nodded at Frans. Dora was full of questions. "And Tilda, how is she? How long was the labor? Was the doctor there in time?"

"Hold on, *Moeder*. One question at a time. Tilda is fine. The labor was quick - I think about three hours in all."

"Three hours," Dora interrupted, "That's very quick for a first baby. And was Dr. Verstar notified right away and did he come before she delivered?"

"Yes, Dr. Verstar was there in time and he and Hilde delivered the child together."

"And what does Johannes look like? Does he have hair?"

"He is a very dark baby. Looks like you, *Moeder*."

It was true. Dora had a dark complexion and black hair. Nelis often teased her that she had been smuggled into Diestadt with the gypsies.

"Like me?" Clearly Dora was pleased. No, that was not the right word. She was delighted.

"Well, you will have to come and see for yourself tomorrow, *Moeder*. Then you can hold the little lamb in your own arms and ask all the questions you want."

"Yes, we'll go tomorrow, won't we Nelis?"

"Well, I don't know, Dora. You can go, certainly, but I should stay in the store."

"But hardly anyone comes to buy anymore, Nelis. We have

so little stock left. Surely you can lock up for a few hours?"

He stubbornly shook his head and refused to look at his wife. Instinctively he knew he had to get used to the idea of Johannes – had to let it cool down like his Sunday bowl of soup before he took a first spoonful.

So it was the next day that Dora, arms full of baby things on which she had been working every evening since Tilda left, departed for the farm and Nelis stayed behind the counter of the store.

"Gutenmittag..." It was one of the German officers. Officers often came to the store, checking whether or not Nelis had any surrogate coffee, or bread, or even fish. From time to time Nelis bartered his wares for some local fish caught by anglers. Today, however, his shelves were naked.

"I hear," the officer went on, "that you have become an Opa," He laughed and extended his hand in congratulations. "Güssman," he said by way of introducing himself.

Nelis took the hand. Since the Wilman debacle, the Germans, some of them in any case, had made sympathetic comments to him. Too bad about Dolf, they said, laughing and smirking simultaneously. Nelis took the comments. He was, after all, part of the underground and heard a number of things at his counter which he could pass on to contacts. It was best not to spoil relations even though his heart was not in it.

"Yes," he answered curtly.

"The baby, what is it?"

"A boy."

"A boy? Wunderbahr. Wie heissen sie?"

"Johannes."

"A good name. Yes, I like it."

Nelis nodded and wished the fellow would leave.

"I have a son. He is called Wilhelm." The officer leaned his elbow on the counter. "Too bad this boy will not know his Vater – is this not so. Poor Dolf..." He let the sentence hang, unfinished. Nelis turned his back on the man and began dusting even though there was no dust. "You have seen this baby?"

"No, I haven't."

"Ah." The man sighed deeply as if commiserating with Nelis before continuing on with his comments.

"It is this krieg, this war. Soon perhaps it will be over and we can go back to our heimat. I will again see my children and you..."

Nelis turned. He contemplated the soldier with some compassion but could not bring himself to speak.

"Well, I will go again." He extended his hand again and Nelis shook it once more.

Two weeks later, Tilda came home. Nelis had not been out to the farm even once. He was ashamed of himself. But he simply could not force his legs to walk the distance – the long distance of acceptance. He made excuses. He had a headache; he was busy; and, in the long run, Dora stopped asking him. Tilda looked well. Rosy cheeks, shoulders straight, and a determined look on her face which gave her, Nelis thought, a maturity which neither he nor anyone else could fathom.

“Hello, *Vader*.”

“Hello, Tilda.”

She carried the child. She carried Johannes in her arms. He walked over slowly and stood in front of her.

“Would you like to see him?”

He swallowed but said nothing. A small mewling sound erupted from the blanket.

“He is hungry.”

“Oh.” It was all he could think of to say. Behind him, Dora laughed.

“Go on, Nelis. Take the baby. He’s such a good boy.”

Slowly his arms reached out and Tilda placed the blanketed little heap within the contour of his outstretched limbs.

“There you are then, Opa.”

Suddenly she gave him a smile. And all his hard-fought animosity almost melted within that smile. Johannes made another sound – a small sound. Nelis sat down in the nearest chair and moved aside the blanket. A tiny face peered up at him. Coal-black eyes intensely scrutinized him.

“Hello, Johannes,” Nelis said hesitatingly, thereby gingerly wrapping the gurgling child into his heart.

CHAPTER 4 - An irritating man

1943 continued on quietly, without any fanfare. People tended to stay home more and more. Blackouts were enforced and fall and winter evenings were spent with curtains drawn and folks going to bed earlier to ward off the cold while snuggled under their blankets. Coal was not easy to come by and it was better to keep it for the day.

Johannes thrived. He gained weight, slept well at night and was quite content if he was but fed and dry. Tilda did not feed the baby herself but used goat’s milk. Frans or Hilde brought it over, or Tilda herself would walk over to the farm and come back with a few liters.

Dominee Raadsma visited the Goedhart’s early on in 1944, and smilingly quoted a Proverb to Nelis in the store: “You shall have enough goats’ milk for your food, for the food of your household, and the nourishment of your maidservants.”

Nelis smiled back in a half-hearted manner. Although he could not deny that he was fond of Johannes, he was still not very comfortable with speaking of him to others.

“So how is Tilda doing?”

“Well. She is doing well.”

“Make sure she goes out regularly with the child. I understand that someone has given you a ‘kinderwagen’, a baby carriage?”

“Yes,” Nelis answered stiffly, “it was a gift from some of the German officers who said they wanted to give it in remembrance of Dolf. I have no idea where they got it, but it’s a solid carriage and we may as well use it.”

As a matter of fact, he had wanted to refuse the carriage, or use it as firewood, but Dora had stopped him. “Don’t be silly, Nelis,” she had said, “we can use it. I don’t have our old carriage any more, and the baby has to be taken out sometime. So what if it comes from the Germans. If they want to be generous about Johannes, let them. They’ve taken away so much that belongs

to other people.” Dora had sighed as she added that sentence, finishing with “and we should feel no compunction about taking something from them in return.”

The dominee coughed, and Nelis was brought back to his surroundings with a start. “The baby,” dominee said, “should be baptized, I think.”

“Yes?” Nelis did not commit himself to any other words.

“Well, I was thinking,” the dominee went on, “in light of the fact that Tilda is a single mother, and in light of the fact that some people have expressed hostility, it might be best if it was a private occasion.”

Nelis felt relief flood through him. The days had passed and he had not spoken of baptism to either Dora or Tilda. But he had thought of it. He had been contemplating going to church, walking down the aisle, encountering a host of curious faces, condemning faces, faces eager to see both the child and the mother. Tilda had not been to church since the baby had been born. He had not spoken to her of that either.

“When?”

“Well,” dominee spoke slowly, as if he were weighing the matter, “perhaps in a week or so. We will, of course, announce it to the congregation – announce that Tilda’s baby will be baptized.”

“What will you say if they ask you why it will not be baptized



The dominee arranged for the baptism to be “a private occasion” in a near empty church.

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publicly?”

Dominee smiled. “I’ll think of something,” he said, “Yes, I’m sure I’ll think of something.”

So it was that two weeks later, with a cold January frost settled on the windows, that Tilda, with the baby bundled up warmly in the carriage, left for church. Dora was about to follow her. Nelis said that he would come shortly.

“You are coming, Nelis?” Dora said with a half-worried frown on her face as she was doing up the buttons of her blue winter coat.

“Yes, yes, of course.”

“Well, Frans and Hilde will be there with their children and so will Hans and Tina.”

He nodded and she walked out the front door. He proceeded to the livingroom window and looked out from there. He saw her overtake Tilda who had already manipulated the carriage down the garden path and onto the street. She companionably put her hand onto the carriage handle in liaison with Tilda. Nelis felt a twinge of jealousy as he peered at them through the pane. He then went to the back to lock up the store and find his coat. He would, he feared, not have been a good father for the prodigal. But he was not the prodigal’s father, was he? He was actually the prodigal’s son. Dominee had once preached a sermon on it. His arms struggled with the sleeves of his coat, but then the coat was on, and he was ready. But he waited a few minutes before he finally ventured out the front door himself.

The air was crisp outside. He breathed it in deeply and began to stride purposefully towards the church. It was not far, only some five blocks.

“Hey, Nelis.” It was Jan Pot, the local shoemaker, appearing out of nowhere and running to catch up with him.

“Hey, Nelis, where are you off to, man?”

“To church,” he answered shortly, not in any mood for conversation.

“To church? You’ve got your days mixed up. It’s only Wednesday.”

“Yes, it is. But I have some business at church.”

“Business?”

“Yes.” He wished the man would go away. Not only was Jan Pot a gossip, he was also thought to be a collaborator, although he had not, to anyone’s knowledge, joined the NSB.

“Well, I’m going that way as well. Mind if I walk with you?”

Nelis did mind, but he did not say anything, only stepped up his pace.

“Cold, isn’t it?”

Nelis did not wish to talk. He murmured assent and left it at that. But Jan Pot was bound and determined to chit chat.

“How’s the new grandchild? Nice to have a boy, isn’t it? But it must be hard, knowing where the child came from.”

Nelis shrugged.

“What do you think actually happened to Wilman and Dolf? I mean, what do you really think happened to them?”

Nelis shrugged again.

“What do you think of the possibility that the Nazis themselves killed them? After all, Wilman and his son knew

a lot of things that were going on at Nazi headquarters... if you know what I mean. Do you agree?”

Why was the man so persistently talkative? Nelis studied the ground, his shoes, and shrugged once more.

“Well you must think something about it, Nelis!” Jan Pot was gesticulating now, his hands coming perilously close to touching Nelis’ face. The church was visible, its spires rising in a gesture of worship. “Well, what do you think?”

“It could be,” Nelis said, just to get the man from asking again.

“What could be?”

“It could be that the Nazis killed the Wilmans.”

Jan Pot stopped short in his tracks. His small, almost yellowish eyes shone with a secret triumph. “Nelis Goedhart, I am making a citizen’s arrest. I am arresting you for accusing the Nazis of willfully killing two of their most ardent supporters.”

“You are what?” Nelis stopped as well and looked at Jan Pot incredulously.

“And you will come with me to the police station at once. If you resist, it will only make matters worse.”

“What matters?” The man was crazy.

“Matters of... matters of security and of importance to the city. Matters which will be of interest to the police of this city.”

“You are out of your mind, Jan Pot.” Nelis began walking again, but Jan Pot put a hand on his shoulder.

“We will pass the police station before you get to the church, Nelis. Do you want me to shout and make a scene so that someone will hear? That wouldn’t be good for your business, would it? And it wouldn’t aid your already tarnished reputation in Diestadt.”

It was true that the police station stood kitty corner to the church. They could see it as well as the church from where they stood. Nelis could also see, within his mind’s eye, a little group of people around the baptismal font – a little group waiting for him to arrive. He could see Tilda with the baby in her arms, and Dora standing next to her eyeing the door.

“Well, Nelis, are you coming quietly, or do I shout?”

“You are an extremely irritating little man,” Nelis began, “and I don’t want you to waste my time any longer.”

“The police are already aware of the fact that you accused them of murdering the Wilmans.”

“And who told them that?”

“My wife.”

“Your wife?” Jelle Pot was a thin, small lady, always coming into the store asking for things that she knew he didn’t have. She was forever complaining, haggling over prices and never satisfied with what he did have in stock.

“Yes, my wife. She went into the station this morning and told them that you had informed her that you knew that the police were personally responsible for murdering the Wilmans. And also that you were spreading this rumor to every customer that came into your store. Now will you come quietly into the station, or must I run for a policeman to come and follow you into the church.”

“Your wife is a liar, Pot,” Nelis began, adding, “Are you looking for some sort of reward, Pot? Is that what you’re up to?”

It's dangerous to play with the enemy."

"The enemy?" Jan Pot rubbed his hands together and smiled gleefully, before continuing. "That's another phrase the police will be happy to know you are in the habit of using."

Nelis sighed. He might as well go into the station. He knew several of the officers and hoped that someone familiar would be on duty. Better straighten this silly matter out rather than have Jan Pot and some SS ruffian disrupt the baptism. He could explain later. "Fine, we'll go and speak to someone at the station."

There were two officers seated at the front desk when Jan Pot and Nelis walked in. Jan Pot began speaking almost immediately upon entry, putting his right hand on Nelis' shoulder by way of introduction.

"This is Nelis Goedhart, the man my wife told you about this morning. He runs the local grocery store on Rechte Weg."

"Ja, I know him."

To his great relief, Nelis recognized one officer as Güssman, the man who had stopped in the day that Johannes was born, the fellow who had a son called Wilhelm.

"How is your son Wilhelm?" The words were out of his mouth before he knew it. But Güssman smiled cordially and responded warmly.

"I had not heard for a month, but just last week I had a letter. Wilhelm was well then... as was his mother..."

"This man," Jan Pot, interrupted, "this man has accused the police of murdering the Wilmans. He has accused you..."

Güssman waved his hand to stop the flow of words coming out of Jan Pot's mouth. "You have proof of this?"

"Yes, he told me just now as we were walking along the street. As well, last week he spoke of it to my wife when she was in his store."

"It is just your word and your wife's?"

"Well," Jan Pot stuttered, disappointed there was not more immediate reaction on the part of the officers, "you told my wife this morning you would look into it."

The second officer, who up to this time had said nothing, stood up. "You will both sit down and wait while we confer."

The men left and both Jan Pot and Nelis sat down on the chairs lined up against the wall. Nelis did not take a seat next to Pot but left a few spaces between them. He was disgusted with the man. About half an hour later, the officers returned.

"I understand," the second officer said, "that your daughter is the mother of the little baby boy – the child of Dolf Wilman?"

Nelis looked up at him and stood up. Almost imperceptibly he nodded.

"The death of young Dolf was most unfortunate."

Nelis waited. He said nothing. At precisely that moment the door opened and Tilda walked in, the baby, crying lustily, in her arms.

"*Vader*. We waited and waited. Then finally we heard that you were... that you had been taken..." She stopped, confused. Slowly making her way over to Nelis, she stood next to him. The baby continued its wailing. She rocked her arms back and forth and both officers watched her. And all the while Johannes hiccupped his distress. Güssman had a sympathetic look on his face. "I think you should both go home," he said, adding, "and

quickly, as it is beginning to snow."

It was true. Small snowflakes were falling past the windowpane and the sky was growing dark.

"Thank you," Nelis said, and taking Tilda's elbow, steered her towards the door.

Jan Pot got up as well, but he did not get further than a few steps.

"We would like to question you further."

"But..."

Both officers held up their hands. "This way please."

Nelis opened the door, let Tilda go first before venturing out into the falling snow himself.

"*Vader*." Tilda's voice was small, almost as if she too was ready to cry.

He glanced at her, saw tears rolling down her cheeks, and took her arm. "Shall I take the child for you?"

"What happened, father?"

"At home, Tilda, I'll tell you at home."

Later, as they were gathered in the livingroom, he apologized for not being present at the baptism and then he related what had happened with Jan Pot. "It is ridiculous really," he finished, "absolute poppycock and I don't know what the man meant to gain by it."

"Still," Frans commented thoughtfully, "you'd better be careful. The SS kill at will and a friend today may be a foe tomorrow. Lie low, *Vader*, don't go out and maybe you should close the store for a while and stay with Hans and Tina – you and *Moeder* both."

"Nonsense," he said, "I've done nothing wrong. Even if the truth is that I think they probably did kill the Wilmans."

CHAPTER 5 - The letter

The next few months passed peaceably enough. Winter passed into spring, and the spring became the summer of 1944. People were thinner. Food was becoming scarcer and scarcer. Still Johannes drank goat milk and grew. Dora baked bread made from dried peas and rationed it to one small slice per meal – two on Sunday. She planted a garden at the back of the house, hoping for some beans and carrots to can for the winter. Clothes were not to be had anywhere, and Nelis fixed the holes in the shoes that he, Dora and Tilda wore, by cutting up an old leather handbag. Dora unraveled one of her sweaters and knitted a new sweater for Johannes – a green one. Nelis' store was permanently closed now. There were no more goods to be had.

On nice days that fall, Tilda would go out on walks with Johannes in his carriage. He was a friendly baby, one who smiled engagingly and dimpled for anyone who happened to look his way.

It was on one of those late fall days in 1944 that Nelis, listlessly gazing out through the front window, saw Tilda approaching down the street pushing the carriage in front of her. She appeared to be walking quite fast and then he noted with some alarm that a group of school-aged children were following her. They seemed to be pelting her with something. He stood up from his chair in

front of the window.

“Dora,” he said, “Dora, look.”

She absently got up from her chair, still half-absorbed in her reading, and stood next to him. “What, Nelis?”

He could feel her tense up. Then, as Tilda came closer, they could both see that the children were throwing stones.

“I don’t believe it.” His cry was intense and he felt pain in his stomach. He was out on the walkway, on the street, before he knew it. In his haste he had forgotten to put on his shoes, and was running towards his daughter on his stocking feet. “Tilda,” he called out, “Tilda.”

She was bleeding from a cut on her temple, but she was not crying. Johannes had been totally covered with a blanket. He was protesting this indignity loudly and moving about as much as he could in his limited space. Because he was tied in with a harness, he could not fall out. Nelis put his right arm about Tilda, and took over the pushing of the carriage with his left. The children, after seeing him approach, had run off.

“Has this happened before?”

“No... well, yes, a few times.”

“Well, from now on, I will go with you when you take Johannes for a walk.”

She sobbed then, wearily, as if she had been fighting for a long time. His arm tightened about her and he swallowed. Reaching over, he took the blanket off Johannes.

“Boo,” the small boy said, thinking for a moment it was the game they often played with him before he went off to sleep.

Dora stood waiting at the steps. She clucked at the blood on Tilda’s face, but then calmly took her hand and led her into the house. Nelis was quite certain a lot of the neighbors were watching through their curtains. If this had happened before, why had no one told him? Mrs. Meester, their closest neighbor, was waiting for word on her husband who had been sent to Germany to work in an armament factory. Mrs. Geest, on their other side, was waiting to hear from her husband as well. Only he was in a concentration camp. Did they identify Tilda with the Germans? Did they feel the same hatred for her as they felt for the Germans? Nelis sighed. He undid Johannes’ harness and lifted the child up out of the carriage. The child laughed and grabbed his cheeks.

Inside, Tilda was weeping on Dora’s shoulder. Dora looked at Nelis and motioned with her hands that he should take the baby somewhere else. Nelis nodded and took Johannes with him into the empty grocery shop. He played with the boy – sat on the floor and then lay down, letting the

child crawl all over him. Johannes, excited by the individual attention, roared with laughter every time Nelis tickled him. There was a knock from the outside door. Nelis, flat on his back, Johannes on his belly, sat up. No one ever came to the shop door any more. A very clear sign was posted reading “Not open for business.” But there, persistently, the knock sounded again – a very decided knock.

Nelis put Johannes down and got up. Cautiously peering through the small window in the door, he saw Mrs. Pot’s face close to his own. “Yes, can I help you?”

“No, you can’t,” she said, “but here’s a neighborhood petition signed by many of your neighbors, asking you to move away from here.”

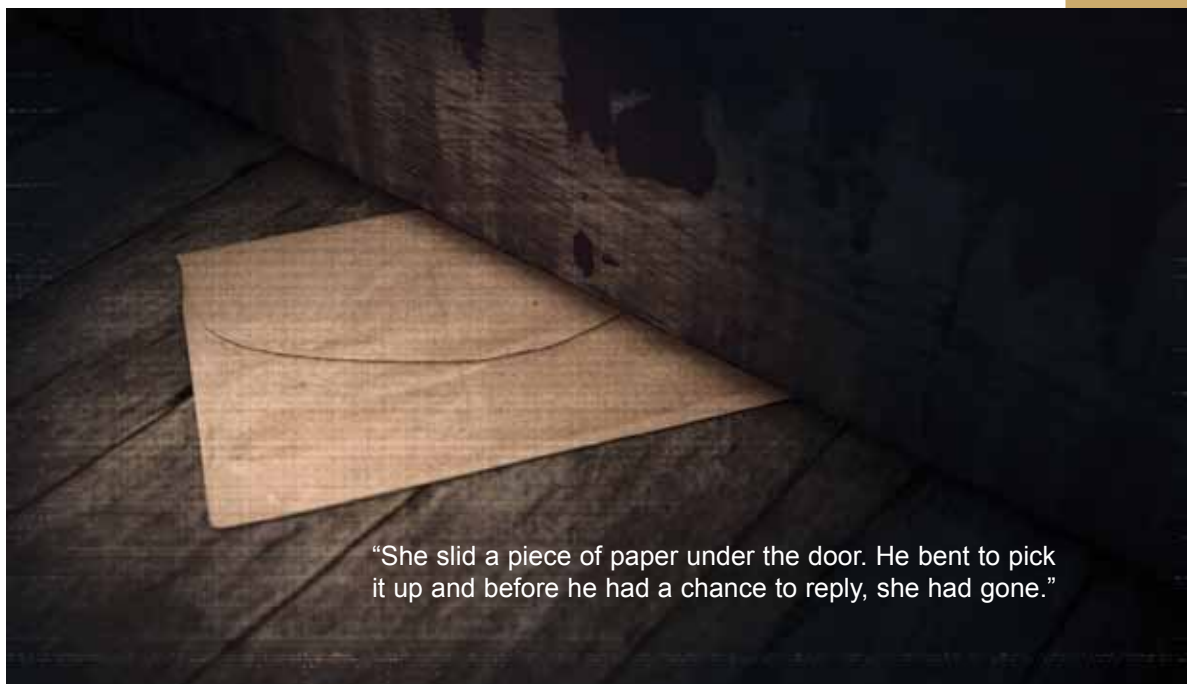
She slid a piece of paper under the door. He bent to pick it up and before he had a chance to reply, she had gone. He sat down next to Johannes again. The child tried to grab the paper from his hands, but he held it up in the air with his right hand. Then, reaching for the glasses in his shirt pocket with his left, he read:

To the Goedhart family:

We, the undersigned, would prefer it if you all left the neighborhood. Though you have been a good neighbor for a long time, we cannot tolerate the presence of your daughter, someone who collaborated with the enemy. It would be for Tilda’s own good if she just left these parts. The end of the war will be here soon and then what will happen to her? This note was written to let you know that traitors will be punished sooner or later.

Twenty names were affixed to the bottom of the letter. Nelis stared at the names and stared and stared. Then he ripped the letter up into shreds.

“You can move in with us, *Vader*,” both Frans and Hans said.



“She slid a piece of paper under the door. He bent to pick it up and before he had a chance to reply, she had gone.”

But neither Dora nor Nelis wanted to do that. To run away from the neighborhood where they had lived since they were first married did not sit well with them. Besides that, they did not believe that everyone on the list had actually signed. Perhaps, they argued between the two of them, most of the names on the paper had been affixed there by the Pots.

But that there was a growing animosity of people towards Tilda could not be denied. The girl was unable to walk the streets any longer by herself. It had happened several times now, that she had been pushed and shoved by total strangers – people who seemed intent on physically harming her. Dominee Raadsma visited and encouraged. Sometimes he talked to Tilda privately and always she came away from these meetings happier and more hopeful. And Johannes grew and thrived through that difficult fall and even through the hunger winter and spring.

CHAPTER 6 - Liberation

There were air raids at night now and sometimes during the day as well. Nelis, Dora, Tilda and Johannes spent many sleepless hours huddled together in the storage room underneath the shop. More and more German troops passed through Diestadt, retreating back into Germany, carrying German equipment with them. Nelis, and all the other inhabitants of Diestadt, often saw allied airplanes overhead flying in V formation. They were on their way to Germany where they would drop bombs. Farther out, close to the next town, it was reported that the Germans were starting to dig foxholes, were getting ready for the Americans and the Canadians. It became dangerous to walk out on the streets. The Germans were constantly patrolling, shooting at any and everything. Far away in the distance, the sound of machine guns rattled and rattled and rattled.

“I’ve seen an allied soldier. Actually I’ve seen at least a dozen of them.” Frans was excited. He sat on the floor of the shelter with his parents and talked non-stop. “But none of you should venture out yet. It’s definitely not safe.”

“What about you?”

“Don’t worry about me. But...” He stopped suddenly, eyeing his sister with a certain amount of trepidation.

“Make sure Tilda, that you do not go out alone either,” he said, “Wait for either Hans or myself before you go out. Do you promise?”

Tilda nodded, giving her word readily.

“Good.” He smiled at his parents before he went on.

“There are Belgian, French and Polish soldiers about. They’re all part of the American, British and Canadian forces. The streets in the next town are filled with tanks, trucks, and jeeps. And one of them gave me some chocolate.”

He pulled several chocolate bars from his pocket and handed them to his family. Tilda ripped one open and broke a small piece off for Johannes. Opening his mouth wide, he was delighted with the taste and clamored for more. They all laughed.

“I have to go again, but remember what I said. Tilda do not, under any circumstance, leave this shelter until I or Hans come to get you.”

“I won’t,” she agreed again.

“Good,” Frans repeated, leaving them savoring the chocolate bars.

The next evening, dominee Raadsma came to the house.

“I’ve spoken with your sons and I’d like Tilda and Johannes to stay with my wife and myself until things have quieted down,” he said.

“Why?” Nelis asked, but he knew within himself that it

“And what does Johannes look like? Does he have hair?”
“He is a very dark baby. Looks like you, Moeder.”



might be a very good idea.

“The Germans have all but left Diestadt now and the next few days could be rather difficult,” dominee answered, “No one will bother my wife or myself or even think to come to our home to look for what they conceive to be collaborators.”

“But she did not...” Nelis stopped. Was he sure she had not? Tilda looked down at the floor.

“Go and pack a few things for yourself and the child, Tilda,” dominee said, “and I’m sure we’ll get to the parsonage safely under the cover of darkness.”

Tilda got up and left with Dora in tow. Nelis nervously began to tap his fingers on the edge of the table. “Will things be all right, do you think, dominee? Will people forget?”

“Time will tell, Nelis. Time will tell. Make sure that you and Dora attend church this Sunday morning.”

“Yes, dominee.”

It was strange for dominee to say this. Nelis pondered the words within his heart. After all, he and Dora had never missed a service. Why should they begin now? He watched as dominee walked away down the garden path towards the road. Dominee had his arm around Tilda, who was carrying Johannes on her hip. It was dark out and the wind shook the leaves of the trees they passed. And then he could not see them any longer.

Church was packed that Sunday. The ushers had to bring out chairs and place them in the aisles, beneath the pulpit and next to the walls. Everyone was wearing their best, and many people were wearing something orange as well. Dora and Nelis had arrived early. They watched the sanctuary fill up with church members as well as with people they had never seen before. Although thin and undernourished, there was no doubt that everyone was overweight with heavy smiles. The organist began the prelude and rich tones swept through the church. There was an air of expectancy, of keyed-up joy – a joy that was just waiting to be released.

But there was an infinite sadness within Nelis. He wanted more than anything else for his Tilda to be sitting by his side. He wanted to glance at her face, as he had done so often in the past when she had sat next to him in the pew. He wanted to see the eager anticipation on her face as she listened to the minister preach. But there was no Tilda – not yet anyway – and he did not think in his heart of hearts that dominee would deem it wise to bring her to church.

The consistory filed in. One by one the men passed through the aisle with the minister last of all. And, lo and behold, Tilda was walking at dominee Raadsma’s side. A murmur ran through the congregation. It was a low murmur – neither approving nor disapproving. Nelis reached for Dora’s hand and she squeezed his fingers hard as if to say, “It will be all right, Nelis. Don’t worry.” The last elder, as was the custom, stopped and shook dominee Raadsma’s hand and then, much to everyone’s surprise, he also shook Tilda’s hand, before taking his place in the elder’s pew.

Dominee Raadsma then, stepping back, motioned that Tilda should precede him onto the pulpit. She walked up the steps, her back straight and tall, looking every inch, Nelis thought,

like a royal princess. He smiled at himself. How often had he thought that in the past. And now, of all times, he was caught in pride again. Tilda had reached the top of the steps. Dominee Raadsma was close behind her. He indicated, when he reached the top as well, that she should sit in one of the chairs behind the pulpit and she did so. It was breathlessly quiet in the sanctuary. No one made a sound. No one.

Dominee Raadsma walked over to the chancel. “Dear people of God,” he said, “dear liberated people of God.”

Nelis felt a shiver go down his back. What a blessing it was to be liberated. Not just from the Germans, but from sin. Yes, what a blessing! Just behind the dominee, he could see Tilda’s dress. She was wearing the light red dress that Dora had made for her for the confession of faith Sunday.

“What a blessing it is to be here this Sunday! What a great, great blessing!”

It was still eerily quiet. Everyone had their faces turned towards the dominee. Everyone wondered, speculated and listened.

“Before we begin our service,” dominee went on, “I want to tell you a story.”

Dora squeezed Nelis’ fingers again. His hands were cold and he felt sweat pour down his armpits.

“A few years ago, a young girl made profession of her faith in this church. She was young but wished with all her heart to serve the Lord.”

Dora squeezed Nelis’ hand once more and he glanced at her. Tears were running down her eyes. “Examined by consistory, this girl was found to be pure in heart and earnest in her desire to profess her faith. I gave her a special text to carry with her throughout her earthly life. The text was ‘Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.’”

Now a tear slid down Nelis’ cheek.

“You all know, of course, that I am speaking of Tilda Goedhart, daughter of Nelis and Dora Goedhart. And you anticipate that I will ask all of you to forgive her for the indiscretion you believe she committed by bearing a child – the child Johannes.”

It was deathly quiet.

“However, I do not ask that.” Dominee paused and looked down at the congregation. “As a matter of fact, I ask something entirely different.”

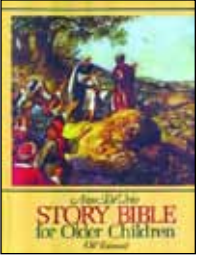
He turned and looked at Tilda. “Tilda, will you come and stand next to me?”

Very slowly, Tilda rose from the great chair which had enveloped her all the while the dominee had been speaking. She came and stood next to him and he put an arm about her shoulder.

“I ask her instead to forgive you.”

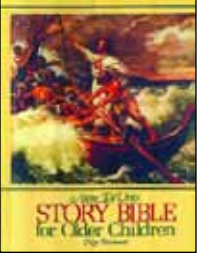
The hush was palpable now.

“Back in the winter of 1942, one Jewish family in this area was desperate for an address – for a place to hide from the infamous razzias that took so many of their countrymen to camps – camps from which they never returned. That place, sad to say, could not be found. Many people were asked but all were afraid to take this couple who only had one child with them.



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by Anne DeVries

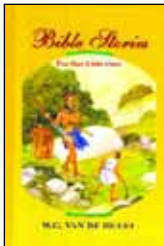
New Testament

by Anne DeVries

Newly republished, this story Bible is a classic in which Anne DeVries touches on the episodes recorded in Scripture one by one, bringing them to life for children through dramatic dialogue, imaginative descriptions, and careful attention to narrative structure. The exquisitely detailed and unique illustrations by Cornelis Jetses reinforce the story of God's dealings with His people in a beautiful way. The author, comments one observant reader, Ideal also for those wishing to introduce friends and neighbours and their families to the Christian faith. Covenantal. Originally published in Dutch as Groot Vertelboek voor de Bijbelse Geschiedenis. Translation by Theodore Plantinga. Hardcover, 660 pages, Hardcover in two volumes, over 660 pages, numerous black and white illustrations, altogether over 440 stories with index.

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Oct 2012 Story Bible for Older Children... 2 x 6.25

Mrs. Raadsma calmly stood up from a back pew and came towards the front carrying the child. Johannes was solemn and quiet, contemplating all the faces he passed. But when Mrs. Raadsma mounted the pulpit steps and the child discovered Tilda, he crowed with delight. And a smile passed through the congregation. And Mrs. Raadsma gave the baby to Tilda, who kissed his forehead.

“May I now ask the Rabbi Heyman and his wife to come up here as well.”

Again, from the back, two people, hand in hand, moved quietly through the center aisle and climbed the pulpit steps. Nelis now wept openly, as did several people around him. Tilda walked towards them and gave Johannes to Annie Heyman. Baby Johannes, fond as he was of faces and beards in particular, grabbed the rabbi’s beard in passing. Then Tilda began to weep, and the rabbi embraced her and kissed her.

The organ began to play – softly at first, but increasing in volume as the lines flowed.

*Hallelujah! Praise the Lord!
In His house, with one accord!*

People began to hum, to sing along. And on the pulpit Tilda still stood in the embrace of the rabbi.

*Praise Him in the wide extent
Of His spacious firmament;
Sing and shout His praise uprightly.*

Then, first one person and then another, stood up. And the volume of their singing swelled the rafters.

*His unbounded greatness praise
And extol His wondrous ways;
Praise Him for His deeds so mighty.*

End notes

¹ The NSB, (Nationaal Socialistische Beweging), the national Socialist Movement, was founded by Anton Mussert in 1931. Mussert studied civil engineering and became a chief engineer in Utrecht until dismissed in 1933 because of membership in the NSB (state employees were forbidden membership in that party). A swastika was not used as an emblem. Instead, to convince the Dutch of the party’s patriotism, a lion on a shield of horizontal orange, white, and blue was used. The party greeting was “Hou Zee,” that is to say, “Hold steady,” a sailor’s cry. Mussert was a friend of the Germans but opposed to a German take-over. His so-called three pillars were: 1. Faith in God, 2. Love of nation, and 3. Willingness to work. Initially not opposed to Jewish participation in the NSB party, he had to yield to pressure to prohibit their membership.

*Three of the illustrations in this article – on pages 20,
25 & 29 – were done by Nathan Wilkinson,
grandson of Christine Farenhorst.*

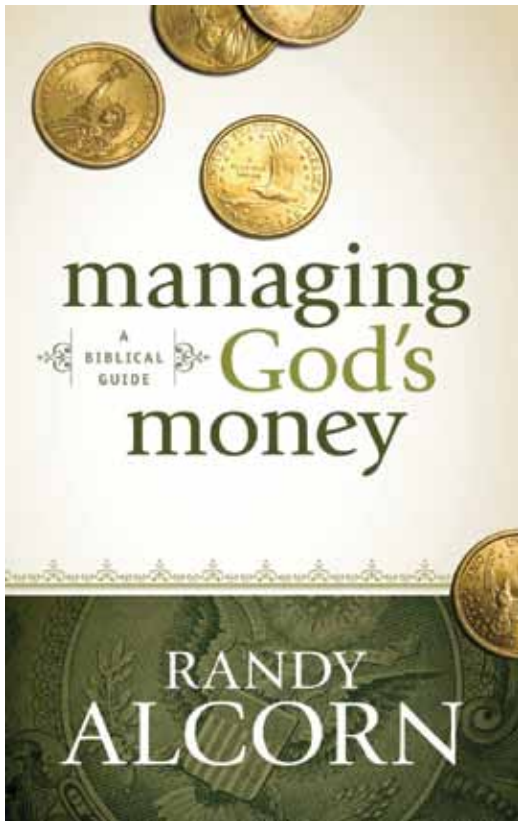


The reason they were afraid to take the couple was because the woman was pregnant with another child. People felt that to take a Jewish couple with a baby due meant extra risk – and it seemed that no one was willing to take that risk.”

Nelis had trouble breathing. He remembered. He remembered. “Tilda took the text she had received at her confession of faith, seriously. She came up with a plan – a plan to safeguard the coming child. She offered to be a surrogate mother to that child – offered her own body to protect it. She had been seeing young Dolf Wilman, at the request of the underground, in order to gain information and a plan was born in her heart after Dolf was killed. And so, as I said just now, she offered to be a surrogate mother to the little Jewish child – she offered even though she knew that in pretending to be pregnant with this child, she would suffer the consequences of scorn and derision from her friends and neighbors.”

Dominee paused for a moment before he went on. “I ask that Johannes Heyman now be brought to the front of the church.”

BEST BOOKS: On money, by Randy Alcorn *by Jon Dykstra*



Managing God's Money: A Biblical Guide

by Randy Alcorn

254 pages, Paperback

There are quite a few books you can find on the “how” of money management – Christians authors such as Dave Ramsey (who has some great free material available on his site at daveramsey.com/articles) and Mary Hunt come to mind. But in *Managing God's Money* Randy Alcorn comes at the topic from a completely different angle. He explores the *why* behind our efforts at money management.

The ultimate question the book answers is “Why do we even have to be careful with our money? Why can't we make it, spend it and enjoy it without thinking all too much about it?” Alcorn shows first, that our money is not ours, but *His*. All we have we receive from God. And second, Alcorn shows that numerous passages in Scripture address money, which makes it clear that what we do with the money God entrusts to us is of enormous importance to Him.

There are 23 short chapters in all, so this is an easy book to digest a bit at a time. And the question and answer format Alcorn uses also aids in making this very readable. While it is a decent size, at 240 pages, most readers will skip a chapter or two that just aren't relevant to them. For example, I didn't need to be convinced that gambling was a sinful use of what God has given me so I flipped right past that section. That makes this a book most could finish in just a few evenings. And it is an important book, applicable for anyone from the the older teen just starting to make money with their first part time job, to adults who have been budgetting for decades.

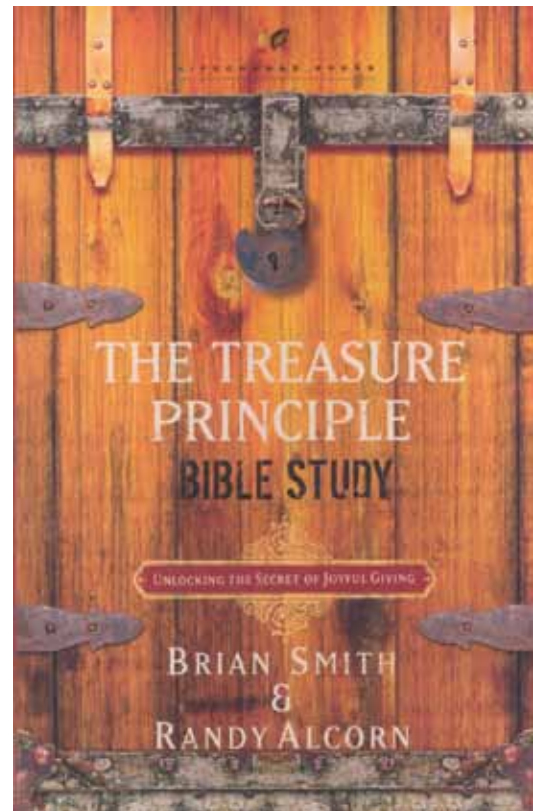
The Treasure Principle Bible Study

by Randy Alcorn & Brian Smith

90 pages, Paperback

This is a companion to a book of just about the same name – *The Treasure Principle* – but it was also intended as a book that could stand alone on its own. So I put that to the test, reading this by its lonesome, and I found it worked great that way. Actually, I didn't read it all by itself – having a Bible ready is vital, as Alcorn takes us through a variety of Scripture passages in each of the 12 lessons. This covers much of the same territory as *Managing God's Money* except that there is way more Scripture reading involved in this one, and a lot more work required from the reader. This is a book of questions, and while it tells you where the answers can be found – what Scripture passage – the reader does have to figure out the answer for themselves.

So the two books could be contrasted this way. In *Managing God's Money* Alcorn feeds us the information, whereas here Alcorn only points us to where the answers can be found in Scripture and we have to go read it, and ponder it for ourselves. That makes this the more challenging of the two books, though it too is very readable. Alcorn asks great questions that force you to think, which makes this an ideal resource for just about any study group, from Young People's on up. In fact, I would say it is one of the best study group resources I have ever come across and what I hope to do next is go through this with my wife. It seems like it would make a fantastic resource for couples to go through together.





Envy

“Envy is counting someone else’s blessings instead of your own.”

by Sharon Bratcher

“[The blessed] person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither – whatever they do prospers.”
Psalm 1:3 NIV

We are not wild trees that pop up here and there on the landscape. We are trees that have been carefully planted next to a source of water so that we will flourish. We will not wither.

And yet, sometimes we complain that we are not being taken care of in the manner to which we would like to become accustomed. Whether openly or subconsciously we envy others. We feel resentment against someone simply because of that person’s success, advantage, or rivalry. This envy is self-pity because someone else has something we feel entitled to have: a house, job, income level, boyfriend/girlfriend, spouse, office in the church, talent or beauty. We begin to doubt our loving Father’s grace and mercy towards us. We see ourselves in the words of Tevye in *Fiddler on the Roof*:

*Lord, who made the lion and the lamb
You decreed I should be what I am
But would it spoil some vast
eternal plan
If I were a wealthy man?*

But it’s really not a humorous matter. In Galatians 5 envy is listed by the Apostle Paul as one of the works of the flesh. Reading the entire list should convince us that this is no small sin:

The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and

debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like.

Counting problems

Sometimes we might think we are getting rid of our envy by doing a comparison. Instead of drooling over someone else’s advantage, we compile a short list of the other person’s difficulties or deficiencies and the comparison comforts us that we are still “one up” on them in some category – health, or relationships, perhaps. But this is not so much “counting our blessings” as it is stroking our pride.

Why didn’t God make everyone’s life exactly the same, anyway? He could have given us the same amount of talent, opportunity, money, health, and leisure options. Wouldn’t this world have been a lot easier to live in?

No, it wouldn’t. Because we are all sinners, we would have ruined it.

Bob would have envied one of Keith’s possessions and stolen it, and Stan would have envied Trevor’s wife and gone after her. Jill would have envied Heather her husband because he was more helpful and involved with their kids. The problem is not the “stuff” or our lack of it. This is *entirely* about our attitudes towards God.

Recognizing our blessings

We forget that we do not belong to ourselves. We forget that we are not in charge. Yes, each day we choose whether to get up out of bed and progress towards

our goals and whether to say a kind word to our co-worker or curse him. But our Almighty God is the creator and provider who knows what we need:


Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Matthew 6:25 NIV

The *Harvard Business Review* (December 2010) defined envy as “universal,” and described the disparaging remarks and the distancing that it causes in every workplace, and at every income level (and we could include churches and families). They suggested taking an honest assessment of exactly what we are envious of and why. When we realize how it ruins our relationships, perhaps we will understand why Paul listed it among the heinous sins.

When we feel upset with our lot and prone to envy, let’s read Habakkuk 3:17-19:

Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail, and the fields yield no food...yet I will rejoice in the LORD; I will take joy in the God of my salvation. God, the LORD is my strength; He makes my feet like the deer; He makes me tread on my high places.

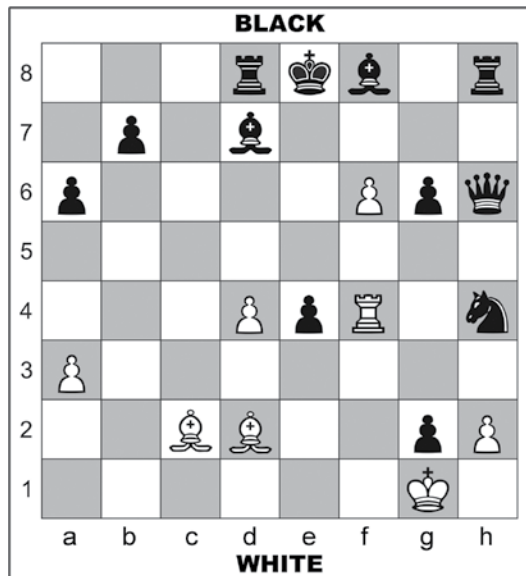
Whose blessings are you counting today?

Sharon’s Bible Overview for Young Children covers the OT & NT. For more info: sharoncopy@gmail.com. 

ENTICING ENIGMAS AND CEREBRAL CHALLENGES

Send Puzzles, Solutions, Ideas to Puzzle Page, 43 Summerhill Place, Winnipeg, MB R2C 4V4 OR robgleach@gmail.com

Chess Puzzle # 193



WHITE to Mate in 3
Or, If it is BLACK's Move,
BLACK to Mate in 3

NEW PUZZLES

Riddle for Punsters #194 – “Will the doctor bill bowl him over?”

Why did the overworked plumber go to see his doctor? He complained of feeling quite d_____ed at the end of each day and his face looked rather f_____ed. A wheezing sound was coming from his wind_____s. The doctor said, “I should run some tests before you _____ a lot of money into medicine and I am p_____ out of ideas as to what is making you ill.”

Problem to Ponder #194 – “Science Terminology”

Below are some descriptions or definitions of terms used in science, followed by the number of letters in each term. For example, a commonly used name for an arachnid (6) spider.

- a type of acid found in our stomachs (12) _____
- the back of our eye, where light is focused (6) _____
- the scientific name for a brain cell (6) _____
- the part of our skin where a hair is produced (8) _____
- the type of clouds that look feathery (6) _____
- the charge on an electron (8) _____
- a sea creature with suckers on its 8 tentacles (7) _____
- time rate of change of speed (12) _____
- the bonding together of two different elements produces this (8) _____
- region around a magnet where magnetic force can be found (5) _____
- part of a cell that contains the genetic information (DNA) (7) _____
- the process by which plant cells use sunlight to produce food (14) _____

SOLUTIONS TO THE NOVEMBER PUZZLE PAGE

Answers to Riddles for Punsters #193 – “Willing to Be Patient only so Fur”

Why did Mrs. Grizzly kick Mr. Grizzly out of their cave after a few sleepless nights? She found his snoring to be unbearable and could bearly get any sleep.

Answers to Problem to Ponder #193 – “Math Terminology”

- the result of addition – sum
- the result of subtraction – difference
- what is produced by multiplication – product
- the result of division – quotient
- a rectangle with all sides equal – square
- a 2-D figure with 8 sides – octagon
- a 2-D figure with 3 vertices – triangle
- a 4-sided figure with 4 right angles – rectangle
- an angle less than 90 degrees – acute
- the perimeter of a circle – circumference
- half of a circle’s diameter – radius
- a round 3-D object – sphere

SOLUTION TO CHESS PUZZLE # 193

WHITE to Mate in 4 Descriptive Notation

- RxP ch PxR
- QxP ch K-R1
- B-K5 ch R-B3
- BxR mate

Algebraic Notation

- Rg3xg6 + h7xg6
- Qg2xg6 + Kg8-h8
- Bh2-e5 + Rf7-f6
- Be5xf6 ++

BLACK to Mate in 3 Descriptive Notation

- Q-R8 ch
- N-N1 QxN ch
- KxQ R-Q8 mate

Algebraic Notation

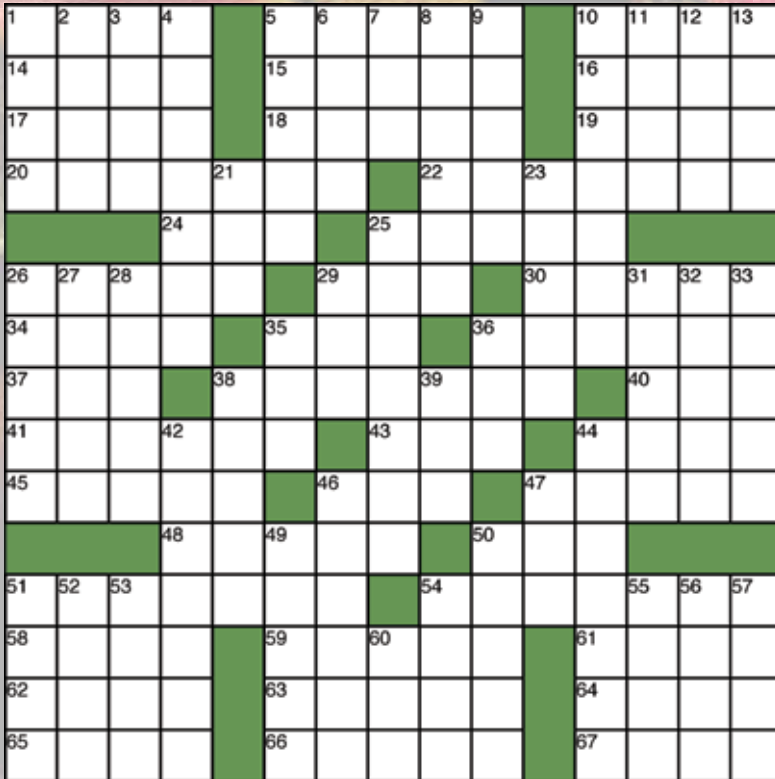
- Qa7-a1 +
- Nc3-b1 Qa1xb1 +
- Kc1xb1 Rd8-d1 ++



Crossword Puzzle

Series 19 No 9

Last Month's solution
Series 19 No 8



ACROSS:

1. A female given name
5. Go off the beaten path
10. Pirate's word
14. Lyric poems
15. A place many people visit or hope to visit
16. Naomi's daughter-in-law
17. A lake, in Scotland
18. Security system
19. The lowest female voice
20. Tread heavily over
22. Cans with long spouts for lubricating
24. Become sick
25. A useful thing to have
26. A group's doctrine or belief
29. Multiple Chemical Sensitivities (for short)
30. Recreational water holders
34. Egg-shaped
35. Rocky pinnacle
36. A native of Germany
37. No, informally
38. A wide ladle
40. Had dinner
41. Grown-ups

DOWN:

43. Drill part
44. Card game term
45. Small nocturnal mammal
46. Brief sleep
47. Type of willow
48. Eleventh month of Hebrew year
50. Here, in Paris
51. Field event involving a heavy ball
54. Abraham's son
58. Emily, famous Canadian artist
59. A shark, in Latin
61. Doing nothing
62. Married woman, or wife, esp. in Germany
63. Kind of ray
64. Space organization
65. Ship's wheel
66. Playful prank
67. A baby's nurse in India

DOWN:

1. Shake up roughly
2. Smell
3. Comb. form meaning ten
4. An outcast, the ancestor of 12 Arabian tribes
5. Not large
6. British television
7. Royal College of Art (abbr.)
8. From one side to the other
9. Members of an Indonesian people of Hungtow Island
10. Farm vehicle
11. Special kind of hoop
12. Letter beginning
13. Seventeenth letters of the Greek alphabet
21. Cherry center
23. Ostracized person of Biblical times
25. Circus performer
26. Relating to tone
27. Escape from
28. Minor prophet in OT
29. Farm sound
31. Of or relating to Oman
32. Fancy coffee order
33. Smile of contempt
35. Traffic Control Station (abbr.)
36. Obtain
38. Kind of throat disease
39. One of the spots on a dice
42. Roman census purification ceremony
44. Also known as the pawpaw
46. Prophet during the reign of David and Solomon
47. Scottish word of disapproval
49. This place is officially know as the "Union of Myanmar"
50. Jacob's father
51. Standard cubic feet per hour (abbr.)
52. Mammal with long ears
53. Spoken
54. Former monetary unit of Peru
55. First man
56. A variant form of the name "Elizabeth"
57. Jacob's first wife
60. Internal, for short

Joyce