

EDITORIAL

The Church historian and the *Altestamentler* have a lot in common. We both like old things, we dote on footnotes, and we delight in dates. (Other academic types enjoy dates too, of course. When during my college days I once asked a geologist friend what it was that geologists did and he answered, "We date rocks," I allowed as how I would rather date girls.)

As those accustomed to reading these annual editorials already know, anniversaries are another commonality that I share with my Church historian colleagues. Dick Pierard's presidential address in this issue sketches out for us a number of significant celebrations that were worthy of our participation last year, and I for one am grateful indeed for the reminders that he has given to us—reminders of our heritage, of our legacy, of our past, to be sure, but reminders also of the fact that anniversaries continue to occur over and over again in our present existence.

Some anniversaries are communal, while others are intensely personal. Through the years I have shared a number of personal anniversaries with you on this page, and now, at the risk of proving once again to be an insufferable bore, I wish to share a few others.

This year I will conclude my twenty-fifth year as a teacher of Old Testament. Being a seminary professor for a quarter of a century has provided me with a sense of fulfillment that I never would have dreamed possible, including such things as the privilege of playing a small role in the spiritual and intellectual formation of a generation of students (many of whom I encounter here and abroad in strategic areas of service for our Lord), growing daily in my understanding of the great themes of Holy Scripture, debating matters of theological import with my colleagues (both in my field and outside of it), and contributing to the literature in my areas of interest by doing a bit of writing and editing.

A second anniversary that comes to mind is the fact that Bethel Theological Seminary is soon to begin its tenth year of extension education in San Diego. Every seminary teacher is justifiably grateful to God when he grants to the school a continuation of steady growth and development, and those of us who on occasion have the opportunity of being part of a fledgling program have reason to be doubly thankful.

Third, it was exactly thirty years ago that I attended my first ETS meeting while a graduate student in Philadelphia. I still have in my files the late J. Barton Payne's handout of his 1956 paper entitled "The Predictive Cycles of Zechariah 9-14," a paper published along with others that year even before *BETS* came into existence. The scholarly output of ETS members and friends since those early years continues to be a source of encouragement and gratitude to us all, and we revel in that heritage as well.

Last but not least, I have just completed my tenth year as your *Journal* editor. 1985 included a fifth issue, the twenty-five-year *Index* (itself an anniversary issue). All of us owe a debt of gratitude to John Wiseman, its compiler,

who has performed for us a task at once herculean and thankless. A work of this scope and complexity will inevitably contain an error or two, and we hope that you will send to us whatever mistakes you discover in it so that we might publish a (hopefully brief!) list of corrigenda and/or addenda from time to time. Meanwhile, you might wish to turn to page 190 of your *Index* and place the name of Kenneth L. Barker after the year date 1981 (and of course move each of the other two names down one space accordingly). Ken's name was inadvertently omitted from the list—even though he is currently celebrating his fifth anniversary as past president of ETS.

Thanks again, Dick, for sharing a number of important and historic anniversaries with us in your presidential address. And thanks not only for telling all of us about a “usable past” but also for incidentally providing me with a usable hook on which to hang my post-decennial editorial.

Ronald Youngblood