

# Glorious Hope Slavná naděje

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## Convention Mission Statement

The Czechoslovak Baptist Convention of USA and Canada exists 1) to assist in extending the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in lands of central and eastern Europe, particularly the Czech and Slovak Republics; 2) to support the work of Baptists and other evangelical churches in North America that minister to persons of Czech and Slovak descent, and 3) to provide a Christian context for worship, fellowship, teaching, and appreciation of heritage among those in the United States and Canada who bear interest in the nationalities we represent.

## Misijní poslání konvence

Československá baptistická konvence Spojených států a Kanady byla ustanovena za účelem: 1) napomáhat v šíření evangelia našeho Pána Ježíše Krista v zemích střední a východní Evropy, zvláště v České a Slovenské republice; 2) podporovat práci baptistů a jiných evangelikálních církví v severní Americe, které slouží českým a slovenským potomkům; 3) předložit formu bohoslužby, obecnství a učení, vážit si dědictví těch, ve Spojených státech a v Kanadě, kterým leží na srdci národy, které reprezentujeme.

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# Editorial



The year's second issue of this magazine should have been in readers' hands by the Easter holiday season. I regret that we are having trouble handling this problem of punctuality. Nevertheless, this time our delay brings an interesting thematic addition.

I believe the painting on the front cover captured your attention. It is entitled *The Crucifixion*, and it belongs to one of the most realistic and valuable depictions that have even been created. After the Good Friday service, many members of our church in Toronto visited the studio of a well-known artist, Maria Gabankova (whose studio is quite close to the church). We went to see a painting that she is just finishing, which is a copy of one of the paintings on Isenheim's altar. It was a one-of-a-kind experience. It was as if the painting emphasized the message we had heard earlier from the pulpit. In the right-hand corner of the cover you may distinguish a photo (practically blended with the painting) of the artist at work. You may find more information about the painting inside this issue of *Glorious Hope*.

Why did this reproduction of the great masterpiece affect me in such a powerful way? I remember that it was when I was nine years old that I read about the crucifixion of Jesus in my

Continues on page 39

**D**ruhé číslo časopisu v roce, by se mělo čtenářům dostat do rukou v období velikonočních svátků. Je mi líto, že se nám tento časový problém nedaří zvládnout. Nicméně tentokrát nám toto opoždění přináší zajímavý tématický doplněk.

Veřím, že vás zaujal obraz na přední straně. Nese název *Ukřižování* a patří mezi ta nejrealističtější a nejvzácnější díla, která kdy člověk vytvořil. Po Velkopátečním shromáždění mnozí z našeho torontského sboru navštívili ateliér známé malířky Marie Gabánkové (nedaleko od kostela). Šli jsme se podívat na obraz, který právě dokončuje. Jedná se o kopii jednoho z obrazů Isenheimského oltáře. Byl to jedinečný zážitek. Obraz jakoby podtrhl poselství, které zaznělo z kazatelny. V pravém rohu můžete rozpoznat umělkyni (téměř splývající s obrazem), při práci. Více informací o tomto díle se dočtete na stránkách *Slavné naděje*.

Proč na mne tato reprodukce vedla tak mocně zapůsobila? Vzpomínám si, že mi bylo devět let, když jsem ve svém malém Novém zákoně četla o ukřižování Pána Ježíše. Bylo to jedno prázdninové odpoledne, kdy jsem se rozhodla, že přečtu celý Nový zákon (Bibli jsem tehdy ještě nevladla). A tak jsem četla, kdykoliv jsem měla volnou chvíli, se zapálením, jaké

Pokračování na straně 39



Front cover: Maria Gabankova – The Crucifixion  
Back cover: The Crucifixion—details



## Following the Brush Strokes of the Mysterious Grünewald

Grünewald—Mathis Neithardt—Gothard  
c. 1470/80—1528

I am painting this copy for the Biblical Museum of Canada, in Vancouver, British Columbia ([www.biblicalmuseum.com](http://www.biblicalmuseum.com)). Ever since I first saw a reproduction of this work I have been fascinated and moved by its unusual expressiveness and the power of its spiritual content.

After I agreed to work on this copy I visited the Unterlinden Museum in Colmar (Alsace, France) and studied the altar. It was an unforgettable experience which proved to be essential for the task ahead.

Began in 2003, the work on the copy is in its final stage. Throughout the process I learned and continue to learn from the great Grünewald about art. It has also been a very personal meditation on the sufferings and the glory of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer.

The Isenheim Altar is known for Grünewald's unique, wonderful use of color and the dramatic treatment of the figures and composition.

The altar was destined for the chapel of a lazaret-house, a place in a monastery for people with various skin and nervous diseases, when they were cast out of the world.

The Crucifixion panel is one of the most terrifying portrayals of the agony of the Redeemer, also unusual in that it includes John the Baptist with an inscription "He must increase but I must decrease," pointing to Christ on the cross.

Maria Gabankova

### Who Is Maria Gabankova?

It is not the first time that readers of *Glorious Hope* have heard about Maria Gabankova, an artist and associate professor of drawing and painting at the Ontario College of Art and Design, Toronto. She was born into an artistic family in former Czechoslovakia and both her parents (Jozef and Antonie Gabanek), who are also painters, live in Canada and paint. Her personal experience in seeking and discovering her path and the true source of life is opening the hearts of young people. She always has words of encouragement, evidence of wisdom from the Lord. In her humility, Maria is perhaps unaware of her tremendously positive Christian example to those around her.

As an artist she strives to express the philosophical and spiritual aspects of human existence.

"I love to search for what is hidden, the mystery and poetry in a visual language. In figurative painting the unique character of each individual is a wonderful challenge, one that for me goes far beyond a mere attempt at capturing a likeness. The complexity and mystery of a human being is at the very heart of my portraiture," says Maria.

Maria's work reflects the impulses of everyday life, and the vast

Continues on page 39

## Po stopách štětce tajemného Grünewalda

Grünewald—Mathis Neithardt—Gothard  
c. 1470/80—1528

Maluji tuto kopii na zakázku Biblického muzea ve Vancouveru, v Britské Kolumbii, Kanada ([www.biblicalmuseum.com](http://www.biblicalmuseum.com)). Od prvního pohledu na reprodukci této práce jsem byla fascinována a hluboce pohnuta neobvyklou výrazností a mocným duchovním obsahem.

Když jsem se rozhodla na této kopii pracovat, navštívila jsem Unterlinden Museum v Colmar (Alsace, Francie), abych oltář prostudovala. Byl to nezapomenutelný zážitek, který byl k danému úkolu nepostradatelný, jak se později ukázalo.

Na kopii jsem začala pracovat v roce 2003 a nyní je práce v závěrečné fázi. Během procesu jsem se od významného Grünewalda mnoho o umění naučila

a stále učím. Kromě toho se tato práce stala osobní meditací nad utrpením a slávou Ježíše Krista, našeho Spasitele.

Isenheimský oltář je známý Grünewaldovým unikátním použitím barev a dramatického ztvárnění postav i kompozice.

Oltář byl určen pro kapli lazaretu. Lazaret byl umístěn v klášteře a byl určen lidem s různým nervovým a kožním onemocněním, vyloučeným ze světa.

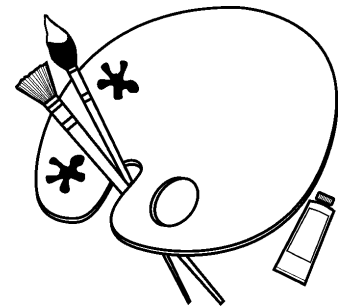
Panel *Ukřižování* je jedním z nejděsivějších vyobrazení Spasitelovy agonie. Neobvyklý je také tím, že zobrazuje Jana Křtitele, s výrokem *On musí růsti, já pak menšit se*, poukazujíc na Krista na kříži.

Maria Gabanková

### Kdo je Maria Gabanková?

Není to poprvé, kdy se čtenáři *Slavné naděje* setkávají s umělkyní Marií Gabankovou, profesorkou na umělecké škole Ontario College of Art and Design v Torontu. Narodila se v bývalém Československu, v umělecké rodině (její rodiče, Jozef a Antonie Gabankovi, žijí v Kanadě a také malují). Její osobní zkušenosti v cestě hledání a nalezení pravého zdroje života, jí otevírají srdce mladých lidí. Vždy má slova povzbuzení, která svědčí o moudrosti od Hospodina. Ve své skromnosti si snad ani neuvědomuje, jakým vzorem křesťana je pro své okolí.

Jako umělkyně se snaží vyjádřit filosofickou a duchovní stránku lidské existence. „Ráda hledám to, co je skryté, mystérium a poetiku vizuálního jazyka. Unikátní charakter každého jednotlivce je pro mne výzvou, která jde daleko za pouhý pokus o zachycení podoby. Složitost a tajemství lidského bytí je jádrem mých obrazů,“ říká Maria.



Pokračování na straně 39

# Justification by Faith and its Fruit

Ján Banko

**T**herefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. (Romans 5:1-2)

The inspiration for this article was the name of the magazine you are reading right now—*Glorious Hope*. We are quite used to this name and perhaps we even do not meditate deeply about it any more. And yet, hidden in this name there is knowledge of God's love and grace which is vitally important for every follower of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Once this train of thinking started, it did not take a long time to find the first two verses from Romans 5, teaching about justification by faith and about three kinds of fruit based on justification:

1. *Peace* with God
2. Access into the *grace* of God
3. *Hope* for the glory of God

Sincere and devoted Christians of all ages were, are and will be blessed by the Lord through justification by faith. *Justification* (Gr. dikaiosune) in the New Testament means that God's attitude to sinners is that He accounts their faith to them for righteousness, forgives their confessed sins, cleanses and heals their spotted consciences and offers them His mercy.

There is a question why God justifies human beings. Well, there are at least two very important reasons why God is doing that:

1. God is willing to justify human beings because He loves us so much, that He sacrificed His only begotten Son to save us from capital punishment for our sin.
2. God is also willing to justify human beings because of what the Lord Jesus Christ has done:
  - He secured for us an ideal righteousness by His perfect and sinless life obedient to God, when He dwelt on earth as the Son of Man
  - He died as our substitute on the cross of Calvary to take away the sin of the world
  - He rose from the dead on the third day according to the Scriptures, defeated Satan and death, and sitting on the right hand of God intercedes for us.



Justification by faith bears in human lives various fruits—the first of them being *Peace* with God. *Peace* (Gr. eirene) in the Scriptures doesn't mean either escape from problems or the quiet atmosphere of an undisturbed life with everything under control. Biblical peace with God is a full realisation of renewed relationship with God, as well as awareness that our sins are forgiven, our conscience is cleansed, and we don't need to be afraid of God's wrath and judgement. The very source of this peace is Jesus Christ, who brought peace in His

blood shed on that rugged cross of Calvary.

The next fruit of justification by faith is access into the *grace* of God. *Grace* (Gr. charis) is an undeserved gift of God's favour, His reception, help and kindness granted for free. We have this access into the grace of God solely through our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the one who opens the door for an audience with our Sovereign Lord. He also introduces us to God and inducts us into His holy presence.

The third fruit of justification by faith is *Hope* for the glory of God. *Hope* (Gr. elpis) for a Christian is different from the notion of hope in secular society. For the world, hope is more of a wish to fulfill certain desires. But the hope of believers is an assurance and knowledge that all God's statements, promises and prophecies are true and coming to their fulfilment. Followers of the Lord Jesus Christ have this assurance of hope, because this biblical hope is their inner possession, based on the presence of the Holy Spirit, which dwells in them. The hope for glory of a believer exceeds even the most beautiful human experiences. It will be fulfilled in eschatological eternity, because God's children will be full of God's light and knowledge and they will dwell in the presence of the sovereign, holy and perfect Heavenly Father.

Dear readers, let us comfort one another with this hope during our earthly pilgrimage. We can do that during Easter as well as during the whole year. And when we open the pages of *Glorious Hope* again, let us remind ourselves that the most precious fruits of justification by faith are peace with God, access into the grace of God and hope for the glory of God.

□





# Ospravedlnenie z viery a jeho ovocie

Ján Banko

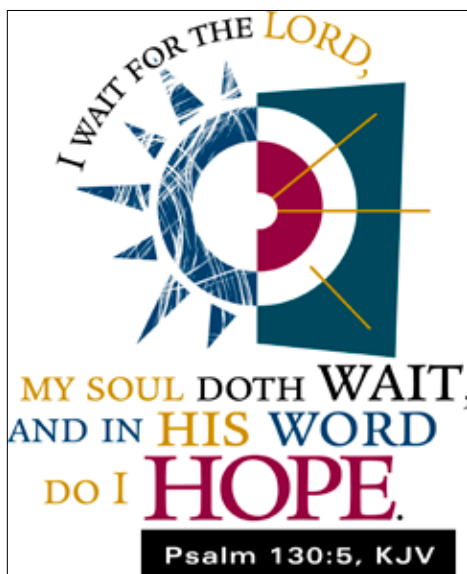
**O**spravedlnení súc teda z viery máme pokoj bližít' sa k Bohu skrze svojho Pána Ježiša Krista, skrze ktorého sme dostali aj prístup vierou do tejto milosti, v ktorej stojíme, a chválime sa nádejou slávy Božej.“ (Rimanom 5:1-2)

Podnetom k napísaniu tejto úvahy mi bol názov časopisu, do ktorého ste sa práve začítali—*Slávna Nádej*. Je to názov, na ktorý sme si už zvykli a vari o ňom ani hlbšie neuvažujeme. A pritom je v ňom ukryté poznanie Božej lásky a milosti, ktoré je pre každého nasledovníka Pána Ježiša Krista životne dôležité.

Od týchto myšlienok som už nemal ďaleko k vyhľadaniu prvých dvoch veršov piatej kapitoly listu apoštola Pavla do Ríma, ktoré vyučujú o ospravedlnení z viery a o troch druhoch ovocia, ktoré toto ospravedlnenie v živote človeka prináša:

1. *Pokoj* s Bohom
2. Prístup do Božej *milosti*
3. *Nádej* slávy Božej

Úprimní a Pánu Bohu odovzdaní kresťania všetkých dôb boli, a budú Hospodinom nadovšetko požehnaní prostredníctvom ospravedlnenia z viery. *Ospravedlnenie* (gr. dikaiosune) v Novej Zmluve znamená, že Boh hriešnemu človeku, ktorý verí v Pána Ježiša Krista, počíta túto vieru za spravodlivosť, odpúšťa jeho vyznané hriechy, očisťuje a uzdravuje jeho poškvrnené svedomie a prijíma človeka na milosť.



Vynára sa nám otázka, prečo vlastne Hospodin ospravedľňuje človeka. Nuž, sú tu dva veľmi významné dôvody k tomuto Božiemu počínaniu:

1. Boh je ochotný ospravedlniť človeka, lebo ho tak veľmi miluje, že obetoval svojho jednorodného Syna, len aby zachránil človeka pred trestom smrti za jeho hriech.

2. Boh je ochotný ospravedlniť človeka kvôli tomu, čo Pán Ježiš Kristus pre človeka vykonal:

- zabezpečil človeku ideálnu spravodlivosť svojim dokonalým, bezhriešnym a Pánu Bohu poslušným životom, keď prebýval na zemi ako Syn človeka
- zomrel zástupnou obeťou za človeka na kríži Golgoty a vzal na seba všetky hriechy sveta
- na tretí deň vstal z mŕtvych podľa Písem, porazil smrť i diabla a sediac po pravici Božej, prihovára sa za človeka.

Ospravedlnenie z viery prináša v ľudskom živote viacnásobné

ovocie, medzi ktorým ako prvý druh figuruje „*Pokoj* s Bohom“. *Pokoj* (gr. eirene) v biblickom slova zmysle neznamená únik od problémov, ani tichú atmosféru ničím nerušeného života, ktorý má všetko pod svojou kontrolou. Biblický pokoj s Bohom je plné uvedomenie si obnovenia vzťahu s Pánom Bohom, ako aj vedomie toho, že naše hriechy sú odpustené, svedomie očistené,

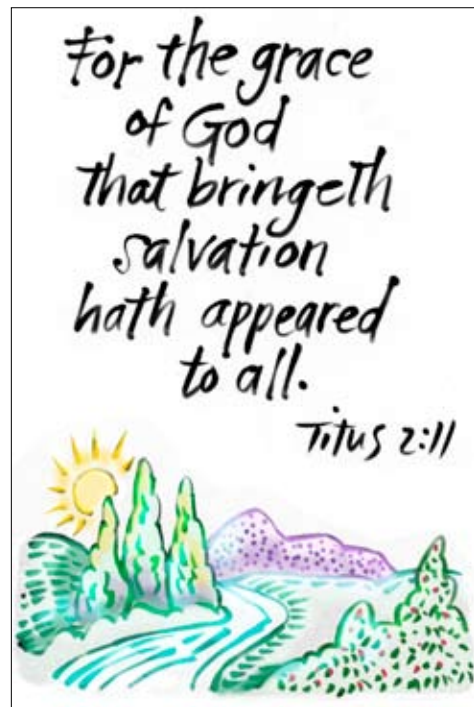
a že sa nemusíme obávať Božieho hnevu ani súdu. Zdrojom tohoto pokoja je Ježiš Kristus, ktorý priniesol pokoj v krvi Jeho križi.

Ďalším ovocím ospravedlnenia z viery je „*Prístup do Božej milosti*“. *Milosť* (gr. charis) je nezaslúženým darom Božej obľuby, Božieho prijatia, Božej pomoci a láskavosti poskytnutej zdarma. Prístup do tejto Božej milosti máme jedine prostredníctvom Pána Ježiša Krista. On je ten, ktorý otvára dvere k audiencii u Zvrchovaného Panovníka. On nás tiež Pánu Bohu predstavuje a uvádza nás do Jeho svätej prítomnosti.

Tretím uvažovaným ovocím ospravedlnenia z viery je „*Nádej* slávy Božej“. *Nádej* (gr. elpis) veriaceho človeka je rozdielna od toho, čo pod nádejou rozumie okolitý svet. Pre svet je nádej skôr priáním po naplnení určitých túžob. Nádej veriacich ľudí je však istotou a poznaním toho, že všetky Božie výroky, zaslúbenia a proroctvá sú pravda a dochádzajú svojho naplnenia. Túto istotu nádeje majú nasledovníci Pána Ježiša Krista preto, že biblická nádej je ich vnútorným vlastníctvom, založeným na prítomnosti Sv. Ducha, ktorý vo veriacich ľuďoch prebýva. Sláva, na ktorú sa veriaci človek nadeje, presahuje aj tie najkrajšie ľudské skúsenosti. V eschatologickej večnosti sa naplní tým, že Božie deti budú plné Božieho svetla a poznania a budú prebývať v blízkosti zvrchovaného, svätého a dokonalého Nebeského Otca.

Milí čitatelia, potešujme sa navzájom počas nášho pozemského putovania touto nádejou. Číňme tak v dobe Veľkonočných sviatkov, ako aj počas celého roka. A keď budeme znovu otvárať stránky časopisu *Slávna nádej*, pripomeňme si, že vzácnym ovocím ospravedlnenia z viery je pokoj s Bohom, prístup do Božej milosti a nádej slávy Božej.

□



# From Torment To Tranquility

Thomas Cosmades

In outer space of which man has touched the fringes, there are ongoing storms of ferocious velocity. Likewise, man's inner world is the scene of unimaginable storms and counter-storms. Christ's disciples were not exempt from a variety of troubling onslaughts emanating from various directions. Physical storms are fashioned by contrasting elements. So it is with the fluctuating conflicts which regulate our actions or reactions.

St. Thomas was a disciple of Jesus Christ whose life and ministry carry great weight to the Christians in India, some of whom belong to the Martoma Church. In the Church calendar, the Sunday following Easter is celebrated as St. Thomas' Day. The emotional turmoil observed in the conduct of this renowned apostle exposes the span of conflicts surfacing within my soul and yours. Incidents affecting our overall behavior can be readily traced to battles that troubled this reputable disciple's life. It is of benefit for every believer to examine the pros and cons in Thomas' stormy behavior, which mirror our own ups and downs.

The noteworthy list below can direct our thoughts to an unbiased inventory of our individual stance in relation to the principle of consistency:

- Is the reality of the risen Christ governing my own existence and deportment?
- Is my assessment of existence geared to the supernatural, or to ordinary logic?
- Is my faith-life always inspired by the reality of the risen and ascended Christ?

Thomas (*'teoma'* in Aramaic, which means *'twin'*) appears three times in John's Gospel in events very close to each other time-wise. The storms encountered by the apostle are reflections of our personal conflicts.

## I. The Perplexity of Vacillating Dedication (John 11:7-16)

The necessity of passing from the safety of Trans-Jordan (cf. 10:40-42) to the animosity in Judea came into view. The disciples earnestly tried to dissuade their Lord from crossing the Jordan and exposing Himself to possible stoning (11:8). It is obvious that they were ruled by apprehension. Christ calmed their storm-tossed hearts by demonstrating that fear did not have any part in His mien and ministry. His use of the analogies *walking* and *stumbling*, *light* and *night* (9, 10), remind us that the steps of the God-appointed life move within the sphere of His sovereign designation. External forces are always subject to His supreme design.



Obviously, Thomas was apprehensive along with the others. However, he dared to put forward audacious support to his Master's courageous plan: "*Let us also go, that we may die with Him*" (16). Being certain that his Lord would not return from Jerusalem alive, he was gripped by religious melancholy - an uncalled-for tendency in a believer who should have been confident of the Lord's sovereignty. William James (1842-1910) said, "If religion is not an acute fever, it is a dull habit." Don't we all fall at times into the category of pursuing a dull habit, as Thomas was caught doing? Such behavior disregards even the impending pos-

sibility of death. Death becomes a convenient escape, a way out of a quandary. This attitude dragged the melancholic apostle to the inference of a senseless death. Daily we are surrounded by a stream of repulsive scenes of preventable loss of life:

- Young people plunging themselves to premature death by the use of narcotics.
- Smokers treading the perilous road of a punishing death.
- Dysfunctional alcoholics caught in a pitiable plight.
- Suicides throwing away their valuable lives.

We Christians often have a ready reply for injudicious options of death. We flash the answer, "Christ can save your life, making it worth living." No convinced Christian entertains any doubt about this. Thomas had first-hand experience with his Master, but had yet to comprehend the whole weight of dedicated discipleship. Commitment to Christ is not a blind alley. It is a firm step of well-studied faith which is verified by Him who said, "I am the Alpha and the Omega." Lamentably, sometimes we all fall into Thomas' dilemma. Many lessons can be learned from his vacillation.

- How do we handle our inner crises?
- Do we have ample faith to guide us through the stormy and thorny paths of life?

Christ does not leave His follower to face his/her emergencies alone. Right at this moment, there are millions of Christians everywhere being fortified by their victorious Lord while enduring the ravages of a cruel life. Their course may even carry them to meaningful martyrdom. Thomas' dilemma cries out. Is our conduct like his in times of crisis? Here we are reminded of the resoluteness of our calm Redeemer, who beckons us to disown routine and superficial commitment. Thomas' perfunctory dedication opens the way to one of Christ's supreme declarations

as He was about to bring His friend Lazarus back from death: "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live" (11:25).

## II. The Liability of Quivering Projection (14:4-6)

Following Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem, there were three full days of extraordinary activity. Finally, we come to Thursday - a long day spent with the disciples, the parable of the vine, promise of the Holy Spirit, Passover meal, the inception of the Lord's Table, the traitor, washing the feet, intercessory prayer, arrest in the garden. Somewhere along this loaded day, Jesus disclosed to His disciples, "In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also" (2, 3). This authoritative statement ought to put the mind of any troubled believer at ease. A quick glance backward would have reminded the disciples of the power and splendor of the One extending this assurance. But all the certitude of the past could not rescue Thomas from his quandary. Immediately Thomas posed a natural question reflecting the thoughts of his disquieted spirit: "Lord, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?" (5).

Every mind is convinced about its own evaluations. These can be classified as unconditionally settled. A person may fight for his appraisals, considering them final. He may wish others to follow him. Thomas did this. He asked the question, supposedly representing them all. However, he shouldn't have been so sure about the others' wavering. It is not difficult to carry those near us to our own doubts and anxieties. Thomas did not display any caution about shifting his friends to the same slippery ground he was treading. His evaluation was logical to himself. His own projection of what lay ahead bore the marks of misgiving. Instead of keeping it to himself and seeing what the outcome would be, he put into words his shaky evaluation. Do you have some lack of conviction about your faith? Don't make it public. Wrestle before God with your personal doubts; seek his guidance through His inspired Word and then supplication. Share them with someone who is stronger in his/her faith, and the Lord will direct your thoughts into His captivity.

Rejection of the essentials of the faith resulting from personal evaluations opens the road to possible heresy. Spreading doubts around recklessly leads to the perturbation of weak lives. Thomas' quivering projection was checked by Christ's command-

ing intervention: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me" (6). Christ is ever ready to dispel our biased queries. He is available to suppress every segment of darkness from our minds, illuminating it with his eternal light. Thomas was talking to the pre-resurrection Christ. At that moment Christ dissipated the doubts of Thomas' natural mind. Thomas had yet to see the power of the resurrected Christ. We now face the post-resurrection Christ, glorified in the heavens. Through his Holy Spirit, Christ puts our wavering minds in order, making them channels of constructive thoughts (cf. *Philippians 4:8*). Christ can remove every kind of despair that makes for an unhealthy mind. Christ's encouraging words don't seem to have fully satisfied Thomas' anxiety. What about you and me? Is our persuasion about the Christ fully satisfactory to Him and to us? To those with whom we fellowship? Or is it irresolute

at times? Our belief based on Christ's statement ought to be at the heart of all convictions. Without Christ, there is no going, no knowing, no living.

## III. The Reliability of Satisfying Consecration (20:24-29)

When the verification of the four women who found the tomb empty reached the disciples, "these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them" (*Luke 24:11*). The resurrection was such a superlative climax to Christ's passion that the disciples, and particularly Thomas, were sorrowfully skeptical about it. Thomas, whose name became synonymous with doubting, almost bade farewell to the most basic exercise, known as 'faith in Christ.' The nature of this superlative miracle was so incomprehensible that he almost chose the path of unbelief. His overwhelming sorrow stripped him of the delight that can only be realized by uncompromising faith in the resurrected

Christ.

He did not find it necessary to join the disciples that evening when the risen Christ appeared in His resurrected body, thereby missing an unforgettable experience. When the disciples informed him of having seen the risen Lord, his natural feelings got the best of him, just as happens to some of us at times. Not being a deliberate rejecter, he was in the company of the disciples at the reappearance of the Lord a week later. There Thomas met the risen Christ. At that moment, all doubts evaporated, and without putting his finger in the Lord's side, he pronounced one of the most triumphant confessions of consecration: 'My Lord and my God!' (20:28). This convinced testimony has been the anthem of hundreds of millions throughout the ages who found their rest from a distress-tossed life in the arms of the resurrected



Continues on page 33





# World Cup 2006—Germany

Thomas Cosmades

The blow of the whistle on the 9<sup>th</sup> of June in the main stadium of Munich will inaugurate the start of the World Cup between the teams of thirty-two countries which reached the finals. Another blow of the whistle on the 9<sup>th</sup> of July in the Olympic stadium of Berlin will terminate the world tournament. This sixty-fourth match will reveal the winner of the quadrennial event.

Whether you call it football or soccer, this game beyond any argument is the number one sport in the world. During the contest, millions will be involved in another game—speculating on the possible winners through Lotto Sport. Many will lose money. Some may make a fortune. Millions will be plunged into sorrow, either because of the defeat of their team or through loss of money. At the end of the games, one nation will be presented with the cup in impressive glitter. Old stars will fade away; new stars and new football millionaires will emerge. Some trainers will be obliged to resign because their team couldn't make it. Afterwards, everybody will be looking forward to the next World Cup in 2010 in South Africa, a 'first' on the African continent.

Vast numbers of fans will travel to Germany from everywhere. Alongside the teams will come managers, referees, trainers, media personnel, doctors, therapists and business promoters. This fascinating contest will ultimately determine the World Cup holder for four years. People everywhere are speculating about the Cup winner. Will the host country claim the Cup? Many doubt it. Perhaps Brazil will again vie for victory in the final, or it may just be a complete outsider!

More than in any other previous tournament dread of terrorism will be the persistent consternation. Swelling hooliganism is another cause of trepidation. At times, the blustering conduct of spectators or intruders can bring disgrace and disaster on the occasion. Performance-enhancing substances by certain players constitute a serious concern. Add to these the recent reports of corruption and various scandals widely witnessed in the arena of football. All are apt to turn this multi-billion dollar rated sport into an enterprise with multifarious demands. A further major concern is the negative impact on the environment through the boundless tons of trash left behind. Vast amounts of money have been allotted for order and protection. Another dimension to human depravity affecting the occasion are gain masters fever-

ishly at work with cunning stratagem to trap young women and teen-agers from countries to the East. Their objective is to supply modern sex slaves as commodity for deceptive pleasure. This heinous villainy exploiting an outwardly glittering international event will draw many men to a grievous pitfall. The days when sports events were a benign and well-mannered encounter are a thing of the past. In these games fear is amalgamated with thrill.

Against the agitating unpleasantries already mentioned, a heartening activity will be noticed everywhere. Volunteer evangelists from many lands will be telling people who follow the excitement of football about the greatest thrill of all: Finding forgiveness of their sin in Christ and discovering the purpose and essence of life. Christians everywhere are praying that people whose thoughts are centered on football will comprehend and receive the supreme offer of Christ into their lives. A wide variety of literature in many languages is already circulating.

**I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day — and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing**

2 Timothy 4:7

Besides those who will have the privilege of watching the games in Germany's twelve main stadiums, it is estimated that approximately two billion spectators will passionately follow the matches on their TV screens. The exuberance of football (soccer) is peculiar to itself. All over the world, hundreds of millions are loyal fans. When football is discussed, differences are laid aside. Fans everywhere have the same sentiments, emotions and

devotion. Any famous player is respected the world over. How many transformations this amazing game has undergone since it was first played in England! The rules of football made by FIFA are the same everywhere. In 1883 there were thirteen rules of the game drawn up in England. Today under FIFA, the articles have grown to seventeen. Football experts are constantly teaching new techniques, writing books and articles, making countless videos and giving lectures. There are football schools in several parts of the world.

The renowned Pele whose skill became a saga is still considered a respected authority on football. But what disgrace Maradona brought on his own reputation and the sport! Numerous yellow and red cards will be held up to players who advertently or inadvertently commit an offence during the games. Sometimes, poor judgment on the part of the referee causes deep disappointment or even the loss of a game. An English player of the past, Gary Lineker, was never shown a yellow card, much less a red one. The aim of football is to pass the ball skillfully and fascinatingly



from player to player until the play climaxes in a masterful goal. The goal keeper in kicking off the ball which he caught aims at the onward advance of his team. Every player in the backfield strives with equal concentration to assist those who play in the forward. Imaginative midfield play generates excitement. But the definitive delight is when the ball makes it way through the 7.32 x 2.44-meter goal post. If this doesn't happen the excitement of the game is stolen. We are at a time when Africa and Asia are producing able players. Today's European clubs are actively recruiting African players to their teams, notwithstanding wanton racist jeers from the ranks of the spectators.

Whether we like this game or not, it reminds us all of another contest. To what extent have you comprehended life's design and target? Are you heading to absolute triumph following a purposeful life, or to shaking defeat? What is your accomplishment in the critical game of this brief life? To achieve it, you don't need to be athletic, affluent or a person of position. You are involved in a crucial engagement that is much more serious than the one played on the field. There is a goal more fascinating than that craved by the hundreds of millions of football fans around the world. That is to encounter Jesus Christ, the Redeemer and Rewarder of your priceless life. The Almighty God is the organizer of life's contest and Jesus Christ its coordinator for brilliant achievement. During the games, the trainers' contribution is paramount. No success in life or eternity can be attained without the most skillful of all trainers, Jesus Christ, who has full knowledge of all of life's secrets and intricacies. He has paved the way for you with his atoning, redeeming blood. You are probably familiar with every rule of effective football. It is worthwhile to examine the life of Christ so that you can know his power to save and organize any individual who is run aground, including you.

The mighty Creator placed each one of us in the arena of the world and wishes to grant us total victory. God is fully aware of your ineptness to attain the triumph and the ultimate crown. The pitch is strewn with failed players. Earnest efforts could not secure the longed-for victory. So it is in the contest of life. Therefore, the heavenly Father sent his only Son from heaven. In his Incarnation he came to live among us and declared, "I am the way." His wish is to lead each life to definitive triumph. He is the only one who offers ultimate victory to everyone. A person who lived nearly two thousand years ago and submitted his life to the Savior-trainer wrote: *"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day — and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing"* Paul to Timothy, 2 Timothy 4:7, 8. Unless you turn your faulty life, no matter how good a player you seem to be, over to the Master Achiever, you will continue collecting yellow and red cards. This is apt to thrust you from one grief to another. Remember that Christ is the one who will blow the ultimate whistle which will declare the winner and the loser. Wouldn't you like to be on his winning team?

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## From Torment To Tranquility... Continues from page 31

Savior. Thomas' unreserved commitment brought out another absolute declaration from Christ: *'...blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe'* (29b).

Going back to his conflicting statements we can deduce that Thomas was not a rationalist or a determined unbeliever. Rationalists **will** to disbelieve. Thomas was cast into unbelief by distress. This state often comes upon believers encountering crises in their lives. Someone has observed three categories of unbelief besetting people everywhere:

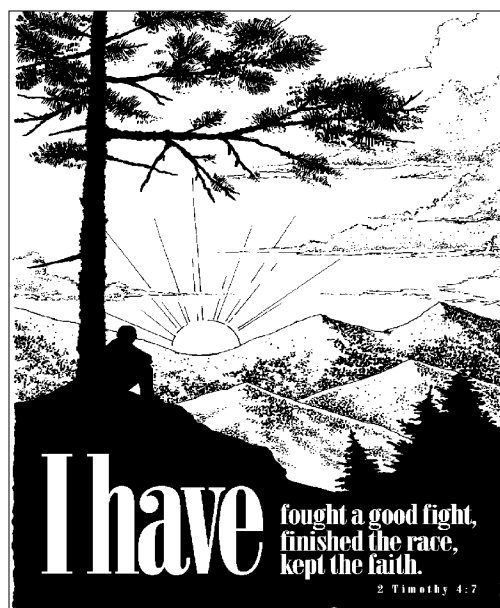
- Scientific skepticism—test tube religion
- Deliberate rejection (cf. Acts 28:24)
- "I believe; help my unbelief!" (Mark 9:23,24; Luke 17:5,6)

When the ten disciples brought the glad tidings to Thomas that they had met the risen Lord, his despondency and gloom did not immediately give way to jubilation, but to a stubborn expression of the heart. It is a known conflict in many people's life of faith: *"I shall not believe, unless ..."* (20:25).

A child of God must approach all areas of life by faith, thereby learning concrete lessons for spiritual progress. As God's Word states, belief in Christ's resurrection is a prerequisite for salvation (cf. Rom. 10:9, 10). While he was wrestling with his distressing trials, Job raised a spirited question, *"If a man die, shall he live again?"* (14:14). This is answered by a man who actually met the risen Christ: *"But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep"* (1 Cor. 15:20).

Thomas' experiences with the living Savior should fortify everyone on their pilgrimage of faith. Christ's authoritative declarations can cheer your heart and uplift your soul, just as they did in the case of the disciple who turned from being chief doubter to chief defender of the resurrection.

□



# The Triumphant Ascension

Thomas Cosmades

Luke 24:50-52; Acts 1:1-11; Hebrews 9:1-14; 24-28

Religions relish their sacred sites and objects. The holiest location of Christ's believers is heaven itself. It is not Jerusalem. "From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view. Though we once regarded Christ from a human point of view, we regard him thus no longer" (II Corinthians 5:16). Our beloved Savior and exalted High Priest is in heaven (cf. Hebrews 4:14-16; 6:20; 7:26-27; 8:1; 9:11; 10:21). Thirteen times in Revelation he is introduced as the Lamb seated on the throne in heaven (cf. 4:2, 3, 6, 9, 10; 5:1, 7, 13; 7:10, 15; 19:4; 20:11; 21:5). Once he is the Lamb standing between the throne and the four living creatures (5:6). He is God's Lamb who accomplished on earth the perfect salvation in his own body by pouring out his blood. His vicarious atonement is total and final. He now lives to make intercession for men and women (cf. Hebrews 7:25; Romans 8:34b).

The glory of the Incarnation and Redemption fixes our eyes on the Savior's Ascension. Today he is in a different involvement than in his pre-incarnate state. In Revelation, the gleaming ascension of Christ is treated as the climax of the ultimate fulfillment of his ministry. It is to be lamented that the remembrance of this crowning chapter goes unnoticed in most of the evangelical churches or in individual remembrances. How many pulpits consider this glowing event on the Sunday that follows Ascension Thursday, joyfully looking into its different phases? That victorious occasion constitutes a vital connection between the life of Christ and the life of the Church. It is the penultimate instance of salvation history on one hand, and the Church's inaugural spur on the other. This important day in the church calendar is warranty of the believer's immortality and Christ's return to his eternal domain for him/her as he foretold it (cf. John 14:3). It addresses in an applicable way the quandaries surrounding particularly the church: rejection, intrusion, persecution, wantonness, terrorism, warfare, hunger, diseases, and natural disasters, *ad infinitum*. The church should authoritatively remind this unbelieving world about him who ascended to the highest and is laying his plan for its re-creation and reconstruction.

The resurrection was witnessed only by two angels, whereas the ascension was attested to by the company of disciples

and, again, two angels in white robes. The significance of the occasion was authenticated by the proclamation of the Great Commission, not necessarily at that hour (cf. Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:19, 20; Luke 24:50-53; John 20:21; Acts 1:8). These two events remain inseparable. Christ's Ascension, while entirely unique, has its precursors in the OT: Enoch (cf. Genesis 5:24) and Elijah (II Kings 2:9-15). There are prophetic references to the occasion in Psalms 47 and 68. Christ himself alluded to it (cf. John 7:33, 34). He foretold it to Mary at the empty tomb "...I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God" (John 20:17b). Peter summarizes this resplendent event with manifest joy (cf. I Peter 3:22). Paul refers to the occasion by pointing out that "When he ascended on high, he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men"

(Ephesians 4:8). Paul continues by saying, "...he ascended far above all heavens, that he might fill all things" (Ephesians 4:10b). On that sublime manifestation of Christ in Patmos, John was awe-struck by the glory of the Ascended Master (cf. Revelation 1:1, 2; 5:6).

The Jews revered their temple with its holy of holies where the priest alone could enter once a year with the blood of the animal for his own and his people's sin. The Babylonians destroyed this earthly temple (586 BC), depriving the people of offering sacrifices. It was rebuilt by Ezra, then destroyed by the Antiochians, and following them the Romans, terminating sacrificial religion for good. Following his ascension, Jesus Christ appeared in heaven as our efficacious high priest (cf. Hebrews 9:11). This way he entered the holiest of all religious settings to intercede for anyone who would believe and

approach him --- people of all ages, races, tongues, creeds and gender. The ascension marks the importance of Christ's past, present and future appearances (cf. Hebrews 9:24, 26, 28).

## I. Christ Now Appears in the Presence of God (Hebrews 9:24)

Heaven's multitude of hosts exultantly welcomed the triumphant Lion of the Tribe of Judah to his eternal glory. His conquest over the merciless dominion of the arch-enemy Satan is now absolute. Our Savior and High Priest presently carries a



superlative ministry of unceasing intercession before the Father. Sin torments all people, everywhere. We are accountable not to relegate these multitudes to disinterest and neglect. Knowing well the availability of an effectual mediator, we pain for all who grope in darkness.

People ran to Joseph to obtain grain at all costs. Those who shrugged off the accessible provision had only themselves to blame. Egypt's gates were open to all. Joseph didn't send emissaries to surrounding countries to plead with them to come to him for grain; the initiative fell on them.

Against this background, we see the One who offers the bountiful Bread of Life to everyone. Those who reject this inexhaustible supply will be judged by none other than the Supplier himself. Joseph had no argument against those who spurned the opportunity awaiting them in Egypt. But here we are encountering an entirely different case. *"Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us"* (Romans 8:34). Rejecting such a tender-hearted and gracious offer will lead to judgment by him whose mediatory offer is slighted. Only an irrational individual will turn down the services of a competent advocate in his hour of need. The offer of a mediator can only be rejected at one's own peril.

In the epistle to the Hebrews, the high-priestly ministry of Christ in heaven repeatedly draws our attention—nine or ten times. Christ's believer persuaded of his/her Lord's ascension to heaven ought to give due consideration to such an august climax of his overall ministry. *"If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God"* (Colossians 3:1). *"...which he accomplished in Christ when he raised him from the dead and made him sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and above every name that is named..."* (cf. Ephesians 1:20, 21). The reminder in these passages ought to spur the believer on to full allegiance to Christ. The triumphant Savior is sitting on his throne in heaven waiting for the proper time *'to make all his enemies his footstool'* (cf. Psalm 110:1).

The mighty Ruler of heaven and earth who was debased to the lowest insignificance is exalted to highest eminence. His believers world-wide who are subjected to horrendous ordeals and onslaughts can live with concrete and tangible hope in their ascended Lord. Atheistic existentialism disparages the concept of *'hope.'* The Christian with his/her Savior in the highest realms enjoys hope in its superlative context. It is worthwhile to make a study of the fifty-two references to *'hope'* in the NT. Once it is mentioned as *'better hope'* (Hebrews 7:19). We wish to extend our loving invitation to existentialists and others everywhere to embrace this *'better hope,'* freely provided by Christ. Such hope is already being translated daily into reality in the lives of millions.

## II. Christ Has Appeared to Put Away Sin (Hebrews 9:26)

The captivating aspects of the mystery of the Incarnation transform the believer's cosmos. The person genuinely com-

mitted to this reality can enjoy a course of life unlike all others. In ancient Greece men took the form of gods who sometimes imposed demands on their subjects. Exactly the reverse is true in God's agenda. Here God became Man, offering his race unimaginable benefits *"...he was manifested in the flesh"* (I Timothy 3:16). We grieve profoundly for our fellow humans in this wide world who have jettisoned this enriching, life-transforming reality of the Incarnation. The writer to the Hebrews explains why Christ was manifested in the flesh at the apex of history: *"to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself"* (cf. Hebrews 9:26, 12; 10:10, 14).

At Jesus' birth in Bethlehem's manger as a human baby, an angel appeared; God's glory shone around the shepherds; a multitude of the heavenly hosts praised God; wise men outside of Israel's community came to behold him; Simeon, the aged dweller in Jerusalem, uttered a profound word of prophecy; old Anna, a Hebrew prophetess from Asher's tribe, gave thanks to God for this extraordinary baby. She spoke prophetically of God's redeeming expression. Herod, an earthly potentate, was filled with trepidation. Until now, there are those rejoicing over Christ's manifestation in the flesh. On the other hand, those unhappy with his name seek ways to suppress his importance and relegate him to irrelevance. *"You know that he appeared to take away sins, and in him there is no sin"* (I John 3:5). Those who make the connection of this appearance to their forlorn condition receive adoption as sons and daughters by faith (cf. Galatians 4:4-7). This way they need no longer roam over earth's desert as orphans. The Ascended Christ has opened the curtain for mortal men and women to view at least in part the majesty of the hitherto unknown heaven. Those who see this sublime glory joyfully sing endless praises to him:

*"Thine be the glory, risen, conqu'ring Son, Endless is the vict'ry  
Thou o'er death hast won;  
Angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away, kept the folded  
graveclothes, where Thy body lay.  
Thine be the glory, risen, conqu'ring Son, Endless is the vict'ry  
Thou o'er death hast won.*

(Edmund Budry, 1854-1932)

## III. Christ Will Appear to Those Waiting for Him (Hebrews 9:28)

The appellation **Pantocrator** (Almighty) appears nine times in Revelation and once in II Corinthians 6:16. A host of potentates appeared like a flash on the stage of history and disappeared like a flush. They assumed temporary glory, and the remembrance of some continues to draw a variety of repugnant and detestable designations. Space and decency does not allow mentioning these. Such epithets, at times blasphemous, celebrating the procession of mortals are repulsive to the believer whose heart and mind are fixed on eternal values. To those of us who delight in using superlative appellations for our glorified Savior, mundane titles are a pretext of usurpation. To Christ

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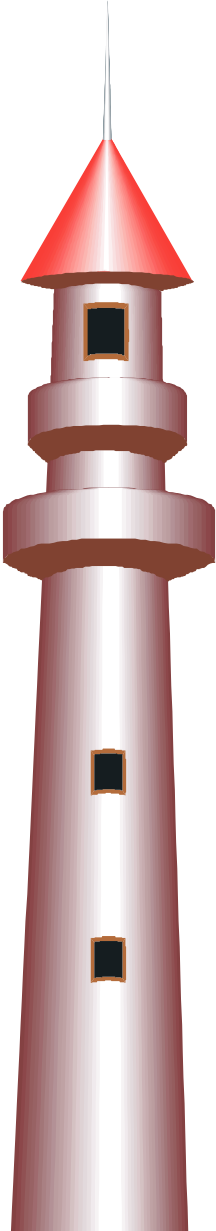




## *The Observation Tower*

### The Pursuit of Happiness

Rev. John E. Karenko



**T**he preamble of the American Constitution mentions the third of our inalienable rights as “the pursuit of happiness.” The quest dominates much of our talent, time, and treasure. It’s sought in entertainment, achievement, wealth, employment, possessions, position, family, security, travel, drugs, food, health, sex, etc. It is an endless list of human beings’ futile attempts to find lasting and satisfying happiness.

The wise look up to the Creator-Architect of us all for an answer to the search. God is called “The Blessed (makarios>Greek=Happy) God” (I Tim 1:11; 6:15), so he is no kill-joy. “In your presence is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore,” (Psm.16:11). “These things write we unto you, that your joy may be full” (I John 1:4). Fullness of joy... forevermore... ureka!

The word “bless” (with its derivatives) appears about 500 times in the Bible, describing those who have been blessed and the way we can attain blessing, too.

In His sermon on the mount, Jesus gave a progressive list of how a person can be happy (blessed); in the 8-10 “be-attitudes” our Savior describes the path we tread to reach the greatest blessing (happiness) from the time when there is none (Matthew 5:3-12). As we climb the ladder from abject misery as vile, evil, unworthy sinners (“poor in spirit”) to reach great joy in suffering service for

our Savior, we find a fulfilling, meaningful life with eternal rewards at God’s right hand in heaven’s glory. This gives real purpose to our life on earth!

We can learn much from both David and Solomon (inspired predecessors; inspired by God) who attained and lost happiness in greater measure than any of us will. Wise indeed is anyone who learns lasting, valuable lessons from prior generations. From their praise and proverbs may we learn to keep what they lost.

- “Happy is the people, whose God is the Lord” (Ps. 144:15b).
- “Happy is he who has God for his help, whose hope is in the Lord” (Ps. 146:5).
- “Happy is the man that finds wisdom...that retains her” (Prov.3:13,18).
- “Whoever trusts in the Lord, happy is he” (Prov. 16:20c).
- “He that keeps the law, happy is he” (Prov. 29:18b).

In the New Testament we read: “If you know these things, happy are you if you do them,”(John 13:17) and “If you suffer for righteousness’ sake, happy are you...If you are reproached by the name of Christ, happy are you” (I Pet. 3:14; 4:14). “We count them happy who endure” (James 5:11).

The pursuit of happiness culminates at the cross in personal salvation and devoted service. Have you found true, meaningful, and lasting happiness?

Answer: “Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, rejoice” (Phil. 4:4).

□

# Christ's Seven Last Words

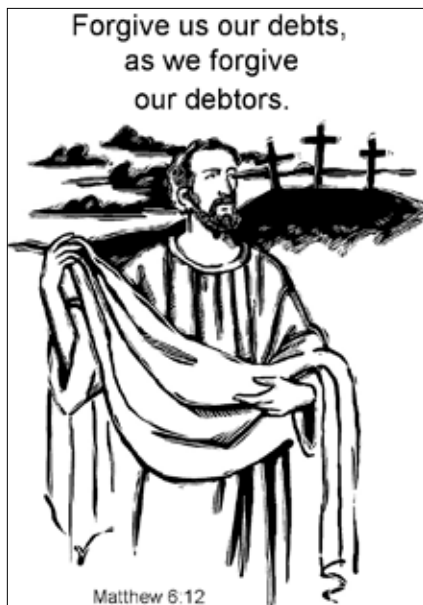
Thomas Cosmades

## Part 1

Every statement from the Incarnate Word bears timeless significance. However, in the last seven words which Christ pronounced from the cross there is historic, theological and existential relevance. From the hour they were first heard during the Savior's tormenting agony, much has been communicated on the subject. Always some new light or insight emanates from these unfading pronouncements.

On the cruel cross Jesus is displaying the congruity between what he taught and what he put into practice. The first three utterances address some of the people who surround him; another

three point toward God the Supreme Judge, and one focuses on both God and man. All seven remind us of Christ's perfect obedience to the will of the Father, his unmatched love to man, his offer of unconditional forgiveness and his absolute authority to pardon sin and to carry the soul to heaven. There is no end to delving into the wide implications of Christ's seven last words.



### I. Father, forgive them for they know not what they do. (Luke 23:34)

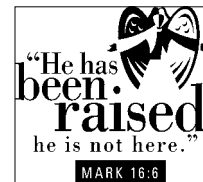
In his superlative teaching, our Lord Jesus Christ promulgated the unique dimension for man's conduct and relationships (*cf. Matthew 12:19-21; 5:44*). This was not a new maxim, but one which commenced in the teaching of the Old Testament (*cf. Proverbs 25:21, 22; Exodus 23:4, 5; II Kings 6:20-23; II Chronicles 28:13-16*). The Incarnate Word, who came into our world as the pronouncer and propeller of divine love, displayed the extent of his love to men and angels on Calvary's cross. Only this noble demonstration could effect the transformation of our fallen human race. With this sublime behavior Christ draws the sinner to his unparalleled love.

Stephen, the protomartyr, who probably was in Christ's company in his earthly ministry fully comprehended the verity of Christ's love (*cf. Acts 7:60*). The spirit of Christ alone can carry the person to the full comprehension of Christ's love. The only mediator between God and man displayed his reconciliatory power. He is the loving mediator through whom the vilest

offender can receive forgiveness from God (*cf. Isaiah 53:11, 12; II Corinthians 5:21*). In this provision of divine forgiveness emanating from love, Christ also shows the extent of man's captivity to hatred. Here Christ is in absolute command. But those mocking him are displaying their miserable servitude to hatred. While hanging on the cross, Christ was a free person; conversely, his executioners were enslaved to their ugly passion. Christ reveals his inner peace and freedom even while enduring the most painful ordeal known to man.

The religious leaders who crucified him were captives of ignorance (*cf. Acts 3:17*), so were the rulers of this world (*cf. I Corinthians 2:8*), ordinary people everywhere (*cf. John 1:10*), and the intellectuals of the age (*cf. Acts 17:30*). Saul of Tarsus, a zealous Pharisee, was in the same category (*cf. I Timothy 1:19*), but he later confronted the wise people of his time for lack of perception (*I Corinthians 1:20*). In this generation of violence when appalling rogueries are invented in malignant minds, perpetrators of all pernicious deeds don't know what they are doing. They will someday.

□



### Christ is Risen - Hallelujah!

Christ is risen! Hallelujah!  
Gladness fills the world today;  
From the tomb that could not hold Him,  
See, the stone is rolled away!

Christ hath risen! Hallelujah!  
Blessed morn of life and light!  
Lo, the grave is rent sunder,  
Death is conquered through His might.

Christ hath risen! Hallelujah!  
Friends of Jesus, dry your tears;  
Through the well of gloom and darkness,  
Lo, the Son of God appears!

Christ hath risen! Hallelujah!  
He hath risen, as He said;  
He is now the King of Glory,  
And our great, exalted Head.

Fanny J. Crosby

## Three Significant Anniversaries in Toronto

„And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men.“ (Col. 3:23)

We recorded three significant birthdays in Toronto church not a long time ago. Sister Lenka Wetrovetz by the mercy of God turned 95 on May 2<sup>nd</sup>. Sisters Donna Nesvadba (April 30<sup>th</sup>) and Natasha Legierski (May 11<sup>th</sup>) recalled that they are both half of a century young.

For our church fellowship these anniversaries are a reason to be thankful to God. Even the earliest born of them, Lenka Wetrovetz, is still young in her spirit and ready to transfer her joy, optimism and vitality to all generations. Meetings and discussions with sister Lenka help others to live and serve God and people joyfully and willingly. Her prayers are supportive and intercede constantly for her family and for our church fellowship. Sister Wetrovetz is a mighty testimony of God's grace, manifested in a humble and loving heart devoted to the Lord. Dear sister, we wish you much joy, peace and God's manifold blessings as well as new strength from our Heavenly Father.

Sisters Donna and Natasha have many things in common, especially in the area of spiritual ministry. While Natasha teaches Sunday school for children, Donna plays piano in the Sunday school for adults. They also serve together in the choir - Donna with piano accompaniment and Natasha conducting the choir. You can see them ministering together during the services as well; while one is a pianist, the other is an organist. Donna also organizes a blessed worship team service in our church and together with Natasha sings there as well. They also minister to our countrymen and countrywomen in Toronto during such events as Czech and Slovak Day of Canada, Christmas Carols Evening and others. In our Convention, Natasha is Editor-in-Chief of the magazine you are just now reading, and she and Donna together contribute with their musical talents and other ministry to the Annual Meetings of our Convention.

Dear sisters, we'd like to wish you lots of enthusiasm, creativity and God's blessing in your spiritual, personal and family lives.

Czechoslovak Baptist Church in Toronto  
Rev. John Banko



## Tri významné jubileá v Toronte

„A všetko, čokoľvek činite, robte z duše ako Pánovi, a nie ľuďom.“ (Kol. 3:23)

Nedávno sme v torontskom zbere zaznamenali tri významné jubileá. Sestra Lenka Wetrovetzová a dožila z Božej milosti 2. mája 95 rokov svojho života. Sestry Donna Nesvadbová (30. apríla) a Nataša Legierski (11. mája) si pripomenuli, že sú stále mladé päťdesiatničky.

Pre naše zborové spoločenstvo sú tieto jubileá dôvodom vďačnosti Pánu Bohu. Veď aj tá najskôr narodená z jubilantiek, Lenka Wetrovetzová, je stále mladá duchom a odovzdáva svoju radosť, optimizmus a chuť do života všetkým generáciám. Stretnutia a rozhovory so sestrou Lenkou mnohým dodávajú chuť radosne a ochotne žiť a slúžiť Bohu a ľuďom. Jej modlitby podopierajú a prihovárajú sa za jej rodinu i za naše zborové spoločenstvo. Sestra Wetrovetzová je mocným svedectvom Božej milosti, ktorá sa prejavuje v pokornom, milujúcom a Pánu Bohu odovzdanom srdci. Milá sestra, zo srdca Vám prajeme veľa radosti, pokoja, Božieho požehnania, ako aj síl od nášho Nebeského Otca.



Lenka Wetrovetz



Ntasha Legierski and Donna Nesvadba

Naše ďalšie jubilantky, Donna a Nataša majú najmä v oblasti duchovnej služby veľa spoločného. Zatiaľ čo Nataša vyučuje Nedeľnú školu detí, Donna hrá na klavíri v Nedeľnej škole dospelých. Aj v spevokole slúžia spoločne—Donna klavírnym doprovodom a Nataša dirigovaním. Počas Bohoslužieb ich opäť môžete vidieť v službe spolu; kým jedna hrá na klavíri, druhá je organistkou. Donna tiež organizuje požehnanú službu skupinky oslavných piesní v našom kostole a spolu s Natašou v nej aj spievajú. Naším krajanom v Toronte tiež slúžia spoločne, ako pri Českom a

Slovenskom Dni Kanady, tak aj pri Večeri Vianočných Kolied a pri ďalších krajanových podujatiach. V rámci našej Konvencie sestra Nataša slúži ako šéfredaktor časopisu, ktorý práve držíte v rukách a spolu s Donnou prispievajú svojím hudobným talentom a službou aj počas Výročných stretnutí našej Konvencie.

Milé sestry, prajeme Vám ešte veľa nadšenia, tvorivých síl a požehnania vo Vašej duchovnej službe, ako aj v osobnom a rodinnom živote.

Československý baptistický zbor v Toronte  
Rev. Ján Banko





little New Testament. It was on one afternoon during summer vacation that I decided to read the entire New Testament (I did not yet own a Bible at that time). And so I read whenever I had a spare moment, with the drive that usually accompanies resolve. I will perhaps never forget that afternoon when I read about the crucifixion. In my childhood's imagination I began to visualize in detail how it must have happened and how much it hurt. I read no further. The rest of my spare time was spent crying in sorrow over Christ's suffering. I realized that he had suffered for my sins as well. And this picture has guided me throughout my whole life. I suppose that for this reason I don't like to watch films of the gospel. The director's imagination conflicts with mine (which I guard, understandably).

While viewing the reproduction of Grünewald's painting I noticed the details. I realized that during the course of passing years it was as if my own notion of the details had faded. We are reminded of the events of Easter every year. Yes, we have gotten used to them. The extreme drama of Easter has been replaced by information, which has been neatly packed away in our memory. During Easter we brush up somewhat on this information and store it away in our memories once again. Maybe they have become commonplace. I think back once again to that afternoon from my childhood so long ago, when I had such a vivid picture of the horror of death and suffering on the cross. Yes, the Lord Jesus went through all of that for me—for humankind and salvation for human beings. And this valuable painting also testifies about this salvation. The author of this painting wanted to help people appreciate how horrible the death that the Lord Jesus had to go through was, and most importantly, that he brought salvation.

Given that I have named this issue preciousness, what is for me true sacrifice of the Lord Jesus on the cross? What is it for you, dear reader?

*For God so loved the World that He gave His only begotten Son, so that whosoever believes in Him will not perish, but have eternal life (John 3:16).*

Editor-in-Chief *Natasha Legierski*  
Translated by *Elizabeth Legierski*



často předsevzetí provází. To odpoledne, kdy jsem četla o ukřižování, snad nikdy nezapomenu. Ve své dětské fantazii jsem si do detailu začala představovat, jak se to asi odehrávalo a jak moc to bolelo. Dál už jsem nečetla. Zbytek volné chvíle (před pokračováním vykonávání povinností rodičemi uloženými) jsem proplakala litostí nad Kristovým utrpením. Uvědomovala jsem si, že trpěl i za mé hříchy. A tato představa mne provází celý život. Předpokládám, že z tohoto důvodu se nerada dívám na zfilmovaná evangelia. Představitost režisérova se neshoduje s mou představivostí. (Pochopitelně si tu moji představu střežím.)

Při pohledu na kopii Grünewaldova obrazu jsem si všimla detailů. Uvědomila jsem si, že v průběhu let mi z té mé vlastní představy detaily jakoby vymizely. Velikonoční události se připomínají každým rokem. Ano, zvykli jsme si na ně. Dramatičnost velikonoce se proměnila ve znalosti, které se v paměti uložily. Při velikonočních se znalosti poněkud oprášily a opět se uložily. Možná i zevšedněly. Vzpoměla jsem si znovu na to dávné odpoledne z mého dětství, kdy jsem si živě představila hrůzu smrti a utrpení na kříži. Ano, to všechno Pán Ježíš vykonal pro mne—pro lidstvo a spasení člověka. A o tom vydává svědectví i tento vzácný obraz. Autor obrazu chtěl pomoci si uvědomit, jaká hrůza byla smrt, co Pán Ježíš vykonal a hlavně, že přinesl spasení.

Jestliže nazývám toto dílo vzácností, čím je pro mne skutečná obět Pána Ježíše na kříži? Čím je pro tebe, milý čtenáři?

*Nebo tak Bůh miloval svět, že Syna svého jednorozeného dal, aby každý, kdo uvěří v Něho nezahynul, ale měl život věčný. (Jan 3:16)*

Šéfredaktorka *Natasha Legierská*



flow of information, detailing conflict, as well as the forms, which conceal and reveal other forms. (visit [www.paintinggalleries.net](http://www.paintinggalleries.net)).

The Isenheim Altar is nine feet tall and sixteen feet wide when closed. It is composed of panels which open in a variety of ways. Scenes from the life of Jesus are painted on these panels, one of which is entitled *The Crucifixion*. A copy of the painted panel entitled *The Resurrection* was created for the same museum by Maria's mother, Antonie Lanikova (Gabanek).

Maria Gabankova lives with her husband Ales Brezina in Toronto and attends the Czechoslovak Baptist Church.

*Natasha Legierski*, translated by *Elizabeth Legierski*



Obrazy Marie zachycují každodenní život, ve světě zaplaveným množstvím informací a konfliktů a různé formy, které zastírají nebo odhalují formy další. (Viz [www.paintinggalleries.net](http://www.paintinggalleries.net))

Isenheimský oltář je téměř 9 stop vysoký a 16 stop široký, když je zavřený. Skládá se z panelů, které se otvírají. Na panelech jsou namalovány scény ze života Pána Ježíše. Jedním z nich je *Ukřižování*. Kopii dalšího obrazu *Vzkříšení* pro totéž muzeum namalovala maminka Marie, Antonie Laniková (Gabánková).

Maria Gabánková žije se svým manželem Alešem Brezinou v Torontu a navštěvují Československý baptistický sbor.

*Natasha Legierská*





## Radio 7 is alive! 24 hours daily with Czech and Slovak programs!

Last time we shared some responses from the Czech listeners. Here are some responses from a few of the Slovak listeners. Their notes point out the importance of the not only the Satellite broadcasting but also using the Internet.

*I am excited that I can listen the Radio7 broadcasts. Everything that I have heard there was perfect! When I turn on my computer at the same time I turn on Radio7. The programs with their new style are delightful, refreshing and full of enthusiasm. For now, I like it! I wish you a lot of creativity and strength!*

Another listener says:

*It is beautiful to listen to you! I praise God that we have such a medium in Slovakia that God has in His own hands!*

Even foreigners can listen (that is, Slovaks in other countries):

*I can listen to Radio7 via internet in Italy very well. I hope that broadcasting will continue fine. May God bless you. The evangelization is very important in this world of reality show.*

One person even uses it as an alarm clock!

*Congratulations! With your radio I wake up joyfully!*

You can listen, too! On your computer browser go to [www.radio7.sk](http://www.radio7.sk) or if you prefer the Czech version go to [www.radio7.cz](http://www.radio7.cz). Or do both and tell me which is better.

*George Cooper, for TWR Czech and TWR Slovakia*

□

## Rádio 7 je živé! 24 hodin denne s Českými a Slovenskými programami!

Minule sme sa s vami podelili o reakcie od českých poslucháčov. Tu je niekoľko reakcií od zopár slovenských poslucháčov. Ich pripomienky zdôrazňujú dôležitosť nie len satelitného vysielania, ale aj použitia internetu.

*Som nadšený, že môžem počúvať Rádio7. Všetko, čo som si doteraz vypočul, je super! Keď si sadnem za počítač, hneď si zapínam Rádio7. Programy sú svojím novým štýlom príjemné, občerstvujúce, plné nadšenia. Zatiaľ mi to "sedí". Prajem veľa tvorivosti a síl!*



Iný poslucháč hovorí:

*Je to nádherné počúvať Vás! Chválim Boha za to, že na Slovensku je také médium, ktoré má Boh v jeho vlastných rukách!*

Dokonca cudzinci môžu počúvať (Slováci v iných krajinách):  
*V Taliansku môžem počúvať Rádio 7 výborne aj cez internet. Dúfam, že sa vysielaniu bude dariť. Nech Vás Boh žehná. Evanjelizácia je dôležitá v dnešnom svete reality show.*

Jeden človek Rádio7 dokonca používa ako budík!  
*Gratulujem! S vaším rádiom sa mi vstáva radostne!*

Môžeš počúvať tiež! V počítači zadaj vo vyhľadávači [www.radio7.sk](http://www.radio7.sk) alebo ak uprednostňuješ českú verziu zadaj [www.radio7.cz](http://www.radio7.cz) alebo skus obidva a povedz mi ktoré je lepšie.

*George Cooper za TWR Česko a TWR Slovensko preložila: Miroslava Kopčoková*

□



**Check our Convention Web page:  
[www.ab.edu/czslbaptconv](http://www.ab.edu/czslbaptconv)**



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## The Triumphant Ascension... Continues from page 35

alone every royal and legal right can be ascribed because he is the only one occupying the endless eons.

The eternal **Logos** appeared *'full of grace and truth'* with the final salvation which he carried in his enfleshment (*John 1:14*). The awe-inspiring Pantocrator will again be manifested, armed with the final redemption (*Romans 13:11; Philippians 3:20; Psalm 87*). At his birth he appeared to deal with sin and offer free salvation to those who would apprehend it by faith. In his epiphany he will deliver those who eagerly wait for him to bring final salvation. Christ fulfilled God's eternal objective by making atonement for sinners and rescuing all those destined for reconciliation and ultimate glorification. The Incarnation is linked to redemption. The ascension is bound to his priestly manifestation in heaven. His brilliant epiphany heralds his universal domination. His feet left Mt. Olivet (*cf. Acts 1:12; in Luke 24:50, Bethany, which is at the foot of the Mount*). The same feet will touch the Mt. of Olives (*cf. Zechariah 14:4*) with phenomenal manifestations. *"Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven"* (*Acts 1:11*). He alone will bring into order the universal disorderliness.

Peter who witnessed the ascension describes in irrefutable terms Christ's epiphany and the reward he will bring: *"And when the Chief Shepherd is manifested you will obtain the unfading crown of glory"* (*I Peter 5:4*). Christ's apostle also reminds the believers of their lost state from which they returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of their souls (*cf. I Peter 2:25*). The unfading crown of glory is the valid anticipation of the Chief Shepherd's sheep. During his trial by the Sanhedrin the high priest roared: *"I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God"* (*Matthew 26:63*). Christ replied with authoritative composure: *"You have said so. But I tell you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven"* (*Matthew 26:64*).

The manifestation of the sovereign Christ could not even be discussed without his ascension (*cf. Acts 1:11*). Likewise, the descent of the Holy Spirit could not become a reality without the Lord's ascension (*cf. John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7*). In our age, the ascended Christ is present where two or three meet in his name (*cf. Matthew 18:20; I Corinthians 5:4b*). The Lord's Supper reminds us of his being presently in heaven with his Father. Until he comes we remember him in relation to his suffering (*cf. I Corinthians 11:26*). The beloved disciple John comes to every believer with a solemn admonition: *"Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure (I John 3:3)*. Then we shall behold him in his power and glory. *"Even so, come, Lord Jesus!"* (*Revelation 22:20*).

□



## Země patří Hospodinu

Nataša Legierská

Země patří Hospodinu  
od samého počátku

procházím se údolím  
má ústa jsou němá

spatřuji dotek Boží ruky  
v nepatrné větvičce keře chvějící se v ranním vánku  
v kapce rosy v níž se zrcadlí vycházející slunko  
nové ráno  
krásné ráno  
přicházející po tisíceletí stejným způsobem  
a přesto jinak  
unikátní  
neopakovatelné  
další ráno  
darované Bohem  
dýchající novou nadějí  
nadějí na den v němž se splní přání  
touha  
možná úsilí oslaví úspěch

Země patří Hospodinu

a vše na ní  
velehory svědčí o Jeho díle  
svěží pramínek stékající do údolí  
omývající oblázky proměňující je v zrnka písku  
opěvuje Jeho slávu  
šumění lesů dotváří harmonii  
údolím se nese chorál

v údivu nad dílem Stvořitele  
z úst vyklouzne povzdech úžasu  
co je člověk  
že ho máš ve své patrnosti Hospodine

March 12, 2006



## John A. Jeren, Sr.

September 22, 1917 – April 24, 2006

On April 24<sup>th</sup> of this year, my grandfather, John Jeren Sr. closed his eyes to this world only to wake up in the presence of our dear Savior. Even as his life on this earth was coming to an end, he held fast to his favorite verse, Romans 8:28. “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” He trusted those words throughout his entire life and had tremendous peace and comfort in the end because he knew that God had always been and was now in control.

He was born September 22, 1917, in Youngstown, Ohio to parents Anthony and Anna (Schulick) Jeren. It was at a young age that he developed his adventurous spirit and curious mind. He often told the story of his “great escape” at the age of five. He missed his grandparents who lived two miles away and decided that he would simply travel the distance to visit them! That little visit began a lifetime of adventure that would lead him on travels across America and around the world. He graduated from Campbell Memorial High School in June of 1936 and was a 1947 graduate of Youngstown College, where he received a bachelor’s degree in business administration. He was a public accountant at H.L. Libby Co. in Youngstown, where he served as vice president from 1947 to 1984, and was the finance director for the City of Campbell from 1990 to 1994.

As my family members and I have reflected on his life in these past few weeks, two words continue to come to mind. Faithfulness and Service. John A. Jeren Sr. was a loyal and faithful man. Whenever he made a commitment or a promise he remained true to his word. He was faithful to his country and served bravely during WWII in the Air Force. He was faithful to his community and loyally volunteered for organizations like Meals on Wheels and was a longtime member of the downtown Kiwanis, serving on its Board of Directors.

In regard to family, my grandfather was dedicated and devoted in a way that I’ve seen few others model. He loved my grandmother, the former Irene (Struharik) Jeren, whom he married September 6, 1941, in such a tender way. Their love and life together truly left a legacy on this earth. I can still see the twinkle in his eyes whenever he talked about their first date to see the premiere of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. His children, my father John A. Jeren Jr. and the late Linda (Jeren) Hanzel were the apples of his eye. He adored them and supported both of them in every way

imaginable. He welcomed their spouses (Marjorie Jeren and Donald Hanzel) in to his family as though they were his own children and because of that, as both expressed at his funeral, he had an enormous impact upon their decisions to follow Jesus Christ.



As a grandfather, from my experience, there could be no better. Children need grandparents in their life to offer support and wisdom. They need someone who will cheer them on during the good times and when the going gets tough. Grandpa was always the loudest in the cheering section of my life. Sometimes it was a bit embarrassing, such as when he introduced my twin sister and I as up and coming Olympic Athletes during a time in our lives when we were heavily involved in track-n-field or when he would pass out newspaper articles to

complete strangers about my cousins’ and older sister and younger brother’s accomplishments. During those moments I was a little embarrassed, however he got his point across. In his eyes, we were stars and he wanted to share how much he loved us with the world! He took so much time to express his love for each of his six grandchildren that there was no doubt in our minds how much he cared for us.

As loyal as he was to his country, community and family there was one loyalty that far surpassed all others; his loyalty and allegiance to the Lord Jesus Christ. Every aspect of his life was lived in service and obedience to Him. He laid down his life to be a blessing for others. Whether it was family members, friends or complete strangers, he was always ready to show Christ’s love to anyone in need. He spent time with the Lord daily and cherished time in prayer and in God’s Word. I was able to witness this first hand when he and I traveled to England a few years ago and spent two weeks together traveling. Though we would spend long days sight-seeing and visiting former British Air Force friends, he would never be too tired to neglect kneeling in prayer before the Lord. It was a beautiful witness to me and spoke louder than any words ever could.

He was a charter member of Christ Community Church, formerly known as the First Baptist Church of Campbell, where he served as treasurer for 50 years. He was also the treasurer of the Czechoslovak Baptist Convention of USA and Canada for 38 years. He loved attending convention and often shared his memories from the earliest conventions in Chicago, Minitonas, Windsor, Hatch Hollow, Cleveland, and

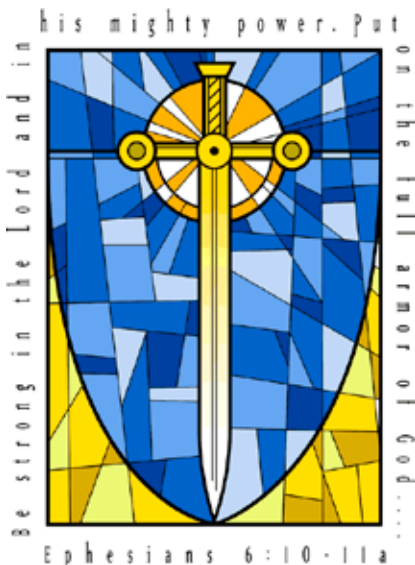
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## Needed: Crabgrass Preventer

By Brian Dors

As spring has settled in, I am finding time to work outside. Most of the time I enjoy keeping my lawn lush, green, and weed free. But one of the enemies of my lawn is crabgrass. It is an ugly wild grass that moves into lawns and, left unchecked, spreads quickly, crowding out everything around it.

One way to combat crabgrass is to use a fertilizer with crabgrass preventer. For unlike other weeds that can be killed after they have sprouted, the key to controlling crabgrass is to prevent it from gaining a foothold. The fertilizer is spread and acts as a barrier at the soil surface to prevent crabgrass from ever popping up.



In this the Lord has shown me a parallel to our lives. We must be careful to provide an environment that does not allow sin to gain a foothold, for once it has, it is very difficult to rip out, and often damages the surrounding desirable grasses in our lives, hurting our loved ones, our reputation, and our witness. It is much better to prevent this from happening by using a preventer, or a barrier. The Armor of God is just such a barrier that we are blessed to have. Let us read and meditate on Ephesians 6:10-8, to make prayer a habit, and not allow sinful thoughts to gain a foothold in our lives.

□



## Spring

Eva Zila

Spring is a time when most flowers grow,  
When the wind will arise with a sweet scent and blow.  
The daffodils hold their golden trumpet heads high,  
They look strait up proudly with no fear and no sigh.

The grass is the greenest in this weather, yes,  
It rains a lot, blooms a lot; you've taken a good guess.  
The tulips now spring up their beauty is near,  
As the other trees rejoice, with a joyful quiet cheer.

Hurray! our snow blanket is finally gone,  
The sun's golden sunlight is again turned on.  
The Pansy the Hyacinth the Lilies all grew,  
They know that God made them; they know it's true.

### In Memory... Continues from page 42

Toronto. He used the gifts that God had given him to be of service for the Lord. Along with his gifts, he used his time wisely on this earth. I remember a conversation we had shortly after my grandmother passed away. During that conversation he told me that he knew and had always believed that God knows exactly how many days we will be on this earth. He was determined to live every one of his days for the Lord. He did just that. As his days grew shorter on this earth, he experienced many losses and went through some difficult experiences but refused to sit and feel sorry for himself. Instead, he went about serving others and continued to be a blessing to many.

Though he is missed greatly by all those who knew and loved him, his passing brought about joy with the thought that he is now with the Lord whom he loved and served throughout his life. I smile because I know that the Lord embraced John Jeren Sr. and welcomed him with the words, "Well, done thy good and faithful servant." His life of faithfulness and devotion left footprints that those left behind are now able to follow.

*Suzanne (Jeren) Lantz*

□

## Spring is Here!

Natasha Legierski

A ray of sunshine mischievously tickled Susan the squirrel's nose. It was a beautiful morning and Suzy was still asleep. Her red fur coat glistened like red gold, shimmering in the sun's bright rays. Suzy opened one eye, the other eye, then she groaned and turned over so that her back was to the sun. Suddenly the door to her room opened.

"Wake up Suzy, spring is here!" Mother squirrel called, opening the windows.

"Why? There's no school today!" mumbled Suzy, and yawned.

"There's no school, but it's a beautiful day, just made for a proper spring cleaning!" answered Mother Squirrel. The word 'cleaning' sat Suzy up. What kind of cleaning? she thought to herself. Why, their house is always clean! Mom makes sure of that. 'You can tell what state your heart is in by seeing what your room looks like.' Suzy reminded herself

of her mother's words and slowly got up. Mother squirrel seemed to read the young squirrel's mind: "How can you have peace and order in your heart when a mess surrounds you?" Mother always said this when Suzy didn't feel like cleaning.

During breakfast Mother went over the day's plans with Suzy. By the time evening came, together they would have the whole house clean. They lived in a big oak. Many things had piled up in the house over the winter months. Mother wanted to have the house perfectly spotless—why, Easter would be coming soon!

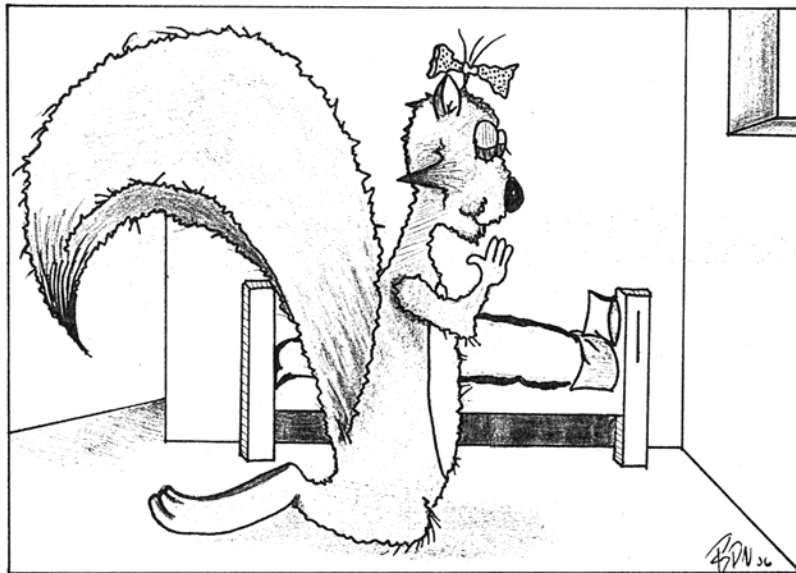
Suzy knew that Easter was a very special holiday. She had learned about Easter in Sunday school. She also knew that this holiday meant salvation for everyone who believes. She knew John 3:16 by heart. In Sunday school they competed to see who could remember the verse the fastest. Suzy was second. The squirrel who lived across from her family was first.

The scent of spring wafted through the open windows

into the house. Suzy felt joy in her heart. She began working with enthusiasm. She wanted to be a real, useful helper. When she was beating the carpets, Suzy noticed that even the neighbor in the oak beside her was diligently cleaning the windows. They shone so that you couldn't even look straight at them for very long. Suzy waved cheerfully at the neighbor. While the sun was setting, she brought the aired-out bed sheets back into the house. The house was

so clean it shone! Even Dad was home by this time. After dinner he got the big black book and read aloud about how Jesus had been beaten, whipped and crucified. He had died on the cross forsaken by everyone. Suzy pushed back tears.

"We will read about how Jesus rose from the dead tomorrow," said Dad, and closed the book. They all joined



paws and prayed the Fireflies' prayer:

*Heavenly Father, here we stand,  
Guide us with your gentle hand.*

*Help, oh help us every day  
All your wishes to obey.*

*Make us strong your will to do,  
Make us kind and loving too. Amen.*

Susan was just falling asleep when she heard Mom's voice. She was telling Dad what they had done all day and how happy she was with Suzy's help. Without her, Mom would have still been working, and everything wouldn't be done.

A satisfied smile settled under the young squirrel's nose, and her heart felt strangely warm....

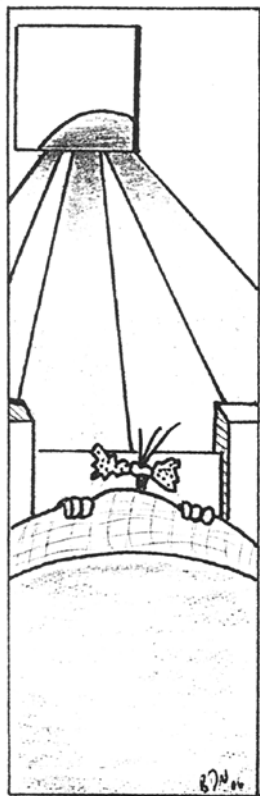
Translated by *Elizabeth Legierski*  
Illustration: *Ben Nelson*

□



# Jaro je tu!

Nataša Legierská



S luneční paprsek rozpustile pošimral veverku Zuzanku po čumáčku. Bylo krásné ráno a Zuzka ještě spala. Její zrzavý kožíšek se třpytil při doteku paprsku jako rudé zlato. Zuzka otevřela jedno oko, druhé oko, potom nimi zamžourala a otočila se zády k paprsku. V tom se do pokojíčku otevřely dveře. „Vstávej, Zuzanko, jaro je tu!“ probouzela maminka veverušku a otevřela okenice. „Proč? Dnes přece není škola!“ zamumlala Zuzka a zívla. „Škola sice není, ale je krásný den, jako stvořený pro pořádný jarní úklid!“ odpověděla maminka Veverka. Slovo úklid Zuzku posadilo. „Jaký úklid?“ přemýšlela. Vždyť mají uklizeno stále! Na to maminka dbá. „Podle toho, jak vypadá tvůj pokojíček,

se pozná, v jakém stavu je tvé srdéčko“, připomíná si maminičina slova a pomalu vstává. Maminka jakoby četla veverčiny myšlenky: „Jak můžeš mít pořádek v srdéčku, když máš kolem sebe nepořádek?“ Toto maminka Veverka říkávala vždy, když se Zuzce do úklidu nechtělo.

Při snídani maminka seznámila Zuzku s plánem na celý den. Do večera měly spolu vyčistit domeček. Bydlely na velikém dubu. V domečku se mnoho přes zimu nashromáždilo. Maminka chtěla mít domeček krásně čistý, vždyť budou velikonoce! To, že jsou velikonoce vzácné svátky, Zuzka věděla. Učila se o nich v nedělní škole. Také věděla, že znamenají spásu pro každého, kdo uvěří. Zнала z paměti verš Jan 3,16. V nedělní škole soutěžili, kdo si verš zapamatuje nejrychleji. Byla druhá. Veverka od naproti byla rychlejší.

Vůně jara pronikala otevřenými okny do domečku. Zuzka pocítila radost v srdéčku. S chutí se pustila do práce. Chtěla být opravdovou a užitečnou pomocnicí. Když vyklepávala koberce, všimla si, že i u sousedů, na vedlejší dubě pečlivě čistí okna. Leskla se, až oči pře-

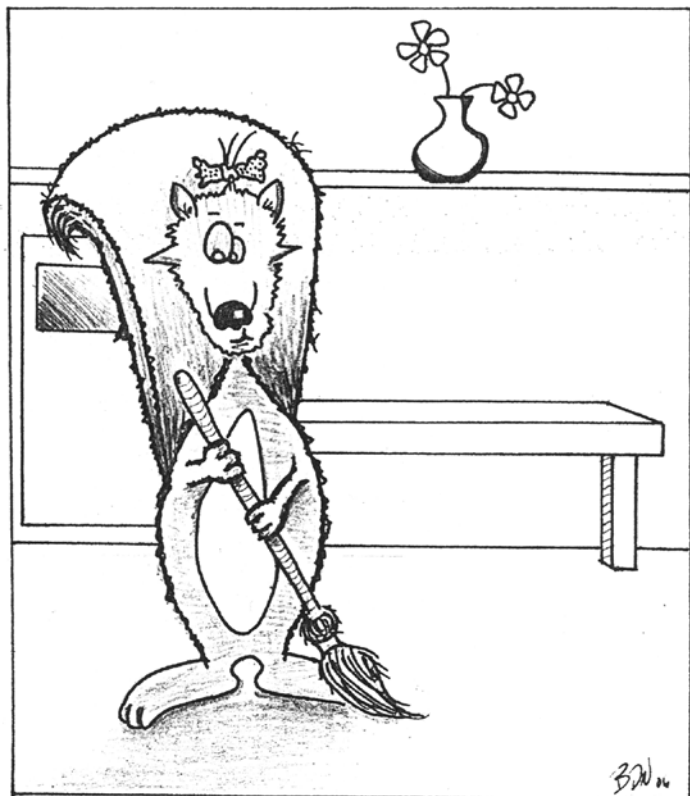
cházely. Zuzka sousedům vesele zamávala. Při západu slunce zanesla vyvětrané peřiny zpět do domečku. Celý čistotou jen zářil! To už byl doma i tatínek. Po večeři vzal velkou černou knihu a četl nahlas o tom, jak byl Pán Ježíš zrazený, zbičovaný a ukřižovaný. Docela opuštěný na tom kříži zemřel. Zuzce se tlačily slzy do očí. „O tom, jak vstal Pán Ježíš z mrtvých si přečteme zítra“, řekl tatínek a zavřel knihu. Podaly si pacičky a modlily se modlitbičku Broučků:

*V podvečer tvá čeládka,  
jak k slepici kuřátka,  
k ochraně tvé hledíme,  
laskavý Hospodine. Amen.*

Zuzanka už téměř spala, když zaslechla maminčin hlas. Vyprávěla tatínkovi o tom, co celý den dělaly a jak velikou radost má ze Zuzančiny pomoci. Bez ní by to všechno jistě nestihla udělat.

Veverušce se pod čumáčkem usadil blažený úsměv a u srdíčka ji tak zvláštně hrálo....

Ilustrace: Ben Nelson



For a lot of the Christian church around the world, Pentecost Sunday (recalling the events of Acts 2) is specifically observed annually on the seventh Sunday, or fifty days, after Easter. This year the date was June 4. Pentecost represents the birthday of the church. If you read, or remember, the second chapter of Acts, the great event of that day centered around Peter's quite remarkable sermon in Jerusalem recalling recent events relating to the death and resurrection of Jesus. It was an inaugural sermon for the church as we know it.

Did he ever get the ball rolling! Probably no one had less idea than the old fisherman himself what all was going to happen from that point onward. And remember, he had no seminary degree, no higher education background, no church building in which to hold forth. Yet he preached up a mighty storm. It was like the rush of a violent wind was present, according to Acts 2:2. Peter simply went into the great out-of-doors, looked around at a considerable number of people who previously had been approvingly present when Jesus was put to death, and spoke himself boldly up. Listen, he said to them, here's the rest of the story about what was done that you do not know. And then he let the words of searing speech fly. (Either that, or the Holy Spirit who is God's deep wind blew Peter's remarks all over the place, profoundly into the souls of several thousand folks. At the end of it all, the response to 'altar call' went far beyond what anyone could have predicted.

One of the companion Old Testament texts to this New Testament Pentecost story takes shape in Ezekiel 37: 1-14, where you come across that most memorable vision of a valley filled with brittle, bleached bones. About this incredible scene, God and the prophet wrestle over this question: Can the lifeless, disconnected pieces of dead bodies ever amount to anything again? We might think it a very odd question indeed, but you know how the New Testament speaks of the common human condition as "dead in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1). Well, that provides some commentary on this valley of dry bones—remains of human life and experience going to dust.

In reading these three vivid paragraphs of Ezekiel's writing, you end up watching the bones reassemble—blown back together by a mighty wind, clanging and banging against one another as the wind drives them hither, thither, and yon. And somehow sinews begin knitting old bones together, muscles wrap them, flesh encases the skeletal pieces. The gale blowing around the bottomlands of that old valley whistles and howls, producing an ethereal music, a little scary even. Whatever else, here was the message: God at work, regenerating crashed lives reduced to almost nothing at all. By a power beyond earth's



capability to comprehend, all that discarded humanity began to rise, thrive, and breathe with a breath of divine origin.

St. Paul wrote more or less like this: Whoever is in Christ is a new creation; all things are made new out of old stuff passed away.

This, brothers and sisters, is our state of affairs, all our hope forever. Once in the valley where we lived out our death, a rumbling could be heard. It was the force of the Spirit of a living God come to visit a bad place. And the Spirit blew all over us.

In its aftermath, by the grace of God we have come back to reconstructed, reconstituted, changed lives, intended for purposes much larger than we ever dreamed of in our old way of going through life's motions. The return of silent old ugly bones to new energies and integrity of purpose in our days is what Peter was preaching for. It is what our convention was born into ninety-seven years ago. It is what lies behind all our hopes, commitment, and calling to reach the world with transforming gospel. Here is our message: You don't have to dwell in the land of crusted death any longer.

Hear the wind blow? Feel the breeze? It is God moving, the Spirit doing breathing all around you, all the time.

As the Ezekiel story winds down and its imagery of the Valley of Dry Bones begins to break up like a dream giving way to first barely awakening moments after sleep, receding words echo forward from the far back of this incredible vision. It is Ezekiel 37's parting shot—God's voice, withdrawing but leaving nevertheless a final postscript, an unforgettable promise to draw all things back to right conclusion among all the bones transferred to full life. "You shall live," says the Lord, "and I will give you your own place where to stand." Surely this spot is the "higher ground" that one of our old gospel songs so zestfully sang out. Land rising way above the valley! A place in the sun (or should we say, "the Son")! A steadfast, unmovable

positioning for the children of God in the Kingdom of God!

Now I cannot help but hear overtones from a parable of Jesus concerning a nobleman going away for a long trip and summoning ten of his staff for last-minute instructions. "Occupy until I return," he summed the whole thing up. Doesn't that tell it all? And isn't that the thing we are seeking to do in the "place" (Ezekiel 37:14) where, by a new and

I will put breath in you,  
and you will come to life.  
Ezekiel 37:6



Continues on page 47

## Convention...

Esther Tarr



Here we are, looking forward to Convention in July once again. Time seems to have flown by while we enjoyed Mother's Day, the coming of spring flowers and warm and sunny days.

Here are some of the answers given by grade two students who were asked the following question: What is the difference between Moms and Dads? 1. Moms work at work and work at home, and dads just go to work to work. 2. Moms know how to talk to teachers without scaring them! 3. Moms are magic, they make you feel better without medicine!

We have a Heavenly Father who through His love makes us better without medicine! This past year many of us have gone through troubled times and health issues, but knowing that our Heavenly Father has provided us with all that we need when we trust in Him makes our daily walk much lighter!

I would like to encourage you to attend Convention in Philippi for a time of refreshing of your mind, body and spirit. The ladies from Toronto will be providing special music, and our speaker for the Ladies' Missionary Rally will be Vera Titerova.


Look forward to seeing you all there!!!!

□

## President... Continues from page 46

living hope, God has put this convention? In our particular "place" we are drawing near each other and together closing in on God. We want to take seriously the Lord's directions for the future till he returns. We expect to hold onto the "place" we have been given and where our feet have been set.

We'll be doing those very things in Philippi, WV, at the 97<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention, July 6-9. Come take your place with us, won't you, and feel the Spirit's breath like a Pentecost wind. Something new and alive will happen, I sure hope.

  
Robert Dvorak

## A ---- of a Century Young

On behalf of the entire convention, I want to express our great thanks to **Natasha Legierski** for her steady, creative work as editor of *Glorious Hope*. We are mindful of Natasha this springtime as she reached an important birthday on May 11<sup>th</sup>. I won't tell you exactly which one it was, but think in terms of half a dollar or half way through a century. You'll be in the right vicinity of an intelligent guess concerning Natasha's new status in life.



Many greetings and wishes to Natasha, a good friend to all of us, a leader in the convention, and a person of commitment to the Lord and to faith in what we can do together in God's service. Health, joy, and peace in the second half, Natasha.

Robert Dvorak

□

## Donation

**All donation** should be send in enclosed envelope.

The checks will be delivered to right financial secretaries. (Vera Dors, Henry Pojman, Grace Niswonger or Donna Nesvadba.)

- **Gifts for Ladies' work**—make check payable to **Czechoslovak Baptist Women's Missionary Union**.
- **Gifts for Convention**—make check payable to **Czechoslovak Baptist Convention**. On the bottom of the check mark to what account you are sending your contribution: Convention, *Glorious Hope*, Trust Fund, or Scholarship Fund.

☞ You may send separate check (one for Ladies and one for convention accounts) in the same envelope.

☞ If you are sending contributions for **convention** (Convention, *Glorious Hope* etc., you may send only one check, and write on the bottom how you want to divide the amount (for example: Total \$150; \$100 Convention, \$50 *Glorious Hope* etc.) You do not have to send two separate checks.

For your information, financial secretaries' addresses are as follows:

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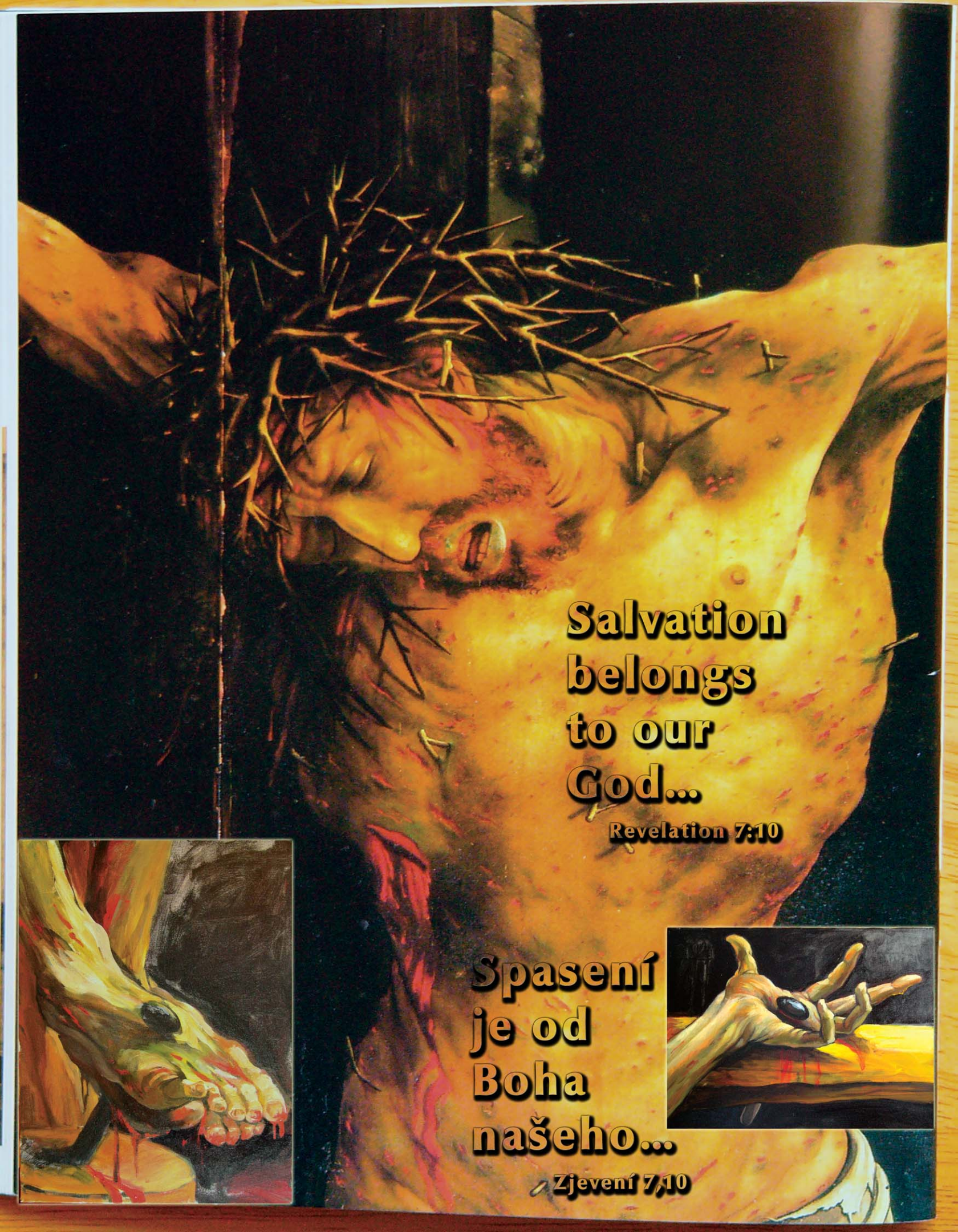
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Middleburg Hts, OH, 44130

### Canada:

Henry Pojman  
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Oakville, ON L6M 4P2







**Salvation  
belongs  
to our  
God...**

**Revelation 7:10**



**Spasení  
je od  
Boha  
našeho...**



**Zjevení 7,10**