



Do we know how to stop? Our current style of life is one of always being in a hurry. As we move through our busy days, weeks and months, we finally reach the time of summer vacation. Working mothers are especially aware of this when they feel they have little strength left as they strive to take care of everything and not miss any of the children's school-related and extra-curricular activities. Then

during summer vacation the rhythm of daily life changes. Children don't need to go to school; it is a time of rest from work.

One of the negative traits of our society is the inability to rest. Without even realizing it, people are always rushing after something. Even during vacation, there is the desire to see and do as much as possible. Certainly there is nothing wrong with wanting to see new places. However, it is necessary to find the right balance. Rest follows work the way calm follows a storm. In other words, we must know how to stop, rest and still ourselves. Several months ago I was reading from Isaiah, Chapter 30, and the following words from verse 15 spoke to me: "In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength." In this lies the great secret of a balanced lifestyle within the ultra-modern society of the 21st century. To truly calm oneself before the Almighty, it is necessary to fully submit to His will.

We had one such opportunity for rest at the beginning of this summer at the Czechoslovak Baptist Convention in Philippi. In the beautiful surroundings of West Virginia that remind us of the Beskydy mountains in Moravia, we were able to calm ourselves before God. In this issue of our magazine, you will find out what we experienced and what spoke to us. We believe the contents will enrich all of you and that the photographs will help to recreate the atmosphere for those who were not able to attend.

Editor-in-Chief *Natasha Legierski*

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U míme se zastavit?

Současný způsob života se projevuje značnou úspěšností. Vtažení do víru každodenního dění prožíváme den za dnem, týden po týdnu, měsíc po měsíci až se konečně dočkáme prázdnin. Zaměstnané matky pocítují tuto skutečnost zvláště ve chvílích, kdy jim docházejí síly. Přidá-li se k tomu ústřednost o to, jak to všechno zvládnout a nechybět na žádné aktivitě dětí ve škole i mimo školu, může dojít k naprostému vyčerpání. O prázdninách dostane celý ten koloběh jinou podobu. Děti nemusí do školy, je čas dovolených, čas odpočinku od celoroční práce.

Jedním z negativních jevů naší společnosti je neschopnost odpočívat. Člověk, aniž by si toho byl vědom, se musí stále za něčím usilovně hnát. Při dovolených to bývá touha co nejvíce uvidět při cestách po kontinentě, navštívit co nejvíce zajímavostí apod. Jistě není na škodu cestovat a poznávat. Je zde však potřeba naprosté rovnováhy. Po práci následuje odpočinek tak, jako po bouřce přijde utišení. Jinými slovy, člověk se musí umět zastavit. Zastavit se, uklidnit a ztišit se.

Před několika měsíci, při čtení proroka Izaiáše 30. kapitoly,

☞ Pokračování na straně 77



Front Cover: Wilcox Chapel

painting by Vladyslav Vovkanych

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Back Cover: 93rd convention photo by Johnny Prusa



93rd Annual Czechoslovak Baptist Convention of USA and Canada

July 4–7, 2002

Alderson-Broadbush College at Philippi, West Virginia

The Rock of Our Salvation

Dr. Donald Shoff

There is no one holy like the Lord; there is no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God (1 Samuel 2:2).

Names are important. A rural congregation dearly loved their missionary, Bertha Belch. She had gone from their church to serve in Africa, and every home assignment was a big event for that little church. She was coming home, and they decided to invite the community to see her pictures and hear her report. So they put a big sign in front of the church that read Come Hear Bertha Belch—from Africa.

Even when names may not be particularly appealing to us, they are important. Dale Carnegie reminded us that a person's name is, to him, the sweetest sound on earth.

It is significant that one of the ways God has revealed Himself to humankind is through His names. Each of the names for God in Scripture has deep significance because His name is synonymous with Him. To call on His name is to call on God. To forget His name is to forget or to depart from Him.

Before "rock" became a music style, it was a favorite name for God. In her song of praise, Hannah exclaims, "...there is no Rock like our God" (1 Sam. 2:2). Not only in the book of First Samuel but throughout Scripture, God is called the Rock. Moses says of the Lord, "Their rock is not like our Rock, as even our enemies concede," (Deut 32:31). Repeatedly the Psalmist affirms that "He is our Rock and our salvation." Through the prophet Isaiah, God asks, "Is there any God besides me? No, there is no other Rock; I know not one" (Is 44:8).

Since each of God's names communicates



some aspect of His being, and since God has chosen to reveal Himself as the "Rock," we would do well to seriously ask two questions: What does it mean? And, what does it matter?

What does it mean to say that God is a rock to us? Perhaps to the Western mind, it sounds strange to hear God called a rock. This is due to our lack of understanding of biblical geography and culture. As everyone who has visited Palestine knows, it is a land of rocks. Nothing is more plentiful. It is the primary building material for everything from palaces to common dwellings, and from city walls to fences. You cannot be in that land without encountering rocks. Thus, it is not surprising that Scripture

 Continues on page 83



93rd Convention Delegates

The Rock of Our Salvation

Rev. Joseph Novak

“There is no one holy like the Lord; there is no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God.”

I Samuel 2:2, New International Bible

In this text we have the well-known story of Hannah, the childless wife of Elkanah. Although Elkanah loved Hannah very much (1 Sam. 1:4), and even though she was a very godly person, Hannah was unhappy because she had no children. In those days every Hebrew woman wanted to have a child, especially a son, hoping that he might be the promised Messiah. Childlessness was disgraceful, and it was considered a sign of God’s displeasure with that woman.

Peninnah, the other wife of Elkanah, took advantage of that situation. She mocked Hannah, especially when the family went to worship the Lord Jehovah in Jerusalem each year. We read about it in 1 Samuel 1:6-7. At one of these annual visits to the Temple in Jerusalem, Hannah prayed sincerely and with “bitterness of soul and tears” (1 Sam.1:10). In her prayer she poured out her soul to the Lord in the following words: “O Lord Almighty, if you will only look upon your servant’s misery and remember me, and not forget your servant but give her a son, then I will give him to the Lord for all the days of his life” (1 Sam. 1:11).

My text comes from Hannah’s second prayer, from a prayer of joy and praise after she had received a son from the Lord: “There is no one holy like the Lord; there is no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God.” And she gave her precious son, Samuel, to the Lord.

Rock

Since July 20, 1969, when Neal Armstrong brought several rocks from the moon, many people have started to collect stones. The Bible refers to different places and speaks about many rocks. In Horeb, water came from the rock when Moses was instructed by the Lord to strike it with his rod (Exodus 17:5-6). The apostle Paul tells us that this Rock was Christ (1 Cor. 10:4). Also, Moses stood in a cleft of the rock when God talked with him (Ex.33:21-22). We read in Numbers 20:8 that this time God instructed Moses to speak to a rock in the desert of Zin for water. (This is near the Kadesh Barnea, and only about 150 km. south of Hebron. My wife and I visited this place in March, 1975.) This event happened at the end of their forty-year wandering across the desert. However, instead of speaking to the rock, Moses, in anger, hit it twice (Num. 20:11). Because of this act, Moses did not enter the Promised Land (v. 12).



Rocks in Israel also gave people shelter from the wind and sandstorms, and provided many people and animals with shade, protecting them from the scorching sun.

In our Christian hymnals we have many beautiful songs which compare Jesus to an unchanging and immovable rock. Apparently Augustus M. Toplady was inspired by Isaiah 26:4 when he wrote that beautiful hymn “Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in Thee.” The chorus of another powerful hymn, “My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus’ blood and righteousness,” declares “On Christ the solid Rock I stand; All other

ground is sinking sand.” Today these hymns are translated into many languages and still bring comfort, strength and blessings to millions around the world.

From Romans 9:33 we see that Jesus is also the rock of offence to unbelievers. People stumble and fall into all kinds of sins when they reject Christ, that Chief Cornerstone. Peter repeats this truth in his first letter, 2:8, in which he states, “And the Scriptures also say, ‘He is the Stone that some will stumble over, and the Rock that will make them fall.’ They will stumble because they will not listen to God’s Word, nor obey it, and so this punishment must follow—that they will fall.”

I read about a 16-year-old boy who saved himself from drowning after a boating disaster by clinging all night to a rock. When asked, “Did you not shake when those huge waves were hitting you all night?” he replied, “Yes, I shook all night, but the rock never shook once!” Praise the Lord for this truth! David also declares in Psalm 62:2 that God alone is the rock of his salvation; therefore, he will never be shaken. I hope that Jesus is also your rock.

Salvation

Salvation means being saved from any danger, from drowning, fire or enemy attack. It means deliverance from danger and destruction. In Evangelical Christian language, it means being saved from the consequences of sin and rescued from eternal damnation. As Christians, we understand that the blood of Jesus Christ obtains salvation. It comes to us because of God’s grace. It is a free gift, which must be accepted by faith (Eph. 2:8). It is like a lifeline thrown to a sinking person, or a rescue from a burning automobile. Some years ago, I read this true story about a boy who fell into deep water during a garden party at an English estate. When the gardener heard calls for help, he jumped into the water and rescued the drowning child. That child’s name was Winston Churchill. When the grateful father asked the gardener how he might reward him, he answered with hesitation and humility that he would like to

see his son go to college some day and become a doctor. Mr. Churchill Sr. promised that he would honour that request. Years later when Winston Churchill became Prime Minister of England, he was stricken with severe pneumonia. The country's best doctor was called in. His name was Dr. Alexander Fleming, the discoverer of penicillin. Yes, he was the son of the gardener who had rescued young Winston from drowning, and the doctor who was helped throughout his medical studies by the parents of the Prime Minister.

From Luke 19:10, we know that Jesus came to seek and to save the lost. The following illustration explains this statement. A tourist visiting Norway went to a church. (My wife and I were privileged to visit this Lutheran church in 1998.) He was surprised that there was a carved figure of a lamb near the top of the church tower. He enquired about it and learned that during the construction of the church, a workman had fallen from a high scaffold. His co-workers rushed down, expecting to find him dead. But to their surprise and joy, they saw him alive and only slightly injured. How had he survived a fall from such a height? At the time he fell, a shepherd was walking his sheep by the church. That construction worker landed on a lamb. The lamb was killed, but the man was saved. Jesus is the Lamb of God, who died for fallen mankind. By His death on the Cross of Calvary, He saves us from the danger and damnation of sin. For all those who receive Jesus as their Saviour and Lord, He forgives their sins and makes them His children. Now they, too, like Hannah of the Old Testament, may praise the Lord that He is their deliverer and the Rock of their salvation. (1 Sam. 2:1-2):

"...How I rejoice in the Lord! How he has blessed me! Now I have an answer for my enemies, for the Lord has solved my problem. How I rejoice! No one is as holy as the Lord. There is no other God, nor any Rock like our God." And with the Psalmist they will declare, "God alone is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will never be shaken." And above all, with all believers and angels, they will loudly and triumphantly sing, "Jesus is my Deliverer and the Rock of my salvation."

□

Editorial ... pokračování ze strany 74

mne velice oslovil 15. verš: „V utišení se a v doufání bude síla vaše.“ (Druhá část verše podle Bible kralické). V tom spočívá hluboké tajemství vybalancování života supermoderní společnosti 21. století. Ztišit se před majestátem Všemohoucího je podmíněno naprostým odevzdáním se do Jeho vůle a Jeho vedení. Ztišit se je ekvivalentem slova zastavit.

Jedním takovým zastavením na začátku prázdnin, je naše Československá baptistická konvence ve Philippi. V překrásném prostředí Západní Virginie, připomínající nám pohoří Beskyd na Moravě v České republice, jsme se opět směli ztišit před Boží tváří. Na stránkách tohoto časopisu najdete odraz toho, co jsme prožívali, co nás oslovilo. Věříme, že obsah obohatí všechny čtenáře a fotografie pomohou nastínit atmosféru těm, kteří se nemohli zúčastnit.

Šéfredaktorka *Nataša Legierská*

□



Miluji podzim pro jeho zimní krásu a letní třpyt

Kateřina Jariabková

Miluji podzim
pro trpělivost stromů
stojících a tiše čekajících,
až jim spadá listí.

Miluji podzim
pro padající barevný list,
který se krásně zbarví
a po spadnutí už nečeká, že by ho
někdo zved.

A když přece se smiluje vítr,
tak se zvedne a dopadne tam,
kam ho vítr odvál.

Miluji podzim
pro jeho krutá rána, mírná poledne
a smutné noci.

Miluji podzim
pro jeho spleen,
pro křik havranů,
když přes slunce
jdou mraky jako stín.

Miluji podzim

říjen 1999



Shelter in the Time of Storm

Jozef Kulačík

Psalm 91:1-6

Dear brothers and sisters:

I remember very well the year 1991, when the Gulf War broke out and CNN was reporting live 24 hours a day, producing breathtaking pictures from the scene. It was overwhelming, and even though we were watching it on TV thousands of miles away, we felt threatened and insecure. I also remember the feeling of growing panic as Saddam Hussein decided to attack Israel directly. During these several days of fierce battles, when Israel was suffering the Scud missiles shooting, the conflict reached its climax. The US was the most reliable military ally who stood up for the protection of Israel. Could you recall the night scene as the Scuds hit the suburbs of Tel Aviv? Those were really perilous moments of the Middle East crisis.

The next morning I met a friend of mine. He opened his Bible in the book of Psalms, read Psalm 91 verse by verse, and gave me a unique exegesis on the text. It was really interesting how his explanation perfectly fit the current situation in the utmost detail. It was fascinating to observe how he was involved in the problem. In verse 4, for instance, we read: "He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge...." He was literally reading the text in the context of US Patriots daily successfully destroying the Arab Scuds. The state of Israel should not fear the terror of the night nor the arrow that flies by day (verse 5). Because "He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty" (v. 1). He found an interpretation even for Hussein's threats of chemical weapons in verse 3: "Surely he will save you from the fowler's snare, and from the deadly pestilence." The war was hard, several people fell on the Israeli side, but losses on the part of Iraq were heavy. My friend was reading the verse, "A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand" (v. 7). He even explained the special political treaty that Israel should restrain from any military defense of its own and leave it all to the allies, by verse 8: "You will only observe with your eyes, and see the punishment of the wicked. He saw this Psalm as the prophecy for the year 1991, and even the number of this Psalm was, therefore, symbolic.



Of course, there may be some occurrences in general or in our personal history for which we could find numerous interpretations and parallels in the Scriptures. One true theological meaning of Psalm 91 remains: that whatever the human situation is, God is the Almighty refuge and fortress to His people. No matter how intense a political, social, cultural, or personal crisis may fall upon our lives, God is the supreme and sovereign ruler over all happening.

Dear brothers and sisters, we are very happy that we can share fellowship with you during the days of our Convention. The

Convention of 2002 is the first gathering of our brotherhood after September 11. Huge terrorist attacks in New York and Washington have changed the world, and regardless of our attempts to lead our daily lives as if nothing has happened, we all know that our world is definitely different. Our Euro-American civilization is waging war upon terrorism, and it seems this battle is going to be neither easy nor short. I do not know how you are feeling, traveling maybe much more than I am, but I can tell you we were taking a plane for the first time since September 11, and it was quite a different feeling from before. The fear of terrorism is present everywhere, especially this month, when America was threatened with new strikes.

There has always been fear in humans. People have felt various kinds of fear since ancient times. It is no discovery of the modern age. There have always been things to be afraid of. One can be afraid of the future—what is to come tomorrow? What will happen with my family, my job, my business? Will we be able to raise our children? What if a serious illness came? How will things

go with our church community? Will there always be enough of us to maintain our Czechoslovak Baptist congregations? Or will the American phenomenon take over?

To whom shall we go? That is the elementary philosophical question of human beings. All human fragility, vulnerability, weakness and imperfection is contained in the mere formulation of this question. Only a believer, however, can ask in this way. There is no need of such a question for an atheist. To a certain extent, we could say that the question itself is a deep confession of faith. King David, the famous psalmsinger, knows very well how even God's chosen ones can be fragile, and how deeply

The confession of Psalm 91 is a glorious assurance that we are the children of the Holy and that we will not be abandoned. We are not to go alone in our lives. Even if everyone leaves us, He will never forsake us. It is a great joy that He has given us His Holy Scripture, and He has chosen us to be a part of His church.

he needs to belong to God, how he needs His embrace, His protection, His shelter every day. That is actually not even a question in its regular sense. He is not asking as someone who does not know the answer. He knows and confesses the answer. Psalm 91 is a great testimony of the right answer to this question. The whole book of Psalms, including this one, is a comforting assurance that no other answer is ever thinkable. The writer is not a student seeking an answer that is unknown to him, like a solution to a complicated mathematical problem, not at all! The psalmist does not even admit that the answer to the question could lead elsewhere than to God. No compromise is permissible. Can you imagine David hesitating among several answers, among which the possibility of going nowhere might be included? Absolutely not! David knows exactly the destination, because he knows the way! God is our destination! God is the way!

Psalm 91 was originally intended as comfort to a single person going through afflictions. Yes, we believe in God Almighty as omnipotent and omnipresent ruler of the universe, and at the same time He is a caring Father to each person individually. There is no general humanity on earth that would be more important to Him than you personally. Our God is a personal God. Each individual is under the special protection of the Almighty! "He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High...." This is a special formulation reminding the reader of the protective area of the tabernacle. The Old Testament expression "shadow" was very frequently used and understandable in a country where people were exposed to sunshine and heat. The original text uses a phrase "to stay overnight." Night carried a symbolic meaning in Old Testament language. Night is the danger, in the darkness demonic powers are released. One cannot see through the darkness and can easily get lost. Night cannot be avoided, it is an inevitable cosmological principle. One cannot walk "around the night," but can find shelter in the midst of the night. In the midst of the night of this sinful world, we will find the Most High as our dwelling (v. 9). "He is our Lord and our refuge and fortress, in whom we trust," (v. 2). The expression fortress means stronghold similar to that in which David was hiding while on the run from Saul (1Sam. 22:24). David, escaping Saul's persecution, says in his Psalm 18, verse 3: "I call to the Lord, who is worthy of praise, and I am saved from my enemies...." And in Psalm 31: "...come quickly to my rescue, be my rock of refuge, a strong fortress to save me. Since you are my rock and my fortress, for the sake of your name lead and guide me." There were moments in the life of David when he felt like a bird chased by a hunter. Thus he uses the expression "fowler's snare," a hunter's net meant to catch the Lord's servant. Also "deadly pestilence" represents a trap and damnation, that leaves a person helpless. Dear brothers and sisters, there are many traps, pestilences, snares, and dangers threatening us every day. They are not only external dangers of the world, but often our inner self, perhaps the deadliest pestilence of all. The sinfulness of human beings is the most dangerous enemy of everyone.

Dear brothers and sisters, in the time of storms, whether they are coming from the world around us like severe terrorism

or various disasters, or our own sinfulness threatens us, we are not among those who have no answers and who must fight fearing what will happen, for we can depend on the Lord. We do not know what is to come tomorrow, we do not know the future, but Jesus said: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life," (John 14:6). In the situation when many were doubting and others left Jesus, Peter confessed to the Lord: "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God."

Jesus predicted that as believers we would experience affliction. "In this world you will have trouble. But take heart, I have overcome the world," (John 16:33). "Do not let your hearts be troubled. You trust in God, trust also in me," (John 14). The glorious hope he has given to us to live on in this world also has its eschatological dimension. "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me," says the psalmsinger in Psalm 23. And Jesus describes to his disciples: "In my Father's house are



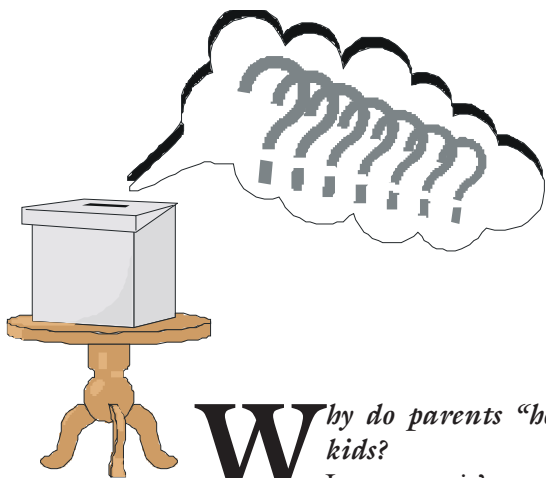
Robert Dvorak, George Sommer, and Jozef Kulačik

many rooms. If it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you," (John 14:2).

The confession of Psalm 91 is a glorious assurance that we are the children of the Holy and that we will not be abandoned. We are not to go alone in our lives. Even if everyone leaves us, He will never forsake us. It is a great joy that He has given us His Holy Scripture, and He has chosen us to be a part of His church. We have brothers and sisters. "Therefore since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." There is no greater comfort than the assurance that no matter what we encounter in our lives, there is no power strong enough to take us from the hands of our Lord. Amen.

This sermon was delivered during the 93rd Czechoslovak Baptist Convention on Saturday evening, July 6, 2002.





Question Box

The Rev. John E. Karenko
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Why do parents “holler” at us kids?

I suppose it’s to attract your attention, like the man who used a baseball bat on his mule’s head ... to attract its attention. However, Biblically speaking, it’s better to be yelled at than to have your parents follow Solomon’s advice in the Book of Proverbs (19:18): “Chasten thy son while there is hope,” and “Correct thy son and he shall give thee rest” (29:17). Tell your parents about these verses and then maybe they’ll obey the Bible and apply some heat to the seat!

Where did Cain get his wife?

Genesis 5:4 says that Adam “begat sons and daughters,” so Cain probably married one of his own sisters, and if you are an unmarried man, may I suggest you also marry a sister, but “only in the Lord” (1 Cor. 7:39), which means a fellow Christian.

I feel “cheated” because I don’t cheat. Everyone cheats at our school.

Everybody sins, but that’s no excuse for us to sin. Cheating breaks both the 8th and 9th commandments, for we steal someone else’s knowledge and claim it’s ours. God keeps good books, and some day we will give “account of ourselves to God” (Rom. 14:12). Honesty is still the best policy.

I have a secret sin I cannot control. What shall I do?

There are no secret sins, because God knows all about it (Heb.4:13), but if we repent and confess our sin to Him, He will forgive all our sin (1 John 1:7,9). Jesus is available to help you (Phil.4:13), and remember this verse: (1 Cor. 10:13), “But remember that the temptations that come into your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will keep the temptation from becoming so strong that you can’t stand up against it. When you are tempted He will show you a way out so you will not give in to it”(1 Cor. 10:13, NLB).

I have trouble understanding the Bible; what do you suggest?

The most popular easy-to-read Bible of recent years has been The Living Bible, which uses the abbreviation LB. It has recently been updated and I recommend it for easy reading. In the answer to the previous question there is a sample of this text; compare it with the KJV.

Can a christian smoke or drink?

Both smoking and drinking are stinky, smelly and filthy habits, costly and harmful to health; sadly, millions in America are their slaves. Paul said, “All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient; all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have of God and ye are not your own? ... Therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Cor. 6:12,19,20).

Literature and TV are increasingly filthy: what can we do?

Object loudly; we Christians need to “stand up and be counted.” Silence is a vote of approval. Sadly, American freedom has become license. I took a “best seller” home from the library and was shocked. I returned it to the librarian and showed her the filthy language, and she took it off the shelf immediately. Call the TV stations and let the politicians know how you feel. The Bible says, “Resist the devil, and he will flee from you” (James 4:7). “Be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, and stand steadfast in the faith” (1 Pet. 5:8,9).

At our school condoms are available free: what gives?

The last time I looked, the Bible still had the verse: “Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body, but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body” (1 Cor. 6:18). I believe STDs (sexually transmitted diseases) are earthly paydays for this sin.

□



The Observation Tower

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The Self-Test

Rev. John E. Karenko

Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith: Prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" (2 Cor. 13:5) Four important truths are in this one Bible verse.

(1) The verbs are in the imperative mood, which means these are commands, orders or requirements, and not merely suggestions or advice. The present tense of the verbs indicates that repeated and constant diligence is to be used to comply fully with these necessary demands of God recorded in His Holy Word.

(2) The words ourselves, ye and you used seven times with these verbs indicate a personal responsibility, for each of us. It's a self-test that only we can administer honestly. In fact, we are commanded to do it! If we are wise, we will!

(3) Every Christian is indwelt by our Savior, Whom we have "received" (John 1:12), when we were "born again" (John 3:3,7) by repenting and accepting Christ into our hearts.

(4) In contrast, the absence of Jesus from a person's heart is the "proof" that he or she is a "reprobate," i.e., reprovved, abandoned and rejected, having failed the heart test. They are not really Christians, but hypocrites, pretending to be Christians (Living Bible)."

It's wise to "examine, prove and know" before God surely will, because eventually and for sure "every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Rom 14:12). "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he has done, whether good or bad" (2 Cor. 5:10). The following verses explain the differences between "good and bad."

"Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble (good to bad), every man's work shall be made manifest for the day (of judgment) shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try (test,

examine, prove, know) every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he has built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire" (Cor.3:11-15), i.e., empty handed, with nothing!

Obviously, it is of utmost importance that we test ourselves and make necessary adjustments, while there is time, i.e., while we are still alive and able, before the book closes!

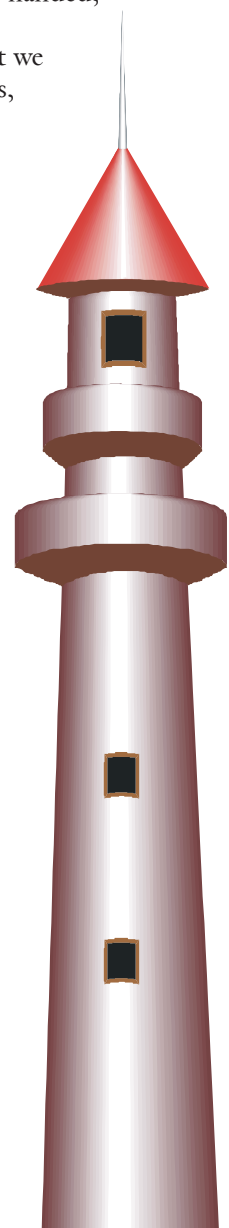
The Bible teaches that "whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire...the unbelieving...and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone" (Rev. 20:15; 21:8). Be sure your name is in that book.

God's Word also teaches that "...the books were opened ... and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works" (Rev. 20:12).

Why are we alive? What is God's purpose for our lives? "Be fruitful and multiply" (Gen. 1:28) is God's first command to mankind. Jesus' last command, before His ascension, was: "Ye shall be witnesses unto me" (Acts 1:8). "Go ye therefore, and teach (disciple) all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you (Matt. 28:19,20).

As we come to the close of the sixth millennium since creation and the end of the second since Christ's birth, it would surely be wise to examine and prove (test) ourselves by God's test of requirements and purposes for our lives, particularly the great commission repeated at the end of each of the four Gospels as Christ's last command. Will we pass "the self-test" as the books are opened on judgment day? (Rev. 20:11-15)

□





Part 1a

Abraham was known as the “friend of God.” The Psalmist puts companions and loved ones together, as “friends.” We usually speak of “loved ones” as relatives, but the Word of God puts together “loved ones” and “companions.” It would be a wonderful thing if we, as believers, could be regarded as “friends” of God. Of course, we are the children of God through that relationship with Christ (Eph. 2:13): “But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.” We are also brought near by the Word of God (Rom. 10:8). “But what does it say? ‘The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that is, the word of faith which we preach.’ It is near. It is in our heart and because it is in our heart we must speak about it. Abraham was indeed a “friend of God.” Listen to 2 Chronicles 20:7: “Are you not our God, who drove out the inhabitants of the land before your people Israel, and gave it to the descendants of Abraham your friend forever?” And James 2:23: “And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, ‘Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness.’ And he was called the friend of God.” I think Abraham was the only person in the Bible to be referred to as a “friend of God.” Because of his relationship to God, Abraham obeyed.

About two weeks ago I read a brief article by F.B. Meyer entitled “Faith Without Feelings.” Throughout my ministry I have had some difficulty with this concept. For some reason or other people think that faith in Christ must be or should be accompanied by good feelings.

I remember one man in particular who didn’t think he was a Christian because he didn’t feel saved, even though there is

no Biblical basis for requiring a “feeling” of being saved. I dealt with this man on more than one occasion but was never able to convince him that he was saved on the basis of faith alone, without feelings. You know as well as I do that feelings, our emotions, are very deceptive because they are formed by outward situations. I personally don’t like overcast weather. The sun doesn’t shine all day and the condition may last two or three days. So I can be affected by weather. There are people who have mood swings and won’t or don’t make any decisions at certain times.

There is a story told about a mother and her daughter who were both converted at an evangelistic service. The next day the mother engaged in conversation with her daughter and said, “You know, I don’t feel the same way I did last night, and I am not sure that I was really converted.” The daughter, without saying a word, disappeared and returned in a few minutes with a Gospel of John in her hand. She turned to John 3:16, showed it to her mother and said “Look, mother, it’s still there, just as it was last night.”

There are some days that we feel as though we could conquer the world. As the saying goes, we are on top of the world. God the Father Who made us and knows all about us, including our mood swings, has made provision for it. You remember after Elijah’s contest with Ahab on Mt. Carmel, he slew the prophets of Baal and aroused Queen Jezebel’s ire. She threatened to execute Elijah. He fled the scene, went into the wilderness and said to the Lord, “I’ve had enough, take away my life. I’ve got to die sometime and



it might as well be now.” In other words, I’d rather die at the hand of God than I would under the hand of Jezebel. The Lord caught up with Elijah and said, “What are you doing here, Elijah?” But even in Elijah’s obstinacy, God gave him rest and food. As a result, faith feeds on its

fruit, its results. “Being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” “Though now we see him not, yet believing ye (we) rejoice with joy and full of glory.” (1 Pet. 1:8). When the prodigal returned and was warmly greeted by the father, the father said to his servants, “Quick! Bring the finest robe in the house and put it on him and a jeweled ring for his finger and shoes...we must celebrate with a feast, let us eat and be merry.”

Happy and blessed is the effect of the Spirit’s work on the soul. “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace.” Glory is assured us, for because of our faith, He has brought us into this place of highest privilege, where we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to actually becoming all that God has in mind for us to be. We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they are good for us—they help us learn to be patient. We are assured that there is a glory awaiting us in heaven, free of all the encumbrances of earth, of all the burdens that weigh us down so mercilessly.

F.B. Meyer in his article says, “The lack of feeling does not always indicate we are wrong. There may be causes such as health, weather, loss of job, heavy indebtedness or some social misunderstanding. It may be that Christ would teach us to

distinguish between love and the emotion of love, between joy and the rapture of joy; between peace and the sense of peace. Or perhaps He may desire to ascertain whether we cling to Him for Himself or for His gifts. Now the first three fruits of the Spirit mentioned in the Word of God are “love, joy, peace.” Is it love produced by the Spirit or is it a love induced by the flesh; is it a joy honestly created by the Spirit or is it a joy manufactured by the flesh; is it a peace developed by the Spirit or is it a peace generated by the power of the flesh?

When I was a child my father worked for Firestone Tire and Rubber Company. At that time people were paid in cash

which came in a small brown envelope. When my dad came home on Fridays he would take the envelope out of his pocket, open it and spill out all the money on the table. The children would get all the small change and quickly spend it on penny candy. I don’t remember but it would be in order to question whether the children looked for him as their father or as a generous gift-giver. We need to stop every once in a while and ask ourselves: do we love God for Himself or rather for the gifts He gives?

Does God sometimes cut off the joy and suffer us to experience some misery that He may know what is in our hearts? Are we happy or joyful because we love

Him or because He is the giver of good gifts? Do you remember the story of Job? I don’t believe any man suffered as Job suffered. He lost all his earthly possessions, including his family, and yet he said, “Though he slay me, yet will I trust him.” “For what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? (Mk 8:36,37)

Faith is really an indispensable commodity for the believer and it is indispensable to almost all Christian activity. If you don’t have faith, the pursuit of bodily pleasure and preoccupation with obstacles to it become your entire life, and the horizon darkens. □

The Rock of Our Salvation ... Continues from page 75

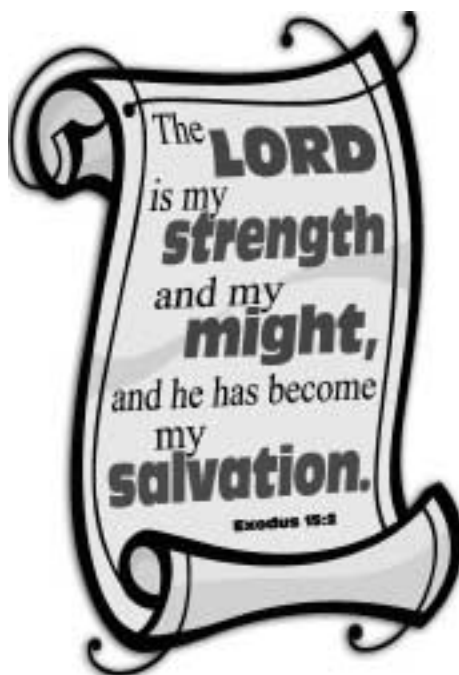
uses this metaphor. But what does the name the “Rock” say about who God is?

First, it means security. When one says, “The Lord is my Rock,” he confesses: “I find my security in the Lord.” The primary issue in the location of cities in biblical times was security. Towns were usually located on the top of a mountain or hill, which was almost always made of rocks. It was easier to defend a city from the top looking down, than from the bottom looking up. Thus, when biblical writers spoke of God as their rock, they were saying, “He is my security.”

David said, “The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge,” (2 Sam. 22:2,3). Just as David had a sense of security when dwelling in a well-fortified rock fortress, so he faced the uncertainties of life with a sense of security because of his trust in the Lord.

Fredrick Nolan lived in North Africa during a time of intense persecution. Because of his bold preaching, a band of hoodlums were continually trying to kill him. One day as they chased him, he ran until he was exhausted. He knew he could go no farther. He fell onto the floor of a cave and waited for his pursuers to find him and take his life. As he waited, he saw a spider beginning to weave its web across the opening of the cave. In a few minutes the web completely covered the opening. His pursuers came eventually to the cave, but seeing the spider web across the opening, they passed by, knowing that it would have been impossible for

Nolan to enter the cave without disturbing the web. In reflecting on the experience, he wrote: “Where God is, a spider’s web is like a wall. Where God is not, a wall is like a spider’s web.”



Second, God is a rock of refreshment to us. When one confesses “The Lord is my Rock,” not only is one saying, “I find my security in Him,” but “I find refreshment as well.” The Prophet Isaiah speaks of this: “Look, a righteous King is coming, with honest princes! He will shelter Israel from the storm and wind. He will refresh her as a river in the desert and as the cooling shadow of a mighty rock within a hot and weary land” (Isa 32:2 LIV).

The phrases “a river in the desert” and a “cooling shadow of a mighty rock” paint a picture of a traveler exhausted by the merciless heat of the desert. Then the traveller comes to a huge rock that provides shade, and finds the flow of a bountiful river nearby. The prophet says our Lord is like that to His people.

Most of us know what it is like to struggle with the pressures of life to the point of exhaustion, like the traveler in the desert. However, those who have walked this road with the Lord can add their

“Amen” to the prophet’s words: He is “a river in the desert and as the cooling shadow of a mighty rock.” Many times, blind songwriter Fanny Crosby experienced this divine refreshment as she walked through some of life’s deserts. On one occasion she wrote:

He hideth my soul in the cleft of the rock
That shadows a dry thirsty land;



Časť 1

Abrahám, veriaci a poslušný

Jozef Kulačík

Gal. 3:6–14 (1M 12:1–9)

Témou Konvencie 2002 na biblických hodinách boli postavy viery Abrahám a Hagar z pohľadu viery. Už ten rozdiel medzi nimi je zaujímavý—prvý je praotec, jedna z najznámejších postáv svetových dejín a náboženstiev a druhá je len jeho vedľajšia žena. Viera je pre všetkých, nielen pre veľkých, viera je dar, ktorý je v Kristovi dáva každému.

V 3. kapitole listu Galatským vedie Pavel zápas o novozmluvnú podstatu teológie viery. Na príbehu Abrahámovom polemizuje s judaistickými kresťanmi, pre ktorých zákon neprestal ani po prijatí Krista byť dôležitý. Judaisti sa dovoľávali Abraháma a tvrdili, že dedičom zaslúbení, ktoré dostal, môže byť len ten, kto sa podriaďuje Mojžišovmu zákonu. Mohli by sme povedať, že to je jedno z miest, na ktorom sa Pavel venuje základom dogmatiky. Príchodom božieho Syna sa na scéne svetových dejín objavila cirkev a začalo niečo úplne nové. Nová doba potrebovala novú interpretáciu. Interpretáciu v Kristu. Aj Abrahámom v Starej zmluve začalo niečo nové. Mohli by sme povedať, že rozkaz „Vyjdí zo svojej zeme“ oddeľuje od seba dejiny ľudstva a dejiny spásy (Westermann). Tak ako sa dovtedy biblická zvesť zaoberala dejinami sveta a kozmu v jeho celku, tak sa od povolania Abraháma biblická zvesť zaoberá dejinami spásy. Dejiny sveta idú svojím smerom ďalej, ale Boh od momentu oslovenia jednotlivca Abraháma rozvíja spásenosný dej, ktorého príbeh bude vrcholiť v príchode Mesiáša, Božieho Syna. Biblia myslí v epochách. Pre Bibliu nie je každý čas rovnaký, príbeh sveta má svoj chronos, ale príbeh boží má svoj kairos.

Abrahám je postava naprosto jedinečná. Nie nadarmo dostal prívlastok, že je otcom všetkých veriacich. Už začiatok cesty je úžasný.

Boh zavolá a Abrahám odpovedá. Je to naprosto určujúce a dôležité. Tak ako život Abrahámov, aj život veriaceho človeka nezačína tým, že človek začne volať na Boha, komponovať o ňom viac alebo menej múdru teóriu, ani tak, že si človek snáď môže naprojektovať komunikáciu s Bohom, ale práve naopak—Boh je so svojím slovom prvý. Už na počiatku, predtým, než sme boli, než všetko bolo, bol tu Boh so svojím slovom. Boh hovorí a človek odpovedá. Jeden teológ nazval celý svoj teologický systém „Človek v oslovení“. Len Boh je totiž istota, ktorá sa klenie ponad naše bytie. Jeho rozhodnutím sme na svet prišli, aj z neho odídeme a vo vymedzenom čase medzi tým sme bytosťou, ktorá by mala odpovedať na božie oslovenie. Božie povolanie je naprosto kľúčová udalosť. K téme povolania hneď v úvode svojej dogmatiky J.L. Hromádka píše toto: „Podstata nášho kresťanstva nespočíva v názoroch, myšlienkach, dogmách, bohoslužobných organizačných poriadkoch. To základné pre vieru je božie povolanie. Niet viery tam, kde nie je mohutné povedomie povolania. Cirkev SZ aj NZ sa nerodila pri nohách mysliteľov, filozofov, mravokárcov, náboženských snilkov, kňazov či biskupov. Cirkev vznikala vždy tam, kde jednotlivec alebo skupina ľudí boli zovrení vedomím, že sú povolaní k určitej neuniknuteľnej a smrteľne vážnej úlohe. Za všetkými biblickými postavami a udalosťami zaznieva tu hlasno, tu potíchu ale vždy jasne hlas zhora: „Poď! Choď! Vezmi na seba úlohu, ktorú ti dávam a daj sa na cestu!“ Bol to vždy hlas, ktorý prebúdza všetky ľudské schopnosti, ktorý vyžadoval jasnú myseľ, odhodlanie, mravnú zodpovednosť, ktorý naplňoval ľudské vnútro bohatstvom radosti aj úzkosti, pokoja aj nekľudu,



pokánia aj nádeje. Povolanie v biblickom slova zmysle znamená niečo úplne iného než rozhovory v záhradách filozofov alebo za katedrami učencov. Povolanie sa zmocnila vždy celého človeka a celého jeho života. Počiatky našej viery nie sú v nás, v našom srdci, v našom rozume. Neveríme preto, že sme citovo zatúžili po nejakej náboženskej skúsenosti. Neveríme preto, že sme sa svojím myslím prekúsali tajomstvom ľudského života a urobili logické závery zo svojich alebo iných skúseností. Neveríme v skutočnosť ani preto, že sme sa narodili veriacim rodičom a boli sme nábožensky vychovaní. Nech už sú akokoľvek vznešené túžby nášho srdca, nech je akokoľvek šikovný náš rozum, nech je akokoľvek dôležitá náboženská výchova, predsa len viera vo svojej podstate vzniká až vtedy, keď človek počuje hlas, ktorý ho povoláva k určitému dielu.“ Abraháмова odpoveď na božie volanie si nekladie žiadnu podmienku. Je to bezpodmienečne poslušná viera, pretože toho, ktorého poslúcha, pokladá za jediného Boha.

□

He hideth my life in the depths of His love,
And covers me there with His hand,
And covers me there with His hand.

Finally, God is our sure foundation. To say “He is my Rock” is not only to testify of the security and refreshment He gives, but it is also to state “The Lord is the foundation of my life.”

In the New Testament, Jesus called Himself the Rock, the same term used for Jehovah in the Old Testament. One day

**The Lord is my rock, my
fortress and my deliverer;
my God is my rock, in
whom I take refuge.**

2 Sam. 22:2,3

Jesus told a story about two builders. One built his house on a rock, the other built on the sand. For a while it appeared that the foundation made little difference in the permanence of the house. But eventually, as is always the case, the storms began to blow. The house built on the rock stood firm, the other one collapsed. The point of the story emphasizes the importance of building one's life on obedience to God's Word. And we know that there will be little obedience to His Word until we have made Jesus Christ the foundation stone of our lives. Today, many people are building their lives on possessions or position. There is nothing inherently evil about either of those things, in their proper place. The problem comes in making them the foundation of one's life, because inevitably the storms will prove that earthly things are sand, not the Rock.

We must now go the next step and ask, “Does it matter?” One may say, “So the Lord was a rock to Israel. But this is a day of missile defense shields, not rock fortresses. What relevance does it have for me today?”

We can say with certainty that it does have relevance for us today. The needs of the human heart are the same now as they were then. Every person, whether consciously or not, seeks security, refreshment and a foundation for life. The Lord, who is the same yesterday, today and forever, wants to be the Rock of our salvation. If the Lord is to be our Rock, we must learn to do what author J.I. Packer calls “turning knowledge about God into knowledge of God.” Probably the most succinct definition of God ever penned by human beings is found in the Westminster Shorter Catechism: “God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.” There are many people who profess with their lips to believe that. Yet, they lack a personal relationship with Him. They accept intellectually the definition of God, but they do not know Him. They know about Him but they have no knowledge of Him.

Often the same is true of those who are truly members

of God's family. The study of Scripture becomes merely an academic exercise. It is important, of course, to understand the meaning of the words of Scripture. But Bible study that does not go beyond the meaning of words can be deadly. Dr. Howard Hendricks, long-time professor at Dallas Theological Seminary, used to say, “The Bible was not given only for our information, but for our transformation.” But how can we turn knowledge about into knowledge of? From earliest centuries, Christians have identified certain practices that have been helpful in doing this.

One way is meditating on Scripture. The discipline of memorizing and meditating on Scripture is a practice that is becoming rare in our fast-paced, pressured culture. It is significant that the only two places in Scriptures where success is promised are in connection with meditating on the Word of God (Psalm 1:2 and Joshua 1:8). Do you struggle with fear? Are you harassed by your life journey and in your heart hungering for renewal in your walk with the Lord? Are you seeking new purpose in life and realize you have been building on the wrong foundation? Then, let me suggest that you begin to memorize the Word, and through the day, make a conscious effort to call it to mind and let your mind dwell on it.

Another way to turn knowledge about God into knowledge of God is to commune with God through prayer. here is a vast difference in saying prayers and in communing with God. This is not to imply that every prayer time will be marked by an emotional experience of the presence of God. Nor is it to suggest that we should seek a mystical experience. Rather, it is to say that prayer is more than the mouthing of words. It is more than the ritual of the recitation of the want list. Genuine prayer is communion with the Lord.

A final way to approach God more closely is through journaling. Many have found spiritual benefit in writing out their prayers, concerns, questions and biblical insights. They testify to having come to a fuller understanding of God's dealing in their lives by looking back over their journey.

Studying the Scripture, communing in prayer, journaling one's understanding—which of these methods could best bring you closer to God, to know of God, not only about Him? By God's grace, may we strive together increasingly to know Him as the “Rock of our salvation.”

This sermon was delivered during the 93rd Czechoslovak Baptist Convention on Thursday evening, July 4, 2002.



The Saturday Night Concert



The Devine Family



Donna Nesvadba, Miriam Racinsky, and Debbie Lev



Mathew Habuda



George and Joann Cooper



Kuzmik Family



Kristina Vlasic and Marija Sommer



Ken Devine



G 6 – Formerly Joe Schoun Ensemble



Debbi Lev



John Alac, Jr.



Ashley Kuzmik



Nicki Habuda



Dick Niswonger

Convention Echoes in Pictures Part 1



The Convention Youth



The Toronto Youth



Brian Dors enjoys ice-cream



John Jeren, Sr., John Gabor, and Margie Jeren



Daniel Widlicka



Don Shoff, Robert Dvorak



Natasha Legierski



At Sommer's Home



Petr Raus and Henry Pojman enjoy also ice-cream



Obecenství at Sommers—Andy and Alice Kmetko, John Gabor



General Board Meeting



Robert Dvorak

Christ Community Church, Campbell, Ohio



The past year and a half has been a truly exciting time at Christ Community Church. God has been and is still working in a powerful way. We have witnessed lives changed for Christ, miracles of spiritual and physical healing, answered prayer, strong

leadership and so much more.

We hired a music minister, Pastor Garry Butt, to lead our music program. We were able to form a small choir and perform two holiday cantatas for the first time in over 12 years. We now have a praise and worship service every Wednesday, and Garry has also been able to form the beginnings of a drama ministry.

We started a "small groups" ministry program and currently have six active groups with two more starting this year.

We were able to support three additional missionary families with the goal of adding one family per year. One of those families is our own Peter Abrman family.

Our children's programs are going strong, and again this past

year we had over 125 children at our Vacation Bible School. The youth group, "Warriors for Christ," has been very active, not just at our church but in the community. They have a monthly ministry to the rescue mission and the Lincoln Center, a place for troubled children and teens. They also attended a teen convention, "Acquire the Fire," in Pittsburgh, and came back excited for Christ.



We held two outdoor services in the summer in an attempt to wake up the community and will continue to outreach Campbell, Ohio, for Christ.

We have experienced 24% growth this past year and owe it to the glory of God. We have, however, witnessed the going home of Helen Struharik, John Struharik, Irene Jeren, Hazel Lukich, and Mary Almasi, precious saints who will be terribly missed. We do rejoice for them however, because of the glory to be in heaven with the Lord.

I thank God every day for the privilege of being a minister of the gospel and the pastor of Christ Community Church. We covet your prayers as we carry on the ministry in Campbell and promise to be praying for all of you as well.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Bill Rotar

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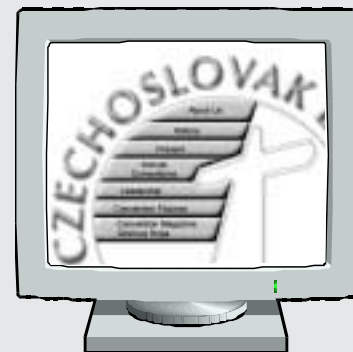
Mission Strategies Conference

In 1900, 85% of Christians in the world were from Europe and North America. Today 55% of Christians are from the Two-Thirds World. There has been

a dramatic demographic shift in the Christian mission around the world. Because of this, Denton Lotz says, "I believe that Baptist missiologists, mission leaders, and emerging leaders from the Two-Thirds World need to consider the state of the modern missionary movement, and what we must do to further evangelize the world in our generation."

A Summit on Baptist Mission in the 21st Century will be held May 5-9, 2003, in Swanwick, England, to encourage Baptist mission agencies and conventions/unions to recommend to us the best and brightest of the younger generation of mission thinkers in each country. "We pray this will be a significant opportunity for Baptists to rediscover and learn from one another the new demands of going into all the world and preaching the gospel," says Lotz. □

Check our new Convention Web page:
www.ab.edu/czslbaptconv



Bruce Charles Schnurr

April 21, 1931–March 13, 2002



Bruce Charles Schnurr was born April 21, 1931, in the village of Harriston, north of Kitchener, Ontario, where his family lived.

He came to know the Lord as a teenager, was baptized, and was eager to further his religious education in obedience to God's calling on his life. He graduated from London Bible College in 1958, and married Margaret McDougall on April 20, 1963. They have one daughter, Rebecca Ruth, who married Tony Lapointe

in June 1996. Ruth and Tony are currently residing in Abbotsford, British Columbia, with their three children, Ben, Aria and Christiane.

While in Ontario, Bruce pastored churches in Wilkesport, Dorchester, Gladstone and Scarborough; then in Buckingham, Quebec, before coming to Portage la Prairie in 1977 followed by a pastorate in Minitonas, before retirement brought them back to Portage.

Bruce served the Lord faithfully over the years, and in his retirement he filled pulpits as opportunities arose, along with ministering to seniors, teaching Bible studies, and doing visitation. Also, everyone enjoyed his musical talent on the piano.

We know Bruce's life now is victorious, and we rejoice in the glory he is presently experiencing—"Absent from the body, present with the Lord!"

His devotion to his Lord, his family and his friends will long be remembered and treasured.

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All convention gifts may be sent in the enclosed envelopes:

US residents may use the **Business Reply envelope** or send their gifts to **Vera Dors, 6621 Elmdale Rd., Middleburg Hts, OH, 44130**, Canadian residents may send their gifts to **Henry Pojman, 1516 Pembroke Dr., Oakville, ON, L6H 1V9, Canada**.

Make checks payable to **Czechoslovak Baptist Convention**, and on the bottom write to what account you are sending your gift: **Convention, Glorious Hope, Trust Fund, or Scholarship Fund**.



Memorial Service

at the 93rd Annual Convention

Sunday

July 7, 2002



Bessie Adam, Morris, IL, March 2002
James Adam, Morris, IL, September 2001
Erma Bliley, Hatch Hollow, PA, March 2002
Lloyd Bliley, Hatch Hollow, PA, January, 2002
Walter Burlingham, Hatch Hollow, PA, January 2002
Daniel Frank Helmich, Jacksonville, IL, January 2002
Irene Jeren, Campbell, OH, March 2002
Hazel Lukich, Campbell, OH
Josef Marek, Toronto, ON, January 2002
Cephas Mitchel-Allen, Cleveland, OH, January 2002
Rose Burysek Nesvadba, Franklin, KY, November 2001
Michalina Pawlew, Cleveland, OH, January 2002
Ruth Pilat Ronk, Cleveland, OH, July 2001
Bruce Schnurr, Portage la Prairie, MB, March 13, 2002
John Struharik, Campbell, OH
Nora Vogel, Cleveland, OH, November, 2001

□

President ... Continues from page 94

convention leader in this time of personal health stress, and do not forget to pray for strength for his wife, Rose, as she supports him with devoted love and care.

2) *Mary Shereda Grant*, Richmond, VA, has been diagnosed with ALS, sometimes known as Lou Gerig's Disease. The condition has been determined after tests and observation over the past six months. The symptoms of the disease are affecting her hands and one foot at the present time. The disease requires great courage to bear and brings considerable physical deficits. Mary, daughter of the late Pastor Shereda of long service to Christ, the church, and our convention, is a beloved colleague with us in the life and ministry of the Czechoslovak Baptist Convention. God bless her with patience and stamina. Prayers for her, please.

Robert Dvorak

□

From Our Readers



July, 2002

It was such a blessing and inspiration to be at the Convention again this year. What a wonderful time to fellowship with dear folks from around the world who have a bond of a common heritage and

common hope in the Lord Jesus. God bless the work of the Czechoslovak Baptist Convention.

We appreciate so much all the hard work that goes into planning for this special time together. A Big thank-you to George and Marija for their work and for opening their home for the Sunday evening picnic, to Bob Dvorak and a host of others. God bless you all.

In His love, *Don and Judy Shoff*



Praise the Lord. I had a glorious time at the convention. God bless all who had a part making it so wonderful.

Marie Ferrett



Dearest Marija and George,

July 14, 2002

Thank you for the wonderful time of fellowship we enjoyed at your back yard. How kind of you to entertain us after the busy time of planning the whole Convention. We still love to smile the way your cat ran off when the first of the fireworks were lit. God bless you with health and strength.

Lovingly, *Dick and Grace Niswonger*



Hi Vera:

July 7, 2002

God bless you. It is great that the Czechoslovak Baptist Convention was a success. I miss being there. I have always enjoyed the fellowship and the spiritual messages. Perhaps someday I will be able to get there, the Lord willing.

Love you, *Lennie Wilcox*



Dear George and Marija:

July 30, 2002

Dan and I love you both and appreciate all you do for us at our Convention. As I reflect back on the blessing of those four days in Philippi, I thank the Lord for you. We do appreciate the planning and the "on the spot" work involved. God bless you.

Love, *Jane Widlicka*



Dear Marija and George,

Just wanted you to know how much the two of you are appreciated. Our convention is truly blessed. You are very special to us and we thank God for you. Hope you will get some needed rest.

Our love and God's blessing,

Bob and Martha Karhan

Greetings from Bratislava, Slovakia
George!

July, 2002

This year's convention was simply great! It seemed that there was a greater interest in the radio work [TWR] than in the past. I think knowing more of the people also helps. Thank you for the increase in support for the ministry in Czech Republic and in Slovakia.

Thank you, too, for all your work. I know it is a big job, a job that requires a big-hearted man. Joann and I certainly enjoyed ourselves this year and look forward to returning again next year. I know too that Petr and Marian were very happy with the results of the trip and especially the convention. Personally I was a little afraid of how they would mix since they are both a little shy. I was pleasantly surprised and I believe the people who took the opportunity to get to know them were blessed.

Thank you for the hospitality in your home. We will plan to stay over Sunday next year and enjoy it more. That's a warning!

Sincerely, *George D. Cooper*



Czechoslovak Baptist Convention:

May 7, 2002

The enclosed check is for the Boubelik Trust Fund, in memory of James Adam who recently passed away.

Sincerely, *Joseph Palma*



Dear Christian Friends:

June 3, 2002

Enclosing two donations for the Czechoslovak Baptist Convention and Glorious Hope. God bless you all richly with good health to carry on God's Holy Mission, the 93rd Czechoslovak Baptist Convention in the unsettled world.

I enjoy reading the messages in *Glorious Hope*. The history in *Czech, Slovak, and the Bible*, and *Jan Amos Komensky—Teacher of the Nations*. In Jesus Christ, love lives forever, Amen.

Sincerely in Jesus' name, *Emily Kazil*



Greetings George and Marija:

July 17, 2002

I just had to take time out to write to you, to thank you for the outstanding work you did to set up the 93rd Czechoslovak Baptist Convention. Everything ran so smoothly, thanks to the two of you. When I think of all the work you had to do...set up meals, print tickets, arrange lodging, print programs, contact participants plus so many other details.

I thought the convention was one of the best we have had for a long time. The Women's Rally was tops. Their music and messages were outstanding. Thank you Marija for your work on the piano and organ plus MC-ing the talent programs Saturday evening.

All in all, I thought it was a great successful Convention. Thanks again to the two of you.

In Christian Love, *Florian Manas*

Dear Brothers Dvorak and Sommer, July 20, 2002

We felt broken-hearted when we were unable to attend the Convention this year, due to Bill's illness. Up to that time we were making plans to go, but God had other plans for us. It is always such a special, blessed time, and we have heard such glowing reports. God bless you all and keep you in His close, loving care.

In Christ Jesus,

Bill and Esther Widlicka



Dear friends,

In loving memory of our beloved husband and father, who went to be with his Lord on June 28, 1998.

Virginia Profant



Dear friends:

May 21, 2002

Enclosed is a gift in memory of our beloved brother *Rev. Michael Evan*.

Sincerely in Christ,

Rev. Daniel and Dorothy Evan



Dear Prayer Partners,

Since we got back to Slovakia, there has been no time to catch our breath. I have finished nine months' discipleship teaching with excellent results. The goal was to get everyone to understand their personal involvement in the ministry and the work of the Lord. I am excited about starting to train personally four men, one on one. Zorka will get involved with two ladies.

Our visitation efforts are reaping fruit. The Lord has opened several doors of opportunity recently. The following people are close to salvation, although the decision-making process may take months, even years: Marian B. Sr., Hana B., Marian B. Jr., Olga, Daniel, Michael, Peter, Lenka, Natalia S., Tomas V., Rado, Igor. Please pray for us that we have enough patience and wisdom, and the right words to lead them to Christ.

Zorka was admitted today (July 24) to hospital for minor surgery. Her stay is estimated for ten days; that means I have to fill in for Mama's role... Please pray for successful surgery and her quick recovery. I need her at home, and the children do too!!

Our upcoming youth/young adults retreat will take place Aug 11-18. Of 26 that have already registered, 11 are unsaved. This is a proof of God's moving around here, but I realize the battle is not over yet. It has just begun.

Thank you again for your unending sacrifice in standing by as we labor in Slovakia.

Peter & Zorka, Rachel, Samuel, and Ashley.

Update on Zorka's Surgery

Dear Friends,

Just a short update on Zorka's post-surgery condition. But first, let me thank you for your prayers and e-mails that came from many of you. It is so encouraging to be assured of your

love and concern in our time of need.

The surgery that took place on Friday, the 26th, and went along as planned. The only unexpected and painful event arose the next day, a gall bladder attack that lasted on and off for about 48 hours. The doctor says it may be just a side effect of the anesthetics. In any case, they will perform an ultrasound check today, just to make sure there is no stone.

Otherwise, with God's help, things in the house are in order and our ministry is "keeping on trucking."

Thank you again for standing by,

Your Missions Outreach in Slovakia, *Abrmans*



Milá Máňa a Jirka,

Chceme Vám mnohokrát poděkovat za příjemné chvíle strávené u Vás.

Konvencia nám bola požehnaním. Nech Vám Bůh žehná i nadále.

S láskou *Lenka a Naďa*



From the Executive Secretary



Dear readers of *Glorious Hope*,
We have a few dates for you to remember:

- The Midyear meeting of General Board will be held in Grace Baptist Church, Windsor Ontario, on November 1, 2002 at 1 o'clock afternoon, followed by evening service at 7 p.m. and after that we will have "Old Fashioned Hymn Singing" with Bob Dvorak at the piano.
- 94th Annual Convention of Czechoslovak Baptist Convention of USA and Canada will be held on July 3-6, 2003 at Alderson-Broadbush College, Philippi, West Virginia. Convention special guest will be the "Metuzalem," well known singing quartet from Bratislava, Slovakia. We are looking forward for their visit in Canada and USA.

George Sommer



MOVING ?

Please write to:

Glorious Hope

Rt.4, Box 58D

Philippi, WV 26416 USA

Include your mailing label from a recent issue of **Glorious Hope** for faster service.



Firefly

Natasha Legierski

Have you ever thought about how well God has created everything? For example, the firefly looks like a small fly that flies at night and carries a tiny light. In the evening when it's dark, you may have seen this light. It flickers on and off, and when there are many of them, they look like mini fireworks.



Why has God created this fly with a light? Was it so that it would light the way for people at night?

A long time ago, before there were cars and airplanes, a young man living in Bohemia was studying to be a priest. His name was Jan Karafiat. He liked to spend time alone in nature. The fireflies fascinated him so much that he wrote a book about them for children. He did not foresee how valuable his story about the fireflies would become, not only for children but for adults and entire generations of Czechs.

During this year's convention, the children were introduced to the firefly who is the main character of Karafiat's story. At first he was quite rebellious, but the adventures he encountered as he was learning to fly and shine for people taught him to become obedient.

In future *Glorious Hope* issues, we will learn more about the firefly's interesting adventures. We hope you enjoy them!

□

Svatojánský brouček

Nataša Legierská

Již jste někdy přemýšlely o tom, jak Pán Bůh všechno dobře udělal?

Například takový svatojánský brouček, vypadá jako moucha, která létá v noci a má malé světélko. Večer, když už je tma, můžete to světélko opravdu vidět. Rozsvítí se tu a hned zase tam, a když jich je více pohromadě, vypadají jako miniohňostroji!

Proč Pán Bůh stvořil takového létajícího broučka se světélkem? Stvořil ho proto, aby svítil lidem v noci na cestu?



Kdysi dávno, ještě když nejezdila auta ani letadla nelétala, žil v Čechách mladý muž, který studoval na faráře. Jmenoval se Jan Karafiát. Rád trávil chvíle o samotě v přírodě. Svítící broučci ho tak zaujali, že o nich napsal knížku pro děti. Netušil, jak vzácnou knihou se stane jeho příběh o broučcích nejen pro děti, ale i dospělé pro následující pokolení českého národa.

Při letošní konvenci se děti seznámily s hrdinou tohoto příběhu, s Broučkem, který byl zpočátku docela neposlušný. Mnohé trampoty, které ho potkaly, když se učil létat a potom i svítit lidem na cestu, ho naučily být Broučkem poslušným.

V následujících číslech *Slavné naděje* budeme sledovat události Broučkova zajímavého života. Věříme, že se vám bude líbit.

□

Youth Scene ... Continues from page 93

On another occasion, someone asked: "Lord, are there few who are saved?" and he said, "Strive to enter in at the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter in and will not be able." As people knock at the door (of heaven), Christ twice answers, "I do not know you," and then adds, "Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity" (Luke 13:23-28).

Jesus said the genuineness of a person's faith is seen in their actions: "By their fruits you will know them. Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my father who is in heaven" (Matt. 7:20,21). So, it's very wise to "Examine yourselves" (2 Cor. 13:5) here on earth, because some day he will examine every one of us, at either the judgement seat of Christ or the great white throne of judgement! Each of us shall give account of himself to God" (Rom. 14:12). Nobody is skipped!

□

Ladies' Page ... Continues from page 95

Marija Sommer presented the slate of new officers for the year 2002-2003, which were approved.

Dorothy Dvorak: President
 Esther Tarr: Vice-President
 Jane Widlicka: Secretary
 Joan Rotar: Treasurer, USA
 Donna Nesvadba: Treasurer, Canada

Judy Shoff prayed for the new officers, and certificates of appreciation were presented to our outgoing officers, Natasha Legierski and Eileen Lev.

We sang Hymn, *Revive Us Again*, and Jane Widlicka closed the meeting with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Jane Widlicka

□

Are Most Americans Christians?

Rev. John Karenko

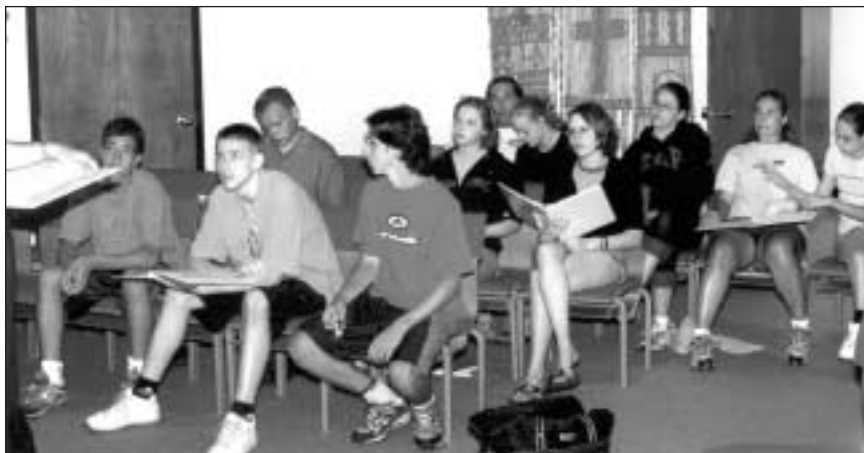
Most Americans think they will be in heaven when they die. Does the fact that we say “under God” in our pledge of allegiance make us Christians? Can the majority of Americans truthfully say, as we have printed on our money, “In God we trust?” We Americans take oaths in courtrooms and when taking public office with our hand on the Bible; does this prove we are Christians?

Do you think keeping the golden rule, trying to keep the Ten Commandments, going to church and even giving money to the poor will ensure we will be in heaven?

American polls show that about 90% say they believe in God! But God’s Word shows us two facts. “Let God be true, but every man a liar” (Romans 3:4); also, “You believe that there is one God. You do well. The demons also believe, and tremble” (James 2:19). Note, demons believe and tremble, yet they will not make it, nor will most Americans.

In fact, heaven is limited to a few. “Enter in at the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in through it. But narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it” (Matthew 7:13,14). Jesus is the door (John 10:9) and the way (John 14:6).

Jesus said, at the close of the parable of the wedding feast, “Many are called, but few are chosen” (Matthew 22:1-14). He gives two reasons why there are few. First, some refused the invitation and were pronounced “not worthy.” Second, some were not wearing “a wedding garment.” Proper dress for being in the presence of God is to “Repent and believe the gospel” (Mark 1:15). The Bible says that without holiness, “no man shall see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14). Only those with “pure hearts...shall stand in his holy place” (Psalm 25:4,3). Does it make a difference what we wear when we worship God? Are short-shorts and jeans proper clothes for worship? What do you think?



Young People

I Timoteova, 4:12

Nikdo ať nepohrdá tvým mládím, ale buď pro věřící příkladem v řeči, v chování, v lásce, v duchu, ve víře a v čistotě. (Nová Bible Kralická)

I Timothy 4:12

Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity. (NIV)



Children and Youth Choir

Continues on page 92

Greetings to one and all this first issue of *Glorious Hope* following our 93rd annual convention in Philippi, West Virginia. It was a great time once again this year, and our attendance grew, by the grace of God. The spirit of those four days in early July was one of high joy and deep appreciation for the Spirit's work among us. We had just an unusually fine experience of fellowship, ministry of the Word, refreshment of conversation, recreation, friendship, and working together. Lots of youth were present, and we had with us this year Dr. Jozef and Mrs. Anna Kulacik from Bratislava. Jozef is general secretary of the Slovak Baptist Union in his country.



in the convention.

If you missed this year's meetings, we sure hope it might be possible for you to come next year, July 3-6, 2003. We would like so much to welcome you into the goodness of that time together, as well as to the mission we seek to carry out, namely, gospel outreach to lands of Central Europe, particularly the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

A final thought, if I may. As you read this, the date of September 11th will be approaching. It is an anniversary none of us looks forward to. It will bring the sense of pain and loss afresh to many people. This world in which we live is beautiful and productive; God made it that way. It is also filled with perils and inexplicable violence; we human beings have made it that way. God grant you peace in making your way through this year's 9/11. And I wish for you fresh gratitude of mind and heart, recalling an unshakable confidence that is ours in the One who is our Rock of Salvation, Guide and Defender, Redeemer, Lord, and Friend through September 11 and its repetitions and through every single day of our living of the life God gave us. Bless you—always!

Two notes regarding health issues for beloved members of the convention.

1) *Reverend Joe Novak*, our vice president and convention president in Canada, has been struggling with illness in recent months. Joe was hospitalized once again on September 3rd. Physicians have treated him for fluid buildups around the heart and lungs initially, but more recently in the abdominal area is affected. Considerable physical weakness has significantly complicated the situation. Please remember our brother and

Continues on page 89

Trans World Radio

The Listener's Post



A Czech listener wrote, "Your programs, for me and for others, are an oasis in the scorched desert of temporalities." An oasis sounds good; an oasis in a scorched desert sounds even better; but an oasis in a scorched desert of spiritualities shows the severe

drought of Biblical teaching available in the country.

Realizing the importance of the message from God's Word, we try to do all things right. Nevertheless, we sometimes make mistakes, too. A listener writes:

Dear TWR, thank you for your blessed ministry. Whenever we can, we listen to the night broadcast of TTB (Thru

the Bible). It is a precious resource, spiritual nourishment for us. We were very surprised when you apologized for exchanging programs by mistake instead of airing the Epistle to the Hebrews. That particular evening we needed to listen to what you aired. I just want to say that nothing gets out of God's control and that this "failure" of yours He used for His glory. Believe me, this "mistake" was very much needed for at least the two of us. It was the right timing.

We try never to make mistakes, but when we do, we simply prove the Psalmist correct in saying, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee..." (Psalm 76:10).

Pray with us that as people tune in to the programs, they will hear God's voice speaking to them, meeting their needs.

George Cooper, July 2002

Seventy-Ninth Annual Rally of the Czechoslovak Baptist Women's Union

Philippi, West Virginia, July 6, 2002

As part of the 93rd Annual Czechoslovak Baptist Convention, President Natasha Legierski welcomed all present. She expressed sadness that some could not be with us because of illness, especially our sister Anne Opocensky, who for so many years has served as secretary. We were reminded to pray for those absent.

We sang hymn *To God Be the Glory* and heard scripture from 1 John 4:7-16, read in Slovak by Vera Banko and in English by Judy Shoff. Grace Niswonger led us in prayer.

Debbie Lev sang *God Has Been Faithful to Me*. We were encouraged to pray for Debbie as she goes to Romania in August to teach in an orphanage there.

The minutes of the 2001 meeting were printed in the program bulletin, and the treasurer's report was read by Donna Nesvadba in the absence of treasurer Joan Rotar. Missionary disbursements will be the same for 2002. Natasha prayed for the offering, and we were favored with a musical selection on the french horn by Carrie Gallagher, accompanied by Marija Sommer on the piano.

Guest Kellie Honey told us of the ministry she and her husband had in Kosice in Eastern Slovakia for three years with Campus Crusade for Christ. She shared her struggles in

adjusting to the culture and the spiritual climate, especially among students. She asked us to pray for those who have accepted Christ to grow in faith and be bold to share the gospel. Following this we were blessed with two numbers by our Toronto sisters.

Natasha then introduced our speakers Anna Kulacikova, wife of Josef Kulacik, General Secretary of the Slovak Baptist Union. Marija translated as sister Kulacikova brought greetings from our sisters in Slovakia. She read Psalm 50:15: "Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." The Lord gave her this verse in 1987 as a new believer at her baptism service. She didn't fully understand at that time the impact the verse would have on her life years later. She and Josef were married and prayed for a family and wondered why they were not able to have children. In 1993, after many hospital tests, she discovered she had cancer—what a shock. Yet in all of this, she experienced a calm-

ness. God was close to her; He gave her peace. Matthew 16:24: "Jesus said, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Sister Kulacikova learned that difficulties bring something positive: strength in the Lord.

We listened as the trio, Debbie Lev, Miriam Racinsky and Donna



Esther Tarr

Nesvadba sang, accompanied by Margaret Holt on the piano.

Natasha introduced another guest, missionary and author Leona Sprinclova Choy. She told of the many years of rejecting her Czech heritage and how the Lord brought her back to her "roots." As a result her latest book is entitled *Czeching My Roots*.

Natasha presented our three guest speakers with certificates of appreciation.

Ladies' Contribution may be sent in the enclosed envelope.

US residents to Joan Rotar, 4 Lee Dr., Poland, OH 44514. **Canadian residents** to Donna Nesvadba, 2029 Laurelwood Dr., Oakville, ON L6H 4P2.

Make checks payable to **Czechoslovak Baptist Women's Missionary Union**.



Continues on page 92