

Glorious Hope Slavná naděje

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The Earth Is the LORD's...

Psalms 24:1a

Hospodínova jest země...

Žalm 24,1a

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.

Misijsní 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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Editor-in-Chief: Natasha Legierski

1524 Lancaster Dr., #134,

Oakville, ON, L6H 2Z2, Canada

email: natasha.legierski@sympatico.ca

You may send articles to above address

Desktop publishing and Art: Vit Malek

Assistant Editors: Janice Cermak, Ján Banko

Editorial Staff: George Sommer,

George Legierski, Joseph Novak

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Glorious Hope / Slavná naděje

Rt. 4, Box 58D, Philippi, WV 26416-9717 USA

email: sommer@ab.edu

www.ab.edu/czslbaptconv

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Editorial



Gratitude.

Be thankful (Col. 3:15b). The season of Thanksgiving gives us opportunity to pause and reflect upon all we can be thankful for. We realize that we live on a continent of plenty, one that does not suffer from insufficiency and impoverishment. People help each other, especially when natural disasters strike, as we witnessed during hurricane season this year. Drastic

changes that impact lives bring us closer to the insignificance of our own existence. In contrast to this human existence stands an all-powerful, omnipotent God, as written about in the Bible. It is also human to ponder why God allows human beings to suffer. Each person wrestles with this question at one point or another during the course of his or her life. Each also comes to an individual conclusion, and life goes on.

It is easy to be grateful when the going is smooth, when there are no hurdles or obstacles to face. Nothing appears to be missing when one is healthy and strong, both physically and psychologically. Sometimes we can even forget to be grateful.

As a matter of fact, many do forget. Perhaps we cherish and value the good things only when they are gone. And sometimes, we have problems that we find too difficult to discuss with anyone. In our isolation, we become oversensitive

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Vděčnost.

Buďte vděční. (Kol.3,15b) Jsme vděční, zvláště v období důkuvzdání. Zamýšlíme se a přemýšlíme nad tím, za co všechno jsme vděční.

Uvědomujeme si, že žijeme na kontinentě, který nedostatkem netrpí. Lidé si vzájemně pomáhají, zvláště v případě přírodních katastrof, jak jsme tomu svědky v období hurikánů. Drastické změny, které zasáhnou do života lidí, přiblíží člověku nepatrnost jeho existence. Proti této existenci jednoho člověka stojí mocný a všemohoucí Bůh, jak jej známe z Bible. Člověk také přemýšlí nad tím, proč Pán Bůh dovolí, aby člověk trpěl. S touto otázkou se snad zabývá každý jedinec v určitém období svého života. Každý také dojde k určitému, osobnímu závěru a život jde dál.

Je snadné být vděčný, jestliže všechno probíhá hladce, bez problémů a bez překážek. Je-li pevně zdraví a dostatek tělesné i vnitřní síly, nic člověku nechybí. Snadno se také na vděčnost zapomene.

Ve skutečnosti však mnohé nevnímáme. Možná si dobrých věcí více vážíme až tehdy, když je postrádáme. V jiném případě se život může odehrávat ve sférách, o kterých člověk ani nechce hovořit.

Pokračování na straně 87



Front Cover: Corel photo

Back Cover: Czechoslovak Baptist Convention
midyear meeting October 2004

Photos by: George Sommer and Vlastimil Pojman



The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

Dr. Josef Šolc

Part 1

Acts 15:7–9

Karl Barth was asked by his students about theological issues that in his opinion would be important in the future of the church. He challenged them to formulate the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. Why did he choose this doctrine?

The Holy Spirit is the neglected person of the Trinity. We believe in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, but we pay much more attention to God the Father and to Jesus Christ than to the Holy Spirit. Pentecostal Christians are not guilty of this negligence; however, their doctrine of the Holy Spirit elevates speaking in tongues to a level that is supposedly normative for all Christians. By doing so, they seem to imply that speaking in tongues is necessary for all Christians, as proof of being filled with the Holy Spirit. But such a doctrine is not found in the Bible. Is it possible that because of some non-biblical emphasis, other Christians stay away from the command of Paul (Ephesians 5:18) to be filled with the Spirit? Are we afraid of that which should and could be our daily experience? I will try to explain that there is nothing to be afraid of; on the contrary, there is much to be gained by being obedient to the command of God.

I was raised in Czechoslovakia, where under the Communist government the Pentecostals were not allowed to exist as a church. So these believers would be visiting Baptist churches and bringing with them their Pentecostal theology. It usually did not take much time before they would gain some members for their house meetings, where they emphasized and demonstrated speaking in tongues. This kind of behavior caused mistrust in relation to these Pentecostal believers. Fear of excessive emotionalism caused Baptist preachers to be silent on just about everything that concerned the Holy Spirit. They hoped that their silence would make this problem go away. That was not a good solution. On the contrary, it resulted in pervasive ignorance about the Holy Spirit among Baptists, of whom I was one.

Another attitude I encountered toward the Holy Spirit was even more negative. It happened while I was studying in the International Baptist Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland. I was listening to a lecture by a German professor of the Old Testament. He was explaining some details about dates in the Old Testament, and then he said, “If we take this passage as it is written, then we can say that the Holy Spirit is not good with numbers.” Even though I had heard very little about the Holy Spirit from the pulpit, by this time I had read the Bible several times from the first page to the last page, and I knew immediately that talking in this way was contrary to what the Bible said about the Holy Spirit. So I stood up and told that professor that I did not appreciate his description of the Holy Spirit as Someone who was not capable of producing right numbers. But I was the only one in that classroom who was bothered by the professor’s arrogant statement.

Some months later, I encountered yet another attitude towards the Holy Spirit. After three semesters in Switzerland, I moved to Tulsa, Oklahoma, where I was awarded a full scholarship for

playing tennis for Oral Roberts University (ORU). I did not know much about that university, but it was the only place where I was offered free education. Upon arrival, I knew that ORU was just the opposite of Ruschlikon. People were friendly, loving, and joyful. At first I did not know what was going on. Why were these people so nice to me? Was it because of the announcement in the chapel about a new Czech tennis player who had just joined the team? Or was it because these people really loved Jesus and that love spilled over to others as well? Fairly soon I discovered that the people on the campus were talking a lot about the infilling of the Holy Spirit that empowered their lives.


I became curious because this was the first positive input I had received concerning the Holy Spirit. Instead of forming my opinion on the basis of what I heard at ORU and what I experienced there in the fellowship of students, I started my search in the Bible. This is what I learned.

I. The Holy Spirit is a Person.

We have no problem thinking about God the Father as a Person. He loved us enough to send His Son Jesus to live among us. We know that His love for us endures forever. Therefore, we come to Him in prayer, address Him as our Father and continue in this relationship. When we have disobeyed Him, we are aware of the possibility of confessing our sins and receiving His forgiveness. Relating to God the Father seems quite natural, because it resembles our relationship with our parents.

Our relationship with Christ is equally real. We appreciate His coming to this earth and remind ourselves of it each year at Christmas. We have the Gospels to read and to gain detailed information about His life and teachings. He died for our sins, but He also rose from the dead, never to die again. His promise to be with us always, to the very end of the age, is true, and we enjoy His presence with us.

But how is it with the Holy Spirit? He did not become flesh. He is likened to oil, fire, wind and a dove. No wonder that some Christians have a hard time relating to Him. But when we study the Bible with the idea of getting to know the Holy Spirit, we find that He is called a Comforter (parakletos) in John 14:16. He is the One who is called to our side. He offers His help through teaching, reminding, guiding, testifying, and glorifying Jesus (John 14-16). As a Person, he hears us and speaks with us (John 16:13). This information should encourage us to approach the Holy Spirit in the same way as we do the Father and the Son. In fact, the Bible uses interchangeably the names for the Spirit as the Spirit of God (Romans 8:9) and the Spirit of Christ (Acts 16:7). There is no competition within the Trinity. We should learn to relate to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit in the same way. There is, however, a need for distinction within the Trinity in regard to the functions of each Person of the Godhead. Paul writes in Galatians 4:6, “Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit

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Doktrína o Duchu Svatém

Dr. Josef Šolc

1. část

Skutky 15: 7–9

Karl Barth byl studenty dotázán, která teologická oblast, podle jeho názoru, se stane klíčovou v budoucnosti církve. Vyzval je k formulaci doktríny o Duchu Svatém. Proč zvolil právě toto téma?

Duch Svatý je zanedbávanou osobností Trojice. Věříme sice v Otce, Syna a Ducha Svatého, ale větší pozornost dáváme Bohu Otci a Ježíši Kristu, než Duchu Svatému. Letniční křesťané se tohoto přestupku nedopouští; avšak jejich učení o Duchu Svatém je vyzdvíženo v mluvení jazyky do takového stupně, že je pokládáno za normu všem křesťanům. Následkem toho je hovoření jazyky požadováno od všech křesťanů jako důkaz naplnění Duchem Svatým. Toto učení se v Bibli nenachází a mělo by být opraveno. Není totiž možné vyzvat křesťany, aby okusili plnost Ducha Svatého tak, jak je nabízena samotným Duchem Svatým, a ne prostřednictvím křesťanů vynucujících dar jazyků na druhých. Činí tak bez ohledu na to, co čteme v 1. Korintským 12; 11: „To vše působí jeden a týž Duch, rozděluje jednomu každému obzvláště, jak ráčí.“ Je možné, že díky tomuto nebiblickému zdůrazňování letničními věřícími, se druzí křesťané distancují od příkazu Pavla, aby byli naplněni Duchem (Efezským 5;8)? Bojíme se toho, co by mělo a mohlo být naší denní zkušeností? Pokusím se vysvětlit, že se zde není čeho bát. Naopak, mnoho lze získat poslušností Božího příkazu.

Byl jsem vychován v Československu, kde existence letniční církve byla komunistickou vládou zakázána. Tito věřící tedy navštěvovali baptistická shromáždění a vnášeli do nich svou letniční teologii. Z pravidla to netrvalo dlouho, aby získali některé členy pro své schůzky, při kterých zdůrazňovali a demonstrovali hovoření jazyky tak, aby nově příchozí mohli okusit druhé požehání v životě křesťana. Takové chování způsobilo nedůvěru ve vztahu k letničním věřícím. Strach z nadměrných emocí nutil baptistické kazatele, o otázkách Ducha Svatého, nehovořit. Jenom doufali, že jejich mlčení pomůže k odstranění tohoto problému. Nebylo to dobré řešení. Naopak, projevilo se v naprosté ignoraci Ducha Svatého mezi baptisty, včetně mne.

Stejně škodlivé bylo i další setkání s pojetím Ducha Svatého. Bylo to během mých studií na Mezinárodním baptistickém semináři v Rüşchlikonu, ve Švýcarsku. Poslouchal jsem přednášku německého profesora o Starém Zákoně. Vysvětloval nějaká data ve Starém Zákoně a poznamenal: „Jestliže vezmeme tento oddíl doslova, jak byl napsán, můžeme říci, že Duch Svatý neuměl počítat.“ Neslyšel jsem sice mnoho z kazatelny o Duchu Svatém, ale tenkrát jsem měl Bibli již několikrát přečtenou a okamžitě jsem si uvědomil, že hovořit takto o Duchu Svatém je v rozporu s tím, co Bible o Duchu Svatém říká. Postavil jsem se tedy a řekl profesorovi, že nemohu s jeho vyjádřením o Duchu Svatém, jako o někom, kdo není schopen počítat, souhlasit. V celé třídě jsem však byl jediný, koho toto prohlášení pohoršilo. I tam jsem se musel vyrovnat s arogancí ohledně Ducha Svatého.

Tím to však nekončilo. Po absolvování tří semestrů ve Švýcarsku jsem se přestěhoval do Tulsy v Oklahomě, kde jsem získal plné

stipendium v reprezentaci tenise na Oral Robertsově univerzitě (ORU). Mnoho jsem o té univerzitě nevěděl, ale bylo to jediné místo, kde mi bylo nabídnuto vzdělání zdarma. Hned při příjezdu jsem zjistil, že ORU je protiklad Rüşchlikonu. Lidé byli přátelští, milí a radostní. Zpočátku jsem nevěděl, co se děje. Proč se ke mně tak pěkně chovali? Bylo to proto, že v kapli byl oznámen příchod nového českého tenisty? Nebo to bylo proto, že tito lidé skutečně milovali Pána Ježíše a tato láska byla rozlita i na ostatních? Docela brzy jsem zjistil, že lidé na koleji velmi mnoho hovořili o naplnění Duchem Svatým, který zmocňuje jejich životy.

Byl jsem zvědavý, protože to bylo první pozitivní setkání týkající se Ducha Svatého. Nechtěl jsem svůj názor formovat podle toho, co jsem slyšel na ORU a podle zkušeností se studenty, začal jsem tedy hledat v Bibli.

Toto jsem se naučil.

I. Duch Svatý je Osobou.

Pána Boha vnímáme jako Osobu bez problému. Tolik nás miloval, že poslal svého Syna Ježíše na Zem k nám. Víme, že Jeho láska je věčná. Proto k Němu přicházíme v modlitbách, nazýváme Ho naším Otcem a v tomto vztahu setrváváme. Jestliže Ho neuposlechneme, uvědomujeme si možnost vyznání se z hříchu a přijmout Jeho odpuštění. Spojení Bůh Otec se zdá být docela přirozené, protože se podobá našemu vztahu k rodičům.

Vztah k Pánu Ježíši je rovněž skutečný. Vážíme si Jeho příchodu na zem a připomínáme si to každé vánoce. Máme možnost číst evangelium a získat podrobné informace o Jeho životě i učení. Zemřel za naše hříchy, ale také třetí den vstal z mrtvých a již nikdy nezemře. Slíbil, že s námi bude stále, až do skonání světa, je pravda a my se radujeme z Jeho přítomnosti v nás.

Jak je to však ve vztahu k Duchu Svatému? Tělem se nestal. Je dáván do souvislosti s olejem, s ohněm, větrem a holubicí. Není divu, že někteří křesťané k Němu těžko nacházejí vztah. Jestliže však studujeme Bibli za účelem poznání Ducha Svatého, zjišťujeme, že je nazýván Utěшителеm (Parakletos) u Jana 14:16. Je Ten, kdo s námi zůstává. Nabízí svou pomoc skrze učení, připomínání, vedení, svědčení a oslavení Pána Ježíše (Jan 14–16). Jako Osoba nás slyší a hovoří s námi (Jan 16:13). Známost této skutečnosti by nás měla povzbudit k tomu, abychom k Duchu Svatému přistupovali stejně jako k Otci a Synu. Faktem je, že Bible používá záměrně jméno Ducha jako Ducha Božího (Římanům 8:9) a Ducha Kristova (Skutky 16:7). V Trojici neexistuje soutěživost. Měli bychom se naučit přistupovat k Otci a Synu i Duchu Svatému stejným způsobem. Nicméně, je potřeba rozlišovat v Trojici jednotlivé funkce každé Osoby Boha Otce. V Galatským 4:6 Pavel píše: „Protože jste synové, poslal Bůh Ducha Syna svého v srdce vaše.“ Bůh poslal Ducha svého Syna na základě žádosti svého Syna, aby tak učinil (Jan 14:16). Duch Svatý je s námi nyní a v tomto smyslu je živou součástí našeho křesťanského života. Zanedbávat svého Utěšitele je k vlastní škodě každého křesťana, zvláště ve světle dalšího bodu.

Holy Spirit ... Continues from page 79

of his Son into our hearts....” God sent the Spirit of His Son as a response to the request of His Son to do so (John 14:16). The Holy Spirit is with us now and in this sense is vitally involved in our Christian lives. What a shame it is for any Christian to neglect this Comforter, especially in light of the next point.

II. The Holy Spirit lives in every Christian.

The presence of the Holy Spirit is not reserved just for special children of God. Paul writes to Timothy, “Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you—guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us,” (2 Timothy 1:14). Peter challenged a large group of people who listened to his sermon, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit,” (Acts 2:38).

Our neglect begins right here. We are not sure how to define this presence of the Holy Spirit in us. We ask questions: “Where does He live in me?” “How do I know He lives in me?” “How can I be sure this is true?” “Is it possible to prove this matter?” “If I do not feel the presence of the Holy Spirit, is He still living in me?” Doubts enter our minds when we do not have definite answers, and so the easiest thing to do is to forget about the Holy Spirit. Maybe this whole thing is just for those who are capable of mystical experiences, but we can do without them.

Even though we do not understand everything about the Holy Spirit, the Bible is clear on the fact that He is real. Paul goes so far as to claim, “And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.” (Romans 8:9b). The presence of the Holy Spirit is the distinguishing mark of those who have placed their trust in Jesus Christ. Your full theological understanding is not what qualifies you to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. It is your faith in Christ. Once we believe in Christ, we are sealed with the Holy Spirit for the day of redemption (Ephesians 4:30). We are no longer our own. We belong to God, and He is making sure that we are living a life that is transformed by the Holy Spirit in us. A transformed life is the evidence of the presence of the Holy Spirit. I will describe this truth in my next point.

Will continue in the next issue

□

President... Pokračování ze strany 98

Baptist Church v období společenství s naší konvencí. Velmi jsem se potěšil, když jsem spatřil vystavenou fotografii ze sejití Československé baptistické konvence z r. 1980, kdy jsem se naposledy setkali se sborovou úžasnou pohostinností.

10. říjen, slavná neděle, ale nekončila vyprošením požehnání. Odročili jsme do banketní haly asi míli od kostela, kde byla připravena báječná hostina. Sdíleli jsme bohaté vzpomínky, videové záznamy, které pochopitelně svědčí o bohaté historii sborového života. Tento den jsme si znovu mohli připomenout, jak velký vliv mají vzájemné vztahy, které chováme s láskou jeden k druhému jako dědicové a spoludědicové Kristovi. Ať žije Trinity Baptist Church v Chicagu!

Robert Dvořák, překlad Nataša Legierská

□

Duch Svatý... Pokračování ze strany 80

II. Duch Svatý přebývá v nitru každého křesťana

Přítomnost Ducha Svatého není rezervována pouze pro neobyčejné děti Boží. Ve svém dopise Timoteovi Pavel píše: „Výborný ten poklad ostříhej, skrze Ducha Svatého přebývajícího v nás“ (2.Timoteova 1:4). Petr vyzval zástup lidí, kteří poslouchali jeho kázání: „Pokání činite a pokřti se jeden každý z vás ve jménu Ježíše Krista na odpuštění hříchů a přijmete dar Ducha Svatého“ (Skutky 2:38). Naše nedbalost začíná právě zde. Nevíme, jakým způsobem definovat tuto přítomnost Ducha Svatého v nás. Ptáme se: „Kde ve mně žije?“ „Podle čeho poznám, že ve mně žije?“ „Jak si mohu být jist, že to je pravda?“ „Je to možné dokázat?“ „Když necítím přítomnost Ducha Svatého, žije stále ve mně?“ Jestliže nemáme definitivní odpověď, pochybujeme a nejjednodušší řešení je na Ducha Svatého nemyslet. Možná to všechno je pouze pro ty, kteří se zabývají mysticismem, my se bez toho můžeme obejít.

O Duchu Svatém všemu nerozumíme, Bible však jasně hovoří o Jeho skutečnosti. Pavel zachází ještě dále, když říká: „Jestliže pak kdo Ducha Kristova nemá, není jeho.“ (Římanům 8:9) Přítomnost Ducha Svatého je významným znakem těch, kdo svou víru uložili v Ježíši Kristu. Vaše celé teologické porozumění nespočívá v kvalifikaci přijetí daru Ducha Svatého. Je založeno na víře v Krista. Uvěříme-li Kristu, jsme zapečetěni Duchem Svatým ke dni vykoupení (Efezským 4:30). Již více nepatříme sami sobě. Patříme Bohu a On způsobuje, že žijeme život, který je přetvářen Duchem Svatým v nás. Změněný život je evidencí o přítomnosti Ducha Svatého. Tuto pravdu rozvedu v příštím bodě.

Pokračování příště,

přeložila Nataša Legierská

□

President ... Continues from page 98

pray for Pastor and Mrs. Mariottini, for the lay leadership of the congregation, and for the lively body of Christ's people who call Trinity Baptist their spiritual home today. We also express deep appreciation for the support and fellowship Trinity Baptist has shared so loyally down through the years with our convention. One of the great joys of the day was to see the annual Czechoslovak Baptist Convention photo from back in the early 1980s when last we met there by the church's gracious invitation and hospitality.

Anniversary Sunday, October 10th, did not end with the benediction of the worship service. We adjourned en masse to a banquet hall a mile or so away from the church building and there shared a magnificent dinner, rich memories, and many video photos that obviously represent a rich history of congregational life. It was a day for learning once again how strong is the impact of relationship we cherish with one another together as heirs and joint-heirs with Christ. Long live Trinity Baptist Church of Chicago.



Robert Dvorak

□

„Já, já jsem Verunka. Já jsem byla u tetičky, a když mne už bolela křídélka, tak jsem si drobátko sedla, že si odpočinu, a já jsem usnula. A teď jest tma, a já nevím cestu a bojím se, a maminka pláče, že jsem se jí ztratila.“

„Ty jsi Verunka? I neplač. Kde pak zůstáváte?“

„My zůstáváme v růžtce.“

„V růžtce? Vid', to jest tam před potokem na mezi. I já vím, kde to jest. Pojď, já tě tam zavedu, a neplač.“

Však Verunka už neplakala. A letěli. Brouček letěl napřed, aby Verunka viděla na cestu, ale mohl na ní oči nechat. Pořád se ohlížel. Když byla taková krásná, celinká červená se sedmi černými puntíčky! A ty oči, ty krásné černé oči! A už neplakaly. A letěli, ale neříkali nic. Brouček se díval na Verunku, a Verunka letěla za Broučkem. Už byli na vrchu, už letěli s vrchu, už byli nedaleko potoka, po potoku vzhůru, už počínala mez, už bylo vidět růžtku, a u Verunků—vždyť oni celou noc nespali. Pořád Verunku hledali, a teď, když viděli blížít se jakési světlo, letěli naproti. Verunku hned poznali, a to bylo radosti! Brouček se však otočil, a když se po něm ohlíželi, byl on už ten tam.

Však už na něho doma čekali.

„Kde paks byl, Broučku,“ ptal se tatínek.

„Já jsem musel zavést Verunku domů. Ona seděla v trávě a plakala, že se bojí a že neví cestu.“

„Kde pak oni zůstávají?“

„Tamhle za potokem na mezi v růžtce.“

„A co pak ti řekli?“

„Nic. Já jsem honem letěl domů.“

„Nu, dobře,“ řekl tatínek. A jako by nic. Ale maminka tomu byla ráda, a Janinka neříkala nic, ale také byla ráda, a Brouček měl posud dobré svědomí, a jakoby nic.

Druhý den letěl zas. Rovnou cestou do té zahrady u toho pěkného domu, a svítíl a svítíl, na nic nedbal, a ničeho si nevšímal. Ale za nějakou chvilku sedne si na hrušku na samý vrcholek, na nic nedbá a ničeho si nevšímá, a počne mudrovat. „A proč bych já musel tady svítit! Ať svítím, kde svítím, jen když svítím. Tady jest nás bez toho dost.“ A tak si to povídal, na nic nedbal, a ničeho si nevšímal, sletěl však s hrušky a marš—vzhůru mezi vinohrady k lesu, přes vrch, podle potoka, tu jest ta mez, tu na ní ta růžtka—a tu se Brouček zastavil. Ohlížel se, chodil kolem, a tu k němu vyběhne z růžtky Verunka.

„Broučku! Však já vím, že jsi ty brouček. Také prý vám říkají svatojanské mušky. Ale vždyť ty nejsi muška, ty jsi brouček, vid', Broučku?“

„Ale jak pak ty víš, že já jsem Brouček?“

„I tatínek mně to povídal. On se po tobě včera ohlížel, a tys už byl pryč. A povídal, že to byl brouček, a že jste hodní. A vid', vy lidem a jiným broučkům svítíte. Já bych hned chtěla být takovým broučkem.“

„A poslouvej, Verunko, co pak vy děláte?“

„My? My povídáme lidem, kam se dostanou, jestli do nebe nebo do pekla.“

„A jak pak vy to víte?“

„I to my už víme. Když letíme nahoru, tak se dostanou do nebe, a když letíme dolů, tak se dostanou do pekla.“

„Ale! A poslouvej, kam pak se dostanu já, a maminka a tatínek, a Janinka a kmotříček a Beruška?“

„Kam? To já nevím. Počkej, já se zeptám tatínka, až přiletí domů.“

„Kde pak on jest?“

„On letěl povídat lidem, kam se dostanou. Však on už brzy přiletí.“

A tu on letěl. Brouček ho spatří, a jako by neměl dobré svědomí, otočí se a pryč—vzhůru do vrchu okolo lesa, skrz vinohrady do té zahrady u toho pěkného domu, a svítíl a svítíl a svítíl až do samého rána.

„Broučku, už polet!“ volali na něho tatínek a kmotříček. A letěli domů.

Ale druhý den zas tak. Brouček letěl nejdřív tam do té zahrady, drobátko svítíl, pak si sedl na hrušku na samý vrcholek, na nic nedbal, a ničeho si nevšímal, a započal mudrovat.

„A proč bych já musel tady svítit! Ať svítím, kde svítím, jen když svítím. Tady jest nás bez toho dost, a tam se dozvím, kam se dostaneme.“ A tak si to povídal, a na nic nedbal, a ničeho si nevšímal, sletěl však s hrušky, a marš—vzhůru okolo lesa, přes vrch, podle potoka—tu jest ta mez, tu na ní ta růžtka, a teď se Brouček zastavil. Ohlížel se jako by měl zlé svědomí, obcházel kolem, a tu k němu vyběhla z růžtky Verunka.

„Broučku, však ty se nedostaneš do nebe. Tvá maminka se tam dostane, a ta Janinka také, ale ty ne.“

„A proč pak ne?“

„Já nevím, ale tatínek letěl šikmo na zem, a povídal, že kdybys teď uměl, že by ses do nebe nedostal. Abys prý si vzpomněl, co jest u vás to první.“

„To první? Co pak to jest? Já nevím.“

„I, to jest zle, když ty ani nevíš! U nás jest to první mluvit pravdu, a hned to druhé jest poslouchat. Víš, tatínkovi to bylo líto, žeš mne přivedl, a že by ses přece neměl dostat do nebe, ale on musí mluvit pravdu.“

„Ó, však já už vím, co jest u nás to první. Ale já musím letět.“

„A přiletíš zas?“

Ale Brouček už letěl. „Já nevím,“ a letěl vzhůru do vrchu okolo lesa, skrz vinohrady do té zahrady u toho pěkného domu, a svítíl a svítíl a svítíl až do bílého rána. „I už polet', Broučku!“ volali na něho tatínek a kmotříček. A letěli domů.

Přetištěno s povolením



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:

USA:

Vera Dors
6621 Elmdale Rd.
Middleburg Hts, OH, 44130

Canada:

Henry Pojman
2393 West Ham Rd.
Oakville, ON L6M 4P2



Fireflies ... Continues from page 95

turned round and was off. He flew up the hill, past the wood and over the vineyards to the beautiful house. There in the garden he shone and shone till dawn broke.

"Lucius, come along home!" Father and Godfather were calling to him. And they flew home together.

The next day the same thing happened. Lucius flew straight to the garden and stayed there for a short while, then he settled down on top of the pear tree and began to meditate. "Why should I have to stay and shine here? What matters is that I shine and it doesn't matter where. There are plenty of us here, anyway." And while he was thinking about it he took no notice of anything else, flew down from the pear tree, away over the vineyards to the wood, over the hill and along the brook till he came to the bank where the rose bush grew. And there he stopped. He looked round uncertainly and strolled about. And now Veronica came running out from the bush.

"Oh, dear Firefly, you're not good. Your mother is good and Jeanine too, but not you."

"How come?"

"I don't know. Father said if you were to die now you wouldn't go to heaven and that you should remember what is the most important thing for you." "The most important thing? What is it? I don't know."

"It's bad if you don't know. For us the most important thing is to tell the truth and the next is to be obedient. Father thinks it was very kind of you to bring me home and he's very sorry that you shouldn't get to heaven. But he must tell the truth."

"Oh, I know now what is the most important thing for us. But I must be off." "Will you come again?"

"I don't know," he said as he flew off.

Then he flew up the hill, past the wood and over the vineyards to the beautiful house. There in the garden he shone and shone till dawn broke.

"Lucius, come along home!" father and Godfather were calling to him. And they flew home together.

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Youth Corner ... Continues from page 99

asked the clerk how to get back. Thankfully, we managed to take the back roads, and three hours later arrived back safely on the college campus.

After this adventure we had, I realized that God provides for us and helps us through any situation if we just trust in Him. I know that God was watching over every single one of us that day and He brought us all back safely. This experience reminds me of a song and the lyrics that fit perfectly. The song is called "God Will Make a Way," and the lyrics are "God will make a way where there seems to be no way, He works in ways we cannot see, He will make a way for me; He will be my guide, hold me closely to His side, with love and strength for each new day, He will make a way, He will make a way."

This trip to Audra State Park added another wonderful experience to our annual convention, and makes us look forward to the trip we will embark on next year!

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Ladies Page... Continues from page 99

Romania tidbits:

•Peoples:

Romanian—85.1%. A Latin people descended from Romans settled in Dacia.

Hungarian—7.1%. Primarily found in Transylvania.

Roma (Gypsy)—5.4%. Government figures admit only 400,000, but could be as high as 2 million.

Turkish—0.8 %.

German—0.5 %. Significant losses since 1988 due to emigration.

Other—1.1 %.

•Economy: A land rich in agriculture, minerals and oil, but pillaged by a rapacious elite under Communism. Government reluctance and a strangling bureaucracy has slowed economic reform as Romania lags ever further behind other former Communist states. Unemployment was 45% in 1998. Income per person—\$1,410.

•Politics: One of the Communist bloc's most oppressive and cruel regimes. The revolution of 1989-90 overthrew that regime, but former Communists still play a large role in government. There is a revival of anti-minority nationalism against Hungarians and Gypsies. Romania aspires to EU membership by 2007.

•Religion: Romania has Europe's third-highest population of Evangelicals, but the number of Evangelical believers has not grown since 1990. Since 1989, Romania has seen a sustained church-planting movement, with an average of five new church buildings opening every week until 1999. Only a lack of human and material resources prevents this from continuing at the above rate.

The burden of a tragic past lies heavily upon Romania. The moral vacuum left by Ceausescu's Communists has been replaced by every kind of social ill. Substance abuse, prostitution and violent crime are all on the increase. Romania has one of the highest abortion rates in the world. Many spend most of their income on food.

Some groups in the Orthodox Church are violently opposing evangelistic outreach. Millions of Romanians have grown up as "Christians," but with no meaningful exposure to the gospel: only 2-4% of Orthodox believers take their faith very seriously.

In the time that we were in Romania, we were able to share many joys while serving God:

In the towns where we were teaching English, families came to see what we were doing, and now some are connected with the local churches.

We exchanged journaled notes with our students each day, and many asked about the God we talked about in class and chapel time. Many seeds planted.

We were an encouragement to the translators, missionaries and pastoral teams.

500 more students were able to access the camp with more renovations completed this summer, and many came to know Christ as their Lord and Savior.

With our van breaking down three times, the men were able to witness to the people that helped us.

Encouragement and support to the people at the camp that work very hard each day. (The ping-pong tournaments at wee hours of the morning were great!)

If you ever have a chance to take a mission trip somewhere, not only will you be a blessing to others, but God will richly bless your heart.

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Cornerstone Baptist Church Celebrates 75th Anniversary

"And above all these things put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony." Colossians 3:14

From Friday, July 30, to Sunday, August 1, 2004, the fellowship of the former First Czechoslovak Baptist Church, now Cornerstone Baptist Church, in Minitonas, Manitoba, commemorated together with visitors its 75th anniversary. Participants of the celebration praised the Lord for His providence, which had led Czech immigrants to the area of Minitonas from distant Europe (from Volyn and subsequently from Czechoslovakia) during the years 1927-1935.

The first Czech newcomers immediately joined the German Baptist Church, and in 1929 they established their own Czechoslovak congregation. During the spring of 1934, our countrymen started to build their own church building in Minitonas. The opening celebration took place on October 28, 1934.

The Czechoslovak community of believers spread the good news of the gospel in their neighbourhood. Many of them significantly influenced the Christian spiritual life of their countrymen all across Canada. For example, some of the original Czech immigrants together with their descendants form the core of the Czechoslovak Baptist Church in Toronto, Ontario, to this day.

The program of the 75th anniversary celebration was a rich one. Registration of the guests, which took place on Friday, July 30, ran smoothly. The ever-increasing group of visitors was buzzing like a



on God's love, was delivered by the local pastor, Rev. Garth Priebe. The solemn atmosphere of the opening evening was excellently enhanced by the service of the choir and the congregational singing of spiritual hymns and worship songs.

The morning of Saturday, July 31, was free for the participants, and for many of them the afternoon was free as well. Some of them used these moments to visit families, to explore the farms of Czech immigrants and to visit the Minitonas cemetery, where they commemorated our deceased countrymen, fathers and mothers of our faith.

Early Saturday afternoon was marked by other preparations: choir practice and brass band practice. During the late afternoon the participants gathered for an excellent barbecue supper, which took place on the premises of the church. The fellowship of love continued in a pleasant atmosphere. The soft shower at the end of the picnic had simply no chance to spoil the event the organizers had ready their Plan B—to go on in the church's banquet room.

The evening worship service was again enriched by the choir, the brass band and also various solo performances. Rev. George Munchinsky delivered the devotional, focused on the Holy Spirit shaping the emotional, intellectual and volitional life of individuals and working through dedicated servants. Rev. Bruce Mateika addressed the audience with the idea of the church fellowship which binds believers together and makes them strong. After some late-evening refreshments, conversations and inspection of high-quality church photographic archives, both participants and organizers of the celebration adjourned, with a joyful expectation of the Sunday program to come.

Sunday, August 1, was a dignified climax to the whole event. The whole musical program was so beautiful. The sermon was delivered by Rev. Lorne Meisner, representative of the Baptist General Conference of Central Canada. In his speech he emphasized the idea that the local church represents the bride of the Lord Jesus Christ and that His bride has to be attractive to the audience and to the surrounding society by her moral purity, service and love. After the anniversary picture was taken, a banquet was served in the Legion Hall in Swan River, where more than 320 participants, local church members, organizers and guests, including children, met for an excellent closing lunch and final mutual fellowship at the tables.

Under the leadership of their church president, Henry Jersak, the organizers of this unique 75th anniversary celebration in Minitonas had prepared a most valuable program, and secured a smooth course for the whole event. The visitors left Minitonas full of gratitude and with a precious knowledge that God the Father is in Christ and in the Holy Spirit, the Lord of His church and of the world's history. To God be the glory for the work he has done and continues to do. *Soli Deo Gloria.*

Ján Banko



bee-hive. Well, no wonder, many of the participants of this celebration were meeting again after many years, and their communication was full of joy and enthusiasm.

Friday's evening worship started with a prelude and continued with the service of the choir, the Canadian national anthem, worship songs, a warm welcome and a prayer. The participants then remembered those charter members who are still serving as living witnesses of God's mercy: sister Rose Kilbrai and sister Bessie Reichert. Then greetings were delivered from dignitaries, the representatives of various churches and conventions as well as some of the former church pastors, missionaries and other representatives. The message, focused

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Cornerstone Baptist Church oslavuje 75. výročie

„Ale nad to nado všetko oblečte si lásku, ktorá je pojivom dokonalosti.“
(Kolosenským 3:14)

V dňoch od 30. júla do 1. augusta tohoto roku si miestne spoločenstvo niekdajšieho 1. Československého Baptistickeho Zboru (dnes „Cornerstone Baptist Church“) v Minitonas, (kanadská provincia Manitoba), spoločne s návštevníkmi pripomenulo 75. výročie svojho založenia. Účastníci osláv chválili Hospodina za Jeho prozreteľnosť, ktorá v rokoch 1927–1935 viedla českých emigrantov do oblasti Minitonas až z ďalekej Európy (z oblasti Volyne a nasledovne z Československa).

Noví emigranti sa najprv pripojili k Nemeckému Baptistickeému Zboru a v roku 1929 si založili svoje vlastné československé spoločenstvo. Na jar roku 1934 začali svojpomocne pracovať na stavbe budovy kostola, ktorý slávnostne otvorili dňa 28. októbra toho istého roku.

Československé spoločenstvo veriacich pôsobilo zvesťou evanjelia vo svojom okolí. Mnohí z nich však významným spôsobom ovplyvnili kresťanský duchovný život krajanov i kanadskej komunity od západného až po východné pobrežie. Napríklad niektorí z pôvodných českých emigrantov spolu so svojimi potomkami tvoria až do dnešných dní jadro Československého Baptistickeho Zboru v Toronte, v kanadskej provincii Ontario.

Program osláv 75. výročia bol bohatý. Registrácia hostí v piatok, 30. júla, prebiehala hladko a v rastúcom obecenstve návštevníkov to šumelo ako v úli. Niet sa čo diviť, veď niektorí z návštevníkov osláv sa stretli po mnohých rokoch a tak sa radostne a s chuťou komunikovali.

V piatočnom večernom zhromaždení si po úvodnom prelúdiu, službe spevokolu, kanadskej národnej hymne, spoločných oslavných piesňach, privítaní a modlitbe účastníci osláv pripomenuli tých zakladajúcich členov zboru, ktorí až dodnes slúžia ako živí svedkovia Božej milosti—sestry Rose Kilbrai a Bessie Reichert. Zazneli tiež pozdravy vzácných hostí, predstaviteľov zborových spoločenstiev a konvencií ako aj pozdravy niekdajších kazateľov zboru, misionárov a iných zástupcov. Posolstvo Božieho Slova, zamerané na Božiu lásku, tlmočil poslucháčom miestny kazateľ Garth Priebe. Slávnostnú atmosféru výborne dopĺňovala služba spevokolu a spoločný spev duchovných a oslavných piesní.

Dopoludnie v sobotu, 31. júla, bolo pre návštevníkov osláv voľné a pre mnohých bolo voľné aj sobotňajšie popoludnie. Niektorí ho využili na návštevy v rodinách i na historické potulky po farmách českých emigrantov a na návštevu cintorína v Minitonas, kde si v tichu prírody pripomínali našich zosnulých krajanov, otcov a matky našej viery.

Sobotné rané popoludnie bolo v znamení ďalších príprav, cvičenia spojeného spevokolu a nácviku dychovej kapely. Počas neskorého popoludnia sa účastníci osláv zišli k veľmi dobre pripravenému pikniku. Obecenstvo lásky a dobrej pohody teda pokračovalo ďalej plným prúdom. Ani mierny dážď ku koncu pikniku nič nenarušil, veď uspo-

riadatelia mali pre takúto situáciu pripravený plán „B“ v spoločenskej miestnosti kostola.

Večerné bohoslužby boli opäť obohatené službou spevokolu, ako aj vystúpením dychovej kapely a rôznymi sólovými vystúpeniami. Biblickou úvahou o tom, ako Svätý Duch formuje citový, intelektuálny a vôľový život jednotlivcov a ako pôsobí prostredníctvom odovzdaných služobníkov, predniesol kazateľ George Munchinsky. Kazateľ Bruce Mateika oslovil poslucháčov myšlienkou spoločenstva cirkvi, ktorá spája veriacich v jedno a čini ich silnými. Po večernom občerstvení,

rozhovoroch a prehliadke kvalitného fotografického archívu zo života zboru sa účastníci osláv i organizátori podujatia s radostným očakávaním nedeľného programu odobrali na zaslúžený odpočinok.

Nedeľa, 1. augusta, bola dôstojným vyvrcholením celého podujatia. Hudobný a spevácky program bol krásny. Kázňou poslužil predstaviteľ Baptistickej Generálnej Konferencie pre Strednú Kanadu, Lorne Meisner. Jeho preslov hovoril o tom, že miestny zbor predstavuje nevestu Pána Ježiša Krista, ktorá má byť príťažlivá pre okolitú spoločnosť svojou morálnou čistotou, službou a vzťahmi lásky. Po

spoločnom fotografovaní sa účastníci osláv odobrali k záverečnému banketu.

Záverom je vhodné zdôrazniť, že organizátori osláv 75. výročia založenia zborového spoločenstva v Minitonas sa pod vedením predsedu zboru Henryho Jersáka postarali o hodnotný program a hladký priebeh podujatia. Návštevníci odchádzali z Minitonas plní vďačnosti a so vzácnym poznaním, že Hospodin je v Kristu a v Duchu Svätom Pánom svojej cirkvi i dejín celého sveta. Jedinému Bohu patrí sláva za dielo, ktoré konal, koná a neprestáva konať.

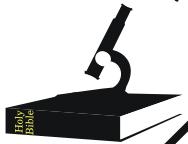
Soli Deo Gloria.

Ján Banko



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





Part 2

John the Baptist:

The Power of the Preparer

John 1:15–24

Dr. Richard Niswonger

In the Arkansas Ozark Hills, raising a garden can be a delightful exercise, but it also can be arduous. One of the obstacles for me has been to get rid of the seemingly endless supply of rocks. I think there is some kind of devilish elf who comes in the dark of night and adds new stones to frustrate the gardener. Also I need to add organic amendments to the hard clay soil. Otherwise it would be just about as easy to grow lettuce on a hot tile roof. If the seedbed is not prepared first, the seed will not sprout and grow into a healthy plant. It would be almost impossible to get even a stubby little corn stalk. So the task of preparing before the seed is planted is essential. John the Baptist was the seedbed preparer. The Gospel of John says of the preparer, "There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light..." (1:6–7).

Many in that day were not ready to heed the message of Jesus. John came to help them prepare their hearts. Malachi had predicted this work of John. Speaking of the return of "Elijah," Malachi said, "he will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers..." (Mal. 4:6).

There are many hearts today that are not ready to receive the Messiah, the Light of the World. They need to hear the Word of God, but they need to have their hearts prepared by the Holy Spirit to receive the message. As in Jesus' parable of the sower, there are many stony hearts, many preoccupied with the cares of this life. We need to be spirit-empowered witnesses, like John, to bring them to the light.

It is surprising that mankind needs a witness to point them to the light. But



this tells us something of our own sinfulness and blindness. When I was studying for a Ph.D. in Austin, Texas, I often had lunch near a school for the blind. Once I walked over to the facilities of the school. I noticed that it was very dark in one room where a few young men had gathered. I asked if they did not want a light turned on. This of course was a foolish question, and they informed me that it made no difference to them. For those who are totally blind, the light does not penetrate. Hearts need to be prepared to look toward God to receive His grace.

As we examine what the first chapter of John says about the preparer, we can divide the passage into three parts:

- 1) Who is the Word?
- 2) Who is John the Baptist?
- 3) What was John the Baptist doing?

1. Who is the Word?

The first part of John 1 describes Jesus as the Word. In verse 15, John asserts that this one called the Word was preexistent. Or as an early Christian theologian, Athanasius, proclaimed of the second person of the trinity, "There was never a time when He was not." Verse 15: John testifies concerning him. He cries out, saying, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because

he was before me.'"

We know from Luke that John was born before Jesus' birth. Yet Christ preceded him. As Jesus told his critics, "I am that I am." The son of God was present even before Abraham lived.

Look next at verses 16 and 17: "From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ."

Moses was the deliveryman. He received the commandments from God. They were given at least in part for a period of time only. Jesus did not just deliver truth. He was the truth. He was God's word, or message, to man. He was the message in that as the incarnate God, He revealed God. He also was more than a bearer of grace. Through His sacrifice, He became the means of God granting freely the undeserved favor of God to all who receive the Son. Jesus came not just to give us a few benefits. He pours out grace upon grace. His blessings are boundless.

One of the clearest statements about who Jesus is can be found in verse 18: "No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known." Moses saw only the faintest shadow of God's glory, but those who looked upon the Word saw God's clearest expression of Himself that man could ever see. The Greek expression is very interesting. "God the One and Only" is in Greek, *monogenes theos*. The term *monogenes* means "unique" or "the only one of its kind." And *theos* is the word for God. So the passage is very clear about the deity of Christ. He is the Unique God. He is the God who declares Himself to man by coming as a man. The phrase "has made him known" is the same expression bible students use when they talk about exegesis, the study of scripture to draw out truth. Jesus leads us to the meaning and understanding of God.

2. Who is John the Baptist?

When Ross Perot introduced his running mate, the vice-presidential candidate of the Reform Party, back in 1992, Mr. Stockdale with a blank look on his face asked two questions. It almost looked as if he did not know the answers. He asked, "Who am I, and what am I doing here?" This is similar to the questions the religious leaders had about John. Who was John, and what was his work?

Notice verse 19: "Now this was John's testimony when the Jews of Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was."

We note two things about the leaders in Jerusalem:

1) They were impressed with the power John had over the people. They saw that the multitudes went out into the desert to hear him and be baptized. They wanted to use John's popularity to add to their own power.

2) They were not humble enough to go out and be seen attending the revival led by the outspoken desert preacher who was wearing a rough camel-hair garment. This indifference and disdain shows their unwillingness to acknowledge that John had a message they needed to heed. We cannot learn from God's word or the preaching of His messengers if we are too proud to admit our need. These religious

leaders in their prestigious robes of power were unaware that they resembled what Jesus said of the Laodiceans, "...you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked," (Rev. 3:17).

Note the honesty and humility of John by contrast, in verses 20 and 21: "He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, 'I am not the Christ.' They asked him, 'Then who are you? Are you Elijah?' He said, 'I am not.' 'Are you the Prophet?' He answered, 'No.' "

John was in a figurative or spiritual sense the fulfillment of the promise that Elijah would come to prepare the way for the Messiah. But humbly, John makes it clear he is not the reincarnation of the literal man Elijah. He was also not the prophet that Deuteronomy predicted would be like another Moses. John was careful not to accept glory that was not his.

Deut. 18:18: "I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him." That prophet was a reference to the Messiah Himself.

Not satisfied, the agents from Jerusalem asked further, in verse 22: "Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "I am the voice of

one calling in the desert, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.' "

John does not try to portray himself as an important figure. It is almost as if there is no man, just a voice calling out in a barren place.

3. What was John the Baptist doing?

When asked why he is baptizing, John points to the greater baptism of Jesus. That baptism would be not only of water but of the Spirit.

Notice verse 26: "I baptize with water," John replied, "but among you stands one you do not know. He is the one who comes after me, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie."

And consider verse 33, where John says, "I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.' "

What kind of attitude do we have as we seek to serve God? Do we seek too much the applause of men, the acclaim of the crowd? Are we more focused on ourselves than on the God we serve? God is still looking for faithful men and women like John to serve Him today. May God grant us help in being more selfless and more dedicated to serving Him.

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Editorial ... Pokračování ze strany 79

Na jedné straně hovořit nechce, ale na druhé straně je velmi citlivý. Přecitlivělost na sebe sama zastírá pohled na bližního a omezuje rozhled kolem sebe. Následkem toho je i pohled na vděčnost zkreslený.

Charakteristickým rysem společnosti moderní doby je kult osobnosti. Člověk se stal centrem svého světa. Je to jakýsi stav izolace, který předchází naprosté destrukci osobnosti. Člověk byl stvořen pro život ve společnosti druhého člověka. (Genesis 2,18a) Proto je izolace nepřírozená.

Jedná se v podstatě o rovnováhu. Dvě protilehlé strany se drží v rovině díky ose, která je spojuje. Dojde-li ke změně, porušení či odstranění pojítka mezi dvěma stranami, nelze hovořit o rovnováze.

V lidských vztazích je středem rovnováhy Pán Ježíš Kristus. Jak vznikají vztahy? Nejprve musí probíhat nějaký děj. Akce a reakce. Podle toho se vztahy utvářejí. *Jak chcete, aby vám lidé činili, i vy jim též podobně činite.* (Lukáš 6,31 Kralický překlad)

Ano, člověk má dbát o dobro svého bytí, dokonce musí, neboť je

chrámem Ducha Božího (1. Kor. 3,16). Marné je však jeho snažení, zapomene-li na svého bližního. Jinými slovy, vztahy je možné udržet v rovnováze jedině tehdy, prochází-li středem. V praktickém životě to znamená aplikaci znalosti nejen Božího Slova, ale také příkladu Ježíše Krista. Pokud je vztah započat s předsevzetím následovat Kristova příkladu, je i podvědomí člověka daleko citlivější a vnímavější na Boží svrchovanost. Taková citlivost a vnímavost nutně vede k vděčnosti, která trvale naplní lidské srdce. V tomto stadiu je člověk schopen být vděčný i za věci, které sice zraní či zarmoutí, ale pohled na střed rovnováhy nezastřou.

Toto je pravděpodobně jedno z mnoha tajemství v následování Kristova příkladu.

Proto jsme vděční.

Šéfredaktorka *Nataša Legierská,*

□



Časť 1b

Ján Krstiteľ:

Muž zmocnený Duchom

Matúš 3:1–17

Ľuboš Dzuriak

Jeho odkaz (3:7–12)

3:7–10 Na scéne sa objavujú dve skupiny židovských vodcov. Farizeji a sadukaji, ktorí reprezentujú dve z troch náboženských skupín (popri essénach).

Sadukaji—ich meno je pravdepodobne odvodené od Dávidovho kňaza Zadoka. Oni boli považovaní za politických liberálov a náboženských konzervatívcov. Išlo o malú aristokratickú a kňazskú skupinu, ktorá uzavrela mier s rímskou vládou. Verili iba v Písmo, ktoré bolo inšpirované samým Bohom a verili iba tomu, čo mohlo byť odvodené z piatich kníh Mojžišových. A teda zavrhovali anjelov a zmŕtvychvstanie.

Farizeji—(meno pravdepodobne pochádza z hebrejského slova *Perushim*, čo znamená „tí, ktorí sa oddelujú/separujú“.) Farizeji boli obľúbení učitelia zákona. Mali sklon k politickému konzervativizmu a náboženskému liberalizmu. Rozvinuli ústny zákon, ktorý obsahoval detailnú interpretáciu, aplikáciu a rozpracovanie Písma pre lepšie pochopenie bežného ľudu. Farizeji boli všeobecne uznávaní a obľúbení. V žiadnom prípade neboli všetci pokrytci, tak ako ich mnohí kresťania vnímajú.

Farizeji a sadukaji tvorili menej ako 5% z celkovej židovskej populácie. Sanhedrin—najvyšší židovský súd patrili práve týmto dvom skupinám.

Ján vnímal z ich strany isté pokrytectvo. Pravdepodobne predstierali, že podporujú jeho misiu. Presnejší preklad je, že „prichádzali kde Ján krstil“ než „prichádzali pre krst“. Pod slovami „vretenie plemä“ chcel Ján zrejme vyjadriť ich prešibanosť a nebezpečenstvo, ktorým ohrozujú ostatných. Druhá polovica verša 7 je povedaná možno so sarkazmom. Ján vie, že židovskí vodcovia sa nesnažia uniknúť od prichádzajúceho hnevu. Tento hnev je súčasťou príchodu kráľovstva, ktoré smeruje k súdu Božích nepriateľov, ako aj k požehnaniu Jeho nasledovníkov. Boží hnev neodráža emócie, ale je súčasťou Božej svätosti, ktorá zavrhuje všetko nesväté v Jeho stvorení.

Verš 8 poskytuje vysvetlenie k jednej



z najvýznamnejších Matúšových tém—spravodlivosť skrze skutky. Matúš neprotirečí Pavlovej doktríne ospravedlnenia skrze vieru, skôr hovorí, že skutočná viera, či pokánie, majú za následok zmenu správania a životného štýlu. Vo verši 9 Ján opäť varuje svojich poslucháčov, aby sa nespoliehali na svojich predkov a nemysleli si, že len oni sú legitímni kandidáti na Boží ľud. Táto mesiášska doba spôsobuje, že do Božieho kráľovstva sa dostávajú noví ľudia a vylučujú sa tí, ktorí sa cítili v bezpečí. Mesiáš je skutočným synom Abrahámovým (Mt 1:1–2). Mimo neho niet spasenia. Jánova referencia k „týmto kameňom“ pravdepodobne odráža originálnu aramejskú slovnú hračku—podobnosť medzi slovami deti (*beenayyaa*) a kamene (*abnayya*). Ján bol zrejme inšpirovaný charakteristickou kamenistou pôdou, ktorá pokrýva Izrael.

Verš 10. opäť varuje, aby sme sa nespoliehali na to, že žijeme v kresťanskej krajine, alebo že sme boli vychovaní v kresťanskej rodine. Dokonca ani členstvo v cirkvi, či slovné prehlásenie, že dôverujeme Kristovi nie je nič platné, ak nie je evidentné, že náš život je zmenený a neprinášame ovocie hodné pokánia. Kresťan bez ovocia nie je kresťan (Jk 2:14–26).

3:11–12 Ján sa v týchto veršoch porovnáva s Ježišom. „Ten, čo prichádza“ (v. 11) je pravdepodobne mesiášsky titul a pochádza z textov ako Žalm 118:26 a 40:7. Ján sa vidí nižšie postavený ako otrok, ktorého jednou

z najpodradnejších úloh bolo nosiť zvyčajne špinavé sandále svojho pána. Mnohí Jánovi poslucháči si o ňom mysleli, že je úchvatný, no niekto ešte úchvatnejší sa čoskoro objaví. Obaja, Ján aj Ježiš kážu o pokání a používajú krst vodou ako vonkajší znak vnútornej zmeny (Jn 4:1–2), ale iba Ježiš krstí Duchom Svätým a ohňom.

Slovné spojenie „na pokánie“ naznačuje, že človek musí byť pokrstený, aby bol spasený, avšak takéto vysvetlenie stroskotáva na iných novozákonných učeniach (napr. Sk 3:19; Rim 3:23–24; Ef 2:8–9). Jánov krst vo vzťahu k pokániu sa líši od ostatných náboženských rituálov krstu, keďže ten Jánov len symbolizuje odvrátenie sa od hriechu.

Zmienka o krste „Duchom Svätým“ alebo „v Duchu Svätom“ sa nachádza šesťkrát na rôznych miestach v Novom Zákone. Päť z nich sú vlastne citácie Jána (Mk 1:8; Lk 3:16; Jn 1:33; Sk 1:5; 11:16). Skutky 1–2 potvrdzujú, že Jánove slová sa naplnili na Letnici. Šiesta zmienka je v 1. Kor 12:13, kde je jasné, že všetci kresťania prijali krst Duchom. Tento verš svedčí o začlenení veriaceho človeka do tela Kristovho a to tým, že Duch Svätý v ňom prebýva a nikdy ho neopúšťa. „Krst Duchom“ sa nesmie zamieňať s „naplnením Duchom“, ktoré sa objavuje v súvislosti s posilnením veriacich smelo prehlasovať Božie slovo (Sk 2:4; 4:8, 31; 9:17; 13:9). Toto je ďalší dôvod, prečo človek nemôže byť kresťanom bez toho, aby mal zmenený život; prebývajúcí Duch garantuje, že proces posväcovania sa objaví (Rim 6–8).

Ak krst Duchom Svätým sa týka obrátenia veriacich, tak krst ohňom by mal byť prirodzene spojený s ohnivým súdom neveriacich (v. 10 a 12). Dokonca aj gramatická konštrukcia v gréčtine naznačuje (v. 11), že ide o jeden a ten istý krst, ktorý spája v sebe Ducha Svätého a oheň. Pre veriacich to s najväčšou pravdepodobnosťou znamená očisťujúcu moc Ducha Svätého, avšak pre neveriacich je to tá istá usvedčujúca moc, ktorá vedie k odsúdeniu. Verš 12 rozvíja

metaforu súdu z verša 10. Ján používa obraz hospodára, ktorý vyhadzovaním zŕn do vzduchu za pomoci vetra oddeľuje hodnotnú pšenicu od plevy. Pšenica, tak ako veriaci, je zachovaná a uskladnená; plevy, tak ako neveriaci, sú zničené.

V Biblii nachádzame istý nesúlad v opise večného trestu, keďže oheň a vonkajšia tma sa navzájom vylučujú. Avšak ako metafory obe potvrdzujú bolesť a odlúčenie od Boha a teda zatratenie. Matúšov zámer tak nie je presný opis pekla, ale rozdelenie ľudí na dve skupiny na základe ich odozvy na Jánovu a Ježišovu výzvu k pokániu (13:36–46).

2. Ján a Ježiš: Krst Mesiáša (3:13–17)

Cesty dvoch hlavných postáv 3. kapitoly sa križujú. Jánova služba je zavŕšená pokrstením Ježiša. Jánova rola tak upadá a Ježišova naberá spád (Jn 3:30).

3:13–14 V 2. kapitole Matúš necháva Ježiša ako dieťa v Galileji. Teraz je Ježiš už dospelý a prichádza na juh do Judska. Keďže krst znamená, že osoba činila pokánie, Ján sa zdráha pokrstiť Ježiša. Matúš jednoznačne nevyhlasuje doktrínu o Kristovej bezhriechnosti, ale miestami to naznačuje. V 11. verši už Ján poukázal na svoj „pocit menejcnosti“ v prítomnosti

Mesiáša. Teraz potvrdzuje svoju vlastnú hriechnosť v porovnaní s Ježišom a ako by sa situácia mala správne otočiť—Ježiš by mal pokrstiť Jána.

3:15 Ježiš trošku nejednoznačne odpovedá a zdá sa, že potvrdzuje Jánovu logiku, avšak jednako si žiada krst z iného dôvodu. Ježiš neprichádza, aby vyznával svoje hriechy, ale aby „naplnil všetku spravodlivosť“. On už predtým naplnil konkrétne prorocktá, ako aj iné všeobecné biblické motívy. Teraz si žiada splniť všetky morálne požiadavky Božej vôle. „Naplniť všetku spravodlivosť“ znamená uskutočniť všetko, čo je súčasťou poslušného vzťahu voči Bohu. Ježiš sa teda stotožňuje s Jánovou službou ako posvätenou samým Bohom a jeho posolstvom, ktoré treba poslúchať.

3:16–17 Matúš neopisuje krst ako taký, skôr sa zameriava na to, čo sa stalo následne po ňom. Ako Ježiš vychádza von z rieky, Boh na neho dáva svoje dvojité potvrdenie. Najprv zostupuje Duch Svätý „ako holubica“, čo nemusí znamenať, že išlo o skutočného vtáka, ale že ten viditeľný prejav Ducha viedol pozorovateľov k rozpoznaní, že Boh sa zjavuje spôsobom, ktorý je spájaný s holubicou (ako napríklad: vznášaním sa nad stvorenstvom (Gen 1:2),

ponúkaním pokoja (Gen 8:10), jemnosťou v kontraste s odsúdením verše 7–12, alebo ako charakteristický Boží znak lásky). Druhé potvrdzujúce znamenie je „hlas z neba“. Tento hlas bol potvrdením, že Božia komunikácia s Izraelom pokračuje.

Nebeský hlas cituje Písmo zo Žalmu 2:7 a z Izaiáša 42:1. Obidva texty sa chápali ako mesiášske referencie v predkresťanskom Judaizme. Spoločne poukazujú na rolu Pána Ježiša ako Syna a zároveň trpiaceho služobníka. Toto je základná kombinácia pre interpretovanie Ježišovho sebavnímania a Jeho misie. V tomto príbehu o Ježišovom krste sa objavuje aj podklad pre teológiu trojedinnosti Boha Otca, Syna a Ducha Svätého. Avšak nič nenasvedčuje tomu, že Ježiš začal svoj vzťah s Duchom Svätým až v tomto momente. Matúš 2:15 hovorí jasne, že evanjelista vidí Ježiša ako Božieho Syna už od detstva a dokonca 1:23 potvrdzuje Ježiša ako „Boha s nami“ už od narodenia. A teda tak ako v 2. Žalme, to čo sa tu deje sa dá chápať skôr ako kráľovské dosadenie a poverenie, a teda formálne pokračovanie vzťahu. Teraz môžeme lepšie rozumieť prečo Ježišov krst sa „patril naplniť“ (v. 15). Boh tu zasväcuje Ježiša do verejnej služby na tejto zemi.



Editorial ... Continues from page 78

about our own situation. Oversensitivity towards ourselves and our problems obscures our view of our neighbor and restricts our vision of the things around ourselves. Consequently our view of gratitude becomes skewed.

A widespread trait of modern-day society is the cult of individualism. Man has become the centre of his own universe. It is a state of isolation, which results in the complete deterioration of a person's ability to relate to others. Man was created as a social animal, to live as part of a society (Genesis 2:18a). That is why isolation is so unnatural.

What we're actually dealing with is a matter of balance. In a human relationship, two diametric sides are kept in line thanks to the relationship - the balance arm that connects them. When a change occurs that destroys that connection between the two sides, talk of balance is utterly impossible.

The centre of the relationship, the support for that balance arm, is our Lord Jesus Christ. How are relationships formed? First, people have to be open, to be willing to make links with one another. If they remain open in their attitudes and actions, the relationship, supported by God, is maintained and grows stronger. "Do to others as you would have them do to you," (Luke 6:31).

Certainly we should be concerned with our own well-being; in fact we must, for each of us is the temple of the Spirit of God (1 Corinthians 3:16). But if in the process our neighbor is forgotten, all our efforts are in vain. In other words, relationships are kept in balance only when they are lived out through the centre, through God. This means an application not only of a knowledge of God's word, but of the example of Jesus Christ. As long as the parties to a relationship resolve to emulate Christ and keep Him as their role model, their subconscious becomes more sensitive and aware of God's sovereignty. Such sensitivity and awareness inevitably leads to gratitude, which in the end fulfills the human heart. In this state of mind, we are capable of being grateful even for things that would otherwise hurt or disappoint.

Cherishing our vision of the centre—which is Christ—reveals the necessary balance. This is probably one of many secrets in modeling Christ's example. And that's something for which we can be very grateful.

Editor-in-Chief *Natasha Legierski*





Slovak
Bible Study–
English version

Introduction

The world of Christ's day was unified in a way it had never been before. A common language provided a medium by which the gospel could be quickly spread. A single political power maintained its massive authority, and wiped out old national boundaries, freeing men to travel safely throughout the known world. These unique conditions were vital in the later spread of the new faith.

Alexander. Alexander the Great had been responsible for the spreading of the overarching culture and language of this worldwide civilization. Alexander, a Macedonian, had set out over three centuries before Christ to conquer the world. His goal was to spread Greek culture, which he firmly believed was superior to all others.

Rome. Following Alexander's day, the city on the Tiber River in Italy continued to expand its influence. Ultimately the Roman Empire extended from Spain to Armenia and from Britain to the Sahara. But the language and culture were Greek (Hellenic).

Augustus succeeded in bringing to the Roman Empire a period of unmatched stability and prosperity. The world into which Jesus was born had known some 25 years of Roman peace (the Pax Romana)—a peace imposed by the power of Roman arms. Thus many in Palestine anticipated the Messiah foretold by Scripture to set them free and to bring prosperity for Israel. And so the country waited....

All history had converged on this moment. Augustus in Rome would never dream that God had guided him to power to bring world peace. Alexander never imagined that God was using him to establish a common language as a medium through which a new revelation of God's grace could be communicated to all men.

John the Baptist (b. between 8 and 4 BC, d. about AD 27), according to all four



Gospels the forerunner of Jesus Christ, born in Judea, the son of the priest Zacharias and Elisabeth, who was also a kinswoman of Mary, the mother of Jesus. John's birth was miraculously foretold. John is also mentioned by the Jewish historian Josephus. John was a Nazarite from birth and prepared for his mission by years of self-discipline in the desert (see Numbers 6:2–21). At about the age of 30 he went into the country around the Jordan River preaching penance to prepare for the imminent coming of the Messiah. He baptized penitents with water as a symbol of the baptism of the Holy Spirit that was to come. With the baptism of Jesus, his office as precursor was accomplished, and his ministry came to a close soon afterward. John angered Herod Antipas, the Judean ruler, by denouncing him for marrying Herodias, the wife of his half brother Herod, and was imprisoned (see Luke 3:1–20). At the request of Salome, daughter of Herodias and Herod, John was beheaded (see Matthew 14:3–11). In art, John the Baptist is represented as wearing a garment made of hair and often carries a staff and a scroll with the words "Ecce Agnus Dei," or "Behold the Lamb of God," a reference to John 1:29.

The Herod dynasty was reigning in Palestine at the time of Jesus. As a dynasty the Herods depended largely on the power of Rome. Antipater (c. 65 BC) was founder of the family fortune. He was an Idumaean. His son, the second Antipater (d. 43 BC), was favored by Julius Caesar, who made him (c. 55 BC) virtual ruler of all of Palestine.

John the Baptist:

A Man Empowered by the Spirit

Matthew 3:1–17

Luboš Dzurik

The son of the second Antipater was Herod the Great (d. 4 BC), who gave the family its name. He made great efforts to mollify the Jews by publicly observing the Law, by building a temple, and by reestablishing the Sanhedrin. He promoted Hellenization and adorned most of his cities, especially Jerusalem. Herod married ten times, and the various families in the palace intrigued against each other continually. In his last years Herod was subject to some sort of insanity, and he became bloodthirsty. This was the Herod who was ruling at the time of Jesus' birth and who ordered the massacre of the Innocents (see Matthew 2). Herod the Great divided his kingdom among his sons Archelaus, Herod Antipas, and Philip.

Herod Antipas (d. after AD 39), tetrarch of Galilee and Peraea, was the Herod who executed John the Baptist and who was ruling at the time of Jesus' death. Herod Antipas repudiated his wife, daughter of Aretas, to marry his niece Herodias, wife of his half brother Herod Philip, whom she divorced to marry Herod Antipas. This affair gained Herod Antipas many enemies, and the vaulting ambitions of Herodias eventually ruined him. She drove him to seek a royal title, and he was banished by Caligula in AD 39.

Herod Agrippa I and his son, Herod Agrippa II, were the last important members of the Herod dynasty.

Part 1

The Proclamation of John the Baptist (Mark 1:2–8; Luke 3:1–20)

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, 2 "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." 3 This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'" 4 Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. 5 Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, 6 and they were baptized by him in

the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

7 But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Bear fruit worthy of repentance. 9 Do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. 10 Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 11 "I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 12 His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

The Baptism of Jesus

(Mark 1:9–11; Luke 3:21–22; John 1:29–34)

13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. 14 John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" 15 But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. 16 And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. 17 And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."

Jesus' Preparation for Ministry

Matthew abruptly jumps from the events surrounding Jesus' birth to the time of his adult life. Apart from the one episode of Jesus teaching in the temple at age twelve (Luke 2:41–52), none of the canonical Gospels describes anything about his intervening years. Apparently, they provided few clues to his true identity or coming mission. In striking contrast, the apocryphal gospels fill Jesus' "hidden years" with all kinds of miraculous exploits, esoteric teaching, and exotic travels. The events of chapters 3–4 probably date from A.D. 27 and focus on God's preparation for the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. These necessary preliminaries include the emergence of the Messiah's prophetic forerunner (3:1–12), his baptism of Jesus (3:13–17), and the Messiah's temptation (4:1–11). Matthew 4:12–16 brings this period of preparation to a close with a characteristically Matthean fulfillment quotation.

1. John the Baptist: The Prophetic Forerunner to Messiah (3:1–12)

Popular Jewish expectation anticipated a messianic forerunner. Deuteronomy 18:18, speaking of the prophet like Moses to whom all Israel should listen, became a seminal text in the development of this expectation. Some expected a literal Elijah to return from heaven, based on Malachi 4:5. John comes fitting no one stereotype but fulfilling a variety of prophetic roles and themes. More about his ministry will appear in 11:2–19 (in other Gospels, cf. Luke 1:11–17 and John 1:19–34; 3:22–36). Interesting extracanonical confirmation of the main contours of John's message and ministry appears in Josephus as well.

a. His Ministry (3:1–6)

3:1–3 Matthew first introduces what John was about and shows how he fulfilled Scripture. "In those days" (verse 1) refers to the days of Christ's life; otherwise there is approximately a thirty-year gap from the preceding chapter. Matthew introduces John as he came to be known—as one who baptized people. He calls him a preacher or, more literally, one who speaks as a herald. John proclaimed God's message as a prophetic spokesman in the desert of Judea, the wilderness area to the south of Jerusalem. Reminiscent perhaps of Israel's wandering in the wilderness prior to their entry into the promised land, John too prepared the way for One who would reconstitute God's people. Jesus himself would also have his time in the wilderness shortly (4:1–11).

John's message called for repentance from sin. He thus anticipated the Messiah's mission as described in 1:21. Repentance in Greek traditionally implied a change of mind or attitude, but under Old Testament influence it took on the sense of a change of action as well. John's radical appeal stemmed from the belief that a new epoch of world history was dawning.

The "kingdom of heaven" is a circumlocution for the kingdom of God, reflecting pious Jewish avoidance of the divine name. The expression appears only in Matthew, but it occurs thirty-three times. "Kingdom of heaven" perhaps refers also to the fact that all power and authority in heaven are given to Jesus.

A large consensus and a vast array of scriptural data support a two-pronged focus in which the kingdom is both present and future (both in Jesus' day and our own)—contrast, e.g., Matthew 12:28; Luke 7:22–23; 17:20–21 with Matthew 6:10; Luke 13:28–29; Mark 9:47. The kingdom is not currently a geographical entity, but it manifests itself in space and time in the

community of those who accept the message John and Jesus proclaimed and who begin to work out God's purposes for their lives as well as for the lives of others.

Verse 3 presents John the Baptist as the fulfillment of Isaiah 40:3. The larger context of Isaiah 40–66 discloses that the prophecy depicts part of Israel's end-time restoration. John is thus heralding the beginning of the full restoration and blessing of God's people. Just as roads were often repaired in the ancient world in preparation for royalty traveling on them, so John calls his listeners to rebuild highways of holiness (cf. Isaiah 35:8), i.e., to return to moral living in preparation for God's coming in Jesus.

3:4–6 Matthew describes John's dress as much like that of the prophet Elijah of old (2 Kings 1:8). His diet resembles that of desert dwellers of the day. Both clothing and food point to an austerity and asceticism appropriate to his stern calls for repentance. John is apparently a charismatic figure who attracts crowds from many nearby places. People welcome him and he welcomes people. His welcome reception provides a striking contrast with 2:3, though hostilities will resume in verse 7, confirming that it is primarily the official Jewish leaders who reject God's new revelation. The crowds who come and repent make public their change of heart by acknowledging their failure to meet God's standards and by resolving to change their ways. They visibly demonstrate the seriousness of their pledge with the rite of water baptism. The Greek imperfect tense (literally, were being baptized) suggests that John's ministry lasts for a significant period of time.

Jews seem regularly to have practiced water baptism by immersion for adult proselytes from pagan backgrounds as an initiation into Judaism. Qumran commanded ritual bathing daily to symbolize repeated cleansing from sin. But John's call for a one-time-only baptism for those who had been born as Jews was unprecedented. John thus insisted that one's ancestry was not adequate to ensure one's relationship with God. As has often been put somewhat colloquially, "God has no grandchildren." Our parents' religious affiliations afford no substitute for our own personal commitment (verse 9).

Baptizing in the river suggests that the people were either immersed or had water poured over them. The best historical evidence suggests immersion was more likely.



Anna Madjar

September 26, 1918–July 20, 2004

Born in Sid, Yugoslavia, to Jan & Zuzana Cani, Anna was the second youngest of eight children. She was saved at a young age and served her Lord faithfully, singing in the choir and playing in the string orchestra at the church in Sid.

In 1938 she married Andrew Madjar, but shortly found herself alone. Her husband was taken to the Yugoslav marines and later to WWII. In this difficult time, without Andrew's knowledge, their daughter Vera was born. Hearing the news, Andrew ran from his duty, hitching a ride by hiding under coals aboard a train. Several days later he returned to his military station, but was arrested and therefore protected from going into battle where some of his closest friends perished.

Three and a half years later a son, Vlado, was born. In 1958, an invitation from Anna's brother had the family move to Argentina and later to the United States.

For many years Anna was a deaconess at Scranton Road Baptist Church and was a regular attender of our convention. She had the great gift of hospitality; helping and serving others was her pleasure. She worked hard, pushing through obstacles with her Lord's strength. Her garden was always the biggest, and her flower beds the most beautiful.

In a tragic accident while working outside, she cut herself and contracted tetanus. For the next month, she bravely fought the infections. But it was the Lord's time to relieve her of her earthly labor.

I love you dearly, Mom.
Vera Dors, daughter

John Senak

February 4, 1912–August 4, 2004



Dear Friends,
Just to let you know that my husband John Senak went to be with his Lord on Wednesday, August 18, 2004. It was very sudden. He died of a severe heart attack and was gone in one hour. I praise the Lord that he didn't linger and suffer.

He enjoyed life, and his music, his violin, and fishing pole were by his casket. The funeral was packed; everyone loved him. Our son told the undertaker to tell people that, in place of flowers, if people would donate to our Czechoslovak Baptist Convention, it would be greatly appreciated, because John and Sue attended convention for many years, and loved the people and the ministry.

Now he's with Jesus making lovely music. Thank you for your prayers. With much love,

Sue Senak and family

John Senak passed away on August 18, 2004, in hospital in New Port Richey, Florida. He was born in Bayonne, New Jersey,

on February 4, 1912. John was a retired electrical troubleshooter for the Public Works Department for the City of Detroit, Michigan. In 1981 John and Sue moved from Detroit to Florida, where they became members of Sun Coast Baptist Church in New Port Richey. John loved to play the violin and played at his church, Sun Coast Baptist Church, as well as at nursing homes and senior centers in the area. Survivors include his wife of 67 years, Suzanne Senak, of Port Richey; one son, Robert Jon Senak, of Hudson; one daughter, Judith Sue Smith, of Spring Hill; six grandchildren; and fifteen great-grandchildren. Funeral services took place at 1 p.m. on Saturday, August 21, 2004, at the North Meadowlawn Funeral Home in New Port Richey.

Rev. John E. Karenko

April 10, 1916–September 3, 2004

Rev. John E. Karenko of Godfrey, Illinois, went home to be with his Lord on September 3, 2004. God's faithful servant, John had been under home hospice care as congestive heart failure stole his strength but not his dedication to the Lord's work.

Born April 10, 1916, in Detroit, Michigan, the son of Efram and Juliana Karenko, John was 88 years young when he died. In 1932, at the age of 16, John accepted Jesus as his Lord and Savior and dedicated his future to serving the Lord, a commitment that spanned 72 years.

An honors graduate of Columbia Bible College (Columbia, SC) and Wheaton College (Wheaton, IL), John received his divinity degree from Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary (Philadelphia, PA) in 1949.

In 1946 he married Mary Anna Melnitsky, and together they served the Lord until her death in 1990. John is survived by three children, James Karenko (Saline, MI), Ruth Karenko (Arvada, CO), and Ted Karenko and his wife Dawn (East Alton, IL); two sisters, Mary K. Moore (Hudson, FL) and Violet Ludwig (Warren, MI); and five grandchildren.

John was ordained in Clearwater, South Carolina, in 1944. While in college he traveled extensively, ministering in churches associated with RUEBU (Russian Ukrainian Evangelical Baptist Union). He later pastored churches in Emma, NC; Sumter and Clearwater, SC; Philadelphia, PA; Binghamton, NY; Edmeston, NY; Campbell, OH; and Staunton, IL. After open-heart surgery to implant two artificial valves, John retired (briefly) in 1986, and then returned to ministry serving as interim pastor in four additional Illinois churches.

Throughout his ministry, John was an avid reader, writer and songwriter. He authored two long-running columns, "The Observation Tower" and "The Question Box," which appeared in The Evangelical Baptist Herald, Glorious Hope magazine, and



Continues on next page

From Our Readers



Dear Natasha,
Greetings from Manitoba! Glorious Hope magazine came today, and I have just sat down and read it right through. What a wonderful time you enjoyed at the Convention this year. I am so thankful for this blessing. And the messages must have been a tremendous

challenge too. This is so good.

I am always interested to read of friends from years gone by. And loved ones are in glory gathered around the throne of God too - more of them every year.

On the Civic Holiday weekend, it was my privilege to visit Minitonas for the 75th anniversary of the Czech church—now called Cornerstone Baptist Church. And what a wonderful celebration was held at that time. It was wonderful to meet friends from years gone by, and to share in the ministry of God's Word as well. I am sure you have heard about it from the many friends who came from the Toronto area.

Thank you for all you do for *Glorious Hope* magazine. It is a blessing to many, and may God continue to help you in your faithful work for Him.

Sincerely in Him, Margaret Schnurr

[her husband, Bruce, had been pastor in Minitonas]

Dear friend,

July 25, 2004

I want to praise the Lord for seventeen people who accepted Jesus as their Savior during our mission trip to the Czech Republic. We changed our strategy by going into the parks in Prague and throwing Frisbees to attract young people. Our Frisbees had the four spiritual laws printed in the Czech language on the inside. After playing mostly with teenagers, we presented the gospel to them. It was our joy to see 17 of them to pray with us to accept Jesus.

I remember especially one thirteen-year-old girl who refused to accept Jesus and left. I proceeded to talk to other teenagers who responded positively and then I was ready to go back to church. At that point that girl came back to me and asked me to explain the gospel to her again. I was glad to do it and then I heard from her, "I want to have my sins forgiven. I want to pray to accept Jesus Christ." She made a genuine decision to become a Christian and the next day she brought four of her friends to church where our group shared our testimonies at the First Baptist Church (FBC) in Prague. Please pray with me that the members of the FBC would do proper follow up and that they would incorporate these young people into their church.

There is another joyful news I have to share with you. Three Czech students graduated from our school in May. Two of them are already serving in a local Baptist church in Zlin in Moravia. I believe that these students will make a difference in reaching people for Christ and making strong disciples of Christ. There are three other Czech students at South-Eastern Baptist theological seminary (SEBTS) now and two other students are saving money in order to be able to come here on student visa. I praise God that my dream of providing conservative education to Czech pastors is becoming a reality. I will keep you informed about the ministries of our graduates in the Czech Republic and I hope that their example will motivate others to serve the Lord well.

I will be going to New Hampshire again in August to do more

church planting. It is vital that we do not give up on any state where the Christian population is diminishing. Only 7% of the people in New Hampshire are going to church on a given Sunday. Our school has helped to plant 29 churches in that state in seven years. Our promise is to plant 50 churches and so we will continue in this effort. I would appreciate your prayers for our team August 8-14, 2004.

Until Christ comes again, Josef Solc

In Memory ... Continues from page 92

several newspapers. A keen observer of human nature and world events, John strove to provide insight, evoke thought, encourage discussion and share Biblical principles for daily living through his writing.

Humor was one of John's hallmarks; always a clown, he was rarely without a joke or pun to share. If a lesson could be imparted with a smile, John did it in word or song. ("When the sign reads 55, but you're out cruising' at 65! There's an eye watching you...") Surely God will love "corn" along with John's tomatoes (something John enjoyed every day from his garden!)

While the majority of John's pastorates were in American Baptist Churches, he never lost sight of his roots; he labored tirelessly for the cause of missions. Actively involved throughout his life with the American Baptist Missions, Russian Ukrainian Evangelical Baptist Union, Slavic Missionary Service, and Czechoslovak Baptist Convention of USA and Canada, John was passionate about spreading the gospel message to the people of Slavic descent, both here and abroad. Like the number of ripples from a stone dropped into water, only God knows the results of John's efforts. Donations to any of these missionary organizations would honor him.

A Celebration of John's Life and Ministry was held on September 18, 2004, at the Upper Alton Baptist Church, in Alton, Illinois, where he was a member. Those who gathered were blessed by a message and two vocal selections as well as John's favorite scriptures and hymns; a multimedia remembrance of John's life; a piano medley of "Precious Hiding Place" and "His Eye Is on the Sparrow" played by his sister Violet and most importantly the sharing of God's word by Rev. Frank Sparks and Rev. Dr. Glen Greenwood.

"For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain," (Phil.1:21). While Rev. Karenko is gone from our earthly presence and will be missed, he has now met his Savior face to face. Even so come, Lord Jesus.

Tim, Ted, and Ruth Karenko & Families

MOVING ?

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Fireflies

Jan Karafiát

Translated by Daniela Bisková

Part 12

Spring had come again. Everything was in bloom. The grass was waist high, the dew sparkled, the bees buzzed and buzzed and the crickets chirped. Among the bushes down by the brook the nightingale sang a love song.

Godfather and Godmother were talking to Lucius' father and Lucinda was helping his mother in the kitchen. Lucius was outside waiting for Jeanine. He had grown big and strong again and was hovering about, high in the air. After waiting for some time he flew over to the heather. Jeanine came across and greeted him warmly. "So you'll go flying again, Lucius. And will you be obedient?"

"Oh, I will be."

"And why would you want to be obedient?"

"H'm, not only because you all wish me to but also so that I don't come to any harm."

"Indeed, I don't think you're going to be obedient. You'll get into trouble again, perhaps even worse than before."

Lucius took Jeanine's hand and said, "But I will be obedient."

"Yes, when the Lord God will have taught you."

Mother had chocolate and hot crispy biscuits ready. They all sat round the table, said grace and had their breakfast. Lucius was the first to start out. He rose up, made three circles in the air and came down again, right next to Jeanine. All surrounded him and father began, "Dear Lucius, it's a year now since you flew out for the first time. Then we all told you that you should be obedient; you know what happened. We would have never expected that."

Lucius was looking to the ground and his eyes were full of tears.

"Let's not say any more about it," cut in Godfather. "I'm sure he will do better in future."

They set off, flying low in order for mother, Godmother, Jeanine and Lucinda to keep up with them for a little way. They did not reach the brook yet and mother was out of breath. "Wait, I can't go any farther," she said. And they stopped and mother said, "Go now, Lucius. I may not be able to see you off next year. May the Lord God bless you."

All of them said goodbye and mother, Godmother, Lucinda and Jeanine started home. As long as they could see the three fireflies they kept turning round.

"Oh, I do hope he will be obedient, but I'm afraid he won't,"



mother started. She would have liked to hear what Jeanine thought but she was quiet.

"Oh, he will be," Godmother thought. "He's wiser now and is good-natured. He won't get tempted again."

"He had done it once, he can do it again," Jeanine added. "But I believe the Lord God will teach him to obey."

Mother gave a sigh and said nothing. She flew very slowly home and it took a long while before she caught her breath again.

The three fireflies flew on—past the oak wood, along the valley and over the vineyards. They met many fireflies and from every side came the greeting, "God bless you!"

Lucius was flying a little ahead and father and Godfather followed him. They were discussing something.

"I'm still afraid to leave him there," said father.

"Oh well, he can do good where he was foolish," replied Godfather. "We can't be with him all the time and he can disobey wherever he is. I should leave him there." Here they came to the garden with the beautiful house.

"Listen, Lucius, you will stay here. You have been foolish in this place. Be good now. We have to go to our place beyond the town. God bless you," said father and they flew off.

Lucius flew straight to the tall pear tree and sat looking down into the garden. There was the rose bush into which he had fallen when little Paul struck at him with his hat. There under the ash tree the children had had their supper, and there was the lawn where they had played at blind man's buff. But this evening there was silence everywhere. Nobody was to be seen. There was not a light in a single window. The shutters were closed; the house looked dead. But there were fireflies everywhere, the grounds were ablaze with them. "God bless you, God bless you," they kept calling to one another and Lucius joined them. He shone and shone and didn't mind anything but his work. He thought of mother and Jeanine and said to himself. "Why should I not be obedient? I will be." And he shone and shone.

The cocks crowed and stars began to grow pale. In the east the sky was reddening. Father and Godfather arrived, "Come along, Lucius, the sun is rising."

They flew home. Jeanine was standing by the heather and waiting. "God bless you, God bless you," they called. And she

replied, "God bless you." Lucius was beaming, he knew he had been obedient; Jeanine was pleased and mother was delighted.

So Lucius kept on shining and was obedient, mindful of nothing but his task. The beautiful house had the shutters open again and the tall lady with the brown hair was sitting in the garden under the ash tree, knitting a stocking. But now only two children were playing on the lawn: the little girl and fair-haired Paul. They had a white lamb with them. It had a red ribbon round its neck and it nibbled at the grass and skipped about. The two children ran behind it, laughing; they did not even look at Lucius. But the lady under the ash tree did. She saw him, but he took no notice; he just shone and shone.

One evening later on, when he arrived soon after sunset, a young man in uniform was walking beside the lady. He was wearing a fine red coat and had a little sword at his side. Paul and Ellie scampered around them talking and pulling at the sword. But the soldier did not mind. It was some time before Lucius realized that the young soldier was none other than dear Fred. He was happy to see them but did not allow himself to be distracted; he shone and shone. His mother was pleased and Jeanine too, and Lucius' conscience was clear!

One night he had been very, very busy and was tired when dawn came. His wings ached and he decided to do no more but to fly home slowly. He felt sure that father and Godfather would catch up with him. He flew and as he passed the wood he heard a sad little cry. He stopped to listen and tried to find out what it was and where it came from. There was someone crying down in the grass. So Lucius flew down and very carefully, without going too near, shone his light to see who was crying.

What do you think he found? Such a pretty round little beetle sitting in the grass, all red with seven black spots; and the eyes, the beautiful black eyes! They were full of tears as they gazed at Lucius. Lucius was filled with pity.

"Who are you? What's the matter?" asked Lucius.

"I'm Veronica. I went to see my auntie and got tired coming back and thought I would sit down in the grass for a little and I went to sleep. And now it's all dark and I can't find my way home. My mother will be afraid that I'm lost."

"So you're Veronica. Stop crying! Where do you live?"

"We live in the wild rose bush."

"The wild rose bush? That's just before you come to the brook, isn't it? I know where it is. Come on, I'll take you there. Don't cry."

Veronica didn't cry any more. They flew off together, Lucius leading the way and Veronica following his light. But he kept turning round to look at the pretty little beetle, all red with seven black spots. And the beautiful eyes! They weren't crying any longer.

They flew like this in silence. Lucius kept looking at Veronica and she followed him. Soon they reached the hill, then they

were over the top, and at last they were not far from the brook. There was the bank, and on the bank the rose bush: the home of the Ladybugs. They hadn't slept the whole night. They had been looking for Veronica and now when they saw the light they rushed towards it. They recognized Veronica immediately and they were very happy. Lucius turned round and off he flew. When they looked for him, he was gone.

At home they were looking out for him.

"Where have you been, Lucius?" asked father.

"I had to take Veronica home. I found her sitting in the grass crying. She was frightened because she thought she was lost."

"Where does her family stay?"

"Just across the brook there; in the rose bush on the bank."

"And what did they say to you?"

"Nothing. I was in a hurry to get back."

"That's all right," said father as if nothing had happened. But mother was very pleased. Jeanine said nothing but was pleased as well. Lucius was glad too.

The following day Lucius flew off again. He went straight to the garden round the beautiful house and shone and shone minding nothing else. But after a little while he settled down on top of the pear tree and began to meditate. "Why should I have to stay and shine here? What matters is that I shine. Surely it doesn't matter where. There are plenty of us here, anyway." And as he was thinking about it he took no notice of anything else, flew down from the pear tree and away over the vineyards to the wood, over the hill and along the brook till he came to the bank where the rose bush grew. There he stopped. He flew round for a time, then he dropped to the ground and strolled about. And now Veronica

came running out from the bush.

"I know that you're a firefly. Some people call you glow-worms, but you're not a worm, you're a fly, aren't you?"

"How did you know I was a firefly?"

"My father told me. He wanted to speak to you yesterday but you flew away so quickly. He said that you were a firefly and that fireflies are very good and kind. And that you give light to people and beetles. I'd love to be a firefly."

"And what do you do, Veronica?"

"Well, we tell people whether they're good or bad."

"But how do you know?"

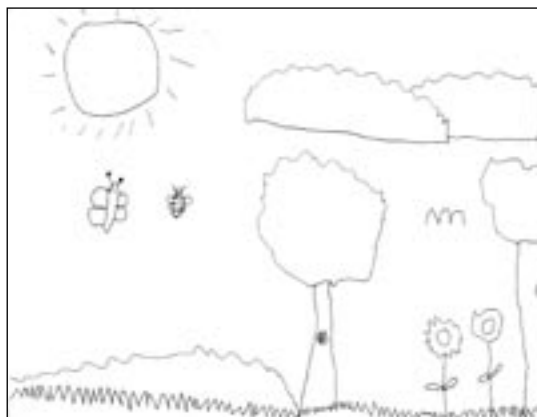
"We just do. If we fly upwards they are good; if we fly low they are bad." "Listen, what about me and my mother and father, Jeanine, Godfather, Godmother and Lucinda? Are we good or bad?"

"This I don't know. I'll ask my father when he comes in."

"Where is he?"

"He's flown off to tell people whether they're good or bad. He's sure to be back soon."

Just then they saw him coming. Lucius felt awkward. He



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Broučci

Jan Karafiát

12. část

A bylo jaro. Všechno, všechno kvetlo, ale pravě všechno, tráva po pás, rosa jak granáty, a ty včely tolik bzučely, a ti cvrčci tolik cvrčeli, a tam dole u potoka slavík v křoví klokotal. Aj, čas tvůj, čas milování.

Kmotříčka a kmotříček byli s tatínkem ve světnici a něco si povídali. Beruška pomáhala mamince v kuchyni. Brouček byl venku u palouka a čekal na Janinku. Byl zas takový silný a velký, a vznášel se vysoko do povětří. A když Janinka dlouho nešla, letěl jí až k vrase naproti. Však už šla a měla z Broučka radost. „Tak už zas, Broučku, poletíš. Ale budeš-li poslouchat?“

„Ó, budu.“

„A proč bys chtěl poslouchat?“

„I, že si to všickni přejete, a pak aby se mně zas něco nestalo.“

„Ó, to ty nebudeš poslouchat, a zas se ti něco stane, třeba ještě horšího.“

Brouček chytil Janinku za ruku: „Však já budu přece poslouchat!“

„Ano, až tě Pán Bůh naučí.“

Maminka už měla čokoládu a ty smažené věnečky na stole. Sedli, pomodlili se a nasnídali, a že tedy poletí. Brouček byl první venku. Povzněl se do výšky, letěl třikrát kolem jako by nic—a spustil se u Janinky na zem. Všickni si stoupli kolem něho, a tatínek začal: „Milý Broučku, vzpomeň si teď rok, když jsi poprvé letěl. Všickni jsme ti domlouvali, abys pěkně poslouchal, a víš, co se stalo. Toho bychom se byli žádný nenadáli.“ Brouček už měl plné oči slz a díval se k zemi.

„I už nechte, a poletíme,“ vpadl do toho kmotříček. „Však on si dá teď pozor.“

A letěli, ale jen pranizoučko a pomalinku, aby maminka a kmotříčka a Janinka a Beruška mohly stačit. Ještě však ani nebyli u potoka, a maminka už nemohla dechu popadat.

„Počkejte, já už nikam nemohu.“

A oni počkali, a maminka plakala: „Tak jen leť, můj Broučku, však už tě snad na přesrok vyprovázet nebudu. Pán Bůh sám tě sprovázej.“

Rozloučili se, a ony se vracely. Pokud bylo broučky vidět, pořád se ohlížely—až už je nebylo vidět. „Ach, jen kdyby poslouchal!“ začala maminka. „Já se bojím, že nebude.“

A byla by asi ráda slyšela, co myslí Janinka. Ale Janinka přisvědčovala a neříkala nic. „I, on bude,“ myslila kmotříčka. „Teď on už má přece rozum a jest dobrák. Ani mu to nedá.“

„Ó, když mu to dalo poprvé,“ ozvala se Janinka, „dalo by mu to také po druhé. Ale já věřím, že ho Pán Bůh naučí poslouchat.“

Maminka vzdychla a neříkala už nic. Letěla prapomalinku, a když přiletěla domů, dlouho to trvalo, než se zase vydýchala. A oni letěli okolo dubového lesa, dolů do údolí, mezi vinohrady, a ze všech stran: „Zdař Bůh! Zdař Bůh! Zdař Bůh!“ Brouček letěl napřed, tatínek a kmotříček za ním. Něco se domlouvali.

„Já se přece bojím ho tam nechat.“ pravil tatínek.

„I co,“ odporoval kmotříček. „Kde hřešil, tam ať dělá dobrotu. Pořád u něho být nemůžeme, a chce-li neposlouchat, může všady neposlouchat. Já bych ho tam nechal.“



A už byli v té zahradě s tím pěkným domem. „Poslouchej, Broučku—ty tady zůstaneš. Tady hřešil, tady dělej dobrotu. My musíme letět na své místo tam za město. S Pánem Bohem.“

A letěli. Brouček letěl rovnou cestou na tu vysokou hrušku, sedl si na samý vrcholek a díval se. Tamhle jest ten růžový keř, kam Brouček spadl, když ho Pavlíček kloboukem udeřil. Tady pod tím jasanem večereli, a tady dál na tom trávníku hráli si na slepou bábu. Dnes tam ticho jako v hrobě, nikde nikdo. Ani žádné světlo v oknech—okenice zavřeny—jako po vymření. Ale broučků všude plno. Jen se to míhalo; a „Zdař Bůh! Zdař Bůh! Zdař Bůh!“ A tak Brouček také letěl a svítil a svítil, a na nic nedbal a ničeho si nevšímal, a jenom svítil a pořád svítil. Při

tom myslel na maminku a na Janinku, a že proč by neposlouchal? Ó, že bude poslouchat. A svítil, a svítil, a ti kohouti kokrhali, a ty hvězdy začínaly blednout, a bledly a bledly, a tam od východu se tolik rdělo, a tu letí tatínek a kmotříček: „Broučku, polet, slunce už vychází.“

A letěli domů. U vřasy stála Janinka a čekala. „Zdař Bůh! Zdař Bůh! Zdař Bůh!“

A ona také: „Zdař Bůh!“ A Brouček se usmíval, protože poslouchal, a Janinka byla ráda, a maminka byla teprv ráda. A tak Brouček svítil a poslouchal, a pořád pěkně svítil, na nic nedbal a ničeho si nevšímal, a jenom svítil. Ale na tom pěkném domě už nebyly okenice zavřeny, a ta velká paní s těma kaštanovými kadeřema seděla v zahradě pod jasanem a pletla punčochu. Děti si hrály na trávníku, ale byli jen dva, ta malá holčička a ten bělohavý Pavlíček. Měli tam bělouňského beránka s červeným páskem na krku. On se pásl a skákal, oni skákali s ním a měli radost. Po Broučkovi se ani neohlédli. Ale ta paní pod jasanem se ohlédla a viděla Broučka, a Brouček je také všechny viděl, ale nic nedbal a nic si jich nevšímal, a svítil a svítil a svítil.

A když tam zas jednou hned po západu slunce přiletěl, tu se procházel po zahradě s tou velkou paní takový krásný malý vojáček v červeném kabátku a s malým kordem po boku. Něco si povídali. Pavlíček a Elinka kolem nich poskakovali, a vytahovali tomu vojáčkovi kord, a on si to nechal líbit. Brouček ho nemohl hned poznat, až pak přec poznal, že jest to ten hodný kaštanový Fréda, a byl rád, ale nic nedbal a nic si jich nevšímal. Hleděl si svého a svítil a svítil, a maminka měla radost, a Janinka měla radost, a Brouček měl dobré svědomí.

A když tak jednou Brouček svítil a svítil, tu už k ránu se mu jaksi znechtělo svítit. Už ho také jakoby křídélka bolela, a tak že poletí pomalounku domů, však že ho tatínek a kmotříček dohoní. A letěl, a už byl v lese, už byl za lesem, a tu slyší takový usedavý pláč. Brouček poslouchá, odkud to a co to. A byl to pláč, tam někde dole v trávě. A tak si letěl Brouček na to posvítit. Ale opatrně zdaleka. A když si tak na to svítí, tu vidí—ach, co on nevidí! Takový hezounký, kulatý brouček sedí v trávě, celinký červený se sedmi krásnými, černými puntíčky a ty oči, ty krásné černé oči! A ty oči tolik plakaly, a teď se na Broučka upřeně dívaly, Broučkovi jich bylo líto.

„Kdo pak jsi? A co pak se ti stalo?“

My First Convention

Tracey Dvorak

For many years I have worked with children and young adults, both in my professional life and within my church community. It was a natural fit, then, to find myself working with the youth program during the convention this year. What a gift to the younger generation to have the opportunity to come together during the weekend for singing, discussions, and crafts. There was even an amazing scavenger hunt for all ages! For a first-time participant, it was fun to watch the community that has been established over the years of attending the convention.

By far the most memorable experience of the convention for me occurred off campus. Going to a nearby campground for a picnic, we were all looking forward to some hiking and swimming. After setting up, approximately twenty people set off on a hike. We arrived at a beautiful spot along the water, where many people took off their shoes and jumped in for a refreshing dip. A suspicious sound was quickly identified as a roll of thunder, and people began getting out of the water. In no time, rain began falling. People barely had time to gather up their belongings and get under a tree before it was an amazing downpour. Some chose to go ahead in search of cover while others stayed under trees (until the trees no longer provided shelter from the drops).

During this time, there was great bonding, much laughter, and many stories of being caught in the rain as we tried to wait out the storm. Needless to say, by the time we returned to the cars, there was not a dry bone among the bunch. It is an outing which will not quickly be forgotten! Being involved with the youth typically ends up with a great story or two!

Ninety-five years ago, a group of Czech men who were faithful followers of Christ gathered with a vision. I am sure that my great-grandfather Vaclav Hlad never dreamed that one of his grandsons would one day be the president of the convention that he helped to establish.

Year after year when my father and mother (Bob and Dottie Dvorak) return from this convention, they speak so fondly of their time with friends and loved ones they have gathered with in Philippi, West Virginia. For the first time this summer, both my sister, along with her family, and I decided to come see what the convention was all about. We joined my parents for the road trip from Connecticut to West Virginia to experience the weekend of fellowship that has clearly meant so much to my family for many generations.

□

Day Trip to Audra State Park

Amy Nesvadba

After waking up on Saturday morning, we walked outside to feel the air: humid but cloudy. We all thought, is the youth day trip still on? As we approached the meeting area in front of the cafeteria, we were informed that the trip was still on. So, we all piled into our cars and followed one another to Audra State Park in West Virginia. As we pulled up to the parking lot, you could see the gorgeous scenery with big trees, rushing river and the beautiful hills and countryside. We parked our cars and made our way down to the river, where we all dipped our feet in to see how warm or cold the water was. This park was so amazing, and as I sat there I thought to myself, what wonderful things God has created. I stood in awe of His mighty power and His ability to create a place so breathtaking.

We all decided to go for a walk down the path along the river. We came to a clearing and found a nice place to relax. Some went swimming and managed to slide down the river rapids, and others stayed on the side and had friendly conversations with one another.

As I was standing on a rock watching the children swim in the river, I looked up and saw some dark grey clouds above me. After a few minutes it began to rain, and

the thunder became louder.

We all crowded under a tree and waited for a bit, thinking it would stop. Well, quite the opposite happened. It started raining even harder, so we all made a run for it to the boardwalk, where it was covered. We stayed there for a bit to try and dry off.

When we thought the worst was over and it looked like it was letting up, we decided to walk again and go back to the cars. Just when we thought it couldn't get any worse, it started getting really windy, and the rain just started pouring buckets again! This time we made a run for it. We came to a clearing almost at the cars, and I looked up to see branches falling from the trees. As I dodged the branches, I truly thought that we were in a hurricane. At that moment I was truly scared, but as we ran to the car I realized that God created this too. As we rushed into the car, there was a storm in full force outside.

We took off, and were heading back to the college campus when the cars in front of us stopped. A tree had taken out a hydro pole and the road was blocked. So, we turned around and went the other way. About half an hour later, to our amazement we came upon yet another tree and hydro pole taken out that was blocking the road! Now what? We turned around and thought, we are stuck! We stopped at the local convenience store and



☞ Continues on page 83

Sunday, October 10th, was an important Sunday for one of the churches long associated with the Czechoslovak Baptist Convention. Trinity Baptist Church in Chicago celebrated its 75th anniversary of founding. Originally started as a work of outreach among Slovak people on the south side of Chicago, the current Trinity Baptist has become a diverse membership of loving folk who both remember well their history and also focus on their ministry calling in the present and future.

Roots of the congregation go back to mission beginnings hosted in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Jancy. The year was 1911, and the sponsoring congregation was Immanuel Baptist Church, a Slovak congregation on the north side of the same city of Chicago. In time the group meeting on the south side purchased a store-front at 47th and Laflin Street, and later a two-story home at 52nd and Winchester, where the Michael Stancik, Sr., family lived on the second floor, while the first floor was devoted to churchly activities.

In 1929 yet another building, a Chicago-style bungalow, was purchased at 59th and Rockwell Avenues to accommodate the growing numbers. At about the same time, the Immanuel Slovak church of the north side dismissed a total 106 members (registered on its rolls but really belonging to the mission group) to become charter members of the now fully organizing congregation down on the south side. The new church was called Czechoslovak Baptist Church. First pastor was the Reverend Vaclav Hlad, formerly minister at Emmanuel Bohemian Baptist Church on Trumbull Avenue near 26th Street in what is today the "Little Village" section of Chicago.

The list of those founding members contains many names spare with vowels and peppered with Slavic accent marks. Beautiful names, strong names. Some of those names still continue in more recent generations at Trinity Baptist Church. But there are other names rich with different heritages as well. For example, Dr. Claude Mariottini, originally from Brazil, serves as the gifted and devoted pastor while also teaching Old Testament at Northern Baptist Theological Seminary in Lombard, IL (a suburb west of Chicago).

It was my privilege to represent our convention at the 75th anniversary service and to preach the service of worship. Arrangements for all aspects of the day were planned with great care and effectiveness by a committee under the direction of Joseph and Iris Broschka and Pastor Mariottini. The executive minister of American Baptist Churches of Metro Chicago, Dr. Leonard Thompson, and the president of Northern Baptist Seminary, Dr. Charles Moore, participated in the service. Greetings came from the governor of the state of Illinois (who was represented by a member of his staff), from former pastors, current and former members of the church, and friends widely associated with the church's life.

We thank God for the life and ministry of Trinity Baptist Church in Chicago, for its continuing strength and vision, and for the "cloud of witness" now gone but eternally alive in the faith they once learned in their much beloved congregation. We



Velmi důležitou nedělí byla neděle 10. října, 2004 v jednom ze sborů, jež mají úzkou spojitost s Československou baptistickou konvencí. Trinity Baptist Church, baptistický sbor v Chicagu oslavoval 75. výročí svého založení. Původně se jednalo o práci mezi Slovaky, žijícími v jižní části Chicaga. Současný Trinity sbor se stal rozmanitým členstvem milých lidí, kteří nezapomínají na svůj původ, ani na poslání ve službě se zřetelem na přítomnost i na budoucnost.

Kořeny sboru sahají až k počátkům misijní práce, jejichž základnou byl dům Samuele Jancy. Bylo to v roce 1911 za podpory sboru Immanuel Baptist

Church, slovenského sboru na severní straně Chicaga. Skupina scházející se v jižní části města potom koupila obchod na rohu 47. a Laflinové ulice. Později byl koupen dvouposchodový dům na rohu 52. a Winchestrové ulice. V prvním patře bydlela rodina Michaela Stancíka staršího a přízemí bylo zasvěceno sborovým aktivitám.

Vzhledem k rostoucímu počtu lidí došlo v roce 1929 ke koupi další budovy (ve stylu chicagských přízemních domků na rohu 59. ulice a Rockwellové třídy). Přibližně ve stejné době bylo uvolněno dohromady 106 členů ze slovenského sboru Immanuel na severní straně města (jakoby „na vlastní pěst“, ve skutečnosti se však jednalo o misijní skupinu), kteří se stali zakládajícími členy nového sboru na jižní straně. Nový sbor se jmenoval Československý sbor baptistů. Prvním kazatelem byl Václav Hlad, bývalý kazatel českého sboru, Emmanuel Bohemian Baptist Church na Trumbullové třídě nedaleko 26. ulice, v oblasti Chicaga dnes nazývané „Malá Osada“. [Václav Hlad, dědeček současného prezidenta naší konvence, Dr. Roberta Dvořáka, pozn. překl.].

Na seznamu zakládajících členů jsou mnohá jména složená se samohlásek a opeřená slovanskými znaménky. Krásná jména, významná jména. Mnohá z nich přetrvávají v současných generacích Trinity sboru baptistů. Mezi nimi jsou také jiná jména rovněž s bohatým dědictvím. Například Dr. Claude Mariottini, který pochází z Brazílie, je velmi obdarovaný a odevzdaný sloužící kazatel a profesor Starého Zákona na semináři, Northern Baptist Theological Seminary v Lombard, Illinois (západní předměstí Chicaga).

Měl jsem tu čest reprezentovat naši konvenci na 75. výročí sboru a příležitost kázat při shromáždění. Pečlivým zorganizováním oslav byla pověřena komise pod vedením Josefa a Iris Broschkových a kazatele Mariottiniho. Vedoucí tajemník Amerických baptistických sborů hlavního Chicaga, Dr. Leonard Thompson a ředitel baptistického semináře, Northern Baptist Seminary, Dr. Charles Moore, se rovněž zúčastnili bohoslužeb. Pozdrav zaslal guvernér státu Illinois (v zastoupení člena svého oddělení), rovněž předchozí kazatelé, současní i bývalí členové sboru a mnoho přátel, kteří mají kontakty se sborovým životem, zaslali gratulace.

Jsmo Pánu Bohu vděční za život a službu Trinity Baptist Church v Chicagu, za neumdlévající sílu a vizi, za „oblak svědků“, kteří již odešli, ale žijí věčně vírou, kterou se kdysi naučili v jejich sboru, v milovaném obecnství. Modlíme se za kazatele Mariottiniho a jeho manželku, za vedení sboru a za živé tělo Kristovo, nazývající dnes Trinity Baptist Church svým duchovním domovem. Chceme vyjádřit hlubokou vděčnost za podporu a účastenství sboru Trinity

Camp Bradatel—Romania

Miriam Racinsky

I had the wonderful opportunity to go back to Romania and work alongside a mission team from Greater Europe Mission. We had a group of 43 people working at camp Bradatel in Romania this past Summer.

Camp Bradatel is one of two Christian camps in Romania, and is situated in the beautiful Transylvanian Alps. This camp ministers to over 2,000 Romanians every year.

Our work consisted of three areas:

- The work team was involved in further renovation of the campground and buildings. Over the past 10 years, the buildings and property have become more functional, and with further renovation each year, the camp will be able to expand



its ministry in central Romania.

- The ImaginAir program worked with children from 5 to 10 years of age in a VBS-type program, teaching English.

- The team I was involved in taught English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) to adults and older children. We were trained earlier in the year to teach this Biblically based program, which introduces Romanians to the Gospel and also provides students with a basic understanding of English. Each day the students also came to a 45-minute session where God's Word was shared through drama, worship, testimonies and

short devotionals, which we were all a part of.

With each team that I work on, though very different in need and focus, I always find that I come back to Canada with a greater urgency to live my Christian faith. Not only do I take things for granted at home, but at times I expect God's provision and comfort to be mine.

I notice more and more the need for those around me to hear the Gospel message. It's sometimes easier to share Christ's love, then head away while others follow through. At home I need to be that witness day after day as others watch my every move and judge each action.

The Christian Romanians that I had the pleasure of working with had such a strong faith in our Lord and Savior. It amazed me that they were so giving, especially when they had little to give. But as one of my Romanian friends told me, they are so rich in their love for God that nothing else matters. God will provide the joy that we need no matter what circumstances we go through!

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From the Executive Secretary



The midyear meeting was held on Friday, October 22, 2004, in Czechoslovak Baptist Church, Toronto, Ontario.

After the meeting we ate a very good dinner, including svickova with knedliky, and vobalovany rizky (wiener schnitzels) with potato salad (both were out of this world). President Dr. Robert Dvorak then preached during an evening service, which was concluded with "Old Fashioned Hymn

Singing" with Bob Dvorak at the piano. Many of us stayed until Sunday, when Bob Dvorak preached again during morning worship. We experienced a lot of God's blessing through hearing God's word, singing, and obecnstvi—fellowship with our dear brothers and sisters from the Toronto church.

- We watched a DVD program from the 95th annual convention on TV, prepared by John Jeren, Jr. (the one which will be sent to you upon request).

- The next annual convention, the 96th, will be held July 7-10, 2005, in Philippi, West Virginia. The general theme for the 96th convention will be: What Is Asked of Us? Deuteronomy 10:12: "So now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you?"

- Of course we plan to have the train trip again, on July 11, 2005.
- Check the convention web page (www.ab.edu/czslbaptconv) and see pictures from the 95th annual convention and other news and announcements.

- We again apologize for the delay in sending CDs (Matuzalem and DVD 95th Convention.) They are being manufactured and labels and covers printed, and they will be mailed ASAP. (A new software is needed.) It takes a lot of time to design and print labels and covers for CD and DVD disks. We also found out that there is not complete compatibility between DVD disks and DVD players, a problem which we have to solve. Then copies have to be made, a mailing list prepared, and the copies packed and mailed. And everything is done by one person — a "one-person factory." We are really sorry.

Thanks.

George Sommer, Executive Secretary



Exactly who is it living within You?

Romans 8:9b,14



Kto je vlastne ten, co žije v nás?

Rímanom 8;9b,14



General Board in Toronto