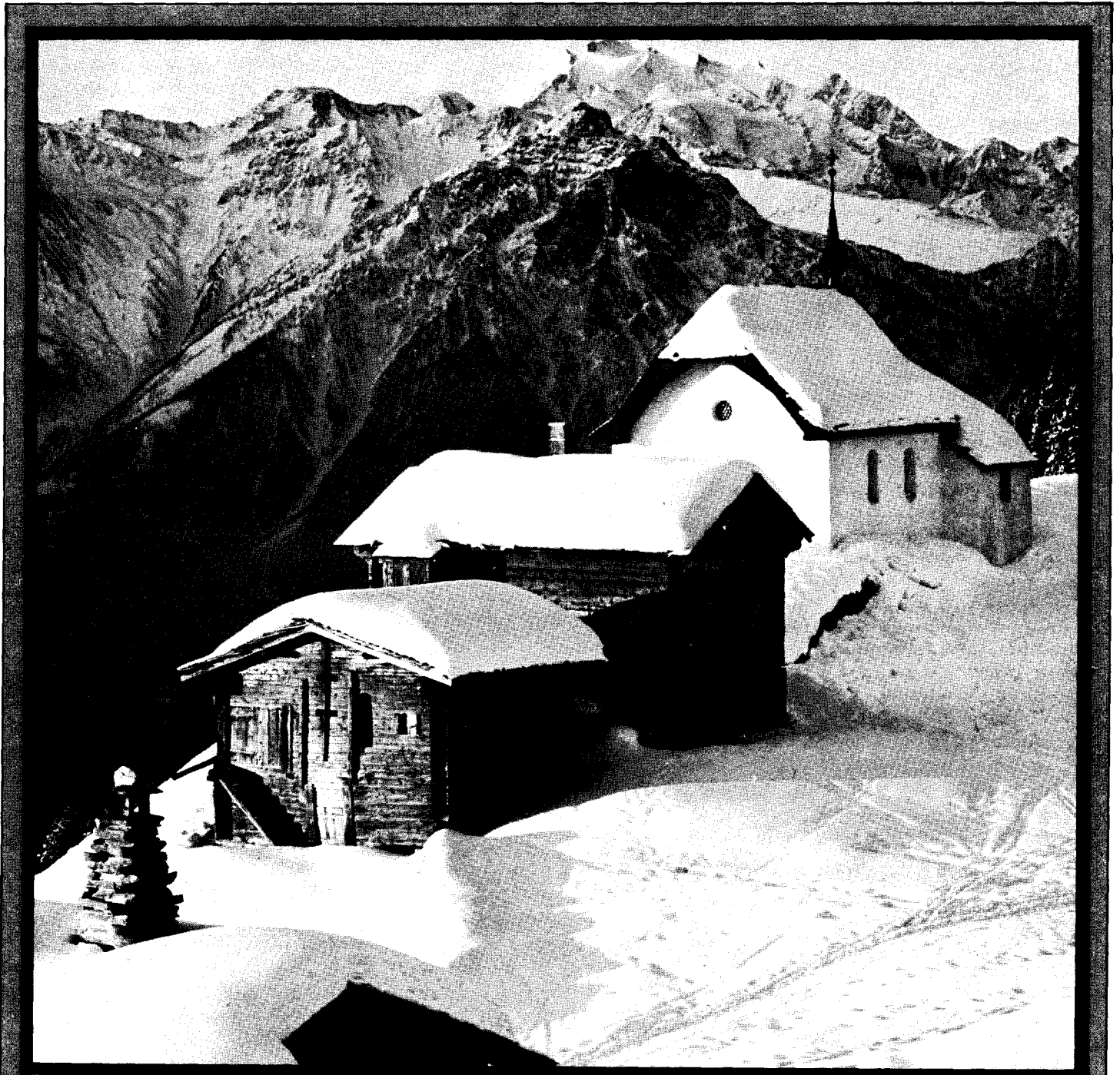


# The Presbyterian Guardian

Vol. 47, No. 11 - December, 1978



Anna

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Mass Suicide in Guyana

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The Spiritual Realm

# Letters

## Those Taken Away to Death

"Protestants just don't like to mix politics and religion." This was just one of many such comments we heard recently while attending a state-wide Pro-Life Convention in Pennsylvania. The person speaking was a Protestant who was frustrated at her inability to mobilize non-Roman Catholic support for the movement. The truth was evident. Abortion (anti-) is not a Roman Catholic issue only, but few others are willing to take up the fight.

Our purpose in writing is to request the *Guardian* to act as a Presbyterian and Reformed advocate for the Pro-Life movement, by regularly stirring up the brethren to love and good works. Much needs to be done both in protest against abortion, and in providing needy mothers with viable, biblical alternatives.

We want to pass on some hard questions put to us during the convention. Imagine that you knew a young child whose life was in danger. What would be your normal response to that child's need? Is your reaction to the scheduled deaths of unborn children in your community just as normal? God forbid that we should sink into the same abortionist mentality which permits killing of the unborn merely because they are not in public view.

*Deliver those who are being taken away to death,*

*And those who are staggering to slaughter, O hold them back.*

*If you say, 'See, we did not know this,' Does He not consider it who weighs the hearts?*

*And does He not know it who keeps your soul?*

*And will He not render to man according to his work?*

*(Prov. 24:11-12)*

Tom and Lisa Seelinger  
Philadelphia, Pa.

## The Problem with Grain Crops

Your comment on information found in *Diet for a Small Planet* needs a bit of extra explanation. The cattle industry in

this country utilizes a land area that by and large is not arable. It is all right for forage, however. But its use does not in any way deplete our grain crop, until shortly before the animals are slaughtered. Then they are brought to pens for extra feeding.

The problem of children starving in India is basically theological, for as *Eternity* in its latest issue, back page, comments, there is more arable land in India than there is in the USA. The feeding of grain to cattle there, without the slaughter of those same cattle, is an offense. And the fact that India is actually a grain exporter is also an offense. But the offense is defined by the Scriptures, which few in India live by. Where there is no vision (or revelation from God, and seen by the people) the people perish. And though favor be shown to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness. When there was famine in India, and America opened its granaries, there were many caste people who would prefer to starve than to eat food which had been under the shadow of an untouchable. When there was a famine in the Sudan, and many flocks of ducks were migrating overhead, and a missionary brought down many a duck with a shotgun, the natives would not eat them, for they said, "the duck walks on two legs like a man." The need for the gospel is the greater need.

The feeding of grain to the distillery, and the use of land for raising tobacco are prime examples of how American people nourish themselves in a day of slaughter.

Edwards E. Elliott  
Garden Grove, Ca.

## A Sin of Presumption

The Lord has laid it on my heart to correct an erroneous statement in my letter to the editor (September *Guardian*), namely, that "It is true that individual expression of other inspired song is recorded in the New Testament. . . ." and that these charismatic songs may constitute the "psalm" of I Corinth 14:26. This was presumption on my part, and exactly

what I warned against in connection with the regulative principle of worship.

Indeed, not a vestige of any hymn is extant! Mary "said" the Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55), Zechariah "said" the Benedictus (Luke 1:67-79), and Simeon "said" the Nunc Dimittis (Luke 2:28-32). These and other rhythmic passages commonly cited as evidence of expanded song content (Acts 4:23-31, Eph. 5:14, I Tim. 3:16) cannot at all be proven to have been sung in worship.

Furthermore, while the entire context of I Corinth 14:26 is that the gifts were charismatic, and while we know that in the post-Apostolic period the word "psalm" was not always used in connection with the Psalter, it is dangerous to conclude a broader definition of the word on the basis of history or conjectural hypotheses of commentators. We are wrong to go outside of Scripture, our *only* and *sufficient* rule for doctrine (Confession of Faith, Chapter 1). Very possibly each worshipper came prepared with an Old Testament psalm! Whatever, the material was inspired.

The main point of my letter, that the entire Psalter is designed and authorized for Christian praise, and that only in this dispensation do we have the key to unlock its deep significance, remains unaffected by my error.

*Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; Let them not have dominion over me! Psalm 19:13*

Renwick B. Adams  
Edgewood, MD.

## Missionaries in Mexico

I noted with interest the brief news item on the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico extending its "deadline for foreign missionaries to leave the country" (October, 1978). Isn't it interesting that they approve it at all and that we "send" missionaries, since a violation of the Ninth Commandment is involved? To be a professional missionary in Mexico, which is illegal, one must falsify his visa and claim to be either a tourist or a retiree.

Carl W. Bogue  
Akron, Ohio

# From the Editor

One of my most treasured childhood memories is of listening to a favorite aunt read to me from John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. I never tired of hearing the heroic story of Christian's battle with Appolyon, or of Doubting Castle and giant Despair, or of the glorious entrance into the Celestial City where Abraham, Moses and a host of other heroes were awaiting the weary pilgrim and his friend Faithful.

It is now three hundred years since Bunyan's classic work first captivated the imaginations of its readers. Not all, however, afforded it an unqualified welcome. A contemporary review by an Anglican clergyman saw it as an "inflammatory treatise," "an ill-favored attack upon the Church of England and upon all our society holds dear." Drawing attention to the fact that Bunyan wrote only in plain English, quoting neither the fathers nor the "lore of antiquity," the reviewer concludes that "Mr. Bunyan evidently suffereth from a want of education." It is confidently asserted that England's gentle folk will know enough to allow the book to descend into a well-deserved obscurity. The reviewer even suggests that the answer to Bunyan's sort is to banish them to the new world!

Three centuries later, this "inflammatory treatise" remains both a literary and a spiritual classic. It has been reprinted countless times and has been translated into numerous languages. Several children's versions have been published, although Bunyan did not originally write with children in mind. The Banner of Truth Trust has recently reprinted a beautifully bound and illustrated edition of the complete work, available for \$10.95.

Uneducated Bunyan may have been in the traditional sense of not being well "school'd." He freely confessed that the Bible and his concordance were his only two reference books. Yet, in addition to possessing an exceptional imagination, Bunyan was indeed educated in the

highest sense of the word. His teacher was the Spirit of Truth and his textbook the Word of God. Like the Psalmist he pleaded, "Lord, teach me thy statutes" and with David again he could have said that his knowledge excelled that of the ancients.

John Owen, the great Puritan scholar, is reputed to have said that he would gladly have given up all his learning to have been able to preach like the "Bedford tinker." C. H. Spurgeon is quoted as having said, "I regard the style of John Bunyan as being a nearer approach to the style of the Lord Jesus than that of any other man who has written."

Bunyan demonstrated exceptional insight into both the human condition and the work of the Holy Spirit in a sinner's soul. Countless pilgrims since his day have turned to the *Pilgrim's Progress* for spiritual strength and understanding. Bunyan's own spiritual pilgrimage is dramatically recounted in his autobiographical work, *Grace Abounding*. He was also the author of a number of theological treatises including one on *Justification by an Imputed Righteousness*.

Bunyan has been criticized, as have other Puritans, for presenting the Christian experience in a stereotyped pattern in which the sinner undergoes protracted conviction of sin before he can enjoy the blessing of salvation. Christian was well on his way to the Celestial City before he even reached the cross!

Be that as it may, if Bunyan erred on the side of making salvation seem too difficult, do we perhaps err on the other side of making it seem too easy? Bunyan had a profound sense of human depravity and of the awful cost paid by Christ for the sins of his people. Assurance of salvation was not something cheaply obtained, but bought by the tremendous cost of Christ's sufferings. It is this sense of the sinfulness of sin and the holiness of God which comes to the fore time and again in Bunyan's writings. As he wrote in the preface to *Grace Abounding*, "God

did not play with me in trying me, nor did I play when I sank as unto a bottomless pit and the pains of hell got hold upon me; wherefore I may not play in relating them, but be plain and simple and lay down the thing as it was."

There is nothing the church in our day needs more than a renewed appreciation of the great themes with which Bunyan dealt. We have come to take our faith all too lightly. Modern evangelism offers a faith that is "easy come" and tragically "easy go."

And what of us? We pride ourselves in a faithful adherence to the doctrines of grace. But what impact are these doctrines making on our personal and corporate lives as the people of God? Are we distinguished as a people who know their God, know him with that biblical fear and awe which is the beginning of wisdom? What practical difference do the doctrines of divine sovereignty and human inability make to our family lives, our corporate worship, our preaching and evangelism? Are we marked out by that sense of urgency which characterized Christian on his way to the Celestial City? An urgency which resisted the temptation to turn aside to Demas's silver mine. An urgency which fearlessly overcame the attack of Appolyon. An urgency which carried him through the river of death into the Celestial City.

It would be good if the commemoration of *The Pilgrim's Progress* in this its tricentenary year would bring the church of our day to stand with Christian before the cross, singing in adoring wonder:

*Bless'd cross, bless'd sepulchre,  
bless'd rather be the one that there  
was put to death for me.*

J. Cameron Fraser

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# Anna

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## at the Presentation of Jesus

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*Norman Shepherd*

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The figure of the just and devout Simeon stands out in our minds as we contemplate the scene when the infant Jesus is brought into the temple by his parents. He who waited faithfully for the consolation of Israel is permitted to see the salvation of the Lord. What an inestimable privilege! And not only Joseph and Mary, but now the whole church marvels at the words spoken by Simeon.

There is another figure in the temple, however, and she must not be lost in the shadows. She, too, has her place in the history of redemption next to Simeon. Anna. Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher (Luke 2:36-38).

The tribe of Asher? It is virtually an unknown quantity in the pages of Holy Scripture. What do we remember of the tribe of Asher? In all probability, little or nothing. And yet, of Asher Moses had said, "Let Asher be blessed with children; let him be acceptable to his brethren, and let him dip his foot in oil. Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be" (Deut. 33:24, 25).

But the days of Asher had long since come to an end. Asher was no more to be found. Asher belonged to a people that had rebelled against her covenant

God, and because of her apostasy, had been driven from the land where righteousness was to dwell. Asher had been carried into captivity to become one of the "ten lost tribes of Israel". It is, perhaps, understandable that we have forgotten all about Asher.

Does this mean, then, that God, too, has forgotten Asher? We ask with the Apostle Paul, has God cast away his people? (Rom. 11:1). Has the Word of God been without effect? (Rom. 9:6). What about that promise, the promise according to election, has it been overthrown? We must answer — again with Paul — No! by no means! Here is Anna, with her identity intact, a remnant of the tribe of Asher in the temple of God.

But even when we see Anna we must admit that it still looks rather hopeless. Here she was, married only seven years, and then the bitter blow, the death of a beloved husband. We sympathize with her in her grief, but that was only the beginning. She had lived at least sixty years alone. Her constant vigil in the temple across that time span suggests that there were no children from her brief marriage that had to be cared for, and thus there were no children to comfort her in her loneliness. Moses said, "Let Asher be blessed with children," but there were no children for Anna, and it would appear that this line from Asher is on the point of fading away for ever. All that is left is a grey-haired old woman.

Anna was a widow in a day when the life for widows was not easy. Her de-

votion to the God of her fathers brought her to the temple day after day; but who can say how often she was compelled to listen to the pious prayers of religious people whose occupation it was to devour widows' houses? (Luke 20:47). The temple itself was the very focal point of Israel's religion, but the rot had already set in that would warrant Jesus' condemnation of what had been transformed into a den of thieves. Surely this is the end of the line for the aged Anna herself, for her family, for the tribe of Asher, indeed for the seed of Abraham which had forsaken the ways of covenant loyalty and obedience.

Nevertheless Anna hangs on by a bare thread as it were, with fasting and with prayer, night and day. It is not her personal misfortune that is the problem. It is not something that can be remedied by means of personal counseling sessions. Her thoughts go out to Asher, to Israel, to God's people. Her zeal is for the house of God. She is deeply conscious of the church of God, the pillar and ground of truth — and the utter desolation of that church. There is almost nothing left! In her desolation she fasts, and thereby identifies herself with the desolation of the church. There is no escaping from the church or from her responsibility as a member of the church.

Although the fasting bespeaks desolation, in prayer she cries out to God for mercy, and the glimmer of hope is kept alive even as life itself is ebbing away. Her only comfort in life, and now on the very threshold of death, is the knowledge that God is the Savior, and God had promised to come and to redeem Israel from all her sin. Anna, too, continues to look for the consolation of Israel.

And he comes! God, himself comes to his temple in the person of the infant Jesus at the very hour when Anna is there to see him with her own eyes.

Anna of the tribe of Asher. The name means "happy", or "blessed", for the arrival of Asher had brought happiness to his mother, Leah (Gen. 30:13). Not only Moses, but Jacob as well had prophesied

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the prosperity of Asher (Gen. 49:20; Deut. 33:24, 25). But never in all of history had the tribe of Asher been so blessed as it was at this very moment in the person of Anna.

Anna, the daughter of Phanuel. The father's name means "vision of God." We know nothing of the spiritual pilgrimage of this man, but we do know that he was never permitted to see what his daughter, Anna, now saw. For her was reserved the vision of God — not an apparition of some kind, but she beheld the glory of God in the flesh.

And Anna herself. Her name means "grace" or "favor". How uniquely favored of God she was, to see his only begotten Son! Moses promised that Asher would be blessed with children. Anna had received none from her own body, but in the grace of God she received much more. She received the child Jesus in the temple so that through him the tribe of Asher might become fruitful in the most profound sense of the word.

Is it any wonder, then, that she immediately gave thanks to God? Redemption had at last come. She could not help but speak of him to all who were looking for redemption in Jerusalem. Anna is described for us as a prophetess, and her prophetic calling now reaches its climax in that she can speak not simply of a salvation to come, but specifically of Jesus (his name means "Savior") who *has* come to save his people from their sins.

The long, dark night is now past. The vigil has ended. The dawn of a new day has come, the promised Sabbath for the people of God. It is a day of superabounding grace. Anna prophesied to the remnant who were looking for redemption in Jerusalem. In this new day, however, a new generation of prophets would arise, indeed, many generations of prophets. Their ministry, however, is not to a remnant, but to multitudes. These multitudes are not looking for redemption in Jerusalem at all, but they will find redemption; for it is the day when the Savior will be found by those who did *not* seek for him. Isaiah had spoken of

just such a day (Isaiah 65:1) and we who are alive today are privileged to live in that day. Neither wisdom nor might, nor nobility, nor any other qualification in us, either obtains or thwarts the grace of God (1 Cor. 1:26, 27). It is the gracious, sovereign, and efficacious call of God that ushers us into the fellowship of the Son of God so that we become the sons of God in the beloved Son (Eph. 1:5,6). We who are by nature sinners of the Gentiles (Gal. 2:15) join with Anna of the tribe of Asher in giving thanks to God for his unspeakable gift.

Jesus who came to the temple as an infant finished the work which his father gave him to do. He was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, so that those who were given to him by the Father might die to sin and rise with their Redeemer unto eternal life. Jesus was taken from us into heaven, and that, too was for our benefit. He has poured out his Holy Spirit so that we who have never lived in Jerusalem might be numbered among those who were born there (Psalm 87:6).

But Jesus who has gone into heaven will one day return to his temple as he promised, though not the temple where Anna fasted and prayed, for that has long since been destroyed never to be rebuilt. The temple to which Jesus returns is nothing less than a new heaven and a new earth; not a den of thieves, but the dwelling place of righteousness (2 Peter 3:13).

In that day Anna will be there to give thanks to God, as she did at the hour of the presentation of Jesus in the temple. Because Anna is there, the tribe of Asher is there. Indeed, Revelation 7:5 speaks of the twelve thousand of the tribe of Asher that are sealed. The election of God has not fallen to the ground. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his" (2 Tim. 2:19). Because Asher is there, the children of Abraham are there. And we, too, who by the grace of God

(continued on page 11)

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# The Spiritual Realm

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Leslie W. Sloat

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*Now there were in that same country  
shepherds abiding in the fields,  
keeping watch over their flocks  
by night. And lo, the angel of the  
Lord came upon them, and the  
glory of the Lord shone round about  
them and they were sore afraid.  
And the angel said unto them, . . .  
And suddenly there was with the  
angel a multitude of the heavenly  
host, praising God, and saying . . .*  
(Luke 2:8-14)

Wait a minute! Wait a minute!! What is all this? Unidentified flying objects? Visitors from outer space? A close encounter of the third kind?

No, none of these things. This is another instance, of the kind of which the Bible is full, when beings from the unseen and mysterious spiritual realm take upon themselves forms which make them available to the human senses — visible to the human eye, audible to the ear, and so on.

As those who take the Bible seriously, and believe that what it says is true, we must face the fact that from the beginning to the end the Bible is a record of the interrelation of the physical world which we experience through

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in Greek at Westminster Theological  
Seminary.*

our normal human senses, and another realm, mysterious, spiritual, ordinarily unseen, which yet is more real and more ultimate than this physical world. It seems to be the habitation not only of the great triune God, but of multitudes of angels and other beings. Again and again beings from this invisible realm have assumed forms in which they could be seen and heard by men, though for a limited time. And on occasion, though far more rarely, individual men have been given the privilege and ability to see something of the reality and glory of that spiritual realm.

Look again at the birth narratives. We often read them without thinking. But the whole record begins when an angel appears to Zacharias as he is ministering in the temple. The angel tells Zacharias that his wife will bear him a son, even though both parents are old and beyond childbearing age. Zacharias is frightened by the appearance of the angel, and expresses doubt about the possibility of having a child. At this point the angel identifies himself — "I am Gabriel, who stands before God, and I was sent to speak with you and bring you this good news."

The same angel, again identifying himself, appears a short time later to Mary, to tell her that she will be the mother of the Messiah, even though she has no husband.

Then after Jesus is born we have the account of the shepherds being visited by the angel of the Lord and the heavenly host, and then going in to Bethlehem and finding the family just as the angel had said.

What do we have here? Are these

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#### **Contacts in Arizona**

Families of Reformed faith convictions who are moving to the Prescott, Arizona area will find like minds and fellowship with the Prescott Presbyterian Church in America. Providing a full ministry of preaching and teaching in the Reformed Faith. Write Pastor Charles E. Turner, P.O. Box 248, Prescott, AZ 86302. Ph. (602) 778-2538.

stories to be taken as myths, fairy tales, hallucinations, the imagination of religious geniuses, or tales made up by people who wanted in some way to provide a background for a faith they had somehow come to hold?

In the current atmosphere of almost hopeless despair which seems to be so common around the world, people wondering and fearing what may come to pass, there appears to be a growing interest in the occult, in ghosts and spirits, and in some way of finding out whether there is any life after death. It seems strange to me that people are willing to follow and chase after any wisp of alleged experience which they think may offer some sort of vague hope that gives meaning to existence, and yet are not willing to accept the clear teaching of the Bible.

We are prepared to honor the Bible as a wonderful book, to expect presidents and those in public office to swear the oath of office with their hand on an old — or new — copy of the Bible. We are prepared even to read or quote it at times. But how many of us are prepared to believe implicitly what it says? How many of us who each year read the birth narratives truly believe that angels exist, that a multitude of the heavenly host sang to the shepherds on that morning long ago? To put it more boldly, how many of us truly believe that the God we profess to believe in not only has a real existence, but is able to act and has acted with reference to this physical universe we call ours?

Yet this is precisely what Christianity is all about. The Christian believes that the Bible is the very Word of the living God, a Word which shall abide forever. Its declarations concerning God and man and the relation between them is true. In fact, the Bible is not only a human record of past events, but is itself a most significant part of those events. It is itself revelation, God speaking to men.

No sooner do we look at the opening pages than we are confronted with the two realms of existence. We are told that God in the beginning created the

heavens and the earth, the physical universe we know through our senses. But in this simple statement we are also confronted with the fact that there is another realm of existence in which God is.

And when the physical universe is completed and there is a man, a human being in it, we read of God speaking with the man he has made. Consider that! God has by divine fiat created the vast universe, earth, sun, moon, stars. And here this great God is talking, in words, in language, to the man. Specific commands and instructions are given. When man disobeys, he hears the voice of God as God is walking in the garden in the cool of the day. We are not told that God had assumed a form to make him visible, but there was an audible voice, and it is difficult for us to, think of the expression, "walking in the garden" without thinking also of a visible presence.

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As we continue reading in the Old Testament we find again and again that the record tells of the Lord speaking with men in a way which strongly suggests a visible presence. We have the conversation between the Lord and Cain after the murder of Abel. We have the instruction given to Noah. And there are the call and the covenant promises given to Abraham.

One of the most interesting and specific of these "theophanies" (as they are called) is described in Genesis 18. Three "men" come to Abraham, but he seems to recognize them as supernatural beings. Abraham prepares them food and they eat. Then they promise that Sarah shall have a son. Finally two of them go on to Sodom, but we read that Abraham "stood yet before the Lord," and there follows

that fascinating conversation concerning the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Meanwhile the other two have come to Sodom, where they are received by Lot, and the next day persuade him and his wife to leave the city, which is in due course destroyed.

When we come to Moses, we read again and again how that the Lord spoke to him, giving him the specific instructions which resulted in the institution of the passover and the exodus of the people of Israel from Egypt. Moreover we are specifically told that the Lord spoke with Moses face to face, and not by dreams or visions or similar methods.

Thus one cannot read the Old Testament without being constantly confronted with the reality of that other realm and the fact of repeated interventions by the beings of that realm in the affairs of our physical universe. The reality of life after death is implicit, it seems to me, in the existence of this spiritual realm. It is interesting to remember that when Jesus was questioned about the resurrection, he cited the Old Testament statement, "I am the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob," and commented, that God is not the God of dead people, but of living. The fact that after the "death" of these individuals God continued to be declaring himself as their God was in itself proof that they were to be considered as living persons.

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There is a most interesting statement of our Lord Christ recorded in the New Testament. He tells the parable (?) of the rich man and Lazarus. At the conclusion he has the rich man ask that Lazarus be sent back to earth to his brothers, to warn them of the reality of the life after death and of judgment and hell. But the response comes — "If

they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one should rise from the dead."

It seems to me there is something rather significant in these words. What is in view is not merely a sort of general Christian belief. Rather to believe Moses and the prophets is to believe that the spiritual realm has actual existence, as it has manifested itself again and again in the records given us from Moses and the prophets. If one does not believe Moses and the prophets, one has already rejected the only reliable record we have — even God's own revelation — of the spiritual realm and of another life beyond this one. Those who have rejected the revelation from God through Moses and the prophets concerning that realm, already have their minds set against that truth, and will not be persuaded through some sort of alleged resurrection in their own time.

It will be worthwhile to notice a few of the incidents of apparently theophanic appearance or vision recorded in the Old Testament outside of the writings of Moses. In the life of Joshua we have the record of the appearance of one who looked like a man, but who declared himself to be "captain of the Lord's host," and who further identified himself when he told Joshua, "Take off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy." These words, the same as those spoken to Moses at the burning bush when he was called and appointed to lead Israel out of Egypt, indicate that as Moses was appointed, so now Joshua is appointed to be the leader of the people, but under the supreme leadership of the Lord.

Moving on, we have the account of the child Samuel in the temple hearing the voice of the Lord, but thinking it is the voice of the priest Eli, until Eli corrects him. So we read (1 Sam 3:10) "And the Lord came and stood and called as at other times . . ." On throughout the Old Testament, in the writings of the prophets, we are repeatedly told that the "Word of the Lord came" to this or that prophet, and they passed on the message which they had received.



## **Celebrate Christmas in the Philippines!**

Not in person, but with a gift of love to a Christian family of the Philippines.

You can help a family raise its income by 50% (to \$600 per year) through a loan, a small at-home business, or an animal raising project.

Remember His gifts and His Gift, and share it with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

This Christmas a gift of love in the name of Jesus Christ.



**C R W R C**  
**2850 Kalamazoo Ave.**  
**Grand Rapids, MI**  
**49560**

- 
- I want to celebrate Christmas in the Philippines. Here is my gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Please send me information concerning the needs and how my gift will be used.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_

I think we cannot pass by these references and think that they are simply some internal imaginings of the men. God exists, and in his own way but by a method that left no doubt that it was the Word of the Lord, he communicated to his people the messages he would have them hear.

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*The reality of life after death is implicit in the existence of this spiritual realm.*

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We have the account in II Kings 6, when Elisha is in a certain city and the Syrians come and surround the city, and Elisha's servant is afraid. But Elisha prays, and the Lord opens the eyes of the servant so that he sees on the mountains around them chariots and horses of fire — the army of the Lord. Before this there is the account of Elijah being caught up to heaven, again in a chariot of fire. And we are reminded of Christ's statement to Peter on the occasion of his arrest when Peter uses a sword, "Do you think that I cannot now pray to the Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" The unseen realm is all around the people of God.

In Isaiah 6 there is the account of the prophet's vision of the Lord in the temple. In Daniel chapters 8 and following we are told of the angel Gabriel coming and revealing to Daniel things which were to take place. The name is the same, and so there is no reason to think this is an angel other than the one who came to Zacharias and Mary at the time of Jesus' birth.

Thus the Old Testament is replete with instances of beings from the unseen or spiritual realm making themselves available to human senses and communicating with human beings.

As we have seen, the situation does not change in the New Testament records. But here the factor which is of prime importance is the person of Jesus Christ

himself. For Jesus Christ is plainly presented to us in the New Testament as both God and man, both divine and human, the two natures, each complete and perfect in itself, yet joined in one person. The creeds have described the two natures as being without mixture or confusion, without separation or division. In Jesus Christ the physical and the spiritual realms are together. In a most interesting statement near the beginning of his ministry, Jesus says to Nathaniel that he would see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man. The Son of Man (Jesus' self-designation) is here pictured as the ladder which bridges the gap between heaven and earth. He partakes of the nature of each. Yet he is one person, so that whether speaking from the divine or from the human standpoint it is Jesus who is speaking.

Naturally the human beings who are his disciples see him as a human being, eating, drinking, walking, becoming tired, sleeping, and so forth. The divine or spiritual nature in him is hidden and unseen, though constantly revealing its presence through the authority of his speech and the signs and wonders he continually performed.

However, at one point in his life the veil is lifted briefly. That is at the Transfiguration. Here for a brief moment three of the disciples are permitted to see the glory of his divine nature, also to see Moses and Elijah, long since dead from the human standpoint, but very much alive so far as the spiritual realm is concerned.

The restoration of Lazarus to life on the fourth day after his death is completely overshadowed by the resurrection of Jesus Himself. Both of these, but especially that of Jesus, are completely beyond our comprehension. They represent realities which have never entered the arena of our experiences. Yet in the resurrection of Jesus we are brought into immediate contact with the reality of the spiritual realm, and finally Jesus, still clothed with that human body yet marvelously changed, is actually seen

ascending into heaven. And but a short time later the first Christian martyr, as the stones of the enraged mob are about to snuff out his physical life, declares that he sees heaven opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God. Paul also is granted the vision of glory, and places his seeing of the risen Christ in the same class with that of the disciples.

Finally of course in the New Testament we have the Revelation, in which John reports his experiences: his vision of the Son of Man in the midst of the churches, and then his own seeing of things in heaven.

As we said at the beginning, Scripture is one long account of the interrelation of the unseen or spiritual realm and the natural or physical realm in which our lives are presently being lived. This aspect of Scriptural teaching is one which often escapes us. We may speak of salvation from sin, of eternal life, of the hope of heaven, of the resurrection, but how real are these things? The New Testament speaks plainly of the final destruction of the present physical world and of the new heavens and the new earth. We are told in so many words that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. We must all be changed, either through death and resurrection, or through transformation at Christ's second coming. But there is the abiding and eternal realm of existence, the heaven where God dwells, and the angels and the spirits of just men made perfect, and where Jesus himself will be seen in all his perfections, and we shall be like him for we shall see him as he is.

The assurance which the Christian believer has concerning these things is a far greater source of comfort than any modern experiences or hallucinations or ghost stories can ever be. For Scripture, as the very Word of God, is true and abiding.

There is another aspect of this whole picture which must yet be mentioned. Scripture makes it perfectly plain that in this invisible spiritual realm, however it is to be termed, there is not only eternal

*(continued on page 11)*



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# RES Committee

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## Meets Dutch & Indonesian Churches

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The Reformed Ecumenical Synod (RES) was formed in 1946. Its purpose was to be an international body of churches committed to the historic Reformed faith. Its member churches are from all around the world.

Two years later, the theologically liberal World Council of Churches (WCC) was formed. Despite the fact that the RES has been consistently opposed to the WCC, three RES member churches are also members of the WCC. These churches are the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (Reformed Churches in the Netherlands), the Gereja Kristen Jawa (Christian Churches of Java) and the Gereja Kristen Indonesia Jawa Tengah (Indonesian Christian Churches of Central Java).

At the last meeting of the RES in Cape Town, South Africa, in 1976, a resolution was passed reinforcing the RES' opposition to the WCC. Accordingly, the Synod instructed its Interim Committee under the chairmanship of the Rev. John Galbraith to meet with the three denominations which continue to hold joint membership. (The Interim Committee consists of the Synod officers serving between any two meetings of the RES Synod)

The Interim Committee met with a delegation from the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (GKN) on April 1, 1978, and with delegates of the two Indonesian churches from July 19-25. Two other Indonesian churches which are members of the RES also sent delegates, even though they do not hold membership in the WCC.

As far as the GKN is concerned the matter is further complicated by the fact

that controversy has arisen over the doctrinal views of two leading ministers in the church. One of these men is Dr. Herman Wiersinga, student chaplain in Leiden, whose view of the nature of Christ's atonement is at serious odds with the confessional teaching of the church. According to his published doctoral thesis on the subject, Dr. Wiersinga teaches that "Christ did not bear the wrath of God in our place and that his death on the cross was important primarily because of the shock-effect it had upon the disciples" (Interim Committee Report, P. 9).

The other controversy surrounds Dr. H. M. Kuitert, Professor of Theology at the Free University of Amsterdam. Dr. Kuitert's views, particularly expressed in two of his books, *The Necessity of Faith* and *What Does It Mean to Believe?*, have raised questions as to his adherence to the Reformed confessions, the authority of Scripture and the uniqueness of the Christian religion.

Several member churches of the RES expressed concern over the apparent failure of the GKN to discipline these men. This has in turn raised questions as to the GKN's continued membership in the RES. The Interim Committee found, however, that the GKN is deeply concerned about these matters and that steps are being taken to prevent heretical views from being promulgated in the church.

There is, however, a decided reticence to proceed rapidly with disciplinary action. It was argued that in the history of the GKN, discipline cases have been rather frequent and, when pursued rather quickly, have led to schism. The present leaders in the church are anxious to avoid



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Not in person but with a gift to our Haitian brothers and sisters in Christ.

You can help reduce malnutrition in a Haitian community by 10% among children between birth and five years of age.

Remember His gifts and His Gift.

This Christmas—celebrate—with a gift of love in the name of Jesus Christ.



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2850 Kalamazoo Ave.  
Grand Rapids, MI  
49560

- I want to celebrate Christmas in Haiti. Here is my gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Please send me information concerning the needs and how my gift will be used.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_



## Celebrate Christmas in Bangladesh!

Not in person but with a gift to a Bangladesh farmer and his family who have less than 3 acres of land

Help them increase their grain production by 50%, their vegetable production by 100%.

Remember His gifts and His Gift, and share it with these poor.

This Christmas—celebrate—with a gift of love in the name of Jesus Christ.



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49560

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- Please send me more information concerning the needs and how my gift will be used.

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Address \_\_\_\_\_

repeating mistakes of the past. "Cape Town spoke of all due haste. The GKN feels that at all costs undue haste should be avoided." (Interim Committee Report, p. 17).

It was also argued that it was this concern with the unity of the church which led the GKN to join, and now to continue membership in, the WCC. The church leaders claim that they are attempting to be a Reformed witness within the WCC.

Among the Indonesian churches, the interim committee found a different situation. These churches, which are the fruit of Dutch missionary labor, find themselves to be in a very small minority in Indonesia. Some four percent of the total Protestant population of the country belongs to the four RES member churches. The Protestant population is in turn estimated at between five and six percent of the entire 135,000,000 who inhabit some 13,600 islands spread across nearly 3,500 miles on the western edge of the Pacific Ocean. Estimates of the Muslim population range from sixty to eighty five percent. There are also Hindus, Buddhists and animists.

In the midst of this isolated situation, the four Reformed churches have reached out to the Indonesian National Council of Churches, and two have joined the WCC.

The churches frankly admitted to the Interim Committee that there were dangers in these ecumenical relations: the infiltration of un-Reformed teaching into the churches through the union seminary at which their pastors are trained; the effect of un-Reformed teaching received by Indonesian students in schools abroad (this training is often made possible by the WCC); the lessening of Reformed biblical awareness among pastors of the future.

Nevertheless, the churches argued that the advantages of membership in the WCC outweigh the disadvantages. In addition to fostering their sense of being part of the body of Christ world-wide, membership in the WCC provides practical help both in terms of theological education and of social services, especially in the areas of agriculture, medicine and education.

The Indonesian delegates indicated that they felt the RES to be guilty of imbalance in emphasizing doctrine at the expense of deeds. "The RES is more ready to raise the warning finger than to extend the helping hand. It should emphasize both word and deed in a way more relevant to the Indonesian situation." (Interim Committee Report, p. 6).

In response to this situation, the Interim Committee has recommended that the RES assume a higher profile in Indonesia. More active assistance should be given both in terms of theological education and social and diaconal help. "The RES ministry in Indonesia must exhibit greater concern with ethics as well as doctrine, a word/deed unity." (Interim Committee Report, p. 8).

It was also felt by the committee members that it would be advisable to have a contact person in Indonesia, able to translate Reformed literature into Indonesian. In large part, problems have arisen because of the language barrier and other communication difficulties. The committee was particularly concerned that the Reformed faith does not seem to be communicated effectively to the lay membership of the Indonesian churches.

The Interim Committee has prepared separate reports on its meetings with the various churches. These reports have been sent to the several RES member churches for their deliberation. The Dutch and Indonesian churches are in turn required to study the RES recommendations of 1976 and the 1968 report on "The Nature of the Church and its Ecumenical Calling" They are to report their evaluations to the 1980 RES at Nimes, France.

### DORDT COLLEGE STAFF OPENINGS 1979-1980

Dordt College, a private four-year college owned and operated by members of the Christian Reformed denomination, will have an opening in the BIOLOGY DEPARTMENT. Academically qualified individuals who are committed to the Reformed-Calvinistic-biblical theology and educational philosophy are invited to send inquires to: DR. DOUGLAS RIBBENS, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dordt College, Sioux Center, Iowa 51250  
AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER.

## Anna (continued)

have become the sons of Abraham, walking in the footsteps of his faith, will be there to join in the thanksgiving and praise.

While we wait for that day there are doubtless going to be days of fasting. We cannot blind ourselves to the widespread apostasy among many of those who profess to be the followers of Jesus. We must do everything in our power to separate from such apostasy and to bear witness against it. But we cannot separate ourselves from the professing church any more than could Anna. Nor should we want to. Our calling is like that of Anna. We have a prophetic work to do in the midst of the covenant community at the same time that we call new nations and new people to the obedience of faith. We are also called to fasting and prayer to acknowledge our own unfaithfulness and the faithlessness and ingratitude of the church of Christ, and to cry out to God for mercy. We do so not out of desperation, but in the full confidence of Anna, who looked for redemption in Jerusalem. Our Savior teaches us to look up, for our redemption is drawing near (Luke 21:28).

Jesus promises, "Surely I come quickly," and the church prays, "even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20). Our song is Psalm 96:13 —

*Let all prepare to greet the Lord,  
Because he coming is.  
He surely comes to judge the earth,  
And righteousness is his.  
He'll nations judge with faithfulness,  
The world with justice bless.*

## DORDT COLLEGE

### STAFF OPENINGS 1979-1980

Dordt College, a private four-year college owned and operated by members of the Christian Reformed denomination, will have openings in each of the following areas:

### BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION ECONOMICS BUSINESS EDUCATION

Academically qualified individuals who are committed to the Reformed-Calvinistic-biblical theology and educational philosophy are invited to send inquiries to: DR. DOUGLAS RIBBENS, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dordt College, Slouss Center, Iowa 51250  
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## Spiritual Realm (continued)

blessedness in the presence of God our heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, but there is also for those who are not numbered among the Christian believers, the condition of eternal suffering and woe. Jesus speaks plainly of the "outer darkness," of the place of "everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

*The assurance which the  
Christian believer has is a  
far greater source of comfort  
than any modern  
experiences or  
hallucinations or ghost  
stories can ever be.*

The living God is a holy God. All men have sinned and do not deserve and cannot merit eternal blessedness. But God himself has provided a Savior in the person of his Son Jesus Christ. Scripture plainly tells us that God has manifested his love for us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us, in our stead, bearing the very wrath of God and the punishment due for our sins. The deliverance which he accomplished is the possession of those who trust in him as their Savior. Whosoever believes in him is not condemned, but whosoever believes not is condemned already, for he has not believed in the only begotten Son of God.

The assurance concerning life after death and the sure hope of heaven cannot rest on some modern experience, but only on the ground of Christ's perfect atonement and our resting in him. But so certain is the consolation here, that Paul can say without hesitation, "to depart and be with Christ is far better," and again, "we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

He also closes the great eighth chapter of Romans with that glorious declaration, "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."



## Celebrate Christmas in Jordan!

Not in person but with a gift to the mentally, physically, and socially handicapped.

You can help a handicapped child develop his abilities, give a handicapped adult the chance to become self-supporting.

Remember His gifts and His Gift.

This Christmas—celebrate—with a gift of love in the name of Jesus Christ.



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- Please send me information concerning the needs and how my gift will be used.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
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# News & Views

## John Galbraith: 30 Years Service

On December 31, 1978, the Rev. John P. Galbraith will retire from 30 years service to the Foreign Missions Committee of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC). His successor will be the Rev. Laurence N. Vail, currently serving as Assistant General Secretary. Mr. Galbraith has been designated General Secretary Emeritus.

It was in 1948 that Mr. Galbraith was appointed as General Secretary of both the Home Missions and Church Extension and the Foreign Missions Committees of the OPC. Prior to this he had served in three pastorates. He has also been a member of several other church committees and boards including the Christian Education Committee of which he was the president from 1952-58. In 1947 he was elected moderator of the fourteenth General Assembly of the OPC.

In 1948 the work of foreign missions was at somewhat of a standstill in the aftermath of the Second World War. However, with the increase in foreign missionary opportunities in recent years, it became desirable for Mr. Galbraith to devote himself full time to the Foreign Missions Committee. This he has done since 1961 at which time the Rev. Leroy B. Oliver was appointed General Secretary of the Home Missions and Church Extension Committee.

In 1961 the foreign mission work of the OPC was confined to Taiwan, Korea and Ethiopia. Mr. Galbraith has overseen the development of works in Japan, in Lebanon and more recently in Egypt, where the Rev. George Cottenden is working in cooperation with the Evangelical Church of Egypt.

One of the most difficult experiences during Mr. Galbraith's 30 years in foreign missions was the enforced withdrawal of OPC missionaries from Eritrea, Ethiopia in 1976. This event, necessitated by the deteriorating political situation, was overshadowed by the death, two years earlier, of Nurse Anna Strikwerda, the first



martyr of the OPC foreign mission work. The story of the OPC enterprise in Ethiopia is told by Clarence Duff in *God's Higher Ways: the birth of a church* (Nutley, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1977.)

Mr. Galbraith's concern for the world mission of the church has been evident in his work for the Reformed Ecumenical Synod of which the OPC has been a member since 1949. At the last meeting of the RES in Cape Town, South Africa in 1976, he was appointed President and will serve in that capacity as Chairman of the RES Interim Committee until 1980. He has been involved in a number of significant actions in this connection. Earlier this year the Interim Committee met with South African member churches, both black and white, to discuss the question of race relations. Then this summer the committee had consultations with RES member churches from the Netherlands and Indonesia which also hold membership in the World Council of Churches, contrary to expressed policy of the RES. (See the accompanying report in this issue.)

Mr. Galbraith characterizes his policy over the last thirty years as having been to "think creatively and to move cautiously." Among the new developments which he initiated are: a Thank Offering (for the church's three main committees) and more recently a Missionary Memorial Fund; a policy of regular reporting by

missionaries; a Missionary Associate program; the Reformed Bulletin of Missions; and Telenews, a telephone answering service which provides mission news on a regular basis. He has also been the editor of *Worldwide Challenge*, the monthly newsletter of the OPC Foreign Missions Committee.

Above all, however, Mr. Galbraith's desire has been to see the OPC maintain its Reformed witness in foreign missionary endeavor and to be a faithful steward of the gifts given to the church.

In retirement, he has pledged himself to continue serving both the church and the committee to which he has already given so much.

## Resignation of Robley Johnston

At its regular fall meeting the Committee on Christian Education of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church accepted the resignation of its General Secretary, the Rev. Robley J. Johnston, effective September 30, 1978. Mr. Johnston has served the Committee in the capacity of General Secretary for twenty-three years. In recognition of the faithful service and exceptional leadership he has provided over the years, the committee drafted the Resolution of Appreciation quoted below:

"When Mr. Johnston began his work with the Committee in 1955 the publication of Sunday school materials was only a dream. Today, under Mr. Johnston's direction, Great Commission Publications (GCP) has developed material for grades 1 through 12 together with studies for adult classes. In addition, vacation Bible school materials have been revised and written, church bulletins have been developed, *Trinity Hymnal* has gone through 12 editions with a circulation of some 123,000 copies, and the annual gross sales of GCP have reached \$266,000. More than 750 churches are now served by the Sunday school materials alone.

"In leading and guiding this growing ministry, Mr. Johnston has served in an astonishing number of capacities . . .

He has been an imaginative leader in planning the publications program. He has served as the advertising agency of the enterprise, designing advertisements, writing copy and developing the catalog of publications. His skills in editing and in publishing and his taste in typographical design have secured for GCP the respect and esteem of others in the field and have given the materials great impact in their ministry for the cause of the gospel.

"He has been no less effective in developing cooperative relations with other churches. The joint venture that has been established between the Presbyterian Church in America and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church is in large measure the result of his vision and his leadership."

Since the joint publications venture between the Presbyterian Church in America and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church was consummated three years ago, Mr. Johnston has worn two hats. He was both the General Secretary of the OPC Committee on Christian Education and the Executive Director of Great Commission Publications.

As one might expect, after such a long period of so intense involvement in a publications ministry, Mr. Johnston plans to enjoy some well-earned rest for a while after he retires from GCP.

Mr. Johnston's successor as Executive Director of GCP is the Rev. Thomas R. Patete, former president of the Board of Trustees of Great Commission Publications. Before joining the GCP staff Mr. Patete served as pastor of the Marks Presbyterian Church (PCA), Marks, Mississippi.

Mr. Johnston's successor as General Secretary of the Committee on Christian Education has yet to be chosen. At the fall meeting the Committee appointed a search committee to begin the process of finding a new General Secretary. In the meantime, Mr. Michael G. Smith, Managing Editor of Great Commission Publications, serves as Acting General Secretary.

## Seminars on Ministerial Training

The Committee on Ministerial Training of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC) recently sponsored a series of seminars on the campus of Westminster Theological Seminary.

The first, held on October 12, was a planning seminar with students and local OPC ministers. A second was held on October 24 on "Involving Seminarians in Local Church Activity During their Course". The Rev. Harold Burkhardt of Christ Reformed Presbyterian Church, Oreland, Pa. addressed pastors in the morning and the Rev. Wilson Cummings of Emmanuel Chapel, Philadelphia spoke to pastors and students in the afternoon.

The third seminar, held on November 28, was led by representatives of the Home Missions, Foreign Missions and Christian Education Committees of the OPC. The theme of the seminar was "Opportunities to Serve in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church."

The next seminar is planned for February, 1979.

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### Ministry in Marysville

Pastor needed for group of 15 young adults, hungry for the Reformed faith. Left the charismatic movement a year ago. Solidly presbyterian. None over 35 years old, with a group of young children from three to nine years.

Situated about 135 miles northeast of San Francisco. Rent free place of worship. Eleven wage earners. Tremendous elder and deacon potential among the men, with the possibility of starting a second church 50 miles away.

Pastor must have understanding of charismatic theology, as well as being firmly convinced against it. Must be willing to start an Orthodox Presbyterian Church, working as associate with pastor of First OPC, San Francisco. Must have a car, be willing to work long, hard hours. Demanding but very challenging work. Please contact Pastor Chuck McIlhenny, 1350 Lawton St., San Francisco, Ca. 94122. Phone: (415) 564-8180. Please call right away. Job opening immediate.

## International Council on Biblical Inerrancy

From October 26-28, 1978 an international gathering of evangelical scholars met in Chicago to discuss the much debated question of biblical inerrancy. The result of the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy (ICBI) was an 11 page statement in three parts, affirming and defending the doctrine of biblical inerrancy. Foremost among the compilers of the statement were Dr. J. I. Packer, Vice-Principal of Trinity College, Bristol, England; Dr. Edmund P. Clowney, President of Westminster Theological Seminary; and Dr. R. C. Sproul, theologian-in-residence at Ligonier Valley Study Center. Dr. Sproul was also called to be the general director of the ICBI. The first part of the "Chicago Statement" is given below as a popular exposition of what the ICBI stands for. In our next issue we shall discuss the significance of the conference.

### The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy

1. God, who is himself Truth and speaks truth only, has inspired Holy Scripture in order thereby to reveal Himself to lost mankind through Jesus Christ as Creator and Lord, Redeemer and Judge. Holy Scripture is God's witness to himself.
2. Holy Scripture, being God's own Word, written by men prepared and superintended by his Spirit, is of infallible divine authority in all matters upon which it touches: it is to be believed, as God's instruction, in all that it affirms; obeyed, as God's command, in all that it requires; embraced, as God's pledge, in all that it promises.
3. The Holy Spirit, Scripture's divine Author, both authenticates it to us by his inward witness and opens our minds to understand its meaning.
4. Being wholly and verbally God-given, Scripture is without error or fault in all its teaching, no less in what it states about God's acts in creation, about the events of world history, and about its own literary origins under God, than in its witness to God's saving grace in individual lives.
5. The authority of Scripture is inescapably impaired if this total divine inerrancy is in any way limited or disregarded, or made relative to a view of truth contrary to the Bible's own; and such lapses bring serious loss to both the individual and the church.

# Book Reviews

## NEW TESTAMENT THEOLOGY: Basic issues in the current debate

by Gerhard F. Hasel. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1978 254 pp \$5.95. Reviewed by Michael G. Smith, Managing Editor of Great Commission Publications, Philadelphia, Pa.

Pastors and other teachers in the church can properly justify their ignoring much of the published scholarly research on biblical study. Too much time—time needed for various ministries—is required to absorb it, and too little direct benefit seems to come from it.

Gerhard Hasel, however, has produced a handy work about New Testament scholarship which ought not to be ignored. In it he surveys the history, methodology, and problematics of New Testament theology. This surprisingly comprehensive survey is accomplished in the short space of 220 pages.

The author does a masterful job of comparing, contrasting, and evaluating New Testament theologies and theologians. In so doing he has given his reader a rare perspective on the field. What's more, his perspective does not merely take account of developments in the Bultmannian and post-Bultmannian schools. Rather, he views his subject with a wide-angle lens and shows his reader conservative, evangelical, moderate, and Roman Catholic scholarship as well as the more radical.

This book is to be commended to pastors and other teachers in the church who have had some grounding in the history and inner workings of biblical scholarship. It is, to be sure, a technical work. But it is not one of relevance only to specialists. It raises and analyzes issues concerning the interpretation and application of the New Testament. All who are called to teach the Bible have some interest in such issues as these.

## MINISTRY AND MUSIC

by Robert H. Mitchell. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1978, 163pp., paper, \$5.95.

## MUSIC AND WORSHIP IN THE CHURCH

by Austin C. Lovelace and William C. Rice. Revised and enlarged edition. Nashville: Abington Press, 1976, 256 pp., \$12.95.

## MUSIC IN THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

by Dale Topp. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1976, 205pp. paper, \$4.95.

Reviewed by Michael G. Smith, Managing Editor, Great Commission Publications Philadelphia, Pa.

Each of these three books is addressed to the larger audience of musicians, ministers and interested lay persons rather than the narrower audience of professional musician. They all three wish to make the reader more reflective and more conscious of the role and function of music among God's people, particularly in the area of worship. It would be wise for every pastor and every church library to have all three of these books on hand and to encourage their being read widely throughout the church. While there is some duplication among them, they all three complement each other quite well.

Topp's *Music in the Christian Community* is the broadest in scope of the three. It undertakes to show the place of music not only in worship, but in the home and Christian school as well. The author very cogently presents music as an aspect of life in the Christian community; and he goes on to demonstrate how music can then glorify God and serve man in all areas of life and not merely the Sunday worship service. Topp includes a very useful appendix of 1000 recordings of music of various types for the purpose of helping the Christian to begin to systematically expose himself to significant music of the past 500 years.

Mitchell's book, *Ministry and Music*, has a narrower scope than Topp's but is no less successful in terms of its purpose. The author wants to establish common ground between the theological orientation of the pastor and the musical expertise of the

musician. In the process he hopes to be able to help make music serve the ministry of the church and be a positive rather than a negative or disturbing force. He treats such topics as music in the congregation, the choir, the organ, music and worship, planning for worship. As a result of his efforts the author has produced a concise and very helpful study book for pastors, elders and church musicians. It would be well for church leaders to consider taking up the content of the book in a six week course of study.

The Lovelace and Rice book, *Music and Worship in the Church*, is, in some respects, an expansion of the Mitchell book. That is to say, it covers much of the same issues as *Ministry and Music* but in much greater detail. Lovelace and Rice have written a handbook in contrast to Mitchell's study book. *Music and Worship* is full of useful information on the role of the minister, the music director, choirs, the music committee, the worship committee, the organist, and others. It contains not only discussions of issues related to each of these, but it also contains recommendations of music and helps for these various parties. There is also in this book a superb bibliography on music and worship. Ministers and music directors especially should own and use this volume.

## A CHRISTIAN INTRODUCTION TO RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

by Johannes G. Vos. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1965, 79pp., paper, \$1.95. Reviewed by Karl Hubenthal, pastor, Knox Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Lansdowne, Pa.

The great world religions are, at their roots, but heresies of the one true religion. Consequently some relative good may be found in all of them. But what shall we make of that "good"? What should the Christian's attitude be toward the Hindu, Moslem, or the Buddhist? How far can the Christian cooperate with these religions, if at all? How is the Christian's concept of good different from that of the moral pagan? What is the origin of false religion in general?—of

each of the major world religions in particular? How should the Christian relate to the Jew?

These interesting questions and many more are answered by the former missionary to Manchuria and master Christian pedagogue. Dr. Vos is Professor Emeritus of Bible at Geneva College where he taught for two decades.

The book covers Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Shinto, Islam, and Judaism. This is done in a simplified but not simplistic style (so characteristic of Dr. Vos) with short chapters and questions at the end of each chapter. But more than a survey of these six major religions, it is a Christian introduction to the study of religions in general.

If one wants a more detailed presentation of the religions he would do better to go to a library where he will find volumes on any one religion. But if he desires a basic and accurate analysis of the whole, from a solidly Reformed standpoint he could do no better than to turn to this little paperback. Most attempts to introduce the religions of the world pretend to do so from a neutral point of view which is in reality a humanistic or eclectic bias. Vos's approach in contrast is decidedly Christian.

Concerning Judaism, for example, Vos observes:

"The thing that the student should by all means learn from this lesson is that *twentieth century Judaism and the religion of the Old Testament are two entirely different kinds of religion* (p. 74)."

According to Vos the real hope of the world lies not in moral reforms, Christian adaptations, social improvement, or education, etc. "but in the clear, faithful proclamation of the true God, the Holy Bible, and Jesus Christ and him crucified as the only salvation of sinners—the Way, the Truth, and the Life, without whom none can come to God (p. 37)."

Because of its readability and format (not to mention the price for a sewn paperback) this book would make an ex-

cellent text for a church school (teenage and up). It is surprising that it is not better known. Highly recommended!

### THE GOD OF HOPE

by *Cornelius Van Til*. Phillipsburgh, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1978 334pp., paper, \$9.95. Reviewed by Donald A. Dunkerley, pastor, MacIlwain Memorial Church (PCA), Pensacola, Florida.

Nine sermons and seven addresses by the Emeritus Professor of Apologetics at Westminster Theological Seminary are contained in this volume.

The preface says that they are "primarily addressed to those who are without God and without hope in the world." This seems to be a remarkable statement in the light of the fact that all of the sermons were preached to congregations of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, except one which was a baccalaureate sermon at Westminster Theological Seminary and one which was preached to the Orthodox Presbyterian General Assembly!

The point intended, I believe, is that each of these is an example of apologetics in action. Van Til is not speaking to the representative member of these congregations but to the unbeliever who may be present, in an effort to win him to the Savior and to the faith.

Of particular interest to me was an address on "Orthodox Protestantism" given to a group of Roman Catholic students. I shared this book with a friend who is a member of the Roman Catholic Church and well-read in Catholic philosophy and theology, although also a person who, I sincerely believe, knows Christ. She found this presentation of Orthodox Protestantism as over against Roman Catholicism to be most interesting and helpful, although not easy.

Van Til is not a writer or speaker for a popular audience, but these addresses are as close to popular presentations as he is likely to come. Indeed, the sermons are remarkably clear. Those who have been discouraged from reading Van Til because they believe they will find him too difficult might well begin with this volume.

### CALVIN ON SCRIPTURE AND DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY

by *John Murray*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1978, 71pp., paper, \$2.95. Reviewed by Donald A. Dunkerley.

The late Professor of Systematic Theology at Westminster Theological Seminary is the author of this book of three lectures: "Calvin's Doctrine of Scripture," "Calvin and the Authority of Scripture," "Calvin on the Sovereignty of God." These lectures were originally delivered to the Reformed Fellowship in Grand Rapids, 1959, and printed in hardback in 1960. We are grateful that an inexpensive paperback edition has now appeared.

Murray's precise scholarship defines carefully Calvin's position on the issues in question, refutes the errors of those who would impute other ideas to Calvin, and leads us to greater appreciation for Scripture and divine sovereignty.

### THE CHRISTIAN SOLDIER: an exposition of Ephesians 6:10-20

by *D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1978, 363pp. \$8.95. Reviewed by Donald A. Dunkerley.

Addresses on the armor of God delivered to the congregation of Westminster Chapel, London, are contained in this volume, with the freshness, readability and punch that we have come to expect from sermons by "the doctor."

The passage on the armor of God is one of the most basic in the Bible on Christian sanctification. Old William Gurnall's 17th century exposition of it covers almost 1200 fine-print double-column pages in the Banner of Truth edition. This modern exposition may not be as complete, but it is certainly as forceful and practical to the modern reader.

Dr. Lloyd-Jones has keen insight into the spiritual struggles of modern Christians and the pitfalls into which we are liable. His analytical mind, his sense of spiritual psychology, his ability to grasp basic scriptural principles and his flowing style of speaking and writing all help to make this volume, along with others in this same series on Ephesians, very desirable for us.

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## Mass Suicide in Guyana

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### Whose Responsibility?

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*Daniel R. Morse*

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We read with disbelief the first accounts of the deaths in Jonestown, Guyana. We were sickened and outraged as repeated news broadcasts blared forth from our television sets that what we heard was indeed true. In our very dens and living rooms we were helpless witnesses of a horrible tragedy. We could only watch and listen, unable to do anything about it. It is hard to believe that over 900 Americans relinquished their minds and wills to a man like Jim Jones, submitting to death by suicide or murder

Already questions are being asked by the news media. How could such a thing happen? Who is responsible? None of us can be satisfied with unresolved blame. Ever since sin entered the world, man's conscience has had an inbuilt reflex action which must deal with guilt. He cannot shrug it off.

The Bible teaches that responsibility for sin is individual and personal. It is not environmental or cultural. There is one man, Jim Jones, who must and does bear direct personal responsibility before God for this tragedy.

Even so, this does not absolve us of any concern in this matter. God does not allow us to adopt a flippant attitude

towards the death of even one human being. Our society has become callous about death. We see it reported on news programs, we see it portrayed fictitiously on Kojak or Hawaii 5-0, and somehow it all blurs together into one fuzzy picture. So we turn to our *TV Guide* and ask, "What's on next?"

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*Because we have not brought  
to them the water of life,  
they have replaced it with  
Kool Aid and cyanide*

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But God says, No! All men are made in the image of God, so that to attack man is to attack God. We must not be indifferent to this tragedy simply because it did not happen here, or because the news media no longer bring it to our attention. An offense has been committed against God and we dare not ignore it.

In interviews with Mr. Jones which were taped some years ago and played on television recently, we heard Jones claim to be an evangelical Christian. We heard him speak of our Judeo-Christian heri-

tage and we heard him take the name of Christ, claiming to be a follower of his.

Our non-Christian neighbors must be wondering what kind of Christianity this is. Is *this* what Christianity leads to? In the light of these questions the church of Jesus Christ has no option but to speak out. Let us, therefore, declare from our pulpits and in the printed page that we repudiate Jones' claim to be a Christian. Let us protest before God and man our innocence of this despicable and Satanic murder. This murder is not the result of Christianity, but of the evil and perversity to which men are subject when they follow the teachings of men rather than the truth of God and the Bible.

Let us also pray that God would purge our blood-soaked land and blood-stained people of this wickedness. We must do so, not on the basis of our own goodness, but on the basis of God's gracious redemption in Christ. As we grieve with the families of the dead we also grieve that God's Word has been so perverted and that people have been led astray from the simple truth of salvation from sin through faith in Jesus Christ.

Not only that. We also grieve the fact that the church has been lax in not making known to the world the liberating gospel of truth, with the result that false prophets have arisen to bind thousands in the chains of error. We have left a vacuum into which Satan has stepped with soul destroying heresies.

Let us cry out to God that he will shake us out of our lethargy. May he show us that what matters is not whether we give mental assent to a right set of doctrines. These are life and death issues. Men are dying. And because we have not brought to them the water of life, they have replaced it with Kool Aid and cyanide.