

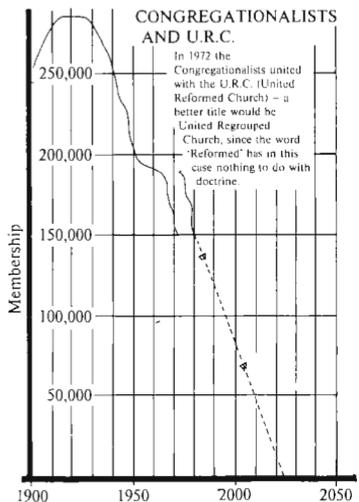
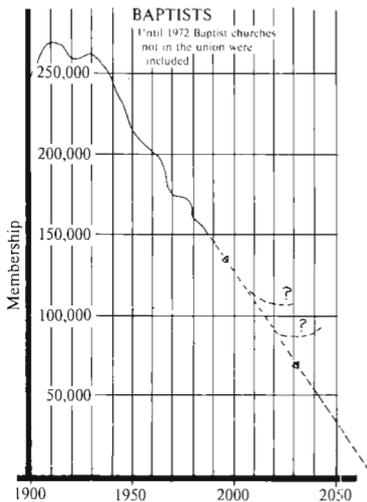
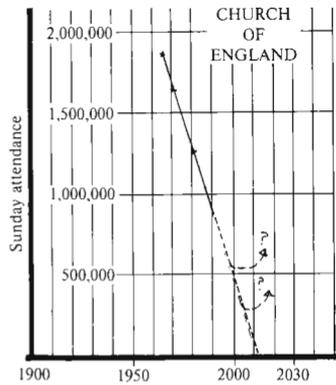
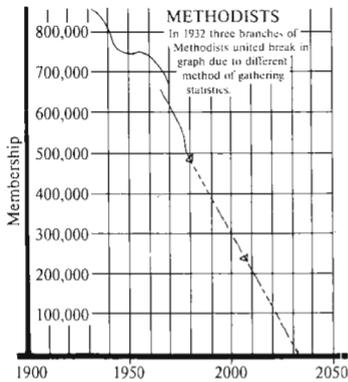
REFORMATION TODAY



(see p. 32)

■ JANUARY-FEBRUARY 1989

107



For discussion about the future see article: 1989! But what will we be like in 2000? (p. 5). The graphs above are based on records begun in 1965 as well as statistics published in, *I believe in Church Growth* by Eddie Gibbs (Hodder). The expected decline shown with dotted lines is based on the average decline recorded in the past. Since Modernism (the most virile form of Anti-Christianity that there is), dominates Methodism and the U.R.C., it is difficult to conceive of any upturn or recovery. During 1988 articles have been appearing in the British press discussing the possible break-up of the Church of England. The Church of England has always been comprehensive in nature and at low points has experienced revival, as in the 18th Century. Evangelicals in the C. of E. tend to over-estimate their strength. Most striking is the fact that secularism is taking the place of nominal Christianity. It is difficult to discern what powers of recovery lie within in the doctrinally mixed Baptist Union. Increasingly Baptist churches grounded in the truth are developing outside the B.U.

Editorial

Why have a Confession of Faith?

At least two articles in these pages are taken up with the tercentenary of the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith. This raises the questions: Why bother with creeds? Why stress doctrine? Does not doctrine divide and love unite? If we believe the Bible is not that enough? Why this fuss about creeds? In answer to such notions it can be pointed out that Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons claim to believe the Bible too. Throughout the history of the Church it has been necessary to define in exact terms what Christians understand the Bible to be saying so as not only to be clear in their own teaching but also to refute those who would destroy the gospel with their false teachings.

The idea is quite popular that instead of a detailed Confession of Faith it is quite sufficient for an evangelical church to hold to a very brief summary of basic truths. A brief statement of belief has its uses and is better than nothing.

However a full Confession of Faith is essential for the leaders and officers of the Church and for the constitutions of churches which profess to believe the Bible. The reason is that it is in matters of fine detail that the Church in past times has been led to take a wrong direction, which has resulted in disaster. At one stage two entirely different religions were in view over a single letter of the Greek alphabet. Jesus is of the same essence or substance as the Father (*homoousios*), and not merely of a similar substance (*homoiousios*), which opens the door to a denial of his deity. Also the instance can be cited of Augustine who with the use of the Latin word *justificare* meaning to make righteous, set the Church off in a wrong direction because that confuses sanctification with justification. *Dikaio* in

the Greek means, to declare to be righteous, which is entirely different from something that takes place within a person. The consequences of this error could hardly have been worse for the Christian Church.

This issue of *Reformation Today* illustrates the importance of a Confession in at least three ways as follows.

Firstly, there is the article by Stephen Dray, which reminds us that the canon of Scripture is now complete. No further revelation is to be expected or tolerated. Mormonism is built on the idea that prophecy has continued and now the world is called to follow a prophet called Joseph Smith. A Confession of Faith like the Westminster Confession or the 1689 which is its Baptist counterpart, spells out the sufficiency of Scripture clearly and adequately. Stephen Dray reminds us that God has spoken in the past at many times and in various ways, and then finally in his Son (Heb 1:1). This magazine has warned constantly against all efforts to repeat the apostolic era. That epoch was unique. It was a time of transition. It cannot be repeated, no more than the incarnation can be repeated.

Rather this final age, 'the last days', is the epoch of revivals. We can look to the future with the greatest optimism because the Holy Spirit will bless the preaching of the Word in the future just as he has done in previous revivals. We can pray for, work for, and expect that spiritual awakenings will become more and more universal in extent as more and more nations are reached with the gospel.

Secondly, we see the importance of a robust Confession of Faith because such a confession in itself forbids the

addition of anything that is extraneous or frivolous. In America, as we were reminded by the International Baptist conference reported in these pages, there are extreme dispensationalist groups in which complex programmes about world history are made obligatory. Those who do not subscribe to these amazing ideas are excluded from missionary societies. Those who insist on these ideas must be challenged with this question, Where in the great confessional statements of the Church through the centuries do we find any mention of these complex future programmes for world history?

Thirdly, in the review of the new book authored by John F MacArthur which we hear is shaking American Evangelism, we observe how easy it is to over-simplify the gospel and distort it to become a weak and effete 'easy believism'. That would never have taken place if there had been adherence to the Westminster, the Savoy, or the 1689 Confessions with their powerful chapters on faith, repentance, effectual calling and free will.

The gospel addresses the whole man

I have been pleading the usefulness of our great historic Confessions of Faith and pointing to some reasons for that, and there are countless other reasons which can be argued from every chapter of the 33 chapters of the 1689 Confession. But having said that we need to remember that Christianity is more than correct belief.

The gospel addresses the whole man: heart, mind, conscience and will. We obey the gospel call from the heart (Rom 6:17). During the 18th century there arose an error known as Sandemanianism named after Robert Sandeman (1718-71). Sandemans were orthodox Calvinists who were unhappy with the idea that faith could be taken as a good work which earns

salvation. Therefore in reaction they taught erroneously that faith is a mere assent of the mind, which in a strange way is akin to modern day 'easy believism' which is Arminian in character, and which omits repentance. Saving faith, to be genuine, must include repentance. True faith consists not only of the knowledge of Christ, but also personal commitment to Christ, that is trust which unites the believer to Christ. Hence we see that we are not just dealing with correct doctrine but a love of the truths in which the Christ of God is enshrined. Ours is experimental religion as well as a religion of believing all that God has revealed in his Holy Word.

Christmas Evans the Welsh evangelist and church planter (1766-1838) must be ranked with John Bunyan and C. H. Spurgeon as a giant preacher, one who witnessed powerful revivals. Yet he fell into the error of Sandemanianism, an error of the mind which leads to a frigidity in the affections, a frozen heart, which is a desperately serious spiritual disease. Evans' ministry was severely blighted, if not destroyed, for a number of years, until one day as he was crossing the mountains of Wales he was subject of an extraordinary and transforming experience of the heart, which delivered him once and for all from Sandemanianism. Evans' deliverance is described in the book *Crisis Experiences* (pp 86,87). Following his restoration the mighty power of the Holy Spirit, which had formerly attended Christmas Evans' ministry, returned to him.

What happened to Evans illustrates that the greatest care should be taken to embrace the truths of the Bible correctly, and also that the connection between the mind and affections is close. Doctrine on its own is not enough. Let us strive to realise the full potential of the gospel for mind, heart, hands and feet, the whole man devoted to our most worthy Redeemer!

How can we commemorate the Tercentenary of the 1689 Confession?



Will the next generation know and appreciate our Reformation heritage? The soccer team featured above from Leeds Reformed Baptist Church challenged the second team of the Garston church in Liverpool, shown overleaf.

The example of the Leeds Reformed Baptist Church

In past epochs Christian leadership has come from those who have been blessed with a firm and unwavering grasp of the overall revelation of God in the scriptures as expressed in our great confessional statements. Reformed pastors should be planning and labouring now to have a network of Reformed churches throughout the nation, well bonded in love and unity of truth and purpose, so that we enter the 21st century not limping and bleeding to death, battered by defeats from those forces hostile to Biblical Christianity, and bruised and weakened by self inflicted wounds.

If any such vision for the future is to be realised then we must be strong in intellect and heart, in mind and soul. We need to be like the Puritans who during the whole period from about 1558 to 1662 increased and prospered spiritually, building in expository and pastoral style on the foundations laid by the reformers of the 16th century.

In view of all this, what are we doing in our church to advance into the future strong in the faith of our fathers and praying that the Lord our God will be with us even as he was so mightily with them? For sure we can expect nothing if ignorance prevails. We must know our history; we must know and love the great Biblical truths expressed in the 1689 Confession; we must know those truths in their right proportion and balance. We have been blessed with *many* young converts who know nothing of our doctrinal inheritance. So what are we going to do in practical terms? Venturing forward in humble dependence on the Lord and earnestly seeking his favour during 1989, twelve seminars are planned to which all will be welcome. We will begin with the historical background so that everyone can know exactly how we have come to possess our Reformation heritage. Then we will demonstrate the riches of truth enshrined in the 1689. Finally in four seminars we will deal with four particu-



Will the next generation, know and appreciate our Reformation heritage? The photo shows the second team from Garston Bridge Baptist Chapel which beat the L.R.B.C. first team 4 -1 . On the right of the photo is pastor Billy Bygroves who refereed the match.

larly relevant subjects from the 1689 which have an unusual bearing on the contemporary scene.

Nor is it our intention to stop there and then forget all about it. During 1990 we plan to continue with a series based on the Confession called 'Great foundations of our Faith'. The two series as follows:

- 1 A short history of Christianity prior to the Reformation
- 2 Our Reformation heritage and the relevance of Confessions
- 3 The Puritans and the Westminster Confession of Faith
- 4 The Reformed Baptists of the 17th century and the 1689 Confession

The riches of of our Faith as expressed in the 1689:

- 1 The authority of the Bible (ch. 1)
- 2 The nature of God 9 (chs. 2 and 8)
- 3 The sovereignty of God (chs. 3 and 5)
- 4 The consequences of the fall of man into sin (ch. 6)

Subjects of the utmost relevance for today:

- 1 The Creation (ch. 4)
- 2 Free will (ch. 9)
- 3 The law of God (ch. 19)
- 4 The binding nature of the great commission to evangelise the world (ch. 20)

Proposed series for 1990 Great doctrines of our faith:

- 1 God's Covenant (ch. 7)
- 2 Effectual calling (ch. 10)
- 3 Justification (ch. 11)
- 4 Adoption (ch. 12)
- 5 Sanctification (ch. 13)
- 6 Saving faith (ch. 14)
- 7 Repentance unto life and salvation (ch. 15)
- 8 Good works (ch. 16)
- 9 The perseverance of the saints (ch. 17)
- 10 The assurance of grace and salvation (ch. 18)

1989! But what will we be like in 2000?

1989 marks the tercentenary of the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith. This anniversary encourages us to look back into history. It also invites us to look ahead and ask whether the substance of truth displayed in this Confession will prevail more in the future, and to what extent? 37 Baptist ministers were responsible for the publication of the Confession in 1689. The work had been prepared in 1677 but conditions at that time were not propitious for publication. Turning to our own generation we note that there was little appreciation of the doctrinal character of the Confession in the 1940s and 1950s in England, or any other land for that matter. During that period it would have been difficult to find 37 ministers in England with sufficient enthusiasm for the 1689 Confession to come together to decide on any concerted action. The traditional Strict Baptists were fragmented, weak and divided over the free offer of the gospel. When the first Banner of Truth conference for ministers was promoted in about 1962 very few gathered from across the whole of the UK.

There is a marked contrast now. Hundreds of ministers in England and North America heartily embrace and own the Confession as a faithful declaration of their beliefs. The 1689 Confession has been translated and published in several other languages including Hungarian, Polish, and Zulu, and is in course of being translated into a number of other languages.

What will the position be when we come to the 21st century? Will Reformed churches enter the next century flourishing and growing in their witness and influence?

We are living in a time of tremendous change. For instance in 1800, 99 percent of those professing the Christian faith in the world were European. Now only 33 percent are European. The proportion continues to change rapidly, with continued steady increase of Bible believers in South America and the Far East, especially China. At the turn of the century there were only about 200,000 evangelicals in South America. Now there are 34 million and by 2000 at the present rate of increase there should be 80 million!

At the same time there is a static condition or decline and decrease in European nations. Compare Portugal (10 million) with Brazil (130 million) both Portuguese speaking: in Portugal only one percent profess evangelical faith compared to 16 percent in Brazil. Allowing for superficiality and the obvious objections always made about statistics and their value, we still have to note the tremendous disparity between a possible 60,000 in Portugal compared with about 21 million in Brazil; that is 350 times more who profess to believe in a relatively young country compared to the parent nation.

What about England? One of the main features in England is the rapid demise of nominal Christianity. The graphs indicate the rapidity with which liberally ecumenical churches are dying. At the present rate of decline they will all be buried by about 2050! Once the gospel is denied it is only a matter of time before there is de cease. It is vital that out of the rubble and ruins left by Liberalism a network of Reformed churches should rise, grow, and exercise a powerful ministry both at home and abroad.

Evangelicalism in Britain has been distracted by the charismatic movement. This has been like playing musical chairs. There has been an exodus from many evangelical churches to regroup with charismatics, often in house groups. This is not to say that there have not been conversions in Charismatic churches, but the proportion of new converts is very small compared with the number who have come out of traditional churches of all kinds.

There has been no revival in England this century and certainly none over the last twenty years. The absence of revival is seen in two ways. Firstly, a genuine spiritual awakening has an impact on the national life of a country. England has become increasingly secular and hedonistic. Secondly, a genuine spiritual awakening has a dramatic effect on the number of candidates for the mission field. For instance, when a revival took place among the Afrikaners during the Boer War the Dutch Reformed seminaries in South Africa thereafter were packed to capacity with candidates training for the ministry and for the mission fields. The positive outcome by way of missionary endeavour in Southern Africa was widespread and effective.

Omri Jenkins is the director of the EMF (European Missionary Fellowship, representing outreach in many European countries which began through a revival in Eastern Europe during the period 1934-1939). Concerning the question of candidates for the mission field Omri Jenkins writes in his annual Christmas letter as follows:

‘One of our largest missionary societies has recently published a report on missionary commitment in contemporary Britain. It makes depressing reading, with cold facts reflecting a marked decline in every aspect of foreign missions, including personnel, financial

support, prayer, etc. We with other societies can vouchsafe the accuracy of this unhappy picture of evangelical Christianity among us today. Regard for the spread of the Gospel in distant, needy lands and for those who labour there is in steep decline. Financial contributions are marking time, where they have not actually diminished, though everybody should know that costs are climbing annually throughout the world, and all this at a time when most believers in Britain are more prosperous than any of their spiritual forbears.

The situation is deeply disturbing because of what it reflects of the state of affairs among evangelicals in Britain on one hand and its implications for missionaries and their task in the world on the other. But one thing we must not do is to take matters into our own hands. If the missionary movement is running out of steam with the missionaries diminishing in numbers and quality, and support of them is on the wane, the answer is not in worldly wisdom and its carnal methods. God is still on his throne and his eternal purposes will not be thwarted by any lukewarm Christianity. This generation may suffer but as for God’s cause — “it shall never suffer loss”.

In spite of the discouragements so eloquently described by Omri Jenkins we must continue steadfastly to encourage church planting and church growth. As nominal churches close down and are turned into warehouses, shops, offices and gymnasiums, there is no reason to suppose that the Bible believing churches will not increase steadily. Indeed we have personal friends in various parts of the land who have laboured steadfastly for about 20 years. Most of them report a steady increase, and a few a substantial increase in their membership over the last few years.

This is a suitable time to follow the example of Daniel the prophet. He identified himself with the sins of his captive people and pleaded for a restoration of their cause. The history of the Christian Church in the UK shows that time and time again when the scene has been desperate and seemingly hopeless the Lord has come in power and revived his work in a marvellous way. Because the Lord's ways are wonderful beyond all human understanding, the timing of his visitations, the choice of his instruments and the character of spiritual awakening, have always been original, different and totally unpredictable. In no way can we confine or restrict him. He will revive his work where he pleases and use the instruments of his own choosing, not ours. From observation however we can say that he honours those who are faithful to his Word and he bypasses where the gospel is hidden or lost due to sacramentalism or modernism. He hears the prayers of those who humble themselves and plead his glory which is plain from Psalm 102:13,14.

A revival has been taking place in French speaking Quebec in Canada for the past decade (see news), and there it would appear that all evangelical denominations have been included in that revival. The number of new converts has brought about an urgent need for well educated pastors who will provide a thorough doctrinal foundation for the future. If and when our prayers for revival are answered we anticipate, as in Quebec, that people of all kinds will be given a desire for the truth and seek it until they find it in those places where Christ is lifted up as the Saviour of the world, and a free justification proclaimed and held out to all who repent of their sins and believe in Christ committing themselves to him.

In view of our present situation what can we do? Here are some suggestions.

1. We should concentrate more than ever on both public and private means of grace. Obviously the public prayer meetings are of prime importance. There should be information, direction, exhortation and a sense of urgency in our prayer meetings. I wrote about this in detail in *R.T.* 95 and was encouraged to see other papers reprint that material in recognition of the importance and relevance of this basic issue of the necessity and vitality of the church prayer meeting.

2. We should continue to aim at high standards of preaching. At the recently concluded Westminster conference in London a paper on John Bunyan was presented by John Harris who is soon to take up a pastorate at Mirfield in Yorkshire. Examples from Bunyan's preaching reminded us that that he possessed just about every quality required for the ideal gospel preacher: doctrinal substance, solid exposition, personal application, imagination, vivid illustration, spiritual unction and power, and above all, a warm, direct, attractive, compelling gospel appeal to sinners. Bunyan lived on into the post Puritan time of comparative declension yet could attract great congregations from 1,000 to 3,000.

3. We should continue with our reforming activities. We need to know where we have come from and where we are going. The spiritual wilderness around us shows that the professing Church has lost its way, lost the Reformation, lost its doctrinal foundations, and subsequently lost the gospel and thereby, as I have sought to show, all hope of recovery. Where Liberalism is entrenched a new start has to be made. What is meant by reforming activities? The answer is the spread of literature and the organisation of conferences and seminars. The article, '1989, The Tercentenary' illustrates what we are doing in the university city of Leeds



Part of the group photo taken at Toronto at the International Conference. In the forefront is Martin Holdt and to his left Bill Payne, who earned the title 'the irrefutable' through his skills in the debates! To the immediate right is David Fountain, then in the front of him Jim McDowell, and next to him Norman Street, pastor at Jarvis Street.

by way of public lectures followed by debate.

4. We should strive much more for unity. A healthy respect for all evangelical churches is needed, while at the same time promoting those truths which are declared in the Confession which has prompted this material. Many evangelicals in England are likely to come out of apostate situations and regroup. Many new Reformed Baptist churches are being planted and will be planted. Presbyterians are awakening to a new era ahead and doubtless many new Presbyterian churches will be planted. We regard them as our friends

and allies and not competitors, never enemies. The more reformed and evangelical unity we can promote and enjoy, the better the prospects for revival (Psalm 133). The more cooperation there is the better. Never before has a knowledge of Church history been more important because it is imperative to implement positive lessons and avoid repeating past mistakes. At all costs we must avoid sectarianism or elitism. Surely the doctrine of sovereign grace teaches that all virtue derives from our Father. If we think we have more truth than others let us remind ourselves that grace and love in our lives should be commensurate with that truth.

The fourth International Baptist Conference, Toronto

The editor apologises for bias which may appear to some readers who do not share his convictions. However it seems inconceivable for anyone with passionate convictions to report on a theme of this kind without bias

Dr. Amar Djaballah is principal of Centre d'Etudes Theologiques Evangeliques, Montreal. Formerly he was professor of New Testament at the Toronto Baptist Seminary, which adjoins the Jarvis Baptist Church. The idea of an international conference originally came from Dr. Djaballah, the first such event having taken place in 1982 and thereafter every second year. One of the aims of the conference was to contribute to the unity of a diversity of Baptists coming into a rediscovery of the doctrines of grace.

Differences among Baptists, particularly in North America, is seen especially in a wide diversity of view with regard to prophecy (eschatology). The conference recently held during October had as its theme, 'The Christian and the Future.' 300 attended and 19 papers were read which are now available in an A4 size volume of 326 pages obtainable from the Seminary for \$17 Canadian dollars which includes postage.

Obviously every reader will be prejudiced according to his own doctrinal position concerning the value of the materials. However a number of papers possess intrinsic merit and high value whatever view we may presently hold. David Kingdon's contribution belongs to that category and it is published unabridged in this issue of *Reformation Today*. Two matters are pressed home cogently, 1. Redemption



Dr. Amar Djaballah

is not apart from the created order but inclusive of it (the way some speak we might conclude that heaven will be eternal floating in the sky!) 2. The implications of the Abrahamic covenant are universal in an absolute sense. (We might well only now be seeing the beginning of that universality as far as the nations of this world are concerned.)

As far as prophecy is concerned the most fundamental and important of all principles is — what do we take literally and what spiritually? It is admitted by all parties that literalism can lead to the theatre of the absurd and the stage of the ludicrous. The other extreme, in which substantial promises are spiritualised away so that we are left with nothing apart from pious thoughts, is to be guarded against, but the paper

titled 'The Now Millennium' by Don Garlington was a fine example of biblical craftsmanship.

Historical theology was not neglected in the programme. Jim McDowell gave a fine overview of millennial views during the reformation period. One of the best researched papers was by a recent contributor to this magazine, namely, Michael Haykin, an extremely competent historian. He showed how the Greek fathers turned away from Chiliasm (literalism). But did they go too far?

Some of the material was non-controversial and came by the channel of powerful preaching, Bill Payne: Christ and his Kingdom, Martin Holdt: The Resurrection, B. Stark: The final Judgement, Guy Appere: The Christ of the Apocalypse, Don Carson: The moral lessons of the Olivet discourse (unfortunately not included in the published papers).

Different perspectives were presented on Romans 11 by David Fountain, David Bugden and B. Prentice.

Roger Fellows analysed the position of Hal Lindsey (the most famous of all extreme dispensationalists). The analysis proved to be like the destruction of Jerusalem but with less pain: not one stone was left upon another! Also worthy of special mention is Amar Djaballah's scholarly and relevant study 'Imminency and the Return of Christ.' Amar's work came too late to include the 25 pages in the binding of conference book, so if you write for the papers make sure they add this one.

The spirit of the conference was excellent. We can be thankful for that because in America, in contrast to

Britain, there is extreme polarisation: fanatical and intolerant dispensationalism on the one side and on the other an over-reaction which drives the opposite camp to an extreme position in which the continuity of the old covenant is completely severed from the new. Both factors, continuity and discontinuity, require careful distinction. Readers will judge for themselves whether David Kingdon achieves this balance.

There was genuine profit in seeing just why the various views are held, especially since there is in all of us a tendency to dismiss contrary views without really listening to what they are. The exercise of having to hear was therefore not without profit. Historic pre-mills with substantial hopes could see that they had a lot in common with post-mills who also entertain very considerable hopes. A number of a-mills confessed that they hoped that the post-mill was correct and some admitted that they were almost persuaded that the post-mill position was consistent with the biblical perspective concerning the ever increasing reign of Christ as King on earth. 'He will reign until his enemies become his footstool.' In America the post-mill position is often caricatured and portrayed as a view held by late 19th century modernists, when in fact that position has been held by a galaxy of the greatest reformed theologians like Jonathan Edwards, Charles Hodge and Robert Dabney.

The conference was well organised with a thorough groundwork laid by the faculty, student body, church members and friends of Jarvis Street. It was particularly helpful and refreshing to have the opportunity of fellowship with pastors and church planters from other nations.

News

Quebec, Canada

A revival has been in progress in Quebec province for about a decade. At the Carey conference for ministers in 1984 Don Carson of Deerfield, Illinois, shared with us his experience of that awakening. His father was one of a generation of pioneers who laboured all his life in Quebec in a tough situation, which was unyielding and unfruitful and in which there was fierce persecution of believers. The principle of some sowing and others reaping has once more been proved and the faithfulness of God mightily vindicated in the harvest which has been confined to French speaking Quebec, which is predominantly Roman Catholic although this is mostly nominal. As far as we can tell the blessing has not travelled one inch beyond the borders of Quebec, not to any other French speaking community abroad, and certainly not to any other part of Canada or the U.S.A. The increase is mysterious; it is something fervent Christians everywhere long for and pray for.

We must not entertain unrealistic and romantic ideas about spiritual awakening as though all problems are solved. The curse of barrenness is removed but new spheres of work are opened bringing responsibility and often strain. In the case of Quebec the need is for biblical teaching and reliable pastors.

A group of ministers has been meeting with the purpose of creating a Reformed Baptist Association. Raymond Perron and Daniel Bernier are two pastors engaged in pioneering new churches who attended the recent International Baptist Conference at Jarvis Street, Toronto, reported in these pages. It is not easy for them as they have not inherited premises and pioneer works require backing from stronger churches of maturity. Support is not immediately forthcoming from young believers who have to be taught stewardship. For more detail of their work write to Raymond Perron and Daniel Bernier, 103 rue Des Crans, 41 Lac Delage, Qc, GOA 4PO, Canada.

Malaysia

News from Malaysia this autumn is in sharp contrast to that of a year ago. Both Pastor Poh Boon Sing and Joshua Jamaluddin have been released from detention. Philip Chong has been released on bail while he awaits an appeal. There is however no news of another Malay Christian, Hilmy.

In September Dr. Poh was freed on the recommendation of a government review board. There were however certain restrictions. These included an order to stay in an area close to Kuala Lumpur and be in his house between the hours of 8 p.m. and 6 a.m. Because this latter restriction prevented involvement in evening meetings he appealed against it and has now been granted permission to stay out until 11 p.m. In spite of limitations he has resumed pastoral work at Sri Serdang and Sri Hartemas both of which are close to Kuala Lumpur.

More surprising was the release of brother Joshua in October. Because Joshua is a Malay and a convert from Islam, many of us felt that his release could not be imminent. Freedom came when he was granted a writ of habeas corpus in the High Court. The court's unexpected ruling was made on the grounds that the Internal Security Act could not be allowed to restrict a citizen's constitutional right to exercise his religion. It is understood that this legal right is being challenged in the Supreme Court. Malaysian Christians continue to need the prayerful support of their brethren throughout the world.

Dr. Poh was able to use his time of detention for reading and writing. His new book, *God's Way*, is now available.* He has written a letter reflecting on the ordeal of recent months. His experiences remind one of the sufferings of English nonconformists in the years of persecution after 1660. God sustained and blessed Poh but there was a real cost to be paid, not least by his family. His wife Goody made the five hour train journey to visit him in the detention camp as often as possible, usually accompanied by one or more of their three little boys. On one occasion she was involved in a railway accident but mercifully was uninjured.

Malaysia needs churches which will bear testimony to the whole Counsel of God. There are Christians ready to serve him and the constitution promises freedom of religion. Believers were shaken by events of 27th October 1987 when a serious political crisis was turned against Christians who had not been politically active. We are thankful to know that many Christians are in good heart knowing that they serve the living God. We pray that in days to come they will be given much wisdom and may experience his abundant blessing.

RWO

Yugoslavia

The mass media has reported the tense situation in the region of Kosovo where the Albanian people predominate and strive to demoralise and displace the dwindling Serbian minority in order that they can annex that area of Yugoslavia for an independent Albanian state. Simo Ralević for a number of years has pastored a small church in the north of this province in the town of Peć, recently weakened by the exodus of some young converts moving to other parts of the country for employment. Now his eldest son Robert aged 21 finds himself struggling with the humiliating trauma of unemployment. Their eldest daughter Ruta has married and now lives in Čakovec in Croatia where Nikola Vukov is the pastor of a small church which has seen an ingathering of youth during the past year and the promise of more to come.

* Copies available in the U.K. from Dr. R. W. Oliver, 4 St. Margaret's Place, Bradford on Avon, Wilts, BA15 1DT. 75p incl postage.

Simo's ministry continues to consist mainly of printing his spoken ministry in two or three books per year and preaching in various parts of Yugoslavia ten days in each month which involves much travel by train. Not long ago Simo lived under the threat of an extended prison sentence for receiving stolen goods which had been planted on him maliciously. After appealing to the supreme court in Belgrade he was fined but allowed to go free. News has just reached us that the man who brought this tribulation on Simo has himself died in prison.

If you have a time of special prayer or are involved in the Concert of prayer for revival please consider the needy church in Peć which is surrounded by so much that is hostile to its wellbeing and progress.

South Africa

R.B.M.S. (The Reformed Baptist Mission Services) publish a quarterly newsletter providing valuable updates on Reformed Baptist churches in different countries. The work of R.B.M.S. has resulted in much blessing among the black pastors of South Africa inasmuch as funding has been provided for them to benefit from reformed books and also attend the annual Evangelical and Reformed Conference in Natal. The expense involved in printing the 1689 confession in Zulu and also in Southern Sotho has been met by the generous support of a church in California.

Pastor Martin Holdt, who is now leading the Emmanuel Baptist Church in Johannesburg, has been enjoying an unusually effective gospel preaching ministry by radio with a hearing audience of 600,000. Martin reports that there is an encouraging interest shown by Dutch Reformed students in experimental Calvinism, the potential for revival in the D.R. Church being very great if experimental religion is quickened on a large scale. Pastor Brian Stone is well settled at Constantia Park R.B. church in Pretoria and Wilhelm Odendaal, formerly principal of the Afrikaans Baptist Seminary, is enjoying pastoral leadership of the Lynnwood R.B. church also in Pretoria.

For copies of the R.B.M.S. quarterly bulletin write to P.O. Box 289, CARLISLE, PA 17013, U.S.A.

Prophetic Interpretation from the Perspective of Covenant Theology

David Kingdon

It was a Hebrew Christian who observed that ‘In the discussion regarding the Second Advent the covenant is hardly ever taken into account.’¹ As I have researched this subject, I could have wished that his observation was somewhat exaggerated, but it is not. The field in which I have laboured is virtually untilled.

Presentations of covenant theology almost always begin with ‘God’s promises to Abram when he called him to leave country, people and father’s household and go to the land which God would show to him (Gen 12:1-3). This, however, is to begin too late, half-way through the first chapter of the unfolding of the covenantal history which is enshrined in a two-part volume entitled the Old and New Covenant. There are two reasons why it is inappropriate to start at Genesis 12:1-3. First, because the promises to Abraham are set within the context of the creation of the world (Gen 1-2). Thus we are meant to understand that the God of Abraham is the creator of ‘the heavens and the earth’ (Gen 1:1). This fact means that creation is for covenant or, more precisely, that the created order is both orientated towards, and providentially preserved for, the unfolding of covenant grace in history until its complete fulfilment in the *new* heavens and the *new* earth (2 Pet 3:13 quoting Is 65:17; cf. also 66:22).

The second reason why it is inappropriate to start at Genesis 12:1-3 is because already, in the primal history leading up to the call of Abraham, we have been introduced to the concept of covenant in the story of Noah. When Noah and his family emerge from the ark of deliverance, God not only reissues his original blessing-command – ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth’ (9:1), but also establishes his covenant with Noah and his seed (v. 9). This covenant, however, is not restricted to humans. It is also established ‘with every living creature’ (v. 10, 12, 15, 16) and its appointed sign – the rainbow – is a perpetual reminder to God (v. 16) of his promise that ‘never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth’ (v. 21) and ‘while the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, day and night shall not cease’ (8:22).

Our starting point, then, must be further back than the Abrahamic covenant. We must at least begin with the covenant God made with Noah.

But is it possible to go even further back to creation itself? I believe it is, as I hope to demonstrate. Further, if it is possible to go back to creation, in what ways are covenant and creation related to each other? Clarity here is of fundamental importance for eschatology, because central to the biblical teaching on the ‘last things’ is the concept of the ‘new creation’, declared by the prophet Isaiah especially (‘Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth,’ Is 65:17, N.I.V.), inaugurated in Christ (‘if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation’ 2 Cor 5:17)

who at his return will bring the new creation to its final completeness and everlasting perfection ('we according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells', 2 Pet 3:13; cf. Rev 21:1).

I *Creation and Covenant*

In the creation narrative of Genesis 1 and 2, the word covenant is not mentioned once. The first mention of the term is at Genesis 6:18, when God unfolds his purposes of judgment upon a world gone wrong and promises salvation from destruction to Noah and his family.

The word is introduced without explanation, the inference being, I would suggest, that Noah was already aware of the existence of a covenant of some sort which God had previously made. Furthermore, God speaks of 'my covenant' which suggests that he is already known by Noah and his ancestors as the God who makes covenant. Particularly significant is the terminology used. It is not the verb which is normally employed when a covenant is being initiated. That is the verb *karat*, meaning 'to cut'. This is used, for example, in Genesis 15:18, with reference perhaps to the dividing of the sacrificial animal whose blood 'sealed' the covenant.²

However, when a covenant is confirmed, having already been initiated, a different verb is used — *nātan*, meaning 'establish'. It is used in Genesis 17:1-2 where N.I.V. correctly translates: 'I will confirm my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers' (v. 2). The covenant confirmed is that made with Abram in Genesis 15:18, but Genesis 12:2-3 with its reference to vastly increased numbers of descendants is also in view. A 'great nation' requires great numbers (cf. 15:5). From all this we learn that for a covenant to be described as being confirmed, it must already be in force, already 'cut', i.e. initiated.

Now if we apply this insight to Genesis 6:18, we understand that when the *hiphil* of *qūm*, 'cause to stand', is used, as it is here, reference is being made to a covenant already in existence. If it be objected that, in the previous chapters of Genesis, the word covenant is not used, we reply that neither is it used in Genesis 12:2-3, yet, as we have already seen, God has made promises to Abram which can only be described as covenant promises, which he later *confirmed* to him (Gen 17:2, N.I.V.).

It seems clear, then, that Genesis 6:18 refers to a covenant already in existence. In the words of W. J. Dumbrell, 'God is declaring here his willingness to persevere with what has been already set up. In spite of human failure and independent of human participation, whatever arrangement God is referring to here will be continued. Not all are agreed that "covenant" is the best or an adequate translation, but it is generally conceded that the word has the note of obligation in it. The commitment of God to the total created order therefore seems to be in view.'³

Is it possible, however, to be even more precise, and to speak of creation as covenant, as Karl Barth does?⁴ I believe it is. In the first place, Genesis 1-3 follows the pattern of the later covenants to which are attached blessings and curses – the former conditional upon covenant loyalty, the latter visited upon those who break covenant (e.g. Deut 28:3-14 – blessings; 28:15-45 – curses).

This blessings-curses pattern is visible in the first three chapters of Genesis. God blessed man (1:28) and the seventh day (2:2). And to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil he attached the curse of death, should its fruit be disobediently eaten (2:17). This curse was brought into yet greater prominence and clarity after the fall (Gen 3:14-19).

A further point which supports the position for which I am arguing is the covenant made with Noah, his descendents, every living creature, and even the earth itself (Gen 9:13). The God who created the earth (*hā-ares*, 1:1), is the God who covenants with the earth (same word) never again to destroy it. This suggests that God is committed to creation by covenant and that even the flood, terrible though it was as curse and judgment upon human sinfulness, does not abrogate that covenant, which is *renewed* when Noah and his family emerge from the ark.

As the Old Testament revelation unfolds, the theme is developed that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and of his people Israel, is also God the Creator of all things. And, in his care for his creatures, he reveals himself as the covenant-keeping God ‘who keeps faith for ever’ (Ps 146:6). As Jacob Jocz points out, ‘The Hebrew: *shomer ’emeth e’olam*, literally: “Keeper of eternal faithfulness” is even more expressive: he is the One who remains faithful forever.’⁵ This note of covenant-faithfulness continues to be sounded in the New Testament, most notably by Peter as he encourages innocently suffering believers to ‘commit themselves to their *faithful* Creator and continue to do good’ (1 Pet 4:19, N.I.V.).

Now if God has a covenant with creation, what implications does this fact have for eschatology? It seems to me that it has a number, and that each of them has far-reaching consequences in the framing of a biblical world-view.

1. Creation and covenant belong together. The basis of creation is covenant. The word that brings it into being and sustains it is a covenant-word, expressive of the gracious faithfulness of God. And ‘the covenants of promise’ (Eph 2:12) have their working within the created order which God has promised to keep in being (Gen 8:22).

So covenant-grace includes the created order, for it is unthinkable that the faithful Creator will drop the temporarily cursed earth from his covenant purpose and renew only those who are brought into union with Christ by faith.

Further, creation has a *telos*, a purposed end, in virtue of the fact that God the Creator wills to carry out his covenant obligation, not only to restore it to its

Edenic beauty and harmony, but also to carry it to that further destiny to which, even in the Garden of Eden, we were already pointed.

The sabbath day shows how much creation and covenant belong together. It has its basis in the pattern of God's creative works. He rested on the seventh day, blessed it and made it holy. Yet it is this day also which points to the eternal rest of God's people in the new creation (Heb 4:8-11). 'The sign which celebrates the completeness of creation looks forward also to the fulfilment of history.'⁶

Because creation and covenant belong together, any eschatology which claims to be biblical must not neglect the covenant. To do so is to sunder creation from redemption, whereas Scripture sees the new creation as the fulfilment of the central theme of the covenants of promise. The voice from the throne in Revelation 21:3 links creation and covenant in an eternal bond when it proclaims: 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.'

2. Redemption is not redemption *from* the created order but is *inclusive of* the created order.

That which God saw as good, the material world which he created, he does not intend to abandon to the devil or to oblivion. True it is at present 'subjected to frustration' (Rom 8:20, N.I.V.), but this is for a temporary period – until creation itself is liberated from its bondage to decay and is brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God (v. 21).

The test, therefore, for any eschatology which claims to be biblical, is what place it has for the material creation. Some forms of A-millennialism, it seems to me, face the danger of spiritualizing the Christian hope into an escape from the materiality of the Old Testament visions of the new creation and of seeing the New Testament fulfilment in terms of a superior 'spiritual' salvation.⁷

Judged from the perspective of covenant theology, such an understanding of eschatology is seriously deficient, for it does not take seriously God's covenantal commitment to the created order. It is his by virtue of creation. To it he has pledged himself, making a covenant with the *earth* (Gen 8:13).

And it is not for nothing that our covenant-surety, Jesus our Saviour, is both 'the firstborn over all creation' and 'the firstborn from the dead' (Col 1:15,18). Thus are creation and redemption linked, the latter being a renewal of the former through the saving work of Christ.

Hebrews 2:5-9 points in the same direction. Taking up Psalm 8, which celebrates man's dominion over creation, and interpreting it Christologically, the author, as Oliver O'Donovan rightly observes, 'sees in Christ, and in the order of the world to come, the vindication and perfect manifestation of the created order which was always there but never fully expressed'.⁸

Here the resurrection of Christ is of decisive significance for it affirms and vindicates the created order, as O'Donovan so powerfully argues. He was raised from the dead, not to escape from creation into the world of the spirit, but to affirm it in the same (yet somehow different) body that was crucified at Calvary. He was brought *back* from the dead (Heb 13:20) both to live for forty days on earth and yet to return to it. His resurrection from the dead is a world-affirming, not world-denying event. Its significance cannot be over-stated. 'Before God raised Jesus from the dead, the hope that we call "gnostic", the hope for redemption *out of* creation, might have appeared to be the only possible hope.'" Now it is ruled out by the resurrection of Christ, for 'if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal *bodies* through his Spirit who dwells in you' (Rom 8:11).

And this life is to be shared in by the whole of creation, which meanwhile groans as in the pains of childbirth right up till now (Rom 8:22), for final redemption includes the created order in its totality.

3. The unity of creation and covenant provides the basis for a proper biblical dualism.

There is undoubted dualism in Scripture, a dualism which will not be finally resolved until the Lord Jesus comes again and puts all his enemies under his feet (1 Cor 15:25). Meanwhile, there is an unceasing conflict between God and Satan, the flesh and the Spirit, light and darkness.

This dualism is not, however, one of spirit against matter, of the spiritual as opposed to the material. *That* it cannot be, because creation is for covenant and covenant grace looks to the renewal of the created order. Thus, though we live as believers in expectation of new heavens and new earth, we do not deny the present world by adopting a spiritualistic asceticism which denigrates the body. Living in the light of our Lord's return, we are nonetheless given all things richly to enjoy (1 Tim 6:17).

As Jacob Jocz observes: 'The covenant also prevents (sic) us from a wrong spirituality whereby an eternal rift is created between spirit and matter. This Manichaeian attitude, which ascribes to matter a maleficent quality, is a form of gnosticism that has survived in theology to this day. It is only when the covenant is taken seriously that the ancient dualism of spirit and matter is overcome without infringement of God's sovereignty and without reduction of matter to nothingness. The covenant stands for the fact that this is God's world and belongs to him in the double sense: he created it and he redeemed it.'¹⁰

II *Covenant and Eschatology*

According to Hebrews 1:2, we believers live in 'the last days', inaugurated by God's speaking in his incarnate Son, and yet to be climaxed in the 'last time' (1 Pet 1:5, *kairos eschatos*) when our Lord comes again.

The last days are the days of the new covenant (Jer 31:31-34) which came into force with the death of Christ (Heb 10:11-18). The new covenant is the eschatological fulfilment of the covenants of promise in the history of Israel. The key issue is in what sense this can be said, for some ultra-dispensationalists would see a complete disjunction between the Israel with whom the covenants of promise were made and the church 'on whom the fulfilment of the ages has come' (1 Cor 10:11, N.I.V.).

If now we begin with Abram's call (which we declined to do before), we shall see that what is termed the Abrahamic covenant contains within it an eschatological promise: 'in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed' (Gen 12:3).¹¹ This points to the inclusion of the Gentiles, their grafting into the stock of Israel (Rom 11:17-21), and prevents the promise that Abram would become a 'great nation' from being understood in terms of a narrow nationalism. From the beginning of God's gracious call of Abram, there is struck the note of covenantal universalism. Beyond the 'am (people) that Abraham will become are the *goyim* (the nations) who will be brought near through the blood of Christ and made one with believing Israel (Eph 2:13-16). Though, then, the covenant with man and the created order precedes the covenant with Abraham, as we have already seen, it is equally true that the covenant with Abraham includes all mankind.¹²

The note of covenantal universalism will swell, as we shall see, into a mighty symphony extolling covenant grace even though Israel according to the flesh will persist in ignoring it, wanting to claim Abraham as *alone* their father (Matt 3:9).

1. Embedded in the call of Abram is the promise of a *land*, which is elaborated in Genesis (cf. 13:13-17; 15:18-21) and becomes one of the main themes of the Old Testament.¹³ To enter into the land and to be blessed within it is the sign of God's covenant favour. It is to enjoy rest from Israel's enemies and to live in safety (Deut 12:10). On the other hand, for the land to be overrun by invading armies and to be scattered from the land among the nations is to experience God's judgment upon breaches of the covenant (Deut 28:36-37).

How are we now to regard the promise of the land in these days of eschatological fulfilment? Are we to see, in the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, a sign that the promise of the land of Canaan still holds good for ethnic Israel? Or are we to see it fulfilled typically in the believer's inheritance in Christ — 'our inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven . . . ready to be revealed in the last time' (1 Pet 1:4,5)? Shall it be that according to our eschatology we shall stress one to the exclusion of the other?

In fact, the promise of the land which might, at first sight, seem to have no theological significance in the New Testament, undergoes a prodigious expansion now that the time of the Gentiles has come. Abraham is seen by Paul as not merely the inheritor of a land through his subsequent seed but also as the

heir of the world (Rom 4:13). Now nowhere in the Old Testament do we find a promise in these express terms. It does not seem possible to make the promise that, in Abraham, all the families of the earth would be blessed (Gen 12:3; cf. 13:14-17; 15:4, 5, 18-21; 17:2-21; 22:15-18) mean that they would inherit the world. That blessing is justification by faith, as Paul elsewhere makes clear (Gal 3:8), not the inheritance of the world as such.

However, John Murray is surely right when he says, commenting on Romans 4:13:

In the light of Pauline teaching as a whole . . . we cannot exclude from the scope of this promise, as defined by the apostle, the most inclusive messianic purport. It is defined as the promise to Abraham that *he* should be heir of the world, but it is also a promise to his seed and, therefore, can hardly involve anything less than the worldwide dominion promised to Christ and to the spiritual seed of Abraham in him. It is a promise that receives its ultimate fulfilment in the consummated order of the new heavens and the new earth.¹⁴

2. The conquest of the land of Canaan, begun under Joshua, but not completed until the time of David, was preliminary to the building of the *temple* in Jerusalem. The temple is the place which God chose as 'a dwelling for his Name' (Deut 12:11).

In the eschatological teaching of the prophets, Zion/Jerusalem becomes the place of eschatological pilgrimage to which the nations come to worship and to be taught God's ways (Is 2:2-4, Mic 4:1-5). According to John, Jesus himself is the new temple into which both believing Jew and believing Gentile are built as living stones (1 Pet. 2:4,5). John sees the body of Jesus, crucified and risen, as the place of eschatological pilgrimage (Jn 2:19-22). And Paul sees believers *in* Christ as the temple of the living God (2 Cor 6:16-18), further evidence that Jesus the Messiah is the 'place' where God is to be found, for he is Immanuel – God with us (Matt 1:23).

This is not, however, the end of the story, for the seer John tells us that in the new Jerusalem there is no temple, because 'the Lord God Almighty and the lamb are its temple' (Rev 21:22). As with the promise of the land, so again there is a prodigious expansion of horizon. The whole new heavens and new earth is the temple of God and of the lamb, so full of his glory that it needs neither sun nor moon to give it light (v. 23). Then takes place the ultimate eschatological pilgrimage: 'The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendour into it. . . . The glory and honour of the nations will be brought into it' (vv. 24, 26, N.I.V.).

The seer of Revelation unites creation and redemption, for he sees not only the new Jerusalem but a new Eden, with its river of water of life and the tree of life whose leaves are for the healing of the nations (Rev 22:1-2). No longer does the curse rest upon it (v. 3). The protevangelium of Genesis 3:15, embedded within the curse, has now so flowered and triumphed that there is no more curse.

So land is universalized into the world renewed, the inheritance of all believers, whether Jew or Gentile. Jerusalem becomes the new Jerusalem to which all who are in Christ are brought in pilgrimage. The temple, considered inviolate until it was destroyed, becomes the whole renewed creation. And all this happens, not in some separate and distinct prophetic programme divorced from God's covenant, but in fulfilment of it. For God's covenant is all about his choosing a people to be his own (Deut 4:24; 2 Sam 7:24; Jer 13:11). So the loud voice from the throne utters the old words of the covenant with yet deeper and more thrilling meaning: 'Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God' (Rev 21:3, N.I.V.).

3. One question, however, remains. What of Israel after the flesh, ethnic Israel? Does the covenant still relate to her now that she has been broken off and the Gentiles have been grafted in? Yes, it does, precisely because God is *faithful* to his covenant, which is not abrogated even by Israel's apostasy. The covenant word of God has not failed (Rom 9:6), for Israel will be grafted back into her own olive tree (11:24) when the fulness of the Gentiles has come in (v. 25).

There is, Paul insists, no *new* Israel. There is one Israel of God to which both believing Jew and believing Gentile belong (Gal 6:16; Rom 2:28-29). So we must avoid 'replacement theology' which gives such pain to Jewish Christians because it seems to impugn God's covenant-faithfulness in its teaching that the Church now replaces Israel in God's purpose.¹⁵ If the argument of Romans 9-11 holds good, the Church does not replace Israel; it is grafted into and onto Israel, to whom was granted 'the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen' (Rom 9:4-5).

Our great need, I would suggest in closing, is to integrate eschatology into our total biblical theology. And the most fruitful way in which to do this is, it seems to me, by way of reflecting upon the meaning of covenant. For this provides us with a hermeneutical key which will enable us to do justice both to creation and redemption, the relationship between Israel and the Church and the continuity and discontinuity of the Testaments.

As I said at the beginning, I have laboured in a virtually untilled field. Perhaps others will be able to uncover the rich treasures which still lie buried awaiting the efforts of those more able than I to discover them.

Footnotes

1 Jacob Jocz, *The Covenant — A Theology of Human Destiny* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1966), p. 204.

2 On the question of philology and *berit* (covenant), see D. J. McCarthy, *Old Testament Covenant — A Survey of Current*

Opinions, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1972), pp. 2-4.

3 W. J. Dumbrell, *The Faith of Israel — Its Expression in the Old Testament Books* (Leicester, Inter-Varsity Press, 1989), p. 10.

4 Dogmatik III/i, p. 106, quoted Edmond



Will the next generation know and appreciate our Reformation heritage? The photo was taken at the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Franklin Square, during October.

- Jacob, *Theology of the Old Testament* (London, E.T. Hodder and Stoughton, 1989), p. 10.
- 5 Op. cit., pp. 33-34.
- 6 Oliver O'Donovan, *Resurrection and Moral Order*, 'Leicester, Inter-Varsity Press, 1985), p. 61.
- 7 See R. J. Bauckham: 'Millennium' in *New Dictionary of Theology* (Leicester, Inter-Varsity Press, 1988), pp. 428-430, and note his remark on Augustinian A-millennialism: 'For the earthly kingdom expected by the chiliasts, it substituted a twin emphasis on the present rule of Christ and *other-worldly* eschatological hope' (my emphasis).
- 8 Op. cit., p. 53.
- 9 Op. cit., p. 14.
- 10 Jocz, op. cit., p. 234.
- 11 Many scholars take the verb in a reflexive sense, i.e. 'bless themselves', but, as C. F. D. Moule points out, LXX has *eneulogthesontai* for both forms alike. 'Jesus, Judaism, and Paul' in Gerald Hawthorne, editor with Otto Betz, *Tradition and Interpretation in the New Testament — Essays in Honor of E. Earle Ellis* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, note 6), p. 51, and J. C. B. Mohr, Tübingen, 1987.
- 12 'We will misread the message of the Bible if we define the covenant in narrow national terms: the covenant with "man" precedes the covenant with Abraham and the covenant with Abraham *includes* mankind. There is an unbroken continuity of God's condescension toward man of which covenantal history, as recorded in the Bible, is a demonstration.' Jocz, op. cit., p. 43.
- 13 Elmer A. Martens has pointed out that 'land' is the fourth most frequent noun or substantive in the Old Testament. It is used 2,504 times. E. A. Martens, *God's Design — A Focus on Old Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids, Baker, 1981), p. 97.
- 14 John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans*, Vol. 1 (London, Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1960), p. 142.
- 15 Michele Guinness records her pained reaction, as a Hebrew Christian, on hearing a preacher say, 'Now that God has finished with the Jews, we Christians are the chosen people, the new Israel.' 'Finished with the Jews! Well, why am I sitting here? Why have we been so persecuted? If God doesn't still love us, who does?' Just wait until the service is over. I'll tell him a thing or two, and anyone else who happens to be in range.' *Child of the Covenant — a Jew completed in Christ* (London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1985), p. 109. The issue of 'replacement theology' is addressed by Steve Motyer, *Israel in the Plan of God* (Leicester, Inter-Varsity Press, 1989).

Biblical Theology and Charismatic Teachings

Stephen Dray

God has revealed himself gradually in history and in different ways suited to the various times in which he has spoken (Heb 1:1). This is one of the fundamental convictions which lie behind the discipline of Biblical Theology. We need then to be aware of these different stages and sensitive to those features which especially mark each period as God's revelation moves from its partial immature form through to completion and maturity. We are not at liberty to import the practices of one period into another without careful thought. Thus, for example, the sacrificial system was characteristic of the provisional Old Testament eras. We cannot transfer such practices into the New Testament era because the revelation in Jesus makes such earlier and provisional rituals obsolete. But within the two Testaments we also note differences in the way God deals with his people. In the patriarchal age God revealed himself frequently by theophany (a manifestation of God in human or angelic form). Later, prophetic mediation was the more usual means of revelation. There were also distinct phases in his covenant relationships with his people: the Abrahamic, Mosaic and Davidic covenants distinguishing three of the more obvious periods.

The same is true in the New Testament. We can clearly distinguish the period of Jesus' earthly ministry from that of his exalted ministry in glory. Other differences are also observable: notably the present period in God's dealings with his people which is distinguished from the consummation of his purpose when Jesus returns. This means that we have to be sensitive to the structure of God's revelation. We are not to expect as part of our experience what was characteristic of an earlier stage in God's dealings with his people. Nor are we to expect now what is to be our experience when salvation is fully consummated.¹

It needs to be said that with very few exceptions the literature and teaching advanced by charismatics, non-charismatics and anti-charismatics is vitiated by a complete failure to give consideration to the contribution of Biblical Theology. In the following discussion some preliminary observations are made which indicate how its insights ought to be integrated into discussion on matters pertaining to charismatic gifts.

I. Old Testament Perspectives

It is a feature of the O.T. that prophecy ceased with the ministry of Malachi (probably about 470 BC). After him, the Jews did not look for any further prophetic ministry, believing that only in the messianic age would the prophetic ministry be restored. This occasioned a shift to the teaching ministry, a shift which is already discernible in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. In Ezra 5:1 and 6:14 the ministries of Haggai and Zechariah are mentioned. The date is about

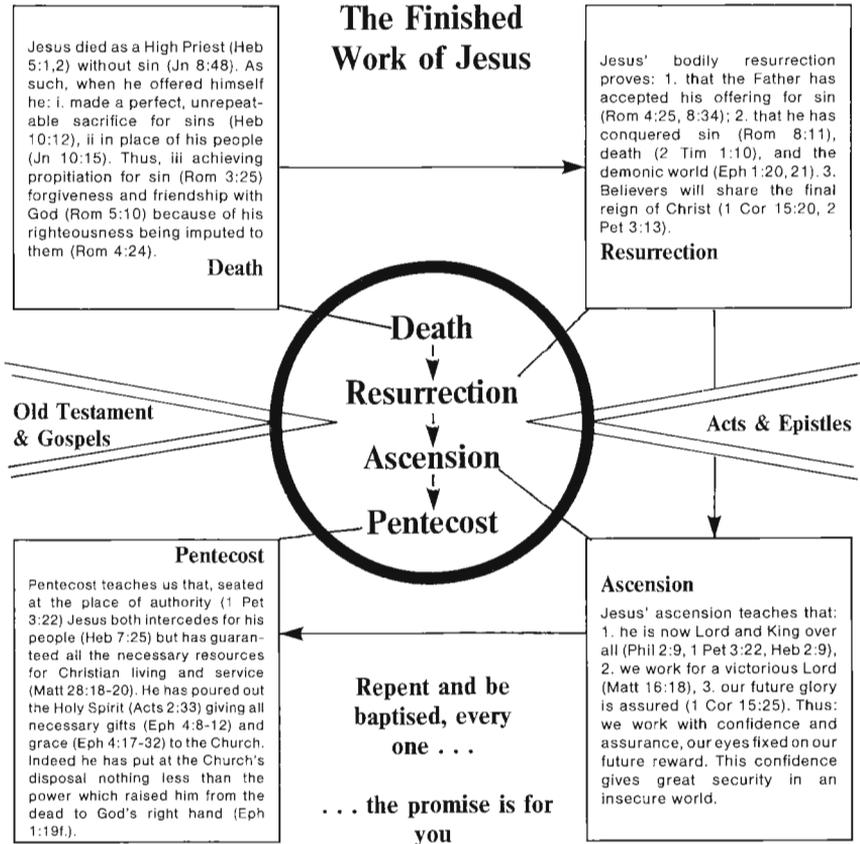
520-516 BC. There is then a temporal jump in the text since the next event mentioned (the return of Ezra) was in 458 BC (Ez 7:1ff.). Probably, Malachi's ministry was during the intervening period. Significantly, the people seem to have had an early instinct that it was not to future prophets but to those who could teach the words which God had already spoken that they were to look. They seem to have understood that God had said all that he intended to before the messianic age, that his covenant relation was complete. With the completion of the canon they looked not for new prophets but to Bible teachers. Thus the early verses of Ezra 7 speak of Ezra's qualifications in this respect. From then on emphasis lies upon what the LORD had already said, upon the instruction from the Word (see especially Neh 8ff.). Interestingly, those who felt the need to add new words from God in the intertestamental period had to write in the names of past leaders of God's people so deeply had the conviction established itself that prophecy had ceased!

It is a noteworthy fact that the miraculous activities of God were associated with certain periods of his dealings with his people. In particular the times of the patriarchs, those of Moses and the entry into the land, and the period associated with the ministries of Elijah and Elisha are those which are full of remarkable signs. No explanation is given of this, but very often O.T. narrative leaves the reader to determine the obvious conclusions to be drawn from such features. What then is significant of these three periods in the life of God's people? The following observations would seem to be true. The patriarchal age is one which is marked off from the preceding history. It marks the time at which God took one man and his family and resolved to work out his redemptive purposes through them. The Mosaic era, and especially the ministry of Moses, was one in which the LORD revealed the great foundation of O.T. religion and established the people in the land of promise. Elijah and Elisha were the first of the order of prophets who were to characterise the following period of God's dealings with his people. There had been prophets before (e.g., Deborah, Judges 4:4) but their ministries were of a limited nature (see, again, below). From Elijah and Elisha onwards a new age was inaugurated: the age of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and all the 'minor' prophets. In each case the LORD signified the beginning of a new epoch in his dealings with his people with confirmatory signs. Those who followed lacked the signs (for the LORD had already established his purposes) though they sometimes had more significant ministries.

The O.T. emphasises that Holy Spirit gifts are often practical skills and abilities owned by God and used in his service. Bezaleel and Oholiab were equipped for the building of the Tabernacle. Later, David and others were similarly used for the construction of the Temple. On the other hand, Moses' obvious qualifications were of little value in the LORD'S work until the LORD himself had set Moses aside for his ministry as saviour.

The O.T. seems to use the terms prophet and prophecy in a number of different ways. Basic to all usage is, however, the idea of one who speaks for God and speaks the pure word of God without error.² O.T. saints seem to have been able

The Finished Work of Jesus



to distinguish between those oracles (and prophets?) who were mediators of the covenant and others with lesser ministries. The O.T. canon bears witness to this. Also, the more archaic term, seer, became largely overtaken by the word prophet. This may reflect an attempt to come to terms with some such distinction (but see below).

With the emergence of wisdom, the earlier means of seeking direct guidance from the LORD tended to fade out. This is almost certainly evidence of a new and maturer stage in God's dealings with his people.³ Responsible parents first tell their infant what to do. Later the growing child is encouraged to make free, responsible decisions. So in the Old Testament earlier, direct commands were superseded by free choices grounded in the 'fear of the LORD'. It may be that the word 'seer' was superseded by 'prophet' in order to emphasise the change. The early seers seem to have been largely (but not entirely) purveyors of individual guidance. The later prophets occupied themselves in larger matters

which dealt, at heart, with the response of God's people to God. As such, though prediction was part of their ministry, they read rather more like preachers who seek to apply God's message to their hearers. There was little that was really innovative about their messages. They called God's people back to the 'old ways'.

The O.T. saints knew the LORD as the restorer. This is especially evident in the Psalms where the numerous references include physical healing. Even so the emphasis lies upon spiritual renewal as his great work. Increasingly, the prophets speak of the future in terms which speak of a complete reversal of the effects of the Fall. Thus spiritual and physical healing are predicted. In the absence of an understanding of the N.T.'s realised *and* future eschatology these effects of God's intervention are, understandably, intertwined (as, theologically speaking, they are).

The O.T. expresses a wish that all the LORD's people be prophets (Num 11:29) and looks to an era in which the activity of the Holy Spirit would be more widespread and more personal and deep and, apparently continuous (Jer 31:31ff.; Ez 36 and 37; Joel 2:32ff.). Yet, paradoxically, they also speak of that age as one in which prophecy will be obsolete (Jer 31:34)! We are probably to understand these facts in the following way (see discussion of Hebrews 1:1,2 below): the deeper ministry of the Spirit will render prophecy redundant since the Spirit himself will be the one who speaks and leads each child of God. As such, however, each one will be possessed of the ability to speak for God: to be the one who proclaims the Gospel of God.

Conclusions

By both prophetic oracles and by the description of the LORD's characteristic activity among his people the O.T. prepares us for the revelation of God's final purpose. It looks forward to a time in which the messianic age will arrive, accompanied by the restoration of the prophetic ministry. It leads us to look for a deeper and more personal experience of the Holy Spirit in the lives of his people. It encourages us (on the model of God's earlier dealings) to expect that the inauguration of such an age will be accompanied by the heightening of God's 'miraculous' activity, especially among those chosen to be the mediators of the new covenant. Equally, it prepares us for the probability that the completion of the new covenant revelation (and its inscription) will be accompanied by the cessation of those ministries and signs which mark off the period as one in which God has revealed and inaugurated something new. It implies that, should this occur, the LORD's people are not to look for new prophets but turn to those equipped by him and study the explanation and application of that which has already been revealed.⁴ Nevertheless, it encourages us to believe that the days which follow such a change will be ones in which the people can still look to him as their healer. Moreover, it encourages us to look for his more widespread equipping and gifting of his people for mutual service; the analogy of the OT suggests that this will often, even usually, be by means of the

sanctified use of 'natural' gifts. It also teaches that the final removal of the curse will, of necessity, involve the end of physical suffering.

II. The New Testament

It is a feature of the New Testament that the Gospels look forward to the completed work of Jesus while Acts, the Epistles and Revelation look back upon the events associated with it as a once for all occurrence. Jesus died and rose again only once, two thousand years ago. But every Christian becomes a beneficiary of both these events upon repentance and faith. Significant for our purposes (see the separate chart) is the fact that the once for all ministry of Jesus is seen as embracing four events: his death, resurrection, ascension and the gift of the Spirit. Those who fail to grasp this and argue that Pentecost is a model for a second Christian experience have confused the history of salvation with the believer's personal experience of salvation. They fail to see that Pentecost is no more repeatable than the Crucifixion, Resurrection or Ascension. What was purchased in Christ's completed work is lavished upon every person who believes (see further Garlington).

The New Testament uses the word apostle in a number of ways. It is used of the twelve (plus Paul; despite attempts to deny it, there can be little doubt that Paul claims equality with the twelve), missionaries such as Barnabas (Acts 14:14) and church messengers (2 Cor 8:23). However, Peter R. Jones has shown that Paul regards himself as equal with the Twelve, the last apostle, bringing the apostolic circle to a close.⁵ This explains both his (and, for example, Jude's) insistence that the apostolic deposit is to be guarded. Nothing new is to be expected: the new covenant revelation is at an end. As with the Old Testament, the last New Testament books look forward to a new era (see, especially 2 Peter, notably chapter 1). The apostles' doctrine is, from now on, to be guarded and taught by faithful men (2 Tim 2:2).

The New Testament, as is to be expected, speaks of those authenticating signs which are to confirm the unique status of the Apostles in the history of redemption (2 Cor 2:2, Heb 2:4). It also seems to hint that the signs gradually ebbed away; the later New Testament writings seem to know far less of the miraculous than the earlier ones. It does appear to conceive of a continuing ministry of healing (Jam 5:13-16), although of a different order from that of the LORD and the apostolic band.

The New Testament seems to associate a group of prophets with the apostles in their unique foundational ministry as mediators of the new covenant (Eph 2:20; 3:5; 4:11). These persons were, effectively, the scribes of Jesus, fulfilling his prediction in John 14:26. They, as his mouthpieces, and together with him, were the final mediators of God's revelation to mankind (Heb 1:1,2). Agabus was one of their number. He is presented in terms which emphasise his identity with the old covenant prophets⁶ and his predictions, which authenticate his ministry, were without error as Victor Budgen⁷ argues, while Wayne Gruden,⁸ Roy Clements,⁹ and H. M. Carson,¹⁰ take another view.

All these factors indicate that the New Testament makes a distinction between the apostolic and the post-apostolic era. The office of an Apostle and the foundational ministry of prophet was distinctive of New Testament times. Probably other gifts come under the same heading, especially those more closely identified with revelation and authentication.

Guidance in the new age is modelled closely upon that of wisdom in the Old Testament. The renewed mind (Rom 12:1,2) is the primary vehicle through which, by his Spirit, the LORD leads his people. The example and words of Jesus himself provide us with our great exemplar.³

The New Testament makes a further, very clear, distinction between the present age and the final consummation of salvation. The Christian already has a deposit guaranteeing the future glory. However, the present age is one of tension in which the believer still experiences the weakness of fallen humanity while indwelt by the Spirit of power (see, especially, 2 Cor 4:7ff.).

Conclusions

The New Testament teaching fulfils the expectations of the Old Testament. A new age dawned with the ministry of Jesus: an era in which the gift of prophecy was restored. In particular the Apostles seem to have had a ministry analogous to the canonical prophets. Mediators of the new covenant revelation, they (and their circle) were accompanied by the signs which confirmed that God was revealing through them the expected and final word of revelation. However, with Paul that revelation was complete and a shift began to take place to those who faithfully taught the apostolic deposit. The signs also began to ebb away and, as to be expected, nothing like the remarkable ministries of Jesus and his immediate followers has been seen since.

Meanwhile, God's people enjoy the full blessings of Jesus' work (including Pentecost) and they experience his leading through the exercise of their renewed minds. While the LORD can and does sometimes heal sicknesses, his people still await the final consummation of their hope and the removal from them of all the effects of the curse which render, so often, their present experience as one of having treasure in weak, frail earthenware pots.

The following books or articles are referred to in the substance of this essay:

- 1 D. Garlington: *Studies in Biblical Theology* (series in R.T.).
- 2 E. Hulse: *Prophecy: does it still continue today?* (R.T. 101).
- 3 G. Goldsworthy: *Gospel and Wisdom* (Paternoster/Eerdmans).
- 4 J. MacArthur: *The Charismatics* (Zondervan).
- 5 P. R. Jones: *The Last Apostle*: Tyndale Bulletin, 1985.
- 6 J. A. Motyer: 'Prophecy': article in *New Bible Dictionary* (I.V.P.).
- 7 V. Budgen: *Prophecy in the New Testament* (R.T. 101, 102).
- 8 W. Gruden: *The Gift of Prophecy in 1 Corinthians* (Eerdmans).
- 9 R. Clements: *Word and Spirit* (I.V.P.).
- 10 H. M. Carson: *Spiritual Gifts for Today* (Kingsway).

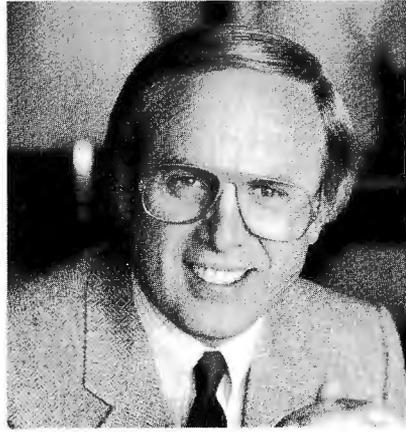
Reformation in America?

A review article by Dean Olive

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JESUS: WHAT DOES JESUS MEAN WHEN HE SAYS, 'FOLLOW ME?'. John MacArthur, Jr., 253 pages, cloth-bound, Zondervan, \$14.95.

This is a book America desperately needs. The truth that MacArthur expounds, that Jesus is Lord of those he saves, has been lost by most Evangelicals and Fundamentalists in the U.S.A. The 'gospel' that is proclaimed by the vast majority of conservatives centres on a salvation that leaves man in his sin, but makes him a citizen of heaven nonetheless. It is taught that when Jesus is received as Saviour, the believing sinner's eternal destiny is sealed, though there may be no evident change in his behaviour or life-style. It is a gospel with no repentance (or where repentance is re-defined) and with no power to transform the ungodly. MacArthur takes the words of Jesus and exposes and explodes the shallow concept of the gospel with its 'crippled message that presents a saviour who is not Lord, a redeemer who does not demonstrate authority over sin, a weakened, sickly messiah who cannot command those he rescues'.

On the American scene, the book is quite controversial. Some will not even give it a fair hearing because of pre-conceived prejudices. Many Fundamentalists have already judged MacArthur as a heretic because of his views on blood redemption. Some radio stations have cancelled his broadcast, sermons have been preached condemning him of heresy, and many believers who once received profit from his ministry have been poisoned by the words spoken against him. Yet his views on blood



John F. MacArthur

atonement are orthodox. But he has infuriated the Fundamentalists because he teaches that the blood which flowed through Jesus' veins is human blood and that there is none of it on the altar in heaven now. He says that because God is a Spirit, he has no blood, and that we take away from the humanity of the Lord Jesus if we say his blood was of some heavenly origin. If John MacArthur is a heretic on this subject, then so was C. H. Spurgeon. In reference to the phrase 'the blood of God' (Acts 20:28), Spurgeon said, 'strictly speaking, there can be no blood of God, and the expression looks like a confusion of the two natures; but this is intentional, that we may clearly see that the two natures are so joined together that the Holy Ghost does not stop to dissect and set out differences (MTP, vol. 30, p. 26). But even without this barrier, most Fundamentalists will have difficulties with this book because it cuts so deeply into the gospel of 'easy-believism'.

Religious papers like the *SWORD OF THE LORD*, edited by Curtis Hutson,

have lashed out against the position maintained by MacArthur. The concept of 'Lordship salvation' has been sharply criticised. Some years ago, a sermon appeared on the front page of this paper by Jack Hyles, a leading figure in the Fundamentalist movement, entitled, 'Saved But Not Converted'. The title alone divulges an unsound doctrine. The message is typical of the modern day gospel that radically divides sanctification from justification and which creates two kinds of Christians. Hyles declares that there are many saved people 'whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life but they live lives as carnally as the unsaved'. In other words, they are saved from their sins and are eternally secure, but there is no spiritual fruit or holiness evident anywhere in them. What is needed by such a 'Christian' is simply for him to make a decision to become a spiritual Christian. (R. T. Kendall's position in his *Once Saved, Always Saved*, is not too far removed from this.)

But the Evangelical camp in the U.S.A. has mixed feelings about this book as well. Moody Press, the publisher of MacArthur's helpful *New Testament Commentary* series, refused to publish this book. Zondervan, who also published MacArthur's excellent book, *The Charismatics*, have issued this volume.

But there is something else that makes this book very controversial among American Evangelicals. *The Gospel According to Jesus* is a direct response to the writings of two professors of the Dallas Theological Seminary, one of the largest Evangelical schools in the world. These two men are Charles Ryrie and Zane Hodges. Their influence is widely felt, especially Ryrie, who is the man behind the very popular study Bible that bears his name, *The Ryrie Study Bible*. Both men teach that for a person to become a Christian, that it is necessary for Jesus to only be received as Saviour



Dean Olive

and not as Lord. MacArthur counts these men as his friends and highly respects them in other areas of study, but strongly disagrees with them on the vital subject of the gospel. MacArthur declares that the message they proclaim is a 'new gospel' which has 'spawned a generation of professing Christians whose behaviour often is indistinguishable from the rebellion of the unregenerate', and that 'it promises salvation from hell but not necessarily freedom from iniquity. It offers false security to people who revel in the sins of the flesh and spurn the way of holiness. . . . Thus the good news of Christ has given way to the bad news of an insidious easy-believism that makes no moral demands on the lives of sinners. *It is not the same message Jesus preached*' (emphasis mine).

Two books by Zane Hodges are quoted from frequently to show the fallacy of the position that the gospel makes no moral demands on the believer and that a person may be an eternally secure Christian without one ounce of good works produced by the indwelling Holy Spirit to evidence it. The books are, *The Gospel Under Siege: A Study of Faith and Works* (Redencion Viva), and *The Hungry Inherit* (Moody, 1972, and Multnomah, 1980). Hodges argues for two classes of Christians, the saved only

and then the saved who are disciples. His interpretation of the Scriptures in *The Gospel Under Siege* is so unusual that D. A. Carson comments, 'Perhaps one of the most intriguing – and disturbing – features of Zane C. Hodges' book . . . is that to the best of my knowledge not one significant interpreter of Scripture in the entire history of the church has held to Hodge's interpretation of the passages he treats. That does not necessarily mean Hodges is wrong; but it certainly means he is probably wrong . . .' (*Exegetical Fallacies*, p. 137). MacArthur completely reveals the cracks in Hodges' doctrinal foundation. He successfully combats the idea that 'salvation is only the granting of eternal life' and 'not necessarily the liberation of a sinner from the bondage of his iniquity'. He adds, 'any "salvation" that does not alter a life-style of sin and transform the heart of the sinner is not a genuine salvation'.

So then, a major portion of Evangelicals and Fundamentalists, who are normally divided over other matters, are in agreement in their opposition to the doctrine proclaimed by John MacArthur. But why is this so? Why would so many who believe whole heartedly in the great fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith be so opposed to a gospel which with certainty produces works of righteousness in true believers? The answer is because they fear that men will embrace a salvation by works system if too much is made of works. And in their zeal to protect and promote the gospel of salvation by grace through faith alone, they have swung too far and have embraced a salvation which does not demand or produce holiness. As a result of this error, churches have been filled with professors of religion who have a decision card in their hand but whose hearts are full of rebellion and sin. MacArthur is only sounding out the Biblically correct and time honoured doctrine of the Reformers and Puritans,

which is: 'Faith alone brings salvation, but the faith that brings salvation is never alone.' Scripture teaches that a faith which is not accompanied by holiness is not true saving faith!

Though MacArthur's position is opposed by a large number of Evangelicals and Fundamentalists, there are many who support his Biblical stand. J. I. Packer and James Montgomery Boice both have written forwards to *The Gospel According to Jesus*. Packer writes, 'I commend it enthusiastically'. Boice says, 'If MacArthur's book succeeds in turning many from this weak gospel and false confidence, as I believe it will, *The Gospel According to Jesus* may be one of the most significant books of this decade.'

But now to some particulars about the book. The book arose out of the author's study of the Gospels, especially from his lengthy sermon series in his church through the Gospel of Matthew. His purpose in writing is 'to deal fully with the text of the biblical accounts of Jesus' major encounters and his teaching on the way of salvation'. *The Gospel According to Jesus* is a thorough examination of the message of Jesus and of the methods he used. Though MacArthur is mildly dispensational, he opposes the division that many dispensationalists make between the teaching of Christ and the Epistles. Two very helpful appendices show that neither the gospel according to the Apostles or that of historic Christianity is in conflict with what Jesus taught. MacArthur says the gospel of Jesus is 'the foundation upon which all the New Testament doctrine stands'.

The Gospel According to Jesus is divided up into five parts (the fifth section is the two appendices). The first part is entitled 'Today's Gospel: Good News Or Bad?' In this chapter, the author accurately portrays the present gospel of modern day evangelicalism and shows



Tragedy in Armenia

The earthquake in Armenia during December which, according to the latest estimate (30th December), carried away the lives of 25,000, was a tragedy of devastating proportions, the painful effects of which will be experienced for a generation to come. The disaster reminded us all of the existence of a world within the world of the Soviet Union. Armenia is possibly one of the better known nations within Russia. But what do we know of Azerbaijan, Turkmenia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kirghizia and Tadzhikistan, countries which add up to population of 42 million, 35 million of which are culturally Sunni Islamic. Could you guess to which nation in that part of the world the young faces on the front cover belong? Who cares about taking the Gospel to these peoples? People International is an evangelical organisation that publishes informative materials and promotes gospel endeavour within that mostly Islamic world within the world of the Soviet Republics. The address is: PEOPLE INTERNATIONAL, P.O. Box 26, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 5AZ, England.

how catastrophic it has been. The foundation is well laid in this section for the exposition of passages from the Gospels which follows.

The heart of the book is in the next three parts: 'Jesus Heralds his Gospel', 'Jesus Illustrates his Gospel', and 'Jesus Qualifies his Gospel'. The major encounters of Christ with sinners, relevant parables, and the terminology Jesus employed in his preaching (repentance, faith, disciple, etc.) is examined in detail. He powerfully demonstrates how Jesus came to make disciples, not just to register decisions. The exegesis of the many Scriptures portions from the gospels is plain, sober, and fervent.

The book concludes with the two

appendices mentioned above. Also included is a bibliography and a subject and Scripture index. Readers in the U.K. should note that R. Murdoch now owns the Zondervan printing organisation. The book is not yet available in Britain.

What we believe regarding the gospel of Christ is no peripheral issue. We cannot afford to be mistaken about what our Lord taught concerning the way of salvation. That's why we need this book. It causes us to re-examine the gospel according to Jesus. It is a clarification of that gospel and a warning to those who tamper with it and destroy it. We pray that God will use this book to bring about a reformation in the religious life of America.

Editor
Associate Editors

ERROLL HULSE, 75 Woodhill Road, Leeds LS16 7BZ
DAVID KINGDON, JOHN DAVISON, JIM VAN ZYL, S.A.,
TOM NETTLES, WAYNE MACK, U.S.A.

Rates

1 year £5.50 — 2 years £9.50

1 year £5.50 — 2 years £9.50

1 year \$10.00 — 2 years \$18.00

1 year \$10.00 — 2 years \$18.00

1 year \$12.00 — 2 years \$20.00

1 year \$12.00 — 2 years \$20.00

1 year R12.00 — 2 years R20.00

1 year f20.00 — 2 years f33.50

1 year \$20.00 — 2 years \$38.00

Subscriptions

BRITISH ISLES

IRISH REPUBLIC

AUSTRALIA

NEW ZEALAND

U.S.A.

CANADA

SOUTH AFRICA

NETHERLANDS

MALAYSIA AND
SINGAPORE

Agents

75 Woodhill Road, Leeds LS16 7BZ.

Alan Barker,
Bethany, Cartron Hill, SLIGO.

Ray Levick,
*27 Coven Avenue, Bayswater North,
Victoria 3153.*

Sovereign Grace Books
P.O. Box 62-159, Sylvia Park, Auckland.

Great Christian Books Inc.,
*1319 Newport-Gap Pike, Wilmington,
DE. 19804-2895.*

Tom Lutz,
*Edgewood Baptist Church,
3743 Nichol Avenue,
Anderson, IN 46011.*

Bill Ascol
PO Box 552, Clinton LA 70722

Max Latchford,
*14 Southwind Terrace, Oakville,
Ontario L6L 6K5.*

Patrick Palmer,
Box 33226, Glenstantia 0010.

D. H. Gritter,
*Laaghalerstraat 12
9414 AK Hooghalen.*

Good News Enterprise
*Beg Berkunci 210, 43409 UPM
Serdang, Malaysia.*

Single copies one-sixth the above in each case which includes postage.

For airmail add £3 sterling equivalent p.a.

Gifts are welcomed and those who wish to support the Magazine should make out their cheques to "Reformation Today".

Bound volumes available: 37-48 £7.50 or \$12, 71-90 £12 or \$16, post free

----- cut here -----

**SUBSCRIPTION
FORM**

Please send to:

Name:

Address:

Reformation

Today

Bound

Volume

Tick

1 yr	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 years	<input type="checkbox"/>

37-48	<input type="checkbox"/>
71-90	<input type="checkbox"/>

I enclose..... Your name and address:

Please enclose gift card Yes/No

Please send me a receipt Yes/No

CONTENTS

front inside cover — **Statistical Decline**

(see page 5)

- 1 Editorial
- 3 How can we commemorate the Tercentenary
of the 1689 Confession?
Editor
- 5 **1989! But what will we be like in 2000!**
Editor
- 9 **The fourth International Baptist Conference,
Toronto**
Editor
- 11 News
- 14 **Prophetic Interpretation from the
Perspective of Covenant Theology**
David Kingdon
- 23 **Biblical Theology and Charismatic Teachings**
Stephen Dray
- 29 **Reformation in America?**
Dean Olive