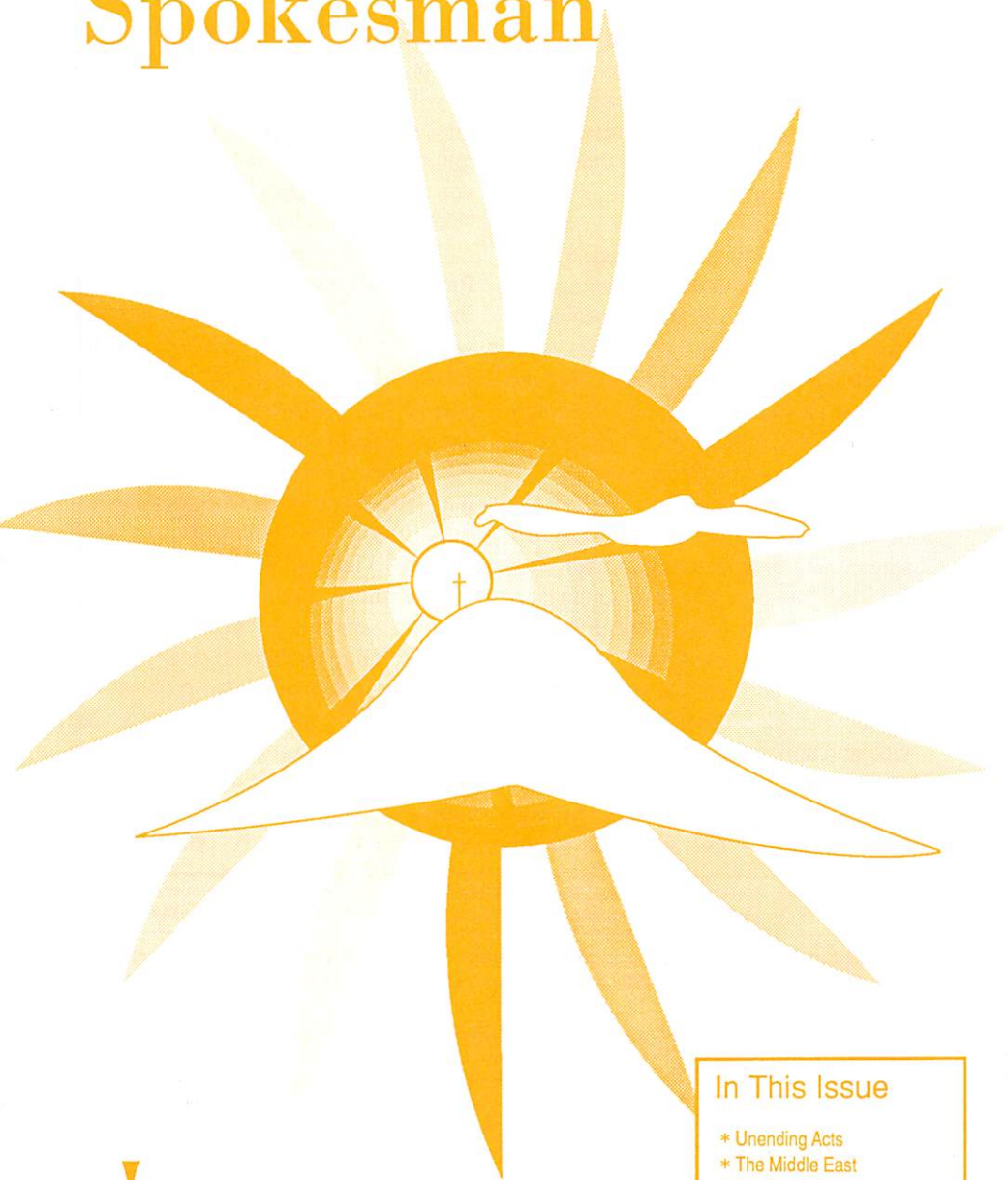


Lutheran Spokesman



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Church of the Lutheran Confession

“O Lord, open Thou my lips...”

EASTER LIPS

God first made lips. And, as with all parts of God’s creation since the fall, what wonderful as well as terrible purposes they serve. They express or betray the gamut of human emotions. They admit or refuse what is either good or harmful into the body. Someone discovered that they can give great pleasure when pressed together against another’s. They are indispensable in forming and sounding words with which we communicate. And—truth be told—an astounding amount of money is being spent also by Christians in keeping them attractively covered.

But again, as with other parts of the human anatomy which sin has first stained and then shamefully exploited, the real function got lost someplace. Other parts? Oh, you know. First one plucks out the eyebrows and then paints them back in. Then one can get all the wrinkles “tucked” out of one’s face and appear 20 years younger. One can even get all the ugly fat painlessly sucked out of one’s tummy. In fact, medical science has advanced to the

point of taking some ugly stuff off here and putting beauty back in there almost at will. And, wonder of all wonders, now we hear that one can get the lips rebuilt into a fuller and more sensuous you. As the ad says it for both sexes: “You’ve come a long way!”

It is surely “Back To Basics” time for virtually everything, including the lips. May we suggest beginning anew with the proper use of our lips for Easter? Turn to page 69 in the front part of The Lutheran Hymnal and notice especially the second two Collects for Easter Tuesday. (Incidentally, it may help those of us whose congregations follow the hymnal liturgy each Sunday to look up in advance and then follow these changing parts of our church service.) The second one pleads: “Give us the will to show forth in our lives that which we profess with our lips.” The third one implores God to “...grant us the grace to show forth in our lives that which we profess with our lips.” And we are likewise familiar with the liturgical response to, “O

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Lord, open Thou my lips," namely, "And my mouth shall show forth Thy praise."

God grant special graces to our lips this Easter season and beyond. May the resurrection of Jesus Christ be such a mighty possession in our hearts that your and my lips be used for showing forth in our lives the glorious and

hope-filled joy of our Savior who arose from the dead and promised that we're next.

Yes, God first made lips. Yours and mine. May this season inspire the very best use of ours. Pray - praise - proclaim.

—Bertram Naumann



Jesus Rises From The Grave

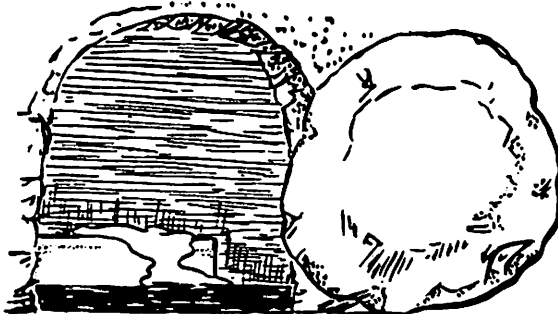
Very likely our Lord spent a small part of Friday, all of Saturday, and some of Sunday in the grave. The Hebrews began their day at sunset in accordance with Genesis 1:7, "The evening and the morning were the first day." According to the Bible, Jesus died about 3:00 p.m. on Friday, was hurriedly buried in a nearby grave because "the Sabbath drew on" (Lk. 23:54), and then left the grave early Sunday morning, the first day of the week.

But Christ's words recorded in Matthew 12:40 ("As Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days *and three nights* in the heart of the earth") make some people wonder if He also

spent three nights in the grave. If so, it would require that Jesus die on Thursday instead of Friday.

Those speaking in favor of this idea say that such a move would eliminate the "silent Wednesday" problem of Holy Week - a day for which none of the four Gospels record any of the Savior's activities. It is also said that since the Old Testament passover lamb was selected on the tenth of the month and slain four days later, it is fitting that Christ, our Passover Lamb, would be welcomed into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday and then slain four days later on Thursday.

But such thinking goes against Bible verses such as John 19:31 & 42. These verses clearly show that Christ



AND THE STONE WAS ROLLED AWAY

died on Friday, since the Jews wanted His body and those of the two malefactors removed from the crosses before the Sabbath day began.

We should also remember that the gospels quote Christ at least nine times as saying He would be in the grave three *days*, and only *once* as saying He would also be there three nights.

Here are some samples: "and be raised again the third day" (Mt. 16:21); "and the third day He shall be raised again" (Mt. 17:23); "the third day He shall rise again" (Mt. 20:19); "in three days I will raise it up" (Jn. 2:19).

No doubt Christ's purpose in mentioning three nights in Matthew 12:40 was not to set the exact time He would be in the grave. Rather, it was to teach that as Jonah was in the fish for only a limited amount of time and then came forth alive, even so He - Jesus - would

spend a brief time in the grave and then come forth alive.

Rather than knowing exactly how much time our Savior spent in the grave, it is far more important for us to know that He dwelt there for a brief time and then conquered its power. As a result, we, His brothers and sisters, need not fear to enter our earthly graves, for God has given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ye who are of death afraid,
Triumph in the *scattered* shade.
Drive your anxious cares away.
See the place where Jesus lay.
Christian, dry your flowing tears.
Chase your unbelieving fears.
Look on His *deserted* grave.
Doubt no more His power to save.

(TLH 203:2-3)

—Robert Mackensen



Message from Our CLC President—

OUR VICTORY IN CHRIST

As this article is written the air war is being carried on intensively in Iraq. Many, including this writer, have looked in on the war on the TV. One tends to forget that he is not watching a TV mini-series. This is for real. War is not glamorous. It is more than a matter of keeping score. War is ugly. In the real world, people who die in war do not get up to appear in another war.

Victory is Ours

One is not a warmonger because he says that in the real world war is inevitable. It is simply a fact. The false pride and the greed of fallen men has through history inevitably caused man and nations to war with one another. War between nations is simply a larger mirror image of what is happening in homes that fall apart through divorce, cities which are enveloped in crime, and every expression of man's inhumanity to man.

Our God is not the author of such activity as war. The cause lies in sin—personal and national. Thus the Christian's first approach to God is one of confes-

sion. War is a call to repentance!

As you read this we are in the middle of the Lenten season. This season of the church year culminates with the death of Jesus on the cross. "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). But why Jesus Christ, God's own Son? The answer is as simple as it is profound. On Him was laid the iniquity of us all. Our sins, as much as those of people before and after us, were the nails that pierced the Savior. Jesus died on the instrument of Roman torture because mankind loved, and still loves, to wander. Satan was gleeful. The death of Jesus upon the cross was, as Satan thought, the culmination of his war against Christ:

**The Foe in triumph shouted
When Christ lay in the tomb . . .**

War among men is so often the result of miscalculation. Satan also miscalculated. He thought that He could overcome the Lord of glory. Easter is the declaration of the Father in heaven which reveals the miscalculation of Satan. "Now is Christ risen from the dead" (I Cor. 15:20).

**For Christ again is free;
In glorious victory
He who is strong to save
Has triumphed o'er the grave. (TLH 192:2)**

Under the mysterious but gracious and loving hand of the Father, the personal victory of Christ over Satan and death has been made our victory. "Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 15:57). Satan cannot enslave again those who find their life and their security and their hope in the Savior, Jesus.

The War Goes On

The message of this Gospel is the continuing uncovering of the lie of Satan. Precisely for that reason does Satan enlist an army to fight against the Gospel. Thus the Church is, interestingly, the Church "militant." The Church in the world is a church at war. People at peace with God because they are reconciled to God through the death had resurrection of Christ are, at the same time, people at war against the world.

We are at war, not to win what Christ has already won for us, but against Satan who would rob us of what Christ has won. And let none forget it. Satan in his weakest state is still stronger than we at our best, except when we are in Christ. That is reality.

Obviously, the necessity for continuing war against Satan lies not in any weakness of the Lord, nor in any failure of Christ. The necessity lies in the continuing lie of Satan who, knowing what the fact is, still suggests to gullible people that he—Satan—is the life of the world. Therefore we as the redeemed and believing children of God must be on our guard. We are not engaged in a fantasy war with Satan. It is real; it is deadly.

Day by day, with prayer and supplication, we will implore the Lord Jesus to

FROM THE EDITOR—

Unleashing the Power

These very days we are witnessing, though thankfully from a distance, the greatest display of earthly power ever unleashed on our planet. We refer, of course, to the “smart” bombs, “guided” cruise missiles, and other modern weaponry of America’s arsenal on deadly display in the Persian Gulf conflict.

But, you know, there has long been an even more powerful weapon at work in the world. It is literally as old as the hills. It is the Gospel of our God, first proclaimed by Him in Eden as that which would crush the head of man’s worst enemy. God’s own unique Son, Jesus Christ, would be, and was, the agent of Satan’s destruction. Whenever and wherever that Good News in Jesus is proclaimed it lays waste Satan and his hosts. “The word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword . . .”, bomb, or missile. Wherever the Gospel “lands” under the guidance system of the Holy Spirit it touches, converts, renews hearts, bringing them to faith in Christ, the Savior.

This little magazine always intends to unleash some of that power. With this issue we begin a couple of new series. The one on *Romans* features the Gospel as the “dynamite” of God. The second on *Prophecy* is to help us keep the happenings such as those in the Gulf War in proper biblical perspective. Concluded in this issue is the “Tracing the Acts of the Apostles” series. Concluded? Not really, as the writer says. The Holy Spirit through the Gospel power keeps the ship of His Church sailing on until that final day of Christ’s return.

In both the *Acts* series and the one on “Pilgrims on Earth” (also to be concluded in a couple months), we have seen how it’s never been easy for Christ-believers enroute to a far better place. But it has ever been worth the struggle. Once the “fight of faith” is over, says St. Paul, there is a crown of righteousness awaiting “not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.”

In addition, Lord-willing, in the coming months another new series or two are planned: “Gems From Proverbs”—“The Crying Need of Christian Education”—“One on One Witnessing”—“What is This Thing Called Love?” etc. All platforms for unleashing just a little bit more of the power of God.

We pray:

“Fly abroad, eternal Gospel; Win and conquer, never cease . . .”

keep us in Him Who is our strength in this continuing struggle. Further, we implore Him to forgive our sins, and bless us with the confidence of eternal life.

This then suggests to us that in these troubled days, with all the uncertainty and confusion in the world, the message of our church be always the grace of God in Christ Jesus. More than that we should not preach; less than that we should not expect. To preach Christ is to preach victory. To believe in Christ is to draw strength and confidence from that victory, and thus to sing:

**Jesus lives! I know full well
Naught from me His love shall sever;
Life nor death nor powers of hell
Part me now from Christ forever.
God will be a sure defense;
This shall be my confidence. (TLH 292:4)**

This is the confidence for living in time, and passing from time, for all who rejoice in the reality of our Savior's victorious death and glorious resurrection. May it be so for you.

—*Daniel Fleischer*

Tracing the Acts of the Apostles (Conclusion)—

“(Paul) . . . preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him” (28:31).

Unending Acts . . .

A stupid looking airplane, yet it flies! Some years ago on the cover of a magazine we saw an OMAC-1, the latest in business flying machines. The new prop-jet promised to make three to five hundred mile trips at one-fourth the cost of the conventional private plane. But there was something missing: this plane had no tail! After reading the cover story, it became clear that no matter what one thinks should be at the end of an airplane, this model was tail-end-less for good reason.

The same may be said about the end of the Book of Acts. Many years ago an intelligent man came up with the

stupid theory that Luke's conclusion to the Book of Acts is lost. Luke would not have ended his book by leaving Paul under house arrest in Rome, he said. Neither does one end a book with on-going participles like “preaching” and “teaching.” This theory doesn't fly!

True, there is something missing at the close of Luke's record. If the book of Acts were only an account of a period of human history, we might expect an end-mark of some kind. But Acts is His-story. And the God of heaven and earth is ever in the process of making His-story by the movement of His unrestrained, unbounded Word. Acts is

tail-end-less for the best of reasons!

The Word is Not Bound

The book of Acts begins with a promise. To His small band of disciples Jesus said: “. . . you shall be witnesses to me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8). The saving Word of Christ would move even beyond Jerusalem! Peter preached to the Pentecost pilgrims who carried the wonderful message to their homes throughout the empire (Acts 2)! The Jerusalem Jews tried to silence the Christian Gospel by persecuting its witnesses. But the Word could not be bound. For when Christ’s people were touched, it was as someone pictured it: “like dropping a jar of tiny beads on the floor.”—And those Christians who “scattered” went “everywhere preaching the word” (Acts 8:1-4).

Paul himself (as Saul) had tried mightily to confine the message of Christ to Jerusalem. But much to his surprise the Word reached him on the road to Damascus! Paul became the Lord’s vessel to carry the Word of salvation far beyond Jerusalem (Acts 9ff). In the closing chapter of Acts we find him in Rome.

Yes! Rome at last, even as the Lord had promised (Acts 23:11)! It had been three years since he had sent his epistle to the Roman Christians. Now “the brethren” who came to meet Paul’s company gave him reason to thank God and be encouraged (28:15)—the Word was not bound!

Sure, the Apostle came as a prisoner to Rome. And yet, when the other prisoners were delivered to the captain of the guard and put in prison, “Paul was

permitted to dwell by himself,” guarded by just one soldier! (28:16)

To the world Paul was bound by the might of the Roman Empire. Yet, we read that “many” of the Jews came to Paul’s residence in Rome where he spoke the Word of salvation to them. Although “some” hearts had “grown dull” and were bound to unbelief by their own stubborn self-righteousness, the Word was not bound—“some were persuaded” (28:21-27).

For “two whole years” Paul was enabled to remain safely in his rented house and “received all who came to him”! He was “preaching” and “teaching” the Word of Christ “with all confidence” (that is, “with all freedom of speech”) because no one was restraining him! (28:30-31)

During Paul’s two-year bondage in Rome the Holy Spirit moved His Word through Paul and on to the churches in Ephesus, Colossae, Philippi, and the home of Philemon. Rome had a history of using others; now she was being used for the advance of the Gospel. So the apostle wrote with great joy to the Philippians: “I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel. As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for



St. Paul

“The Word did not cease to grow and spread with the martyrdom of the great apostle Paul . . . The Word is not confined to any one person. Our pastors and teachers grow old and pass away, as do all created things. But the mighty Word of salvation marches on!”

Christ. Because of my chains, most of the brothers in the Lord have been encouraged to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly” (Phil. 1:12-14).

A Word of Salvation

Luke does not conclude the book of Acts with a detailed account of Paul’s release, further travels, final imprisonment and death. Why should he? As we noted at the beginning of our Acts series over two years ago, it was not Luke’s intention to present the “acts of the apostles” but the activity of the Word. Luke tells the growth and power of the Word in the hearts of sinners, beginning in Jerusalem and continuing throughout the mighty Roman Empire.

The Word did not cease to grow and spread with the martyrdom of the great apostle Paul. He himself rejoiced during his last imprisonment that even though he “suffer trouble as an evil-doer to the point of chains; yet the

Word of God is *not* chained” (2 Tim. 2:9). The Word is not confined to any one person. Our pastors and teachers grow old and pass away, as do all created things. But the mighty Word of salvation marches on!

The little word “amen” is missing at the tail-end of the books of Acts. Its absence suggests that what the victorious Christ had “begun” (cf. Acts 1:1), the apostles and others continued but did not conclude. The gathering of precious souls into the kingdom of heaven continues until the coming of Christ, through the activity of the Word borne by believers like you and me!

With this article our “Acts” series comes to an end. But the “acts” and the activity do not end. Praise be to our God! For His Word is not bound! How great is His power and love to save us and sinners everywhere by that Gospel! Let us be growing and going with it!

—V. Fossum



The 30th Anniversary of the CLC (1960–1990)

Looking Back in the Spokesman —from March 1961—

A synod is an association of congregations and pastors. A synod is formed to confess the unity of the Spirit by an external union, and to carry out specific parts of the Church's commis-

sion which cannot be achieved as well by individual congregations. Through such a union congregations can serve each other in many ways. Since a synod with a true confession can come

into being only through the power of the Gospel, it is a divine creation . . .

A synod of the true confession is doing the Lord's work. This in itself does not make it a matter of conscience to join such a synod. Congregations can support this work without actually being members of the synod. Yet joining is not a matter of indifference. In a country where there are some 250 denominations within Christendom, joining a larger church body is a confessional act . . . (Winfred Schaller)

. . . The congregation will choose men from her midst who have proved their love for the Gospel, and who have as a result of knowledge and experience developed a sober Christian judgment that is tempered with love. Such men will not be satisfied with what they already know of God's Word, but will rather seek as rejoicing laymen to ever increase in spiritual understanding. It is the Gospel itself which is the power that will promote the Christian virtues and graces so necessary for them as leaders in the congregation. The necessity to advance in spiritual growth is emphasized by the assignment to give assistance to the pastor in caring for the spiritual welfare of the congregation . . . (M. J. Witt)

. . . Where the saving Gospel has been suppressed men reach out with devices in an effort to quiet their sense of emptiness. At present the rage is unionism . . . The frantic effort to heap churches together helter-skelter and to tie them with lovely bow-knots of "love" exhibits a vast spiritual frenzy. Pacts of outward unity are substituted for the unity of heart with peace and certainty that only the Gospel can truly confer; for the authority of the Word has been subverted by the unionist, and man must have something to support their faith. Once the true foundation has been undermined, nothing remains but that church leaders bruise their knuckles in painful handshakes to indicate that the churches are firmly united, if not in doctrine, then at least in joint worship and work . . .

We on our part find healing and sufficiency in the scourges of Pontius Pilate and in the wounds of the Body on the Hill of Skulls. Their power and love compel us to offer complete obedience to the heavenly Letters in our Testaments which alone remain our solace and our wisdom. (Egbert Schaller)

. . . Yes, that is the thinking of many, just living for now and their time and getting the most out of it. "But," the farmer said, "I'm thinking about someone who lives after me *who will enjoy my planting*. Much of our testifying to the truth of the Gospel and sowing of the Gospel seed is the same story. Often we don't see the benefit until many years later. Often we don't observe the good our testimony and our mission work does in the world. But God has promised that His Word shall always be preached with results. What we do for the Lord now will always bring results, for God is not defeated, even though the harvest be years later. The testimony you give today, the money you give now, may be responsible for the salvation of many souls in years to come. (Arvid G. W. Gullerud)

CHURCH NEWS: *Two Upper Michigan Congregations*—Calvary Lutheran Church, Marquette and St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Green Garden, are located on the shore of Lake Superior in Michigan's Upper Peninsula . . . Both congregations felt there was no better, no more God-pleasing way to repay the synod's (WELS—Ed.) past spiritual and financial help than by obedience to God's Word, even though this meant leaving the synod's fellowship . . . *Mankato, Minnesota*—Transfer of Immanuel Lutheran Church to the CLC has been completed. The CLC is now responsible for the property, management, and obligations of Immanuel College. Since its beginning, the Board of Control had consisted of members of Immanuel Lutheran Church. *Eau Claire, Wisconsin*—February 19, 1961 was installation Sunday at Messiah Lutheran Church. The congregation's first church council was installed in the morning service, and Pastors Arvid G. W. Gullerud and Keith Olmanson were installed in an afternoon service. Pastor Rueben Ude of Okabena, Minnesota was the guest speaker in the morning service; Dr. Norman A. Madson, Sr., Mankato, Minnesota, former dean at Bethany Lutheran College, preached the sermon in the afternoon service . . .



The Middle East

What's happening in the Middle East? Read the prophets! They'll tell you. They foretold it all. Have they?

The Battle of Armageddon?

Sales are booming in Christian book stores. Books on prophecy are selling like hotcakes. Hal Lindsey's *The Late Great Planet Earth* is going through yet another reprinting. TV and local evangelists are urging their listeners to focus their attention on Iraq. There is where prophecy is unfolding! The Garden of Eden was most likely in that area. Abraham came from that land between the Euphrates and Tigris rivers. The first world empires of Assyria and Babylon arose there. Daniel served Nebuchadnezzar and his successors there. Ezekiel prophesied there. The captive Jews wept by the rivers of Babylon (Psalm 137). Read the prophecies of Daniel and Ezekiel! They will give you a better understanding of what is taking place than the news analysts of today.

Will they? NO!

When past fulfillment of biblical prophecy is either ignored or rejected, interpretation of prophecy becomes fantasized fiction. Moses and the prophets foretold the coming of the Messiah. He came in the Person of Jesus. The Jews rejected Him. So they are still awaiting Him. Orthodox Hasidic Jewish rabbis are suggesting to their followers that the current Iraqi crisis may spark the "terrible war" which may herald the coming of the Messiah. He would then for once and all time solve the Arab-Jewish conflict.

Victory for the Jews!

Christian scholars are re-examining the prophecies of Daniel and Ezekiel. They seem certain that the Iraqi crisis will trigger a series of wars that will climax in the Battle of Armageddon. Then Jesus, the Messiah, will come again to establish His Jewish millennial kingdom. But again: Past fulfillment of prophecy is ignored.

Fantasy reigns!

Repent!

Hal Lindsey diagrammed the battle plans for Armageddon twenty years ago in his book. Israel is to be attacked by a Pan-Arab League. Russia and her allies are to swoop down from the north. The Roman Confederacy in the form of the Common Market Nations is to launch an amphibious assault. Uncontrolled fantasy! Imagination run wild!

Facts: Despite Saddam Hussein's attempt to link the Kuwaiti problem with the Palestinian question the Arab States remain divided, some in battle array against him. The USSR is in economic deaththroes. It is allied with the USA, but is sitting this one out. The Common Market nations are allied against Iraq, not Israel, with British and French forces deployed against Iraq. The USA and the West are staunch defenders of Israel. Daniel and Ezekiel have absolutely nothing to say about the current Middle East crisis. The modern prophets are ripping off their flocks and throwing desert sand into their eyes.

The drama that is unfolding in the

Middle East is an old rerun—clashing geopolitical forces, nationalism, expansionism, economic greed, the lust for power, centuries-old hatreds and fears. But who wants to admit to all this? Camouflage it with a Moslem jihad (holy war) against the Christian and Jewish infidels! That's the propaganda line out of Baghdad.

"War is hell," said Sherman. "War is judgment—punishment," say the Scriptures. Hussein's Iraq and Khomeni's Iran were pounded with that judgment for eight years, but learned nothing. Iraq is inviting an-

other visitation from the Lord.

But if it comes it will also strike Christians in our country and other Western nations. Can anyone say that America does not have judgment coming? "There is no peace," says the Lord, "for the wicked" (Is. 48:22, 57:21). "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, for our God is a consuming fire" (Hebr. 10:31, 12:29).

The situation cries out loudly: Repent!

—Paul F. Nolting



The Gospel, the Power of God— Studies in Romans

THE GOSPEL—GOD'S POWER TO SAVE

At one time churches of the Lutheran Reformation took great care to include the word **Evangelical** in their name. Perhaps your official church title has it, for many still do. It was a way, a good way, to declare that you—together with the apostle Paul—"serve God with my whole heart in **preaching the gospel of His Son**" (Rom. 1:9).

The practice is changing. The young church of which I am a member did not include it when the congregation was incorporated. The reason? Because the word is now widely used to represent what frequently differs from the scriptural definition of **gospel** as we know it. "Evangelical" has become a catch-all reference for a widely disparate range of conservative Christian groups. One, by way of a 1944 merger plan, has made common cause with a de-

nomination which openly advocates Unitarianism! Sometimes you are robbed of a good word when its usage can cause misunderstanding.

So Confident!

By whatever means, faithful Christians want the world to know their conviction that the Gospel, and the Gospel alone, is able to do the work of God: the salvation of fallen, lost people and the earth they inhabit. Many deride the Gospel as a foolish remedy for the ills of the world. The Jews want "signs." The Greeks demand "wisdom." (I Cor. 1:22-23) The apostle makes his boast in it:

"I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the *power of God* for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile" (Rom. 1:16).

God's very own power (literally "dynamite")! Just think of it. God has placed upon our lips the single dynamic force which He employs to save people from eternal dying and bring them to life and glory. The Bible knows no other such "Means of Grace." This is the *only* weapon God has given us to defeat the very gates of hell. So powerful, none other is needed. It can, and it does prove its ability to "call, gather, enlighten, sanctify and keep in the faith" the people of God.

The Secret of Its Strength

The secret of Samson's strength was in his mop of hair. The secret of the gospel's power lies in what it **does**. **"For in the Gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is from faith to faith, just as it is written: 'The righteous will live by faith' "** (1:17).

The gospel is a divine power because it *reveals* something. Something so great that the very revelation of it changes things. The lost are found and brought home. The heart is turned to God. New life is engendered in what was dead in trespasses and sins. Faith replaces fear. Joy takes the place of sorrow. Hope supplants despair. God-glorifying fruits of faith abound where only law-works were known. Salvation! And only gospel-revelation can do it! How could anyone be ashamed of such power?

It's Christ

What is this "righteousness of God" which the gospel reveals to us? One could say **everything** that God in His faithfulness and perfection of holiness

has done for our salvation. "The wonderful works of God" which were so ably proclaimed on Pentecost. But it is Paul himself who defines that righteousness best for us: "Christ Jesus . . . has become for us wisdom from God—that is, **our righteousness**, holiness and redemption" (I Cor. 1:30).

This, praise God, is ours by the simple taking of **faith** ("from faith"). And that too is a gift of God ("to faith"). We are certainly honoring God rather than ourselves when we share the ringing affirmation that "The righteous will live by **faith!**"

Deservedly "Evangelical"

When can we rightly say that a church is "evangelical"? Surely when Christ is preeminent in its preaching, when the works of God are the great occupation in pulpit and pew. When law is kept in its proper place, demonstrating the universal need for what the gospel alone can do. When good works are seen as fruits of faith, motivated by the gospel alone. When we are encouraged to see ourselves for what we **are** in Christ rather than what we **ought** to be in ourselves. When the talk is of privilege rather than duty. "Evangelical" is often a matter of attitude and manner as well as words.

Do you qualify?

If we say we are **Lutheran** we claim that we do.

—Rollin A. Reim



Pilgrims on Earth (#14 in Series)—

"Jephthah spoke all his words before the Lord in Mizpah . . . and the Lord delivered them into his hands" (Judges 11:11, 32).

JEPHTHAH: THE UNLIKELY SAVIOR

Conditions were bad in Gilead. For eighteen years the Israelites on the east bank of the Jordan had struggled under the oppression of the Ammonites. This unhappy situation had come about because the people had turned away from God to idol worship. Finally they realized their sin and repented. They pleaded with God to help them. "And His soul could no longer endure the misery of Israel" (Judg. 10:16).

The merciful God sent help. It was in the form of an unlikely savior. Jephthah had an unfortunate birth. His mother was not his father's wife. She was a prostitute. But it seems that his father did acknowledge him and raise him in his home. After his father died, his half-brothers drove him out. They were not going to share their inheritance with Jephthah. He went north and made his home in the land of Tob. It was unlikely that he would ever return to Gilead.

A Valiant Warrior

The word used to describe him means "valiant warrior." He seems also to have been a born leader. Other outcasts joined him. Apparently he spent his time and made a living by raiding remote areas. Certainly that was an unlikely occupation for one who would become a hero of faith (cf. Heb. 11:32). But it was very similar to what David did before he became king (I Sam. 27).

The men of Gilead faced a problem. They had gathered their army to fight the Ammonites. Who would be their captain? They made an unlikely choice. They chose Jephthah, the man whom they had thrown out some years earlier. It would be embarrassing to go to him and ask him to help them. But God had given him the abilities that they needed now. He was an experienced soldier and had a small army of his own.

What would Jephthah say when asked to return to Gilead? It was unlikely that he would do so. Why should he? He might well believe that those who had driven him from his father's home deserved everything they might suffer at the hands of the Ammonites.

When asked to lead the army of Gilead against the Ammonites, Jephthah asked: "Didn't you hate me and throw me out of my father's house? Why do you come to me now when you are in trouble?" Rather than answer directly, the elders increased their offer. "That is why we have come to you now. We want you to go with us and fight against the people of Ammon, and be our head over all the inhabitants of Gilead." What an unlikely turn of events. He wouldn't be their leader in battle only; he would be their ruler after the war was won.

Perhaps doubting his ears, Jephthah repeated their offer: "If you take me back home to fight against the people of Ammon, and the Lord delivers them

to me, shall I be your head?" The elders replied: "The Lord will be a witness between us, if we do not do according to your words."

By God's will the unlikely happened. Jephthah agreed to help the people who had treated him so badly. They made him their ruler. And he prayed to God, bringing the whole matter before Him. "And Jephthah spoke all his words before the Lord in Mizpah." We can be sure that those words included a request for God's help in dealing both with the Ammonites and with the people of Gilead.

His work was before him. And he followed an unlikely course for a soldier. He tried diplomacy. He sent messengers to the King of Ammon asking why he had come to fight against Gilead. The king answered that the land in Gilead really belonged to the people of Ammon. The Israelites had taken it from them when they came from Egypt. Now the Ammonites were going to get it back.

God Saves His People

Jephthah replied that Israel had not taken the land from the people of Ammon. They had carefully avoided the land of the Ammonites and the Moabites. They had taken the land from Amorites when Sihon, King of Heshbon, refused to let them cross into the Promised Land. That had happened over 300 years earlier. And if the land really belonged to the people of Ammon, why hadn't they tried to get it back earlier?

The King of Ammon did not reply. Nor did he withdraw. Jephthah led the Gileadites against the Ammonite army, "and the Lord delivered them into his

hands." In fact, there was "a very great slaughter. Thus the people of Ammon were subdued before the children of Israel." God had saved His people. And Jephthah was very willing to give God the credit for the victory. It was a cause for great happiness and rejoicing.

However, sorrow came from an unlikely source. Jephthah who otherwise seems to have been quite practical had made a strange vow. If God would give Him the victory "then it will be that whatever comes out of the doors of my house to meet me . . . shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up as a burnt offering." It was his only child, his beloved daughter, who came to meet him. Whether by sacrifice or by dedication to the Lord, he lost his daughter and any chance for heirs. (Did he sacrifice her on an altar as a burnt offering? There are clues that he did not. "She went with her friends and bewailed her virginity" for two months. After we are told that Jephthah did to her as he had vowed, it is stated: "She knew no man." It does not say that she was killed and burned on an altar.)

Trouble came from another unlikely source. Soldiers from the neighboring tribe of Ephraim came. They threatened to burn down Jephthah's house because he had attacked the Ammonites without them. They felt they should have had a part in saving Gilead. Jephthah explained that he had asked them but they had not come. Since the Gileadites were already suffering at the hands of the Ammonites, he had to fight without the Ephraimites.

But the Ephraimites would not accept his explanation and he was forced

to fight them. Surely it caused Jephthah deep sorrow that 42,000 men from his neighboring tribe of Israel died because of their unreasonable pride.

Six years later Jephthah, the unlikely savior, died. He was another pilgrim whom God used to carry out His

will, one of the people "who through faith subdued kingdoms . . . out of faith were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens" (Heb. 11:33-34).

—Keith Olmanson

Partners in the Gospel . . .

St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church Lemmon, South Dakota



Sunday School on Christmas Eve, 1990

When South Dakota celebrated its Centennial in 1989, the city of Lemmon turned 82—and St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church marked its 80th year. One hundred miles beyond the Missouri River, the city of Lemmon grew up quickly when the Milwaukee Railroad extended its service west from Mobridge along the North Dakota-South Dakota line in 1907. Homesteaders poured into the treeless "short grass" countryside, living in sod shanties and tar paper shacks until lumber could be "imported," turning the prairie into farmland with horse-drawn plows and back-breaking work.

Many of these settlers were of Ger-

man Lutheran heritage and soon began worshiping together in their homes. As early as 1908 a vicar was sent "west river" to serve those in the Lemmon area. On August 1, 1909 the first resident pastor, William Pankow, arrived. Fifteen months later St. Luke's first church building was dedicated to the spread of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Around the city of Lemmon some still refer to St. Luke's as the "German Lutheran Church." That's certainly understandable, since English services were not conducted regularly until after 1925 and German services were not entirely discontinued until 1950. Indeed, when the state of South Dakota,

gripped by war-time hysteria in 1918, banned German services for a time, the people of St. Luke's went across the tracks into North Dakota. There they worshiped in homes rather than be forced to make the language change.

The years have seen many changes other than language . . .

- * Eighteen different pastors have served the congregation, including names familiar to *Spokesman* readers: H.E. Rutz ('39-'46), V.E. Greve ('56-'70), D. Koenig ('73-'86) and the undersigned.
- * Sister congregations in the area closed their doors and their people drove in to St. Luke's as the rural population declined and roads improved in the 1950's. These and other changes have caused the membership to vary both up and down from the present 187 souls.
- * In its 50th year St. Luke's found it necessary to change its synodical affiliation in order to avoid changing its doctrine—leaving the Wisconsin Synod and becoming a charter member of the CLC.
- * A new church building at a new location was dedicated in 1964.



- * Three different parsonages have been employed
- * A Christian Day School was maintained from 1974-84, with teachers E. Maier, D. Gurgel, S. Seibel, T. Quade, K. Olmanson, and L. Lyndgaard serving.

One thing, however, has not changed down through the years at St. Luke's, and that is the central thing—the message of the Cross: The Word of forgiveness full and free on the basis of Jesus' living and dying in our stead. That Gospel word has been held out to and by the people of St. Luke's for all of its history, and—God grant it—will be until our victorious Lord returns.

—W. V. Schaller



Dedication In Florida

Church of the Lutheran Confession of North Port, Florida, one of the youngest congregations of the CLC, dedicated its new house of worship to the glory of God on November 18, 1990. Board of Missions member, Pastor Robert List of Sleepy Eye, Minnesota, was guest speaker. There were 35 members and friends in attendance.

The building was the former Ameri-



can Police Hall of Fame, listed as a tourist attraction in the AAA guidebook; they had moved to new quarters in Miami. The property is ideally located on US 41, the major highway passing through the community.

Because original deed restrictions limited property use to nonprofit activities, the purchase price was less than half that which is normal for such prime highway frontage. A loan from the Mission Extension Fund financed the purchase. Used pews and altar furnishings were acquired from a nearby church that also was moving to a new facility. Some other renovations were required by local zoning codes, and the small group of members took care of landscaping, painting, and similar projects.

CLC North Port was begun as a preaching station in October 1988 as a result of a request by a small group in the area. For the first two years services were held in a public meeting room provided by the local Chamber of Commerce. Retired Pastor Carl Thurow served for two months, followed by retired Professor Roland A. Gurgel. Pastor Richard Kuehne conducted services during the summers of '89 and '90, and Pastor Norbert Reim was the shepherd during the fall, winter, and spring of '89-90. At present Professor Gurgel is back for a "second



Chapel Interior

term."

This arrangement may seem unusual to many readers, but church attendance varies widely. During the winter season "snowbirds" and others who live up north part of the year more than double summer attendance. During the hot months many year around residents visit friends and relatives in other parts of the country.

Communicant membership is only ten at present, but new faces are appearing every week. We are confident that the Lord will continue His rich blessings as He has in the past.

Readers planning to vacation in Florida this winter—or any time—are invited to come and worship with us. Services are at 10:00 a.m. with Sunday School and Bible Class at 11:00 a.m. North Port is on the west coast of Florida, halfway between Tampa and Ft. Myers.

—Robert A. Peters

A New Nigerian Shepherd

It is a rare and special experience for a congregation to be part of a commissioning service for a foreign missionary. Such was the happy lot of the members of Grace in Fridley, Minnesota on Sunday, December 30. On a

typical blustery December Minnesota Sunday, the hearts of 230 worshipers (including extended family and friends) were warmed as Pastor Paul Gurgel was commissioned (installed) as our new Nigerian missionary. His



Pastors M. Bernthal, D. Fleischer, P. Gurgel, D. Schierenbeck, D. Koenig

responsibilities will include both the training of future NCLC pastors in the Bible Institute and guiding and encouraging NCLC members and congregations in their outreach efforts.

Pastor David Koenig, who recently completed four years of service in Nigeria, delivered the sermon on John 10:11-16. He encouraged his successor to emulate the pastoral pattern and example of his Savior in his love for the sheep. (In a cultural footnote worshippers were informed that there are no sheep in southern Nigeria, but only cantankerous goats. Quite a picture of the obstinate sinner for whom the Good Shepherd came and laid down His life!) Host Pastor Daniel Fleischer served as liturgist with Mission Board chairman Pastor David Schierenbeck conducting the rite of commissioning.

Following the service a dinner reception and program in honor of both our former and new Nigerian missionaries were held. Pastor and Mrs. (Barbara) Gurgel and sons Micah, Daniel, and Joshua left Chicago on New Year's Day for their "exciting and challenging" field of labor. Sons Jeremy (16) and Nathan (14) who attend ILC will remain here in the care of family members.

Please remember the Gurgel family in your prayers as they serve their Lord

in our behalf in this far away land. Also appreciated would be mail from CLC brethren in the States. Their address may be found in the new CLC Directory.

As we look back over the 15 years of our involvement in Nigeria, we marvel at the Lord's blessings. In spite of many difficulties and obstacles, the original plea of the Nigerians to our first visitation team, "Come and teach us," is being answered. Pastor E. E. Essien has served faithfully as NCLC President and Bible Institute instructor. Pastor Patrick Udo, who was trained at ILC, is assuming a growing role in the Bible Institute. The Spirit has led two CLC pastors to assist the NCLC in training future pastors.

Beyond that, our prayers ascend heavenward for the young NCLC men led to dedicate their lives to the Lord's service, as well as for the petitions and gifts of CLC members which make possible our presence in Nigeria. To God alone the glory!

—*David Schierenbeck*

Installation

On January 6, 1991 I installed John Ude as pastor of Messiah Lutheran Church, Hales Corners, Wisconsin as authorized by President Daniel Fleischer. Pastors Theodore Barthels, John Johannes, John Johannes Jr., Michael Sydow and Paul Tiefel assisted.

—*Robert W. Mackensen*

Change of Address

Pastor Norbert Reim
801 Princess Dr.
Corpus Christi, TX 78410
Phone: (512) 241-5147

Announcement

Pastor Robert Reim has resigned from the Board of Doctrine for reasons of health. Pastor L. D. Redlin has been appointed to replace him.

—*Daniel Fleischer, President*

Great Lakes Pastoral Conference

Date: April 9-10

Place: Gethsemane Lutheran Church, Saginaw,
Michigan

Scheduled Essays:

1. N.T. Exegesis, I Corinthians 3:6-18—David Reim
2. O.T. Exegesis, Ecclesiastes—Paul Tiefel
3. What Does the Biblical Concept of Fearing God Entail?—John Johannes
4. An Analysis of the Spiritual Implications of the "12 Step" Technique for Counseling Those Suffering from Compulsive or Addictive Behaviors—Mike Sydow
5. Theses/Antitheses Re: the Doctrine of the Call—Egbert Albrecht
6. Book Review: *Prophets of Psychoheresy II* by Martin & Deidre Bobgan—An ILC Professor
7. The Influence of Reformed Literature on our Church/Ministry—P. F. Nolting

—David Reim, Secretary

Names Requested

St. Stephen congregation of Hayward, California is requesting the names of CLC members or people under our spiritual care who are in the Persian Gulf. They will be compiling these names and sharing the information with CLC congregations and schools, who may wish to send encouragement to our people in the Gulf. Please send names and addresses to Rev. Jerome Barthels, 21290 Birch Street, Hayward, CA 94541.

Special Announcement

Professors L. W. Schierenbeck and James C. Pelzl are retiring from their service as full-time faculty members of Immanuel Lutheran Seminary, College, and High School at the end of the current school year. We are deeply grateful to God for the dedicated service of these men to many of our ILC/CLC young people over the years. In token of our appreciation the ILC Board of Regents invites donations to a "retirement purse" which will be divided equally between the two men. Gifts for this purse should be so designated and made payable to the CLC. Gifts should be sent by May 15, 1991 to:

Lowell Moen, Treasurer

3455 Jill Ave.

Eau Claire, WI 54701

—V. Fossum, Regents Secretary

Itinerary

Prof. John Reim announces the following itinerary for the ILC Tour Choir:

Mar. 17	Millston, Wis.	10:15 a.m.
Mar. 21	Hales Corners, Wis.	7:00 p.m.
Mar. 22	Addison, Ill.	7:00 p.m.
Mar. 24	Hendersonville, N.C.	10:45 a.m.
Mar. 24	W. Columbia, S.C.	5:00 p.m.
Mar. 25	Fairfax, Va.	8:00 p.m.
Mar. 28	Saginaw, Mich.	7:00 p.m.
Mar. 29	Sister Lakes, Mich.	2:00 p.m.
Mar. 29	Coloma, Mich.	7:30 p.m.
Mar. 30	Fond du Lac, Wis.	7:30 p.m.
Mar. 31	Markesan, Wis.	10:15 a.m.
Apr. 7	Eau Claire, Wis.	7:30 p.m.

Sioux City, Iowa, Services Planned

Berea Lutheran of Sioux Falls will be holding services monthly in the Sioux City area. If you know of anyone who would be interested, they may contact Rev. Lawrence Bade, 4601 E. Madison Street, Sioux Falls, SD 57103-6451. Or call (605) 335-6683 (collect calls accepted).