February, 1964

Why I Broke from the Roman Catholic Church
MRS. ROBERT HUIZINGA

Neo - Evangelicalism and Billy Graham
REV. R. C. HARBACH
BEACON LIGHTS
FOR PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUTH

VOLUME XXIV  FEBRUARY, 1964  NUMBER 1

Published monthly, except June and August by the Federation of Protestant Reformed Young People’s Societies.

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Subscription price: $3.00
Second Class Postage paid at
Grand Rapids, Michigan

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THE NEED FOR PROTESTANT REFORMED HIGH SCHOOLS

There are many cogent considerations which necessitate Protestant Reformed parents’ providing Protestant Reformed Education for their son or daughter in the high school years. Fundamentally these considerations may all be traced to one principal source, namely: we are called to educate this youth of the covenant in the fear of The Only God, i.e., The God OF THE SCRIPTURES! And it is the solemn calling of all those that hold the Protestant Reformed heritage dear, to strive for that goal with all might and means, so that when it pleases God so to grant, the reality shall appear. We’re humbly thankful to see that the parents in the Grand Rapids area have dared to express this as their desire of soul, and that now it is in the stage of becoming a reality. For it is apparent that we cannot fulfill this calling by sending this seed to the camp of those who claim to confess Scripture’s God, but who in reality attempt to form another that is more in line with today’s thought of “God gives grace to all”; thus god, but not GOD.

We find many things that we cannot condone in the present day “Christian” high school. But we must be careful here. ln that sphere of the nominally “Christian” high school, we may find many things that we don’t like, but let us be careful not to suggest that we did not expect them there! Just take a look at the history of churches as a group, or at the history of any single church, that doctrinally went wayward. Sooner or later, and generally amazingly soon, you notice this: the decay in doctrine has spread as a horrid cancer and the life of that church is nearly identical to the world. But there is one treacherous difference: that group yet wants to claim the title of one whom they don’t know, even Christ. Oh, I am not speaking head for head, but confessionally they deny Him... how then can they know Him? Therefore we should not be surprised to see these things that “go against” us, in the existing schools. They are but the inevitable fruit of men that continue doctrinally in a wayward way. This must and DOES become manifest in their schools also.

So we notice that the existing schools are loath to remain distinct in character, though distinct in name. The ill-suited reply to an attack on amalgamation with public systems in almost any possible joint endeavor is: “Don’t you see? We’re letting our testimony and light shine before these heathen!” It’s hardly worth the answer when we have to be busy with such nonsense! Join with them (the world) in as many activities as possible, academic and social, so that you can let your light shine, so you can show them that you, as a child of the Living God, are called to be different in this world of sin, and that you must come out and be separate? How can your testimony ever contain anything of that antithesis, when your walk is directly opposed to it and puts the lie to every word your lips confess? But this is the thing we must expect in these “Christian” high schools.

Be different? Yes, perhaps, but it doesn’t really matter (so they say) that we have election of a king and queen, and an extra little crew to be their respective courts, does it? That such can continue under the name of Christianity absolutely amazes us. Fostering and nurturing such idolatry and world-limindedness certainly is not approved by
our parents, but don’t forget the children see it all . . . and it goes under the name of our Lord and Redeemer . . . and it makes us quake at the blasphemy of it all. But this again is what we expect, not only, but also witness in these “Christian” schools.

The instruction itself provides the main point of objection for the Protestant Reformed parent. Teach them in the home (do we?) and teach them in the catechism, and for the rest of their spheres the Lord’s command to diligent teaching does not apply? Of course it applies! Well the Protestant Reformed parent knows better than to think that those who kicked our leaders from their midst some forty years ago are going to repent of that work, and suddenly begin teaching our children the truth. That is the root. They cannot teach our children because they don’t have the truth. And let us not be afraid to say so. If our existence means anything at all, as far as education is concerned, it means this: That others may not have our children to inculcate as they see fit! The youth of a denomination simply may not complacently be given over to her enemy and expect thereby to be strengthened in the cause of that denomination. They won’t either. They will be strengthened in the cause of that enemy.

We wonder somewhat at the lack of stress of these things in the past. It is high time that we become aware of the fact that education is not to be denied, a powerful influence in the life of youth. Well, after forty years then, let us all be of one mind and have the courage to express that we need and want our own distinctive schools as well for the high school seed as that which is in our grade schools. Let us labor to that end with the means that He has given unto us, too. Doing those things in the way of prayer, we will be blessed in the instruction of this youth. And we shall never be put to shame!

H.W.K.

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**ATTENTION, ALL YOUNG PEOPLE AND INTERESTED FRIENDS**

For an enjoyable evening of Christian fellowship you are invited to attend the annual Young People’s Mass Meeting.

It will be held at Southeast Protestant Reformed Church February 25, at 8:00 P. M.

The speaker will be Student Mr. Robert Decker and his topic will be “Love Your Enemies.”

After a brief intermission Mr. Donald Faber will show movie pictures taken on his recent trip to the Caribbean Sea. Included in his pictures are a few shots of Jamaica and the new Protestant Reformed Church of Jamaica.

Refreshments will also be served.

See you there.
"WHY I BROKE AWAY FROM THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH"

MRS. ROBERT HUIZINGA

A seed of doubt rooted in the heart began to grow. Doubts must be confirmed! Faith manifests itself in surety.

The Romish church gave me a thorough education and brought me up as a God-fearing person. The sacrifice of the Mass was the life of the Romish church that fed me. In my eyes it held all the beauties of salvation. That renewal of the vicarious death of Christ on the cross was essential in my life for nourishment and growth. The seven sacraments were next in importance, all of which I had a firm belief in. Where were those doubts rooted? In tradition! When I graduated from Catholic Central High School I knew tradition upside down and backwards. The Romish church never let me forget what a supposedly wonderful thing tradition was. In my eyes it was ever changing and worthless in value. At this time also I was taught of the importance of the Bible. In the New Testament I was fairly well instructed. Yet I knew not how to pronounce the names of any of the Old Testament books. And worse yet, I knew almost nothing as to what was written in them. Why was so little emphasis put on this written Word of God and so much on tradition? This question at that time was not enough to disrupt or even phase my belief in the mass. Thus it was left unanswered.

Then in a serious discussion on the doctrines of Rome these questions were put before me:

1. Do you believe that the sacrifice of the mass is an actual renewal of Calvary in an unbloody manner? Of course I did.

2. Do you believe that the death on the cross and the agonies that Christ suffered were sufficient for the salvation of His Church? My reply was a certain "Yes".

3. Then why is it necessary to recrucify Christ at the mass as you do every day, if one time was enough? Why? I had not an answer. A seemingly million other questions now urgently needed confirming. Then for the first time I started to search and study for answers to all my questions and doubts. Due to the fact that in my eyes tradition was a lost cause I had only the Bible to rely on — that Word of God which I knew too little about. In need of help I retreated to my parish priest who helped only to confuse me more.

Seeing in someone very close to me a church and faith so strong that it stood out in his daily walk I decided to learn more about his church. I called and talked to Rev. H. Hanko and discussed the possibility of my studying the Protestant Reformed Church. This resulted in the most important change in my life.

For the first time my Bible was my most prized and used possession. Rev. H. Hanko made me search the Bible for the answers to both his and my questions, never was anything left unanswered.

For me to pinpoint all the reasons why I changed would take a book . . . and that is exactly where you can see why I did so. Read and live your Bible, upon this word of God rely and Rome can never take hold of you. For in the Bible I've found unseparable ties by which I can face the powers of the darkness and stride on my pathway back to God with ever sure footsteps.

The Protestant Reformed Church has the truth of the Word of God as its heart and life. Our church has the purest manifestation of the Truth; and it is here only that I find the strength to fight the battle of Faith.
The History of the Synod

We may turn now to a brief description of the actual proceedings of this Synod.

We have already noticed that the time between November 13 and December 6 was taken up in other business.

It was on December 6 that the Synod turned its attention to the question of the Arminian heresy that was running rampant in the Churches.

Before the Arminians were actually called to appear on the floor of the Synod to defend themselves, they had met in Rotterdam to determine on a course of action. They had decided to pursue a course of action which clearly showed their evil intent—an intent that was not at all for the welfare of the Church. They decided not to allow themselves to be engaged in any doctrinal discussions of the questions that were at issue, nor to permit the Synod to examine their views in the light of Scripture. They decided instead to detain and obstruct the Synod in every way they possibly could in the hopes that the Synod (especially the foreign delegates) would weary of it at last and go home without having decided anything. They were rather confident that if they could delay the Synod for some time, the ecclesiastical assembly that had been called to try them would dissolve. And, if they were given some more time to propagate their views, they were reasonably certain that they could win the day in the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands so that their position would become the official position of the Church.

In order to accomplish this, they decided, on the one hand, to question the legality of the Synod to try their case. They decided to insist that the meeting of the Synod was not a Synod at all that possessed any authority to deal with them, but that rather it was a conference between opposing viewpoints that could, at best, make certain recommendations. On the other hand, they decided to appeal to the foreign delegates in an attempt to gain their sympathy. The appeal was to be made on the basis of the fact that the Dutch theologians maintained (especially in the truth of reprobation) a most cruel, repulsive and God-dishonoring doctrine. They hoped to convince the foreign delegates that this Synod was called merely to condemn serious and pious men who stood in the way of such doctrines. Thus the defense of the heretics was to rest on personal attacks and on a strategy of delay.

The Synod chose a very staunch defender of the truth in their president—Johannes Bogerman, whom the Arminians tried to get out of the chair. As its two clerks upon whom fell the mountain of work of recording the minutes and the speeches, the Synod chose Hommius and Damman.

Almost immediately, upon being summoned to the Synod, the Arminians began their work of destroying the Synod if they could. A very learned, suave, capable and clever man by the name of Episcopius, was their spokesman. No sooner had the Arminians opened their defense and Episcopius arose to pronounce a blessing upon the entire body. But then they proceeded to put into force their tactics which they had de-
cided to use. Every form of deceit, every stratagem of double-dealing, every conceivable argument, every haughty and boastful villainy against the Synod was used in an attempt to prevent the Synod from entering into the doctrinal implications of the issue. The Synod attempted again and again, with tremendous patience, to examine the Arminian position and hold the views of these men up to the light of Scripture. But they were never permitted to do it. And, when the issues became sharply drawn and the heretics had dug out the last of their tricks to delay the Synod, they flatly refused to submit to Synod's authority.

All this was finally brought to a close on January 14, 1619. President Bogerma arose and addressed the following words to the Arminians: "The foreign delegates are now of the opinion that you are unworthy to appear before the Synod. You have refused to acknowledge her as your lawful judge and have maintained that she is your counter-party; you have done everything according to your own whim; you have despised the decisions of the Synod and of the Political Commissioners; you have refused to answer; you have unjustly interpreted the indictments. The Synod has treated you mildly; but you have—as one of the foreign delegates expressed it—'begun and ended with lies'. With that eulogy we shall let you go. God shall preserve His Word and shall bless the Synod. In order that she be no longer obstructed, you are sent away! You are dismissed! Get out!"¹

The Arminians left; but not before they made many pious pronouncements. "With Christ I shall keep silence about all this. God shall judge between me and this Synod," Episcopius cried. Some appealed to the judgment day and others left calling the Synod an assembly of the Godless.

As you can well imagine, the Synod was deeply moved by this dramatic moment, and stirred by the departure of these men. But, without the lengthy interruptions and delays of the Arminians, Synod could now get down to work.

The Synod was first divided into a number of sub-committees including sub-committees of the foreign delegates which were instructed to meet separately and hand in written opinions of the five articles which the Arminians had composed in Gouda several years before. The Arminians, although put out of the Synod's assemblies, were still permitted to hand in a written defense of their views—which they did in lengthy documents covering more than 200 pages in the Acts.

By the 22nd of March all the written opinions were in and read by Synod. After this, another committee of six was appointed to draw up "concept-Canons" which could be presented to the Synod for adoption. On April 16 the committee brought to the Synod the first part of their work—the "concept Canons" I & II. These were adopted by the Synod. The next day after this adoption, a day of prayer and thanksgiving was proclaimed by the State's representatives, a day which the Arminians bitterly called "Ahab's prayer day". On April 18, in its 130th session, the Synod adopted Canons III, IV, & V. To this was added a "Conclusion" which is also included in our Canons found in the back of the Psalter.

And so the mighty work of composing our Third Confession was accomplished.

Our Canons are, as we noticed above, divided into five "Heads of Doctrine". These five heads of doctrine or chapters are what have become known as the "Five Points of Calvinism" which are often memorized under the key-word "TULIP". To each chapter is added a series of articles in which various errors, particularly of the Arminians and Pelagians, are condemned.

These five chapters are careful statements and thorough expositions of the truth of Scripture over against the five articles of the Arminians which they adopted at their meeting in Gouda.

Although it is outside our intention in this series to discuss these doctrines completely, we do well to notice briefly what they teach.

The first chapter deals with "Divine Predestination".² In this chapter the truth is

¹Quoted from the Standard Bearer, Volume 29, pages 375, 376. In this volume of the Standard Bearer is contained a series of articles written by Prof. H. C. Hoeksema as an introduction to his commentary on the Canons which give many interesting facts of the Synod of Dort and an evaluation of its work. The interested reader is urged to consult these articles and read them.

²Notice that the order of the five chapters of the Canons does not correspond to the word "TULIP". This order was changed so that the memory device of "TULIP" could be used.
developed that the salvation of God’s people and the damnation of the wicked finds its origin in the eternal decree of God’s predestination. According to this decree God chose some to everlasting life and “leaves the non-elect in his just judgment to their own wickedness and obduracy.” (Article 6) This predestination is not a decree of God which is based upon what the Arminians called “foreseen faith and unbelief”; it is rather based only on the sovereign good pleasure of God. It is called consequently, “Unconditional Election”.

The second chapter deals with “The Death of Christ, and the Redemption of Men Thereby.” The particular teaching of this article is that Christ died only for His people so that the cross is a realization of the decree of election. Election and atonement are inseparably united. For the elect Christ died. And all of salvation is merited by Christ in this work of His cross. This we have come to call “Limited Atonement”.

The third chapter is combined with the fourth and is entitled, “Of the Corruption of Man, His Conversion to God, and the Manner Thereof.” Two main points are discussed. The first is that the fall of man resulted in his total corruption so that Adam and all his posterity are completely unable to do or will anything good or anything that will aid, abet or assist their salvation. Secondly, it is further emphasized in this article that man’s salvation is the fruit of the irresistible power of God’s grace—that regeneration, faith, conversion and all the blessings of salvation are solely the work of God which He performs sovereignly in the hearts of His rebellious (by nature) people in such a way that God accomplishes His own purpose of salvation. We refer to “Total Depravity” and “Irresistible Grace”.

Finally, the Canons, in their Fifth Head of Doctrine, develop the truth of the preservation of the saints. The Arminians had also denied this. They taught rather that when God began the work of salvation in the hearts of His people, this was a work which He finished by His own power until the elect were brought to final glory. And this work of preservation was made sure by the decree of election and the work of atonement.

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So Arminianism was defeated in the Netherlands.

There are several remarks which we wish to make by way of conclusion of this section of the history of the Church from “Dordt to Today”.

1) The Synod of Dordt also disciplined the Arminian ministers who refused to subscribe to the Canons. Some 200 ministers were deposed from office in the Dutch Churches. The foreign delegates took no part in this disciplinary action since this was purely a national matter of no immediate concern to the Reformed Churches in other countries. Further, in years following, for good or for bad, some of these deposed ministers returned again to the bosom of the Reformed Churches. I say that this could possibly have been bad because it is doubtful whether they returned in all cases in strict honesty. Some held to their Arminianism within their hearts even though outwardly they subscribed to the Canons.

2) The Synod of Dordt, and the Canons which this Synod composed and adopted, was a great victory for the Church of Christ. It is a most remarkable demonstration of the faithfulness of God toward us and the gracious care of Christ for His Church. Indeed, “the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

3) As is always the case with long and bitter struggles in defense of the truth, this Synod was also instrumental in developing beyond the statements of the Reformation, the Reformed faith. What Luther and Calvin had taught was now carried forward by their spiritual children. But these developments were hammered out on the anvil of ecclesiastical strife. So it always is. The lie is, under God’s sovereign control, a means to develop the truth. Dordt was no exception.

4) Finally, there are many in our day who claim to stand in the spiritual tradition of Dordrecht and the Calvin Reformation, but who deny the very truths our fathers incorporated into the Canons. We will treat this more extensively later, the Lord willing; but let us notice now that the doctrines which have, in the last half century, been developed in the Reformed Churches both in the Netherlands and here in America—the doctrines of a general offer of salvation, a common attitude of favor of God towards all men, man’s native ability to do good in

(Continued on page eight)
WHY I CHOSE TO BE A MINISTER

REV. DAVID J. ENGELMA

As soon as a minister of the gospel reflects upon the fact of his ministry from the viewpoint of his choice, he is turned by the Word which (or, Whom) he serves to acknowledge “how shall they preach, except they be sent?” (Rom. 10:15a) In this matter, it is imperative to “begin at the beginning” for God has reserved the “beginning” to Himself lest anyone, taking his eye off the gospel and staring fixedly at himself as the bringer of the gospel, rob God of His glory. The opening phrase of Scripture bears not only upon creation but upon redemption and upon every phase and aspect of it, “In the beginning, God.” The minister of the gospel must begin with “be(ing) sent” because Scripture states in an emphatic way that that is the beginning and the Spirit binds that “calledness” on the heart. Nor does he want it any other way for then he could not comfort and encourage himself with Paul’s “woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!” (I Cor. 9:16)

It is legitimate to publicly contemplate one’s choice to be a minister, not because “In the beginning, God” is succeeded by “afterwards man,” as if God deistically withdraws into the remote confines of His ivory palace, but because He does not send His servants willy-nilly. His call does not leave them “Balaam’s asses” nor even “Balaams” but renders them, by grace, willing and when they are willing, they choose.

I chose to be a minister because Jesus said, “I am... the truth” (John 14:6) and because Paul asks, “how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?” (Rom. 10:14) Two things become plain when these words of Jesus and His apostle are considered together: God has made the ministry of the gospel of crucial importance in the gathering and preserving of His beloved Church and, as that ministry consists exclusively in preaching Jesus Christ, it is the truth and the truth only, when preached and heard, which effects within the people of God that they believe in Christ so as to call on Him. Concerning this calling the apostle states, “Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” (Rom. 10:13) One need not debate on this statement: the salvation of the Church stands at the center of all things. It is the meaning of all history and of each historical moment and it explains the “working together” of all things. In other words, God declares that in the making spiritually free of His people, His glory is revealed and He is justified in all His works. The point to be stressed is that “the truth shall make you free.” (John 8:32)

God delivered the liberating truth to the apostles with the charge to preach it. The gift of the truth comes carrying this mandate so that the apostle Paul, rather than speaking in terms of choice, claims that “necessity is laid upon me.” (I Cor. 9:16) After a long period of tyrannical slavemaking by the Roman Church (but there were within the Roman framework, the lonely Gottschalks and Husses), designed by God to forcibly stamp upon us the fact that the lie means death, God committed His truth to the Church of the Reformation. That commitment spurred Luther to preach and Calvin and a host of others. They chose, if you will, not to bury the “talent,”
given by their Lord, but to put it to the exchangers that the Lord might receive His own with usury. (Matt. 25:15-28) Now, that line of the dispensing of the truth by God runs squarely over the Protestant Reformed Churches. To say less would not reveal modesty but cowardice. God calls for humility from those blessed by Him but not for timidity and false modesty which ends up in shame for the gospel. And with His gift comes His mandate to cherish the truth, not by burial, but by preaching.

When young men in our churches labor, some agonizingly, with the question whether they are called to preach, they ought not to limit themselves to a measurement of themselves by this or that standard of ability or certainty or feeling. Even to begin with these indefinite considerations lead to puzzlement and, which is worse, an easy escape from the charge God has laid upon the sons of our churches. The first and central consideration, around which all the other considerations find a place and in the light of which the others are to be viewed must be this, that God has committed His truth to our Churches, His liberating and glorious truth, which He delivered to be preached and taught. If the truth of God, which is Christ, is the starting point and the center of the reflective thoughts of our young men, I cannot believe that in the course of time our Churches will have to confess before God that there are none any more to proclaim the truth, that the truth must, as far as we are concerned, be silent.

Only a word about love. It was the point of this article that the lack of ministers could, perhaps, be traced to a nonchalant attitude toward the truth and God's giving of it to our Churches. It was the intent of this article to rouse, God willing, one or two to consider the truth, the truth which lives, the truth which Christ is, the truth which only makes free, when they deliberate on the matter of the ministry. One could, with equal validity, direct our young men to God's revelation of His love in our midst. God's marvellous love and the gracious fact that He has revealed it unto us to be proclaimed may just as well be the central consideration in the thoughts of young men in our Churches. God reveals His love where He establishes His truth. The vehement boasting of those who spurn the truth that they treasure love and embrace it is a hoax. On a worldwide scale, at present, the smoke-screen of apparent esteem for love rises to befog our senses to this bizarre fact, that love no longer "joices in the truth." (I Cor. 13:6) God is love; Christ is the truth. If love is united with the lie God is joined with Antichrist, a blasphemous affirmation and an absolute impossibility.

Since the staff of Beacon Lights has at heart the need in our churches of ministers, they will not begrudge my stepping outside the bounds of my assignment to offer one suggestion. In the past our Churches have focussed their expectant gaze upon youths in high school and college. Without drawing their gaze away from these youths altogether, our Churches might profitably give, at least, a fleeting glance to another segment of men, namely, the (relatively) young, married men. It sometimes seems that our Churches tacitly approve the notion of these men that the fact of a sizeable family, a well established business, or a comfortable income is a guarantee that God passes them by with His call. This is shoddy thinking and our Churches might do more to root it out than they have in the past.

(Continued from page six)

God's sight, a general and conditional promise, a universal love of God for all men—these are doctrines that have been condemned either directly or by implication in our Canons. Especially those who are busy teaching that God loves the whole human race ought to know that it was precisely against this view that the Canons were written. To condemn such teachings our fathers convened in Dordrecht more than 300 years ago and fought long and bravely.

Arminianism was condemned. But that must not be interpreted to imply that Arminianism is no longer a force in the Church. It has, especially in these days, returned with a vengeance. And, to the extent that our Canons are forgotten or ignored, it has seeped as a devastatingly powerful poison into the lifeblood of the Reformed Churches that claim the Canons as their Confession.

The obvious implication is that we, children of the Reformation and of our courageous fathers of Dordrecht, study, love, cherish and defend our Canons. Only then shall we be safe from the errors that fly about us.
FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY

The Wondrous Ways of the Lord
REV. GEO. C. LUBBERS

“A man’s heart deviseth his ways, but the LORD directeth his steps” Proverbs 16:9

We all do a bit of thinking. The Bible tells us that our thoughts which we think and the plans which we make, all proceed from our hearts. He who knew what is in the heart of man and needeth not that anyone inform him said that out of the heart proceed evil reasonings, murders, adulteries, fornication, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. Matt. 15:9. And, in another place, Christ tells us that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, and that a good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure of the heart bringeth forth evil things. Matt. 12:35.

Every man does a bit of planning. And some of these plans are decidedly wicked. They are God-less. God is not taken into consideration at all. The fool saith in his heart: there is no God. The man or men addressed in James 4:13 is a good case in point. They say that today or tomorrow they shall go to such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell and get gain. But the Lord may blow in it and dispel all these plans by taking them away in death. And the rich farmer of whom Jesus speaks in the well-known parable says, This will I do: I will pull down my barns and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry. Luke 12:18, 19.

The book of Proverbs says “a man’s heart deviseth his way”. Man thinks, meditates, reckons and computes! We make plans. In our youth we plan for our vocation and calling in life. We attend the college and school of our choice, seek a help-meet for life; we sow and reap, buy and sell, preach and teach,—in all this man’s heart deviseth his way.

However, there is not one thought that we think which is not in the hand and in the control of the LORD. The Lord directeth his steps. He does this whether he realizes our plans for us, or whether he frustrates them in His unsearchable and impenetrable wisdom. Let it not be forgotten that in all of our “devising” we never circumvent or overrule the directing hand and power of God whereby He determines our footsteps.

This happened in our life in a very striking manner during the past two weeks.

We planned to return from Michigan to Texas by way of Pella, Iowa. Fact is that we had made arrangements with the brethren there to that effect. But the LORD directed our footsteps differently in His inscrutable and just wisdom and providence.

Permit me to tell you just a bit about this, youthful reader.

We arrived safely with our kith and kin in Michigan on the last day of December on Tuesday evening. By Sunday afternoon I was interested to know about the services being held in our absence, about the well-being of the brethren and sisters in Houston, and also to tell them of our own safe arrival and how we had fared. As far as I was concerned I could call at least five
different homes. I dialed the number of Dr. Theo L. Holland. He picked up the phone on the first ring. He was noticeably pleased to receive our call, but he was perplexed. I had never called him before from Michigan. Had we been told of the illness of Mrs. Holland, his wife? Did I know that she had suffered a severe cerebral hemorrhage? I had not. I inquired after her condition and requested whether there was anything that we could do for them. He replied: you can remember us in your prayers. When I had asked a few more questions concerning others I assured him of our thoughts and prayers and he hung up the receiver overcome by feeling. I returned to the living room of our home and told them of the serious nature of Mrs. Holland. Now just the week before she had taken an active part in the Christmas program; she read some Scripture passages concerning the promise of the Savior to come from the Old Testament Scriptures!

I thought at that time of the word of the Proverbs which say “Boast not thyself of tomorrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth”. Proverbs 27:1.

But this is not the end. We were to experience that “man proposes but God disposes”. En route to Pella, Iowa from Jenison, Michigan we stopped at the home of Rev. and Mrs. C. Vanden Berg in Oak Lawn, Illinois. Before we arrived at the home of the latter Mrs. Lubbers opined that she thought it would be best if we simply visit for a little while and press on toward Iowa and eat our lunch en route which she had prepared for that purpose. However, I succumbed to the invitation to have supper with the Vanden Berg family and so our visit was extended a bit longer. While we were discussing the pro and con of the pastoral relationship which a missionary pastor should and inevitably does sustain to the sheep which he gathers by the preaching, the telephone rang. Imagine our surprise to hear it said “It is for you Rev. Lubbers; a personal call from Houston, Texas.” It was Mrs. R. Q. Holland calling, informing us that it was their urgent appeal that we come to Texas at once. She stated: “Please come immediately to Houston. We need you here. Dad and mother urgently request your presence.”

We called Iowa and explained the nature and apparent urgency of the call, and were told by Mrs. Vander Molen: “You just proceed to Houston, domine; we will get along; besides, there is a big storm and much snow on the way. So just keep going South, but don’t drive too fast.”

We did not wait to telephone back to Houston. Later that night at half past the hour of midnight, after we had driven 300 miles after supper, we telephoned them from some 30 miles south from St. Louis, Mo., that we were en route to Texas. Saturday we traveled 550 miles to Jefferson, Texas. We drove in 250 miles of rain through Arkansas, and had to stop that evening at 7:30 due to impenetrable fog. On Sunday morning we were up and going before daylight, drove 250 miles and were in time for the service at 11:00 A.M. We called to our children in Michigan and they were surprised to hear that we were in Bellaire, Texas and not in Pella, Iowa.

Truly man’s heart deviseth his way, but the LORD directeth his path. Our path led to the bedside of the stricken sister, which bedside became her death-bed. We might speak with her; she was overjoyed that we had come. She told us that all was well whatever the LORD had in store for her. She underwent the surgery which the neurosurgeons advised; we were assured that she went through a successful surgery, all looked promising and that nothing had gone wrong. Yet, she suddenly worsened and her life ebbed away.

On Saturday, Jan. 28 we conducted the funeral service. It was another “first” for me as Home Missionary. About 250 people were present. Many doctors, teachers and professional people and others were there. I chose I John 3:1-3 for the message. The Lord in His wisdom had sent me to preach before many people. Yes, the heart of man deviseth his path, but the LORD directeth his steps.

It was a balmy Saturday afternoon. It was 73 in the shade. We wended our way homeward that afternoon with mingled feelings. I thought of the compassion which the Lord had on the multitude who were without a shepherd. Truly I had preached the word which is as a two-edged sword. I had comforted the people of the LORD, who says: comfort ye, comfort ye, my people.

Yes, a man’s heart deviseth his ways, but the LORD directeth his steps...
TRUTH vs. ERROR

REV. ROBERT C. HARBAUGH

NEO-EVANGELICALISM AND BILLY GRAHAM

In our last installment Ecumenical Evangelist Billy Graham was shown to be one who loves to be a great mixer with modernists and church liberals. He is one of the great spokesmen for the new evangelicalism, one of the greatest compromise movements the world has yet seen. Moses had trouble with the equivalent movement of his day. When he led the children of Israel through the wilderness, he had to face the opposition not only of the Edomites and the Moabites, but also of the mixed multitude that came with them out of Egypt. There were the Edomites on the one hand, the Moabites on the other, and the Inbetweenites. Some of the Fundamentalists, however, think that this compromise position arises from faulty eschatology, namely, from post- or a-millennialism. These particular errors are thought to have opened the door to neo-evangelicalism. This rather bizarre notion, not even remotely connected with fact, is dangerous because it casts suspicions upon the Reformed churches which have ever in all their history been amillennial. As Protestant Reformed, the implication would be, we must paralogically open the doors to this, and undoubtedly many other errors because of our amillennialism. But we have nowhere, either in our doctrinal or practical life, assumed a compromise position. The Protestant Reformed position is not a compromise position. It is a position based on scriptural principles of exegesis, upon a biblical theology, upon unimpeachable hermeneutics, and founded on the great Reformed confessions. The compromise of the neo-evangelicals does not stem from any eschatological position maintained, but from a spirit motivated by concession to ecclesiastical liberalism and the modern world. Neo-evangelicalism pretends to have a more respectable and more comprehensive theological and philosophical position than Fundamentalism, that it more closely approaches to having a weltanschauung, a Christian world-and-life view. In this connection it charges Fundamentalism with setting up a “dichotomy between the personal gospel and the social gospel.” Now we, as Reformed, have never accepted either the concept or the expression “social gospel” as anything but anti-American, anti-scriptural and anti-Christ. For the “social gospel” is no gospel at all, and Galatians 1:7-9 and its curse apply to it. However, the gospel, the true gospel, is not antithetical to man’s social problems. The Word of God provides for man’s social as well as his spiritual needs. The Reformed Faith is a comprehensively well integrated system of truth embracing of the whole of reality, nothing excepted, but everything having its ordained place and God-given interpretation.

The father of neo-evangelicalism, and inventor of the term itself, is said to be Harold John Ockenga, pastor of Park Street Congregational Church, Park and Tremont Sts., Boston. He tells us that the strategy of neo-evangelicalism differs from that of Funda-
mentalism, which is that of separation, in that it adopts the tactic of infiltration. This is the tactic of permeation, the aim being to capture from within. This concept, "infiltration," has a bad connotation. It sounds too much like the strategy of the Unitarian, which is to infiltrate the Protestant denominations, "like breaking a hole in the Chinese wall," or like "grafting new thought ... on the older churches ... By indirect a large part of the finest and subtlest work is accomplished ... The purpose of its very existence is ... undoubtedly capturing strongholds that we could never carry by direct attack ... The modernists of Protestantism ... are working from within the fold ... we want more of them and we want them where they are." "What could Unitarianism hope to achieve? To permeate other churches with liberal tendencies ... to leaven the lump of ... Christianity." They "work from the inside ... doing it successfully, and the gradual permeation of the orthodox denominations with liberal ideas disseminated by trusted leaders of their own appears to them the best procedure." Within the body of the Christian church they gradually "sow the seeds of liberalism and wait until the time was ripe for more aggressive agitation." (From Unitarian writings quoted in "The Leaven of the Sadducees"). Not only is such "infiltration" the strategy of Unitarianism, but the neo-evangelicals open their doors to the Unitarians. At the 150th anniversary of Park Street Church, Feb. 28, 1959, included among the speakers beside Ockenga were Rev. Dana McLean Greely, president of the American Unitarian Association, and Erwin D. Canham, editor of the Christian Science Monitor. Now let no one charge us with "smearing" by association. Not we, but the neo-evangelicals have made their own sullied associations.

Neo-evangelicalism does not, as Fundamentalism, make an "attack upon error," but rather proclaims "the great historic doctrines of Christianity." The implication is that Fundamentalism is largely negative, while neo-evangelicalism is more positive. The same reasoning would make the Protestant Reformed Churches negativistic because they maintain the Rejection of Errors appended to the Canons of Dort, whereas the Reformed churches omitting these "Rejections" would be deemed more positive in approach.

But the Bible, the Ten Commandments, the Reformed Faith, the Reformation theology, Calvinism — however you wish to refer to the Christian truth, is both negative and positive. The Word of God thunders NO to sin and YES to righteousness. There is in the gospel no dichotomy between the negative side and the positive side of the gospel. Both sides belong to the true Christian faith.

Says Ockenga, "The New Evangelical is willing to face the intellectual problems and meet them in the framework of modern learning." Some make the mistake of looking for a common ground where the Christian and the non-Christian may meet. The area of "common grace," they say, is such a ground and meeting place. But the Word of God affords the non-Christian no place of refuge anywhere except in Christ. He cannot find a refuge in any neutral or common ground. But here are other men who do much worse, in standing on the enemy's ground. The only safe position is on the ground of Scripture truth, the doctrine of God, and that as exemplified in the Reformed confessions. Otherwise the church soon ceases being the church and conforms to the world.

A further criticism neo-evangelicalism makes of Fundamentalism is that the latter has failed because it is really not fundamental, it is rather peripheral, and taken too much with subsidiary elements of the faith. This is true. Fundamentalists, despite their vaunted name, have really never been as fundamental as a true adherent of the Reformed Faith. For they have always omitted the most basic fundamentals of the faith, the absolute sovereignty of God, the eternal counsel of God, the doctrine of Predestination, election and reprobation, in fact, the Five Points of Calvinism without which the fundamentals are sterile. In this connection, one failure of Fundamentalism is that although it has consistently fought modernism, it has never exposed Arminianism, which, unless uprooted, invariably leads to modernism. Arminianism is incipient modernism. There is simply no effective antidote against the plague of modernism without taking steps to eradicate the deadly germ of Arminianism. But in all the above respects, worse than Fundamentalism, neo-evangelicalism has failed. For it is even less fundamentally supported upon biblical and
spiritual bases. These ecumenical neutralists are permeated with pious platitudes, pragmatic religion and Arminian theology.

Neo-evangelicalism kicks against the goads (Ac. 9:5). Especially does it do this with regard to such arrows of the Almighty as 2 Cor. 6:14-19! They struggle like a dove in a snare to avoid the force of such barbs. Billy Graham claims such texts do not apply to him on the ground that he is an evangelist. It is the calling of an evangelist to separate from sin, but not from sinners; to reprove and rebuke as an evangelist, but not to reprove as an apostle, a prophet, an elder, or a watchman on the walls of Zion. It is his calling to lead those who ought to come into the church, not to expel those who ought to be removed from the church. Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse, pastor of the Tenth Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, when he defected to neo-evangelicalism similarly (mis)interpreted this passage, referring it exclusively to the idols of the Corinthian temples. According to this casuistry, the Bible loses its force, not applying to any man in any age following the period in which it was written. The Word of the Judge of all the earth set aside by a potsherd of the earth whenever he deems it convenient! But God is not mocked. He needs only a worm to prove this. (Joel 1:4). One of our own former ministers went so far as to defend heresies in the church. He thought he had Scripture grounds for his contention (corruption) in I Cor. 11:18, 19, Gk. But one text is perverted when it is twisted and forced to fly in the face of other texts. See, e.g., Titus 3:10.

Consider the maudlin defense of this ministry of compromise, namely that no one is perfect; we are not always at all times as consistent and faithful as we ought to be; our hearts are not pure enough to qualify us as irreproachable critics. Then judge not, lest ye be judged. Valid and acceptable will be your judgment when you become as successful a servant of God as Billy Graham, preach the gospel as widely as he, and have the concern for souls he has. This is the erroneous principle that results prove a doctrine. If this were true, the magicians of Egypt must have borne a divine imprimatur, for they, too, obtained results. But Isaiah had much more discernment. He said, “To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them” (8:20). Still, we do concede that we are not to judge according to appearance, but to judge righteous judgment (Jn. 7:24), especially when God’s honor and the cause of the true church are at stake. Love for souls demands that we unflinchingly heed the divine directive, “Cry aloud! spare not! lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins” (Isa. 58:1). That love for whose sake the Word of God is put to the stake is cursed!

For a long time, many people have had their doubts about Billy Graham. For a long time, thousands have had their doubts about the false ecumenical, one-church movement. Now Graham has been adopted by the ecumenists, modernists, Romanists and Jews to disarm the die-hard multitudes. No wonder they take him under their wing! The Graham crusade, after the Nashville meetings donated about $65,000 toward a stadium at Vanderbilt University, “an extremely liberal Methodist institution on whose faculty the blasphemous Nels Ferre was then serving.” As a result of the New York crusade the Graham organization presented a gratuity of $67,000 to the N.Y. Protestant Council of Churches. The New York Times, Oct. 25, 1963 reported, “Dr. Graham ... recalled that during a recent Graham crusade in Sao Paulo, Brazil, the Roman Catholic bishop stood beside him and blessed the converts as they came forward. Protestant leaders protested that such a display should not be permitted, Dr. Graham said he told them: ‘He’s the bishop here. You go ahead and stop it.’” If anyone has ever made a terrible affront upon the Protestant Christian conscience, Billy Graham has done it in this act and in these words. It is not unlike the heartless answer of the Jewish hierarchy to Judas, “See thou to it!” It is not a figment of our imagination that Graham openly cooperates not only with the worst modernist liberals of apostate Protestantism, but also with Christ-hating Jews and with Roman Catholics, to whom all history witnesses were the greatest enemies of the Lord and His people. These staggering facts, signs neither of reformation nor revival, are stone-wall evidences of The Apostasy, now upon us, and of the approaching kingdom of Antichrist, not among the least culpable precursors of which is Billy Graham.
HELPs FOR BIBLE STUDY ON THE

Genesis 17 - 21

REV. H. HANKO

THE FULFILLMENT OF THE PROMISE

Introduction:

The entire life of the patriarch Abraham centers around the birth of his son. God established His covenant with Abraham (chap. 15), yet this covenant meant nothing to Abraham except the Lord would also give him a son in whom his seed would be continued. Abraham was called to be a stranger and sojourner in the land of Canaan which was to him a strange land. And God had given him the promise of this land for an everlasting possession. But also this promise meant nothing unless Abraham received from the Lord a son. To Abraham this land of Canaan was a picture of the inheritance of heaven for he confessed that he was a stranger and a pilgrim in the earth; and therefore, “he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” Hebrews 11:9-16. But this promise of a heavenly inheritance could never come to Abraham if he died childless.

In chapters 17-21 this fact stands out with clarity. These chapters may therefore be divided as follows:

I. Preparations for the birth of the son of the promise. Chapter 17.
II. A specific lesson in covenant instruction. Chapters 18, 19.
III. A revelation of the mercy of God which alone can give that son. Chapter 20.
IV. The wonder of the birth of Isaac. Chapter 21.

I. Preparations for the birth of Isaac

One year before Isaac was born, God came to Abraham to renew His promise and make the necessary preparations for the birth of this wonder child.

In general we may notice that God evidently appeared to Abraham in a visible form. Also He made Himself known to Abraham by the name El-Shaddai. This name speaks particularly of God’s omnipotence, and the idea was that Abraham must learn that God is able to do what is humanly impossible. Even if the birth of a child to Abraham and Sarah seemed to them beyond the realm of possibility (for Abraham was 99 years old and Sarah was 89), God nevertheless could do it.

God speaks once again of His covenant which He established with Abraham. He speaks of that covenant as being, as far as its essential character is concerned, a covenant in which God was and would forever be the God of Abraham and his seed. He speaks also of what our Baptism Form calls “our part of the covenant” — “walk before me, and be thou perfect.” And finally, He renews His promise to Abraham, a promise that is infinitely rich in blessedness. It is a promise first of all of a seed that Abraham shall surely receive. It is secondly, a promise of the covenant to be established in the line of continued generations. It is thirdly, the promise of a covenant that shall be everlasting. And finally, it is the promise of the land of Canaan (the heavenly Canaan) for a perpetual inheritance.

But before that promise can be realized (all of which hinges on the birth of a son), various preparations must be made. In keeping with the part that Abraham and Sarah will have in the realization of God’s promise, God changes both their names. Abraham’s name is changed from Abram to Abraham. That name means “father of nations.” This is a very beautiful name, for it refers to the fact that Abraham shall be the father of all believers—believers who shall be gathered from all the nations of the world; for Abraham’s seed which shall constitute the Church shall be truly Catholic. Inasmuch as this patriarch shall be the father of all nations, he shall also be the father of kings. The reference is, of course, to all the kings in David’s royal line.

Yet, in a very fundamental sense, Abraham is the father of Christ. For Abraham’s seed is centrally Christ. “Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He
saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.” Gal. 3:16. Christ is the seed of Abraham only because God created Christ in Abraham’s loins. He is therefore also the King born from Abraham. All the believers are then the seed of Abraham only because they belong to Christ the true Seed. “And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” Gal. 3:29.

In keeping with this, Sara’s name is also changed to Sarah. Now, Sarah means “princess”; and this name also is entirely adapted to her place in the realization of God’s promise, for as a princess, she was the mother of kings and nations. Cf. Rom. 4:11-22.

The wonder of all this was too much for Abraham to receive. No doubt, he believed that somehow God would indeed fulfill this promise, but that he himself should have a son with Sarah was too much for him. And so, with laughter in his heart, he suggests the possibility of Ishmael being this child of the promise. But God emphatically states that, while Ishmael will receive an abundance of purely earthly prosperity, Abraham and Sarah must themselves bear this seed of the promise. Furthermore, the child shall be named Isaac (which means “laughter”). There is a twofold significance to this name: 1) it is a sign of the laughter of weakness of faith found both in Abraham and Sarah; 2) it is a sign of the rejoicing (the holy laughter) that shall be theirs when Isaac is born. Cf. Chap. 21:6, 7.

The second preparation required for this wonderful birth of Isaac is the institution of the sign of circumcision as a sign of the covenant. Abraham was commanded to circumcise all the males in his house whether they were his own children or his servants and their children. All males had to bear this sign put into their flesh when they were eight days old.

This Old Testament sign of the covenant has been put aside by the New Testament sign — baptism. Cf. Col. 2:11, 12. But it was in keeping with the dispensation of types and shadows, for on the one hand it was a bloody sign pointing to the oceans of blood that ran throughout the Old Dispensation and that pictured the blood of Calvary that was shed for sin. On the other hand, it was a picture of the fact that man by his own natural strength and power could never produce the seed of the covenant. This lay forever outside his ability. He could only bring forth children that were born in his own image and therefore totally depraved. So circumcision was a sign of the circumcision of the heart — the wonder of regeneration which only God can perform.

(Note: this is not the place to enter into the controversy with the Baptists. The interested reader can consult Rev. H. Hoeksema’s pamphlet, “The Biblical Grounds for the Baptism of Infants.”)

In obedience to God’s command, Abraham circumcised all the males in his house that same day.

II. A lesson in covenant instruction

It must have been very shortly after all this that God appeared once again to Abraham in the plains of Mamre. This time God appeared in the form of three men. Nevertheless, it is striking to notice that this time God does not use the name El-Shaddai, but Jehovah. For “Jehovah” is pre-eminently God’s covenant name by which He reveals that He is eternal and unchangeable, and therefore, faithful to His promise so that He will surely do all He has said.

Not recognizing his visitors immediately, Abraham offers them the hospitality of his home and table. Perhaps to this (and to what Lot also did) Hebrews refers in Chapter 13:2: “Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.” Although God sat down at Abraham’s table and ate, it soon becomes evident that God has come for quite another purpose. Once more God renewed His promise of a son to Abraham, only this time particularly for Sarah’s benefit. Sarah overheard the promise and laughed in the weakness of her faith; but was rebuked by the Lord with the significant words: “Is anything too hard for the Lord?” In these words is really to be found the crux of all these chapters. God’s promise is the humanly impossible, but the divinely possible. This Abraham and Sarah— and we all— must believe. Although Abraham and Sarah both showed a weakness of their faith, we must not forget that they did believe and laid hold on the promise of God by faith. This is evident from Rom. 4:18-21 and Hebrews 11:11.
Nevertheless, this visit of the Lord goes beyond the announcement of a son. The three "men" leave the home of Abraham and go in the direction of Sodom, and Abraham accompanied them. As they proceed on the way, the Lord brought up the matter of Sodom, evidently to lead Abraham to ask about it. It is striking to notice that this has an evident purpose. Abraham must be led to ask about Sodom because the truth of the destruction of Sodom is to form an important part of the covenant instruction which Abraham will have to give to his child when he received it from the Lord. This covenant instruction is to contain the fundamental point that Sodom is destroyed for its wickedness. It is of importance that the seed of the covenant be taught this truth. For in the way of the instruction of the covenant seed concerning this truth, that seed will be blessed so that it becomes a great and mighty nation. Yet, that covenant instruction is the revelation of God's will and counsel which is the heritage the saints of all time must cherish and keep. God revealed the secrets of His will to Abraham, and Abraham must commit them to the child he shall receive. But the Lord emphasizes that this is possible only because God "knows" him (vs. 19). The preservation of the covenant line in the way of instruction is based upon God's foreknowledge—the foreknowledge of sovereign election.

There is a problem in connection with the destruction of Sodom—a problem to which Abraham now turns. This problem is not, in Abraham's mind, the salvation of Lot. It is true that Lot's presence in Sodom forms the occasion for this problem; but Abraham does not even mention Lot's name in his prayer. The problem is broader than this. It is: When God destroys the wicked, will the righteous be destroyed with the wicked? The wicked shall surely be destroyed; of this there is no doubt. And the righteous live in the midst of the wicked. And they deserve to be destroyed as the wicked are, for they are no better. But God's promise is that He will be the God of Abraham's seed. How then will the righteous remain the people of God when the wrath of God is poured out upon the wicked? If they too are destroyed—as they deserve to be—there is no point to the whole covenant promise. There is then no sense in God's covenant and in the promise of a son. How will this be? That is Abraham's problem.

Lot is a type of the righteous of all ages, while Sodom is a type of the world that stands ripe for judgment. How will God accomplish His purpose in the final judgment of the world?

To this problem the Lord gives an answer when this prayer of Abraham—an intercessory prayer without parallel in all Scripture—is answered with the assurance that the righteous shall not be destroyed. God will not destroy the righteous with the wicked. As long as there are righteous upon the earth, the wicked shall not be fully punished. In His forbearance, God will preserve the wicked for the sake of the righteous. This does not mean that there shall not come a time when the wicked shall be destroyed, but the righteous are at last delivered out of the world and the full company of the elect are saved. Then judgment shall come. Cf. Rev. 11:11-13.

This was all actually done in Sodom.

Lot had moved to Sodom when he chose the valley of Sodom many years before. Although he had camped in the plain first of all, he had gradually moved closer to Sodom until he took up his residence in this wicked city. This was a sad sin on Lot's part, for Sodom was very wicked. He had forgotten the call to come out from among them and be separate (II Cor. 6:14-18). This does not mean that Lot was not a righteous man—he was. Scripture tells us that he was just. "And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds.)" II Peter 2:7, 8. But in this he sinned; and the consequences of his sin were that: 1) he lost everything that he possessed. 2) In his generations he was excluded from the covenant. His children were lost and had no place in the covenant lines. This is always the case with those who depart from the ways of God—they are lost in their generations.

When the angels who accompanied God came to Sodom in the evening, they received the kind hospitality of Lot and were taken into his house for the night. Soon it became evident how terribly Sodom had
sunken into the slime of sin. Man, when he gives himself over to sin, becomes worse than an animal. And Sodom manifested itself that night as ripe for judgment.

That angels should come on this mission ought not to surprise us inasmuch as they are the ministers of God both to minister to the needs of the elect and to be the agents by which God brings judgment upon the earth. Cf. Heb. 1:14, Ps. 91:11, Ps. 78:49, Matt. 13:41, etc. It is even quite possible that one of these angels was the Angel of Jehovah—the Old Dispensational revelation of Christ; for we read in Gen. 19:24 the striking words: “Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven.”

Lot was saved by the angels from the wicked men that pressed upon his door when they were stricken with blindness. We are shown how dulled the moral sense of Lot had become by the wickedness of the city when he offered his daughters to these godless men. The angels begin to urge Lot immediately to make preparations to leave the city. These preparations must be particularly to warn his family to flee with him. But they would not. He was to them as one that mocked. They were so drunken with the terrible excesses of the city that they could not leave it ever nor believe that God would destroy it. At last, in haste, the angels took Lot and his wife and two daughters by the arm to lead them from the city, for judgment was speedily coming. Lot requested that Zoar be spared, for it was only a little city and he wished to find refuge there. This request was granted, but from that city also Lot fled in fear when heaven burst open with the judgments of God. Suddenly God’s wrath streamed from heaven upon these cities that had filled the cup of iniquity. Fire and brimstone (some form of sulphur) destroyed the cities and their inhabitants and burned the very ground upon which they were built so that a cavity was created into which the Dead Sea poured. The site of Sodom remains to today a scene of utter desolation—a constant reminder to the wicked of the judgment of God upon a world steeped in iniquity. Lot’s wife was changed into a pillar of salt, for she loved the city and could not bring herself to leave it. She sorrowed at its destruction and hated the thought of forsaking a life of sin which she had grown to love. The pillar of salt remains a horrible reminder of the judgment that comes upon those who love the world (Luke 17:32).

Sodom was a picture of this godless world, as its destruction was a picture of the end of the world. The deliverance of Lot was a type of the salvation of the righteous that shall surely be delivered out of the world. This must be committed by covenant parents to their children in order that they may look away from this evil world and towards their God Who shall deliver them and make them heirs of the heavenly Canaan.

One more incident is added to the narrative. Lot’s daughters, by incest, became the mothers of two nations. They too showed the sin of Sodom that remained in them. And these nations (Ammon and Moab) became the bitterest enemies of Israel in their later history. This is always true, for the greatest enemies of the Church are not the heathen, but those who are born in covenant generations and depart.

(Continued in next issue)

NEWS from, for, and about our churches

LOIS E. KREGEL

Our Servicemen:
We have the address of a serviceman from South Holland:
Pvt. Adrian Lenting US 55777978
Co. D. 9th Bn. 83rd Tng. Bde.;
3rd Plt. USATC Armor,
Fort Knox, Ky.

Neal Buiter and Kenneth Haak of Oaklawn have passed their physical examinations and expect to be inducted into the service in the near future.

New Infant Members
A son born to Mr. and Mrs. Dewey Vander Noord (South Holland)
A daughter born to Mr. and Mrs. Gise G. Van Baren (South Holland)
A daughter born to Mr. and Mrs. E. Medema (Oaklawn)
A daughter born to Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Vanden Top (Doon)

Congratulations
to Mr. and Mrs. Gerb De Jong (Hull) who celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary on Jan. 21; to Mrs. J. W. Pastoor (First) who celebrated her 89th birthday on Jan. 14; and to Mr. Edward Van Eenenaam (First) who was to celebrate his 80th birthday on Feb. 12.

Membership Transfers:
First Church welcomed Mrs. Arie Nobel from Immanuel Chr. Ref. Church of Salt Lake City; Mr. and Mrs. Robert Velting and one baptized child transferred their membership to Southeast; membership papers of Mr. and Mrs. Peter Knott and three baptized children were received from Southeast by Hope.

News in Brief
Rev. B. Woudenberg has received the call from Redlands.
February 25 is the date of the Young People’s Mass Meeting to be held in Southeast Church; Seminarian Robert Decker plans to speak on the subject “Love Your Enemies.”

The Northwest Iowa School Society discussed location, curriculum and transportation at a meeting held Jan. 31 in Doon.
South Holland has changed its second service on Sunday from afternoon to evening.

Oaklawn has been busy getting its church library in good order before adding to it seventeen new books.
Confession of faith was made in Hudsonville on Jan. 26 by the following six young people: Betty Haveman, Joyce Kuiper, Larry Lubben, Marjorie Lubbers, Norma Schut, and Joan Vander Kooi. Beverly Kamphuis, Gary Moelker, and Carol Petrhoije confessed their faith in Hope Church on Feb. 2.

Music in Our Churches
A Singspiration, sponsored by Beacon Lights, was enjoyed by those present at Southeast Church on Sunday, Feb. 2; Chuck Westra led the singing, and special numbers were given by Don Knooper, on his trumpet, accompanied by his daughter Donna, and Mrs. C. Lubbers and Lois Schipper, who played an organ and piano duet.

March 15 is the date set aside by the Hope Heralds for a program to be presented in Hope Church.

This gem from Randolph’s bulletin is worthwhile passing on to you in its entirety: “Are we a singing church? Scripture repeatedly sings of the church which sings. The church sings particularly in its triumphs. Think of the songs of Moses; the song of Deborah; the song of the angels in announcing the birth of Christ; the song of Mary; of the saints in glory. Even in sorrow, the church sings because it knows that all things work together for its good. Ah, who has more right, and greater reason, to sing than we? Yet, there is so much to be desired in our singing. Do we sing from the heart—and with zeal and enthusiasm? Adults: sing with joyous exultation the praises of our God—even though it can not be with perfect tune; parents, teach your children the need and the joy of singing; children, open your books and sing forth with loudness, clarity, and great joy. Can God be pleased when we refuse to sing—or simply mumble a few words? The Lord rejoices in the songs of the saints which arise out of the regenerated heart in thanksgiving to God for all His benefits.”

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