BEACON LIGHTS

VOLUME III MARCH—1943 NUMBER 6

A NEW DAY

Soft rays of light diffuse the eastern skies,
The darkness is dispelled, the night has gone,
While in the glowing light I visualize
The breaking day, the beauty of the dawn.

And as I watch the lovely day unfold,
The light fall softly on the sleeping earth;
The sun appears, a revelation gold,
It pleaseth God to give the new day birth.

It pleased my God to give to me this day,
With all that it may bring—of clouds or sun,
With this command: "In all you do and say,
Thy purpose be—My Sovereign Will be done."

The new day undefiled before me lies,
A page of white entrusted to my care;
What shall I write thereon if bright the skies?
What shall I write if hard my cross to bear?

Lord, grant me when serene the sun doth shine,
The hours pass swiftly by on joyous wing;
That I may not forget my life is Thine,
I am a servant of my heavenly King.

Or when the clouds shall come to try my soul,
I falter not, but in Thy loving care,
Strive ever upward to attain my goal,
That "victory by faith" be written there.

Then at the close when shades of night appear,
I'll know my task accomplished, victory won;
And kneeling at Thy throne of grace shall hear,
"Thou good and faithful servant, 'tis well done."

MISS JANET WASSINK, Bussy, Iowa.

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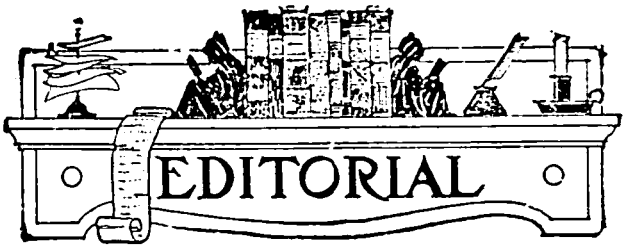


Tempted Of God

By the Rev. C. Hanko — Oaklawn, Illinois

Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God. James 1:13

The Word of God comes to us with a note of warning. When the hosts of darkness are set in battle array against us and temptations beset us from every side, when Satan lays his snares for us, threatening us with suffering, scorns and sneers, or luring us with the attractions of sin, when our faith falters and the battle seems hopeless, let us not say that we are tempted of God.

But is it not true, we ask, that no temptation can ever befall us apart from God?

It is.

When Job deprived of all his possessions and visited with a dreadful plague, even to the astonishment of his three friends, it was God who called Satan's attention to His servant Job and gave him consent and power to afflict him with bitter grief.

When David committed the sin of counting the people, it was God, in His anger against Israel, who moved David through the instrument of the devil to commit this folly. 2. Sam. 24:1. 1 Chron. 21:1

And in this awefulest of nights when Jesus surrendered Himself into the hands of His enemies to be slain, and Satan was out to sift Peter as the wheat, it was God who directed Peter's way to the palace of the high-priest. When Peter, stunned to confusion, staggered before the sneer of a mere damsel and a few sporting soldiers, it was God who created the circumstances in which Peter found himself. And it was God who delayed the crowing of the cock until Peter was well on his way toward denying his Lord three times.

And why should we add more? We know that nothing befalls us, not even to losing one hair of our heads, without the will of our heavenly Father. Also the devil and all the powers of wickedness

are employed in His providence to serve His eternal purpose.

Are we, then, tempted of God? Never say that.

Let not one of us ever lay the charge of our sins to God.

It would only mean that we are not even fully conscious of our own corruption and guilt. Nor are we ready to confess our sin in true sorrow of heart and repentance before Him. But we are rather seeking to excuse ourselves and our sinfulness to continue in the way of the transgressor. We are already caught in the snares of temptation.

Besides that, it is impossible that we should be tempted of God. God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man. God is the light, in Whom is no darkness whatsoever; He is righteousness, and hates all unrighteousness; holiness, and holds Himself aloof from evil. Evil cannot arise in the heart of God nor penetrate into His thoughts, for evil is strange to Him. He cannot lure anyone into ways of wickedness with the intent of seeking his downfall. The holy God never tempts any man with evil.

Let the thought not enter our minds, nor the word pass our lips.

Let us not blame the circumstances we are in for the temptations that beset us and the sins we commit.

How easy it often seems to excuse ourselves and to lay the blame somewhere else.

We cannot help it that we are thrown into the company of sinful men every day. They will laugh at us if we profess our faith among them, sneer at us if we refuse to make light of holy things in their presence. They may take our jobs from us if we do not organize or in some other way compromise with them. It happens to be the kind of a world we are living in, and there is little we can do about it.

Or, again, we simply have a sinful nature that is attracted to the things of this world. The pleasures and treasures of the world appeal to us. We know that this is not as it should be, but it happens to be the case. Not that we live extremely godless and sinful lives, far be it from us that we should allow ourselves to sink so low, but when a person is young he must have some good times.

And the young man in service, far from home and friends and Church, finds himself in the midst of the world at its worst. If he does not do along with the others he is an outcast, the laughing stock of the group. Besides, he is lonely and sick at heart. Fears and dread of what lie before him crowd upon all his thoughts. What is the use of always being on his guard against temptations? Who would ever be the wiser, if he did drown

his grief by an occasional departure from the way? How can he help it if he finds himself in such a position that he cannot resist the wrong? He does not actually seek the evil, but circumstances have brought it upon him.

And all the time we are saying: I am tempted of God.

Never say that.

Rather say: the fault lies with me. The reason that I am tempted to sin is because of my own sinfulness. I am evil, born in sin. My sins rise up against me, prevailing day by day. If it were not for the lusts of my flesh sin would have no appeal, the attractions of the world would not draw me, the sneers of the foolish, sinful men would not disturb me, and Satan could never lure me into his snares.

If I yield to temptation I am following the lusts of my heart. I am giving place to the devil and inviting him to do his evil work in my heart. I am walking the way of sin, even while I know that the way of the transgressor shall perish.

Because we are aware of the sinfulness that dwells in us we must jealously guard our souls, fighting the battle of faith against sin which so easily besets us.

Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

More about this next time, the Lord willing.

* * * * * * * *

The Home Front

Beacon Lights has "gone to war". Or, better said, it has found its own defense program.

No one thought when our paper first came into existence that it would be called upon so soon to serve a double purpose, one for the societies at home, and another for our boys in the armed forces. But now we can plainly see that God in His providence gave our paper a timely birth and has laid a greater task upon us than we ever conceived of at first. And it is truly gratifying to hear from our young men in service that they are regularly receiving and enjoying their Beacon Lights. *

That is one great advantage of having a paper sponsored by the Federation of Young People's Societies. By this time most of the young men's societies find their ranks quite badly depleted, or at least restricted largely to the younger men who have not yet

reached the draft age. Which makes their local activities increasingly more difficult. Even our young people's societies have almost become young ladies societies through the departure of so many of our young men. But with the combined efforts of the young ladies and the young men who are left, we can hope to carry on our efforts quite successfully.

Which means that our home front has a defense program all of its own. We can never render a better service to our boys than to supply them with a paper that particularly fits their needs. A prayerful reading of their Bibles is a daily necessity to them. Just as essential as their food and drink. Our incessant prayers for them, and our letters bearing a truly Christian character, are invaluable to them. But no less valuable are the guiding rays of the Beacon that has the word of Truth, as we love and confess it, as its sole source of light and truth. Our boys, deprived of a sound Christian environment, often lonely and disheartened by the gruesome thoughts of warfare, disgusted with the many evidences of sin and lust round about them, need the wholesome influence of our young people's monthly.

A new duty rests on our home front. We do not expect our boys to become great heroes according to the standard of the world. We would even warn them not to allow themselves to be filled with hatred and vengeance against their enemies according to the flesh. As hard as it may seem, Scripture admonishes to love our enemies at all times. But we do urge them to do their duty as God demands it of them. We expect them to be good soldiers, faithful in performing their duties in that sphere where God has called and placed them. We desire that they should keep themselves unspotted from the world at all times, and to keep their Christian morale high, as behooves a soldier of Jesus Christ. For that reason we want to supply them with a paper that can serve them in their own peculiar position, according to their own particular needs.

But to do this our home front must be firmly consolidated. In order to be of service to them our societies must carry on with more determination than ever before. Every society must be disciplined to a faithful attendance, a diligent study of the Scriptures and a zealous striving toward our mutual welfare. We must be spiritually alert ourselves, if we intend to be of service to them. We cannot fail them now.

And that applies to each one of us. After all, the society is no more than the sum total of its members. Good members make up a good society, while poor mem-

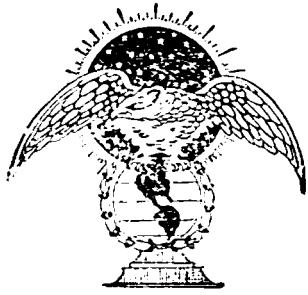
bers a poor society. An all-out for defense means that each one of us must be active and busy all the time. No allowance can be made for a half-hearted, part time Christianity. We must fight the good fight, run the race, keep the faith, if we expect the crown which the Lord has laid away for us and for all those who await His coming. Be ye, therefore, steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

Eternal vigilance is the price we pay for our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

*According to reports in our February issue. Beacon Lights is serving our young men in no less than 28 states, as well as in Hawaii and in the war zones.

C.H.

Current Events



By the Rev. H. De Wolf

Manhattan, Montana

Unconditional Surrender

We can not very well overlook the recent historic meeting of Roosevelt and Churchill in our survey of the news. By this time that meeting may be classed as "old" news, but we have been given to understand that the things which were discussed and decided will make themselves known by actual events rather than by words within the next nine months. No one knows just what was decided although there is reason to believe that the course of the war, as far as the allied initiative is concerned, was determined there. And there has been much talk about opening up another front in one or more places in Europe. One can easily understand that, in case of such a venture, time plays an important role. It would seem most advisable to strike before Germany would be able to concentrate her troops in those parts. It should be done therefore while Germany still has a large share of her troops in the conflict with Russia. Whether that is the plan

that will be followed remains to be seen.

The important thing about that meeting mentioned above is, that it was decided that there should be an unconditional surrender on the part of the Axis. That means that in the Armistice only the Allies will have a voice. The Axis will be entirely at the mercy of the Allies.

But it is only an avowed intention.

We all must realize that many things must still happen and it will remain to be seen just how successful the Allies will be in reaching this purpose and realizing this intention. One can easily imagine that, should this war continue for three of four more years, it might appear advisable at that time to declare an armistice that does not demand an unconditional surrender on the part of the enemy. And, of course, this declaration takes for granted that the Allies will be in the position to dictate the terms of peace when the end comes. That is taking a lot for granted, even though we may at this moment be convinced that such will be the case. It is one thing to state what the end must and will be, and quite another thing what the end actually will be. These are human plans and decisions and they are by no means infallible.

We do not mean hereby to criticize such aspirations and declarations of avowed purpose on the part of the leaders of the allied nations. It stands to reason that there should be something like this and it would not look very well if our leaders were at this time deciding on how we should surrender or would talk about the possibility of surrender. The people want them to talk victory and prepare ways and means for it.

But it is not unpatriotic or even pessimistic to remind ourselves that not man but God will decide the outcome of this conflict. And that may not be in accord with our human desires or intentions. The race is not to the swift nor the battle to the strong. As christians, we are not so foolish that we should deny that and we are not afraid to acknowledge it.

Persons in the News.

Stalin. Where was he and why was he not present when the heads of the Allied nations met in Africa? That question has been discussed and answered variously by many persons who comment upon the world situation. The best reason that seems to be given for this is that he was too busy at that time. But we feel that even that reason is very weak. Weren't Churchill and Roosevelt busy too? Moreover, if Russia were at that time suffering adverses, we could accept that reason without com-

ment. Another thing, did it not lie in the line of duty that one in such an important position, as that which Stalin holds in Russia and the united nations' war-effort, would be present at such a momentous meeting? The excuse that is given seems rather flimsy. We, personally, cannot evade the conviction that Russia wants to stand alone and also intends to do so. Does she perhaps have her own ideas about the armistice that must be signed and will they correspond to those of Roosevelt and Churchill? There is no doubt but what Russia has its own ideas about punishing the aggressive nations and that its plan excludes not a single person, who had a part in fighting against Russia, from that punishment.

Madame Chiang. Perhaps many of you heard her speech or read about it in the papers. It seemed to us that she rather diplomatically told the Congress that the United States was not doing its part with a view to China. It is no secret that China feels exactly that way about things. We gather that the attitude of China is not too friendly because of this thing. Perhaps the United States is under-estimating the importance of China in this war. We might find that we have been taking something for granted that really does not exist anymore when the end of the war comes.

So it goes. Man makes plans and seeks to realize his ideals. It has been so in the past and it shall be so in the future.

But God decides all these things according to His infinite wisdom and power. Remember that!

SOCIETY NEWS

Due to an oversight the society of Hull, Iowa failed to have a report in the last issue of the Beacon Lights.

Our society numbers fifty members. We meet every Sunday evening at 7:30 o'clock. Our meeting is opened with prayer by our Pastor. Then we have a ten minute song service led by one of our members. Our next half hour is spent in Bible Discussion. We are now studying the Beacon Lights. The last quarter hour we have a program consisting of essays, recitations and musical numbers.

We already have thirteen of our young men in service. Eight of them are in the Army and five in the Navy. More of the boys are expected to leave us soon.

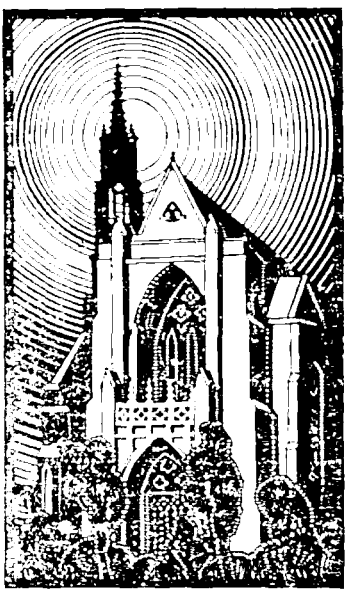
Each week our pastor appoints various of our members to write each of our boys in service. And in turn the boys also write to our society.

Although we deeply feel the absence of our boys our comfort is in the assurance that they are in God's care at all times, wherever He may call them.

THE REPORTER.

When Many Are One

By Miss Alice Reitsma — Grand Rapids, Mich.



Mrs. Van was early as usual. She walked slowly toward an old building. It was old, but the green grass on the sloping lawn all around seemed to garb it with dignity. It stood a little apart from the houses around it and the whiteness of its pillars and the color and design of its windows seemed to shout that this was not merely another building, but that this was a *church*. Its brick walls, standing so stern and erect, seemed to break forth into speech and the heavy brown doors seemed to be eager to tell of the hopes and despondencies of the pleasures and pains of those to whose touch they had opened.

Mrs. Van entered and when inside it seemed to her as if each one of those straight-backed seats had a story all its own to tell. She sat down in her customary place and waited for the service to begin. And as she waited she thought of the various things that were taking place in the individual lives of those who would soon occupy these empty seats.

Her thoughts went back to that scene at the depot where family and friends had gathered to say their final farewells to one of their number — a young man who was leaving for service. Everyone just stood around and no one seemed to have much to say until the train was about to leave and the young man once more shook the hands of those he was leaving behind. Then there seemed to be so many things they still had to say to each other—but couldn't! Many good wishes were choked back and remained unspoken. The young man waved to them as he stood on the steps of the train and then found a seat where he could watch them through the window. The train began to move. He tried to smile as he took one last look into their clouded faces—those faces that tried so hard to appear cheerful! A minute later he was lost from sight to his family and friends who nevertheless remained watching until the last of the rumbling train had disappeared.

And as Mrs. Van sat in church,

waiting so quietly, it seemed to her that the faint rumbling of the distant train and the sweet tones of the church organ merged together, until the rumbling died out and the strains of music became clearer. And suddenly the whole church seemed filled with the soft music of the Lohengrin Wedding March poured out by the organ. With her mind's eye she could still see the minister with his Bible in his hands, standing before the platform against a setting of palms. The bridegroom stood near him, watching his bride come slowly and gracefully down the long isle toward him. And as the young man and the young woman stood side by side, the minister read, "what, therefore, God hath joined together let not man put asunder," and pronounced them man and wife. And then the guests had gathered around with congratulations and kisses for the young couple who were about to begin life's journey together!

But, ah! How well Mrs. Van remembered, that while many were gathered here at this occasion of happiness, another family was in the thrall of overwhelming grief. A father and mother were standing at the bedside of their child who only a few weeks before had been playing happily with his toys. Just a short time ago he had asked Daddy to read him a story and now he lay quiet and disinterested and without any signs of recognition for the anxious, watchful parents. The room was hushed and dim, seemed covered with the deep silence of sorrow. The mother who had cared for him and loved him and who had tucked him into his little bed night after night, now refused to take her eyes off the face of the dying child. Every breath he took they counted to be the last and, yet, they always watched for him to breath once more. He breathed and gasped—and breathed his last. It was the end. The father leaned over to close those big blue eyes which would never see again. And many a tear was shed over the lifeless little form of the child who had been carried away to the land that knows no sorrow and where no tears are ever shed.

Mrs. Van wiped away a tear that had gathered in her own eye at these sad recollections, but her heart repeated the words of the old familiar hymn, "Earth has no sorrow that Heaven cannot heal."

It was time for the service to begin. Most of the seats were taken. Old and young were gathered together to worship: elderly men and women with stooped shoulders and gray heads: and little children with eager, happy faces. The families were there of the boys who had left for service. There was the young couple who had just been

(Cont. on page 22)

The March Wind Doth Blow

By Mr. C. De Boer — Kalamazoo, Mich.

"The stormy March is come at last,
With wind, and cloud, and changing skies;
I hear the rushing of the blast,
That through the snowy valley flies."

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

Swaying branches and swirling smoke betray the invisible force of March winds. Not insignificant is the effect of winds on weather, but seldom do we pause to consider the cause of winds and the importance or value of them to mankind.

Just what is wind? Briefly, it is air in motion. And what is the cause of this movement? It is the difference in the weight of the air, for cold air is always heavier than warm air, and, therefore, it tends to sink, forcing the warmer air upward. Your experience in your own home will verify this, for warm air always rises to the ceiling. This principle can be applied on a much larger scale to the atmosphere.

Contrary to popular opinion moist air is lighter than dry air, and it, too, will ascend and be replaced by the dry air. Naturally, this factor also is an important element in explaining air movements or winds. A simple experiment of boiling water illustrates that steam (moist air) rises, proving that it is lighter than the air surrounding it.

We might summarize the above by stating that the difference in temperature and the amount of moisture causes differences in the weight of air. Variations in pressure (weight of air) causes air to flow from one area to another. The movement of air is wind.

If you were asked "What is a cyclone?" perhaps, all of you would immediately reply that it is a severe wind storm; in fact, many books explain it thus. However, this is not scientifically correct, for it merely refers to a large area of warm moist air called a "low-pressure area" or "cyclone." The air in this region is constantly rising. On the contrary, a "high-pressure area" or "anti-cyclone" area consists of colder and dry air which is heavier in weight and thus descends, and flows toward the low pressure area, thus, producing winds. There is a constant succession of high and low

pressure areas which originate in the Pacific and flow eastward across our continent. Hence, most of our winds come from the west and southwest.

There are three special names given to destructive storms based on the localities where they occur. In central and western United States they are called tornadoes (not cyclones) : in the West Indies, the term used is hurricane, and in the region of China and Japan they are called typhoons. How much destruction has been wrought by these powerful winds on land and sea! Usually, these storms have definite paths, occuring in certain areas; these pathways are called storm-tracks.

Some of you might be familiar with the anemometer, which is the instrument used in measuring the speed of wind, or the barometer, used in measuring the pressure of the air; thus, enabling the forecasting of approaching storms and winds.

Our government has established several large weather training schools because forecasting is so essential to aviation and navigation. Since this war is being fought to a great extent in the air and on the sea, one can readily realize the importance of meteorology — the science of predicting weather. Long range weather forecasting has been studied and perfected to a large extent by German meteorologists. On the basis of their predictions the German army invaded and successfully conquered Poland during an unusually dry autumn, while the conquest of Norway took place under the protection of heavy fogs and clouds of early April. The most outstanding example of the importance of meteorology in military strategy was the forecast of dense fogs which enabled the Germans to move their two famous ships, the Scharnhorst and the Gneisnau thru the British Channel to their own harbor for repairs.

All thru history, weather conditions, storms, and winds have been influential in determining the course of events. Certainly, it is one of the means in the Creator's hands.

"O God from Thee the waters fled,
The depths were moved with mighty dread
The swelling clouds their torrents poured.
And o'er the earth the tempest roared:
'Mid lightning's flash and thunder's sound
Great trembling shook the solid ground.

To Our Boys In Service

Dear fellows:

A good deal has happened on the "home front" since I wrote my last letter to you. And I know that you are deeply interested in "the home front'" particularly as far as it concerns that front from the viewpoint of the Church. First of all, more and more of our boys are leaving. In the Fuller Ave. Church in Grand Rapids the number of those that have been called to the colors may well have passed the one hundred mark by the time you read this letter. Since the eighteen year old are called they are going very fast. Now, this is very significant for the "home front" as far as the Church is concerned, and I sincerely hope and pray that you bear this in mind. We, here on the "home front," certainly have a calling toward you that are in the service; and we assure you that we are constantly mindful of it. But you also have a calling with regard to the Church's home front, and that is to keep in touch with it as closely as possible. I often think of the tremendous effect it must have in the home Church that young fellows are called away from fellowship, the preaching, and the instruction of the Church, for who knows how long, and are exposed to entirely different influences, influences that surely are not conducive to found them in the pure Protestant Reformed truth! Suppose that they will be absent for a few years. Will they be strong in the truth when they return to the Church? I know that God is able to keep you, and for this we pray daily. But I know, too, that it will require effort on your part to keep as closely as possible in touch with the truth in which you have been instructed. Keep in contact. Get whatever literature you can, and read it, that may establish you in our Reformed truth.

You will also be interested to know that our Young Men's Society, of the Fuller Ave. Church, which, of course, is now very small in numbers, has extended its radio work. The program now comes over the Wolverine network, and includes the stations of Traverse City, Muskegon, and Battle Creek. The Fuller Ave. Church rather loyally supported them by a collection in one Sunday of eleven hundred and twelve dollars and twenty eight cents. That is encouraging for our young men, and they deserve to be encouraged, for a program of that nature requires a good deal of their time and effort.

I received a few letters from you fellows that were encouraging to me. Most of them I have already answered. It is, of course, impossible for me to keep in contact with you all by personal correspondence. Yet, if you write me, I promise to answer.

May God bless and keep you all!

Sincerely, your friend,

H. Hoeksema.

Letters From Our Boys

Camp Peary, Virginia

Dear Friends:

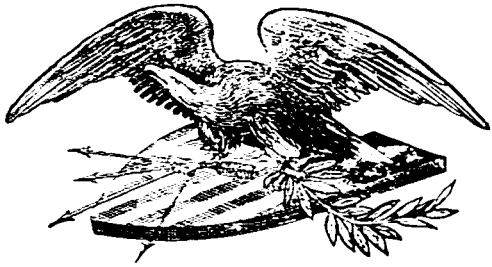
I received my copy of Beacon Lights today. I have read part of it and its contents surely are a comfort to me. It, besides my Bible, is so far my only reading material pertaining to our truth.

I have received many letters from relatives and friends and am kept quite busy returning and keeping up correspondence. Besides my daily duties and my personel duties, I haven't much time to spend writing letters, but I do my utmost to satisfy everyone.

The weather here is very changeable. Today it was very wet as it rained all day. Being our duty day we were out on guard duty, but I have an inside job while others are out of doors in the rain and cold wind.

The food, or chow as the Navy calls it, is very good and very wholesome. What we receive is considered the best food for the building up of our bodies. I might add that I have gained about 10 lbs. in the past two months and am in very good health. We are out of doors the majority of the time and this in itself has had much to do with our health.

We have quite a bit of training altho it isn't very strenuous. The remainder of the time we go out on details, doing all kinds of work. We are far from overworked and sometimes find it harder



to find work than to do work. But somehow we manage through the days.

I am scheduled to leave here March 2, but nothing is sure until it has been done. There is so much rumor (scuttlebut) that one knows not what to believe.

Seeing that my time is limited, I must close for now. I would like to hear from all our Young People's Societies, but not being able to return correspondence I do not plead for it.

May our Gracious God bless all His people, at home and otherwise, now and forever. In closing I remain in Christian love,

Your friend,

George Lanting, (South Holland)

* * *

Camp Gruber, Oklahoma

Dear Sir:

I received my Beacon Lights yesterday and was glad to get it. I am receiving it every month regularly and appreciate it. It keeps me informed of all the church news and I do like to read the articles.

I am getting along with my training and have reached the point which deals with company tactics — just what to do under actual battle conditions. The whole course has been very interesting and instructive.

I realize how hard it is to pay for the printing and sending of the Beacon Lights to us fellows in the service so I am enclosing my subscription price of $1.25. In closing I want to repeat — keep sending the Beacon Lights to us fellows. It helps more than words can express.

Yours truly,
John Wigger (Grand Rapids)
Air Corps Technical School
Gulfport, Missippi

* * *

Dear Friends:

I am writing this letter from the day-room. It is a little noisy in here but I am used to that. There are two fellows next to me playing Ping-pong and every time they step on the floor hard it shakes the table I am writing on. The army furnishes a lot of things for recreation. Besides this day-room we have another one which isn't furnished as yet and also an abundance of outdoor sporting equipment.

We have quite a few chapels on this post and the Chaplains have pretty good sermons but not like you hear at home, of course. There is a Chaplain assigned to the hospital in which I work. Last Sunday he had his first service in the morning. He expects to have one at night also when he gets settled.

I receive the Beacon Lights regularly and enjoy reading it very much. I imagine with all the Young Men leaving you are getting rather short on help in the various activities and committees.

Wednesday morning there was ice on the top of the puddles here. The night was the coolest we have had yet. The next day it warmed up nicely during the afternoon. We have nice weather down here when it doesn't rain.

Sincerely,
Henry Veltman (Grand Rapids)

* * *

Dear Editor and Friends:

When I received my January issue of the Beacon Lights I felt ashamed to find written across it "Please let us hear from you." I thought it over and came to the conclusion that if everyone did as much for Beacon Lights as I did, we would have blank pages. Altho we are not all great writers (at least not I), we founded it with the purpose in mind of knitting ourselves more firmly together as Protestant young people. Now, much as our financial support of our paper is essential, our material support is also very vital. Not that we should all have contributions in every issue of Beacon Lights,—that would be impossible—but if we average two or three articles a year, whatever they may be—poetry, essay, short story, or any other form of contribution—it would help create a spirit of fellowship amongst

our young people which we certainly need in times like these. And we can expect these times to become more trying as time goes on.

To look into the not too distant future and think that when the war is won and everything will be again as it was before, is folly. This world does not stand still and especially not in time of war. There will undoubtedly be a great social upheaval. The world will make great material progress, but for the true church of God it will find less room. Although we hear more and more about back to religion and back to God, we should not let ourselves be lulled asleep. The devil uses various means to try to lure us away from the paths of righteousness and truth to seemingly nicer and easier ways in which we can also enjoy the pleasures of this world. That nations as a whole are turning back to God is not true; although God undoubtedly does use war also as a means to gather his church. He uses war also to ripen the world for the day of judgment. I think that any Serviceman can testify to the fact that never has the seventh commandment been so openly transgressed as in our present war. In civilian life it may not be so apparent, but it certainly is there even among so-called christians.

To say a few things about my service: I am stationed in Muskegon, Michigan, in the Coast Guard Lighthouse Service. The way things look at present, I will be in the lighthouse service for the duration, at least that is the order from the Commandant of the Chicago Ninth Naval District Headquarters. Of course we all know that orders can be changed very easily. I get off every third Sunday and find plenty of churches to attend as Muskegon has a very large population of people from Holland descent. There are none of our churches here but I have met people that do know about our church as they read the "Standard Bearer". I am in good health and hope the same of the rest of the boys and folks at home.

Yours in Christ,
Conrad Portenga.

* * *

Dear Rev. Hanko,

I receive the Beacon Lights regularly and was asked on my last issue how I am getting along. It surely is a hard job to keep up one's letter writing, as the only time I have is Sunday afternoon. I enjoy the Beacon Lights very much and hope I'll get more of them. I read your editorials in the December issue and got a lot out of them. I am in the State of Washington now. There are times when a fellow has the blues. All kinds of men from all walks of life, and ninety percent of them utterly irreligious, are the associates with whom I am forced in daily contact. One surely must have faith in God. "Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," Romans 5:1.

A Beacon Lights Reader.
Robert Kelderman.

THE EDITOR'S DESK:—

It seems that our Iowa Issue was very well received. We have here a letter from Peternella Pooringa from South Holland, Illinois, in which she writes:

"I still look forward to receiving each copy of Beacon Lights and realize that it is serving as a means of uniting all our Protestant Reformed Young People in these times of war. — After reading the ALL-IOWA Issue, I can't help admiring the way these young people came thru."

* * * *

In a letter enclosing a new subscription to Beacon Lights, our Pella Agent, Jennie Klein, writes:

"I received my Beacon Lights Tuesday, Feb. 9. We sure like the Iowa Issue very much. Hope we may have more such issues in the future."

We hope so, too. Maybe we could have an Illinois Issue sometime, or even a California Issue! Something to think about!

* * * *

We would like to advise our Western Societies not to "flounder as airplanes on billows of darkness, looking for beacon lights", but rather to notify the business manager *at once* if copies of Beacon Lights are not received within ten days after date of mailing, which is always the fifth of the month. However, we are glad to hear that Beacon Lights is missed when it is not received!

* * * *

In the April issue of our magazine we hope to feature an article from the inspired pen of Ed. Knott. This promises to be as thought provoking as the previous articles he has written in our other church papers. Don't miss it!

* * * *

SERVICEMEN'S FUND:

Are there any boys in your church who are not receiving Beacon Lights because you have failed to send in their address? Societies, parents, friends, make sure that your boys are able to enjoy our magazine. Keep us posted on their 'changes in addresses'.

We thank all those who have remembered us with donations this past month. They are:

Hull Young People's Society	$12.00
Pvt. John Wigger	1.25
Pvt. Gerrit Pype	5.00
Rock Valley Young People Society	5.00
Mr. & Mrs. Wm. Rottschafer, Sr. Grand Rapids	5.00
Roosevelt Young People's Society	10.00
Priscilla Society (Fuller Ave.)	20.00
A Grand Rapids Donator	2.00
Mr. & Mrs. G. Stonehouse	5.00

(Mail all donations to:—Beacon Lights Servicemen's Fund, 706 Franklin S., S.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan).

The Church and Modern Youth

By Homer Hoeksema — Grand Rapids, Mich.

"What must we do about our young people? They're going to the dogs. Something must be done." Such is the almost frantic sentiment of older people today. I, although belonging to the group called "youth", agree with this sentiment; but I take a more definite stand. I believe that the church is the corrupt tree bringing forth the corrupt fruit of modern youth.

Before writing any further on this problem, I must explain what I understand by the terms "church" and "modern youth". By church I mean the whole church on earth today. I have in mind no specific denomination or congregation, but I accuse the church in general, and each denomination only in so far as it is guilty. Modern youth to me includes all youth people of our own times. I attach no evil connotation to the the term, but use it to denote youth in general of this particular period of history, with its peculiar circumstances.

Now let us see what is wrong with youth: In general, young people are characterized by decadence. Do not misunderstand! I am not a crank. Do not place me in the ranks of those incurable critics who believe that every departure from the conventional styles and habits of two hundred years' standing is an unpardonable sin. I would not go around with a yardstick to measure whether a lady's skirts are more than six inches above the ground. The other night I heard a very striking example of such extreme complaints against youth: the author was showing how some critics decry the difference between the methods of courting of the modern young lady and of grandma. The latter would modestly blush, cast a side-long glance at her victim, and carelessly drop a posy in the path of her pursuer. The young girl of today will sit at a party, grab a roll of bread, dexterously sling it across the room at her heart-throb, avoiding other heads, and hollor: "Hi, there, boob, catch it." And hypocritical grandmother sighs despairingly about the general decadence of modern youth. Please don't put me in that group of calamity-howlers!

But on the other hand, don't place me with those blind optimists who see no cause for alarm, and praise youth to high heaven for their spirit of liberty. I *do* believe that youth is decaying morally. I know this even from my experience at school. I hear reports from other students, and I certainly place some confidence in such reports. This problem is not a

light one, and it has penetrated even to our own circles.

There are several serious faults in modern youth: in the first place, there is a discarding of authority—church, home, school, and state. Youth will go its own way, and that way is the broad way. Hand in hand with the discarding of authority, goes the utter disregard for the experience and wise advice of age. Thirdly, we find a determination on the part of many to get pleasure at any price. Included in this we find immoral sex practices, unchaperoned motor flights which often end when the milk wagon comes around at dawn, modern dancing, and the theatre. Finally, there is the indecent scantiness and boldness of dress on the part of many, which is certainly contrary to the Bible's exhortation of modesty.

No one dares to deny these accusations! They're common knowledge: and I, for one, am apprehehensive as to where our own young people are going.

Various causes for these conditions are pointed out. We may blame it to the fact that modern means of pleasure are so easily accessible. Who doesn't own a car? Who can't afford to go to a dance or a movie? Anyone can enjoy these pleasures. We may blame the matter to modern literature, we may blame it to co-education of the sexes; but basically the church is the culprit.

Spiritual and religious ignorance certainly is the cause of youth's failure; and for this the church is culpable in more than one way. Firstly, she has discarded definite doctrinal instruction. In the second place, she has been caught in the treacherous current of humanitarianism, allowing herself to become the headquarters for welfare unions and charity organizations, and opening her pulpits to Y.M.C.A. secretaries and any tramps of Christians. Humanitarianism is weak; it does not recognize sin as sin; it substitutes social up-building for the fear of God. And the church is guilty in so far as she has given serpents for fishes. In some cases the church has become almost defunct in performing her duty, and popular response is plain evidence of this contention. In my travels I came upon a large Congregational church, I think it was. The morning service was attended by about one hundred people, of whom about one fourth were men, very few were children or young people, and the rest were women. The evening service had an audience of twelve women and one man, not counting our own family. The pastor preached not so much as a Sunday-school lesson. In the evening my father was asked to speak a few words, and he expressed dis-

may at conditions in that church. Afterwards the minister said "Yes, I guess I'll have to give it to you a little stronger now, too." This is only one example of the church in general over the whole country. The church today is shamefully weak.

Attempts are made to remedy the situation, but in these, too, the church errs. Anxious to keep her young people, in order to preserve her own life—although a church that so shamefully denies her calling is unworthy of existence—she proceeds from the false belief that youth is the time of pleasure, instead of correcting her own shortcomings. She caters to the carnality of youth. She furnishes dance floors in the church parlors; and movies, bowling alleys, and athletics are common in today's church. In so doing she fails to realize that she brings up her youth for the world, and not for God.

I cannot deny that youth is the spring-time of life, that youth is carefree and inexperienced, and that therefore youth has a more cheerful outlook upon life: but I do deny that a young man or a young woman is primarily a pleasure-seeking animal, or even more so than an older person. Such epicurean philosophy is an insult to youth, and a fatal mistake.

Another, but equally useless remedy is that which raises a barricade of precepts around youth. Those who follow this plan also proceed from the false principle that youth is the time of pleasure: but they are alarmed. They try to fill the vacuum of doctrinal laxity and deficient spiritual life by precept upon precept: "do *not* do this, and that, and the other thing." Consistories, classes, and synods try to legislate youth into a Christian walk. This policy also fails.

Certainly, our youth must be "in the world, but not of the world." Absolutely, we must warn youth against the dangers of the world. They must learn to know the world in which they live, and they must learn this in the light of God's Word.

What, then, can and should the church be for her young people? She should furnish every young man and woman with a college training in spiritual things. The sole business of the church in instruction in the Word of God: instruction in doctrine, in practical tenets of life's walk, and in history is indispensable. Remember, God's Word is our only infallible rule of faith and practice. If this policy is followed, youth, by God's grace, may walk safely in the world.

But how can the church accomplish this aim? In three ways: first of all, she must turn from her own wicked ways, before she can hope to change youth. She must cease to be a tail to the kite of the

humanitarian world. She must return to the Word of the Cross. Secondly, she must change her mind about youth. Youth is not pre-eminently the time of pleasure, but the time of preparation and guidance. Finally she must offer spiritual pleasure to her young people. She must do this in the sermons, in catechism, in society life, and in personal advice. The church must furnish some positive good. Then she will again become fixed in the minds of youth as the place where they may turn for true pleasure and where friendships are formed that are rooted in the friendship of our Christ! Then, and then only, may the Church be absolved of any responsibility for the failings of her youth!

WHEN MANY ARE ONE

Cont. from page 10)

married and there were the parents who had so recently buried their child. And all those stories of their individual lives seemed to blend together into one perfect whole. All together they stood up and opened their mouths and raised their voices to sing: "Praise God from whom all blessings flow!" It was the beautiful harmony of the voice of the Church!

IN MEMORIAM

The Young People's Society of the Manhattan Protestant Reformed Church, wishes to express its heartfelt sympathy with one of its members,

JOHN KAMMERMAN

in the death of his father.

May the Lord comfort the bereaved.

H. De Wolf, Pres.
Olga Flikkema, Sec'y.

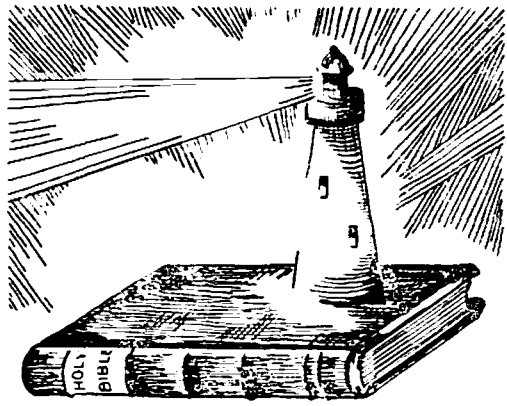
Instructing our sons we gladly record
The praises, the works, the might of the Lord,
For He hath commanded that what He hath done
Be passed in tradition from father to son.

Let children thus learn from history's light
To hope in our God and walk in His sight,
The God of their fathers to fear and obey
And ne'er like their fathers to turn from His way.

The story be told, to warn and restrain,
Of hearts that were hard, rebellious, and vain,
Of soldiers who faltered when battle was near,
Who kept not God's covenant nor walked in His way.

BIBLE OUTLINES

By the Rev. P. De Boer
Holland, Mich.



Outline XXII
THE PASSAGE OF THE RED SEA
2nd Week of March

Heb. 11.29 — By faith they passed thru the Red Sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.

By all means reread the narrative as told in Exodus 14.

A Mighty Miracle

The Lord deliberately led Israel in their exodus into what appeared to be hopeless entanglement in the wilderness. After Israel had headed in a northeasterly direction toward Canaan for a few days, the Lord ordered Moses to turn about and follow a route that led along the western shore of the Red Sea. This brought Israel into the wilderness. On one side of them was the Red Sea, on the other Egypt, and before them as they went south the wilderness wastes. To all appearances the Israelites lost their way and now were hopelessly entangled. According to all human reckoning the only way out would be to retrace their steps and go back to the place where they turned from the route to Canaan. Thus Pharaoh reasoned, and so after the first shock of the last plague was over, he set out with his army to cut off this one escape and so to entrap them, planning to bring Israel thus to its knees. And, indeed, when Pharaoh pursued them Israel was soon entirely hemmed in, a perfect prey of the enemy.

When the trap was closed and Israel realized what had happened, then the Lord, Who had intentionally brought all this about, began to work. Moses was ordered to stretch out his hand over the Sea, and the wind blew all that night and the waters were whipped up and stood in walls on each side of a path for Israel through the depths of the Sea. By morning Israel was safely on the other shore. During the course of the great miracle the pillar of Jehovah's guidance stood twixt Israel and the enemy protecting them. It was darkness to the Egyptians and light to the Israel-

ites. First, while the Sea was being prepared for their passage, the pillar simply stood between Israel and their enemy; as they passed over, it followed them.

Of course the opening of the Red Sea was a miracle Some deny all miracles and consequently seek to explain miracles from the workings of the ordinary laws of nature. It has been pointed out that, e.g., the water in Lake Erie under the pressure of a strong gale has been known to rise as much as seven feet at Buffalo and to be depressed a corresponding seven feet at Toledo. Those who attempt to make of the marvellous event at the Red Sea a mere natural event say that the wind blowing all the night could accomplish this. When Israel was across they reason the wind must have changed in direction since the bodies of the Egyptians were swept to the other shore. If the matter were not as serious as it is, one would be inclined to smile at the attempt to explain the wonder from mere natural phenomena. (1) Would a violently blowing wind normally pile up a wall of water on each side? Remember the water stood on both sides of them—it was not merely backed up on one side as a violent wind may back up a river. (2) It would be very remarkable indeed and impossible to explain that the wind began to blow when Moses stretched out his hand and that the water returned when he again stretched out his hand if all this was a mere natural phenomenon. (3) How would one explain the pillar of cloud rising up from before Israel and taking the rearguard position, if all this was not a mighty working of God's power?

From God's viewpoint the purpose of the miracle was that he might get a name for Himself; as far as Israel was concerned the miracle was intended to deliver them once and for all from their enemy, and to do so in such a way that Israel knew that God had separated His people unto Himself.

A Bold Faith

After Philip had preached to the Ethiopian eunuch and had baptized him the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away that the eunuch saw him no more (Acts 8:39). Of course, the Lord could have performed a similar miracle here at the Red Sea and bodily lifted Israel up over the Sea without making a dry path thru the Sea. In that case there would have been little room for the exercise of Israel's faith and the great unbelief of the Egyptians had not been revealed. Now there was room for the exercise of faith, and it is exactly the exercise of this faith of which Heb. 11:29 speaks.

The passage speaks of Israel's faith, and not merely of Moses'. It is indeed true that we may not presuppose that everyone that passed through, also of the mixed multitude, possessed true faith. Already then there was the great group that was unbelieving and that very likely repeatedly incited Israel to murmur. In many of them God had no good-pleasure. But we must remember there was also the remnant according to election, the faithful—their faith is here the

controlling and dominating force.

Certainly Israel's passage was an act of faith. It took great faith to go down between these walls of water with their wives and cattle and little ones and to move forward to the other side. Yet in obedience to Moses' command they did it, believing that the Lord wrought for them and would lead them safely to the other side, and deliver them from their enemy.

On the other hand, the attempt of the Egyptians to force a passage was the very opposite of faith. They knew that God was for Israel. Yes, even the pillar that was light to Israel was darkness to them. It was hardness of heart, a deliberate attempt to fight against the Lord that made Pharaoh and his army plunge in after Israel. They had no Word of God that He would bring them through, all the testimony was that God would destroy every effort to bring Israel back, yet they went in. And they persisted even when the sea began to return, and the going became hard. And when the sea overwhelmed them Egypt and its host perished in the same Sea that opened for Israel.

A Significant Deliverance

Significant for Israel. By this miracle they were once for all delivered from the house of bondage in Egypt, and Egypt's power completely broken. Besides, the tidings of this marvellous deliverance went before them even unto Canaan, and fear fell on all the inhabitants of the land. God had gotten Himself a great victory. And Israel had beheld that salvation is of the Lord alone.

Significant also in other respects. The deliverance at the Red Sea is mentioned in our Baptism Form as a type of baptism, by which we are delivered from the enemy.

QUESTIONS:—Why did Pharaoh judge that Israel was entangled in the wilderness? How do some attempt to explain the miracle as a mere natural phenomenon? Mention serious objections to this attempt. What are miracles? What are laws of nature? What was God's purpose with this miracle at the Red Sea? Why was Israel's passage an act of faith? How is the wonder at the Red Sea a type of baptism?

* * * * *

Outline XXIII
THE FALL OF JERICHO'S WALLS
3rd Week of March

Heb. 11:30 — By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.

Be sure to reread the story in Joshua 6.

Some forty years elapsed between the passage of the Red Sea and the fall of Jericho. Much took place during these intervening years, but Hebrews 11 passes over all this and calls our attention to the fall of Jericho. Hebrews 11 is the chapter of faith, and although faith was not wholly absent in the intervening years they still were largely years of murmuring and unbelief. Now a new

generation had arisen, and they had conquered the other side of the Jordan with the help of the Lord, and now crossed the Jordan River. Before them stood Jericho.

The Divine Command

Jericho was not a large city but it was a mighty city. It could not have been large since Israel walked about it on the seventh day seven times. Yet it was mighty. It stood on a hill, and was well fortified. It was a garrison city, a fortress surrounded by strong walls. And you may be sure the walls were in excellent repair, for Canaan expected the Israelites to come. The city was the key city on this side of Jordan, and its capture would give access to the whole land.

In respect to the capture of the city the Lord gave a specific injunction to Joshua See Joshua 5:13-15 and 6.2. (The man with the drawn sword was the captain of the Lord's host, the angel of the covenant through whom Israel had the victory.) Israel was ordered by the Lord to walk about the city seven days, once each day and on the seventh day seven times. All Israel was to take part, men, women and children with the armed forces in the van and in the rear, and seven priests bearing the ark in the midst.

The Lord's purpose in giving the city to the Israelites by the miracle of the falling of the walls was again to show Israel that the Lord gave them the Land. The Lord takes the land from the wicked and gives it to Israel. Hence also the ark was to be in the midst, and the priests' trumpets sounded forth the salvation of the Lord. Seven is the number of rest, of God's rest, and on the seventh day Israel would inherit the land.

Undoubtedly we should see in this divine command to Israel a type. Jericho is typical of the world, the fulness of which is now the possesion of the wicked. The church of God is called, not to improve the world, nor to realize the kindom of God on earth, but simply to walk about the world. The church must blow the trumpet of the gospel and announce that God gives the victory. Then at the end, when the last trump sounds, the walls of this world will collapse, and the meek shall inherit the earth.

An Obedient Faith

The walls of Jericho fell by faith. This does not mean that faith itself made the walls collapse, but that believing in the Lord and obeying his command Israel was not put to shame. God could have caused the walls to collapse before Israel ever came to them. He could have caused them to fall without their marching to Jericho. However, in that case their faith had not been exercised and demonstrated. God wished to be magnified also in Israel's faith.

How apparently ridiculous their marching about the city must have seemed to the enemy. From the viewpoint of the world, it was absolutely meaningless and could accomplish nothing. But Is-

rael believed in the Lord. Their faith seems to have been very strong. As a matter of fact the generation that entered the land of rest revealed great faith all along — we do not read of murmurings and rebellions, but tnat they feared the Lord and obeyed Him. The generation previous fell in the wilderness because of its wickedness, the generation that followed turned to idols. This generation was obedient. Also at Jericho they did as the Lord commanded. Again let me reiterate the calling of the present day church is not with ramming beams to break down the walls of the world, it is not to legislate Christianity, it is not to conquer the world for Christ. We are called to encompass the walls of Jericho, to walk about them in faith, and to look for the salvation of the Lord. At the end of our journey, the Lord Himself will come with a trump and Babylon shall fall.

The Victorious Outcome

The walls of Jericho did collapse. The strong walls fell, they collapsed. Not because of weakness, but by an act of the Lord. Of course, also this was not a natural phenomenon but a miraculous act of the Lord. God gave the city unto Israel. And the entire city had to be razed, its inhabitants slain. Its fall as key city was to be a continual reminder to Israel that God and God alone gave them the land as an inheritance.

The citadel of sin and evil, the power of the wicked world as it has dominion over the earth, will also collapse. By a miracle of God, at His appointed time, when Christ returns. In the meantime faith must continualy affirm it, believe, and wait for the destruction of the wicked that is the day of salvation for God's people.

QUESTIONS: Why was the city of Jericho of strategic importance? ..Why was Israel to march about it seven days, and seven times on the seventh day? ·-One of the seven days was a Sabbath, perhaps the seventh day itself was the Sabbath — did Israel transgress the Sabbath in marching around the city? Prove that it is unreasonable to maintain that the walls of Jericho fell in the normal course of natural events. Why was the city to be completely razed and its inhabitants destroyed? ..How do you explain from the viewpoint of God's justice that also the little children and even the animals had to be destroyed?

Outline XXIV
RAHAB'S FAITH
4th Week of March

Heb. 11:31 — By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.

Consult also Joshua 2.

Rahab's name is mentioned several times in the New Testament. Hers is one of the few women's names mentioned in the genealogy of Christ in Matt. 1. In that chapter Rahab is called the wife of Salmon, a prince of Judah. She was a maternal ancestress of David, and

so of the great Son of David, our Lord Jesus Christ. Rahab's name is mentioned also by James, chapter 2:25. The writer of Hebrews very properly mentions here in this eleventh chapter. The fall of Jericho's walls quite naturally brings to mind the woman who hid the spies and was saved from the city's destruction because she believed.

Her Black Background

Rahab was a Gentile, a Canaanite, with all that implies. In God's surpassing wisdom this elect vessel was not born of the seed of Abraham in the sphere of the covenant, but born among the peoples who had no part with Israel. She was not historically an heir of the covenants and of the promise. As a Canaanite she was brought up. The Canaanites worshipped other gods. As a matter of fact they were the descendants of Ham's son Canaan upon whom Noah uttered the curse. In the time of Joshua the measure of their iniquity was full. Abraham could not inherit the land in his day because the measure of iniquity in the land was not yet full. But now it was full, and God's righteous judgments were ready to break forth upon them unto their destruction. The development of sin had run its course. The Canaanites had now in their generations brought sin to the climax. The picture of Rom. 1. applied to them.

On that background it is not at all striking to read of Rahab that she was a harlot. Joshua 2 refers thus to her, and James speaks of the harlot Rahab — only the genealogy of Matt. 1 omits this qualification in its reference to her. Attempts have been made to modify the meaning of this qualification and consider her as a woman who ran a decent boarding house. It is argued that the Hebrew word may mean that. It is also argued that the God-fearing spies would not go to the house of a harlot. In regard to the latter it must be remembered that the spies went to her house because it was by the wall and therefore a safe refuge. Besides, it is questionable whether the spies were aware that the woman was a harlot before they entered her home. We must see in their coming into her home the directing hand of God. It is also impossible to modify the meaning of the term "harlot." The Hebrew word indeed may mean a woman who runs a respectable boarding house, but the Greek word used by Hebrews and by James cannot possibly be taken in any other sense than of harlot, prostitute. She sold her body for pay in the lusts of the flesh. However, this low estate is not a surprise if we remember that the measure of iniquity of the Canaanites was full — such sins exactly follow when men forsake God, cf. Rom. 1. Besides, in heathendom such wickedness is not looked upon with the revulsion of the Christian. There does not even seem to have been any estrangement between Rahab and her family on account of her employment. Finally, although Rahab had fallen low, we must not think that prostitution is in God's eyes the greatest of sins. Indeed it is a great sin, but undoubtedly to deny

God's Word, to corrupt the truth, is a far greater sin.

The description of Rahab as a harlot refers of course to her past life. It certainly cannot mean that she remained a harlot. For several reasons: a. Grace that forgives also delivers. Whom God justifies He also sanctifies. That was true in the Old Testament as well as it is true today. b. Israel would never have condoned continued harlotry in its midst. Especially not the God-fearing generation that entered Canaan. c. Finally, the very fact that she became the wife af Salmon, a prince of Judah, presupposes that she broke with her sinful life. As a matter of fact from this marriage with Salmon was born the god-fearing Boaz of the book of Ruth. In view of all this it is only just to say that Rahab was a harlot when God's race found her, but that sovereign grace changed all this. God magnified His mercy and grace in drawing her out of the darkness.

We must be careful not to look down upon Rahab and her past from the heights. Most of us have been brought up in Christian homes; very few came in any sense from such a background as she did. Yet remember that the human race in Adam together lies in the midst of sin and corruption. The human race is one tree, and each of us sins according to his place in that tree. But we too are part of the same corrupt tree, by nature, that Rahab was. Besides, without intending to mitigate her sinful past, let us remember that we also have transgressed all God's commandments, the seventh not excluded. The background of us all is black.

Her Evident Faith

How did Rahab come to believe? Faith cometh by hearing, Paul says in Rom. 10:17. Rahab had heard the reports concerning Israel and what their God had done for them. God opened her heart and she believed. Rahab's faith was also a faith coupled with action. She brought forth works, James 2. Hebrews 11 says "she received the spies with peace." She took their part against her own people, for God's sake she turned traitor to the cause of her city. Does this, however, justify her lie in connection with the hiding of the spies? There are two views. a. One is that the lie may not be condoned, or excused, that there are no necessary lies, and that in this respect Rahab's faith was imperfect. b. The other is that the lie was necessary for the safety of the spies, that Scripture nowhere condemns it, and that God once ordained Israel to act out a lie (the God-commanded ambush at Ai, Josohua 8).

As Rahab believed, so every believer believes what God reveals. Faith is an inner conviction that God's people have the victory. But faith must also reveal itself in actions conformable to faith. It must do as well as say. Faith chooses God's people and their cause, and receives His people with peace.

Her Blessed Reward

The text puts the matter negatively: she perished not with them that believed

not. Note, the others in Jericho did not believe. Undoubtedly this stubborn unbelief is the clamatic sin of Jericho—when they mocked the reports concerning Israel and its God and hid themselves behind their strong walls, they filled the measure of their iniquity to the very brim and perished righteously in their sins. But Rahab did not perish, not because she had not sinned, but because she believed.

Positively speaking Rahab was saved. She and all hers were incorporated into Israel to be part of the people of God.

If Jericho's destruction is a picture of the final overthrow of the world, then Rahab's case emphasizes that those that believe alone shall escape the destruction.

At the same time Rahab with Ruth and others of the Gentiles who in the Old Testament entered into the kingdom were the prophecy of the New Testament times when the Gentiles are gathered in, to become one fold with the believing Jews.

QUESTIONS:—Who were the Canaanites? How do we know that at the time of the conquest of Canaan their measure of iniquity was full? (See Genesis 15: 13-16). Prove that Rahab did not remain a harlot after she was taken up into Israel. Is prostitution a great sin? Is it the greatest sin? How did Rahab come to believe? How did she reveal her faith in her actions? Are there necessary lies? Why was Rahab's family also saved with her?

Outline XXV
A PARTING GLANCE IN THE HALL OF HEROES
1st Week of April

Heb. 11:32-34 — And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jepthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets:

Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions.

Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

In vss. 32-38 the writer of Hebrews as it were hurries through the remainder of the Old Testament hall of heroes. His purpose is to encourage the New Testament believers in their faith. They must not draw back, they must not grow weary and faint, Heb. 10:36-39. He has shown how the Old Testament saints walked by faith and endured to the end, and he has sufficiently enlarged upon this to serve his purpose. Time would fail him to enlarge upon all the heroes of faith, so he now hurries throuogh.

In vs. 32 he mentions a few names of Old Testament saints who manifested the faith of which he speaks. Their names are written in the Greek spelling in our Bibles, and not in the Hebrew spelling as in the Old Testament. Gideon Barak, Samson, Jepthah, David and Samuel. Indeed some of these also com-

mitted great sins, but it is their faith according to which they are remembered as worthy examples. Samson's name is also mentioned as a believer. By the prophets we understand the major prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel), the minor prophets (the twelve whose writings are part of Scripture), but also all the other prophets of God such as Elijah, Elisha, etc.

Vss. 33 and 34 refer to the great deeds that were accomplished by faith. "Who through faith subdued kingdoms" as David, Hezekiah, etc. "Wrought righteousness" for their subjects and people, as the kings and judges. "Obtained promises", that is, either they received revelations of future promises of Messianic glory, or they obtained the things God promised (victory over the enemies in battle, etc). "Stopped the mouths of lions"—think of Daniel. "Quenched the violence of fire"—think of Daniel's three friends in the fiery furnace. "Escaped the edge of the sword", as Jerusalem did in Hezekiah's day by trust in the Lord. "Out of weakness were made strong"—as Hezekiah's life was prolonged after his believing prayer. "Waxed valient in fight"—David, and many others. "Turned to flight the armies of the aliens". Vs. 35a, adds, "Women received their dead raised to life again."

The meaning is that all this took place: through faith. These words of vs. 33 control all that follows. All these deeds and actions were possible by faith.

Hence, the verses as a whole speak of a common faith, a faith evident thruout the generations, dominating and controlling. All were called in the midst of great difficulties to exercise their faith and fight the battle of the Lord. They did so by faith.

The following verses (35-38) emphasize faith amid persecution. We leave these verses for another outline.

QUESTIONS: — Who was Gideon and what did he do? Who was Barak? Who, was Jepthah? Why is Samson worthy of mention as a hero of faith? In what sense does faith qualify for action? Why should the writer of Hebrews mention all these deeds of faith — what was his purpose as far as his readers are concerned?

FAREWELL

We as Young People gathered here
Our gratitude is God's
For all His care and sympathy,
Which gratefully endures.
I've tried to use the passing hours.
So they would bring no sigh,
For all the happy days with them,
To whom we now must say, Good-bye.

Dear boys, we shall ne'er forget.
The old days spent with you,
With many a thought of joys gone by,
We sadly say — adieu.
The last few hours are going fast.
Here must we break the tie,
And so it is with sadness now,
Once more we say, Good-bye.

Dear boys, we hope you never may forget,
The Bible you were taught,
We trust the future may perfect,
The work the Church has wrought.
And may they bring good gifts to you,
These years that swiftly fly,
And may you kindly think of those.
Who bid you now Good-bye.

Good-bye, it shall not be the end,
But happy hours are ever short,
We hope again to meet.
And days of youth are fleet.
There is so much to learn and do,
And may our aims be high,
And ever lead to that Bright Land,
Where none shall say, Good-bye.

This piece was given for George Lanting and Arthur Zanstra who left for the Service. Composed and delivered by Bertha Van Baren at a social of the South Holland Young People's Society. They requested that it be placed in Beacon Lights.