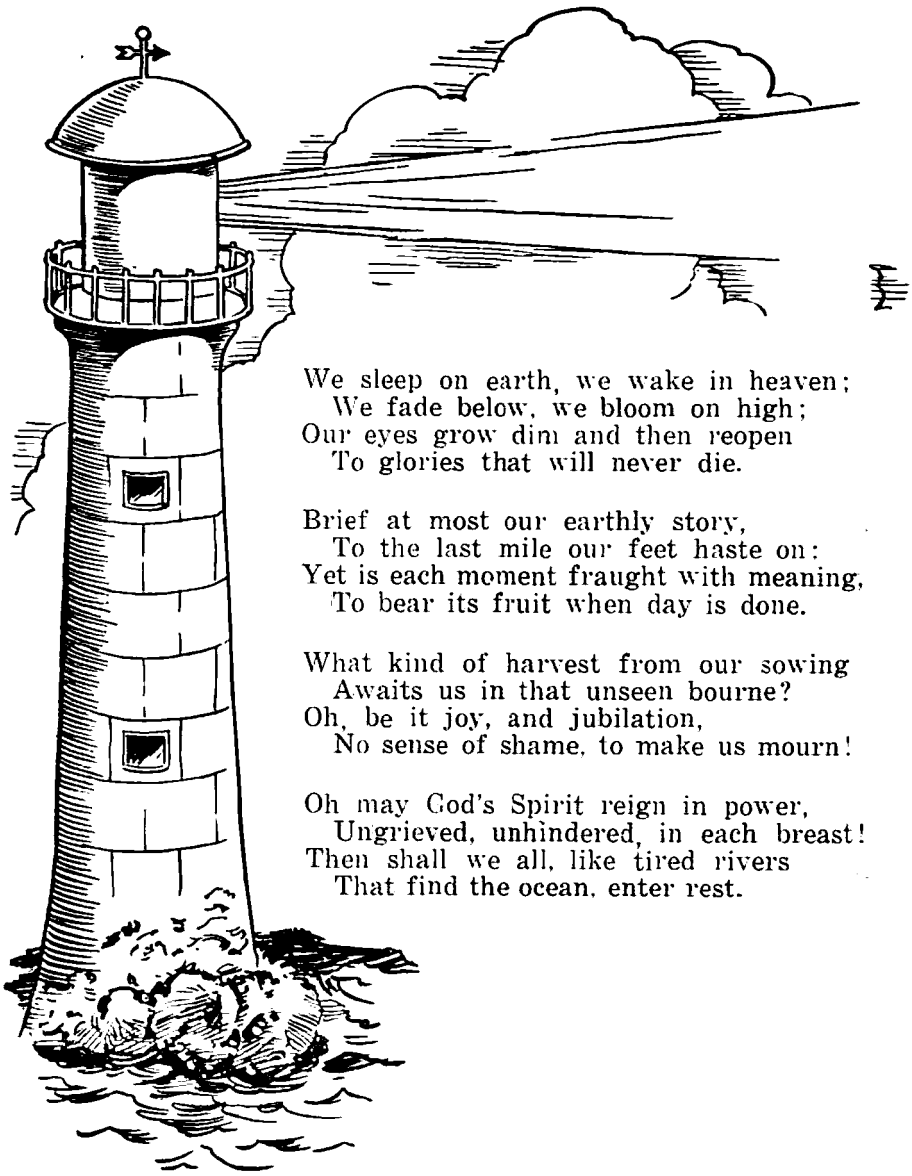
BEACON LIGHTS

OCTOBER — 1943



We sleep on earth, we wake in heaven;
We fade below, we bloom on high;
Our eyes grow dim and then reopen
To glories that will never die.

Brief at most our earthly story,
To the last mile our feet haste on:
Yet is each moment fraught with meaning,
To bear its fruit when day is done.

What kind of harvest from our sowing
Awaits us in that unseen bourne?
Oh, be it joy, and jubilation,
No sense of shame, to make us mourn!

Oh may God's Spirit reign in power,
Ungrieved, unhindered, in each breast!
Then shall we all, like tired rivers
That find the ocean, enter rest.

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Beacon Lights

For Protestant Reformed Youth

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MUSIC

By Miss Anne Alphenaar — Kalamazoo, Mich.

What is music? It is a language which conveys ideas and feelings that words cannot express. But it is for the ear alone. Music is the most elemental of the arts. It surrounds our lives and play. Whether people are conscious of it or not, all are swayed by music. It can induce bodily activity or sleep, can also arouse feelings or quell panic, can soothe or stir. Music uses sounds of all kinds, arranged in orderly succession pleasing to the ear. The combination of harmonious sounds can give a pleasure which no other art can bring.

It is believed that the early Christians borrowed their music from the Jews. As far as the music in the Church of the Reformation is concerned, Luther, himself being a musician and realizing the great power of music in the church, wrote and collected a number of appropriate hymns written in Germany. At that time folk songs had invaded the church and most of them were utterly unfit for use on sacred occasions. Luther was responsible for the change from the folk songs to the use of hymns in the Church of the Reformation.

Looking at the present, we notice the type of music that has come to the foreground. Turn on the radio and what type of music and song greets your ear? Most of the songs are silly, foolish jazz tunes, some quite smooth and seemingly hard to resist, others loud and noisy—just a jumble of notes. On the other hand, we have the old classicals with their beautiful and rythmic melodies, whose soft tones ease and relax the mind and brighten one's spirits. At which program do you prefer to leave your dial? There is no real satisfaction or true relaxation in listening to these modern senseless bits of song which break most of the laws and etiquette of good music. Does this type of song enrich our life, does

it befit our spiritual life? Indeed it would benefit us in no way, but rather would do more harm than good as it tends to lead one in a trend of worldlimindedness rather than benefiting our pilgrimage on this earth. Certainly we don't sing such songs to the praise and honor of God!

Take a look at the music rack of your piano. Yes, I would dare say most of us are guilty of having such trash in our possession. Music is a beautiful art and we must make proper and full use of it, and preserve it as such. The song on our lips must be one as befits a child of God. This does not mean, however, that we must always sing hymns and psalters, for there is a great volume of sacred songs which are true to our belief and have beautiful words and melodies very pleasing to the ear.

The life of a Christian is a serious one and we must be sincere even in our singing. Nevertheless, we are also joyful and happy and there is no better way of expressing these emotions than by means of a song. As a matter of fact, it is our spontaneous reaction, displaying our mood. By means of a song, we can express sorrow and penitence and, on the other hand, it is the best way of voicing joy and thankfulness. No one can live without music: it is a very vital part of our everyday life, in fact, more so than we would believe.

Our walk, our talk, and our song must be to the glorification of God's name. The songs which one gives utterance to, bring out the thoughts which are within.

Even in selecting sacred music, we must be very careful that such compositions do not deviate from our reformed doctrine. For if we are not in agreement with the words and ideas expressed in a song, how can we sing it heartily, with sincerity and satisfaction?

Let us, therefore, as Christians, go on singing spiritual songs as the spontaneous gratitude toward our God until we, as the Church Triumphant, will sing the new song of Moses and the Lamb in heavenly perfection.

Sing a new song to Jehovah
For the wonders He hath wrought;
His right hand and arm most holy
Triumph to His cause have brought
In His love and tender mercy
He hath made salvation known,
In the sight of every nation
He His righteousness hath shown.

Truth and mercy toward His people
He hath ever kept in mind,
And His full and free salvation
He hath shown to all mankind.
Sing, O earth, sing to Jehovah,
Praises to Jehovah sing;
With the swelling notes of music
Shout before the Lord, the King.

I Believe In God

By the Rev. C. Hanko — Oak Lawn, Illinois

One of our oldest and best known creeds, commonly known as the Apostolic Confession, starts out with these significant words: "I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth."

It rings in our hearts as an echo of the opening passage of Scripture: "In the beginning God created heaven and earth."

And in that very same strain the first article of our Belgic Confession expresses it: "We all believe with the heart and confess with the mouth, that there is one only simple and spiritual Being, which we call God, and that He is eternal, incomprehensible, invisible, immutable, infinite, almighty, perfectly wise, just, good, and the overflowing fountain of good."

How utterly unique is this confession. Many will grant you that you should believe in a god, some god of your own choosing. Some will speak of almighty Providence, of worshipful Nature, or of whatever god there may be, and each in turn bows before his own god. The believer says: "I believe in God."

He does not speak of *the* God in distinction from other gods, for he does not acknowledge that there are or can be any other gods. All other gods are the work of men's hands and the product of man's imagination. They are empty and vain, like unto those who make them. But our God is in the heavens. Besides Him there is no other. He is God and He alone. We believe in *God*.

Would we attempt to define Him? But to whom then, would we liken God, or what likeness would we apply to Him? He is the Invisible, the Unseen, Whom no one has ever seen, nor ever can see. The Incomprehensible, the Unfathomable, the Incomparable, God above all, to be praised forever. God is the infinite Spirit, while we are but creatures; He

fills the heavens, while we are bound to that which is earthy; He is eternal, while we are subject to time; His presence fills all the universe, while we occupy but one spot at any given moment. The heaven of heavens cannot contain Him, for He is the God of infinite perfections. He is Light and there is no darkness in Him, He is complete Goodness, Love, Grace, Truth, Life and infinite Perfection. We can only bow in worship as we cry: "O, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to Whom be glory forever!"

Yet we do know Him, for He has not left Himself without witness, but reveals Himself from heaven in all the works of His hands. We have His Word, His own, personal letter, written in His own hand and addressed to us, in which He sets Himself before us in all the perfection of His glory. Even "the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night shows knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard." Only the wicked fool, who refuses to acknowledge Him as God, will say: "There is no God." For God has engraven His testimony into the heart of every man thru His Spirit that He *is*, and that He is God.

It would be foolish of us to even try to prove that God is. Unbelief laughs any attempt of that kind to scorn. The proud Atheist spurns all of God's revelation while he vauntingly cries: "There is no God." The boastful infidel will tell you that this world is a product of evolution and development, worshipfully bowing before Nature. The conceited idolator will set up his own god before the face of the living One and fall on bended knee before it.

While the believer needs no proof. He knows. Not because it has been proven to him, nor because he has a knowledge which is not of himself but has come to him from above. He knows by faith through the Spirit of Grace Who has renewed his heart and implanted that knowledge in him. He knows; and no powers of darkness, not even all the devils of hell nor the ragings of the heathen, can take that knowledge from him.

I believe in God. What a blessed knowledge! The devils also know that there is one God, but they tremble. God speaks in sunshine and rain, in lightnings and thunders, in earthquakes and disasters. Unbelief hears that voice and prefers to say: "Nature causes the sun to shine, it rains, it lightnings

and thunders, the earth quakes by a natural phenomenon and disasters simply happen." And while they say it they curse the God of heaven. While the believer bows down and worships. God has revealed Himself in His Son, Jesus Christ, Who died on the cross to arise on the third day. The world sees it and cries ever anew: "Away with Him, crucify Him." While the believer turns to that cross and confesses: "My Savior, my Lord and my God." God witnesses of Himself in wars and rumors of wars, in havoc among the nations, as so many forebodings of His final judgment to come. The world knows it and hardens her wicked heart against it until the day when she will cry to the mountains to cover her and to the rocks to hide her from before the face of the living God. The believer experiences these same judgments of God upon a wicked world; yet, come what may, he can say:

My soul in silence waits for God,
My Savior He has proved;
He only is my rock and tower;
I never shall be moved.

Reformation Day

The month of October once more brings us the commemoration of the Reformation which took place in the sixteenth century under Martin Luther.

Little had Luther thought, when he nailed his ninety five theses on the door of the Castle Church of Wittenberg on October 31, 1517, that this act would be commemorated by the Church for centuries to come. Little had he also realized that this single act would be the spark which would ignite into the flames of the Reformation whereby the church would be delivered from the bondage of Roman Catholicism.

His only purpose was to expose the evil of the sale of indulgences as it was conducted in Germany at that time. The pope, in need of funds for the building of the St. Peter's Cathedral in Rome, conceived of the idea of issuing indulgences to be offered for sale to the people. Such an indulgence was a certificate signed by the pope assuring the buyer that any sin he committed was forgiven for the price paid for the indulgence. He could even buy indulgences for the dead, thereby delivering them from the pains of purgatory and causing them to pass on into heaven. It was thru

the sale of these indulgences by the monk, Tetzel, that Luther was aroused to openly oppose the teachings and practices of the church in which he was born and reared. On that thirty first day of October in 1517, the day before All Saints' Day, when great crowds would congregate at the church at Wittenberg, Luther nailed his ninety five these on the church door, where all could read and be convinced of the corruptions that were publicly being practiced by the church.

The stage was set, for God had prepared the hearts of many to receive the witness of the Reformer for the truth of the Word of God. Copies of these theses were rapidly spread throughout Germany, and hundreds were aroused to side with Luther in opposing the church and defending the truth of the Scriptures. Before Luther realized it himself, he had broken with the church and was leading the believers back to the Scriptures. The great Reformation, which we still commemorate with gratitude to God, had begun.

Not so well known among us are the ninety nine theses, or propositions, written by Luther even before this eventful day. A reformation is never born over night. God had raised up others, even before Luther, who opposed the evils of Catholicism and gave their lives for it. And Luther himself had undergone a long and bitter struggle before he opened his attack which had such lasting results. It was during this struggle that the ninety nine theses were born in Luther's soul, which are in a sense even more significant than those nailed on the church at Wittenberg because they oppose the error of man's free will as it was openly taught in those days.

A few of these are of particular interest to us. Luther states: "It is true that man, who has become a corrupt tree, can will or do naught but evil.

"It is false that the will, left to itself, can do good as well as evil; for it is not free, but in bondage.

"It is not in the power of man's will to choose or reject whatever is offered to it.

"Man cannot of his own nature will God to be God. He would prefer to be God himself, and that God were not God.

"The excellent, infallible, and sole preparation for grace, is the eternal election and predestination of God.

"It is false to say that if man does all he can, he removes the obstacles of grace.

"On the side of man there is nothing that goes before grace, unless it be impotency and even rebellion.

"There is no moral virtue with-

out pride or without sorrow, that is to say, without sin.

"From the beginning to the end, we are not masters of our actions, but their slaves.

"We do not become righteous by doing what is righteous; but having become righteous, we do what is righteous.

"Man is a greater enemy to the grace of God than he is to the law itself.

"He who is without God's grace sins continually, even should he neither rob, murder, nor commit adultery.

"He sins, in that he does not fulfill the law spiritually.

"Not to kill, not to commit adultery, externally only and with regard to the actions, is the righteousness of hypocrites.

"The law of God and the will of man are two adversaries, that without the grace of God can never be reconciled.

"What the law commands, the will never wishes, except as thru fear or love it puts on the appearance of willing.

"The law is the taskmaster of the will, who is not overcome but by the Child that is born unto us. Isaiah 9:6.

"Cursed are all those who perform the works of the law.

"Blessed are all those who perform the works of God's grace."

Evidently Luther did not believe in a certain favor of God to all mankind, known as common grace, whereby God offers salvation to all mankind, for Luther says that "it is not in the power of man's will to choose or reject whatever is *offered* to it." Nor did he believe in the fruit of "common grace," known as civil righteousness, for he states: "He who is without God's grace sins continually, even should he neither rob, murder, nor commit adultery. He sins in that he does not fulfill the law spiritually. Not to kill, not to commit adultery, externally only and with regard to actions, is the righteousness of hypocrites." Evidently Luther believed only in the saving grace of God in Christ Jesus without which man is rebellious, without any righteousness, and only sins continually, for he adds: The law is the taskmaster of the will, who is not overcome but by the Child that is born unto us. Isaiah 9:6.

It is encouraging to read such a positive stand for the truth of the Word of God. We can never relax, now nor in the future, for reformation never ceases, but is a process that must be carried on throughout the history of God's church until the end of time.

To actually commemorate the Reformation of Luther's day we ourselves must be children of the Reformation.

SCIENCE

Growing Over Night

By Mr. Clarence De Boer — Kalamazoo, Mich.

When speaking of rapid growth we often use either of two comparisons, "growing like a weed", or "growing like a mushroom". Both develop rapidly. However, in a mushroom we cannot observe its progress, not because it grows over night, but because the entire fruiting body—which we eventually see —develops in every detail underground. Usually this requires several days just as a flower unfolds from bud to blossom. After a heavy rainfall, the embryonic mushroom absorbs a large amount of water, causing the expansion of the cells. The rapidly enlarging mushroom suddenly bursts through the thin layer of earth which covers it—and we say, "It grew over night!"

What is the difference between a mushroom and a toadstool? Most people assume a mushroom is edible while a toadstool is poisonous. According to common usage this distinction would seem correct. Scientifically speaking the two terms are synonymous but with different derivations. Toadstool originates from the German word "todt", which means death. In Germany a certain genus of mushrooms, known as the Ammanita, grows in abundance, and is very poisonous. From this arose the prevalent idea that all plants of similar description would be fatal; hence, the term—"toadstools". However, the term "mushroom" had its origin in France, meaning "moss room" because they were found in dark and musty places where moss was common. Not all mushrooms are edible nor are all toadstools poisonous.

Perhaps some of you would be interested in the structure of one of these plants. Beneath the soil or in decomposing leaves lies hidden the most important part of the plant known as the mycelium, which consists of a mass of roots and stems. It is important to note that members of the mushroom family differ from most plants in that they are unable to manufacture their own food, as they lack the necessary green pigment called chlorophyll. Hence they obtain all their nourishment from decaying substances or other hosts. The mycelium doesn't live for a few

days as the fruiting body which we see, but for weeks and months.

The part appearing above the surface of the ground consists of two parts—a stalk and a cap or pileus, which resembles the top of an umbrella. Have you ever removed the cap to observe the lower surface? You may have been surprised to notice the thin blade-like gills radiating in all directions from the center to the outer edge. What an important function is theirs! They must maintain the species by producing tiny naked seeds known as spares. You would look in vain for these wee seeds, as only a high-powered microscope will reveal them. They are measured in microns (25,000 of an inch). The slender stalk which supports the cap is known as the stipe, which in some species has a ring around it called the annulus. Sometimes the base of the stipe is swollen and this enlargement is called the valva. The stalk may have either, both, or neither of these characteristics depending on the type of mushroom.

Have you ever seen a spore print? Simply remove the stipe of a mushroom and place the cap on a sheet of white paper in its natural position with its gills downward. After covering it with a glass for a few hours, to prevent air currents from blowing away the spores, carefully remove the glass and lift up the cap and you will see a pattern of the gill arrangement produced by the falling spores. It might be interesting to note the variety of colors in these prints, for some species have pink spores, others have black ones while others are various shades of brown or white. To the mycologist, spore prints are very valuable in identifying species of toadstools.

How can we determine if a toadstool is edible? Many theories are current. Some believe that highly-colored varieties are very dangerous. Others state that those which turn black as the "ink caps" are toxic. An old Italian collector once informed me that species found growing in lawns and open pastures were safe to eat, while those in woods were usually poisonous. Others maintain that if a silver spoon tarnishes when placed in the container during the process of cooking them, they are harmful. To be brief we might discredit all these prevalent ideas by stating that there is no definite rule to determine the edibility of mushrooms. Only a few mycologists (specialized botanists) can be trusted in making the final distinction between the harmless and the harmful ones. Frequently, their decisions are reached only after the final test—eating very minute portions of the variety in question and carefully noticing its effect. Don't risk picking your own when you can safely purchase a dependable

commercial variety. Too many deaths have resulted from "mushroom experiments".

Closely related to the mushroom family are three types of similar fungi: morel, puff-ball, and truffle; all three of which are edible. In early spring the morel makes its appearance as a deeply furrowed cone-shaped structure, while in autumn we find a large globular structure called the puff-ball, some of which attain the weight of ten pounds. The interior of a puff-ball resembles a mass of rising bread-dough. As long as the puff-balls are white, they can be used as food but as soon as they turn brown, they become tough and leathery and the inside deteriorates. As the puff-ball matures, millions of tiny spores are produced within. Perhaps you have kicked one of these while hiking thru the woods and observed the clouds of smoke (spores) rising out of the small aperture on the top, appearing as a miniature Vesuvius.

The third edible group mentioned above is the truffle. These are not only very different in appearance but especially in growth habits, since their entire life is spent underground. Then, how are they found? Trained hogs and dogs are used to hunt them for they can locate them by their strong pleasant odor. In normal years our country imports about 20,000 lbs. annually from France and countries of southern Europe, since they are not native to our own country.

According to historians the Romans were some of the first people to raise the mushroom. Wealthy people in the upper class grew small quantities of the poisonous Ammonita in their gardens for the purpose of silencing their enemies. At their feasts a few drops of the juice of an Ammonita were placed in the beverage of the individual whom they wished to kill. Hence, the custom arose to have the host sample the drink before pouring it out and passing it to the guests to prove that it had not been poisoned.

Natives of Australia use certain varieties of mushrooms as a staple food, while the inhabitants of the islands off the southern coast of South America depend almost entirely upon the mushroom for their food supply. As far as food value is concerned, the mushroom ranks very low, being used chiefly for its rich flavor in preparing meats. Today, the commercial variety we buy is known as the Agaricus campestris, which can be purchased with safety in your neighborhood store. The raising of this variety furnishes a very profitable income to many large commercial growers.

* * *

He who will tell a lie for you, will tell a lie to you.

Current Events

By Rev. John Heys
Grand Rapids, Mich.

Italy has surrendered unconditionally. This is a fact of tremendous historical significance. Whether Italy is for us a liability or an asset is open for debate. Much can be said on both sides of the question. One thing however stands out in bold relief:—Italy has fallen tremendously low. The Psalmist declares in Psalm seven of his enemy, "He made a pit and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made." How true this is of Italy. She digged a pit that France might fall therein, being after an easy victory and seeking more territory. Ruthlessly she conquered Etheopia a few years before so that we can say of her that she has much pit-digging experience. Now she experiences the pit itself. Unconditionally she surrenders. The time has come when she is brought to her knees, and what she so cruelly inflicted upon others she now experiences herself. The word of God in Rev. 13:10 likewise is here applicable, "He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity." It is now Italy's turn to be led into captivity. The last word has not been said then yet. Italy has fallen tremendously low from a material viewpoint, but there is a lower region of eternal desolation and woe prepared for all who seek this world and motivated by their carnal lust, destroy and devour their fellow men. Italy's leaders one day may experience this captivity also unless God regenerates their hearts.

In regard to Mussolini, who was greatly responsible for Italy's entry into the war and who now has fallen even lower than his nation, let Proverbs 16:18 speak the truth to us, "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall."

Here on the home front the strain of war is making itself felt in a variety of ways. For one thing one is amazed by the increasing number of railroad accidents. The boiler of the modern New York Central streamliner, "Twentieth Century Limited" bursts while on its daily run and derails the train. The Pensylvania Line suffers an even greater disaster by derailment when upwards of thirty passengers were

killed. This past Sunday here in Michigan another Pennsylvania train leaves the tracks killing the engineer and fireman. The equipment cannot stand the strain. The man power shortage has limited the track inspection always carried on by the railroads as a safety measure and the equipment itself both locomotives and cars are not given their former care and inspection. The railroads do not have the men, and many a time a locomotive or passenger car has been put into immediate service after already having made one run that day. There is no time for careful thorough inspection. The morale of the people is not the only thing that breaks.

Yet in spite of all these things, and I do not mean to minimize the loss of life and property suffered in these disasters, we here in America still have little whereof to complain. Our cities are not being bombed into ruins. Our women and children are not forced to suffer the hardships of war as many today are suffering them in Europe. Our loved ones are taken from us and are in imminent danger of death it is true, but these European mothers and fathers also experience this sorrow and they themselves live in the fear of bombing attacks and imminent death from them.

Being spared all these horrors of war, let us render thanks to God, for He it is who spares us from these afflictions.

Christian Living

By Rev. H. De Wolf — Manhattan, Montana

In the Strength of Youth.

It is a wonderful thing to be young, in every sense of the word.

For youth is strong and energetic, strong of body, mind and will. It is undoubtedly for that reason that youth is the envy of old age. Surely you have seen how the light will gleam in the eyes of the old man as he watches the contest that always ensues when young men get together. See those blue eyes twinkle as he watches the broomstick bend under the strain of the hardened muscles when the strength of one is matched against the strength of another and neither will give up. See the smile that plays about his lips and notice how he slowly shakes his head as though to clear it as he listens-in when youth is matching wits with one another. Ah, he would fain join

in the fray, but he is old. Yes, he is old and therefore he leans back in his chair for simply watching and listening has been almost too much for him. But even so as he reclines, memory stretches forth her long arm to reach back into the time when he was young and we hear him softly saying to himself, "Ah, yes, how well I remember when *I* was young. . . ."

If youth could only see itself as old age sees it!

For there is no doubt but what the general rule, that we do not fully appreciate a thing until we lose it, is also applicable to youth. As we grow older and look back upon the past, we see more clearly the wonderful things that belonged to our youth. How sad is then also the picture that memory brings to mind when we behold a wasted youth. For what has been wasted in youth can never be redeemed. Time has borne it beyond our grasp and we cannot change the things that have been though now we fain would make them what they could have been. How necessary it is that we realize that the youth which we are now determines to a great extent what we shall be when we grow old. The old man is not a different man. He is the same man who used to be young. Principally it is true that, what he was in youth, he now is in old age. For the Scriptures teach us that we shall surely reap what we have sown. Youth is the time of sowing. The harvest must and shall come later.

Sow then young man!

Sow then young woman!

Sow in the strength of thy youth!

And, remember, the harvest will be as the seed that was sown. Have you looked at the seed? Are you sowing with the harvest in mind? And what, may I ask, will the harvest be?

Yes, you are strong and you have initiative. God grants this to youth, in His providence, because you need it. Without it you could never face the serious problems that confront you. But God has given you more than merely strength. He has given you His precious Word and has caused you to be instructed therein. He holds before you the way of life. In Him and by His grace you go forth to fight against the powers of sin and death and all the darkness that remains in you and surrounds you. And in His strength you are victorious. The apostle John writes, "I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one."

Ah, my dear young friend, the battle of life is hard and fierce.

And the forces of evil are strong and merciless. They are led by the ruler of this age, the prince of

darkness, that wicked one, the devil. It is a battle unto death: there is no armistice; the terms are unconditional surrender. For it is your soul that is desired, it is your life that is sought.

Yes, the powers of darkness are great.

But, wonderful Word, you are stronger!

Stronger! Not in your own strength; it is in itself mere vanity. But stronger in the strength of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Almighty God, Who goes forth conquering and to conquer. And by faith in Him we sing: "Forward into battle."

In the strength of your youth!

About A Reformation

By Miss Alice Reitsma — Grand Rapids, Mich.

This article serves as an introduction to our new series. We hope to relate a brief and interesting history of one of our Churches in each publication of Beacon Lights!

Question: Why are you a member of the Protestant Reformed Churches?

Answer: Because it is my conviction that everyone is conscience bound to join himself to the purest manifestation of the Church of God on earth.

Question: Is it a great sin to unite oneself with a Church other than that which is, according to one's conviction the purest manifestation of the true Church?

Answer: It is; for, by doing so one knowingly cooperates with those forces that always tend to the development of the false Church. A Church need not be wholly false and corrupt to justify separation from its fellowship. Every Church is false in the measure that it departs from the Word of God, corrupts the Sacraments and becomes lax or perverse in the exercise of Christian discipline.

(Taken from the Rev. H. Hoeksema's book "The Protestant Reformed Churches in America, part II).

A REFORMATION

Large groups of men and women and even children gathered together often, not because they were urged or driven or even asked to come but only because they were so deeply interested in what was going on, they just couldn't stay away. And no wonder! It was the year 1924 and a reformation was taking place!

Many protests were filed with

the Consistory and with the Classis, by members of the church and also by the minsters—protests concerning the teachings of the pastor of the Eastern Ave. Church, accusing him of being guilty of "unreformed tendencies" and requesting that the pastor be examined on the questions of restraint of sin and on civic righteousness and the responsibility of man. The basis? The lack in the preaching of the earnest invitation and well-meaning offer of salvation! And the over-emphasis of election and reprobation! In reality they protested against particular grace in favor of common grace—and that in the name of Reformed Truth!

Auditoriums were filled. A large majority of those who thronged together to "hear what was going on" were those who agreed with the pastor and consistory against whom the protests were brought. They enjoyed the preaching of their pastor and considered his teachings "soundly reformed." Ties of fellowship and love amongst them were strong! Their hearts were united in Christ. It was easy to cooperate and all were willing to sacrifice because all had in mind and heart the cause of God and His Church.

The Synodical meeting held in June of that year, tampered with the Reformed Confessions, adding the three points of common grace. and insisting that they be preached.

All through that summer and fall classis met in regular and special sessions. Public interest continued to grow keenly as the case developed, or should we say, became more complicated. Through irregular procedures and high-handed methods, the consistory's rights were ignored and Rev. Hoeksema was refused the privilege of properly presenting the stand which he took. *So* they suspended the pastor and his consistory from their offices! And *so* they corrupted the truth of God's Word!

Don't forget it—it was the Christian Reformed Church that caused the separation. They adopted the three points which are Armenian and Pelagian! And we thank God that He has given us leaders who held high the truths of the Scriptures and that in this way our Protestant Reformed Church was brought into existence!

If, after the Synod of Kalamazoo in 1924 had adopted the three points, *no breach* had come, it would have been very sad indeed. And from that point of view, we rejoice in the Reformation of 1924-1925!

Watch for our November issue of Beacon Lights. It is to be an ALL CALIFORNIA ISSUE!

To Our Boys In Service

Dear Fellows:—

As I was taking my daily walk this afternoon on this beautiful September day, I could not but be deeply impressed by the sharp and striking contrast between God's world, even on this earth that bears the curse, and the world of men! It was an exceptionally splendid morning, and everything in nature seemed to breathe peace and tranquility and joy. The air was balmy, the temperature about seventy, the atmosphere was quiet, and the woods stood garbed in their rich and colorful fall garment of soft yellow, deep red, pink, rose color, and brown. Surely, the heavens declared the glory of God, and all things witnessed of His power and wisdom. And, as I was taking in the beauty and tranquility of the scene, somehow my thoughts wandered far away, to the battlefields of the present world, with their din of war, their wrath and fury, their destruction and death, their cries of agony, prayers and curses; to distant cities in constant fear and dread of approaching armadas, that will rain destruction upon them indiscriminately; and to our own boys, many of whom now are no longer in our own country, in the South Pacific, in Australia, on the high seas, in Europe and in Africa. And the tremendous contrast between the tranquil scene about me, the peace of God's world, and the confusion and tumult of that distant world of my thoughts, overwhelmed me for a moment.

Grand Rapids, Michigan
Sept. 30, 1943

What a grim thing war is!

Terrible if we think of all the fury and madness it represents, of all the destruction and suffering, sorrow and agony it causes. But more dreadful still it becomes, if we contemplate that even upon the scenes of destruction God does not cease to cause His sun to shine upon the righteous and the unrighteous, and supplies men with the means and power to make and to use their instruments of destruction! Must not an ungodly world tremble at the thought of this mysterious, silent, invisible God, Who fulfills His counsel even through the ungodliness of the wicked? . . . .

And yet, faith in that God, as the God of our salvation, Who doeth all things according to the counsel of His own will, is for them that trust in Him the source of a peace that far transcends the tranquility and restfulness instilled into my soul this morning by the beauty of God's world all about me, the peace that passes all understanding, and that is victorious over all things, so that it cannot be disturbed even by the din of battle, because it is certainty that all things work together for good to them that love God!

Fellows, may that faith be yours, and may that peace keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus!

As ever yours in the Lord,
Rev. H. Hoeksema.

Letters From Our Boys

Richmond, Va.
Aug. 29, 1943

Dear Friends:

Now that the summer session is nearly over and the "Beacon Lights" are coming out again I thought today would be a good chance to do my duty and what has been in my mind ever since I left for camp again after my leave, write to my friends through our magazine.

I have been in the Navy about five months, and apart from being away from home and church I like it real well, mostly because I'm following the line of work that I like and had in civilian life.

We usually have liberty every other Sunday but today we are confined to the camp.

On my liberties I have attended some of the Churches here in Richmond, when I first came to this camp, but I ended up with attending the Church of the Lutheran hour.

Although their services are quite formal and different from ours, the preaching is the closest to our Confession that I could find here.

The people of the congregation are very hospitable. I have been to some of their homes for meals and had some pleasant visits. There is nothing more appreciated by service men away from home who have been raised in Christian surroundings and are accustomed to and long for Christian fellowship than this kind of hospitality. Where else could a Christian service man go on a Sunday liberty?

On days like today when I have to stay in Camp I get out my "Standard Bearer" and "Beacon Lights" and read them from cover to cover and then start over again.

Who can appreciate these papers more than a man who is away from home and has not the blessed privilege of gathering together with the people of the same faith and hearing the Word preached in truth? And who can appreciate more the blessed Word of comfort and admonition itself when he reads it in his barracks or tent, than the man who faces the horrors of war, the possibility of death and separation from his loved ones?

I thank God that by His Grace I have been raised in a Christian home and had the blessed privilege of being with His people in Church, School and Society and now while He has placed me here I may have the closest fellowship with the people of the same faith by reading our Church papers, and the "Beacon Lights" published and sent to me by my friends of our Societies.

Yours in Christ,

Henry De Zeeuw F 1/c
Co. 1. Sec. H-1
A. N. T. S. Diesel

August 30, 1943

Dear Friends:

Just received the Beacon Lights and was glad to receive it again. Although it is two months old, still it is very good to read. After I get through with it, I pass it on to some of my buddies. Been moving very much since I got into the Army, but I've finally landed into an outfit which is much nicer. I've been in the Army a little over nine months. Was only three months in the States. Then got sent to Africa where I am at present. Makes a person feel disgusted going across without a furlough. But as long as we know we are in God's hands we should not be afraid. Even though we have God on our side at times it seems that He has forgotten us. The best thing for us to do then is to pray to Him for His help and guidance. Hoping and praying that this war may soon be over.

I really appreciate Beacon Lights, it gives me great comfort and draws us nearer to God.

Pvt. Peter Dykstra,
Co. B. 601 T. G. Bn.
A.P.O. 464 c/o P.M.
New York, N. Y.

September 26, 1943

Dear Friends:

I received my first copy of the Beacon Lights quite some time ago but did not have time to express my sincere thanks for it. We are in the final stages of our training and we don't have much spare time to do all the things or write all the letters we would like to. Frequently we even work all day Sundays so we miss chapel services also.

We have enough chapels on this post so that everyone can attend services of some kind or another. The chapel I attend has a Lutheran chaplain. Although they do not preach according to our standards, we can still derive comfort and a blessing from their sermons.

I was very glad to be home a few days ago and that I could attend our own church once again.

The weather is somewhat cooler now and certainly is a welcome change from the heat we have had the last three months. It is more like what we were accustomed to back in Michigan.

We are preparing to leave camp after lunch for a five day field problem so I have a lot of work to do this morning.

Until God will that we return to our homes again.

A Friend in the Service,
Pvt. Peter Luyk, 36466216.
Btry. B. 842 A.A.A.A.W.
Bn. (Semi) Camp Stewart, Ga.

SERVICEMEN: Don't forget us! Are you receiving your copy of Beacon Lights? Have you informed us of your change of address? Write us that letter, today!

Editor's Desk

WAIT: DON'T TURN THIS PAGE — Have you renewed your subscription by mailing $1.25 to BEACON LIGHTS, 706 Franklin S.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan!

At the top of our Honor Roll we place our Kalamazoo Subscribers! Their agent, Marie Baas, was first in sending in renewed subscriptions for 1943-44. She writes:

> "Our Society hasn't started yet, but we're looking forward to starting soon. We're boosting our list of regular subscribers by sending in four new subscriptions. That makes it just about one hundred percent! Everyone enjoys reading Beacon Lights and looks forward to getting it. Our Boys in Service mention it very often, and they certainly do appreciate receiving their copy. Here's hoping it won't be long before we hear that we've passed that 1000 mark!"

Congratulations, Kalamazoo! And we hope that all our other societies and agents will follow your good example.

Readers! Will you do something for us? Talk to your friends about our magazine, share your copy with them or ask us to send them a sample copy, let them read it and we know they will want to subscribe! We feel sure that Beacon Lights has not yet reached its maximum number of subscribers.

We appeal especially to you members of Young People's Societies! Beacon Lights is at present our only Federation Project and the success of our present campaign for New Subscribers depends largely on you. So bring 'em in!

Who knows how our Prot. Ref. Church was organized in Bellflower, Calif.? or in Redlands? or in Hull, Iowa? Why? or When? Many of us don't know. But we certainly are interested in learning some of the particulars connected with the origin and history of the churches of our denomination. The article which appears in this issue "About a Reformation" serves as an introduction to a series dealing with this subject. In each issue of Beacon Lights we hope to publish a brief and interesting history of one of our churches!

All donations toward our Servicemen's Fund, are sincerely appreciated.

Eunice Soc. Roosevelt Park	$25.00
Mr. and Mrs. John Boelema, G. R.	5.00
Mr. Seymour Biebor. G. R.	.75
Mr. K. Kikstra, Grand Rapids	.75
Mr. Gerrit Pype, G. R.	5.00

A Letter To Our Readers

By Whilhelmina Rutgers — Oak Lawn, Ill.

Dear Beacon Lights Readers,

Today I received my Beacon Lights. I have read it through from cover to cover, and read all the various articles. I intend to reread them so that I will get the full value of them. I am so anxious to read all it contains that I don't take time to read one article slowly, but at first read all, just to get the main thought of each writer.

I was so glad with Beacon Lights today that it seems as though I must write how helpful it is to me to carry on the good fight of faith.

Sometimes I feel all alone in the world, but when I read articles of fellow members of the church it gives me courage to go on. At times I become weary of all the things we must face and fight in order to walk uprightly. My heart rebels and I think as Rev. Hanko wrote. "Why jealously choke my emotions, why isolate myself from others and make myself the scorn of everyone? Why not be carefree, go along with the crowds and enjoy myself to the full. Why serve God for nothing?" Sometimes it looks to me as though my religion is vain. Nothing is satisfactory. Friends disappoint me. I look at life and so many things cause me to become bewildered and my faith is shaken. But how thankful I am that it is merely shaken and that it still lives! I am positive of that because I know the new life is within me, and I have faith, for I believe He is Lord of lords and King of kings. He will cause all things to work together for good to those who love Him.

(I left off writing there). Now it is two days later. My thoughs have dwelt on many things since then. I hesitate to send this up, but I think I will anyway. It will probably be of help to me and others to write my thoughts and my moods to Beacon Lights.

A verse I read this noon encourages me to write. James 5:16, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." We all have faults,—I would rather use this expression—we all have that which we must fight, the old man within us. I often want to give in, for at those times I think, what is the use. So it seems! It is very wicked to think thus: therefore we should fight that feeling every time it comes up in our hearts, for it is rebellion against the Almighty God. He sends His covenant young man to war, and

not only a war against men and weapons, but against temptations: and makes it hard for them to fight the good fight of faith. If we would see the sorroundings they are in we would say it is impossible for them to keep the faith and walk uprightly. But we know all things are possible with God.

At home here in the churches there is a war going on and we wonder sometimes what the outcome will be. Families are broken up because of doctrinal differences. Fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers and cousins are separated from worshipping in the same denomination. When we work we must fight unions and Sunday work. Where is the peace of today? What joy has the youth of today?

Here I am again. Looks as if I'll never finish this letter or whatever it is. Let's call it an airing of my thoughts.

Since the last time I wrote, a lot has happened to my outlook on life. How changeable we people are! One day we are very near to God and the next we cannot take hold on Him.

I feel so secure today. Rev. Vos' speech of Tuesday night has been very enlightening to me. That which he said seemed to answer many of my puzzlings. He spoke on, "The church in tribulation." How blessed we really are that we are in the sphere of the covenant, and can hear God's Word, and are taught from early childhood and throughout all the years of our life. More and more we learn to know God as He is, and we know we have all in Him. Rev. Vos made clear that all the fightings and sufferings we have here on earth, are the echo of the sufferings of Christ. I no longer ask —why? Why serve God? Why walk a more holy life? For now I know better than ever that we suffer for His name's sake. The church of Christ (we as members of that church) is pure and sinless. Therefore whenever we come in contact with sin and darkness there is enmity. Whether that be of the devil, the world, or our own sinful flesh. For by nature we, the devil and the world, hate the Son and seek to destroy Him. But the law of God is in our hearts. We glory in tribulation for we know Jesus said, "Be of good cheer. I have overcome the world." We have the victory in Christ Jesus our Lord. We are waiting for that day when we shall be one with Him in glory.

We can say as Rev. Kok wrote in Beacon Lights, "Rejoice, O young man, in the days of thy youth: and walk in the ways of thine heart and in the sight of thine eyes." For we know true joy and happiness comes from within. The law of God is in our hearts by the new life within us.

Bible Outlines

By Rev. Geo. C. Lubbers

Pella, Iowa

Introductory remarks:

We believe that the study of the book of Acts will be of great interest to you young folks. It is not easy to say just what point of interest is brought out most prominently in this large Bible-book. Instructive is what we read in Lenski's "Introduction" to the book of Acts. We quote: "The fathers. . .admired the content of the book, noting the great variety of subjects and immense value of each: the great testimony in regard to the apostolic doctrine and the church. . . .; an arsenal full of artillery against the Anti-Christ, a laboratory full of remedies against all soul-destroying errors of faith, and of offences in conduct; a larder stocked with all kinds of food for faith, patience and hope; an inspiration for love and all its works; a very treasury of learning and right doctrine. . . ."

May we find it so in our study, with the "fathers" of the Church!

As to the general scheme and division of the book of Acts, it can be said, that it has been quite uniformly recognized to be as given by Lenski. In substance the scheme and division as given by him is as follows: I. Chapter 1—Introductory. II Chapters 2-12. (Progress of the gospel among the Jews—with Peter as the dominant personage) a) Ch. 2-7—Gospel progress in Jerusalem. b) Ch. 8-12—Progress of the gospel in Palestine in general. III. Ch. 13-28 (Progress of the Gospel among the Gentiles with Paul as the dominant personage). a) Ch. 13-21:16 with Paul at liberty. b) Ch. 21:17-28:21 with Paul as prisoner.

The central line of thought here developed is: Jerusalem—Judea—Samaria and unto the ends of the earth. . . .! Acts is therefore: the progress of the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome. The middle wall of the partition broken down. The Gentiles fellow heirs of the promise to Abraham. All nations blest in Him. The church going forward out of its national-typical form into the international dispensation of the fullness of times!

* * * * *

Outline I

The Connecting Link Between Luke's Gospel and Luke's Acts Of The Apostles

Acts 1:1-5.

The Addressee and Writer. Vs. 1, 2.

It was Luke the "historian" who wrote the Acts of the apostles. At this time he had already written the "Gospel of Luke" as is stated in Acts 1:1. He is writing this letter to Theophilus. It can quite safely be assumed that Luke wrote in view of the spiritual needs of this man. Just who Theophilus was we can not say with certainty. In Luke 1 he is called "Most Excellent Theophilus." In Acts 23:26; 24:3 and 26:25 "most excellent is the title used in addressing persons of rank and authority. The conclusion seems to be warranted that Theophilus was a man of high rank, a Roman offical, yet converted to the faith in Christ Jesus. However this may be, we can safely say that Luke saw in him a man worthy of an entire gospel account, and of this long document whose contents we are about to investigate.

Brief Synopsis Of Luke's Gospel. Vs. 3

No one could give a more accurate synopsis of the book of Luke than its author. In giving this breif account of the book of Luke the writer gives us the proper view-point of understanding the book of Acts. The content of Luke as briefly stated here is: a) All that Jesus began to do and to teach! b) From the time of John the Baptist until Jesus' ascension from mount Olivet.

Thus in one sweeping glance the writer takes in the entire content of the Gospel of Luke—and at once connects its contents with what he is now to record for Theophilus' benefit in the book of Acts. What is recorded in the book of Acts is the continuation from heaven of Christ's ministry which He had begun on earth. Luke is beginning; Acts is continuation.

If we are not "slow to believe" all that is spoken by the prophets this point of the continuation of Crit's labors will easily be seen through prayerful study and meditation. Compare Luke 23:26 ff. Summary Statement Of Christ's Appearances During The 40 Days Between Easter And The Ascension. Verse 3.

1. Luke here has reference to the 10 various appearances of Christ. These appearances are called: "Many infallible proofs." Proofs of what? Of the ressurrection, of course. For further Scriptural data see: Matt. 28; Mk. 16: Luke 24. John 20, 21 and I Cor. 15:4-9.

2. The general subject on which Jesus discoursed these days was: the things concerning the kingdom of heaven. Among other matters we notice the following points of interest: (a) Evidently Jesus did not speak of every detail. Many matters related to the kingdom still remain unrevealed. From the very nature of history and time, prophecy and mode of revelation these matters cannot be seen until brought on the scene of history in the providence of God—and therefore at His appointed time. The fact is that all that Jesus did is not written in the scriptures. John 21:25. (b) There are matters as to time when the Kingdom shall be restored to its final glory as spoken of

in the prophecies (Compare I Peter 1: 11) that the Father hath left in His own power. (See Outline II where more attention will be given to this matter). See further Matt. 24:36, 44; Luke 12: 39, 40. We conclude therefore that the "things" of which Jesus spoke were those necessary for the apostles to know, and those things which they with the dispensational light they had could understand.

Jesus Directions For The Apostle's Conduct In The Near Future. Vss. 4, 5.

1. Jesus tells His disciples not to leave Jerusalem, but to await the outpouring of the Holy Spirit after not many days! He told them this when they were together at a certain occasion. It seems to follow from the text before us that the "being assembled together" was not the last time they were together when on the Mount of Olives spoken of in verses 6-14. Rather is the "getting together" to be conceived of as the time spoken of in Luke 24;36-49.

2. Here the disciples are told. a) That they are not to leave Jerusalem. b) But to await the promise of the Holy Spirit, of which Jesus had spoken to them here-to-fore. c) Jesus does so by appealing to the relationship of John's Baptism with water, and His Baptism with the Holy Spirit. Great things are in the offing. One greater than the temple is here. John the Baptist is not worthy to be his "boot-black." Christ is bringing God's work to its consummation in rapid strides! The "end of the ages" will be ushered in shortly. Let Abraham rejoice because one "greater than he" has come. Gen. 12:3; 18:18; John 8:53, 56. We children of Abraham, living so many centuries later, should pay heed with rapt attention!

Questions: Did Luke plan a document in view of its being placed in the Canon of Holy Writ? What bearing does this have on organic inspiration? Why did Jesus not tell the disciples just how many days they would still have to wait? If the disciples at this stage had understood the scriptures could they have known this from the lunar-sabbatic calendar ruling the feasts days?

Outline II.

Christ's Ascension From Mount Olivet.

Acts 1:6-12.

The Burning Kingdom-Question.

1. The question is asked. It seems to have been with some difficulty that the disciples asked: Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel? How firmly this question was intertwined in "the hopes and fears of all the years" of Israel's struggling existence may be gathered from a comparison of I Peter 1:11 and the plaintive confession of the travelers to Emmaus as recorded in Luke 24:21 "And we hoped that He it was Who was about to redeem Israel." Conditions had changed since that Easter Sunday in the hearts and minds of

the believers. The "day-star had arisen in their hearts" as to the hope of Israel! That He it was Who would restore the kingdom to Israel—they were certain! But when? Would it be now? We here have an echo of the "how long" of saintly bards of old.

2. And the answer? a) Negatively it is: "It is not for you to know the times or seasons which the Father hath put into His own hand." Verse 7. "Times and seasons" are determined by God (Eph. 1:10) who works all things according to the council of His will. They are His divine arrangement. He is Alpha and Omega. He alone can read the clock time minutely. We read by approximation. For that is as near as we can get by reading the "signs of the times." We know enough to live, and know only in such a manner that we must apprehend in faith! Thus we walk in expectancy. Our life is therefore cast after the pattern of the life of the father of all believers. Heb. 11:13, 39, 40. Jesus rigidly holds the disciples to this pattern. No excitement nor enthusiasm of Jesus' closest friends can permit a detour from the beaten path walked by the children of the "father of multitudes." This is the only highway permitted by God. Thus alone the "beacon light" of revelation shines through the ages. b) The positive side of the answer is by implication contained in the negative. The time when the kingdom will finally be restored is not yet! The only way for us to see this day, and to know the times and the seasons is: In the way of the gospel course! The course of the white horse and its Rider of Rev. 6:1, 2 which ends in the song of the saints in Rev. 11:15 heard at the dim horizon (revealed horizon seen by faith) at the end of time,—the song, to wit, "The Kingdom of this world has become the Kingdom of our Lord and His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever." Here in Acs in the text before us this gospel is given in verse 8. It is: Jerusalem—Judea—Samaria—the ends of the earth. . . .!

The thundering hoofs of the white horse resound to the ends of the earth. Acts is complete! Complete in that its Beacon Light shines more and more unto the perfect day. The curtain does not really fall on Paul in Rome! (Acts 28: 30, 31). The shades of night do not fall on the missionary activities of Christ's witnesses ere the work of day is done! Luke's record is not abortive. John of Patmos may see this work to the "ends of the earth." Acts has its divine conclusion. Not Luke's! Pentecost leads to Parousia through the witnessing of fishermen! God's folly defying human wisdom!

The Ascension Of Jesus. Verse 9.

The hour strikes. Jesus must depart into the celestial glories above. There is no warning in advance. (The explanation comes afterward). The chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof. The greater than Elijah will now "ride in royal beauty." Luke says that (Luke 24:51) having blessed them, he was taken into heaven. Here in Acts he tells us: "while they beheld he was taken

up; and a cloud received them out of their sight."

The Ascension Interpreted. Verses 10, 11.

This event needs interpretation. Something of the detail is again shown. Something more of the "Time when" the kingdom would be delivered to Israel is told. But the "time when" itself is not told. "This same Jesus, which it taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." Hence His return will be: 1) A visible return 2) A glorious return 3) A personal return.

How wonderful! And with childlike simplicity the apostles believe. They return to Jerusalem rejoicing.

Some Added Information.

We are told a) That the disciples remained in Jerusalem. They were not sad, but were full of joy and were engaged in prayerful activity. They no doubt discussed together all the things that they had seen and heard of the Word of life. b) We are also told of whom the group was composed. They were the eleven apostles, the Galilean women (evidently those recorded in the gospels) and Mary the mother of Jesus, and His brethren. Mary must now have been a wiser woman than when Gabriel first appeared to her. Truely from the very first she had "kept all these things in her heart" (Luke 2:19) but she could not figure out who this Son was from the information she had thus far. Now she knows what indeed she did not yet understand from the lips of the aged Simeon, or at the wedding feast at Cana as recorded in John 2.

Questions: Did the Disciples have reasons to think that Jesus would soon return in glory? Will Jesus return again to the Mount of Olives? Who teach this? Is this necessarily impossible? Why would it be harmful for our spiritual life if we knew just when Jesus will return? Has the parable of the ten virgins any bearing on this question? What school of thought holds that the "Acts Of The Apostles" is incomplete? How can they determine that they are right, and on what basis could you refute this?

Outline III.

The Ranks Of The "Twelve" Supplied.

Acts 1:15-26

The Occasion.

1. It was during the 10 days between the ascension of Christ and Pentecost Sunday that the act spoken of in the passage took place. Just on which day we are not told. Luke leaves the time indefinite. He merely writes: "In those days." That is enough for us.

2. It is also evident that the vacancy in the "twelve" left by Judas' death was supplied at one of their meetings. They were in one place. Was it the temple? This is hardly likely. Possibly in the "house" spoken of in Acts 2:2. And there were about one hundred and twenty

present. The number had grown. The fact of the ascension was known by more than the eye-witnesses proper of the ascension. Yet a count is made. And Peter rises in the midst of the brethren to bring a weighty matter to their attention.

The Matter Of Judas' Death And The Vacancy Is Brought Up.

1. Peter calls attention to the fact that Judas Iscariot had received the lot of a disciple. But Judas had betrayed the Lord, selling Him for the price of a slave, for thirty pieces of silver. Afterwards he returned the money and having gone out of the temple he went and hanged himself. (Matt. 27:5). And Peter relates how Judas had fallen forward so that his bowels gushed out. The rulers had bought a burying place with this money to bury strangers, that is, non-Jews. And the field was already known in all Jerusalem as Akeldama, the field of blood.

2. A vacancy was brought about in the number of the twelve. And Peter states that this vacancy must be filled. What is the reason forwarded by Peter for filling this vacany? We wish to call your attention to the following:

a) We do not read anywhere in Holy Writ that Jesus gave His disciples the injunction to choose an apostle in Judas' place. Neither does Peter claim such to be the case. b) The sole motivation Peter gives for His resolution is that the Holy Spirit had already spoken of Judas by the mouth of David in the Psalms. Twenty eight generations ago the Holy Spirit spoke of it. A millenium before! Two matters the Spirit has spoken of, which cover the entire case of Judas. 1. The matter of His falling out of the twelve, and his horrible end. Of this we read in Psalm 69:25, "Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein." 2. The fact that another was to take his place. This the Spirit spoke in Psalm 109:8 "And let another take his office."

Matthias Chosen By Lot.

1. The requirements of the one to take a place among the apostles according to Peter was: He must be one of the group who has gone in and out with Jesus all the while that He was on earth, beginning with John the Baptist till the ascension. Only such a one could be ordained to witness of the resurrection with the apostles.

2. The actual choice takes place by lot, after the 120 have made a nomination of two, to wit, Justus and Matthias. The lot fell upon Matthias and "he was numbered with the eleven disciples." The casting of the ballot was preceded by prayer fitting for the occasion.

How To Judge The Choosing Of Matthias

1. No doubt all believers of the Scriptures accept Peter's statement that the particular Psalms quoted were the prediction of the Holy Spirit with a view to Judas. Whether the Holy Spirit only had Judas in mind in this passage is again another matter falling outside the scope of our consideration.

2. However opinions differ as to the proper application of Psalm 109:8 "And

another take his office." The question is whether Matthias was this apostle, or whether we must hold that Paul was this "other one" to take Judas' office. The reason given for denying the apostleship of Matthias is that he was not directly called by Christ. Boiled down this contention holds that this whole transaction was a rash and hasty act of Peter! That if Matthias were the one Jesus could have done so Himself while still on earth!

3. We, however submit the following to sustain the act of Peter as having the sanction of God.

a. It seems to me, that the reverential approach toward this entire portion of Holy Writ would be to attempt to read it looking for reasons why this act of the church is to be held as being valid. If it is not, then this passage may well be regarded as having little value for positive instruction.

b. It should not be overlooked that there is not the least hint in the text that this act of the "brethren" did not have the sanction of God. In fact Acts 2:14 speaks of Peter standing "with the eleven." And in 1:26 we read: "he was numbered with the eleven apostles." It is true that Matthias was not personally called, providing the casting of the lot may not be so judged. "The lot is cast into the lap, and the outcome is of the Lord." And if the fact of never hearing of Matthias again later in the Acts must be held as proof against his being an apostle, the same fact must be held against more than one of the other apostles. Besides, this whole argument is mere inference from silence, and an argument from silence is the weakest argument.

c. Positively it can be said that Matthias must have stood on the day of Pentecost with Peter and the others, and testified with them of "the wonderful works of God."

Outline IV

"The Outpouring Of The Holy Spirit"

Acts 2:1-4

Time And Place.

The disciples of Jesus were on the "Lord's Day" (it was Sunday morning a little before nine o'clock) together in one place. It was not in the temple that they were gathered. Verse 2 speaks of their being in a "house." Of the significance of the Spirit being poured out on the brethren in a house and not in the Old Testament temple more will be said presently.

It was fifty days after Easter Sunday morning. Ten days had elapsed since Jesus had ascended on high. It was a feast day in Jerusalem. Often the feast of harvests had been celebrated before. Throngs of Jews from far and near are present, having come to Jerusalem according to the Mosaic ordinance. Seemingly there is no difference today from other feast days. Maybe the priests are aware of the rending of the vail. At least they have not yet forgotten, and of it they will ere long be reminded

aplenty. We can well imagine that this time what God had rent, men have put together—the vail must have been repaired! But had Isaih not said: "Where is the house that ye build unto me, and where is the place of my rest?"

The Outpouring Proper.

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit must needs be accompanied by signs. The birth of Christ also had a sign accompaning it. Each time the sign fits the case. The signs accompaning the outpouring of the Spirit can be classified as follows: a) Signs whose purpose it was to announce the coming of the Spirit in His might operation. 1. Sounds as of a mighty rushing wind. (The wind was not wind felt. it was heard). 2. Visible sign: tongues like as of fire. There also was no fire. But what was seen resembled fire. It sat on each of them.

Both these signs are fitting and striking. They connect as signs the coming of the Spirit with what the disciples "had heard of Jesus" concerning Him. See John 3:5-8. Notice the advancement of the signs in their majestic greatness over the signs accompaning baptism by John the Baptist. Read what both John and Jesus say of the superiority of the baptism by the Holy Spirit. Matt. 3:1-12; Luke 3:1-20; John 1:19-27.

b) Signs also followed the outpouring of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit immediately becomes manifest as the universal Spirit. He is the "Seven Spirits" before the throne going out into all the earth. And this is shown in the sign, the miracle of "tongues." All heard "the wonderful works of God proclaimed to them" in their own language. See Verses 7-14. The testimony of the apostles indeed must be Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and unto the ends of the earth. . .! The middle wall of the partition is broken down. Indeed the Spirit was not poured out in the Temple on Moriah! It is poured out in the church —a habitation of God in the Spirit. Read Eph. 2:11-22. It proclaims the day when John shall say: And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple thereof. Rev. 21:22. That will be the completion of the cycle of the sabbatic-lunar calendar of the 7 days—(the sabbath): the 7 weeks (Pentecost) the 7 month (feast of tabernacles) 7 years (sabbatic year 7 x 7 years (the year of jubilee)! For this is worked out by God in His wisdom through the 7 seals—the 7 trumpets—the 7 vials. Read Lev. 23.

Questions: Pentecost a day of wrath for the Old Testament Temple? Was this house left desolate? Matt. 23:38. Why was the temple not destroyed immediately? Was this speaking with tongues a momentary something?