EHOVAH IS OUR LIGHT AND OUR SALVATION

OCTOBER - 1947
BEACON LIGHTS

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All subscribers living in Grand Rapids are asked to send their subscription dues to Miss Josie Lanting, 354 Diamond St., S. E., Grand Rapids 6, Michigan.

Beacon Lights Staff

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Assistant Editors .................................... D. Vander Wal and Lois Kregel
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"Truth, even if left alone, will save itself by its own right hand."

—Martin Luther.

Tuesday. The sixteenth of April fifteen-hundred twenty-one.

The dew was not yet dried on the grass. On the winding highway that ran parallel with the romantic River Rhine, a cloud of dust caused by the trampling of horses, moved forward toward Worms. A small party neared its destination. Worms was only fifteen miles away.

In front of a covered carriage, pulled by two husky horses of Mecklenburg, the Imperial herald rode on horseback, clad in the picturesque robe of state. Four men sat in the carriage: two black monks dressed in the habit of the Augustinian order, and two men in medieval civilian garments. Behind the carriage followed a lonely armed escort on horseback again.

Martin Luther, the heroic Black Monk of Wittenberg, was on his way to the Imperial Diet of Worms.

It was the first of April when Caspar Sturm, the Imperial Herald, arrived at Wittenberg with the Emperor’s citation and many letters of safe-conduct.

Charles V, the powerful Roman king and emperor, summoned the infamous Wittenberg monk to appear before the Imperial Diet at Worms and defend himself and his teachings.

On the night of April first, all friends of Luther gathered together in the dark cell of the Black Cloister to warn him against going to Worms.

"Remember the Imperial Diet of Constance," they said. "And remember Huss, who was burned alive at the stake in Constance! Remember Savonarola who was strangled and burned at the stake, punished with a double-death in Florence only twenty-three years ago!"

But the sturdy Black Monk, in spite of all warnings, solemnly declared with an unsurpassable courage:

"Even if they kindled a fire as
high as heaven from Wittenberg to Worms, I would appear in the name of the Lord and confess Christ!"

And on the next day, the second of April, Luther started out for Worms.

The Imperial Herald rode in advance on horseback. Then the carriage followed with Luther and his three friends who accompanied him on the historic journey: Petzensteiner, an Augustinian brother; Amsdorf, a professor representing the faculty of Wittenberg University; and Swaven, a young nobleman of Pomerania, representing the student body.

The two weeks journey was a continual ovation. Luther, whose fame had already traveled near and far and through the whole empire, was warmly greeted by multitudes at every populated point on his way. The ovation at Erfurt rose the highest where an armed escort was added by the cheering town to his party for his protection.

At Weimar disheartening news reached him. The Imperial Diet of Worms, already in session, had condemned all his books as heretical and by a special diet ordered them to be burned. This was his condemnation in advance.

Luther trembled for a moment, but when the Imperial Herald asked whether he would proceed or not, he answered with a heroic courage that was so characteristic of his whole life:

“Yes, I will proceed, and entrust myself to the Emperor’s protection. Christ lives; and I shall enter Worms, though all the gates of Hell and powers of the air be unwilling!”

And the party proceeded on toward Worms.

One of the greatest scenes of history was in the making. The Black Monk of Wittenberg would not be a traitor to his divine mission to make a solemn and brave confession of Faith, Truth, and Right before the Emperor, the Pope, and the empire.

When, in fifteen-hundred-twelve, the degree of Doctor of Theology was conferred upon him by the University of Wittenberg, he had had to take an oath that he would defend the Truth of the Gospel, with all his might.

Luther, now, while speeding toward Worms, set his eyes upon the heavy, golden ring on his finger and repeated the solemn oath to himself:

“I, Dr. Martin Luther, pledge myself to the Holy Scriptures. I solemnly promise to teach them with purity, to preach them faithfully, and to defend them both in writing and disputation against all false teachers. So help me God!”

“So help me God!” he repeated aloud, thus gaining inspiration, strengthening his conviction and courage from his doctoral oath for the great battle of truth to come, against all false teachers supported and defended by might and force,
sword and money, power and all. Then with great determination he spoke loudly to his companions:

“Those false teachers cannot defend themselves against me. I am determined, in God’s name, to tread upon the lions, to trample dragons and serpents underfoot.”

Luther’s party entered the small village of Oppenheim. Suddenly and unexpectedly a band of knights on horseback intercepted Luther: a band of about ten knights clad in iron and steel, with helmets and swords.

The captain of the knights, a husky man with broad shoulders and coarse voice, began to talk to the famous Monk of Wittenberg disclosing their mission:

“Reverend Sir and Doctor! We are men of Knight Sickingen, your admirer and wholehearted supporter. We have come on an errand of our Lord and Master to warn you against your entering into Worms, and to take you with us in his Ebenburg castle-fortress where he is willing to hide you, protect you, and defend you against your enemies.”

“Sir Knight,” answered Luther, who was caught by surprise. “Be pleased to accept and convey my gratitude to your Lord and Master for the gracious protection he offers. However, I must definitely decline to accept. Tell your Lord that my mighty fortress is God, and He, and He alone, will defend me against my enemies. I am not terrified. I am afraid of nothing. Even though there be as many devils in Worms as tiles in the roofs. I will enter Worms!”

“Reverend Sir.” said the Knight “My Lord and Master begged me to remind you of the fate of John Huss who had been summoned to the Imperial Diet in the same way and manner and had been burned at the stake, although held in his possession the Emperor’s letter of safe-conduct, as you do.”

“Indeed. Huss was burned,” answered Luther with unconquerable faith, “but the Truth remained. For this reason I go to Worms!”

And the heroic monk went on.

After leaving Oppenheim behind they sighted the city of Worms, the most ancient city of the old German mythical tales of the Nibelungen. This historic city on the Rhine was, at this time, the political capital of the whole Holy Roman Empire where the Emperor and his Electoral Princes held the yearly Imperial Diet to settle matters of state. For centuries and centuries this city of old had been the seat of a series of kings and bishops.

The magnificent Roman Cathedral of red bricks, one of the most beautiful of all Europe, stood out high with its four tall heavy towers above the hundreds of palaces and houses.

Luther’s dreamy blue eyes blazed as he beheld the scene of his decisive battle for truth. As the heavy carriage rocked him from side to side, and his eyes gazed at the ever nearing Worms, he gath-
ered his thoughts for the greatest confession in human history before the most powerful congregation of men ever gathered together on the globe.

Near the city limits cheering multitudes of people stood and waited for the oncoming Monk of Wittenberg, the idol and hero of millions throughout the Empire. His legal advisor, his friends, and scores of Saxon noblemen belonging to Luther's great protector Elector Frederick's court, waited in the front line to escort him into the city.

The watchman on the Cathedral's tower blew a loud blast, announcing to the inhabitants of the city that Martin Luther was entering Worms.

The cavalcade began to march into the city on the cold gray April morning in a triumphal procession.

The crowds on the streets and from the windows shouted to him a most appropriate sentence from the Bible:

"Whosoever denieth me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven."

Then a Roman priest ran out of the crowd up to the carriage and held up to Luther a picture of Savonarola, begging him as a hero to stand fast by the truth, not to recant!

In the roaring of the immense crowd Luther's mellow voice was only faintly audible as he said:

"God will be with me! I will stand!"

Wednesday. The seventeenth of April, fifteen-hundred twenty-one.

The sun was just setting behind the huge red towers of the Cathedral of Worms, painting the enormous edifice and the sky around with deep shades of purple and blue.

In a dark upper room in the House of the Knights of St. John, the Black Monk of Wittenberg whispered his prayer on his knees before the greatest hour of his life:

"Thou true Eternal God! Not mine, but Thine, is the cause. For my own self, I have nothing to do with these great earthly lords. Stand by me, oh God, my Defense, my Shelter, my mighty Fortress!"

Heavy footsteps echoed through the hall. The black oak door opened noisily, and two armored men appeared dressed in uniforms of many loud colors. One was Ulrich von Pappenheim, the marshal of the Empire, and the other Caspar Sturm, the Imperial Herald.

"Martin Luther," said the Imperial marshal in a dignified tone. "the Emperor summons you to appear before His Imperial marshal in a dignified Holy Empire."

"The time for silence is gone; the for speech is come," said Luther with great determination—"I shall not recant an iota, if Christ be
 gracious unto me!" And he followed his summoners.

The marshal of the Empire preceded him, and the Imperial Herald followed him, while the Black Monk of Saxony marched on through the mighty palace of the bishop of Worms. There the Emperor and Holy Empire waited for the heretic monk already condemned in advance.

The night was slowly falling on the history-making square; all lights already were being lit in the Episcopal Palace. when the Black Monk with his two escorts arrived at the high, arched marble gate of the palace.

The monk of Saxony with firm steps and titanic courage entered the illuminated palace.

Charles V, a youthful looking man with long hair was dressed in all the majesty of the great Roman Caesars. He presided over the brilliant court of the Holy Empire: his brother Ferdinand stood at his side.

Seated around were princes and noblemen, statesmen and soldiers, scholars and knights, within and around in such a mighty assembly as had never before and never since been congregated. Church and State. Rome and Empire, tiara and crown, power and pomp, armory and money, prejudice and hatred, all these were present in the splendid array.

In front of the Emperor, in an arm chair of oak, sat the spokesman of Charles the V, John von Eck, official-general of the Arch-

bishop of Trier, clad in the black gown of scholars, with a small round and neatly shaved, grave face.

Before him was placed a long, narrow dark table of mahogany with rich wooden carvings of angel faces with wings and on the table a pile of some twenty large folio books of the summoned Saxon monk.

And there, confronting this majestic assembly, representing all the power and might of the Middle Ages, stood the "solitary monk that shook the world." the peasant's son in the rude black robe of the Augustinian monks. all alone with His Bible as the only weapon in his hand.

In a great, impressive silence the spokesman of the Emperor began to proceed according to the prearranged program made by Aleandro, the purple clad cardinal, the ambassador of the pope.

Dr. Eck addressed Luther first in Latin, then in German, in a dignified tone as if the Emperor himself had spoken:

"Martin, the Emperor has summon you hither to answer, first, whether you have written these books: secondly, whether you will recant, or abide by them?"

In reply to this question, Luther began in a firm and loud voice to give his address, first in Latin, and then in German. First, he gave a lengthy review of all his books, asserting in the end that not one of them could be recanted. Then
he expressed his willingness to face a debate, and if any one could refute any of his books from the Holy Scriptures, he himself would be the first to throw it into the fire. Then he proceeded to warn the young Emperor against following the policy of Pharaoh and the kings of his like. In closing he made an appeal to the Emperor, saying, "I commit myself to Your Majesty with the prayer that you will not allow my cause to be prejudiced by my adversaries."

Following Luther's address the Emperor and his counsellors held a short consultation, after which Dr. Eck declared the decision in a loud voice: "Martin, His Majesty, the Emperor, and his Imperial Diet is not here to hold a disputation. His Majesty demands a simple and definite answer, an answer without teeth or horns. Will you, or will you not, recant your books and writings published in your name?"

Now the Wittenberg monk realized that the Imperial Diet was not at all concerned with the Truth of God. was not willing to face at debate, and was not anxious to prove or disprove. Both Emperor and Pope were active in only one thing, to press him to recant or die. And then the heroic Black Monk with his titanic courage, unparalleled in history, gave the mightiest of the world a definite and simple answer. "Well then," exclaimed he, "since His Imperial Majesty wants a plain answer, I shall give him a plain one without teeth or horns. I am convinced by the passages of Scripture which I have cited, and I shall stand firm unless I be refuted by Scriptural testimonies or clear arguments, for I believe neither the Pope nor the councils alone, since it is clear that they have often erred and contradicted one another. I cannot, and will not recant anything, because I believe it is insecure and dangerous to act against conscience."

Then the Wittenberg monk, sensing that the greatest moment of his life was now at hand, thundered into the dead silence of the overcrowded hall:

"Here I stand! I cannot do otherwise! God have mercy upon me!"

The mighty Emperor jumped up abruptly from his golden chair of state with astonishment. Cardinals and bishops were dumbfounded, princes and knights were amazed; but thousands in the multitude within the hall clapped their hands approvingly and joyfully.

Great excitement and severe confusion followed. The Emperor instantly and unexpectedly adjourned the Diet.

"The greatest scene in modern European history from which the whole subsequent history of civilization takes its rise" came to a sudden end.

"Had Luther in that moment done other, it had been all otherwise."
As this issue of Beacon Lights comes into your hands, we find ourselves in the autumn season. This is a busy time. The heat of summer is gone and we make our way back to school again. Perhaps others are busily engaged in harvesting the abundant crops which the Lord has given us this year. Mother is making preparations for canning and preserving fruit so that there will be plenty of nourishing food during the long winter months. Father is probably spending a good deal of his spare time wielding a rake among the leaves now littering the lawn. All in all, it is a busy season and vacations are now only pleasant memories. It is now time to work and finish the outdoor jobs before the chilly blasts of winter blow upon us.

For us this autumn season is also a time for the resumption and renewal of society activities in our churches. This is indeed proper for the Christian youth because we should find our companions and pleasures not in worldly places of amusement but in the fellowship of those who profess to find their life in Christ Jesus. It is fitting that at a time such as this that we engage in some self-scrutiny and it will be to our profit to ask ourselves the question: "How shall we begin?"

This question is very important. It is important because if we answer this question properly, we shall have the answer to another very important question: "Where shall we end?" The tendency for us is to neglect or forget to ask ourselves this vital question as we resume our society activities and therefore we do not participate in the benefits which society life in the Christian church can give us.

The answer to the question we are posing before us is not at all difficult to supply. Our societies are all, by virtue of their respective constitutions, bound to the Word of God. It is in the Holy Scriptures that we find the answers to all our problems and we want to suggest to you that we follow the wisdom of Solomon as given in Proverbs 9:10: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; and the knowledge of the holy is under-
standing." The thought that is suggested here is that we begin in the fear of the Lord. We ought to ponder this word for a moment and think of the tremendous implications of this text.

First of all, wisdom, that exceedingly rare and precious item in this day and age, is to be associated only with the things of God and His church. Wisdom is not a mere knowledge of facts concerning God's creation or of man's conquest of that creation. This wisdom is not the knowledge which the scientist has as he works in his laboratory compiling reams and books of facts. At best such a knowledge is not wisdom but a compilation of facts, a fragmentary knowledge of the material world. Wisdom, as we know, is that superiority of knowledge whereby we have an adequate interpretation of all the facts pertaining to our environment and to the position in which God has placed us in the world. We ought, therefore, to begin our society activities with the resolve to search after wisdom, the wisdom found on all the pages of God's Holy Writ.

Secondly, we should do this in the fear of the Lord. We should not take a light attitude toward these vital matters. The fear of the Lord is an attitude of obedience on our part to the truths we shall study during the course of our society year. It is very well possible to absorb a great number of facts from Scripture but to do so properly, that is, in the fear of the Lord, involves that we take a spiritual, prayerful approach to the things of the kingdom of God. This is the way of truth. Let us try to stay on this path because it leads to the eternal riches in Christ Jesus.

Progress... 

With this issue of Beacon Lights we have been appointed by the Federation Board to prepare the editorials for the issues of the coming season. Having certain sentimental attachments to Beacon Lights and the cause for which it stands, I am glad to be in a position where I may, perchance, be of some assistance. We hope that our paper will continue to develop along the lines of the present trend and that the influence of this paper will be felt in greater measure among our young people.

We had the distinction of being involved in the founding and organization of Beacon Lights some seven years ago and there are certain recollections that come to my mind at the present time. Bringing Beacon Lights into being was
not an easy task and it required considerable planning and organization before the first staff was able to produce the first issue of this paper. A plan to defray expenses had to be devised, a format had to be prepared, subscriptions had to be solicited, suitable cuts and photos had to be made and system provided for the proper distribution had to be prepared. It was not an easy task because none of those who were on the first Beacon Lights staff had any publishing experience to speak of. Of course mistakes were made. It was soon recognized that the size of the first issues was not too good and so it was reduced to its present handy size. As time went by, other improvements were made, new cuts were obtained and the result is that we now have a neat little magazine designed to meet the needs of all our young people and in this manner considerable progress has been made.

It should be pointed out that a great deal of credit for a good publication should go to the publishers and we deem it proper that the Doornt Publishing Company, the publishers of Beacon Lights, should receive a fair share of the credit for the progress which has been made through the years in spite of paper shortages, labor shortage and all the difficulties that arose during the war.

The managing editor also should be recognized for his untiring efforts. He has the responsibility that each issue of Beacon Lights is properly prepared and the material organized in the best possible manner and the proofs read before each issue goes to press. For several years now this task has been performed by Mr. Dick VanderWal and he certainly deserves to have his work acknowledged here.

What about the future? Will we continue to progress? That depends to a large extent upon YOU. If you would like to see some changes made or if you have some new ideas, be sure to write us because we do not feel that the ultimate has been accomplished in the preparation of our paper. Another thing, be sure that you support Beacon Lights. It is a worthy cause and needs your individual support to keep it going.
Have You This Calling?

By Lois Kregel — Grand Rapids, Mich.

To many of you, the first part of September was spent in registering for another year of school. In most communities, the schools have thrown open their doors, in order that youth may again take up the pursuit of learning.

Most of us have a goal in mind when we study. We have chosen a vocation, and it is to that end that we bend our efforts in a greater or lesser degree. Now when we are in the grammar school, with few exceptions, we study rather aimlessly. We go to school because our parents send us there; it is not very often that we have decided what our life’s work is to be by the time we are thirteen or fourteen years old. But when we come to our senior year in high school, the problem of finding our place in society looms greater. Either we must find work, or we must go on to college. If we decide upon the latter: there is still the question of what specific field we are to study.

I should like to direct your attention to a very worthy field of study, and before you brush it aside as something for which you are not fit, it is your duty to give this calling due consideration. Here in Grand Rapids there is a movement which is daily gathering more support. We are trying to build an institution where children may be educated according to the same principles which they receive in church, catechism, and, we trust, in the home. To be sure, this cause needs financial aid, but more perplexing and urgent is the need for teachers. We need teachers who are willing to devote, not just a year or two, but their whole life to the cause of Protestant Reformed education. And where are we to look for them? Surely there must be nine or ten of our young people to whom the cause of Protestant Reformed education is so dear that they are willing to devote their lives to it.

O, I know, teaching has its drawbacks. The common complaint of teachers is that they are underpaid. And this is certainly true. A teacher invests four years of college in training for his profession and often receives a lower salary than an unskilled laborer. Surely the laborer is worthy of his hire! We cannot expect a teacher to work for nothing while the salaries in most other professions are high. Yet, on the other hand, if we are to pay our teachers decent salaries we need good financial backing for our school. Therefore the problem of where to find teachers seems to be partly a financial one. And such a problem we can help solve. It is not up to our parents alone to sup-
port the school. When we reach the age of seventeen or eighteen years, and are at all able, we must back a cause as worthy as this with our gifts. We must learn what it means to give—to give as our parents gave when our churches had their beginning.

But money alone will not give us teachers. Entering a profession such as this means the giving up of cherished ambitions, perhaps. You may have other plans, and this does not at all fit in with them. Consider, then, the challenge. You have an opportunity to help build up our own school. You have the opportunity to help preserve true and pure that which you yourself have been taught. Do not brush away the idea as if it is for someone else. Stop and think! Are you called to be a teacher—not only equipped, but called?

Consider, too, the reward: hearing the words of the blessed Master, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant".

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Summaries of Convention Speeches

Fellowship
In Occupation

Speech by Rev. S. Cammenga

Summary by Alice Reitsma

"When we speak of fellowship with Christ, we do not speak of communion with a fellowman, but with the Son of God, the Eternal One, the Creator of heaven and earth. We cannot have fellowship with Him merely as He is the Son of God, but also as the Son of Man, God with us, our Savior. We partake of his anointing—He is the
Rev. Cammenga went on to show that this fellowship is spiritual and therefore, is of and by faith. Since we live in a world of sin where the devil goes about as a roaring lion, our fellowship with Christ is incomplete. We have only a small beginning. We have fellowship with Christ by faith! And faith is a gift of God. That faith must, however, be fed and cultivated. God has given us bodies, but we eat bread and drink water to keep that body alive. Faith must be given food. That food is the Word of God. Our duty and calling as Protestant Reformed young people is that we study the Word of God.

Since our occupation takes up the greatest part of our day, it is very important that we exercise this fellowship in that sphere of activity. Also, it is over that particular activity that the wrath of God has been spoken. “Eat bread in the sweat of thy brow.” This does not mean that work in itself is a curse. Adam worked before the fall, and we shall also work in heaven. But that work is characterized by pleasure and happiness, while work after the fall is labor which has many difficulties and saps our strength. Fellowship will naturally vary with the type of occupation we choose. The man at the dangerous machine does not have the same contacts as the tiller of the soil, nor the stenographer as the mother in the home. But no matter what his vocation, the Christian in his labors must seek Christ. Paul tells us that we serve not man, but Christ. From the Lord we receive our reward.

How must we go about exercising that fellowship? Rev. Cammenga answered this question by pointing out first of all, that we are Prophets. We speak to God in our occupations. We commune with Him. We also talk about Him. We are not ashamed to show openly that we belong to Him. In the second place, we are Priests. All our labor must be dedicated to Christ. There are endless opportunities to use our earnings for Kingdom causes. In the third place we are God’s Kings. All things are ours.

To have fellowship with Christ in our occupations is difficult. It must be done by faith. God knows we are weak. He has opened the way—the way of prayer.

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BEACON LIGHTS FUND

DONATIONS

Peter Vanden Engel (Crescent)............ $8.75
Miscellaneous.................................. 3.75

Note:—Gifts and donations are appreciated very much. Send yours to Miss Winifred De Vries, 354 Diamond Avenue, S.E., Grand Rapids 6, Michigan.
At the mass meeting of our seventh annual Young People's Convention Tuesday evening, Aug. 19, 1947, Rev. H. De Wolf spoke on the topic: Fellowship In Christ. It was the central theme of our Convention which emphasized the blessed fellowship God's people really experience when they are of the same mind in the Lord. We must maintain Christian Unity. "Only by the grace of God in our hearts can we have Fellowship in Christ. These were the opening words of Rev. De Wolf's speech. Man does not establish Fellowship in Christ. Fellowship is born from within. If the life of Christ is in our hearts, we must and do seek others who have Christ in their hearts. This work is spontaneous. It begins in God who works in our hearts, motivated by the living Christ. It is a spiritual fellowship. That fellowship is opposed to all that is of our sinful flesh. It is not conducive to that fellowship. Only in the way of sanctification, light, love, truth and knowledge in Christ and God's Word, as it is proclaimed to us and we study it, God applies it to our hearts and it becomes reality to us. "It is a spiritual reality". It is also a blessed privilege. To know His will, and walk in His way. It is our peculiar privilege. We have "Fellowship" through that living word. When we desire His desire, we have a sanctified fellowship together. He has called us into His blessed knowledge. When we experience this blessed calling, we have tasted a little of heaven. We enjoy a little foretaste of heaven which God has prepared for His peculiar people. That life shall be perfectly revealed to us in the day of perfection. To know His will, walk in His way, is our peculiar privilege. "God has
called you: Protestant Reformed young people, unto His fellowship”. One mind, one heart, one will, to stand fast in one spirit; striving together for the faith of the gospel, manifesting that Christ lives in you, that He may be glorified in all your life.”

Fellowship And Our Friends

Speech by Rev. L. Vermeer

Summary by Arthur Wyma

One of the privileges which we as Christian youth may enjoy in this world is that of having fellowship in friends. But choosing our friends is often a difficult task, for we may never choose our friends from out of the world. In fact, it is impossible to enjoy true friendship with a worldly person for there is no true friendship in the world, but only a cheap imitation of friendship. The so-called worldly friend does not seek our good but only our evil. He blesses us with his mouth and at the same time curses us with his heart.

Friendship with the world means enmity against God, and friendship with the world means sure destruction. So beware, for God has already warned us with the flood that He will punish them who love the world.

There is an old proverb which states that “a friend in need is a friend indeed”, but it is more correct to say that “we have a friend indeed when we have a friend in our need.” When we are ill and uneasy; when our soul cries out for fellowship; when we are down and out; then that friend must not forsake us. And He will not, for He is none less than the Lord, our God.

The relation of friendship which God established between Himself and His people is the very basis of
the covenant. He did not merely become a friend, He IS a friend because He is the only one who can fulfill our needs. The Lord is unchanging and everlasting. Our sins our our attitude, and our praises do not change His friendship. No, even when we rejected Him and hung Him on the accursed tree He did not forsake us but remained our friend. He proved His friendship when He bore all our sins, sorrow, and shame until they were gone and only glory remained.

That fellowship which we have in Christ must constitute the basis of all our earthly friendships. We must take a stand in the world and declare that we are enemies of them who hate the Lord and friends of them who love Him and walk according to His commandments. Only then can we carry out the theme of our convention. “Fellowship in Christ”.

Seek ye only those who love the Lord.

Impressions Of The 1947 Convention

Coming way from California I was very much impressed by the Convention. It was all I had hoped it would be. Seeing old friends, meeting and making new friends, it was truly inspiring to me. It was a privilege to be there. I attended everything pertaining to the Convention and enjoyed it to the utmost. Thanks to the Host Church, Fuller Ave. Friendship in Christ was certainly experienced, and I will not forget those three days.

Bess De Vries.
Redlands, Calif.

* * *

I believe that this year we have had a very nice Convention in keeping with our theme: “Fellowship in Christ”. I believe we have had an unusually good turnout and have really had Christian Fellowship. It seems that each year we get to know each other better and thus I think this year has been the best so far. May next year’s Convention by God’s grace be as much a success as this one has been.

John Cammenga.
Holland, Mich.

* * *

A few words are these: It surely was a great pleasure to me that once again we could see one another’s faces, and in true “Christian Fellowship” of one and the same faith, we could spend a few hours together, not only to be in one another’s presence first of all, but to be representatives of God’s Covenant. May this one and the Conventions to come, be one of God’s means to draw us nearer to
Him in love and affection towards one another.

Harold J. Schipper, Holland, Mich.

* * *

Having the privilege of attending the 7th annual Convention as one of the delegates of Oak Lawn, I would like to express my impression of the Convention. The main speakers gave us very timely and edifying addresses. The outing was full of fun and every one was happy. The banquet also was very good. Thanks to the Host Committee and all those who made this year’s Convention a success. Let’s see if Holland will have one just as good. See you there!

Clarice Ipema, Oak Lawn, Ill.

* * *

In my opinion the theme of the Convention “Fellowship in Christ” was carried out very thoroughly. Those few days of Christian activity and fellowship could not help but be of spiritual benefit to all that attended. I left the Convention with renewed zeal.

Mary Ezinga, Fuller Ave. Church.

* * *

As a delegate to the 7th annual Convention, I can truly say it was a great pleasure. We must certainly congratulate Fuller Avenue for the splendid job. The main speakers of the Convention gave very timely and edifying addresses, and will long be remembered by those who attended, and since that is the purpose of our Conventions it was a great success. Thanks to the Host Committee and to all those who made this year’s Convention a success.

John Haak, South Holland, Ill.

* * *

I found the 1947 Convention to be very edifying as well as very enjoyable. Fellowship in Christ was evident at all times. One thing that interested me very much was the opportunity to meet many new friends from other churches. I think that the Convention was well planned and wish to express my thanks as a delegate to the Convention Committee and all those who helped to make the 1947 Convention a big success.

Ted Sjoerdsma, Fuller Ave. Church.

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I think the 1947 Convention was a great success. I enjoyed myself very much and I hope every one else did too. I am sure every one is anxious for next year’s Convention.

Ardyth Griffioen.

* * *

The Convention of 1947 will long be remembered by all of those who attended because of the various activities, but above all for the spiritual benefit received throughout the Convention according to the theme. “Fellowship in Christ”.

Henry Doctor, Edgerton, Minn.
Arianism's Final Defeat

In a department such as this one it is essential that we see the connection between what was written last time and what is written today. History is not a loose or jumbled mass of facts. One event leads to another and stands in a certain relationship to the other. Therefore we would remind you that when last this department appeared, we were dealing with the Arian controversy. Arius, the founder and mouthpiece of this false doctrine taught that Christ had no divine nature. He was a creature who had been made by God much before He created the world, but was nothing more than creature. Denying Christ's divine nature, he denied the very requirement for our salvation. Constantine called a council to take a stand on the matter and to decide whether Arianism was to be condemned or commended.

The council met in the year 325 in the city of Nicea. And the declaration of the church at that time in regard to this doctrinal matter was called the Nicene Creed. Arius was condemned and exiled to Illyria.

This was by no means the end of this false doctrine. Two of the defenders of Arianism, when placed before the question as to whether they would sign this declaration drawn up at Nicea, which condemned Arianism, did sign it. But they continued to manifest their hostility to the truth and were likewise exiled. The chief of these enemies of the truth was Eusebius. However, through the favor of Constantinople's sister, Constantia, Eusebius was released in 328 and gaining influence over Constantine caused him to reconsider the matter. As a result Arius himself was also brought back from exile and made strong propaganda for his view. Constantine even demanded that he be restored to his office.

It looked as though the truth were about to be plowed under and that the lie would flourish. But the Almighty God had His own plans, and not for one moment did He forsake His Church. In the year 295, years before this controversy, God had caused a child to be born whom He would use to frustrate these works of darkness. We called your attention last time to the fact that Athanasius was one
of the chief defenders of the truth at the council of Nicea. He now had become bishop and refused to reinstate Arius. The emperor, who plainly was not at all concerned with the truth, threatened to depose him. Athanasius paid the emperor a visit and so impressed him that he withdrew his threat of deposition. However the followers of Arius induced Constantine to call another Synod to reopen the matter. Now Athanasius was banished and arrangements were made to have Arius returned to his office. However on the evening of the day before he was to be reinstated. Arius died at the age of eighty years.

Constantine himself soon died after this and his successor Constantine II restored Athanasius to his former position. Nor is this the end of the story. Once again Athanasius was banished when the Arians gained the favor of the emperor. He was restored again some time later only to go through the same experiences at least twice more. During this period the Arians became weaker because of their quarrelling and disagreement with one another. Two factions arose, one going even farther from the truth and the other seeking somewhat of a compromise.

It was not until the year 381 when a special and second Ecumenical council was called at Constantinople that Arianism was given its final condemnation. No new creed was drawn up at this council, but the Nicene Creed was confirmed and declared to be the undeniable thought of Scripture pertaining to the divine nature of Christ.

Thus a dangerous heresy was branded as such and the church was led by the Spirit to develop as well as defend the truth of the Scriptures. And the church of today shares in the enjoyment of that truth.
Choosing A Vocation

It's a long time ago that we started answering the question as to how we should choose a vocation. When summer came around we were almost finished with our answer. I say 'almost' but not quite. I still have a few things on my heart which I like to present to you in this issue of Beacon Lights.

We might continue our subject for a while, but I trust that you are rather surprised that I already went to such length with answering your questions. I did this because of the great importance of the subject. Before we take leave of this subject I wish to state the following:

In the first place, it seems to me we have looked especially, although not exclusively, at this subject from the point of view of the boy and the young man. There are, of course, also a host of vocations for girls. It would not surprise me if one of the young ladies asks me a question in the near future about the subject of girls Choosing a Vocation.

Naturally, very much of what was said is also directly applicable to girls. And although I have no question on the matter, I do like to say that for me the highest vocation of a girl is to be a good housekeeper and a good mother. The threefold vocation of wife, motherhood, housekeeper, is for any girl the highest vocation in life. Naturally, not all can attain to this. Nonetheless, I am certain that this is but too often neglected. And even if the choice of the vocation is there oft times the proper preparation is woefully lacking. We will not enter into this subject any further at present, but I did want to say at least that I have not entirely or purposely forgotten our girls, and did like to emphasize for just a moment as to what I consider to be the most ideal vocation for a girl.

Finally, let me say this yet in conclusion, from what I answered you in the foregoing it has become abundantly plain what I think about some matters that are connected with choosing a vocation. I am also glad that there was some response to these articles, letters which gave some food for thought. I believe that the contents and the nature of these letters was such that a separate reply in our Beacon Lights was neither expected nor would it shed any more light on the subject.

For recapitulation I might state the following:
1. It is very necessary and important to choose a vocation.
2. The field of choice is very limited for us as Protestant Reformed young people, and there are a good many occupations which are forbidden territory for us.
3. We should welcome guidance
and advice.
4. We must seek a legitimate vocation and know what is connected with the particular vocation we choose.
5. We must be extremely careful and proceed cautiously when it comes to choosing some vocations because of the strings attached to them or the means to reach our goal.
6. We should choose a vocation which suits our personal and individual abilities, talents, aptitude.
7. We should choose a vocation where we can serve our God and maintain and live the principles of Holy Writ.
8. In the choice of our vocation and in the exercise of our vocation we must always seek first, and be able to seek first, the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.

SCHUILER.

From The Editor's Desk...

The Staff of Beacon Lights wishes to express its sincere appreciation to its resigning editor-in-chief, the Rev. Walter Hofman. We appreciate his services of the past year, and at the same time wish him God’s richest blessings in that work which he is about to undertake, the work of extension of our churches.

* * *

At the same time we welcome to our staff our new Editor-in-chief, Mr. Homer Kuiper. Mr. Kuiper is an instructor in radar at Western State College in Kalamazoo, Michigan. He spent several years in the armed services, a portion of which time he was in the South Pacific. He is well known to our readers, having written our Current Comments section for some time. We look forward to reading his editorials.

* * *

Let’s not forget our subscriptions. Beacon Lights should be in every Protestant Reformed home, and we might also acquaint those of our friends who are outside of our own church circle with it. Let’s be zealous for Beacon Lights!

* * *

Have you a problem—something that’s troubling you? Something which, if answered would be of spiritual benefit to the readers of Beacon Lights? Send your questions to:

“SCHUILER”
c/o Beacon Lights
1100 Sigsbee St., S.E.
Grand Rapids, Mich.
and rest assured that you will receive a carefully thought out reply.
Book Review

By BERDENA KNOTT

Grand Rapids, Michigan

Père Antoine - - -

by EDWARD F. MURPHY.

There is a vivid story of the inner life of a Roman Catholic priest. It is a study of the motives which prompted his ecclesiastical activities and affords an appreciation of the tangled human relationships which resulted from love of self rather than love of God.

Already as a boy, Fray Antonio had decided to enter the monastery in Granada, Spain. But after he met Anglice, his resolve was shaken as if it had never been. Not until he had been "jilted" for another man did he turn back in his misery to the consecrated life. The padre was pursued with his own bitterness. It drove him to New Orleans which city was under Spanish control at that time. And there the remembrance of Anglice's falseness brought out a harshness in him. Seeking to build his prestige by forcing the civil authorities to kow-tow to the Church, he sowed discord and reaped emptiness in his soul. He was returned to Spain in disgrace.

There the proud monk had to look within for the cause of his wretchedness. Also Antonio found evidence that Anglice had sacrificed her love for him in order that he might dedicate his life to God. This discovery caused the pendulum to swing back, too far back. He obtained permission to return to his former charge. The New World enticed him to try out his new ideas of freedom and self expression. He desired to be loved by men. Laxity prevailed where before he had been overly strict. He now refuted the authority of his superiors to interfere with his methods and was supported by the congregation who had been taught to give him first devotion. And yet there was no peace within him. His love still was centered about himself, and God's Word was interpreted merely to his personal advantage.

At length, his career nearly over, the priest was brought to the realiz-
ation that he had missed the true purpose of his calling. The Almighty could not be fitted into his snug pattern for living. The servant must be led instead by the grace of God. Man's desire must not take precedence, but he must look upward in prayer to ask the Father's will in all things. Thus, after a lifetime of service that was no service, the priest knew his error and could only ask forgiveness.

ANNOUNCEMENT

The second edition of "The History of our Protestant Reformed Churches" is now off the press. This book gives a complete history of the causes that led up to the breach between the Chr. Ref. and Prot. Ref. Churches. It also contains a catechism which refutes the pernicious doctrines of "common grace" and "a well-meant offer of salvation". The book is profusely illustrated with pictures of our churches, consistories and ministers. It is printed on a very high grade of paper, and is beautifully bound. It has 410 pages. A copy of this book should be in every Reformed home.

The Price is $2.00.

ATTENTION — CONSISTORIES:

Some of our Consistories during the past years have the custom of presenting a copy of "The History of the Prot. Ref. Churches" to those making public confession of faith. We would recommend this commendable practice to all of our consistories. As an inducement we are offering our consistories a special price of $1.65 in lots of 25 or more. Send orders to:

Prot. Ref. Mission Committee,
Box 562,
Grand Rapids, Michigan.
The Book Of Judges

Introduction:

The Book of Judges treats the early history of the Church in Canaan. Judges are not kings, e.g. Gideon was Judge but he refused to be king, saying, the Lord rules over you (Jud. 8:23). Judges are captains, and heads of the people (Jud. 11:6, 9). Through them God feeds His people (1 Chron. 17:6), and God has set them “over the people” to subdue the enemies of the people of God (1 Chron. 17:9, 10). The period of the Judges covers the space of about four hundred and fifty years (Acts 13:20). They stand in the midst of the Church as representatives of God and His Law. On the one hand they execute the judgment of God’s righteousness against the heathen nations but also against Israel if it depart from the Law. But they also represent Christ Jesus Who shall JUDGE His people until God has avenged Himself upon the wicked. Really the souls under the altar (Rev. 6:9, 10) are still acting as judges.

OUTLINE I.

(Deut. 7:1-6)

The Church in Canaan...

Well Equipped with the Word of God.

To get started on the Book of Judges we will have to skip around a little in our first Outlines. The thing we ought to get before our minds first of all is that Israel came into the land of Canaan thoroughly equipped with the Word of God. If they obey that Word even though they have no leaders like Moses and Joshua anymore, and even though they have no king, and little mention is made of prophets during this time, all will be well IF they obey the Word. But if they disobey that Word no amount of Judges or Kings will make things well.

OBSERVE: Paul in Ephesians speaks about having on the armor of God. Israel had that armor, the Word of God was ringing in their ears. It was written upon
their banners. God had given Israel the Word: its instruction, its directives, its power and its promises. With that Word they were safe, even in the midst of Paganism and the seven nations of idolatry.

I.—The Word as it had come to them through Moses. (Deut. 7:1-6 but read the entire chapter).

1. Israel is told that when it reaches Canaan it shall show the pagan nations no mercy (vs. 2) establish no affinity with them (vs. 3) but utterly destroy both them and their idols. God's Word and it ONLY appoints us our place.

Notice: (1) If Israel showed "mercy" to the heathen they were following the lusts of the flesh instead of the plain Word of God. The motive behind that kind of mercy is the desire for affinity with heathendom and an urge to follow their pattern of life. (2) Israel is a peculiar people. the Covenant people, an holy people. They were the new creation. The new does not adjust itself to the old.

For discussion: How could we today sin by showing mercy? How does Paul apply the issue of warfare to us of the New Testament (cf. II Cor. 10:4-6).

2. In the way of obedience God will keep unto them the Covenant (vss. 9; 12) but God will likewise repay them that hate Him, and He will utterly destroy them (vs. 10). God keeps the Covenant unto us in no other way than in complete subjection and obedience to His will and Word. The Covenant is not a mechanical arrangement which automatically follows from parents to children. God KEEPS the Covenant UNTO us. That there is ever a people that keeps the Covenant is wholly due to God Who KEEPS it unto us. Yet only in the way of obedience.

3. If Israel should become afraid of the immense task before them (vss. 17, 18, 21) the Word says: In ME is your power, I can even call forth the hornet (vs. 20) to fight for you. Be never afraid.

4. Israel must not consume the nations suddenly, she must do it little by little, lest the wild beasts of the field increase upon them (vs. 22).

Observe: The Word gives detailed instructions. Fail to drive out the Canaanites: I will destroy you; do it too quickly. the beasts will devour you.

Discussion: 1. How does our position in the world compare with Israel's position in Canaan? 2. What does it mean to live after and in blind obedience to the Word of God? 3. Why does Paul tell us we have to cast down "imaginations" (II Cor. 105).

OUTLINE II

(Joshua 24:23-28)

Introduction:

Israel was fully equipped with the Word of God. Their duty here in Canaan was plain, their calling
clear. Not only had Moses, before he departed, cause the Word to ring in their ears. Joshua had done the same. To that we call your attention in this outline.

II.—The Word as it had come to them through Joshua (Josh. 24:23-28). Again read the entire chapter for best results.

Joshua preaches his farewell. He stands with the people in the land of Canaan. He has broken the armed might of the enemy in the sense that the main, armed strongholds have been broken down, but the remnants of the nations are still there. Various strongholds remain. Neither Moses nor Joshua had finished the work.

Observe: The work of all men and of any man stands in the sign of the “unfinished”. Only Christ Jesus finishes all things. Only by faith in Him we see the finished work, and we rest (Heb. 4). Until Jesus comes back our work will remain unfinished also.

1. Israel dwells in the midst of many strange gods (vs. 23). Seven nations are here in Canaan, at least remnants of them. Israel is to put away these gods, lest they become a snare to them. As surely as they leave the gods here, they will become a snare for Israel (Josh. 2:3, Ex. 23:23).

Questions for Discussion: 1. In what sense is it true today that if we “leave” any of the gods, they will be our snare? 2. Israel had to destroy the gods with hammer, ax, and fire. How must we do it today? 3. How does the preaching of the pure Word point out to us our personal idols?

2. After Joshua makes his farewell speech we find Israel vowing most solemnly that they will not turn away from the Lord, but will follow and obey Him (vs. 24). Four times they profess this. Their position here in Canaan is so serious, their past defections so evident that Joshua says to them: Ye cannot serve the Lord for He is an holy God (vs. 19). Ye cannot serve the Lord if you let any of these idolatrous people living in Canaan. After God has done you good. He will turn and do you hurt. Woe unto you if ever you turn away from this Word of God. Four times they profess: WE WILL SERVE THE LORD.

Observe: This generation DID serve the Lord (Jud. 2:7).

3. Joshua places Israel under the consciousness of an oath (24-27). Joshua makes a covenant with the people (vs. 25) and sets up a stone, declaring that this stone has heard all the words which God has uttered. It shall be a witness, to testify against whoever turns away from the Word of God as written in the Law.

4. Then Joshua lets them depart, each man to his inheritance. But they go there fully equipped with the Word of God, under oath. with a stone under an oak at Shechem which has heard the vows Israel made, and will judge them if they apostatize.
Questions for Discussion: (1) How have we professed that we will serve the Lord, and Him only? 2. How will our Baptism and our Confession of Faith testify against us if we turn therefrom? 3. Do we seek to walk in the ways of the Lord only because we are under oath or vow? 4. Is the Youth for Christ Movement one which proceeds from the Covenant view . . . or from what view then?

Conclusion: Israel stands in the land of Canaan with the Word of God in her midst. It blesses, it also curses.

OUTLINE III

(Judges 2:6-10)

Introduction:

Judges 1 and 2 are really introductory of character, they are an overture to the whole of the book. Vs. 6-10 of chapter 2 forms a sort of transition from the book of Joshua to Judges. You might have expected these verses to appear at the heading of chapter 1, but they appear in chapter 2 for the sake of contrast and testimony. The main theme is:

The Appearance of Apostacy.

1. Chapter 1 describes what took place during “all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua” (2:7), but in that chapter you also see the first faint outlines of coming apostacy, for we are introduced to “that other generation after them which knew not the Lord.”

a. Therefore chapter 1 gives you a mixed picture. You see Judah and Simeon and the house of Joseph taking the Word of God seriously, and fighting the Lord’s battles. Judah was the standard bearer (1:1, 2). Judah was to set the pace and the rest of the tribes evidently had to join in with Judah and thus take possession of the land which the Lord had given them.

Observe: That most of the tribes failed to follow Judah is a preview of Israel which eventually refuses to follow and obey the Lion of Judah’s tribe (Christ).

Question: Why is the tribe of Judah singled out as the one to go first? And if the Lord was with Judah, how come they could not rout the inhabitants of the valley (1:19).

In vs. 3 and 17 what a beautiful picture of the communion of the saints, warring the warfare of the Lord together. What unity and brotherhood in the truth. Simeon goes with Judah and when that is finished. Judah goes with Simeon.

Discussion: Instead of warring a common enemy, the church today is divided into many denominations, often warring against each other instead . . . is that a true statement?

b. But in chapter 1 you get a glimpse also of the approaching Apostacy.

1. Starting with vs. 21 the Record tells us of the various tribes (at least six of them) that refused
to obey the Word of Moses and consequently left heathen nations among them. Most of these tribes are part of that Israel which eventually goes into captivity and never returns. You already see the beginning of the end of the Ten Tribes.

For Discussion: Why did they allow the enemies to remain among them? Were the enemies too strong for them? Did it seem more practical to make them tributary instead? Or was there some other motive? Could Ezekiel 16 give you a clue?

Observe: That we repeatedly read of Israel making the enemies tributary shows that Israel HAS the power to overcome the enemies. God has certainly prostrated the enemy before Israel. Israel's neglect is pure disobedience.

2. There arises another generation. You see that generation raising its head gradually. It is a generation that knows not the Lord (i.e., does not fear Him) nor yet the Lord's works (i.e., disrespect for the history of salvation up to this point).

Observe: While the influence of the previous, strong generation was felt, the new generation laid low. Had they raised their heads the "elders" would have condemned them. But as the Joshua generation disappears the new generation gradually dares to raise its head.

Question for discussion: How must we account for an apostate generation following such a faithful generation? Did the Joshua generation fail to give proper covenant instruction? Are apostate children the result of apostate parents? Discuss this. It involves your covenant conception.

OUTLINE IV.
(Judges 2:16-19)

The Vicious Circle.

Introduction:
Read chapter 2:11-15 for background. Suddenly you read that Israel turns to the worship of Canaan's gods. Evidently therefore this had all along been the motive for letting the nations remain among them. It is impossible to have fellowship with the wicked than on their platform. i.e., the platform of another god. Common Grace erects an arena where the children of light and the children of darkness fellowship. That arena is not common grace, but common sin, common idolatry.

Note: There is covenant love, there is also covenant wrath (vss. 14, 15). If Israel turns to sin, the Word of God meets them wherever they turn, to bring them low, to chastise them and distress them. The Word of God blesses . . . it also curses. God therefore delivers His people into the hands of their "friends" or consorts.

1. God delivers His people. Vs. 18 tells us that when His people groaned by reason of their oppression it "repented" the Lord and He delivered them. When it says that God "repented" it is a method
of plain speech telling us that (1) God remembers His Covenant with Abraham. 2. God is angry, but a mediator has appeared, and the wrath is temporarily removed (upon Christ in view of Whose coming alone God can “repent”. 3. God chastises His people until it is enough . . . but He cannot bear that strangers should take His children and beat them. Parents cannot bear it either that strangers should beat their children.

Observe: Vs. 16 says God delivered them “nevertheless”. i.e., in spite of their sin . . . on the basis of mercy and grace. God delivers them because Christ is “among” them. the elect seed is here. When Israel groans you may be sure that God hears the groaning of His Son.

Discussion: Why should Israel turn to the Lord in their distress. when in prosperity they deny Him? What is there behind this? Is distress better for God’s people than prosperity? In our lives, is there connection between our peculiar distress and some certain waywardness in us? . . . Sometimes? Always? Ever? If Judges are deliverers, why are they not called saviors instead of judges? i.e., what is the connection between judging and delivering?

Note: Jesus is our Savior. could He also be said to be our Judge? How?

2. No sooner is Israel delivered or it turns again to idolatry. Remember. however, that the apostacy shows itself now here, now there. now in this tribe, then in that tribe. The apostacy anywhere was really a symptom of apostacy everywhere. Correct? Disease in one part of the body is disease in all the body. Is that correct?

Note: Vs. 19 tells us that as long as the Judge lived the people conformed themselves to the Word of God (and Moses), but as soon as he was dead. Israel turned away again.

For Discussion: Last part of vs. 19 says Israel ceased not from their stubborn way . . . were they perhaps secretly walking their stubborn way, even while they were outwardly conforming themselves to the discipline of the judge? Do you think young people in the church sometimes conform themselves to the rule of faith enough to escape detection, while nevertheless all the while they “cease not from their stubborn way”?

Observe: In vs. 19 there is a hint that when they turned away each apostacy, after each repentance, was worse than the one previous. For we read “they corrupted themselves more than their fathers”. Thus there is development.

Warning: If we cleave to sin, temporary repentance only constitutes us capable of still greater sin. God punishes sin with sin. We recall that parable statement of Jesus about the devil getting cast out of a house, but returning, and taking seven more devils with him.
CHAPTER V.

The skirmish between the merchant company and the Shur outlaws soon blazed to white heat. Because of the quick work of their scouts, the slaves had been able to kneel and tie the camels before they became too frightened to manage. Their high packs made a breastwork of sorts, and such narrow shelters greatly heartened the defenders.

But as the uproarious freebooters surged toward them, the animals became panicky and strained at their bonds. Excitement grew with the hoarse orders of the merchantmen, the curses of slaves, the brays and snarls of frightened animals. Raanah's dragon was growling and lashing its tail defiantly, while the din of the raiders deepened into a thunderous roar.

"They are a wild band." Egiba flashed a tight grin at Isme-Dagan as they dashed between the camel barricades.

"Too wild to suit me," Isme-Dagan growled.

The merchantmen had stationed themselves behind the barricades at intervals to command all parts of their line. The most intelligent slaves, like Calah, Gaza, and Shobal, were set over smaller groups to direct and steady them. Within a circle of hooded howdahs the women were crowded to the rear, for they were considered a prize by the plunderers.

Hardly was the caravan set when the raiders bore down upon them. It was a bold charge, but such a cloud of arrows showered them that they became disconcerted. Their own aim was uncertain because of the motion of their mounts. To rally from their confusion they rode in a circle, howling like fiends, then darted forward in a fan-like spread to discharge their weapons, then whirled about.

The plain in front of the caravan became alive with flying arrows, darting spears, and whirling riders. Once thrust into action the slaves fought with an abandon that was hardly expected of them.

Asaph, Dungri, and Kihai-Del took up bows and used them intensively if not very effectively, while the delirium of battle shot from their eyes. Kedar took a stance with a spear, but he was too
stiff and fat and he fell, then crawled behind his mustache bristling militantly. Dahmru blinked in the strong light timidly, his face twitching in terror.

After several charges, the marauders changed their tactics to tormenting their opponents rather than putting up a stiff fight. They dashed forward, wheeled suddenly, then charged an unsuspecting section of the line. This irked Isme-Dagan. He stepped from cover and shook his spear at an ugly turban-headed Idumean. "Come closer. you howler! I'll pin you to the ground!" he taunted. "I'll fix you so you'll never howl again!"

"That's right, soldier." Egiba snickered. "if you can't hit them, tell them!" He frowned at the bow in his hand. "If these pesky things would only do what you want them to!"

The dry white sands simmered with heat. To the frightened women peering from behind their hooded shelter, the battle seemed too ethereal to be real. The outlaws charged and pranced and whirled, while the dust from the feet of their mounts enveloped them in a thin haze. The women shuddered and wept at sight of the wild faces flashing before them.

It soon became evident that the freebooters were tiring. Their mounts were blowing. They also knew that their desire for plunder was hopeless, for animals that are tied down cannot be stampeded. The merchant company, with its heavy advantage of numbers, had proved too strong for them. The outlaws had persisted merely out of pique. After another futile charge they rode off, defeated.

When they were out of sight and it was certain their departure was not a ruse, the merchant company untied the stiffened knees of their camels. All the men were in high spirits as they wiped the dust and perspiration from their faces.

"That was a grand fight." Egiba declared.

"And our marksmanship was fairly good," Asaph bragged, thinking of the handsome figure he must have cut with his bow.

With the tension of conflict removed, they became a bit hysterical. The slaves played leapfrog and feigned fighting bouts with each other. The merchantmen slapped each other on the back and laughed uproariously. All were agreed on the merits of their defense, though each secretly took much credit for himself.

Isme-Dagan ended their horseplay by suggesting that they investigate their casualties. They found a dead camel with an arrow through its neck. A couple of seriously wounded Bantu were turned over to the women for treatment. Less than a dozen slaves presented superficial cuts or scratches. So they considered that good luck had attended them.

Then they began to wonder where Raanah and Joseph were. Isme-Ragan scanned the hills, cupped his hands over his mouth and hailed, "Raanah! Joseph! Come in! The raiders are gone!"

A short time later the boys reached the crest of the hill and answered. The men animal and Joseph lugging the heavy were surprised to see Raanah leading an weapons of a raider.

(To be continued)