

Translation Dutch letter number 7

Kampen, 25 November 1996

Dear brothers, sisters, pastors and elders,

"When are you going to organise another conference?" asks the one. "Very instructive, and edifying" says the other. "It's really good to be here" say yet other participants. As team, therefore, we were very thankful and happy for the second meeting and day of reflection, which we held on the 5th of October 1996, in Nijkerk. The church building, of the Evangelical Church, which we were allowed to use, free of cost, was filled, the whole day, with people singing, listening and enquiring. A reporter from the Nederlands Dagblad [Dutch Newspaper], was present and wrote a very clear and positive article for her paper. A number of people responded to this article, wanting more information about the workgroup. Why do we think that such a day is important? Simply because, it's important not only to point out where things are going wrong, but also to show how it can and should be. The theme for the day was:

"Prophecy in biblical perspective", This was introduced in the morning by Charles Groot. In his sermon he pointed out the different paths, that we can tread in our lives, as Christians. We can sometimes be deceived, during our walk by wrong signposts. Several letters in the bible even deal with this and warn against these false teachings. He encouraged, those present, to be guided in straight paths, despite the false signposts.

In the afternoon, three workshops were held, at the same time. Ben Hanegraaff, Arnold Doorn and Hans Frinsel introduced the following topics:

"Prophecy in practice in the church"

"Can you learn to prophesy, should you seek it?"

"Testing prophecies. How do you do that?"

Lively discussions arose in all the meetings. The speakers were helped by Jan van Petegem, Charles Groot and Gert van Dasler [elder in the Evangelical Church, The Ark in Nijkerk]. In this way, the topic, prophecy, was fully examined. Perhaps, through reading this report, you are now sorry that you missed this day in Nijkerk. No need to worry! You can still share a part of it. There are three cassettes available, with the messages of the speakers and some of the questions and answers [more information later in this letter].

In our last two letters about prophecy, we mentioned the names of a number of false prophets. We could continue for some time and you as reader, could also, no doubt, add to the list from your own experiences. We don't want to do this. We will limit ourselves now to two Dutch examples and then close this subject. In view of these examples and the discussions in our last meeting, we would advise you to be extremely careful with pronouncing prophecies. If these are spoken out in church let the pastor and elders test them then in a spiritual way by means of the bible. Paul says in 1 Thess. 5:20-21: "do not treat prophecies with contempt. Test everything. Hold on to the good".

Examples of false prophecies before closing the subject.

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-During Eurospirit 1996 in Amsterdam the prophecies of Theunis Herder, member of the ministry team of a church in Purmerend, were advertised. Here follows some quotations from his prophecy given out in book form, "The great finale":

1. "I will also send My prophets to guide you in your lives. Their words will set you ablaze. I will so anoint them that you will sometimes not even be able to come near them and lying on the ground you will drink in My words" [*2].

Comment, workgroup: The prophet makes the Lord confirm, in this prophecy the ministry of the Toronto Blessing. We consider this to be a false prophecy, seeing that the Toronto Blessing is clearly unbiblical.

2. "And the things which My servant John [writer of the book of Revelation] was not allowed to write about, will be revealed to you and I will give them to you to write down, so that you will know" [*3].

Comment, workgroup: It is clearly stated at the end of Revelation that man is not allowed to add anything. This prophecy of Theunis Herder does exactly that. His whole book of prophecies is full of new verses. These statements look like original verses, but if we take a closer look we see that they differ from the bible verses. We'll give you here two examples:

"To him who overcomes, I will be a God and you will be My children" [*4].

"I the Lord am a multicoloured and many-sided God"[*5].

3. "Between the end of 1995 and 1997 there will be around a million people who will give their lives to Me, and that's just in Holland" [*6].

Comment, workgroup: In a years time we will know if this is a true prophecy. We have grave doubts about the outcome of this prophecy, seeing the false statements in numbers 1 and 2. We hope that if the prophecy isn't fulfilled that the prophet will admit that openly. Jaap Dieleman from Stichting Heilbode and Herman Haan from Vorming en Actie who both have written a foreword in the book have perhaps a responsibility in this too.

*1. Cassette tape from the church 21-10-1990

*2. Page 22 of "The great finale"-Theunis Herder.

*3. Page 47 ditto.

*4. Page 49 ditto.

*5. Page 39 ditto.

*6. Page 21 ditto.

Topic for the next letter.

In 1997 we want to focus our thoughts upon the heart of the gospel, which is, the Lord Jesus' redeeming work on the cross of Calvary. In comparison with all the preceding subjects that we have handled, is this the most important one. We will show you that a number of prosperity teachers deviate at this point from the gospel and in some cases they even preach another gospel which is deceiving. We will touch on points such as:

"Did Jesus overcome Satan on the cross or during a three day fight in hell?"

"Is Satan the evil-doer, and man only the deceived victim?"

"Has the power of sin over man been destroyed?"

"Is healing a part of Jesus' death on the cross, equal to the gift of grace in the forgiveness of sins?"

"Does the death of Jesus on the cross bring economical prosperity for Christians?"

In our first letter of the 17th of January 1995 we mentioned already these subjects: the numbers one to five and nine to ten. You will understand; these subjects are not easy and take much time in preparation. Please pray with us for insight and wisdom.

If you have suitable material or information, be it positive or negative, send it to us.

Up-date on the "Toronto Blessing".

**SIXTY
PAGES
OF**

**PROPHECIE
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**THE CROSS
OF
CALVARY**

Maybe you are reading our letter for the first time or you have forgotten, but we as workgroup reject completely the Toronto Blessing. We are convinced that, falling on the ground, laughing loudly, roaring and making all sorts of animal noises is not from God. It doesn't come from the Holy Spirit, but from man himself or in some cases from the realm of the occult [see our letters of the 5th of May and the 11th of September 1995]. In a number of churches, we understand that it is still turbulent. The problem is often the influence of a small 'pro-Toronto' group is bringing a lot of confusion. It is being taught in the Toronto meetings to propagate, and if necessary, aggressively, in one's own church, their teachings. Much courage and wisdom is needed for pastors and elders in dealing with these cases and these groups. We also know of churches who have split because of Toronto, but who are now carefully working on reconciliation. It seems to us a precarious business, in view of the aggression and the false teaching and practice on the Toronto side. It could perhaps be of value for those who are in this situation to take up contact with the Pentecostal Church Sjalom in Vlissingen.

Meanwhile, the Berea churches in Haarlem are fully occupied in spreading the Toronto message. Their goal in the coming months is Zwolle and surrounding district. Bart Doorneweerd from Youth with a Mission is also involved in this conference. It continues to amaze us that an organisation, which calls it self inter denominational and whose aim is evangelisation through young people, should occupy itself with the spreading of such extreme teachings.

A brother phoned us and asked with a sigh: "Why don't church leaders who are against the Toronto Blessing say it more often publicly in their services and outside?" He also said, that he was afraid that many sheep would find themselves outside of the fold and would perish through falling on the stones [the man is a farmer]. We whole-heartily say "amen" to this. If in the Netherlands, no more pastors and elders will stand up against the false teaching from Toronto, then many more sheep will begin to wander away and become lost. Please brothers don't keep silent!

***SAY NO
TO THE
TORONTO
BLESSING***

Information worth knowing and worth our concern.

-Did you know that the Brotherhood of Pentecostal Churches in the Netherlands is seeking closer relationships with the Roman Catholic Church? It is written in the Parakleet 3rd quarterly 1996 that the Brotherhood has already for a few years been sending a delegate to the talks between the Pentecostal denominations and the R.K. Church. A dialogue is taking place with the R.K. church.

- Did you know that Martie Dieperink in March 1995 set up the Foundation, "Meeting and Reconciling" to bring together Protestants and Catholics?

- Did you know that Evangelicals and Roman Catholics in the States made in 1994, a kind of covenant? They call it ECT="Evangelicals Catholics Together". They want to tackle together a number of social and ethical problems. In doing this they have made some promises to each other, one of which is not to try to evangelise or do missionary work in the others ranks.

- Did you know that in 1990 a movement for men was set up, called "The Promise Keepers". The founder Bill McCartney, member of a Vineyard church in Colorado, conducts big gatherings in stadiums for men only. He does this, in conjunction with the Roman Catholics. Doctrines are not spoken about in these meetings; instead seven promises are talked about. The men make these promises in order to be better men in the family, at work and in church. Besides this they keep a watch over each other. The movement is very popular. The number of visitors in 1990 was 4,000 men, but it has escalated in 1996 to probably over the 100,000 men. The Mormons are not unsympathetic to them either. The new Dutch charismatic magazine, Power Magazine,

ROMAN

***CATHOLIC
MOTHER
CHURCH***

published by Toronto minded people and churches, has already this year, written a number of articles praising the Promise Keepers.

Are we allowed to criticise?

A well-known pastor in the Netherlands warned us to be careful about criticising a certain person. He mentioned in his letter the text: "Do not touch my anointed ones, do my prophets no harm". Many of you, we think, will have been, or will be confronted with this text. For this reason we have placed this text in the proper context and made a small study, which we have added as an appendix to this letter.

List of books read.

1. Recommended:

- What happened to worship? - A.W.Tozer
- Yearning for God - A.W.tozer
- Competent to Minister or the biblical Care of souls - Martin & Diedre Bobgan
- The Subtle Power of Spiritual Abuse - David Johnson & Jeff Van Vonderen
- When God's people let you down - Jeff Van Vonderen

2. Not Recommended

- De grote finale - [The great finale] Theunis Herder

Appendix to letter number 7, November 1996.

"Do not touch my anointed ones; do my prophets no harm"

This is a much-quoted text from the bible. This has been applied to many a person over the last few years. Sometimes this is said personally to you but other Christians do it in a kinder way and send you a well-meant letter.

There are also church members who write this in a letter with no stamp and post it late in the evening in our letterbox. So much for your nights rest! It's not possible to misunderstand such a clear text.

Sometimes you sit in the meeting and you hear the voice of the speaker: "Do not touch my anointed ones". He explains that everyone who criticises his words and his ministry should take care. It is very dangerous to do this for God punishes those who do so. An uneasy feeling takes hold of you, because you have been criticising. Several things, which the speaker says, you feel are not true and you are also not happy with his ministry. You return home with a guilty feeling.

Thankfully you have a Bible and a concordance. Calmly you look up the applicable text, setting the different feelings and opinions aside. You find it in the Old Testament. It is a passage in Psalm 105. Isn't it strange to find such a modern text there? Surely, you would expect that more in the New Testament. That would just be something for Paul to have written. But no, it's a text from a psalm of praise about God's acts of salvation, according to the heading. Curiosity being roused you continue to read on and you discover that in 45 verses the psalmist rejoices over God's protection and redemption of the children of Israel. He describes in the verses 12-15 how God protected Abraham's small nomadic group, when they come into contact with Abimelek, king of Gerar. This king had taken a fancy to Sara. However, God warned him in a dream not to touch Sara and in doing so used these words: "Do not touch my anointed ones; do my prophets no harm".

What a surprise! So this is the context in which this verse was written. It has got nothing at all to do with the criticising of someone. You then read the original text in Genesis 20. No, it's very clear here; God offers protection to Abraham and Sara against the heathen king Abimelek. And this is what the psalmist is rejoicing about in Psalm 105.

As a poet he expresses it differently to how it is written in Genesis 20. He calls Abraham and Sara God's anointed ones and prophets whom He will protect from other kings and oppressors.

Continuing to leaf through the concordance you discover that in 1 Chron. 16:22 the same text. It is part of a psalm of praise, which David directed to be sung when they transported the ark of God. In reading the context you discover that it is the same as in psalm 105. The first 15 verses are even identical. They must be copied from each other: something, which happens more often in the bible. With an almost easy mind you go to sleep with the conviction that having criticism about someone's doctrine and the quoted verse don't fit together.

Waking up in the middle of the night, the text: "Do not touch my anointed ones" immediately flashes through the mind. Could the speaker have meant a different passage? The bible and concordance are nervously picked up again: "Who can lay a hand on the Lord's anointed and be guiltless?" is found in 1 Sam. 26:9. Maybe, did the speaker mean this text? David is speaking here to his men, who have King Saul in their power and want to kill him. David still saw Saul as the man whom God had anointed to be king even though he was constantly pursuing him. He respected this during the whole of his life. Never the less, in the end he had to fight against Saul and so Saul lost his life. In spite of his respect for the anointed one of the Lord he had to act in order to bring an end to the civil war in Israel. God did not punish him for this. No, the speaker can't have meant this text from the first book of Samuel. Could it be that the speaker, this evening, didn't know the context of these two verses and just used them indiscriminately?

You're awake anyway now, so you continue to reflect. Am I the only one who becomes so upset by such a text? Are there more people who feel guilty through this? What would Jesus have done? He was very critical about the teaching of the scribes and Pharisees. In Matt. 22:18 and 23:27 He even calls them hypocrites and whitewashed tombs. Why did the scribes then, not answer Him with the same text as the speaker this evening did?

The scribes knew the scriptures nearly by heart, so they also knew Psalm 105:15 too. Why did the Pharisee Gamaliel not use this text against Peter when he came before the Sanhedrin? This authoritative man didn't mention anything at all about this text [Acts 5:26-41]. Paul, then Saul, was about this same time one of his students. Gamaliel's teaching was in so far critical of Jesus that Paul approved of the stoning of Stephen and even went on to persecute the whole church.

After his conversion Paul was never one to mince his words. When there was danger that the teaching of the apostles was being mixed with Judaism, he openly criticised Peter. He even talks about the hypocrisy of Peter [Gal. 2:13]. Paul writes in the beginning of the letter to the Galatians: "But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned". We would never dare say this to a fellow Christian, let alone a preacher. Yet we never read that Peter or James quoted Psalm 105 to warn Paul about God's punishment because of his critical attitude. Nowhere in the New Testament do we find Psalm 105:15 mentioned or used.

Tired from all the reading and worrying, you close the Bible and concordance. Closing your eyes you very quickly fall into a peaceful sleep. It looks like this at least. But your subconsciousness or the place in your spirit, where dreams are made, is still active.

In your dream you are standing beside a couple of Jewish rabbis who are having a serious discussion. You don't understand their Hebrew language. More rabbis join them. They join in the conversation too. It becomes a heated debate. Some even grab the others beard to make their point clear. There's going to be a fight, you think. Fearfully, you turn to the rabbi who is standing watching. He assures you that everything is okay and tells you that the rabbis are discussing some conclusions from

the Torah. "We often do this. They don't like to be criticised, for they all want to be right. We can't do without these discussions, however, because they sharpen our thoughts. The Talmud was in this way compiled.

Look, now things are changing. A younger Jew joins the group. He has got a concertina and begins to play and sing. The rabbis slowly stop speaking and begin to join in with singing. Before you know it they are clapping their hands to the rhythm of the music and dancing in a circle around him. All the disagreements are suddenly forgotten and they now are one group of singing and dancing rabbis. The rabbi who spoke to you gives you a friendly nod and then joins the happy fellowship.

The next morning you wake up with the music still in your ears and life couldn't be better. Ruefully you ask yourself, could maybe the text in Psalm 127 be appropriate for me? "For He grants sleep to those He loves".

Pastor Rien van de Kraats.

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