THE PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT IN HOLLAND: ITS ORIGIN AND ITS INTERNATIONAL POSITION

by Cornelis van der Laan

HAITEMA

Those who are acquainted with the early history of the Dutch Pentecostals will quickly point to Gerrit Polman as the pioneer of the movement and rightly so. Polman was the first national leader. He started assemblies in Amsterdam (1906) and Haarlem (1908) and took responsibility for many outstations throughout the country. He also edited two papers; opened a mission school, founded a mission organization; influenced the Pentecostal work in Belgium and Germany; and was recognized as one of the chief leaders in Europe. What has been unnoticed until now is that years before Polman an American evangelist

Cornelis van der Laan, together with his brother Paul van der Laan, has recently completed a book dealing with the history of the Pentecostal movement in Holland and Flanders (Flemish Belgium). This book has been published by J. H. Kok N.V. in Kampen in October, 1932, under the title Pinksteren in Beweging (Pentecost in Movement). Most of the information in this article derives from this research. In December, 1982, the author completed the requirements for an M.A. degree at The Assemblies of God Graduate School in Springfield, Missouri. He has been accepted in a graduate program at the University of Birmingham, England.
brought the message of the baptism with the Holy Spirit to one of the Dutch islands in the North of the country.¹

On a November day in the year 1903 an unknown man knocked on the door of Herre Stegenga, the minister of the Dutch Reformed Church on the Terschelling Island. The stranger handed out a paper entitled *De Vrije Evangelische Trompet* (The Free Evangelical Trumpet) and explained to the much surprised minister: "I have come to proclaim that a man can live a total life in Christ."² Until deep in the night a conversation continued that would have far-reaching consequences. The remarkable guest turned out to be an American evangelist of Dutch origin by the name of Haitema. His grandfather, a Mennonite, had fled to America. In obedience to the call of God this grandson had now come to Terschelling. While at sea he in a vision had seen the map of Holland with a finger pointing to this island.³

Haitema convinced Stegenga that infant baptism was a heresy within the church. First, one had to repent, then receive water baptism by immersion, and after that, the baptism with the Holy Spirit.⁴

¹Most details of the following account are from G. A. Wumkes' autobiography *Nei Sawnich Jier* (Bolsward: A. J. Osinga, 1949). Wumkes was a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church in Hoorn, Terschelling and Sneek. He translated the Bible into the Frisian language. In Terschelling he was succeeded by Herre Stegenga who takes part in this story. While in Sneek Wumkes was informed about the developments in his previous church and even was requested to return, which he refused. In 1915 Wumkes got in contact with Polman who visited him in Sneek. Wumkes became so much interested in the Pentecostal movement that he wrote an historical study which was published by Polman in 1916 under the title *De Pinksterbeweging Voornamelijk in Nederland*. In his autobiography Wumkes reflects on his earlier contacts with Polman and describes the story of Terschelling. Because it was written so many years later and in the Frisian language, it was not noticed by the Pentecostals thus far. This present writer first learned of this story when he interviewed Trijntje Bakker (one year before her death). She as a young girl was converted under the ministry of Haitema.


⁴What Haitema meant by the baptism with the Holy Spirit is not further explained by Wumkes. Trijntje Bakker was certain that Haitema brought the Pentecostal message to Terschelling.

This writer has not been able to locate Haitema in America. Any suggestion to this end would be highly appreciated.