

Parakka February 12, 1966

Unto the dear brothers and faithful laborers in the Lord's vineyard in America, Hjalmar Wanttaja, William Homola, Walfred Simonson, Nestor Lindberg, Arnold Ruonavaara, Reazo Redinger, Wilbur Koistinen, Leo Lobbestael, Elton Korpela and others with your dear wives and children, also that large flock of Christians. May God's peace and love be with you.

I know many of you through my deceased father's (Frans Parakka) and mother's relating when they were there. It was pleasant and comforting to hear news of peace and one minded love from there. Many of those are partaking of eternal rest and peace, the storms and commotion of this world do not reach there even pertaining to their spiritual state.

August Isaksson was the last one of these elders who had labored one mindedly with Frans Parakka, Isak Niku, Isak Kuoksu, Samuel Vettasjarvi and other preachers. Last summer he was able to go across the bridgeless stream to that right Fatherland, which departure he diligently awaited. However in his old age he was fully rejected by the later laboring companions. But anyway there remained a large group of friends who were left longing after him with sadness. He preached for the last time in our locality meetings, it was so touching to hear his last sermon, he so fully founded us on that same foundation which his deceased laboring companions had laid, and was concerned over this, that this Christianity would be protected henceforth in its' simplicity, that no new substance would enter in to bring it along a wrong road away from that firm foundation which our deceased preachers beginning with Laestadius had done with great wisdom. Certainly the Elder August carried his share of Jesus' cross and also to drink of that bitter cup when according to old custom he wanted to be along when Gunnar Jonsson and Wm. Erickson and other preachers kept meetings in nearby localities. He could sit on the side and receive horrible accusations which they certainly could not show to be true. Jonas Purnu was accused in the same way and so also Samuel Vettasjarvi in his time when the former heresy raged. Nevertheless August Isaksson had a forgiving nature toward them.

I am writing about these matters with a sorrowful mind, but when it seems so that we are standing at a crossroad where we must choose the way, so we must choose that road where there is only ridicule and lies which has already become our share. Certainly it would be easier for the flesh and blood to

choose that road where there is no war against spiritual lords or with the world.

I have read the missionary letter which was written last year from the Gellivaara Christmas meetings and sent to outside countries, of which I am amazed that to each country it was worded differently the one part of the letter, especially in the letter to America; where it says that we have cursed God's own in the frenzy of hatred. Not to mine or to the ears of many hundreds of other Christians has such been heard; on the contrary, they themselves have done this and so many dear brothers and sisters in faith have been offended toward our preachers. May God forgive them. Many different times reconciliations between the preachers have been attempted. In the Gellivaara Christmas meetings in 1963, Levi Alvgren and Sten Johansson tried to get a reconciliation but when things had been discussed for a little while they left and did not want to continue the discussion. Then when the question came up to send a mission to other countries at the same Gellivaara Christmas meetings, August Isaksson said, "It is not fitting to send preachers out from Lapland before the preachers clear the matters between themselves, there is too much of the Boreman leaven. We request that the preachers gather together and discuss these matters but we want the Finland and Norway preachers to listen." Levi Alvgren also said at the same time that the elders have said if there arise differences in the matters of Christianity between the preachers, then take the Finland preachers to judge because we cannot judge our own matters, Gunnar Jonsson answered to this "We have not done this in Lapland and if it must be so then roots which are many tens of years old will come under question." That is what would be our wish because from the root is where all evil starts. The last time in 1965 the preachers Evald Larson and David Bjork came to Sten Johansson to talk about matters but so Sten Johansson told them to give salutations to Wm. Erickson and Gunnar Jonsson and to say that we are ready to reconcile, which they promised to do. A year has gone by and nothing more has been heard.

The doors of reconciliation are continually open. The sounds of joy and rejoicing would certainly resound in the dry lands of Lapland if that word would sound that a reconciliation is made and we could join our hearts together in one mind like it was before. Certainly let us pray together to the dear Heavenly Father that it would so happen.

I thought to mention yet concerning the Swedish Laestadius' postilla which Provost Boreman took as a project to do, to which all the preachers consented. But when some places

were translated to August Isaksson and so he said it is perversion, then he asked Gunnar Jonsson at Parkalombolo what he thought it would cost to make a new printing of J. F Hellman's translation of the Swedish postilla; then Gunnar Jonsson said that he can do it who wants to but we will get along with the Boreman postilla. Levi Alvgren said to this that we cannot call that right which is wrong. However Levi Alvgren, August Isaksson, Sten Johansson and Vilhelm Hedlin arranged to have a new printing of the original Hellman's translation which the old preachers had approved. They said it is not fitting to change these sermons which Laestadius preached in the light of the Holy Spirit and along side of the scriptures and also wrote down for then we will lose that foundation upon which we can continue to build and will find ourselves on the wrong road. Especially Sten Johansson's concern was of that, that the written word of God would remain pure for our dear children.

We cannot leave these matters go with the one-sided information which is given especially there in the far off land of America.

We do not want to be too friendly with the dead faith clergy which is becoming so common with some preachers, we receive with thankfulness that service which belongs to them and pertains to us as they are servants of the church.

Also we do not need to advertize our Christianity as it has been done recently when the newspaper men were admitted from "Svenska Dagbladet" of Stockholm and were freely allowed to take pictures of the meetings at Vittangi and there were pictures and write-ups of interviews in several publications of what the state of our Christianity is here in Lapland. Surely they were glad to be allowed to rage inside of the vineyard fence. They were greatly disappointed when they could not interview Sten Johansson when they went to see him at Kiruna.

Continuing here I must take a part of my deceased father's letter which he wrote on the Atlantic Ocean to American brothers. It is found in the Elders Letters No. 2 on page 283, "It is not strange that the blind world sees the living Christianity to be wrong, but it is more strange that so many who have received substance of living Christianity, and cannot see anything else in this Christianity than popedom, wildness and heresy; as their writings indicate in the spiritual papers and world's newspapers. Woe the darkness! Now the world's trash papers are mediums at hand to Paul Rantala, Jussila and others. And finally customs man Dyhre Haaparanta opens his broad arms with sayings contrary to Scripture and

paints and names Jonas Purnu as a builder of heresy after Raattama's death. Still there are at Soukolo, Tornio, to Haaparanta and Northern Finland those who remember and have taken part in spreading whore tales and other filth about Jonas Purnu tens of years before Raattama's death. And Raattama with the congregation were so blind that they found such a man to be faithful to send him to America to the door of such a great strife; of which there are yet hundreds still living in Europe and America who can testify to this and who have been with the Christianity." Doesn't this picture what is happening in our day. But when there is that mind that the old writings are only writing back and forth and the discussion of the perverted Laestadius postilla is of as little significance as discussing the pope's beard how it has been each year, which one foremost preacher Gunnar Jonsson has said. — Dear brothers hasn't our Christianity been placed at too low value! Where is that great work and trouble which our deceased preachers and laborers have done to protect the vineyard. There we have refuge when hard storms rage also over those few souls who do not dare to move from that way of mockery and subjection. But the God Of Israel still lives, who through the times has protected His chosen ones and may He still help now and henceforth that we would have warriors who fight with shining weapons and watch over the vineyard fence especially in these sad days of trials when it is certain that we receive our sins and transgressions forgiven in that precious outshed blood of reconciliation which our dear parent shed on the cross at Golgotha.

Surely there is reason, dear brothers, to wipe the sleep from the eyes and behold how the time passes and strive onward, unspeakably great is the reward when through all the battles we reach the goal of the journey. May God help that we could with patience and a forgiving heart receive all the false accusations.

Pray in our behalf, written in all weakness at Svappavaara with those gathered there!

Victor Vettainen Parakka Vittangi

Levi Alvgren, Svappavaara, and wife Julia, Sten Johansson, Kiruna and wife Aina, Benjam Jankanpaa, Markitta and wife Alma, Viktor Nordvall, Ratukkavaara and wife Hilda, Johannes Vingback, Vittangi, Vilhelm Orrmalm and wife Elmiina Puoltikasvaara, Hedda Isaksson and sister Lea Johansson, Hilma Stockel, Svappavaara, Ida Stalnacke, Albertina Stalnacke, Svappavaara, Helena Holma and other Christians, Alva Thyini Vittangi, Gustav Dynesius Nattavaara, Isak Gunnelbrand, Parkalombolo, Frans Martinsson, Tjautjasjaure.