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Ein Prediger muss nicht allein we-
den, also dass er die Schafe unter-
weise, wie sie rechte Christen sollen
sein, sondern auch daneben den Woel-
fen wehren, dass sie die Schafe nicht
angreifen und mit falscher Lehre ver-
fuehren und Irrtum einfuehren.

Luther

Es ist kein Ding, das die Leute
mehr bei der Kirche behaelt denn
die gute Predigt. — *Apologie, Art. 24*

If the trumpet give an uncertain
sound, who shall prepare himself to
the battle? — *1 Cor. 14:3*

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Sermon Study on Micah 7:14—20

TRINITY SUNDAY

The year 1947 is the Centennial year of the organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States. The concluding verses of the Book of Micah are a very suitable text for Trinity Sunday in this Centennial year. The Epistle Lesson appointed by the ancient Church for this Sunday speaks of the unsearchable wisdom and the unfathomable judgments of God relating to His plan of salvation, while the Gospel tells us of regeneration and justification by faith as the only way to eternal life. In like manner Micah calls our attention to the marvelous things that God has done for the redemption of His Church and the incomparable majesty and glory of the Lord manifested in His government and guidance of His chosen flock.

V. 14. *“Feed Thy people with Thy rod, the flock of Thine heritage.”* The times were evil. Good men had perished out of the earth, and there was none upright among men (Micah 7:2; cp. vv. 3-6). Yet in the midst of this overwhelming wickedness, so widespread that the enemy sneeringly asked: “Where is the Lord, thy God?” (V. 10), there was still a people of God, whom God acknowledged as His own, His own heritage, *הֵנִי*, possession, His own property. As such the Lord had chosen the children of Israel (Ex. 3:7, 10; 5:1; 19:5; Amos 3:2a) to be unto Him a kingdom of priests, a holy nation (Ex. 19:6). For this people of God, though but small in number, the Prophet lifts his heart and soul to God in fervent prayer. “Feed Thy people,” shepherd Thy people. Isaiah, the contemporary of Micah, had solemnly proclaimed the God of Judah, the Lord Jehovah, as a faithful Shepherd (Is. 40:11; cp. the later Ezekiel, ch. 34:11-23, and Jer. 31:10). As a Shepherd the Lord had been gratefully acknowledged by His people (Ps. 23:1; 78:52; 79:13; 80:1; 95:7; 100:3). Hence Micah pleads with God to perform the functions of a true and faithful Shepherd toward the flock He had chosen as His possession. It was one of the privileges and duties of the prophets to be the mediators of the people before God, their spokesmen, their representatives before the throne of the Lord. So Abraham (Gen. 20:7), Moses (Ex. 20:19; 32:11—34:10; Deut. 9:11-29), and Jeremiah (Jer. 14:7-22). And the record

of their prayers as preserved in Holy Writ teaches us that God is a God to whom we may pray, before whom we may pour out all our heart, our fears, our worries, our hopes, our sorrows, our joys, our disappointments.

Micah asks God to shepherd His flock, as only He, the Lord of Hosts (Micah 4:4), the Covenant God, who had Himself defined this name, I Am that I Am, the Lord of unlimited power, of unfathomable wisdom, of unending duration, of boundless love and mercy, and unchanging justice and righteousness, can and will shepherd His own. Shepherd Thy people! Watch over them, guard them against all danger, protect them from all evil, feed them, shelter them, keep them as Thine own. Shepherd them "with Thy rod." The shepherd used his rod to lead the sheep out of the fold to the nourishing pastures and the refreshing brooks of water; to prod on the lagging sheep, to bring back the straying members of the flock, to ward off wild animals, to lead his flock back at eventide to the safety of the fold to rest and sleep after the wanderings of the day. Micah asks the Lord of everlasting grace, who has promised to be the Shepherd of His Church, to keep this promise, to shepherd His flock, each individual sheep and lamb, to do what He Himself has pledged to do as a good Shepherd (Ez. 34:11-31; John 10:12-16, 27-30).

God's people, the flock of His heritage, is further described as they "which dwell solitarily"; alone, יָרֵב, separate. What does that mean? This phrase occurs in two highly significant prophecies, both of which were spoken "in the days of old" to which reference is made in vv. 14-15. The one, recorded Num. 23:9, was spoken by Balaam, whom the Lord had explicitly commanded to speak exactly as the Lord told him (Num. 23:5). "The people shall dwell alone and shall not be reckoned among the nations," Balaam had said. The second statement explains the meaning of the first. "Not be reckoned, יִתְחַשֵּׁב. The verb in the Kal stem means to weave, to devise, to think, to consider. The Hithpael is reflexive: They do not consider themselves among the nations. They had been told by the Lord that they were to be a peculiar treasure to Him above all people (out of all people, Ex. 19:5); that God had separated them from other people (Lev. 20:24, 26); and Moses had defined this separation as consisting in the fact that God went with them (Ex. 33:16); that there was no other people

who had God so near to them as Israel did, nor had laws as righteous as Israel's (Deut. 4:7-8), and Balaam points to the glorious hope in life and death that Israel had in the Messiah of the Lord (Num. 23:10; 24:17). Among the nations, they were not of the nations, and did not consider themselves as being like them. They had a different God, different laws, a different philosophy of life, a different outlook on eternity.

Another prophecy which throws light on our passage is Deut. 33:28, one of the last words addressed by Moses to his people: "Israel shall dwell safely alone," separated. As long as they remained separated from the religion and philosophy of the Gentiles, stood aloof from the heathen way of life, so long would they reap the riches promised to them by the Lord in Deut. 33:26-29, allusions and reminiscences of which precious promise abound in Micah's prayer. Whenever, however, Israel refused to dwell alone, when it mixed itself among the people, then strangers devoured its strength (Hos. 7:8, 9), then God's curse and condemnation consumed them (Num. 25:1-9; Deut. 28:15-68; the Book of Judges; the whole history of Israel).

In the New Testament also God's people are to be a holy people, separate from the world (2 Cor. 6:14-18). While in the world, they are not, and are not to be, of the world, but sanctified by God's Word (John 17:14-17). Only if they continue in Christ's Word, have they the promise of knowing the saving and liberating truth (John 8:31-32). Therefore they are not to be ashamed of Christ or His Word (Luke 9:26), even if confession of the whole truth will cause opposition by their own household (Matt. 10:34-39). Therefore the oft-repeated warnings against unionism, against false doctrine and false teachers; therefore also the gracious promise to the congregation which had kept His Word and the admonition to hold fast that which it had (Rev. 3:8-12). Separation from sinful life and separation from false doctrine must be the characteristic of God's Church if it lays claim to the honor of being God's people, the flock of His heritage.

"In the wood, in the midst of Carmel." Carmel, a mountain range reaching a height of 1,800 feet, extending about twelve miles from the sea in a southeasterly direction, was known for its beauty, and to this day, though the ravages of centuries of war and maladministration have robbed it of much

of its glory, it is still an outstanding beauty spot of Palestine. In the time of Solomon the tresses of a bride's head were compared to Carmel's beauty (Song of Solomon 7:5), while Isaiah saw in the excellency, the beauty, of Carmel a fitting symbol of the excellency, the beauty, of God to be given to His New Testament Church (Is. 35:2). Along the northern slope of Carmel ran the Kishon River through the valley of Accho bordering the seashore as a part of the fertile plain of Esdraelon, extending from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan. The mountain range of Carmel with its wooded slopes and the lush fields and vineyards and olive groves of Esdraelon formed the most beautiful region in the Promised Land.

"Let them feed in Bashan and Gilead." These two provinces formed the eastern part of Israel's possession. Bashan in the north, just east of the Sea of Galilee; Gilead extending southward along the Jordan to the northern edge of the Dead Sea. Bashan was noted for its cattle (Ez. 39:18; Amos 4:1; Ps. 22:12) and together with Gilead offered such splendid pastures, that Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh asked Moses to allot this East Jordan land to them (Num. 32:1-5, 16, 24, 40; cp. Song 6:5). *)

The Prophet asks God to feed Israel in fertile, blessed areas, where both body and soul enjoy the loving leadership of the Shepherd.

"As in the days of old," the former days, the past. This may refer to the times of Moses and Joshua, when God Himself led His people as a flock of sheep (cp. Ps. 77:20; Ex. 3:17; 23:20-31; 34:10, 11), fed and clothed them (Deut. 8:3-4), when the tribes first occupied Gilead and Bashan (Num. 32). Or it may refer to the early days of the kingdom of David and Solomon, when the boundaries of Israel extended from the Euphrates River to the boundary of Egypt, each man dwelling under his own vine and fig tree, enjoying peace and prosperity

*) This juxtaposition of the fertile sections to the east and to the west of Jordan seems to indicate that here "Carmel" is the mountain ridge described above, although the article is usually prefixed if used as a proper noun. In the three exceptions (Josh. 19:26; Jer. 46:18; Nah. 1:4) the context demands that Carmel be taken as a proper noun. That seems to be the most natural interpretation here also. Lexicographically the phrase may be translated "the wood in the midst of the park or gardenland." Because of this juxtaposition of East and West Jordanland, we prefer to connect "in the wood," etc., with "feed" rather than with "dwell solitarily."

(1 Kings 4:20-25). Micah refers to this era ch. 4:4, which was at the same time an age of spiritual blessings (David's Psalms, his labors for the proper Temple services, 1 Chron. 23-27; the building of the Temple by Solomon). In our text Micah may have thought of both eras.

Micah has poured out his prayer before his God. What will the Lord answer?

There is a difference of opinion as to the connection of vv. 15-17. Sellin, following Ewald, regards vv. 15-17 as the continuation of Micah's prayer and changes "will I show unto him," to "Let him see marvelous things as in the days when Thou camest forth from Egypt." Yet it was not the Lord, but Israel that came out of Egypt. Hence these words are not spoken by Micah as a prayer, but are God's answer to Micah's prayer. Luther's translation: "so that the heathen may see" etc., connects v. 16 to v. 15 as part of God's promise. Yet there is no connective between the two statements, and therefore it seems preferable to regard vv. 16-17 as the words of Micah, as undoubtedly are the final words of v. 17.

V. 15. "*According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I show unto him marvelous things.*" Micah had pleaded with the Lord to shepherd His people as in the days of old. The Lord answers that He will in the days of the Messiah, the era of the New Testament Church (cp. Micah 5:2-4; 7:12), let His people see miracles rivaling the miracles in the days of old, the days of Israel's going forth out of Egypt, the days of Israel's redemption. Throughout the history of Israel the deliverance out of Pharaoh's bondage was used as a symbol of the redemption by the Woman's Seed, the Messianic deliverance. The deliverance out of Egypt which made the establishment of Israel as God's covenant people in the Promised Land possible was accompanied by miracles so great and so numerous as to make the Mosaic era unique in the history of Israel (Deut. 34:10-12).

Moses, standing on the eastern shore of the Red Sea, composed and sang that majestic hymn of adoration to the Lord God, glorious in holiness, doing wonders (Ex. 15:1-19). And throughout the centuries the Church of God of the Old Testament stood in awe at the remembrance of these wonderful deeds of God (Josh 24:2-18; Pss. 78, 105, 106; etc.). In like manner the redemption of the New Testament was to be

ushered in and accompanied by miracles fully as great as the miracles of Moses' time. And again the fulfillment far surpasses the promise, as is the case with all prophecies and promises relating to the New Testament era. In Luther's exposition of the Book of Micah, as compiled by V. Dietrich and approved by Luther, we find this comment on v. 15: "As the New Testament redemption far surpasses in its glory the deliverance out of Egypt, so the miracles of the New Testament are far greater than those of the Old. What can be more wonderful than that the Son of God assumes human flesh and is born of a virgin? What is more astounding than that the Son of God in battling with death and the devil permits Himself to be overcome, surrenders His life to His enemies, and while He is being overcome, overcomes? Truly it is the greatest miracle that the man Christ, who died on the Cross, arises on the third day out of death and the sealed grave and then with His flesh, which hereafter was immortal, ascends into heaven and sits on the right hand of God. What can be told or even imagined that could equal these miracles?" (St. L. XIV; 1160.)

God has answered the Prophet's plea. Now He makes this selfsame Prophet His instrument, His spokesman, through whom He gives to His people a promise which He could just as well have spoken Himself as He did in v. 15. In His marvelous loving-kindness He grants to a mortal being the privilege to proclaim the Word of God to his fellow sinners by divine inspiration! Is there a God like unto our God?

V. 16. "*The nations shall see and be confounded at all their might,*" be ashamed of their own strength in which they trusted. Not only God's people will see His marvelous deeds (v. 15). Already in vv. 11-12 the Lord had foretold the coming of the heathen to God's Church; they also shall see God's glorious redemption (cp. Is. 52:10). They place their confidence in their own power, their riches, their commerce, their statesmanship, their powerful armies and war machineries, their wisdom and philosophy. And where has it gotten them? They see disorder, chaos, dissolution everywhere! They are bankrupt, whether they acknowledge it or vainly endeavor to cover it up by boastful oratory. While most of them remain obstinate, there are many whose eyes are opened to see what mighty and marvelous things the Lord God of Israel has done

for their redemption. And now they are deeply ashamed of what they regarded as their strength. "They shall lay their hand upon their mouth." That is "a gesture of reverential silence from astonishment and admiration." (Keil in loc. Cp. Job 21:5; 29:9, and particularly 40:4-5.) No longer will their lips overflow with vain self-glorifications. They cease to extol their own accomplishments, will cease their ridicule and mockery and blasphemies of the Lord and His Church. "Their ears shall be deaf" to such effusions as well as to the alluring voice of sin, and self-righteousness, and self-indulgence. Overawed by the majesty of the infinite power and justice and grace displayed in God's redeeming work, they lack words to express their thoughts. Silently "they shall lick the dust like a serpent, they shall move out of their holes like worms of the earth; they shall be afraid of the Lord, our God, and shall fear because of Thee," v. 17. "Lick the dust," denotes attitude of defeated enemies unconditionally surrendering to the victor. (Ps. 72:9; Is. 49:23: Kings and queens "shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth and lick up the dust of thy feet"; in Lam. 3:29 the phrase means humble submission to the mighty hand of the Lord, cp. vv. 26-32.) "As the serpent" — the article denotes the species. (Cp. Gen. 3:14; Is. 65:25.) "The serpent, moving as it does with its mouth upon the ground, may readily be supposed to swallow more dust than other animals." (Margolis, *Micah*, p. 78.) "Worms of the earth." The word דָּוָל occurs only here and Deut. 32:24. It denotes the creeping, crawling creatures. The mighty men of this world, like creeping, crawling things before the Lord! "They shall be afraid of the Lord, our God, and shall fear." But that is not the slavish fear of a criminal caught in the act and fearing nothing but the punishment. They do not in their fear crawl back into their hiding places, do not seek to run away from God, like Adam and Eve. No, "they shall move out of their holes," literally, "they shall tremble out of their hiding places"; to the LORD, our God, they shall come in trembling awe, "and they shall fear Him." While lying in the dust before the Lord, ashamed to lift up so much as their eyes unto heaven, while smiting upon their breast, yet they exclaim with the repentant publican: God, be merciful to me, a sinner! While the majesty of the mighty works of God shattered their trust in their own

strength, showed them their sinfulness and unworthiness, yet these marvelous works brought to their attention a salvation so glorious, a love so transcending, a wisdom so profound, a mercy so unequaled, that they were attracted to this God by a mysterious power, were drawn, in fact, by Him with loving-kindness to Himself, their God of mercy and love. To Him they come, trembling under the burden of their guilt, shivering with shame at the atrocity of their sin, yet trembling with a holy joy never before experienced at the knowledge of sin forgiven, of a conscience purged of dead works, of the peace of God surpassing all understanding. And the deeper a believer delves into the mysterious miracle of God's redemption, the greater his awe at the stupendous power, the infinite justice, the incomprehensible mercy revealed in the marvelous things accomplished by our Lord in the redemption, justification, conversion, and sanctification of sinful man.

That is the history of God's Church: a record of marvelous miracles performed by God. Savage nations as well as highly cultured peoples have become docile followers of the Redeemer. Mighty emperors and kings in the realms of art and science have cast their scepters and crowns before the throne of Jehovah, have brought into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. Hundreds and thousands have made experiences similar to that of Philip Mauro, one of the most brilliant attorneys-at-law of America, for a number of years a member of the Bar of the Supreme Court, who was at the age of forty-five converted by the testimony of men, as he says, "of little education, to whom I regarded myself as immeasurably superior in all the higher branches of knowledge." He makes this startling confession: "I should have supposed that in order to convince me of the truth of the Bible and of Christianity it would be necessary to employ the best efforts of a faculty of the profoundest theologians, versed in all the arguments of skeptical philosophy, and able to furnish plausible replies to them. . . . I had no notion at all that intellectual difficulties and questionings could be removed in any way except by being answered, one by one, to the intellectual satisfaction of the person in whose mind they existed. But my doubts and difficulties were not met in that way. They were simply removed when I believed on the Crucified One and accepted Him as the Christ of God and as my per-

sonal Savior." . . . This conversion "is the mighty work of God — 'the working of His mighty power which He wrought in Christ when he raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places' (Eph. 1:19-20)." (*The Fundamentals*, Vol. IV, p. 109, 111, 112.) That is but one of the untold thousands who were confounded at their own might and power and came crawling in sackcloth and ashes to the throne of the Almighty, there to obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. (Cp. Jer. 3:17-25.)

Overwhelmed at this wonderful outlook, Micah bursts forth in one of the sublimest hymns of praise in honor of the great God Jehovah, vv. 18-20.

V. 18. "*Who is a God like unto Thee?*" That is the question asked by Moses (Ex. 15:11), by the Psalmists Ps. 18:31; 89:6; 113:5), by Isaiah (Is. 40:18, 25). The positive expression of the same truth is found 1 Sam. 2:2; Ps. 86:8; etc. Micah stresses not merely the fact that there is but one God; he emphasizes the absolute grandeur and majesty of this One God, particularly the sublimity of His grace and forgiveness and mercy and truth. In his description of the gracious God he heaps up no less than nine synonymous expressions and makes use of every linguistic means at his command to assure his readers of the reality of the forgiveness and grace daily and richly granted to us by our Lord and God.

"That pardoneth iniquity." "Iniquity," *ἰνική*, is one of the strongest terms for sin, denoting perverseness, crookedness, which makes man guilty, a debtor before God, with no possibility of ever ridding himself of that guilt. God does the marvelous thing no man can do. He "pardons" iniquity, lifts that burden off the guilty conscience. What does He do with it? The holy and righteous God cannot be satisfied with simply taking away sin. He has pronounced His curse upon every sin, and He would cease to be Jehovah, I Am that I Am (Ex. 3:14), the God of unchanging justice, if He would permit one sin to go unpunished. Micah had said of the Babe of Bethlehem, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting: "This Man shall be the Peace" (Micah 5:2, 5), establishing peace between God and man, because upon Him the Lord laid the iniquity of us all (Is. 53:6, 11-12), both the guilt and its full punishment (Is. 53:4-5, 7-10). Because of this Man, the eternal Son of God, who is our Peace,

the God of Justice can now do what Micah says, pardon our iniquity, pass by the transgression, וַשִּׁב , rebellion, revolt, of the remnant of His heritage, His possession. Micah uses the participle of both verbs. The Hebrew participle describes "a person in continuous, uninterrupted performance of an activity." (Ges.-Kautzsch, *Hebr. Gram.*, par. 116a.) Lifting up the iniquity, passing by rebellion, for Christ's sake overlooking it, for Jesus' sake wiping it out of His very memory (Jer. 31:34), that is God's constant, uninterrupted activity with regard to the remnant, that little flock which has accepted the grace of God in Christ Jesus and on that account has been accepted by the Lord as His heritage, His own possession in time and eternity. Micah, therefore, here is expressing the same truth we confess in the exposition of the Third Article: "in which Christian Church He daily and richly forgives all sins to me and all believers." A question naturally arises: If Christians love this Lord and are grateful to Him, ought they not make this daily work of their Lord as easy for Him as possible by refraining from sin, by striving to their utmost against the temptations of Satan, the world and their own flesh?

"He retaineth not His anger forever, because He delighteth in mercy." Retain, $\text{לֹא יִשְׁכַּח$, to hold in one's grip, refuse to let go. The Lord is not one who, having once been moved by holy anger, will continually cling with all His strength to that anger, never to let it go. What would become of us then? No, He delights, He has pleasure, in mercy, loving-kindness, good will. The perfect describes this delight as an accomplished fact, absolutely reliable, which cannot be disestablished. This unalterable fact is evidenced by His activity as described in vv. 19-20.

V. 19. "*He will turn again.*" Since v. 18 has spoken of God as not retaining His wrath which would cause Him to turn away from us, but delighting in mercy, we prefer the translation of the Authorized Version to the translation grammatically possible and adopted by many, which regards the phrase as an adverbial modifier to the next statements: He will again have compassion, etc. Instead of retaining His anger, His delight in mercy moves Him to turn from His anger which lasts but a moment (Ps. 30:5; Is. 54:7-8) and to have compassion, pity, sympathy, even as a mother has compassion

upon the child of her womb (Is. 49:15. Cp. Lam. 3:31-32). The imperfects picture the turning and pitying as constantly recurring, never tiring, never aging, always being fresh and new (Lam. 3:22, 23), ceaselessly being in action as the waves of the sea ceaselessly, day and night, year in, year out, wash the sandy shore.

"He will subdue our iniquities." Subdue, tread down, trample down. Our debts, our manifold guilt that we daily amass by sins of commission and omission, that harass the mind of the believer, disturb our peace, oppress and agonize our conscience, these sins, all of them, He tramples under foot. They have no right to disturb the peace of those He calls His own. To harass these His children whose sins He has forgiven, to torment them with the memory of past sins and with the fear of everlasting damnation, — such attacks upon His children the Lord regards as an insult to Himself, as charging Him with not having finished His work of redemption, as having failed in His work of atonement. And therefore as often as sin raises its accusing voice against a child of God, so often does the Lord take that sin, hurls it to the ground, and tramples it under foot. And if, in spite of being ground into the dust, our sin still continues to shriek out its accusations against us and its protests against God's forgiveness, the Lord takes that sin and casts it into the depths of the sea. That God who has determined to forgive the sins of His children, who has forgotten them so thoroughly as to wipe them out of His memory, does not want His children to be disturbed by any accusation, any memory of sins forgiven. (Cp. Ps. 103:3-13; Is. 26:3-4; 32:17-18; 54:10, 13.) Who is a God like unto our God?

V. 20 *"Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob and the mercy to Abraham, which Thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old."* While the English translation "perform the truth," or "show faithfulness" (*The Complete Bible*, Smith and Goodspeed) stress the faithfulness of God, the Hebrew "give, נָתַן , grant, faithfulness" emphasizes in equal measure the utter lack of merit on the part of the recipient. God's keeping of faith with man is altogether independent of any worthiness in man, it is a free gift of grace, granted by the God who delights in mercy. This becomes evident also from the word "mercy" used in parallelism with "truth." The Lord our God,

He who is I Am that I Am (Ex. 3:14), who Himself determines all His actions by His own free will, who is responsible to no one, He has sworn (the perfect denotes completed action, historical fact) to Abraham and Jacob that their seed would be like sand on the shore of the sea and that in them and their Seed all nations were to be blessed (Gen. 12:2-3; 15:5; 18:18; 22:16-18; 28:14). Having determined on this action, having made this promise, and having confirmed it with a solemn oath (cp. Heb. 6:13-18), the unchanging God with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning, will do what He has promised and affirmed with His oath. Who is a God like unto our Lord?

This text is well adapted for Trinity Sunday. In a world with idolatry of every sort, *Who Is a God Like unto Our LORD?* He is a God with whom we may commune, vv. 14-15; a God who redeems and gathers a people for Himself, vv. 15-17. He is a God of infinite mercy and unchanging faithfulness, vv. 18-20. Make proper applications for every part. — *Our Debt of Gratitude to Our Great Lord.* We thank Him for His spiritual gifts and blessings (to the individual Christian, to our congregation, to the church at large, vv. 15-20); we promise Him to be loyal (to His Word, in spreading His Gospel); we pray to Him for His guidance, v. 14.

The Centennial falls in an era of world-wide disturbances. In these days of sore distress *The Eternal Lord is Still the Ruler of His Church.* 1) He still feeds the sheep of His fold. (We are His people, His flock, His possession, v. 14; He still shows us marvelous things, v. 15; He still is the God of mercy and truth, vv. 18-20. Let us gratefully accept and adore His grace, v. 18a; cling to His word, v. 14, "dwell solitarily"; make diligent use of the means of grace at home and in public worship; ask Him in humble gratitude to continue to feed us, v. 14.) 2) He still extends the boundaries of His fold. (Though dwelling solitarily, we still see Him add Jews and Gentiles to His Church, vv. 16-17. Illustrate by growth of our Church during the last century. Since God does that through His Gospel, let us pray for the success of His Word, do personal work for Christ, support the work of our Church.) — *Two Things We Should Not Forget in This Centennial Year.* 1) The marvelous things God has shown to us; 2) The heartfelt gratitude we must show to Him. THEO. LAETSCH