*Through Fire and Water*  Chapter 5, Anabaptism in the Netherlands

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1. Melchoir Hofmann was a charismatic leader, driven by an apocalyptic passion (look up the term "apocalyptic" in a dictionary). If you had lived in Emden in 1530, what kind of sermons might you have heard Hofmann deliver, in terms of style and content?

2. Chapter 5 describes the Anabaptist takeover of Munster, 1534-35. If most Anabaptists were nonviolent, in what way can the Munster radicals be classified as "Anabaptists"? In other words, what is the connection between the Munster Anabaptists and the Swiss Brethren?

3. What kind of a leader was Jan van Leyden? In what ways did his life and practice deviate from teachings in the Bible?

4. Can you think of any leaders in history with similar characteristics to Jan van Leyden? Can you remember any tragedies that were similar to the Munster movement?

5. What effects did the Munster madness have on the larger Anabaptist Movement?

6. Name and briefly describe the 4-5 main issues/events which led Menno Simons to become an Anabaptist.

7. What gifts did Menno Simons bring to the beleaguered Dutch Anabaptist Movement in 1536?

8. Why did Countess Anna use the name "Mennist" in 1544?

9. While many Anabaptist leaders died a martyr's death, Menno Simons died a natural death in 1561. What seem to be the major reasons why he was never apprehended and executed for his beliefs?

10. Harry Loewen argues that Menno Simons task was more difficult than the other reformers because he worked to establish a different kind of church than the other believers. Explain Loewen's argument.

11. Looking back from our perspective today some would judge the Dutch Anabaptists for exercising the ban too harshly. From the vantage point of Anabaptists in Wismar or Emden, however, in the mid 16th century, why was the use of the ban such an important part of their community life?