

June 2010

Grace for every day

Dear brothers and sisters,

Is there ever a moment when we might say to God: "You have given me so much, but enough is enough, no more grace, thank you."?

Never! For each one of us is dependent on God's grace for every day. John said it like this: "From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another." (John 1 v.16). That is why our prayers can never come to an end, not for us personally, and not for our land.

Every new day needs new grace. Every answer to prayer that we received yesterday is a precious gift that we must thank God for today. Therefore we come each day before the throne of grace and pray again for grace and mercy. The more we see the consequences of sin in our land, all the more must we call out for God's mercy – hour by hour, day by day.

Let us start this month with thanks for His grace and all the answers to prayer (see below), and be confident that his mercies are new every morning.

(Lamentations 3 v.22-23)

-RS-

Answers to prayer

1. Two of the three children of the family from Saxony kidnapped in Yemen in June of last year have been released. The fate of the other family members is not known and remains an urgent prayer concern for us.
2. In contrast to Hamburg, Berlin remained very quiet around May 1st despite many demonstrations. A Berlin newspaper reported: "This year's May 1st can be summarized as follows: The spiral of violence was clearly stopped once again." Rain at the appropriate time quenched the desire to go on the rampage!
3. Vaccination against swine flu has been officially recognised as unnecessary. (See prayer letter in December 2009).
4. In November 2009 we prayed that Article.3 of the German law would not be changed. At a hearing with experts in the parliamentary judiciary committee it was clearly stated that any change to Article.3 which accommodated protection from discrimination because of sexual orientation could concede legal rights to paedophiles and therefore would not be wise. This is an important step in the right direction! -RS-

The volcanic ash cloud

On April 14th the Eyjafjallajökull volcano in Iceland erupted, throwing clouds of ash 8 kilometres into the air and disrupting European air traffic for days on end. People were very nervous, shaken and asked themselves: What does this mean? Something like hidden terror hung over Europe, a fear for the future.

Above all it was very clear how little power man has and how susceptible his technology is to the elemental forces of nature. Whether it is an earthquake, tsunami or a volcanic eruption – what is tiny man against it?

Did the volcanic ash cloud have a message for us? Who is speaking to us?

In 1999, John Mulinde, a pastor from Uganda, told of a vision in which the spread of sin in Europe was likened to a volcanic ash eruption. The ash cloud cast a dark shadow over the whole of Europe. He then saw prophetically how the light of God was breaking through the darkness in some places.

Jesus spoke of "...earthquakes in various places." (Matthew 24 v.7), which indicates a conspicuous build up of such activity. Geologically speaking, volcanic activity is caused by the movement of the tectonic plates of the earth, in the same way as earthquakes and also tsunamis. These are all really increasing at this time. Jesus however connected these phenomena of nature with quite different events: various "false Christs" with convincing but deceptive messages (ideologies), many wars, loss of order and values (increase of wickedness), famines, persecution of believers world-wide for their uncompromising faith ("because of Me" - Matthew 24 v.9). Jesus however puts all these events into a clear context: they are signs that will precede his return. In consequence: "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come."

Christians therefore do not primarily wait for great catastrophes, but for their Lord! The "signs of the times" do not fill them with fear, but with confidence! The return of Jesus – that is the good news for the 21st century.

In all these signs there is however also a time of judgement in which God will shake the earth and call people to himself (the great visitation).

As in Jesus' day when some heard God's voice and others heard only thunder (John 12 v.29), today we need people who can see the movement of God in all these events and "stand in the gap" before God for our land.

Prayer:

- **that Christians will not be afraid but be filled with joy because the Lord is coming back**
- **that many will be delivered from fear and come to faith through the witness of Christians**
- **for Christians to repent on behalf of the land and plead for grace and mercy (Matthew 24 v.22)** -OS-

Germany on the side of Israel?

A few weeks ago Israel celebrated the 65th anniversary of the victory over Nazi Germany on May 8th 1945. The memory of the victory over the old enemy was combined with deep concern over the arms build-up of the present day enemy.

The year 2010 marks another memorable anniversary: 45 years of diplomatic relations between Germany and Israel. Considering the previous history, the positive development of this relationship is no less than a miracle. We should be deeply thankful for this, but not lose sight of the fact that Germany finds itself in a dilemma: the

atmosphere in the United Nations (UN) and in the European Union (EU) is increasingly turning against Israel. Germany is often torn between two directions. The federal government has now decided to show its willingness to support the moderate Palestinian leadership by forming a so-called "German-Palestinian steering committee". According to the German Foreign Office, the aim is to help the Palestinian Prime Minister Fayad to create the required conditions for an independent state by the middle of 2012. Germany is now the first state in the world to commit itself to such a cooperation.

Prayer:

- **for grace that Germany will continue to stand on the side of Israel and will not promote plans to divide the land through this German-Palestinian steering committee (Joel 3 v.2)**
- **that the love of Israel and intercession in the body of Christ will increase greatly**
- **that Israel will recognise its God who "will neither slumber nor sleep" (Psalm 121)** -HE-

Europe – where are we going?

In 2004 the state and government leaders of the 25 European nations decided not to include a reference to God, or at least to the Judaeo-Christian heritage, in their so-called "Constitution". What remained was a "cultural, religious and humanitarian heritage" which also appears in the Lisbon Treaty. One of the reasons given for this was that the growing Islam faith must also be able to find a place within Europe.

Pope John Paul II, who was a strong advocate for the reference to God, openly commented that he would not give the European Union project more than 10 years when the reference to God and the Christian heritage was so explicitly denied. So what has happened?

- In 2003 the European Summit that was convened to approve the European Constitution collapsed when Poland and Spain said "no".
- In 2004 the constitution was narrowly adopted and sent to all the national governments for ratification.
- In May/June 2005 came the "no" from the French and the Dutch. It was all over - a complete shock! Then Angela Merkel took up the matter again in 2007 and formulated what in December 2007 was signed off as the Lisbon Treaty.
- In 2008 came the "no" from the Irish. With this the Lisbon Treaty was to all intents and purposes dead. But the Irish were "approached" so that they – under the pressure of the economic crisis – then agreed in October 2009.
- In 2008 came the global financial and economic crisis.
- In 2010 the Greek crisis became the Euro crisis, as five other countries were also heavily in debt. Can the Euro be saved? If "Euro-Land" falls apart, does the EU go the same way? Was Pope John Paul II right?

Not all Christians are able to offer priestly prayers for Europe since they believe that the international cooperation within the EU is already against the will of God. Others however can do it, and want to do it with confidence:

Prayer:

- **Thanks for God's patience with our continent. Thanks for His faithfulness, in that He does not regret His callings – not even on Europe. Thanks for the EU as an instrument of the 65 years of peace – founded in 1950 by Christians.**
- **An identificational call for forgiveness for the omission of His Name – hallowed be Your Name in Europe (Matthew 6 v.9)!**
- **Proclaim the name of Jesus and blessing over all the countries of Europe, individually and collectively.**

-OS-

Thank, celebrate and pray on October 3rd 2010

October 3rd (Day of German Unification) falls this year on Harvest Thanksgiving Sunday in Germany. Christians can use the anniversary in a special way to come before God openly, visibly and full of thankfulness for our country. Churches that are just beginning to plan a service of thanksgiving on October 3rd still have the possibility to invite the mayor or another local politician as a special guest. They can also contact local associations and other groups to initiate a joint celebration on this day. Reports from last year and many helpful suggestions for a celebration can be found on the website: www.3-Oktober-GottseiDank.de

Also let your pastor know about this website.

Prayer:

- **that many churches in Germany will give praise and honour to God in creative ways on this day.** -RS-

Keep praying

Pray for the work of the government. Many different problems including consolidation of the budget, health service reform and other matters will be debated in July. Pray for the protection, health and wellbeing of all ministers in government. Pray also for protection from terrorist attacks in our land and the early discovery of any plans to attack.

Other events for prayer:

- 05.06** Day of prayer for children
- 11.06-11.07** Missionary outreach during the Football World Cup 2010 in South Africa
- 26.06** Day of Prayer for Life with Messianic brothers and sisters in Pirna, near Dresden
- 20.06-28.06** Missionary outreach at the "Kieler Woche" (sailing regatta and festival week in Kiel, North Germany)

God bless you

Ortwin Schweitzer and Rosemarie Stresemann