

CALL OF THE WATCHMEN

October 2010

Word for the month

"I will look on you with favour and make you fruitful and increase your numbers, and I will keep my covenant with you." (Leviticus 26 v.9)

This is great! Here is real growth! Exactly what we want for the Call of the Watchmen and more: doubling, even ten times more! What growth rate do you envisage in the next two years? Ask God to show you how many new intercessors/groups you should expect. Yes, claim this number in faith and pray every day or as often as you can for it. Tell others about it and pray together. Then see what God will do: he may suddenly show you someone you can approach and draw another who would love to take part. Has God not looked favourably on us? Has he not given us a clear covenantal promise with encouragement from Isaiah 60 v.1-2 on three occasions? Believe me: God's kingdom will grow! -OS-

20 years of German unity

Part 1: View from the east

When we look back on 20 years of German unity we can be thankfully amazed. In this short time the east of Germany has been completely renewed. The economy, wages and benefits, housing, health, education and training have reached a level that we could not have imagined 20 years ago. The constant dissatisfaction results mainly from the comparison with the west of Germany. The consequences of 40 years of socialism have however been overcome as in no other land of the former "Eastern Bloc". We are also thankful for the solidarity of the West Germans. However, the distinctly lower level of renovation stands out when we cross the border to Hessen or Lower Saxony.

What has been achieved outwardly should, on the other hand, no longer blind us to the inward signs of decay that affect the whole of Germany. Demographic developments call us to re-examine our entire individualistic culture. The population is ageing in the east, alone through young people continuing to move away. Creativity, enterprise and the freedom of the citizen will be increasingly curtailed by endless regulations. Problematic developments such as the declining level of education and the spread of Islam may not be openly discussed because it would not be "politically correct". The fact that people like Eva Hermann and Thilo Sarrazin were socially excluded for openly speaking out on such issues throws deep shadows on the freedom of expression which is grounded in our constitution. East Germans are divided: for about half of the population, equality is still more important than freedom. On the other hand, fear is growing of a new single-minded dictatorial system that none of the current main-line parties are challenging. May the Lord again show his grace, so that Germany holds on to its basic free democratic principles.

Prayer:

- **Thanks for our reunited fatherland and for all that has been achieved so far. (Psalm 107)**
- **That there will be a democratic alternative to the political trend to the left.**
- **That our political system, media and people will be released from bondage in ideologies to the freedom of truthfulness and respectful debate. (Eph. 6 v.12)**
- **That our people turn to their true freedom in God, (Isaiah 45 v.21ff)** -KH-

Deep divisions in society

Democracy means freedom of expression. Article 5 of the German Constitution establishes this along with the associated freedom of faith, conscience and confession in Article 4. In this respect, fully opposed opinions are perfectly normal in a democracy, as well as different world views that stand apart and stay that way. To sustain the resulting tension is not easy and requires the citizen of a democratic state to be trained to "Live and let live".

For Christians there is also the problem that dear brothers and sisters sometimes take totally different positions in political and social matters – on Biblical grounds which they assert for each case. God has indeed called his children to take a spiritually based position ("salt") but also to build bridges and not to accuse one another ("peacemakers") - Matthew 5 v.9 and 13-15.

In the history of the German Federal Republic there have been times when the country was threatened with social disintegration: in the fifties it was the question of rearmament and in the eighties the question of upgrading mid-range missiles in conflict with the peace movement.

Today we are again at a point where questions of our destiny have arisen that threaten to blow apart our social cohesion because they involve not only rational arguments but also – as in the past – emotion and fear.

The first issue is the question of the *integration of migrants* and their offspring, mainly Turks (education, work, religion). Do the Turks really stand by the German Constitution and how many actually want to?

The next controversy that is fought with ideological might is the question of the *energy supply* – with or without *atomic power*. When and for how long? As before with the upgrading of missiles, this question carries in many people's minds all kinds of fears for the future. The question of decommissioning is also unclear. In the meanwhile no-one is now against the development of renewable energy sources; it is only a question of how quickly.

As a third issue, the *austerity program* of the government is dividing society. But few have actually seen the numbers in the saving measures and compared the numbers expected from the "wealthy" and those drawing social benefits. The issue of *rich and poor* is creating a rift

in our society that is getting deeper.

Prayer:

- **Blessings on our land with God's grace. (Psalm 67)**
- **Pray and give thanks for freedom of expression – whether it concerns Islam or atomic energy.**
- **Repentance as Christians for all our fears and over-reaction to current events.**
- **For real opportunities in training and jobs for migrants – and for them to show love for our land.**
- **For fairness and justice by the state in social support and for our citizens to show concern for the poor. (Leviticus 23 v.22)** -OS-

Dignity of life under threat

In July the Federal Court of Justice in Germany ruled that pre-implantation genetic diagnosis (PIGD) on artificially fertilised embryos is compatible with the German embryo protection law. This then permits a "quality inspection" of the embryo. If susceptibility to certain diseases is found in the genetic make-up, the embryo can be rejected. With this, decisions over "valuable" and "worthless" life will be made possible. The embryo protection law should prevent such selection. The "Christian Democrats for Life" group is now campaigning for a strengthening of the law.

The end of life is also coming under pressure. A survey in the German doctors association shows that 37% of all physicians can well imagine assisting patients to commit suicide. One in four doctors might consider actively offering assistance to die. Now a change in the code of practice for physicians is proposed that allows a doctor to assist a suicide if it does not go against his/her conscience.

Prayer:

- **We bow before God under the guilt of disrespect for the dignity of human life (abortion, PIGD, assisted suicide, etc.)**
- **That the German embryo protection law will indeed be strengthened. (Psalm 139 v.13-17)**
- **That the code of practice of physicians will not be changed to allow assisted suicide.** -RS-

Israel

The present mood in Israel is very ambivalent. The economy is strong. In these summer months Israel is enjoying the good life, especially the young people in the main centres of population. Tourism is booming as never before. Israel is alive! These are all grounds for thankfulness!

At the same time the general situation is still highly dangerous. In August, after a skirmish on the Israel-Lebanon border with several fatalities, the Middle East escaped by a hair's breadth a war with an unimaginable potential for escalation.

The peace talks that began in September in the USA put Israel under another crucial test: if the 10 month

construction freeze in the so-called West Bank (Judea, Samaria, East Jerusalem) is extended, there is a real threat of massive internal Jewish unrest even approaching the scale of civil war.

Iran commissioned its first nuclear power station at the end of August – a significant step in the ability to build a nuclear military threat. This time bomb is now ticking. But through it all we can proclaim: "... indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep." (Psalm 121 v.4)

Prayer:

- **For wisdom and caution, but also for courage, unity and clarity within the Israeli government.**
- **For the Israeli people: that the more the pressure increases, the more may they look towards the God of Israel and their Messiah.**
- **For the Messianic congregations: that they may continue to be "salt and light" and for the success of all efforts towards reconciliation and unity with Arab Christians.** -HE-

European Union of Prayer

Prayer leaders from many European nations will meet from October 9th to 16th in Brussels at a European level.

Please pray for warm fellowship and the leading of the Lord in what and how we should pray! -OS-

Keep praying

In September the police again arrested three German Islamic extremists who had stayed in Taliban training camps. Let us continue to pray for protection against terrorist attacks.

Let us also keep praying for a breakthrough for the Holy Spirit in our land and especially over us as intercessors.

Other events for prayer

07-10.10 Actions by the Micah Challenge campaign - a global coalition of Christians holding their governments to account for their promise to halve extreme poverty by 2015.

16-25.10 3rd Lausanne Congress on World Evangelisation in Cape Town, South Africa

Sept.-Nov. "Jesus House" – local events for youth by the ProChrist organisation in Germany

God bless you

Ortwin Schweitzer and Rosemarie Stresemann