

CALL OF THE WATCHMEN

October 2011

Hello watchmen,

Some time ago, as a group of intercessors were praying for the government in a newly constructed section of the national parliament building in Berlin, the Holy Spirit revealed a picture: a tree with a deep cut across its trunk right in the middle. The only thing that kept the tree from falling was a very tight rope on the opposite side to the cut. This picture has a very serious message. Hostile strikes of an axe had already weakened the tree of the black-yellow (CDU/FDP) government and/or the country of Germany. However this has not yet been recognised because the tree is still standing. But everywhere there is an uneasiness, a sense of extreme danger, of imminent collapse. The only thing that is preventing this is the strong rope of prayer that is holding up the tree.

Let us "stand in the gap" for our people and government. God is looking throughout the land for someone to come before him in humble repentance for our land. God can heal our land again. -OS-

Thanks for answers to prayer

1. The government has finally cancelled the much contended "Elena" project to create a data bank of information on millions of German workers.
2. We have seen amazing miracles of healing this summer during evangelistic outreaches. -RS-

Children are a gift from the Lord

In 2005/06 we prayed continuously for more children and we have taken up this subject many times since. As reported in August by the Federal Statistical Office, the downwards trend in the birth rate was halted in 2010. 13,000 more children were born than in 2009 when an all-time low of 665,000 births was recorded. Whether this was just a statistical "outlier" (a "blip" in the data) or represents a real reversal of the trend will be seen in the coming years. Such a trend would be all the more amazing as the number of women of child-bearing age (15-45) decreases each year by about 300,000.

Family allowance and day care centres certainly help but other factors are of more importance: Do we have enough money? Can a family with two or more children live from a single wage-earner? (- only 38%). In 52% of all families both parents work and therefore there is a distinct trend towards part-time work for one of the parents. Is there then enough time and energy for more children?

But the most important factor seems to be the stability of the relationship between the parents. Only 7% (!) of children are born to unmarried partners, but still 75% of children are born to married couples!

And 16% of children live with only one parent.

Prayer:

- **Give thanks for more child births – may God continue to bless us with this reversal of the trend: - towards marriage, towards family and the joy of having children. (Psalm 127 v.3)**

- **God's help and blessing on married couples, also for second marriages and the many "patchwork" families. (Psalm 3 v.8)**
- **For family-friendly policies: support allowance for mothers at home; flexible part-time work and child-care facilities; child-friendly living and play areas. -OS-**

Assault on the reference to God in the Constitution

With the adoption of the German Constitution on May 23rd 1949 the parliamentarians wanted to lay down a new, firm foundation for all future actions by the state. Never again should Germany become a totalitarian state! Therefore the constitution had to have a sound ethical foundation. It was recognised that God has given mankind commands and responsibilities. The awareness of these responsibilities required that there be a close tie between the Constitution and God on which it would be firmly based. For the founding fathers this God was the Father of Jesus Christ, even though this was not expressly stated.

The latest version of the pre-amble (from 1990) in the German Constitution reads: *"Conscious of their responsibility before God and man, inspired by the determination to promote world peace as an equal partner in a united Europe, the German people, in the exercise of their constituent power, have adopted this constitution as basic law."*

Whoever consciously agrees to and exercises this responsibility, humbles himself/herself before God and therefore confesses his lordship. But this is exactly what more and more people in our land are refusing to do. Humanism, that designates man as the only measure of all things, is increasingly shaping our thoughts and actions. Thus the foundation of our constitution in God is also now being shaken. There are clear endeavours by the Greens and by secular groups in the SPD and Leftist parties to remove the reference to God from the constitution.

Prayer:

- **Thanks for the humble attitude before God of those who enacted our constitution.**
- **Pray a renewal of this humble attitude in all parliamentarians so that the reference to God will never be removed from the constitution. (James 4 v.10)**
- **Pray for forgiveness where we no longer respect and honour God's lordship in so many areas in our land – so conceding ever more ground to humanism. (Romans 1 v.18-23)** -RS-

Increasing terrorist activity by Salafists

Two men were arrested in Berlin in September. They are suspected of planning a bomb attack. The security authorities believe that they belong to the extremely radical "Salafist" group. The security forces in Germany are carefully watching how this movement, which considers itself to be the only "true" representative of Islam, is growing. This growth is coming from intensive

missionary activity through their Web-site and public meetings. Young people in particular are very attracted by the teaching of the Salafists. They are challenged to radically change their life style. Many young people give up criminal activities and drug abuse. A rapper who was converted in this way is now making CDs with Islamic war-cry songs in which he incites violent "jihad". His high profile as a former rapper acts as a "door-opener" to win young people over to radical Islam. The danger is growing that these young people will be recruited for acts of terrorism. In April the German Islamist preacher Pierre Vogel who is a convert to Salafism held a public meeting in Frankfurt which was attended by about 2000 young people and where 17 responded to a call to convert!

Prayer:

- **Give thanks for the prevention once again of a terrorist attack and for further success in the efforts of the security forces. (2 Chronicles 20 v.21-22)**
- **For the Interior Minister Hans-Peter Friedrich – that the government will find ways to curtail the influence of radical preachers. (Proverbs 2 v.3-10)**
- **Proclaim the lordship of Jesus over our land and pray that the young people who are searching for new meaning in their lives will find Jesus. (Acts 4 v.12)**

-RS-

Prayer for Israel

Whatever the outcome of the decisions in the UN General Assembly on September 23rd, the pressure on Israel is going to increase. (Our letter was prepared before this date.) The so-called "Durban III" conference was running at the same time in New York. One of the main speakers was Ahmadinejad, President of Iran, a professed Holocaust denier with the clear aim to wipe Israel off the map. Egypt and Turkey are taking strides to distance themselves politically from Israel. The government, military forces and people of Israel are preparing themselves for a possible military escalation in the autumn. After various diplomatic moves, Germany threatens to slide increasingly in the direction of a united European approach which seeks to maintain an equal distance between Europe and Israel and the Arab world. Chancellor Merkel, clearly one of the most well-disposed German politicians towards Israel, has come under pressure in this respect in the past months, both in foreign and domestic policy matters.

In light of this development many more Christians are waking up and either taking their responsibility for Israel seriously or realising it for the first time. Chancellor Merkel should be encouraged by the 47,000 signatures on the petition in support of her "no" to the UN vote on a Palestinian state. The petition was handed over on September 15th in the chancellor's office. Various Christian organisations and networks have been active in many European capital cities and in New York. We want to thank the Lord for this and pray that the willingness to stand for Israel continues to grow and gains ground.

Prayer:

- **Take Psalm 2 as a basis for prayer for the protection of Israel and its government against the increasing and often demonically-inspired hate of its people.**
- **For Germany, that our government and people will not be sucked further into the anti-Semitic flow but will find strength to swim against the tide.** -HE-

"... that all of them may be one."

An historic event took place in the history of the church last July: for the first time in history the Vatican, the World Council of Churches and the world-wide Evangelical Alliance agreed on a joint document: "The Christian witness in a multi-religious world." Twelve behaviour principles were developed to offer help and guidance for Christian witness and mission. The document stated among other things: "... it is essential for every Christian to proclaim God's Word and to bear witness to his/her faith in the world. It is however important that this is done in accord with the basic principles of the gospel, in absolute respect and love for all peoples." Professor Thomas Schirmacher of the Evangelical Alliance underlined that the guidelines were in no way a compromise statement based on the "lowest common denominator". Rather they demonstrated a common purpose that was thought to be unimaginable at the beginning of the discussions five years ago.

For the third time here was an historic witness of unity to the world. In August 2010 in Stuttgart the Lutheran World Federation asked the Mennonite Council for forgiveness for the atrocities committed to the Anabaptists at the time of the Reformation. There was also reconciliation in 1999 in Augsburg between the Catholic and Protestant Church with the "Joint declaration of the doctrine of justification by faith" that at the time of the Reformation had led to the excommunication of Luther from the church.

Are these not signs of the end-times, as the Lord himself, despite all our differences, makes his church one? The final and most profound unity will be when there is one body with Jews and Gentiles together, reconciled in Jesus Christ.

Prayer:

- **What could we do better than to pray with Jesus his words in John 17 v.1-26?** -OS-

Other events for prayer

- 02.10** Global Day of Prayer for the Peace of Jerusalem.
- 03.10** Many Christians in Germany will be celebrating and praying on the Day of German Unity.
See: www.3-oktober.de
- 08.10** Jewish Day of Atonement "Yom Kippur".

*God's blessings from
Ortwin Schweitzer and Rosemarie Stresemann*