

CALL OF THE WATCHMEN

January 2012

**“ ... for my power is made perfect in weakness”**

This is the text selected (from 2. Corinthians 12 v.9) for the Year 2012 in the “Moravian Daily Texts”. What a comforting yet encouraging word to guide us through this year! Don’t we always feel weak and helpless as we hear about all the tremendous needs in this world with so much injustice? And is there not a danger that we just resign ourselves to all that happens? We become discouraged and give up hope if we see nothing but our own weakness. But Jesus wants to show us the greater reality: his power and strength are there exactly at the time when we see only our weakness. Jesus is always looking for our faith in what he is able to do, in his victory on the cross, in his love and mercy for this world. Let us pray this year for greater trust in God’s power! -RS-

**2012 – the signs are on the increase**

This is not a prophecy but rather a perspective gained from the observation of developments over recent years. History mostly follows a steady course and there are few sudden changes. Matthew 24 is the background text.

- Statistically the number of large earthquakes has risen. An enormous earthquake has been expected on the west coast of the USA for a long time. (Verse 7)
- With the change in climate patterns and global warming there has been an increase in rain storms on the one hand and drought on the other. The lack of rain is bringing famine to millions and creating a huge number of refugees. (Verse 7)
- Authoritarian regimes are being shaken by the people’s struggle for freedom.
- Islam is experiencing secularisation on the one hand and radicalisation on the other. The tension between “democracy” and “theocracy” is increasing. This is true for Islamic states as well as for Islam in the western countries.
- The persecution of Christians is increasing. (Verse 9)
- Under the pressure of the financial crisis Europe is facing a structural change in the European Union.
- The pressure to reduce costs is turning workers into miserable wage slaves both in the industrialised nations and in the emerging and developing countries. (Verse 12)
- In sections of the western church the decline in faith continues. (Verse 10)

In every way the Lord is preparing the world for the end. The church knows that. More and more we hear: “Watch and pray!” A new wave of prayer is moving around the world – also in Europe (the European Network of Prayer, for example).

**Prayer:**

- **That God helps us to see events from his perspective and to recognise the signs of the times. (Matthew 16 v.2-3)**

- **That we are not afraid of the shakings in the world but rather prepare for the coming of the Lord. (John 14 v.27; Matthew 24 v.44)** -OS-

**Breaking through the “wall of silence”**

Last month I discovered to my surprise that one of my grandfathers was involved in the Nazi regime. The things that I discovered shook me to the core. With the help of a pastor I was able to bring the guilt that I was feeling into the light before the throne of God and knew that a huge burden had been lifted from my shoulders. There was also within my family the “wall of silence” that Jobst Bittner in his book of the same name (“Die Decke des Schweigens” in German) vividly describes with all its consequences:

*“Culpable involvement, traumatic experiences and the flight and expulsion of the war generation are deeply influencing lives and relationships in the next generations. In many families they are hidden behind a wall of silence. Their children and grandchildren bear the continuing effects of these deep wounds and inherit problems of self identity without knowing why. Generally they do not know where these problems come from or how they can get help. About three quarters of German families are affected to a greater or lesser degree. The common distinguishing feature is the silence, “the silence of the generations”. (Page 173).*

The war generation has not talked about their experiences – so much guilt and so many personal traumatic experiences have been kept hidden. In most families there is secrecy about the Nazi past and an anti-Jewish mindset that has not been dealt with. The children have noticed that their parents do not want to talk about it and have come to terms with the silence. It takes courage to lay oneself open to the truth about one’s own family, because by breaking the wall of silence the as yet unresolved guilt comes into the light.

Coming to terms with our past is not brought to a close with a public service of repentance. The Holy Spirit wants much more to shine his light into *our families* and release us from our numbed emotions. He wants to enable us to love one another and his people of Israel more deeply – keeping things hidden prevents this work of his grace.

Only what we disclose and lay open before God can then be covered by the blood of Jesus.

**Prayer:**

- **Courage for family members to break through the wall of silence in their families. (1 John 1 v.9-10)**
- **That the light of the Holy Spirit will shine on everything that is deeply hidden. (Daniel 2 v.22)**
- **Germany, arise and shine – let the light be seen in each and every family! (Isaiah 60 v.1)** -RS-

**The danger from the right** (see also December prayer letter)  
We keep praying! Through our prayers in the unseen world we are supporting the endeavours of the state in

the seen world. We will see the results in the newspaper!

**Prayer:**

- We pray for dramatic exposures in the entire “brown” (neo-Nazi) network right down to the level of sympathisers and helpers. We pray for detailed leads from the general population, but above all for “full confessions” (about themselves and their lives) to judges and priests from those detained as well as from anonymous followers. (John 3 v.19-21)
- We pray for the *quick* gathering of information from the different secret service agencies into the “central intelligence agency for right-wing affairs”.
- We pray for the appropriate documents that will be acceptable to the court for an official ban of the NPD (Nationalist Party of Germany). As a political party, the NPD gets tax money and can officially make applications for neo-Nazi demonstrations that often have to be approved. As a result of this their anti-democratic views are known and that they represent the radical elements of the right-wing scene.
- We pray against the xenophobia that was expressed in the nine murders. (John 8 v.44). In the same way pray against anti-Semitism and the hatred of Jews that continues to be encouraged in this network.
- Let us pray for spectacular conversions of right-wing extremists to Jesus Christ who will indeed save them. Let us especially pray for Beate Zschäpe (arrested as one of the terrorist suspects for the murders). (John 8 v.34, 36; 1 John 1 v.8-9)
- We pray for the family members of the victims and all efforts by the state to make reparations for their loss, and pray also for a change of heart within the general population towards immigrants. -OS-

#### **Holocaust survivors in Israel**

On January 27<sup>th</sup> we will remember those who died in the Holocaust. What about the survivors?

World-wide there are still about 500,000 living Jewish victims of National Socialism. Around 200,000 of them live in Israel. Some 60,000 who are over 80 years old live in poverty. Traumatized by imprisonment in ghettos or concentration camps as well as by the murder of their family members, the survivors were often not able to build a successful life for themselves after the war and so secure their livelihood in old age. They cannot keep themselves sufficiently warm in winter, some do not have enough to eat, and they need medical treatment for their many health problems. Many suffer extreme loneliness. Up to now, to receive compensation payments from Germany, Holocaust survivors have had to prove that they were confined in a ghetto during the Nazi period for more than 18 months or suffered for at least six months in a concentration camp. Only in recent months was it possible through negotiations with the German government to widen the circle of those entitled to assistance. Simple evidence of twelve months should now be sufficient for a compensation claim. Whoever would

like to support Holocaust survivors can do so through “Christen an der Seite Israels” at <http://bit.ly/uEYq2T> or <http://www.troestet-mein-volk.de/>.

**Prayer:**

- **Comfort and practical help for all Holocaust survivors world-wide. (Isaiah 40 v.1)**
- **That the German authorities quickly implement the new compensation agreement.**
- **For the memorial events in connection with the “70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Wannsee Conference”** -RS-

#### **Europe sets a new course**

Thank you for all your prayers last month for “**Europe at the crossroads**”. In the summit meeting on December 9<sup>th</sup> Europe chose to go for the first option and to go forward with a fiscal union. All countries voted for it, only the UK remained outside.

I sensed in prayer on this day that God was not looking on the sin of Europe on this point but on the prayers of the saints. And then I immediately saw in prayer: THE KING IS COMING! Jesus himself stepped slowly into the room and stood in the middle of the room. In fright the darkness drew back into the corners of the room, but the light shone on the government leaders around the table. I fell on my knees and worshipped. I felt: now God’s praying children must fill the room with praise for the King. The heart of Europe is now here and Jesus has stepped in. He, the Lord of solutions to all our problems, who is shaping the future of Europe, is now here.

Then I called the leaders of other prayer networks: in Austria, in France, in Sweden and in Germany who immediately passed on the vision within their networks. And as Europeans we raised up our King together. The results of December 9<sup>th</sup> 2011 are a confirmation of the path to unity in Europe that has been followed until now – confirmed by the Lord himself, in such a clear way that we have seldom seen in the past.

**Prayer:**

- **“Now thank we all our God ...”. God directs the course of Europe and lets us know about it.**
- **At an historic turning point in Europe the Lord has let us see what happens when intercessors call out: “Glory to our King in Europe!” And this in unity as Europeans. Let us go forward in this way!**
- **Pray for all with the responsibility to further wrestle for solutions to the issues at hand, especially for Angela Merkel, for new and supernatural strength and wisdom.** -OS-

#### **Other events for prayer**

- 05.- 08.01** European Prayer House Conference “MEHR” in Augsburg. [www.mehr.gebetshaus.org](http://www.mehr.gebetshaus.org)
- 08.- 15.01** German Evangelical Alliance prayer week.
- 20.- 21.01** 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Wannsee Conference - Berlin
- 27.01** Holocaust Memorial Day

*God bless you all*

*Ortwin Schweitzer and Rosemarie Stresemann*