

## CALL OF THE WATCHMEN

November 2012

### Hallowed be your name

This is the first prayer request that Jesus taught his disciples. It is not about God's kingdom, not about God's will, but about God HIMSELF, about his very person. This "hallowing" can only occur whenever we specifically take time out of the hustle and bustle of everyday life, look to God and say to him how good he is and how much we love him. Dedicating something specifically to God is to "hallow his name" – one hour of your time, the baptismal candle of a godchild, the cup used only in the communion service, whatever – something only for HIM.

And what about his "name"? When he first revealed himself he used the name Jehovah (Yahweh): the most Holy One that Israel ever knew and still knows. They shy away from using this name out of fear of misusing it. (Exodus 20 v.7). But Jesus taught his disciples another name for God: "ABBA" – in English: "Daddy". To "hallow" him, the disciples of Jesus should say to the most Holy God "Father - Daddy" for ever. This pleases him!

-OS-

### Anti-Semitism in Germany

With the debate in Germany over the court ruling on circumcision a dam has been breached that discharged a wave of hate on our Jewish citizens. The Jewish associations are being overwhelmed with hate mails, their religious practices are being described as criminal, and the demand for them to change their circumcision practices goes to the roots of their existence. And Jewish life is again being openly threatened in Germany: in August a rabbi in Berlin was attacked and beaten by a youth of Arab descent, having been identified as a Jew by his kippah, and his six year old daughter was threatened with death. On Yom Kippur (Jewish Day of Atonement) a Jewish couple were forced out of a taxi because the taxi driver did not want to take them to a synagogue – and another Berlin rabbi was affronted and assaulted.

In a report on German ARD TV, people on the street openly stated before the camera that "Jews only want our money – they want to keep our country down." The embarrassment which used to be feared by making such openly anti-Semitic remarks seems to have faded away. According to a survey, one in five of the younger generation does not know that Auschwitz was a concentration camp. Sixteen million Germans (20% of the population) have anti-Semitic views. The Middle East conflict, which is always presented by the media in a very one-sided way in favour of the Palestinians, further encourages the growth of negative attitudes towards the Jews. 59% of Germans consider that Israel is the "aggressor". Hate for Israel is very much alive in the ethnically Arab population of Germany. A very dangerous mix of attitudes has developed in our country which is becoming a deadly menace to the Jews living here.

### Prayer:

- **Let us repent for our ingratitude for the grace that we Germans have received from God. Let us humbly ask for forgiveness for all the verbal and physical attacks on Jews in this land. (Zechariah 2 v.8)**
- **For all those who have power to influence hearts in a positive way: in the media and other social areas so that hearts in our land will be filled with the love of God for his chosen people. (Ephesians 2 v.11-17)**
- **We proclaim the victory of Jesus over all schemes of the enemy to drag our nation once again into the pit of anti-Semitism. (Ephesians 6 v.10-17) -RS-**

### Southern Europe and we Germans

At our recent European prayer gathering we were all shaken by the report of our sister from Greece: uncertainty and anxiety everywhere. They just do not know what each day will bring. Children go to school without breakfast. Every day there is a suicide – something that was rare in the past. The people have no hope – especially the young! The radical political parties both right and left have increasing influence over the people with their speeches. The situation is not unlike that in Germany before Hitler came to power. But every country is different. The demonstrations against austerity measures have also taken over in Portugal and Spain. The economy buckles, redundancies follow and unemployment rises; now in Spain to a level of over 50% of those under 25 years old.

There must be a balance between keeping up the pressure for the necessary reforms in the system and the danger of excessive pressure which could destroy the economy and the fabric of society in these countries.

And what about us Germans? For years we have prayed that God will cause Germany to grow into its calling – to be a "fatherland". *Because God has actually taken notice of our prayers*, we now carry so much responsibility in the current crisis! Are we prepared for this? A father must be someone we can totally rely on, even when everything has gone completely wrong. But a father's help can also be linked to specific requirements to avoid similar situations in the future. But within reason!

### Prayer:

- **Let us pray that something from the Fatherhood of God will be evident in Germany's dealings with other lands through both mercy and correction. (Psalm 103 v.8-10)**
- **That Germany will acknowledge its own failures since we were the first country to break the stability pact that contributed to the current crisis.**
- **Let us pray compassionately with the poor and those in despair in southern Europe. (Psalm 85) -OS-**

### National elections in 2013

After much delay the SPD (socialist party) has named its candidate for Chancellor: **Peer Steinbrueck**, a former finance minister and as such a noted financial expert. So his number one election issue is the regulation of the banks. Steinbrueck is considered as aggressive and says of himself that he still has a few "rough edges". He is only narrowly supported by the left of his party. His goal is a red-green coalition government. For him God is just a "principle for peaceful coexistence".

Another note-worthy development in the party landscape is the planned amalgamation of the Christian AUF and PBC parties on November 3<sup>rd</sup> in Bad Staffelstein under the name "Christians for Germany". This merger is a testimony to genuine reconciliation. A lack of credibility in both of these Christian parties has also been addressed.

#### Prayer:

- **That Peer Steinbrueck will experience a living awareness of the God whose plans for him become increasingly clear and evident. (Daniel 2 v.21)**
- **Thanks for the merger of the AUF and PBC political parties as a testimony that genuine faith can open up new political paths that appear impossible to men. (John 13 v.2-17)** -OS-

### Israel boycott campaign

One might think that intellectuals who like to clearly claim their human rights would be shouting loudly and protesting when one country is threatened with full annihilation by another. But this is not true in Israel's case – on the contrary! While the existence of Israel is openly threatened by Iran and rockets are continuously fired into Israel from the Gaza Strip, intellectuals in the European Union and beyond have agreed on an economic boycott of Israel – the so-called "Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) Campaign". According to the widely proclaimed theory, if Israel is economically and culturally boycotted and isolated from the international community, the government will have to change its policy towards the Palestinians. For example, some one hundred European intellectuals have called for Israeli projects to be eliminated from all EU economic development programs. Especially serious is the intellectual boycott of scientists. Because of the Israeli university in Ariel, a contested area in Judea, Israeli scientists and researchers are barred from giving lectures, un-invited from international events, and Israeli students get no tutoring or other help from professors in international universities.

#### Prayer:

- **That such campaigns run out of steam – but that the forces which want to demonstrate godly ways for reconciliation will be strengthened. (2 Corinthians 5 v.19-20)**
- **That friendships will be developed between Israeli and European scientists and researchers.** -RS-

### Protection for Iranian converts from persecution

The International Day of Prayer for Persecuted Christians will be observed on November 11<sup>th</sup> in Germany. Few of us know that Germany has become a haven for Christian asylum seekers from Iran. There is a revival movement in Iran among the well educated Iranian middle class. Reports from insiders say that the political behaviour of Ahmadinejad is in particular contributing to the falling away from Islam even though a Muslim is not allowed to convert to another religion. Despite the prospect of imprisonment Iranians are turning away from Islam in droves and turning towards Christianity. Many are fleeing the country to avoid capture by the religious police. Asylum seekers are coming to Germany every day. About 150,000 Iranians now live here and are bringing new spiritual life into the dying churches. Evangelical churches in the cities have at times been overwhelmed by the influx. It is not easy however to get asylum in Germany as a religious fugitive. Evidence of conversion from Islam and religious persecution must be provided. Many judges do not know how to verify a genuine conversion and therefore generally deny asylum. They have created their own various ways to prove a real faith. For example, that the applicant can recite the creed!

#### Prayer:

- **Thanks for the work of the Holy Spirit in Iran. (Isaiah 61 v.1-2)**
- **That all Christian fugitives will be recognised as asylum seekers. (Matthew 25 v.40)**
- **That many Iranians will be able to bring the gospel to Muslims in Germany. (Acts 7 v.1-3)** -RS-

### Keep on praying ...

The German government has drafted a law to allow boys to be circumcised. The medical association has already criticised the wording of the draft as it is too vague. Let us pray further that the law will be clearly formulated to provide proper legal protection and not lead to new disputes within the courts.

### Other events for prayer

- 01.-04.11** National conference of the Spiritual Renewal Movement (GGE) in the Protestant Church of Germany.
- 11.11** Day of Prayer for Persecuted Christians
- 20.11** Prayday – Day of Prayer for Schools
- 21.11** Day of Prayer and Repentance (Buß- und Bettag) (National holiday now only in Saxony)

*God's blessings from Ortwin Schweitzer,  
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