

April 2016

**Open our eyes**

Where do we look in times of crisis? The immediate circumstances will naturally grab our attention and we look no further. But Jesus said: "When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near." (Luke 21:28) The enemy strives to take control of where we look and what we see, because when he can draw our attention to himself, he is then half way to victory. By focusing only on what we see in the natural, our faith is challenged and grows weaker. Therefore let us pray right from the start for one another as Elisha prayed for his servant: "O Lord, open our eyes so that we may see!" After he prayed, his servant could suddenly see the hills full of horses and chariots of fire around Elisha, where he had previously only seen the superior might of the Aramean army. (2 Kings 6:15-17). -RS-

**Answers to prayer**

In January we prayed that a resolution on the issue of the "Armenian genocide" would be finally passed by the German parliament. On February 25 the Greens presented their own resolution to the national parliament for debate. Suddenly the CDU and SPD promised to quickly pass a resolution along with the Greens, which they could all support jointly. Let's keep praying!

In March politicians and the media paid much attention to the desperate circumstances of Christian refugees in many of the homes for asylum seekers. In Berlin Volker Kauder (CDU) has been discussing this matter extensively with Iranians, who continue to suffer persecution here in Germany. Something is now happening to resolve this issue. -RS-

**Aftermath of the three federal state elections**

These elections have changed the political landscape of our country.

- For the first time in the history of the German Federal Republic, the Greens won against the CDU in traditionally safe CDU territory (Baden-Wuerttemberg).
- The FDP came back onto the political stage in all three states, but only just.
- The AfD established itself on one single day in all three parliaments with two-figure results, and in Saxony-Anhalt was in second place with 24.3% of the votes.

In each of the three states, a different political colour gained most votes: in Baden-Wuerttemberg Green, in Rhineland-Pfalz Red (SPD), in Saxony-Anhalt Black (CDU). All other parties, in so far as they are currently represented in our national parliament, generally fell significantly to historically low levels. It seems that the cohesive power of the traditional "people's parties" has faded and that voters are now looking for people they can trust irrespective of their party. All three prime ministers were such people, but their government coalitions did not survive.

In the past 20 years our society has gradually drifted to the left. Angela Merkel has generally abandoned a conservative approach. She is now considered as "left of centre" by the

voters and is correspondingly supported by the left. This has created free space to the right of the CDU. It was only a question of time before this would become a catchment area for conservatives. The AfD (a relatively new right-wing party) is now filling this role.

Instead of demonizing the AfD, it would be better for the CDU to reaffirm its Christian and conservative foundation. From Adenauer to Kohl, a conservative approach was always the "middle of the road" in society. Whoever treads this path today is considered "right-wing" which is today also immediately interpreted as "extremist".

The potential to attract voters on the right, with all their many differences, has spoken out for itself in these elections. Many who have not voted in the past came back to the ballot box out of sheer frustration and 40% voted for the AfD. This is a revival of the democratic process – (whatever your opinion of the AfD party). When such fundamental changes are suddenly happening, intercessors must ask themselves: what are you doing here, Lord?

**Prayer:**

- **God, your ways are higher than our ways and they are good – we praise you and trust you. (Isaiah 55:8-9)**
- **For the formation of the state governments: coalition building and ministerial appointments. (Isaiah 55:6-7)**
- **Humility for the winners and new hopes and vision for the losers. (Romans 11:29)** -OS-

**Prayer Conference for Germany May 27 - 29 in Bingen**
**Why I am going ...**

... because I want to see you once again. And because I am so glad that so many feel the same way. The body of Christ is not invisible, but rather clearly to be seen and embraced in my brothers and sisters.

And together we "seek the Lord with all our heart", we worship Him, bow our knee before Him, and profess His victory in the invisible and the visible world. He responds: "I will be found by you!" For this reason I am going. I will seek Him. And be found by Him. (Jeremiah 29:12-13)

And then I want to bring our land and Europe before the King, together with you, confessing that I do not have the power, but I take hold of His everlasting mercy and loving-kindness in faith. And where I am too weak to stand alone, then together we will surely see a break-through!

**Prayer**

- **That many will come, seek and find. (Luke 11:9-13)**
- **For all the detailed organisational and technical preparation and planning. (Psalm 118:25)**
- **That the spiritual impact of the conference will be felt throughout the land. (Habakkuk 2:14)** -OS-

**Influx of refugees as a risk to our security**

The uncontrolled influx of refugees presents an enormous risk for the President of the Federal Office for Homeland Security, Hans-Georg Maassen, because the authorities no longer know where all the migrants and refugees are in the land. He sees three problem areas:

1] The influx of active supporters and members of terrorist organisations who enter Germany under the guise of being a refugee, and those with the intent of carrying out terrorist attacks. As about 70% of the migrants do not have a valid identification document, there is no guarantee that the self-declared personal details are actually genuine.

2] Migrants often quickly become radicalised from the information they can access by themselves, for example, from the Internet.

3] The attempts by Islamists to recruit migrants for Islamist terrorism activities. The number of Salafists is steadily growing and now stands at 8300 in Germany. Through such groups young people are often radicalised in order to then draw them into Jihad in Syria. From the 800 who have travelled to Syria, about 260 have now returned to Germany. But it could now be easier to prove in court their involvement in terrorism, as Islamic State “registration papers” of Jihadists from Germany, which list such details as place of residence, home telephone number, blood-group and “terrorism experience”, have recently been discovered. The influx of migrants has also led to a rise in right-wing extremism in the German population. The increase in politically motivated arson attacks has been particularly high, from 6 instances in 2014 to 74 in 2015.

**Prayer:**

- **Thanks for contribution of the Federal Office for Home Security and the police towards the security of our country. (Romans 13:1-4)**
- **Pray for God’s light to reveal and thwart each and every plan for terrorist activities. (Job 12:22)**
- **For the swift discovery and documenting of all unregistered refugees in Germany by the Federal Office for Migrants and Refugees. (Psalm 90:17)** -RS-

**German-Israeli youth exchange programs**

“As the generation that will become the leaders in our two countries in the future, we as young people can tread paths to increase our understanding of one another, in a way that no adult politician can.” This is a statement of a participant in a German-Israeli youth exchange program. More than 9000 young people and students from both countries each year take part in exchange programs which the Family Ministry supports financially. On behalf of many interested partner organisations in Israel, the German Youth Exchange Coordination Centre “ConAct” is actively looking for youth workers and organisations in Germany who want to set up exchange projects with Israel. Potential partners will be introduced to each other in a two-part seminar. The first part will take place from April 10 to 15 in Israel, and the second part in Germany from May 29 to June 3.

Also in Christian organisations there are youth exchange programs such as “IsraelConnect” and “Yad B’Yad” (“Hand in Hand”). For each exchange, Yad B’Yad brings together 10 young people from a Messianic congregation in Israel with partners in a German church. The goal is to build a foundation for the reconciliation of our peoples by studying our history and amongst other things by visiting Auschwitz “hand in hand”.

**Prayer:**

- **Thanks for all levels of youth exchange activities between Israel and Germany. (2 Corinthians 4:15)**
- **Pray for a strong increase in the number of partner organisations and participants.**
- **That youth encounters will be life-changing and lead to deep and lasting friendships. (Psalm 122:6-9)** -RS-

**Syria – from cease-fire to peace negotiations**

Shortly after we had prayed for the peace talks in the Syrian conflict, which took place before the security conference in Munich, a cease-fire agreement between the warring parties (if only fragile) came into force. This was a significant answer to prayer and made it possible for the necessary humanitarian aid to reach the many residents in besieged and isolated areas in Syria. Since then more than 200,000 Syrians have received aid. The first important step, to bring all parties (with the exception of the Islamic State [IS] and the Al-Qaida branch) to the table, has thus been achieved. Now the peace talks must be continued. The building of a government, resolution on a constitution and the proposed elections in 18 months are all subject to negotiation. For this we need God’s intervention. He directs the hearts of leaders as he pleases. (Proverbs 21:1) Staffan de Mistura, special envoy of the UN for Syria, will lead the negotiations and needs much wisdom and sensitivity. The EU is also involved in the talks. Here the issue is also about how the root causes for the refugee crisis can be tackled and how Syria can receive help to rebuild itself as quickly as possible. There is an earnest desire for peace.

**Prayer:**

- **Jesus, Prince of Peace, come with your wisdom and might into this conflict! (Matthew 12:20-21)**
- **For the will in all the parties to the negotiations to come to an understanding and to seek peace.**
- **That humanitarian aid will reach all the people throughout the land.** -AS-

**European Union of Prayer – Den Haag, Holland**

For the 20<sup>th</sup> time, intercessors will meet from April 3 to 8 as the “EU of Prayer”, this time in the Netherlands which holds the Presidency of the EU Council for the first six months of 2016. The group will be made up of about 40 people from 12-15 countries, many of whom attend regularly.

At this critical time in Europe we expect a special move of the Holy Spirit that will confirm in us our authority to stand in the gap for Europe. In preparation for our meeting we have made contact with many intercessors and leaders throughout the land. We look forward to being with them.

**Prayer:**

- **For a spirit of unity between the participants from many nations. (Revelation 5:9)**
- **For discernment in what we should pray and how (our authority and commission). (Revelation 5:10)** -OS-

**Date for your diary**

**14.-16.04** Christian Congress on Health, Kassel

*Blessings from  
Rosemarie Stresemann and Ortwin Schweitzer*