

October 2016

Prayer that God can answer

Germany is divided. Even among Christians, those who are “for” and those who are “against” the government’s refugee policy seem to be irreconcilable.

If we do not find a way to overcome this division, our prayers will not bear fruit.

After calling the church to pray for those in authority, Paul continues: “I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing.” (1 Timothy 2:8).

Jesus said: “And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him ...” (Mark 11:25).

I believe that we, personally and also in our prayer groups, should repent for having any spirit of anger or accusation in our hearts against brothers and sisters who see the refugee situation differently from us. Unity does not mean that we agree on everything. But let us be careful that we do not lose our way as brothers and sisters. God wants our prayers to bear fruit!

- Klaus-Helge Schmidt – “Prayer for the Government” -

Answer to prayer

The construction in Munich of the largest Islamic centre in Europe will not happen. The project collapsed due to a lack of funds as a major supporter from Saudi Arabia pulled out. Furthermore, Saudi Arabia is closing its controversial King Fahd Academies in Germany and sending the children to state schools, most likely because of lack of funds. -RS-

Hallowed be Your Name

In an open letter, the Sisters of Mary together with the international movement “Wittenberg2017” have called for the removal of a defamatory sculpture from the city church in Wittenberg. The Spiritual Church Renewal (GGE) movement in the Protestant (Lutheran) Church in Germany has also supported this call.

The so-called “Judensau” (Jewish Sow) is an obscene sculpture from the Middle Ages which can still be seen on the external wall of the Lutheran city church in Wittenberg. The church associated the “unclean pig” with the Jews and their beliefs long before Luther. In his later writings Luther further incited hatred for the Jews and referred to the sculpture which was already on the church as follows. *“Here on our church in Wittenberg a sow is sculpted in stone. Young pigs and Jews lie suckling under her. Behind the sow a rabbi is bent over the sow, lifting up her right leg, holding her tail high and looking intensely under her tail and into her Talmud ... which is certainly where they get their ‘Shem Hamphoras’.”* This is a shameful desecration of the name of God; “Shem Hamphoras” is a Jewish expression for the most holy name of God. In response to Luther’s text, the words “Rabini Schem HaMphoras” were then later added in golden letters above the sculpture.

God has for ever associated the honour of his name with his people Israel. (Isaiah 48:8b-11). God said prophetically to his people that he will be zealous to restore the honour of his name. (Ezekiel 39:25).

The Jews and their religion have been dishonoured and

God’s holy name blasphemed on more than 25 churches and cathedrals in Germany with such images for 700 years. See: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Judensau> . Until now none of the petitions and discussions with the church and those responsible in Wittenberg have led to the removal of the sculpture. The Messianic theologian Dr. Richard Harvey has started a petition for the removal of the “Judensau”.

See: <https://www.change.org/p/remove-the-wittenberg-judensau>

Prayer:

- **Forgiveness for blaspheming the holy name of God by mocking the Jewish people. (Ezekiel 36:20-25)**
- **For the restoration of God’s honour by honouring the Jewish people and removing the sculpture. (Psalm 96:7-9; Matthew 6:9)**
- **That our eyes will be opened and the church of Jesus Christ will be able to repent deeply. (Joel 2:12-13) -RS-**

“Germany, repent!”

After the “Night of the Broken Glass” (“Kristallnacht”) in November 1938, Pastor Julius von Jan from Württemberg preached one week later on the German Repentance Day from Jeremiah 22:29: “O land, land, land, hear the word of the Lord!” where the prophet was making the people aware of all the evils of the day. He said: “We are paying the penalty for falling away from God and Christ, for adopting organised anti-Christendom ...”

Today we lack such sermons on repentance which clearly state how we have failed. “And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?” (Romans 10:14b). Jesus himself began his ministry with “Repent!” This is the message that he wants to speak very clearly to our people, to tell them how he sees things today, so that many will turn back to him. This requires prayer for repentance for the “falling away from God and Christ”. For example:

- For the rejection of good traditional values in the 1968 movement which lives on even today.
- For the departure of the German Protestant Church from the authority of the Bible, where now in this anniversary year of the Reformation, “alone through Scripture” is no longer valid and “alone through Christ” is denied and other ways to salvation are accepted (Judaism, Islam, etc.) but Messianic Jews who believe in Yeshua (Jesus) are excluded.
- For indifference to the large number of abortions.
- For total dependence on the secularised media, unaware of the brutal and desensitised reporting of events and much more.

Prayer

- **For preachers and teachers (of all ages) to be released and given opportunities to call people to repentance. (Ephesians 6:19)**
- **That the many players involved in “organised anti-Christendom” and “deeds of darkness” will be unmasked and exposed. (Ephesians 5:11)**
- **That God leads our land to return to Him and his Word. (Hosea 14:1-2)**

-J.Blum-

A new start for Europe

Three months ago on June 23rd the British voted to leave the European Union. This is the deepest crisis that the EU has faced since its formation. What is the future for Great Britain? What is the future for the remaining 27 states in the EU? Through such events God's ways are revealed. He acts with purpose and justice in his judgements. But also with mercy. Our God has once again taken Europe into his hands. After breaking up the EU because of our rejection of him in 2004, he wants to set Europe and the EU on a new course. Our political leaders now need the prayers of the body of Christ for God's good purposes to come to pass.

On September 16th, the EU heads of state came together for a special summit meeting in Bratislava, Slovakia. EU Commission President Juncker wrote in the invitation that each leader should think of three reasons why the EU is needed and how he/she will commit to make it happen.

And it appeared that the 27 still wanted the EU. Without the EU there would be no progress in the following three areas: better security internally against terrorism and externally through the protection of the EU borders; economic growth with a reduction in unemployment especially among young people; the policy over refugees – the four eastern states who do not want to accept refugees proposed “a flexible approach to solidarity” in that they will contribute more to security. They all agreed to work together. This was a beginning. Cautious optimism was in the air. The “Bratislava Plan” will be reviewed for progress early next year.

Prayer:

- **Thanks for the sovereignty of God and for his mercy on us. (Psalm 96: 7-10)**
- **Thanks that a conscious decision was made for a new start towards unity. (An answer to prayer!)**
- **For a spirit of thankfulness within the European community and also in its people. (Psalm 92:1-5) -OS-**

Current and past ties with Turkey

At the beginning of September the German government explained to Ankara that the resolution of the German parliament concerning the Armenian genocide in 1915 was only a political statement without legal implications. In this way Chancellor Merkel gave in to the pressure from the Turkish government. About three million citizens in Germany have a Turkish background. In the event of a conflict with Turkey they could become a risk politically within Germany. Turkey ought to be the NATO outpost for political security on its borders with the troubled states of Syria and Iraq and against the Islamic State (IS). The refugee agreement of the EU with Turkey is also an issue.

With its invasion into north Syria, since the beginning of September Turkey has been attacking the democratic autonomous area of the Northern Syrian Federation of Rojava (or Syrian Kurdistan), which is jointly governed by Kurds, Arabs, Armenians and Assyrians. The area is designated as a protection zone for Syrian refugees. The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) of Rojava, which have registered the greatest success so far against IS, is

considered to be a terrorist group by Erdogan, the President of Turkey. Only the USA has up to now been on their side and taken a stand against Turkey. On the other hand the EU is again negotiating with Turkey over a visa waiver, regardless of the fact that since the attempted military coup the Turkish government has dismissed 130,000 state workers and imprisoned dozens of journalists. Just as 100 years ago during the Armenian genocide, the German government is now tolerating the violation of human and citizens rights by Turkey in the interests of its own security.

Prayer:

- **That these wrongly based ties with Turkey, both past and present, will be completely broken. (Isaiah 30:1-5)**
- **Instead of ties with an Islamic power, let us pray for the restoration of ties between Europe and Jesus Christ. (Acts 4:11-12)**
- **For the protection and defence of the Rojava area to be the hope for Syria. (Isaiah 19:23-25) -KH-**

Disunity within the Union (CDU and CSU)

An open disagreement has broken out between the sister-parties CSU (Bavaria) and CDU (rest of Germany) with regard to the German government's refugee policy. Horst Seehofer and the CSU are demanding a clearly restrictive and controlled system for immigration, including an upper limit for the entry of refugees and abolishing dual nationality, which Angela Merkel rejects in this form. This has led to a deep division which is spreading throughout the parliamentary group and is threatening the unity in the government coalition from both sides. The disagreement is preventing a united front in the government coalition and is making the voters, who are expecting clear answers, very nervous as to how our land will manage these issues in the future. Unity and the building of a consensus are now essential. In the past the CDU/CSU parties have been the political home-ground for conservative voters who wish to retain traditional values. Disunity or even division within the Union can in the coming elections not only cost them a place in a state government, but also open the way for a red-red-green (SPD-Leftist-Greens) coalition in the national government to be elected next year.

Prayer:

- **Jesus, we invite you as Wonderful Counsellor and Prince of Peace into Germany. (Isaiah 9:6)**
- **For unity and the building of a consensus in the CDU and CSU parties, for “Any kingdom divided against itself will be ruined ...” (Luke 11:17)**
- **That decisions will not be made based on emotions and party interests, but that good solutions will be found for the benefit of our whole land. (Philippians 2:4) -AS-**

Dates for your diary

30.09-03.10 Congress “Pfungsten21” in Wuerzburg

03.10 German Unity Day – thank-celebrate-pray

*Blessings from
Rosemarie Stresemann and Ortwin Schweitzer*