

November 2017

Know that I am God

I do not know how you reacted to the election. For me, I sensed no immediate need to judge the outcome, whether the election was a success or a failure for this or that party, but to be still and listen to God. In Psalm 46:10, God calls out from great turmoil (...the earth giving way, mountains falling into the sea...): "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth." This is not about passively keeping quiet and saying nothing, but about taking time to be aware of who God is. He is the unchangeable one whose love for this world (and our country) is without end.

Shortly before the election at a meeting of board members, the Holy Spirit gave us a vivid picture to show us what the essential nature and purpose of the Call of the Watchmen Prayer Network should be like. Jesus was holding a precious bowl (which represented our prayer network) in his hand and it began to glow from inside. As the glow finally filled the bowl, it radiated great warmth into the land of Germany. God was making it clear to us that he wants us, as watchmen-intercessors, to be filled with his love and then through our prayers to radiate this love into areas of our land where such love is certainly not an important part of life – as in politics.

God wants the warmth of his love to fill our land. -RS-

Answer to prayer

In 2018 the Federal Government will only support projects of the Turkish Islamic Institute for Religion (Ditib) with a mere 300,000 Euro instead of 1.5 million as in the past. The support for other Islamic institutions has also been substantially reduced. There is overall suspicion of control from outside Germany, and with Ditib strong influence comes from the Turkish government. -RS-

Working with the Alternative for Germany (AfD) Party

Now that the AfD has become the third strongest party with 12.6% in government after the CDU/CSU and SPD, all the other parties as well as the media have to think again about how to work with the AfD. So far the AfD has been mainly marginalised and generally denounced as radical and leaning too far to the right - a tactic that has now in fact led to the AfD being elected for the first time by many who, amongst other reasons, wanted to lodge their protest against the policies of other parties.

In the German Basic Law it is stated that: "Parties play a part in forming the political will of the people". (GG §21,1). They are a desired, important factor in giving people of different opinions and interests a channel through which to express their views politically. No party can therefore claim: "We are the people". There is an internal struggle within the AfD as to which forces and opinions will eventually take hold – the conservative voices which no longer find a home in the CDU, or those who want to see an end to the "guilt-culture" and "purge" the country of certain people.

In the meantime Frauke Petry has left the AfD party and founded a new party: "The Blue Party".

After the election people in Germany are asking: "What's going on in our country?" "What's the matter?" "Where is the worry and fear coming from?" We do not need more marginalisation, but rather the readiness to listen to others. Much has been lost in Europe and Germany because of unbelief and rejection of God. We cannot be restored by a political party or ideology – we need humble repentance before God, prayer for His solutions, and faith in His saving power. Let us station ourselves as intercessors on the ramparts like Habakkuk and trust in His promises. (Habakkuk 2:1-4).

Prayer:

- **For a new readiness to listen to others and ask for godly solutions. (James 1:19-20)**
- **For the AfD party: that it will clearly distance itself from radical right-wing forces.**
- **That the media and all political parties will discuss the needs and concerns of the people without a spirit of judgment and condemnation. (Luke 6:37)** -RS-

Coalition talks

The federal election result marks a clear break in German politics. Nearly all parties have had to accept a loss of support. Now a governmental coalition has to be formed. The possible coalition partners, CDU/CSU, FDP and Greens, could scarcely be more different politically, and yet there is a chance for a new beginning to emerge from the current coalition talks. Politicians must once again listen to the people more and develop clear ideas that they take away and can relate to their own situation. Here there is general agreement. The most contentious issues are immigration, family support, security and tax legislation, energy and education.

The negotiations can only be successful when none of the parties lose face and in the end party members and voters can be convinced. In the wide range of possible approaches politically, there is the potential for creative thinking and innovative solutions.

Quick and easy compromises will no longer suffice, we need divinely ordained solutions. For this we need the release of new ideas through the Holy Spirit and men and women who are open to be led by the Holy Spirit. If there is no agreement to form a coalition, most likely new elections will have to be held. Let us pray that God will grant us a stable coalition with many new ideas, pleasing to Him, and that it will be the foundation for fair and constructive work in government over the next four years. We need a new start!

Prayer:

- **For cleansing and a new start within German politics. (Psalm 51:12)**
- **For fair dealing between the parties and among the politicians, and that God sheds "light and truth" on all the various political perspectives. (Psalm 43:3)**
- **For the release of godly answers to difficult political questions. (Isaiah 11:2-3)** -AS-

Europe and the German federal election result

After the shock of Brexit in June 2016, Europe had again been gaining favour since the beginning of the year 2017. The elections in Holland and especially in France were clearly won against the critics of Europe. At the same time the economies of the countries in the European Union again grew overall, while one could see the consequences of nationalism in England. Everyone in Europe was then counting on a continuation of the grand coalition in Germany with a strengthened chancellor. Therefore the results of the German federal election came as a great shock: Merkel weakened as never before, refusal by Schulz to form a grand coalition, a victory for the AfD, and the only option to form a government was an uncertain "Jamaica-flag coalition" (Black(CDU) - Yellow(FDP) - Green). Suddenly the land which was the source of stability in Europe was no longer a secure factor, with Angela Merkel effectively isolated politically and her days in office numbered.

France's President Macron was particularly affected. His vision was and is the growth of the EU countries together into a federal entity (like the Federal Republic of Germany) with its own parliament, budget, and a finance minister who would work for an improved financial balance between the north and south in the EU. But Christian Lindner (FDP) who is in line to be Germany's next finance minister has already clearly spoken out against this concept in the interests of Germany. The role of Germany in Europe under a black/yellow/green "Jamaica" government must now be newly established. Because of the German election result there is no simple "business as usual", even for Europe!

Prayer:

- **God is building something new in Europe. Let us pray along with His "higher thoughts". (Isaiah 55:8ff)**
- **For a good and constructive understanding concerning the future of Europe. (Jeremiah 29:11)**
- **Pray that the "spring of hope" for Europe continues to grow amongst its citizens.** -OS-

German politicians in Israel

Shortly before the end of the legislature period a request of the chairman of the German-Israeli Parliamentary Group (Volker Beck) to the Foreign Office was answered. He wanted to know with which citizens' organisations German politicians have had meetings in the past four years when they were in Israel for discussions concerning specific issues. The answer showed that SPD politicians (Gabriel, Steinmeier, Nahles, Hendriks) had one-sidedly met only with left-wing NGOs (Non-Governmental Organisations). Among 27 NGOs, only one could be counted as being related to the mid-right political spectrum in Israel. This was a contact that Angela Merkel had. Therefore most of these politicians obviously had no interest in getting a comprehensive picture of civil society in Israel. It indicates rather an interest only in organisations that are criticising Israel. This behaviour can be directly linked to the SPD's own political outlook, as well to those who prepared the specific purpose for such visits. What political persuasion will the next foreign minister have? He will be able to replace those in strategically important positions in the

foreign office (state-secretaries, department heads, etc.) accordingly with new people who share his convictions concerning Israel.

Prayer

- **For a foreign minister who has an open heart for Israel. (Isaiah 66:2b)**
- **For the strategically important positions in the foreign ministry: that people will be appointed who with God's help decisively advance and improve the relationship between Germany and Israel. (Isaiah 60:10a)**
- **That politicians in all parties will be ready to discover the strength and diversity of Israel. (Isaiah 62:1-3)** -RS-

Think tanks

What influences and determines our thinking in this land? How do we get new ideas? And who decides what is discussed in the public arena and in the media? So-called "think tanks" – privately or publically financed – work behind the scenes in politics and in our social and economic system. They provide knowledge and information, develop ideas and encourage people to think in different ways. Politicians are dependent on their advice and expertise. But think tanks systematically follow the set agenda of their sponsors and lobbyists. Their goal is to promote issues, initiate public discussion and to influence public opinion accordingly. In this way they mould the norms and guiding principles in our society. Worldwide there are as many as 6800 think tanks, with some 165 in Germany. Known think tanks are the Bertelsmann Trust, the party sponsored organisations and the Max-Planck-Institute. At the German Prayer Conference we were concerned mainly with the roots of Marxism. We saw how the thinking in our western culture is influenced by humanism, liberalism and nationalism. These ideologies form the intellectual basis for many think tanks.

Today more than ever we need the Holy Spirit to break into our thinking in Germany and Europe in power. We need creative thinkers who together with the Holy Spirit develop Bible-based ways to influence our thoughts and to make room for the Kingdom of God in our society.

Prayer:

- **For Biblical truth to enlighten our society and for ungodly, ideological thoughts to lose their influence. (2 Corinthians 10:4-5)**
- **For a powerful influence of the Holy Spirit in think tanks. (Acts 2:17)**
- **For creative thinkers to rise up and come together to make room for a Biblical thoughts. (Daniel 1:17+20)**

-AS-

Dates for your diary

- 15.11** "PrayDay" for schools by SMD (Student Mission Deutschland) <http://prayday.smd.org/de/prayday/>
- 22.11** Prayer and Repentance Day. (Holiday in Saxony)

*God's blessings from
Rosemarie Stresemann and Team*