

July-August 2019

Giving thanks and thankfulness

I really want to share with you a wonderful experience that we had at the German Prayer Conference in Bonn. As you may know we wanted to bring to God a heart-felt thank-offering for all his goodness to us in the past 70 years in this land. We began the conference with a review of our history, starting in 1945, when our land lay completely in ruins. We were all deeply moved as it was revealed how quickly God has shown his grace to this land of Germany which had in fact systematically abused his Jewish people with such brutality, enslaving them and torturing them to death. As we then began to thank God together in small groups for this immeasurable grace, and for the many events which led to our land being again accepted within the community of European countries, something unexpected happened. Our hearts were so deeply touched by the Holy Spirit that we could hardly stop thanking him. Moreover, we began to weep as our hearts were suddenly even more deeply touched by the revelation of how immeasurably great the love of God is! Right from the start, God also poured out the Holy Spirit as a spirit of thankfulness over us such that we were opening our hearts filled with joy and thanks to God as we progressed from one prayer topic to the next.

None of us could have imagined how strongly the spiritual atmosphere would be changed by the level of thanks and thankfulness. The presence of God was felt by all and there were deep changes in our hearts – and it was clear that there was not only a change in us, but also that something was being opened up over our land. We therefore would like to ask you to help widen this opening by not ceasing to give thanks, so that we now develop in each one of us an enduring *spirit of thankfulness*. Giving thanks and having a spirit of thankfulness is something that our entire land should grasp – but it must begin with us. And it has indeed begun!

“So then just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.” (Colossians 2:6,7)

As you begin your time of prayer, consider the following:

- Living in a spirit of thankfulness always requires that our thanks are focused on God’s goodness, his great and wonderful works, and his faithfulness to the covenant that he has made with us. Praise him that he is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. (Psalm 103:8)
- Are you troubled by the current situation in our land? Then pray the words of Psalm 77 and then begin to give thanks to God. -RS-

Answer to prayer

- Give thanks that in a mediation attempt to save the nuclear deal with Iran, Foreign Minister Heiko Maas stood behind Israel with a clear statement: “Israel’s right to exist is within the national interests of Germany and

is non-negotiable (...). It is absolute. And nothing is going to change this.” -AS-

Review of the German Prayer Conference

From May 24th to 26th, 400 participants came to Bonn from all over Germany to bring a thank-offering to God for the German Basic Law which was established 70 years ago. This prayer conference had a special quality which is hard to explain in words. We became aware of God’s love and grace in a new way and his remarkable work in our nation as we delved intensively into post-war German history, the unparalleled works of God in both East and West, the reunification of Germany, and the gift of the Basic Law. This moved us all so much! Since then a new and deeply felt sense of thankfulness, hope and joy is finding more and more room within our hearts.

The weekend covered many issues in various ways. Besides inspirational times of worship, we concerned ourselves with the reference to God in the preamble and the true meaning of rights to freedom in the Basic Law from an East and West German perspective. Two politicians talked about their daily experiences as Christians in politics.

It was new for us to include our children, the next generation, directly in activities within many of the sessions. This was a real blessing. On the last day we thanked God for the unique character of Europe and again placed each individual nation under the cross and the Lordship of Jesus. But see for yourself: a review of the conference with pictures and video recordings of the sessions can be found at www.gebetstkonferenz.de, and the radio station ERF-Plus will broadcast a report on the conference on July 11th at 8pm. (Unfortunately only in German, but you can enjoy looking at pictures!)

Prayer:

- **Thanks for God’s leading, his amazing presence and guidance during the conference days.**
- **That we come closer to God’s heart and that joy and thankfulness will fill our land. (Psalm 50:23)** -AS-

Renewal within the “people’s parties” in Germany

After the significant loss of support for the SPD and CDU (traditionally strong political parties in Germany) once again, this time in the European elections, it is finally clear that we find ourselves at a break-point in politics which makes a renewal process within these parties unavoidable. At the beginning of the 70s they together could still win around 90% of the votes. Then at the beginning of the 90s both parties lost about half of their members and from then on continuously forfeited the support of the citizens. Now it is extremely important to win back the trust of the people – especially the younger generation. For this there has to be a period of change. Only in this way can the people’s parties show that they really want to govern and develop the land, and know how to bring together the various interests and to unite them in consensus building. For many decades they

were the guarantor for the stability and security of our democracy. We can be very thankful for this.

To overcome the present paralysis in the people's parties, it is necessary to once again carefully examine current structures and concepts, use of governmental power, communication options and ways to build political will-power and to make room for greater flexibility.

It is important that we as intercessors cover this time of radical change in prayer. Periods of restructuring are not easy and often suffer from weak leadership and are discouraged by the lack of visible progress. Prophetic voices have brought to our attention that this will now be a two-year period in the government of Germany during which there will be a spiritual void – “an open gap” that in prayer can be safely closed to protect our land.

Prayer:

- **Give thanks for the stability and security that God has granted to us in Germany over many years through the people's parties. (Psalm 147:7)**
- **That God equips people with wisdom in order to lead the renewal process within the parties. (Proverbs 3:4)**
- **For protection of the parties through prayer and for success in making the necessary changes (so that God's mighty power may be made known - Psalm 106:8) -AS-**

Desire for a spiritual dimension to business management

Because of the increasing speed of change and complexity within today's business world, those in management are reaching their limits more and more. Traditional ways to maintain authority, keep control and stay competitive now often stand in the way when there is a real need to develop new innovative and creative solutions. For this a safe environment is required which allows for a new way of thinking, with fresh ideas and concepts, so that we as a nation can effectively deal with the urgent questions before us concerning our future.

Classic management concepts often fall short, for in situations of extreme stress, it is not the well learnt, tried and tested management behaviour that comes to the fore, but simply a “gut reaction”. So now we read in the latest business literature that we need a “spiritual dimension” to management. By this is meant the development of a behaviour that is mindful of and attentive to oneself and to others around you. There is an increasing desire to set the individual character of a business organisation as well as its sense of purpose and system of values onto a firm spiritual foundation. Businesses are therefore now turning to the practice of “mindfulness” in further training of their managers. In many cases this is based on eastern religions such as Buddhism and on practices such as Zen meditation. (Translator's note: see “Mindfulness” under Wikipedia for more details.) We need the courage to develop concepts based on the Christian faith to specifically support those in business management and to introduce them to Jesus.

Prayer:

- **That business managers will discover Jesus as the true spiritual source for business life. (John 4:14)**
- **For the development of Christian concepts to provide spiritual support for managers. (Revelation 3:8)**

- **For a safe environment in which new ideas for business and politics in our nation can be developed for the future. (Isaiah 11:2,3a)**

-Esther Matatowski, Coach and Mediator, M.A.-

Summer outreach and evangelistic events

According to a poll by Spiegel Magazine, increasingly fewer Germans believe in a God. In comparison with the same poll in 2005 the number fell from 66% to 55%. It appears that God is playing less and less of a role in the lives of Germans, although 66% of those questioned believe in miracles. According to the Jesuit priest, doctor and psychoanalyst Eckhard Frick, the interest of people in spiritual issues has actually grown in the last years, but they find what the church has to offer is too “bureaucratic and academic”.

The Bible presents God to us as a God who does miracles, who we can experience personally and who is the source as well as the destination for every “spiritual interest”. He has set eternity into the hearts of all of us and along with it also the desire to experience his life and works for ourselves (Ecclesiastes 3:11). Let us strive to proclaim and be witnesses to him in our land, as the eternal God, yet who is always ready to be involved in every aspect of our lives.

Now over the summer period there will be many evangelistic outreach events and open-air worship services in Germany and Europe where people will have the opportunity to meet with God personally. Let us pray that the message will be delivered with a “demonstration of the Spirit's power” (1 Corinthians 2:4), so that people will have a real experience of Jesus and turn to him in faith.

Prayer:

- **For all outreach, open-air worship services and evangelistic events during the summer months. (Colossians 4:3)**
- **For a revelation of the reality of God in our land. (Ephesians 1:17-19)**
- **For the people of Germany to have a renewed faith in God. (Mark 11:22)** -TF-

Perception-changing Israel Tour

After the recent elections in Israel, Netanyahu has not been able to build a coalition of parties that would have the majority of the seats in the Knesset. The parliament has passed a motion to dissolve itself and new elections will take place in September. Just the difficulty in building a government majority shows how extremely diverse the various political and religious party expectations are in the land. If you want to understand more about the complexity of life in Israel in order to be better informed when you pray, we invite you to join our first “Perception-changing Israel Tour” (in German: Blickwechsel-Wächterruf-Israel-Gebetsreise) from February 23rd to March 1st, 2020. Rosemarie Stresemann (RS) and Alexander Schlüter (AS) will be the leaders from the Call of the Watchmen and further details (in German only) are available from **Israel.de** at <https://is.gd/Lo9ayr> .

God's blessings for the summer period!
Rosemarie Stresemann, Alexander Schlüter and Team