

September 2020

**A change in our lives and world begins in our hearts**

Our hearts are the “wellspring of life”. (Proverbs 4:23). God’s Spirit dwells in our hearts through faith. (Ephesians 3:17). Our hearts are made to reflect the character and nature of God in this world (2 Corinthians 4:6,7) – also in our prayers. The cross of Jesus makes it possible to do what we cannot do by ourselves – to make a change in our hearts. God uses our hearts as places of transformation in order to literally turn the world up-side-down. It has always been this way. Real transformation begins with hearts that are touched and changed by God. Then the light of Jesus shines out through our hearts and no-one can resist its power. When we look into how the church began, we discover how God, through the hearts of the disciples and apostles, made history in Europe at the time and left us with such a rich spiritual legacy. There we see the hearts of the martyrs, whose powerful prophetic witness shook the mighty powers of the world. There are the monks and nuns who founded places of prayer and dedicated their whole lives to the kingdom of God and transformed society. And there are the missionaries who carried the gospel from Europe into the world. They all changed Europe and their light shone brightly in the darkness (Isaiah 60:1-3). Now it’s our turn, and our calling as prayer watchmen could not be clearer than it is right now. How will we impact Europe through our hearts?

We soon realise that knowledge of all the relevant information does not automatically make our prayers effective. Our prayers are so much more powerful when they are permeated with the fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, faithfulness, ... - Galatians 5:22,23) – with the nature of God. Then they generate the power to make a transformation. It is in our hearts that a change in our lives and world begins. Are we able to open our hearts to our heavenly Father so that he can deliver us from anxiety, insecurity, broken relationships and hopelessness, and can we lay our own thoughts and desires at the foot of the cross?

-AS-

**Thanks and an answer to prayer**

During the last two weeks in August and for the first time, 185 Israeli Airforce pilots came to Germany for training in joint manoeuvres with German pilots. They also together remembered victims of the Holocaust and the massacre of Israeli athletes at the Olympic Games in Munich in 1972. This was a very moving expression of a growing trust and deeper friendship between Israel and Germany.

-AS-

**Tension during the corona-virus crisis**

We are all daily confronted with information, numbers and analyses concerning the corona-virus. Neither the down-playing of the crisis nor the over-emphasis of the pandemic are of any real help. But how do we **as intercessors** keep a balance in all the tension? Firstly, let us be careful that we do not lose sight of God’s involvement in the crisis (with all the controversial opinions). We must fix our eyes on Jesus, who is our guide, light and salvation. (Hebrews 12:2; Psalm 27:1).

First and foremost, we do not expect support and solutions (deliverance) from the politicians, but rather from our God and Father who is our security. (Psalm 121:1). **Have we not experienced his intervention in the destiny of our nation in so many ways? Is he still not making history with us?**

Being thankful helps us to live without fear, to show trust and confidence, and to guard our hearts. (Proverbs 4:25,26). Praising God also changes the atmosphere in our land, where the powers of anxiety and chaos in our society seek to dominate and cause division.

Let us then undeterred take up our mission to pray for our leaders in government (and our people). (1 Timothy 2:1-4). Our prayers can do much at this time (James 5:16b). They make way for God’s plans and his kingdom to come – also where there is darkness. (Luke 11:2). Let us allow no room for a spirit of complaint, judgement and self-righteousness, but rather pray in the spirit of reconciliation.

Finally let us bend the knee before the Father, who wants to strengthen us and make sure that we are firmly rooted in the love of Jesus, and “is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask”. (Ephesians 3:14ff). Humbly we confess that we do not know everything and need his guidance; we need one another and want to keep the spirit of unity despite all our differences.

**Prayer:**

- **Thanks for God’s power, action and guidance in all circumstances during this crisis. (Daniel 2:20-22)**
- **That God’s light brings clarity into every area in our land. (Psalm 43:3)**
- **For wisdom in deciding how to act and that God leads us safely out of the crisis. (Psalm 91:2-3)** -AS-

**Economic recovery**

We are experiencing a historic decline in the economy in Germany, not only in specific areas, but in the economy overall and in all regions. With an export-oriented economy Germany is strongly affected by the impact of the corona crisis globally. The German economy must not only recover from the consequences of recession, but also shape the economy to be competitive and sustainable for the future. This crisis offers the opportunity for a new start and a new direction for the German economy.

For this there are a number of ideas and approaches:

- (1) The strengthening of research and development in small to medium sized businesses.
- (2) Promotion and improved support for start-up businesses and for the self-employed.
- (3) The upgrading of education and training facilities.
- (4) The creation of environmental-friendly infrastructures and the requirement for sustainability.

Above all we need a new and firm connection and linkage of our economy and our financial security to God’s economy. We submit our land again to the leadership of the Holy Spirit in all areas of the economy and repent for allowing ungodly standards, principles and ways of life to develop in our land.

**Prayer:**

- **Father, we ask you to help us to repent and for recovery. You should be our security! (Psalm 51)**
- **For godly wisdom (ideas and new ways) to lead our economy in the process of recovery. (Psalm 23:3)**
- **For encouragement and timely help for the self-employed and businesses which are struggling to survive economically. (Hebrews 4:16)** -AS-

**Lebanon and Israel**

The enormous explosion in the Beirut harbour on August 4<sup>th</sup> killed more than 150 people and injured some 5,000, and about half of the city was damaged and made uninhabitable. Hospitals are filled beyond capacity and about 300,000 people are homeless. The harbour has been destroyed and the most important supply route for goods into Lebanon has been completely cut off.

In addition to the many international rescue efforts, Israel has also offered medical equipment and supplies as well as help for the treatment of the injured, all of which was however rejected by the Lebanese government. Israel and Lebanon have been officially at war since 1948. In 2006 Israel was engaged in a war against the Shiite terror organisation Hezbollah which is supported by Iran and has been a part of every Lebanese government since 2005. Many times in the past weeks the Israeli army has fended off attacks by Hezbollah on the Golan Heights.

Protests in Beirut against the ruling political establishment since October 2019 have paralysed the economy and brought Lebanon to the brink of insolvency. The corona crisis has made the situation even worse and the Lebanese currency has lost more than 60% of its value in the last few months. In a land that was once rich, hunger is spreading all over. One week after the explosion, the entire government, which had only been in office since January, resigned following violent demonstrations for reform.

Lebanon is geopolitically a gateway and spiritually a key nation for the entire Middle East. Christians in Lebanon believe that this crisis will be the beginning of a great awakening in this part of the world. (Song of Songs 4:8ff).

**Prayer:**

- **For a new Lebanese government, free of influence from Hezbollah. (Psalm 29:3-7)**
- **For peace and reconciliation between Lebanon and Israel. (Isaiah 60:10-14)**
- **For mercy, hope and healing for Beirut, also through help from Germany. (Jeremiah 29:17-20)** -KH-

**Opening of schools after the summer break**

In September, school holidays will have ended in all federal states. The start of the new school year will be significantly different from all previous years. Security arrangements, hygiene measures, distancing rules, wearing of masks, etc., will take away much of the joy and the feeling at ease which children normally experience on special occasions, such as on the first day at school. In many states some schools were already again closed at the time for opening due to actual or even suspected local corona infections. National and local authorities are both providing the help needed to improve

education by addressing the overall lack of the latest technological equipment and services in schools which has become clearly evident during the corona crisis. Teachers see governmental guidance for the opening of schools after the holidays as crucial and many are afraid of the risk of infection in closed rooms with a large number of children. The tension caused by the ongoing influence of the corona pandemic is also significant in schooling and education and it affects the children who in school life and in the way they relate with each other in the classroom play an important role. Schooling is not only there for conveying important educational material and attaining learning objectives, but also for experiencing and celebrating together other achievements such as the development of social skills and the ability to build healthy relationships. These in turn have a long-term influence on the development of our society.

**Prayer:**

- **For a return to normality, for feeling at ease and relief from tension in schools. (Zechariah 4:6)**
- **For a clear view of the role of children in the development of our society. (Proverbs 17:6)**
- **For further political decisions with respect to schools and education to be made wisely without fear. (2 Timothy 1:7)** -TF-

**Selection of Union candidate for next Chancellor**

In the autumn of 2021, a new German parliament will be elected. Angela Merkel's 16-year term as Chancellor during many times of crisis will come to an end. A sensitive time in which to set a new direction for the "Post-Merkel-era" has begun. The candidate for Chancellor must win acceptance by the people and as a crisis manager be able to give leadership and direction in times of immense change, strengthening democracy and meeting international expectations.

The SPD has already chosen Olaf Scholz as its candidate, and the CDU will select a new chairperson and Union (CDU/CSU) candidate for Chancellor at the CDU party conference in December. Along with Norbert Roettgen and Friedrich Merz, Armin Laschet is standing for chairman, supported by Jens Spahn. Markus Soeder (CSU) is again under consideration, but has not yet agreed to be a candidate for Chancellor. The CDU still needs solve its internal problems, unite its various factions and agree on a clear policy. The next government will most likely be formed as a coalition of parties – irrespective of which party gets the most votes. Prayer for all the parties to agree on candidates to put forward to become the next Chancellor is very important.

**Prayer:**

- **For a CDU chairperson and Union candidates for the Chancellor according to God's heart. (Psalm 85:10ff)**
- **That God brings forward the next Chancellor and key people who will lead our land in the right way in the future. (Psalm 86:11)**
- **For procedures to be agreed in advance, if coalitions are necessary in order to form a government. (Luke 11:2)** -AS-

*God's blessings for your times in prayer,  
Alexander Schlueter and Team*