

Fellowship in the spirit of the wisdom of God

The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him, the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the spirit of counsel and of might, the spirit of the knowledge and fear of the LORD. (Isaiah 11:2).

Wisdom is supreme, therefore get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding. (Proverbs 4:7).

Wisdom is the beginning of everything. It is by recognising and understanding the wisdom of God that we are able to find our true purpose. *Wisdom is more precious than rubies, and nothing you desire can compare with it. (Proverbs 8:11).* Our intercession requires the wisdom of God so that we can pray creatively together with heaven. Otherwise, we are in danger of only praying for changes in our society and political decision-making. But our intercession must be directed at a somewhat higher level than this – to the kingdom of God and for his glory.

Human wisdom never rises to the level of God's way of thinking and tends to make us to become selfish and insensitive. At first it appears to us that we are much smarter than others. But our pride causes us to end up just bound up within ourselves with no way out. We will be amazed at how God makes the counsel of nations look as nothing and how His wisdom then shines forth as light. God loves to share His greater wisdom with us. Divine wisdom is like a bright light that reaches into eternity. We live in a time when we can hardly make any steps forward without God's greater wisdom. Let us pause and, like Solomon, make the search for the wisdom of God our top priority and be careful not to spend all our energy in just trying to make the best use of our time. Rather, we should be discovering that the door to the wisdom of God in Christ Jesus is open to all of us! Instead of struggling in prayer, we can sit down, have fellowship in the spirit of the wisdom of God, and begin a conversation. "What I have always wanted to ask you - wisdom, is....?" We can learn to work closely with Jesus and the seven spirits before God's throne. (Revelation 4:5).

Prayer is not just about words, but also about contemplating and developing an awareness that Jesus – with God's wisdom – lives in us. (1 Corinthians 1:30). True Christianity is not a life of facing difficulties, but of development. It is the longing to see the glory of the Lord and to be transformed by that glory. This spirit of awareness endeavours to give us a true picture within us of who we are and will be in the future. True maturity is to be seen in Jesus and realised within us. We can submerge ourselves in him and no longer see ourselves separated from him. Because when we experience a revelation of the reality that Christ is within us, everything changes.

Alexander Schlüter

An encounter with the God of Israel

"What do you think about Israel? What moves your heart in this conflict? How can I share what is on your heart and what you want to do in Israel and the Middle East in the next few months?" These are questions which we want to ask God in prayer. God may answer us in such a way that we can encounter him in a new way and in depth. We will sense and realise that God is never far from need and suffering, but is full of compassion and mercy. (James 5:11). We do not need further information about the war so much as we need to know God's heart. For we are called to suffer and be glorified with him as fellow heirs with Christ. (Romans 8:17). Could there not be transformative power here for God's plans for Israel and the Middle East? As intercessors, we first serve the God of Israel in a personal way! Intercession is listening to God's heart and to tarry with him. In doing so, we come to know the thoughts, feelings, and counsel of God. Let us in this way now ask God what is on his heart in this conflict.

Alexander Schlüter

Sound fiscal policy

The German Federal Constitutional Court (BVG) has declared that the supplementary budget for 2021 is unconstitutional, thereby overturning a central instrument of the Federal Government's climate policy. The change to the supplementary budget decided by the Federal Government was the reallocation of the 60 billion Euros that had been raised to cover any costs incurred during the Covid crisis into the Climate and Transformation Fund. The ruling at the same time puts a stop to "shadow" (reserve) budgets and numerous other special

items from the Federal and State governments. From 2024, the hold on incurring further debt which was suspended during the Corona period will apply once again.

While Federal Finance Minister Lindner is giving the ministries clear budget targets, the SPD and the Greens want to continue to suspend (or to reform) the hold on further debt. Lindner has countered this in a guest article for the newspaper Der Spiegel at the beginning of November: "The hold on further debt is based on applying our best wisdom." Sound state finances ensure that the state has the room needed to handle unexpected challenges. The hold on further debt forces us to set priorities, to use public resources efficiently and, last but not least, is also a requirement for future generations. In addition, substantial financial amounts will not be drawn from necessary state support reserve funds every year, when subject to many questionable conditions, and the municipalities lack the personnel capacity to use the money correctly. Germany's structural crises cannot be solved with the use of money. The BVG ruling brings sharp focus on the problems resulting from irresponsible election promises. Could it be that God is telling us: Stop living beyond your means?

Prayer:

- **Let us come before God's throne in humility: prosperity based on incurring debt is built on sand. (1 Peter 5:6-10)**
- **Thanks for all of God's blessings and promises. (Genesis 8:22)**
- **To have a perspective on life beyond dependence on unsustainable materialism. (Matthew 6:19-21)**

Karin Heepen

Self-determination and trans-gender legislation

The Federal Government's proposed Self-determination Act was discussed at its first reading in the Federal Parliament. According to the draft law by Family Minister Paus and Justice Minister Buschmann, every young person aged 14 and over should be able to change their first name and gender entry once each year by submitting a declaration to the registry office. If the parents do not agree, the family courts decide. The self-determined decision about one's own gender identity is said to be a human right. But here biological facts are being ignored that show that in doing this they will not be free from eventual side effects. Opening this path for young people in the process of identity development in puberty can lead to involvement in hormonal and surgical gender adjustments, some of which are irreversible. Countries like Great Britain, Finland and Sweden are again restricting access to puberty blockers. Up to 90 percent of minors, who might want to transition, do in fact reconcile with their biological gender in adulthood. In Germany, however, the medical guidelines were changed in 2020 with the release of "Legislation for Protection against Conversion Treatments", which prohibits therapists from questioning a self-perceived transition identity. Media, including the publicly respected media, do influence children and young people trans-ideologically and intentionally unsettle them in their identity. More and more girls particularly in puberty do not feel at ease in their own bodies. Critical voices are silenced or reported under the pretext of hate speech, also by the Federal Government Commissioner Sven Lehmann who is known to be "queer". The parental advisor: "The Way out of the Transgender Cult" was banned by the "Governmental Testing Agency for Protection from Child and Youth Media".

Prayer:

- **Give thanks that God created us male and female. (Genesis 1:27-31)**
- **For repentance from human pride. (Isaiah 45:9-12)**
- **To stand against the seducers of young people. (Luke 17:1f)**
- **Protective and healing environments for all those young people seduced in the natural and supernatural. (Psalm 139)** Karin Heepen

Evaluation of prostitution legislation

We have repeatedly prayed in the past with great concern for the disastrous situation of prostitutes and for an urgent evaluation of prostitution legislation. The liberal prostitution legislation of 2002/2017 failed in every way and Germany became the preferred destination country for human trafficking. A recent study assesses the legislation in Germany as unconstitutional, because women's basic and human rights are not adequately protected. Instead of protecting the victims, the opportunities for the brothel operators, the sex industry and the customers were strengthened. Experts have long assumed that more than 90 percent of women sell their bodies involuntarily. The overwhelming proportion of prostitutes (mostly from abroad) are traumatised, drug addicts and in precarious economic situations - even if they are not forced by pimps and human traffickers to make their bodies available (at dumping prices). Getting out is life-threatening; prostitution is a billion-dollar business, a new form of slavery. Now there is a push by the Union parliamentary group in Berlin

that wants to criminalise the purchase of sex and ban prostitution businesses and brothels. One speaks here of the "Nordic model", where those who benefit from the prostitution industry - the pimps, operators of brothels and customers - are punished, but not the prostitutes themselves.

But many parliamentary politicians in the current governing red/yellow/green party coalition see this as endangering the right to self-determination. It is the old ideological battle that upholds the right to sexual self-determination but does not take into account the reality of human enslavement. In fact, we need a paradigm shift that makes it clear that there is no absolute right to sexual self-determination. I cannot buy a wife. Sex for money is criminal.

In addition to a clarification of the whole matter, we need a change in social awareness that prostitution destroys the mental and physical integrity of women and stands in the way of their dignity and equality in society.

Prayer:

- **Thanks for the initiative in the German Parliament and a request for a cross-party change of direction to protect prostitutes. (Proverbs 14:34)**
- **For a rethink on how to protect the physical and mental integrity of women. (Psalm 33:5)**
- **For help to be provided to meet the immense needs of prostitutes and for effective ways for them to get out of prostitution. (Hebrews 4:16)** Alexander Schlüter

Yahweh Tsidkenu – a love for righteousness

One facet of what the Bible calls "righteousness" is related to what is the "right", "just", and the appropriate stand to take. For example, my stand before God, the stand of our nation before God, my stand towards "authority", the stand of our government towards Israel, our stand within relationships (parents to children, spouses to each other, students to teachers, etc.). Where our stand becomes unclear and disorderly, we are dealing with unrighteousness and injustice. The result is always some form of suffering, breakdown, unease, and dissatisfaction. We see this in world politics and we experience it firsthand again and again in our personal lives and in our society.

God calls himself "Yahweh Tsidkenu", "The Lord, Our Righteousness". Righteousness and justice are his essence and his passion! He hates injustice and what comes from it. He calls us to love righteousness, to seek justice, to watch over it and to enjoy its blessings. God has prepared the stand for us to take in all areas of life. Accepting this with humility and authority and recognizing and honouring each other in righteousness is part of what it means to establish justice - be it in the family, at work, in prayer, in our neighbourhood, in society, in the community, at all times.

Prayer:

- **For clarity, to take our stand before God, to love justice and righteousness, and to have the courage to consciously do this with humility and authority. (1 Peter 5:5,6; Philippians 2:2-5)**
- **For our government and our nation to stand before God and Israel. (James 4:7,8; Matthew 25:31-34; Gen 12:3)** Tanja Frank

God's blessings in these days of Advent!

Alexander Schlüter and team