

A new level of experience in prayer

We need a new level of experience in prayer in our time. Perhaps it is not so new after all. Perhaps it is old, ancient – and we are simply remembering something that we have always known deep down: that prayer is more than words, positions, spiritual warfare or knowledge. That prayer is not primarily doing, but being. Not speaking, but listening. Not control, but surrender. We live in a world of constant noise. Information, events and news crowd our consciousness. And they challenge our prayer life: everything seems urgent. Everything cries out for immediate classification, activity and reaction. But what if Jesus – as so often – takes a different path? What if he doesn't say, 'Do more,' but 'Go deeper'? We have rediscovered 24/7 prayer – a movement that is bearing much fruit. But now it seems as if the Spirit of God is throwing us a curveball. Not because what came before was wrong, but because he wants to lead us even deeper. into a space where our prayer no longer comes from spiritual fatigue or a desire to perform – but from being rooted in the presence of God. 'Be still, and know that I am God' (Psalm 46:10). We need prayer that sinks into the body. Prayer that not only thinks, but feels. Prayer that is silent – and speaks precisely because of this. Prayer that does not come from our agenda, but from the heart of God.

The great invitation: to pause

If we do not become still, we do not hear. If we do not stop doing, we will not receive. If we do not pause, everything remains the same. But pausing confronts us with our fear of missing out. With the urge to 'have to do something' and the uncertainty of what remains when we do nothing. But this is precisely where the space for new understanding begins. We do not become still in order to pray; we become still so as not to interrupt what God is already doing. In doing so, we sit for a while in a space of not understanding, until God's wisdom reveals itself. We brood over the chaos, as at the beginning of creation. Only in this way can something new emerge – born of a new wisdom. We listen before we speak. Otherwise we have nothing more to say.

Learning from Brother Klaus

Niklaus von Flüe – Brother Klaus – was not a political strategist; and yet politicians sought his advice. Why? Because he had gained spiritual authority through silence, simplicity and devotion. Because he did not take sides, but sought God. Because he did not defend opinions, but received wisdom. His prayer was radically simple – yet deeply transformative: 'My Lord and my God, take from me everything that hinders me from coming to you. Give me everything that leads me to you. Take me from myself and give me wholly to you.' He did not live a life of escapist passivity – but a life of depth from which true peace was born. In this way, he became a peacemaker without words, a bearer of a higher perspective. Perhaps that is exactly what our time needs: less analysis, but more insight. Less classification, but more presence and encounter. Fewer words, but more reality.

Encountering the war in our own hearts

We cannot bring peace as long as we are at war with ourselves and others. What if it were not Presidents Putin and Trump who were the sole problem, but the war within us – in our own hearts. As long as we do not live in peace, we are missing something, and we fight against our insecurity, against the wounded child within us, against our neediness, our weakness and our fear of failure. And this inner war is then projected outward: in harshness and dogmatism. In activism and spiritual overthinking. But Jesus says, 'I give you my peace – not as the world gives it' (John 14:27). This is not peace through victory, but peace through surrender. Through letting go and trusting.

The space for new listening and hearing

'Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own understanding' (Proverbs 3:5). Perhaps this is precisely the key: not wanting to understand more, but placing ourselves in the place of understanding. Just lingering there. Waiting. Listening. Not because we have to do something, but because we want to receive something new. The place where new things are born is not the place of analysis – but the place of receiving, holding and maturing. But to do this, we must take an important step. We lay all our previous wisdom, thought processes and patterns at Jesus' feet. All our classifications.

Contemplative prayer exercise for this summer period

1. **Sit in a place or area where you feel God's presence.** Sit quietly. Put everything else aside. Breathe deeply. Say within yourself:
"Here I am, Lord." Linger a while. Nothing is planned. You are here – and God is here.
2. **Say a prayer of devotion.** Repeat silently or aloud: "My Lord and my God, take away everything from me that hinders me from coming to you."
Let the words slowly sink into your heart.
3. **Seek peace. Where am I not at peace?** Where am I perhaps at war with myself and others?
Affirm what you feel. Invite the Holy Spirit to bring peace to everything within you.
4. **Perceive and take notice instead of making your own judgment.** What am I perceiving and feeling right now? Without analysing.
Let yourself fall totally into God's presence.

We need new places – not for more prayer in the old style, but for deeper prayer from a renewed heart. Places in which we do not explain, but simply to receive. Places where we do not rush ahead, but linger a while. A new stream flows from the heart. New insight grows from silence. New creation is born from love. Let us pause this summer. Not to pray less, but to pray more truly.

Alexander Schlüter

Making peace only with God's guidance and commandments

Following the US bombing of Iran's nuclear facilities, it is unclear as to what extent they have been destroyed and whether the ceasefire between Israel and Iran will end the war. The Mullah Regime in Tehran could thus cling to power, maintaining its current nuclear program and suspending cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Germany, France, and Great Britain have the opportunity to declare the snap-back mechanism before the nuclear agreement, which has not been adhered to by Tehran, expires in October 2025, thus reinstating all United Nations (UN) sanctions. In the face of the inaction of its Western partners, Israel launched a pre-emptive military strike against Iran on June 13.

Meanwhile, Russia has again intensified its attacks on Ukraine, particularly its airstrikes on Kyiv, while the G7 summit in Canada was only able to agree on a vague joint statement on Iran and Israel. In March, the EU Commission presented the White Paper entitled "Re-Arm Europe Plan/Readiness 2030", which proposes the spending of over €800 billion to make Europe more capable of self-defence by 2030. With the expectation that Russia would be ready to attack NATO territory by 2029, at the NATO summit on June 24-25 in The Hague, it was agreed to increase the military defence budget of each member state to 5 percent of their GDP by 2035.

Will this alone make us able to maintain peace? Peace in Europe or the Middle East cannot be secured primarily through military means. Nations see no alternative but to turn to hostility and war as the way to re-establish and maintain peace, when they have turned away from God and His commandments. (Matthew 24:6-8; Deuteronomy 28:1-2).

In a spirit of repentance, let us pray for peace:

- **You, Lord, are the righteous judge and eternal ruler and guide for the nations. (Psalm 2:10-12)**
- **For the peace of God in us and for our rulers, that we may hear your voice and not be led by fear. (2 Timothy 1:5-7)**
- **That the Lord will establish His throne in Elam (Iran). (Jeremiah 49:38f)**

Karin Heepen

"Flipping the political switch"

Given the open questions in the current (conservative/socialist) CDU/SPD coalition agreement, there are currently fundamental disagreements within the new government regarding the Citizen's Allowance, pensions, and migration control. The CDU wants to replace the Citizen's Allowance with a new, stricter basic security for job seekers, in which job placement takes priority and cooperation obligations and sanctions are tightened. The SPD, regarding the Citizen's Allowance, continues to focus on co-operation, training, and individual sponsorship. The fundamental disagreement is: "Should the welfare state be further expanded or should personal responsibility and fairness be promoted?"

According to the SPD, civil servants, the self-employed, and members of parliament should also pay contributions into the statutory pension insurance system in the future in order to finance pensions. The CDU, on the other hand, is committed to a current pension, where pensioners can earn additionally up to €2,000 per month tax-free to cushion the demographic downturn for the economy and the pension funds.

To limit illegal immigration, the CDU wants more far-reaching measures, such as asylum procedures in third-

world countries, in addition to border controls and rejections. The goal is to reduce Germany's magnetic-attraction effect in and for Europe, while the SPD does not want to declare a state of emergency due to illegal immigration.

A manifesto by more than 100 SPD-affiliated individuals calling for a diplomatic shift in dealings with Russia to end the war in Ukraine is causing further tension. Even though the document has been met with opposition within the SPD, it is exacerbating tensions within the coalition.

Prayer:

- **Let us hold the issues before the Lord during the summer break so that they can be laid down again and the well-grounded solutions can be allowed to mature. (Isaiah 33:1-6)**
- **No profiling of the parties or compromises with stop-gap solutions, but rather that necessary reform or measures for the replacement of irreparable systems are addressed. (Psalm 85)**
- **That the political path is paved for God's good plans for Germany to be welcomed and become a reality in the government and the lives of its citizens. (Psalm 115:1-4)**

Karin Heepen

The silent longing to become more like Israel

Since June 13, events in the Middle East have once again come into the global spotlight. While eyes and discussions are focused on the military actions, a silent but profound movement is underway within the population of the Middle East. In the Arab world, an inner shift is perceptible. A war-weariness that has had enough of "heroic operations" driven by the fanatical idea of destroying Israel in order to experience so-called liberation for themselves, which, however, would leave nothing behind but death, misery, destruction, and bondage.

A new desire is now growing, especially among the younger generation, namely, to become more like Israel instead of destroying it. There is a growing admiration and consequent longing for this, the only democracy in the Middle East to date, and for its society, which not only survives, but thrives amidst all the hostility and fighting. Many in the Arab world, whether in Syria, Lebanon, Gaza, Saudi Arabia, or the Gulf States, openly or secretly celebrate Israel's strikes against Iran, because they draw hope from them to gain their own freedom. Freedom from this terrorist domination that has spread its tentacle-like web across the Middle East and brought both suffering and oppression to its people. The new generation no longer wants to die, but to live. They want a future characterised by education, economic and touristic development, and technological progress. They look to Israel and see in it the fulfilment of a longing that they themselves carry in their hearts. They look with

gratitude and respect at Israel's determined, courageous actions. They see the dawn of freedom on the horizon at this time. It is a silent but profound revolution within the Arab states that is taking place here and, because it is happening from within, could mark the threshold of a historic breakthrough, a new era in the Middle East. Could it be that we are currently on the very threshold of the construction and emergence of this highway of peace between nations with healing, worship and blessing as promised to us in Isaiah 19? Let us pray that what the Lord has prepared for this time will come to pass.

Prayer:

- **For this time of a new glorious dawn in the hearts of the Arab people of the Middle East, and that the longing to become more like Israel will lead to encounters with the living God. (Psalm 110:2-3; 1 John 4:9; Isaiah 61:1)**
- **For the manifestation of this path of peace and blessing from Isaiah 19. (Isaiah 19:22-25; Genesis 50:20)**
- **For supernatural protection in all struggles and afflictions. (Psalm 46)**

Tanja Frank

Rest and recreation for people and nature

Summer has begun. And with it comes the quiet invitation: breathe – slow down – rest - relax. But not everyone can do that. Let us pray especially in these summer weeks for people who are not able to rest in their daily lives even in this warmer season. For political and business leaders who have to make decisions while their own hearts and minds are exhausted after a year of continual work commitments. For their families who suffer from media pressure, publicity, and unrest. For all those in leadership positions – visible or hidden – who long to simply be a respected person for once. For the children who often have to rise and get going very early. For the young people whose souls yearn for their own space and security. For parents, who are torn between pressure and desire. And for the teachers who stumble into the holidays burned out. God has given us times – not only for work, but also for rest. And in summer there can be a quiet call: *"Come to rest, my soul."* It is not only humans who need rest. Creation also needs rest and groans awaiting God's future glory. (Romans 8:18-22) Let us also remember and pray for the rainfall that is needed.

Alexander Schlüter

Wishing you God's blessings in this summer period,
Alexander Schlüter and Team

Note: This is a double-issue for July and August.