



January 2010

Hunger and thirst towards God

When we began the Call of the Watchman in 2000, the intercessors were asked to fast as well as pray on the selected day of the month whenever possible. In recent months I have again heard the call of the Spirit: "Strengthen your prayer with fasting!" We have seen during the past year how the pressure on Christians who hold to the truth of the gospel is increasing. Intercession builds up a counter-force against the powers of darkness (Ephesians 6 v.12). Fasting increases this counter-force (Mark 9 v.29). Andrew Murray says: "Fasting strengthens and deepens our resolve to be ready to sacrifice everything, yes, even ourselves, to attain what we really want to accomplish for the kingdom of God." Jesus teaches us that it takes determination and commitment to get what we ask for (Luke 18 v.1-8). Dear brothers and sisters, I want to ask you from my heart to again strengthen your intercession as watchmen and women for our land with fasting. Let us direct our hunger and thirst towards God.

RS-

National times of prayer and fasting

When the people of God all pray and fast together, it has much greater spiritual power than individual fasting. From January 6th to February 14th, 2010, Harald Eckert, leader of "Christians on the Side of Israel", is calling believers in Germany to "40 Days of Prayer and Fasting" for the church, Israel and Germany. There are three main prayer points:

1. For renewal and growth of the church in Germany.
2. Prayer for Israel
3. For the authority given to the church of Jesus to be effective in bringing blessing, reformation and transformation. (Further information: www.israelaktuell.de)

Under the title "True Happiness" (based on the Beatitudes) the prayer action "40 Days Prayer and Fasting for our Land" will take place for the seventh time during Lent from February 17th to April 3rd, 2010. It will be supported by 60 Christian organisations and prayer movements. Particular themes are given for each day with prayer points in a flyer (also in English) which will be sent to you with this prayer letter.

For the 164th time, the Evangelical Alliance invites you to a "Week of Prayer" from January 10th to 17th with the theme "Being witnesses". Each year the prayer meetings are organised by the local Evangelical Alliance groups (www.ead.de).

Prayer:

- **That God's Spirit would open our eyes in a new way to the lost in our land, so that we can pray for their salvation with weeping and supplication.**
- **That many are open to bring a sacrifice of fasting before the altar from which to receive strength.**
- **That in prayer we can confront the "spirit of the age" in the power of the Holy Spirit.** -RS-

Our national economy

The economy is slowly recovering. The export industry is getting more orders and the Germans have remained calm about domestic demand. However the crisis will still affect the job market next year. The financial cushion of short-time working supported by the state and the trade-in deals for old vehicles have avoided the worst up until now. These deals are now no longer valid and many redundancies lay before us. The number of private and company bankruptcies is increasing. Young people are bearing the brunt of the economic crisis. There are no jobs for those starting their careers and for many of those in training there are no prospects for employment at the end of their training. The measures for accelerating economic growth which were to be stimulated by easing the tax burden are now being contested in the political arena. **Prayer:**

- **Thanks for the clever policies of the government that have prevented a catastrophe as in 1929. Pray for further effective measures that will contribute to the strengthening of the economy.**
- **Pray for a quick and complete recovery of the economy and for hundreds of thousands of new jobs.**
- **Every redundancy is a personal tragedy and every bankruptcy affects the fate of families. Pray for those involved and for young people who have no prospects for the future.** -OS-

The way forward for Germany in Afghanistan

The next international Afghanistan conference will take place in London on January 28th. While politicians do not often think about the individual people involved locally when formulating their goals, God is concerned with the people in Afghanistan. He wants "all people to be saved". The federal government wants to help – and is again looking for ways to offer help practically. The country cannot be set free by military means – therefore specific goals should be defined that must be reached before the withdrawal of international troops. The real question is: "How and when can the engagement of troops be brought to an end?" As a result of the investigation of the parliamentary committee into the bombardment of two tanker convoys and the new appointment of Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg as Defence Minister, the government is additionally under pressure to clarify the purpose and meaning of the stationing of troops in Afghanistan. The country needs more development aid. Already available aid to local agencies often gets blocked in corrupt

distribution channels. The Christian aid agency “Shelter Now” (www.shelter.de) is the only organisation in Kandahar that offers help to refugees in winter time. But in contrast to other organisations, it gets no money for its services from the Foreign Ministry. **Prayer:**

- **That the political pressure on the government does not stand in the way of getting help to Afghanistan, but rather makes ways to get it there more effectively.**
 - **That financial help from Germany does not get blocked in corrupt distribution channels.**
 - **That local security can be improved for everyone.**
- RS-

Europe – God is at work

Europe has entered a completely new phase in its development. Many have prayed intensively for the future direction of Europe, in the knowledge that a Christian’s prayer releases the perfect will of God in the land. I see the following result: After God had humbled and shattered the dreams of the EU political elite, who had excluded him from their new constitution (2002-2004) together with his gracious gift (the Judeo-Christian heritage), he opened for Europe once again a door to the future on October 2nd with the YES vote of the Irish. “Lisbon Treaty” is the name on the archway through which Europe enters its new future. God has broken the pride of the “mighty” but he has not abandoned *Europe*. It is a pity that we as Christians do not pray specifically and consistently for these matters and therefore leave room for darkness to enter. Some have recognised the need and pray either regularly for a Member of the European Parliament or in an “emergency” (occasionally) with our so-called “International Gideon Army”. You are welcome to join us – just let me know! God is at work:

1. After the Lisbon Treaty the European Union will in future have a “President of the Council” and a “Foreign Minister”. Whoever first fills these posts will decisively influence the nature of the offices. Many have prayed. And God has appointed as the President of the Council a humble man with a real sense of duty, the Belgian Prime Minister Herman Van Rompuy. He is a believing Catholic Christian and we know that every week he retreats to a cloister to seek God in prayer. Up to now little was known about the new Foreign Minister, Catherine Ashton, from Britain. She will conduct her office not with “show” but with quiet diplomacy.
2. The fact that the “chiefs” of the EU nations have not chosen prominent personalities, but rather two less significant people from the “third row”, really shows that the EU will remain as it is with independent national states even though there will be increasing cooperation. God has heard our prayer for protection from a “Super-State” and set the direction.
3. It is very important for Israel to know who in the EU will lead the “Delegation of the European Parliament for Israel”. And God performed a miracle in that the Dutchman Bas Belder, a reliable supporter of Israel, was elected. His deputy is the Italian Magdi Cristiano Allam, a reliable brother in the faith.

Prayer:

- **Thanks that God disciplines us but does not reject us (Psalm 118 v.18). He is in control (v.16).**
 - **Blessings on Herman Van Rompuy and Catherine Ashton. For good advisors for both of them. For rapid adjustment to their new responsibilities.**
 - **For Christians to wake up and bring Europe before God in prayer in all kinds of ways and to believe that he can change things (Psalm 124 v.8).**
- OS-

Renewed attack on the freedom of speech

On December 7th a large number of homosexuals disrupted a lecture by the protestant professor of philosophy Edith Duesing at the University of Cologne. Edith Duesing, with more than 400 others, had signed the declaration “For Freedom and Self-determination” in the course of the disturbances during the congress in Marburg. (See prayer letters for Germany - May and June 2009.) The professor has been under pressure ever since. Her philosophy lecture on Schiller (historical German writer and poet) would have been massively disrupted by lesbians and gays if the Vice Dean of the faculty had not come to her rescue.

Please pray:

- **For courage, protection and wisdom for all who find themselves under pressure because of their stand for the basic legal right of freedom of speech (Psalm 18 v.30-39).**
 - **That the light of the Holy Spirit increases and that evil campaigns of lies will have no success (Isaiah 5 v.20).**
- RS-

Keep praying

We ask you this month to continue to pray for the **release of those kidnapped in Yemen** and for **those persecuted for their faith** (Psalm 88).

Other events for prayer:

- 27.01** Remembrance Day for the Victims of National Socialism (Nazi) in Germany. (Also International Holocaust Remembrance Day)
- 07. – 14.02** “Marriage Week” – an initiative with the goal to strengthen the value of marriage in our society. At the centre are activities to promote the success of marriage relationships. The organisers ask us to especially pray for all the preparations and activities. (Information: www.marriage-weekinternational.com)

God's blessings for the New Year from Ortwin Schweitzer and Rosemarie Stresemann