

July/August 2012

Keeping watch for the glory of the Lord

God has called us to be watchmen in prayer. We not only want to be alert to recognise dangerous situations and to pray for God in his grace to intervene. Let us also increasingly keep watch for the glory of God in our land. We read in Habakkuk 2 v.14 that the whole earth will be filled with the *knowledge* of the glory of the Lord. The glory should then be seen by all. Worldwide, Christians are looking for a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit, for the glory of God can only be revealed through the Spirit of God. Let us in Germany also expect that God hears our prayers and that “his glory appears over us” (Isaiah 60 v.2). But consider also a change in your heart. Is the desire for God’s presence increasing? Are you seeing the power of God at work more clearly?

We have already seen reports from some of you on Facebook. We would really love to hear from more of you!

-RS-

Political action against Salafists

In the October 2011 prayer letter we advised you of the increasing danger of terrorism through Salafists and prayed then and also in May that the Interior Minister would find ways to curtail the influence of extremist preachers. According to the information from the national security services, the Salafists are considered to be a particularly dangerous Islamist movement. Salafism is a catchment pool for Islamists who are prepared for terrorist acts and has about 4000 members in Germany. In the middle of June the Interior Minister banned the most dangerous mosque association called “Millatu Ibrahim” in Solingen. He will not tolerate the fact that Salafists want to replace the free democracy of the German state with Sharia (Islamic) law. What he could not know is that in Solingen prayer groups have been praying for God to intervene as the danger has already been recognised in the city. At the same time a further 70 homes and premises of mosque associations have been searched throughout Germany in an attempt to uncover a suspected network of radical Islamists.

In order to ban an association in Germany strong legal evidence is required to establish the degree of risk. Will these searches lead to further bans?

Prayer:

- **Thank God for the answer to prayer, that dangerous threats from Islamists will be resolutely confronted at the political level. May it continue!**
(2 Corinthians 4 v.15.)
- **For the work of the police and national security forces: that divine light exposes the darkness.**
(Ephesians 5 v.10-13.)
- **That God protects our land from terrorist attacks.**
(Psalm 127 v.1.)

-RS-

The world of banking

In 2008 we experienced a “banking crisis”. At that time states prevented the collapse of their banks by making money available to (“rescuing”) the banks. But the hope that the banking system would reform itself was illusory. The real purpose of banks is to make money available for business activities, in other words, to serve the people. Instead of this, they began to engage in speculative dealings with savers’ deposits at high risk but with the prospect of a two figure return. Governments declined to regulate the banks before the crisis since they deemed that the banking business would already be regulated by “free market forces”. Until it was too late! Then the banks for the savers had to be rescued by the tax money of the savers.

As for an effective regulation of banks, almost nothing has happened since then, because any action must be taken internationally. Capital resources of banks had to be raised and a tax on stock market business should also be imposed (financial transaction tax). A true regulation of banks by states is however still not in place.

Prayer:

- **The core of the issue is the meaning of money in spiritual terms: either as an aid to the wellbeing of mankind or as an enslaver (“mammon”). Pray for deliverance and a new perspective for this nation.**
(Luke 16 v.10-13.)
- **For the development of a new business approach in the banking world that serves citizens and small enterprises, so that we can receive a new blessing.**
(Jeremiah 31 v.28.)

-OS-

Europe

Europe with 27 EU member states, 17 of which are bound by a common currency, is in upheaval. Many are giving Europe only three more months in its present form – a new order is on the way.

A high level working group comprising the Presidents of the Council (van Rompuy), the Commission (Barroso), the European Central Bank (Draghi) and the Euro Zone (Junker) is already working on a proposal for a new order in Europe. A break-up of the Euro Zone – a taboo issue until now – is no longer being excluded. The determining line would then be the expected norm for each respective economy, that is, the question of whether a country can remain in the Euro Zone or not. Each of the debt-ridden states would then have to stay outside until its economy had again reached the Euro Zone norm. The new Euro Zone would then comprise only those states with similarly strong economic power. The result would be a “two-speed Europe”.

The alternative would be to stay with the present arrangement of a federation of all states, both strong and weak. The consequence: a continuing high financial burden (especially for Germany) and the extension of

central control from Brussels to monitor national budgets and require changes where necessary. The currency union would become a fiscal union as the penultimate step to the political union of Europe. Many say: we do not want this; others say: this was the real goal of the European unification process from the beginning.

Prayer:

- **Divine inspiration for those responsible for the decision on the right form of a future Europe in freedom and unity.**
- **We Europeans confess before God our helplessness and unrighteousness. We no longer know what the future holds and pray for mercy.**
(2 Chronicles 7 v.14. Daniel 9 v.18-19.) -OS-

Challenge of the change in energy policy

At the end of May, after the election loss in NRW, Norbert Roettgen was surprisingly dismissed by Angela Merkel as Minister for the Environment. The new minister is Peter Altmaier who has to develop a clear plan for the implementation of the agreed transition from nuclear power to renewable energy sources. The generation of electricity is the most important and most complex project. New power plants, transmission networks and energy storage must be built by 2020. The necessary networks to carry the wind energy from the north to the south will entail costs in billions of Euro which today's private users will have to bear. For industrial users there are extensive and complex special pricing conditions. So there is also an issue of fair treatment that requires another political solution.

The second problem is the question of the storage of nuclear waste. 31 nuclear plants must be demolished, decontaminated and all materials safely stored away. Since the use of Gorleben as a nuclear waste storage location was abandoned, we should now pray that a much safer location will be discovered and thoroughly investigated.

One further problem: Due to water infiltration at the old Asse salt mine, 126,000 barrels of light to medium radioactive nuclear waste stored there have to be made as safe as possible. The structure of the mine is very unstable and this is a race against time.

The Environment Minister is now planning a special law to allow nuclear waste to be salvaged more quickly.

Prayer:

- **For the Environment Minister and his staff: that the good will of God be made known and successfully implemented in the actual work. (Matthew 6 v.10.)**
- **That a suitable storage location for nuclear waste will be found that is nationally acceptable and that the problem at the old Asse salt mine will be quickly resolved.**
- **For solutions that can also be used in other nations.**
-RS-

Our health care system

The shortage of doctors in rural areas is already a reality to which the government is responding with a new health care bill. It sets aside centralised control and allows the Associations of Statutory Health Insurance Physicians freedom to establish specific measures in their own areas. It is not however enough just to offer financial incentives to the graduates in medicine each year to take a job in the area of health care. As women are in the majority in the next generation of doctors, they are looking for a better balance between career and family when working in hospitals or local practices. Doctors are today under extreme pressure to reduce costs. Administration and documentation take up a great amount of time. The medical associations are considering how the introduction of medical and administrative assistants could relieve the pressure.

Prayer:

- **Blessings and encouragement for all who are gifted and called by God to work in health care.**
(Romans 11 v.29.)
- **For a new way of thinking, including among the older generation of doctors, to open new career prospects especially for the female graduates.**
- **Wisdom for the leaders in medical and insurance associations so that their decisions will effectively relieve pressure on doctors. (Proverbs 24 v.3.)**
-Guenther Gundlach, Christians in Health Care-

Evangelistic outreaches this summer

Many small and large events are taking place this summer. At the biggest International Heavy Metal Festival "Wacken Open Air" in Schleswig-Holstein (29.7-05.08), 20,000 "Metal" Bibles will be handed out.

At numerous children's and youth camps and retreats, many in the next generation will be won for Christ or strengthened in their faith.

The prayer walk "Gemeinsam Beten und Bewegen" (pray and move together) continues in July through Leipzig, Bayreuth, Nuremberg, and ends near Stuttgart on August 1st after three months on the road.

Prayer:

- **For open hearts and many opportunities to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ. (Colossians 4 v.2-6.)** -RS-

Other events for prayer

- 20.07-18.08** 30 Days of Prayer for the Muslim World during Ramadan. To order the prayer booklet, visit: www.30-days.net.
- 01.- 05.08** German Evangelical Alliance Conference in Bad Blankenburg.

*May God bless you in this vacation period.
Ortwin Schweitzer, Rosemarie Stresemann
and Markus Egli*