

Coming from the depths of God's being

A few days ago, I had an amazing experience. In prayer, I watched as we in the Call of the Watchmen were given a new rank in God's army, shown by the addition of a star on the epaulette of my uniform. Then I realised that I was among many others before the throne of God. We were all pouring out our hearts to Jesus and I once again laid down our prayer network at His feet. The Call of the Watchman is God's network and He can lead it and use it as He pleases. That is what I was hearing in my heart at that moment. Then inwardly I heard God's voice, rumbling like thunder: "Watchmen, oh watchmen, I have called you and want you come deep into my heart. Come to the place of seclusion in the depths of my being. Come to the place where political policies and history are being written!" It was an invitation to know and experience the mysteries of God's will for us. Then I saw that we were given white horses on which we could ride at breakneck speed, enabling us to overcome the obstacles that may lay before us.

God is calling us to a new position and responsibility - with a star on our shoulder! With this new rank comes a new way of acting. As I experienced in the vision of the throne room, it became clear that it is the powerful voice of God that not only gives us a new identity and position, but also makes it possible to tackle everything. In prayer, we always have to recognise the power of almighty God. This is so important for us to keep in mind because as intercessors we must no longer allow ourselves to be overcome by the magnitude of the problems we face. Not because they might not be so tremendously challenging as we think - they certainly can be - but because we have an answer to them. That answer lies within God himself - in the depths of his wisdom and knowledge, in his counsel. The horses stand for the power available to us when we act together with Jesus and with the heavenly world. In heaven we come into and experience another environment and atmosphere. In order to have an influence on the culture and events of our time, we need to act with this environment and atmosphere in our hearts and minds - one of strength, peace, joy, serenity and wisdom. Heaven - with myriads of angels, the cloud of witnesses and, above all, God himself - has a message for us: "You should no longer act on your own, but fall into line with heavenly forces".

Alexander Schlueter

The Spirit of God in Europe

When we pray for Europe, for the war in Ukraine and wrestle with Germany's role and the growing danger of war, we should not just have the political environment and current events in mind. Europe is saturated with prayer. Many seeds of prayer, old and new, have been sown deep into the soil of Europe over the centuries. God invites us to join and be in agreement with the prayers of past generations in Europe, for then they continue to have validity and power. We are currently experiencing a phase of upheaval and instability. In the spirit, however, God's promises have been sown, which through the centuries are uniting us in a network in Europe. God calls us to ask for and walk in the ancient paths (Jeremiah 6:16a). We want to guide our country and our continent through this difficult time and in the Spirit join in with God's plans for Europe.

The Spirit of God intercedes for us with sighs which cannot be expressed in words (Romans 8:26). A new sound should be heard, coming from the depths of many hearts. And let us pray that those in power in Europe will heed and follow the call of wisdom from the Spirit of God, which is there to help with insight and understanding (Proverbs 1:20-23).

Alexander Schlueter

The way out of the desert

When we study the exodus of the people of Israel from Egypt, we make some very interesting and informative discoveries. It is a story of miracles and of God's provision and, at the same time, of the challenges. Many unexpected experiences at various times, their judgment and evaluation of these experiences, dissatisfaction with their current situation, and over-

coming of all the challenges of the desert environment repeatedly caused disappointment and frustration among the people of Israel. This resulted in an attitude of grumbling and complaining within their hearts.

A consequence of this continuous attitude of murmuring against God, of contempt for his nature and divine purpose for them, was that almost everyone over the age of 20 had to die in the desert, and the duration of the desert wandering was extended to 40 years. Clearly, this was a serious offense with far-reaching consequences!

As we look back at the history of our nation, we too see a history of grace and God's provision and, of course, of many challenges. And we, too, have largely given in to an attitude of grumbling, complaining, whining, rebellion, negative judgment, and more - both within society and in the church, the body of Jesus.

As followers of Jesus, do we recognise in this attitude a form of contempt for God and lack of belief in his goodness, love, and authority? Do we see in this a denial of the nature and will of God, whose thoughts are only of hope for our future, and for whom we are his messengers and ambassadors?

It's not so much about not accepting the circumstances, but about evaluating, acknowledging and correct understanding of the reality of our God, his nature and his good will for us.

Prayer:

- **For us as the body of Jesus: to bring into the light our own attitude of heart and for repentance. (Psalm 139:23+24)**
- **For a deeper recognition of the nature of God, and his goodness, love and authority. (1 John 4:16)**
- **Awareness of our being ambassadors of Christ in society. (2 Corinthians 5:20)**

- **As Christians, believers in Christ, to bring a “release” from negative thinking into our society through the message for life and the gospel of peace. (Ephesians 6:15)**

Tanja Frank

Legacy of Pope Benedict XVI

The passing of Pope Benedict XVI (Joseph Ratzinger) on the last day of the year marked an event which was worth so much more attention than all other signs and declarations of a significant turning point in 2022. With him went one of the greatest thinkers of our time, a gifted teacher in the church, an inspiring apologist and defender of the philosophical foundations of Europe, of law, justice and human dignity. As a Theology Professor, Cardinal and Pope, he saw himself throughout his life as one to stand firmly for the truth - the truth of God as revealed in Christ for the salvation of mankind. Like no other pope before him, he worked to make the Word of God bear fruit in the church and society. In the uprising of 1968 with students revolting against church and state, his most famous book: “Introduction to Christianity”, helped generations of young people to find the truth in the character and person of God.

He reconciled belief in reason and in faith, as they were being presented as opposites in the course of secularisation. He warned against the denial of objective truth and a dictatorship of relativism, which would bring about totalitarianism and the rule of political might over human rights. Freedom comes only with truth, and all that is true, good and beautiful is an expression of participation in the divine. He always encouraged people in a post-Christian world to have a good memory, a clear conscience and a vivid imagination and, as a minority endowed with creative minds, to serve humanity with the best of Europe's heritage. His last words were: "Lord, I love you."

In the first part of his Jesus-book, Ratzinger highlights two events in the life of Jesus with his disciples: the confession of Peter (Mark 8:27-29) and the transfiguration of Jesus (Mark 9:2-8). Let us pray that the theological legacy of Pope Benedict will unfold such as to firmly establish the church as a whole in confessing Jesus as the Christ - God's Anointed One, and that, in the time now to come, an experience of the glory of God will bear witness to the truth of this confession of Christians world-wide, as God proclaimed: “This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!” (Mark 9:7).

Karin Heepen

Standing on the side of the Israeli government

The new Israeli government under Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has been in office since the end of December and is under fire. A visit to the Temple Mount by Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir prompted the UN Security Council to call an emergency meeting in early January, as if world peace were in jeopardy.

In mid-January, Israel's highest court ruled that Netanyahu had to dismiss Interior and Health Minister Arie Deri. The protests in the country are primarily directed against a proposed judicial reform that is intended to limit the court's power to amend or override legislative proposals from the government for changes to the law or for the introduction of new laws.

In December of last year, a study was presented at a conference in the European Parliament, describing the international legal foundations of the State of Israel, why the two-state solution failed, and proposing a path to peace that is consistent

with legal, historical and political realities. In January of this year the study received positive comments in a Frankfurt daily newspaper. However, the article was deleted a few days later and replaced by a "correction" full of misrepresentations, which in turn called for the world to carefully examine the plan for themselves and prompted a Berlin daily newspaper to launch a sweeping attack on right-wing nationalist Christians and the authors.

Prayer:

- **Thanks for the new Israeli government; for protection, unity and strength in seeking the wisdom of God. (1 Kings 3:5-12)**
- **That the discussion about a two-state solution in Germany and Europe gets a new direction which results in the presentation of realistic alternatives. (Ezekiel 39:25-29)**
- **That criticism and interference in Israel's internal affairs will give way to respect for the new government and that Germany will stand on the side of the Jewish state. (Isaiah 2:1-4)**

Karin Heepen

Building up supply sources and networks

Even though the vast majority of people in Germany are doing well economically, we are experiencing rising energy prices and supply shortages for the first time in many years. Greater global economic upheavals are becoming more and more apparent. How can we as the body of Christ be well prepared for the changes and be a blessing to our environment?

Jacob was given Goshen as a pasture area for his animals and crops in Egypt. While the surrounding countries were suffering from famine, he had no shortage of food. At all times, God wanted His people to be independent of the "system of this world" - even though we live in it and take advantage of it. But ultimately, God wants to be our source of sustenance!

God demonstrates his care especially in providing for our needs and necessities materially and financially (Philippians 4:19). In times of crisis, when there are shortages in supply for some of the people, in cities and regional areas, he wants to express his love and his ability to provide for their needs through us – the body of Jesus. We want to become places like "Goshen", places of refuge and of supply for essential needs. And we must want to form networks with others in order to support and strengthen one another. “From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another.” (John 1:16).

Let us ask God for advice and guidance on how we can:

- **prepare well for times of crisis,**
- **gain greater experience of God's provision with regard to financial needs,**
- **and build up supply sources and networks which will be a blessing for our land.**

Alexander Schlueter

Happy Birthday ! - 23 years of the Call of the Watchmen

In February we celebrate the 23rd anniversary of the Call of the Watchmen. Wow, God is faithful. Thank you for being there and investing your heart in prayer for Germany.

Wishing you God's blessing for your times in prayer,

Alexander Schlueter and team

English translation by Phil and Margaret Daniell