

Setting ourselves free from old ways of logical thinking

We are living at a time where we do not know where to go for guidance, and by just looking into the past we will not find the path that we need to follow to move into the future. Therefore, we should not simply copy others. We are so often caught up in old ways of logical thinking and concepts that no longer reflect the new reality that we need to face in order to be able to move forward. Our way of thinking is still shaped by the logic used in past times in the struggle to find a place in this world, for recognition, for the need to deal with the conflicting nature of self-confidence and insecurity, all of which often goes hand in hand with the search for solutions through politics and technical advancements, as well as the deeply rooted concept of independence – from God, from others, in ourselves and from creation. And so we always look for ways out and solutions for the future with the same old logic patterns. But we will no longer find solutions with this approach. We repeat old patterns of activity, thinking that something new will emerge. However, the solutions found in this way always remain part of the problem because they come from the same old source.

“Make more effort!” is the call within us. “That is not high enough! That is not wide enough!” And we often think we are hearing God’s voice. “Run, it will never happen to you!” Encompassed by commotion that forces us to look here and there and distracts us.

Our senses long much more for an awakening in our real being, in our actions and in our lives in God (Acts 17:28a). For too long we have eaten only the breadcrumbs from our Father’s table. For long enough the notion of not having enough has obstructed our view of God’s thoughts of wisdom and abundance. Now is the time to put childish ways behind us ... to know God face to face and to be fully known by Him. (1 Corinthians 13:11-12)

“Come up here and be aware of a new world!” (Revelation 4:1) God’s voice is full of wonder and renewal. It releases thoughts that have never been thought before. His countenance is the gateway leading (out of the old ways of logical thinking at this time) into a new abundance of wisdom that is not of this world, but for this world.

When Jesus comes into our minds, when we are aware of him, above all he makes our thoughts a place of calm and creativity. When we become aware of the Christ within us, our understanding of ourselves completely changes. We waste so much time thinking and living outside of His kingdom, without Him, without an awareness of our relationship with Him! Let us no longer fight with weapons from the past, but rather trust God anew. In such peace and such trust lies a new way forward.

What is the solution? To come out of the struggle, out of thinking in never-ending circles from the past. Where is the way out? It is in our innermost being – in oneness with God. In a new wisdom that we find in a close relationship. God will reveal secrets to us and teach us new paths.

Alexander Schlüter

Being prepared for the future

Socio-political crises have increased dramatically in recent years. The winds of change are gathering pace around the world. This is not a time to stop praying, but we need a new response to a changing situation. In the past, our prayers have been focused primarily on political decision-making processes. But standards and values seem to be dissipating unstopably in the face of change. It is foreseeable that roles, patterns, proposals, and tasks will have to change completely. If the desired and requested changes do not occur, then what will our mission be and what resources will we have? How will we as intercessors be able to respond to this? We want to achieve this together before God. We can also ask ourselves whether changes will actually come from the political system during this time, or perhaps preferably from individuals and movements that God wants to use for the innovation and the shaping of the future. If we cannot “pray away” crises, what kind of response does God want from us? How do we reach a new level of maturity and become capable of action? For God has undoubtedly given us the authority.

In times of uncertainty, we can rely on God’s providence to show us strategic paths. Just as Jeremiah encouraged those who were exiled from Jerusalem to Babylon, in such a crisis it is important to develop a new vision for how God wants to

shape the future (Jeremiah 29). We can ask God for new approaches to prayer.

There is so much to learn in crises. They help us take stock and realign ourselves. In addition, they open-up access to a potential within us that we did not even know we had. This much is certain: God has a vision for prayer for the future, even if it looks different than we had expected.

Let us ask God the following questions this month in view of these times of crisis. Raising questions before God is a significant form of prayer.

- **Community & Values:** How do genuine relationships appear to us during this time? How can we live as a community (or become a reformed community) that is sustainable as times of crisis come more frequently? Or do we still think that everyone must deal with it for themselves alone? How can we as God’s ambassadors become “architects of cities” that are able to thrive in times of crisis? What can we contribute as a prayer network?
- **Economy & Finance:** How can we prepare for the changing global economic landscape? How can we empower Christian entrepreneurs, investors, consultants, and innovators to become exemplary stewards of tomorrow’s economy? How can we become part of the solution to the needs of our society today and in the future?

- **Health:** How do we stay physically and mentally healthy in a stressful time that demands much from us? How do we include soul and body more in our prayers? How do we treat ourselves more attentively and develop new resources?

Alexander Schlüter

Making peace

It is becoming increasingly clear that Ukraine cannot win the war against Russia. Russian attacks are increasing and Ukraine lacks the equipment, strategy, and soldiers to defend itself. A move by French President Macron to deploy NATO ground troops in Ukraine has received approval from various quarters, including the governments of Poland and Estonia. Poland also confirmed the existing presence of NATO soldiers in Ukraine (including from Great Britain). While NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg denies sending NATO troops to Ukraine, war rhetoric is increasing in politics and the media, and fears of an escalation in the event of direct NATO involvement in the war are growing. Chancellor Scholz has so far rejected the deployment of German army soldiers and the delivery of cruise missiles, and is coming under increasing pressure from NATO partners.

Pope Francis was heavily criticised for saying that, in the current situation, it was important to have the courage to raise the white flag and negotiate before the situation escalates further. He made it clear that negotiation is never a surrender. It is about finding a diplomatic solution for a just and lasting peace with the help of international powers in order to protect the Ukrainian people.

Prayer:

- **Jesus made peace on the cross through his blood to reconcile everything to Himself. (Colossians 1:20)**
- **“Blessed are the peacemakers” (Matthew 5:9) was the premise for the policy for the easing of tension in post-war Europe. Lord, let mediators be heard and pave the way!**
- **That in Germany's weakness, the grace of the Prince of Peace is sufficient and His power is made perfect. (2 Corinthians 12:9)**

Karin Heepen

Protecting lives

The Parliament of France has enshrined "guaranteed freedom" to terminate a pregnancy in its constitution by a large majority, thereby declaring it a fundamental right. With this initiative, France desires to be the first country in the world to set a clear example for strengthening women's rights. President Macron signed the constitutional amendment in a public ceremony on International Women's Day on March 8th. He now wants to have this "freedom" written, as a "universal message", into the EU's Charter of Fundamental Rights. Immediately following this, he presented his plans to legalise euthanasia as a law that promotes fraternity (brotherhood) in that seriously ill people would not have to travel abroad to end their lives.

Using linguistic distortion, a spiral of death has been packaged in the tradition of the French Revolution as "Freedom, Equality and Fraternity". There is no "freedom" to kill human life. "Equality" applies to the dignity of every human being, which

also includes unborn children and the elderly. And helping people to die is in no way a demonstration of "fraternity", which, at the heart of Christian ethics, includes every living person, even those who are terminally ill.

Prayer:

- **For mercy for Europe in its seduction and false judgments regarding basic human rights in law. (Jude)**
- **Repentance for the perversion of the law regarding the protection of life and death. (Isaiah 5:20)**
- **We welcome children and that people receive help to live instead of to die. (Zechariah 8:4f)**
- **That Germany stands up against all efforts to establish a right to abortion or euthanasia in Europe (Psalm 75)**

Karin Heepen

Six months after the massacre in Israel

On April 7th, six months will have passed since Hamas attacked Israel in the most brutal way and brutally massacred, mistreated, raped, mutilated innocent people - men, women, babies, children, young people, and senior citizens - and kidnapped around 240 of them as hostages. Kibbutzim were destroyed, cars burned, videos of the atrocities were spread across social media and the perpetrators celebrated. At least 2,200 rockets were fired from the Gaza Strip into Israel that day. By the end of January around 14,000 rockets had been fired and the shelling from Gaza continues. Israel is under daily rocket fire - not only from Gaza, but also from Hezbollah in the north of the country. There are still over 130 hostages in the hands of Hamas - how many of them are still alive is uncertain. Israel's reaction to the massacre on October 7th was and is to wage war against Hamas with the aim of defeating the Islamist terrorist militia in Gaza and thereby freeing not only Israel from further terrorist attacks, but also the population of Gaza from this oppressive power. Hamas, whose charter propagates the extermination of the Jews, and which has in fact occupied the Gaza Strip since 2006, has used large amounts of the international aid money and supplies which are actually intended for the population of Gaza, in the past and in the present, both to build up a terrorist infrastructure and to indoctrinate the population to support its cause.

While the international community focuses on the disastrous humanitarian situation in Gaza, now six months after the start of the war, and finds Israel guilty for this, let us not tire in praying for truth and justice to prevail for Israel and in asking for God's intervention to bring an end to the war and relief to both the people of Israel and the innocent population of the Gaza Strip.

Prayer:

- **Exaltation of God as the righteous and just judge over the entire situation. (Psalm 7:11; Isaiah 5:20)**
- **For God's supernatural intervention and help for all who are suffering. (Psalm 10:12; Psalm 77:14; Psalm 72:18)**
- **For the release of the hostages and for true and lasting peace. (Psalm 122:6; Isaiah 61:1ff)**

Tanja Frank

Jesus is risen, He is risen indeed!

Alexander Schlüter and team