

A new beginning

"See, I am sending an angel ahead of you to guard you along the way and to bring you to the place I have prepared." (Exodus 23:20)

To be wise means to know God and his plans. (Proverbs 9:10) We do not become wise by just keeping ourselves well informed about current events, but by getting insight into what is really happening, and how this is related to the plans and purposes of God in the world. Wisdom is not to be found in being for or against or in many arguments in our time, or in people such as Trump, Merz or Weidel. But only in God!

We cannot base God's blessing and actions with us solely on election results and party percentages. God is leading us into deeper ways in our country and he wants to teach us his wisdom, which is not only to be found in the success or failure of Party A or B, nor in the best coalition and strongest opposition, but must go much deeper into our hearts - so deep that we are able to influence the very nature and the future of our country.

Our search for truth and wisdom can thus only be realised in God and must not get caught up in moral superiority - nor in simple indignation with evil. At this time, we are confronted with the depths to which humanity can fall and yet we must not reject this world because God "so loved the world". (John 3:16) Otherwise we will internally cut ourselves off from people - especially from politicians, with their mistakes, and their quest for power - and then raise ourselves above them.

What does God say about the election result, even when we may have hoped otherwise? We want to ask him this question this month. We want to talk to God, to become more deeply connected with him. To gain an understanding of this time, with its "troubles and confusion", by realising that we need a deeper relationship with God.

Our thoughts are then influenced by a growing trust in God. We can entrust our country completely to him. He does not change "like shifting shadows". (James 1:17) We need this assurance in a time of constant uncertainty. We can trust God on a deeper level because we know that he is also at work on the crooked paths that our country takes. He can be found in difficult circumstances just as much as in the seemingly good ones. We welcome the processes that God is taking with our nation. We are not only results-oriented and judge only by appearances. No, it is precisely in difficult processes that we anchor ourselves even more in God. Hebrews 10:35-36.

As mature intercessors, we move deeper into the mystery of God with our country. It is important that we listen and are receptive for the next part of the journey. We are so quick to get involved with new needs again and again. Because of this, it is important to linger; to rest in God in order to cultivate a growth in our awareness of connection with him and this world. In this way we reach deeper and deeper into a wisdom that is not of this world, that carries the future within itself and that reveals the mystery of God for our country ever more clearly.

Alexander Schlüter

New opportunities for Germany

The recent federal elections have opened up new opportunities for our country. It is now the time to bring many "loose ends" once again into God's perfect order, in all areas where this may be possible. Our spiritual support is so incredibly important for this. The results of the election will certainly not please everyone and they undoubtedly reflect in part the disunity within the body of Christ, but we can however take on our calling as intercessors in bringing restoration to the chaos and healing to the wounds by blessing all those who have been elected and by continuing to pray for good governance and cooperation in our local areas and in our country.

How can we do this in practice? By freeing ourselves completely from negative emotions and hostility towards the developments that do not appear to suit us, and by seeing every person from God's loving perspective. This will certainly also require a good portion of personal thought and prayer so that we can face our own disappointments and fears and lay them down at the cross. But is that not exactly our task as prayer warriors? In washing ourselves and putting on the priestly garments in order to be able to "stand in the gap" and to plead directly to God over such matters with which He is also deeply concerned? How wonderful that we can be ambassadors of reconciliation and healing in our world, which is so torn apart! Jesus has already made the way for all to be reconciled with God through his death on the cross.

This means that, clothed with the bond of peace and the spirit of reconciliation in prayer, we can ultimately bring reconciliation and union into the deepest cracks of our society, so that wounded hearts are healed and divisions are dissolved.

God's intention is always unity in diversity.

We have tremendous power and authority as people of prayer, as kings and priests of God on earth, but we are often not really aware of this and so unmindfully spoil the precious fruit of our sincere prayers and of our faithful service with negative thoughts and words. Let us consciously put on our priestly robes in the coming weeks and allow the Holy Spirit to speak many words of guidance and give us his impressions for Germany, which we can proclaim as blessings and thereby initiate the right changes and actions. And even if we do not receive any special words or see impressions in the silence, we can still know that the prayers of our hearts are powerful.

Alexander Schlüter

Discourse and divine solutions

The dominant themes in the election campaign were migration, the economy, and Russia's war against Ukraine. On these three issues, the country is divided across political camps, across the population and between the East and West. In all three areas, Germany bears great responsibility in terms of foreign policy, as the country that has taken in the most refugees in Europe, as Europe's largest economy, and as the hub of NATO in the middle of Europe. In all three areas, we are

confronted with a change in US policy with regard to Europe and with our continuing role as mediator between Eastern and Western Europe.

We need a socially and economically sustainable policy for the migration issues between "everyone in" or "everyone out", between climate protection or economic growth, and between the maintenance of our own defence capabilities and increasing the national debt for the arms deliveries to Ukraine. In all policy areas, we need freedom for new ideas, non-conformist opinions, innovation, and the will to engage in dialogue with those who think differently.

Prayer:

- **Help us Lord in this period of repentance before Easter, to restrain from promoting our own political opinions, and in this way open ourselves to Your viewpoint, and prepare room for the Holy Spirit to be in the discourse and for divine solutions between all the various political camps in Germany. (Luke 6:36-42)**
- **Friedrich Merz (CDU) wants to agree on a coalition with the SPD by Easter. During the negotiations, let us pray for grace and solutions that neither partner has had in mind so far and that will bring new life to Germany. (Psalm 115)**
- **For the spirit of reconciliation, so that walls fall in the new Federal Parliament, and representatives of all parties will talk openly and constructively with each other. (Psalm 133)**

Karin Heepen

Setting the young generation free

Thirty-five years after the fall of socialism in Germany, a young generation has grown up that no longer knows the ruins of the GDR (East Germany). Among 18 to 24-year-olds, 25% voted for the Linke (Left) as the strongest party in the federal election, and 21% for the AfD (Alternative for Germany). In our capital city, through which the Berlin Wall ran, the party of the heirs of the SED (Socialist) became the strongest force overall in a federal election for the first time. The policies of radical socialism have been made socially acceptable again after decades, with criticism of capitalism and with the agenda of fighting against the right, thus fuelling ideological fronts on both sides. After the losses caused by the BSW party, the Linke party has seen a significant increase in young members in recent weeks and new strength in social issues. With the increase in economic difficulties, it is only to be expected that socialist utopias on the one hand and radical liberalism on the other will continue to gain popularity.

At the same time, young Christians called for prayers in front of the Federal Parliament in Berlin on the day before the election. On February 1, a network of international churches invited people to Berlin to pray for the elections and brought together representatives from politics, business, and the church. Young Christians are standing up and are ready to take responsibility for their country. They see that "salvation" does not come out of politics, but from the cross of Jesus and our country's conversion to God the Father and his order for life. A CDU-led (right-wing) government also needs this spiritual foundation for political renewal in our country.

Prayer:

- **For true repentance for our focus on economic success and material prosperity, which has left many young people without support and lonely. (Amos 6:1-6)**

- **Give thanks that a young generation of Christians is being set free to stand up before God in and for Germany. (Judges 6:11-16)**
- **For inspiring role models for the good, real, and wonderful blessings that God has in store for us, and wants to bring into the world through such models. (Matthew 5:3-12)**

Karin Heepen

Reinterpretation of "tolerance", "values", and "norms"

(Sequel to "Fruits of the 1968 movement" in December 2024)

The departure from norms, traditions, values, and laws of the previous society was one of the characteristics that emerged in the course of the 1968 movement, the fruits of which are visible in our current social developments (in the definition of gender, marriage, and family, for example) as well as in legislation (for abortion, self-determination of how law applies), and which to a large extent has resulted in a new way of thinking and judging. Values were reinterpreted and set out with reference to other opinions - especially the values that are based on the foundation of the Word of God. Terms such as tolerance were reinterpreted so that tolerance no longer means allowing other opinions to be held, but defaming them if they conflict with one's own interests. Herbert Marcuse, who had a strong influence on the thinking of the 1968 generation, gave the following definition: "Liberating tolerance would therefore mean intolerance towards movements from the right and toleration of movements from the left." To some extent, we also find here the basic principle of so-called "political correctness", in which opinions that do not correspond to the mainstream and/or are based on other (such as Christian) values are devalued, labelled as stupid or dangerous and sometimes even silenced in an aggressive manner. Although the establishment of free thought and critical questioning was one of the positive aspects of the 1968 movement, at the same time an instrument of suppression of free thought was in fact created in order to enforce one's own political and ideological interests. On the one hand, the rejection of authority and turning away from obedience to those with authority was promoted, and on the other hand a new form of power and authority, demanding the adoption of predetermined thought patterns, was created and embedded in society.

"What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? Thanks be to God who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!" (Romans 7:24-25)

Perhaps we can see something of the need for redemption in our humanity and in our society.

Prayer:

- **It is the love of God that drives out all fear - including the fear of losing control, and more. Let us pray for a revelation of the love and redeeming power of Jesus! For us personally, for our society and for our politicians. (1 John 4:18)**
- **Where do you notice in yourself tendencies for intolerance and inner aggression towards those who think differently? Be specific, ask for conviction and a spirit of gentleness. (Matthew 5:5).**
- **For a return to God and His loving authority in our society. (James 4:8)**

Tanja Frank

Praying for a new beginning in our land,

Alexander Schlüter and Team