

BORN IN DIFFICULT TIMES

**THE BEGINNINGS OF THE VOLKSMISSION ENTSCHIEDENER
CHRISTEN IN BERLIN (1933 - 1945), ESPECIALLY CONSIDERING
THE BIOGRAPHY OF ITS FOUNDING FATHER KARL FIX AND
HIS THEOLOGICAL INFLUENCE**

ABSTRACT

As a member of the Volksmission Executive Committee, I had the opportunity to explore the origins of this mission and Christian movement on a journey to Berlin in June / July 2000. This inspired me to commit to paper the beginning of this exciting story.

While in 1933 Adolf Hitler emerged from the brown quagmire of National Socialism to become Chancellor of the Reich and to establish his totalitarian state governed by the Fuehrer, a New-Testament apostolic church developed in the same city whose leader, Karl Fix, bravely offered him resistance.

Neither the ban on public gatherings issued in 1934, nor the permanent control by the GESTAPO could quench the burning zeal of the new converts. In 1934, much more than 1,000 participants were counted in the services; many of them experienced miraculous healings.

Through his literature mission, Fix was able to distribute around two million tracts in more than 12 countries. Thus the movement rapidly spread beyond the German borders. Encouraged by his prophetic view, Fix frankly warned the people of the self-proclaimed "Fuehrer".

The Swiss historian Walter Hollenweger, whose standard work *Enthusiastisches Christentum - Die Pfingstbewegung in Geschichte und Gegenwart* published in 1969, which, in its translation of 1997, was entitled *Pentecostalism Origins and Developments Worldwide*, merely mentions the Volksmission in a marginal note without dealing with its historical significance.

Therefore, it is the goal and objective of this thesis, after giving a short survey of how the German Pentecostal Movement came into being, to point out the contribution of the Volksmission, focussing on its establishment over the years between 1933 and 1945. The theology of the founding father regarding soteriology, water baptism and the baptism of the Holy Spirit, as well as his prophetic views, are then described, referring to his numerous publications.

The author is much obliged to all who have supplied him with source material from the early years.

Masters of Theology Thesis

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2002

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1. THE ROOTS OF THE PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT IN GERMANY

1.1 Holiness Movement and Gemeinschaftsbewegung Clear the Way

The German Pentecostal Movement has got its roots in the German "Gemeinschaftsbewegung" ["Fellowship Movement"], which, in the 1870s, was strongly influenced by the Holiness Movement of England. Several German theologians used to attend the Oxford conferences. Moody and Sanky had brought the Evangelistic Movement to the British Isles which should then spread to Germany as well. The "Deutscher Verband für Gemeinschaftspflege und Evangelisation" ["German Society for the Cultivation of Fellowship and Evangelism"], the so-called "Gnadauer Verband", served as a broad channel for the spiritual revival that was then bursting forth everywhere. The necessity of salvation through personal repentance and faith, as well as the necessity of personal sanctification, was emphasized in the sermons of that time. Further central topics were the imminence of the second coming of Christ, and the truth of the Body of Christ in its unity. Divine healing was also testified to in certain places. The newly converted believers gathered in Christian societies and fellowships, yet without separating from the established churches. Conferences for believers were held, Bible study groups developed and new missionary societies were founded.

1.2 Wales Arousing the Sleepers

The Welsh Revival having started in 1904 which is reported to have brought forth about 100000 new converts,¹ by the ministries of Evan Roberts (1878-1947), Seth Joshua, Joseph Jenkins and Jessie Penn-Lewis, caused the seekers in Germany to completely awaken, too. The well-known Otto Stockmayer and others went to find out what was happening on the spot. Their reports about the extraordinary events in Wales were spread far and wide, this Revival being considered a predecessor of still greater things to come. People set themselves to prepare a path for the Holy Spirit, so that in Germany great things might happen as well.

1.3 R. A. Torrey at the Annual Conference of the Evangelische Allianz

In August 1906, the American Evangelist Dr. Reuben Archer Torrey (1856-1928) preached at the annual conference of the Evangelische Allianz in Blankenburg (Thuringia) on the "Second Blessing" or "Baptism in the Holy Spirit", which, according to Acts 1:8, he interpreted as the event of receiving the "Power from on High for being a Witness".² One of the participants was General Lieutenant von Viebahn. He witnessed having

¹ Allen, D. The Unfailing Stream A Charismatic Church History in Outline, Sovereign World, Kent, 1994, S. 110-111. See also Evans, E., The Welsh Revival of 1904, Evangelical Press, London, 1969

² Steiner, L., Mit folgenden Zeichen Eine Darstellung der Pfingstbewegung, Verlag Mission für das volle Evangelium, Basel, 1954, p. 17

received an entirely fresh power for evangelistic service. New revivals were the result.

1.4 Jonathan Paul and Emil Meyer visiting Thomas Ball Barrat

In the spring of 1907, Jonathan Paul³ travelled to Norway, in order to get to know the Pentecostal Movement in Christiania/Oslo founded by T. B. Barrat (1862-1940).⁴ In 1896, Paul had already published a book entitled *Ihr werdet die Kraft des Heiligen Geistes empfangen* ["You will be Endued with the Power of the Holy Spirit"]. In this book, he had stated already 10 years before the events in "Azusa Street",⁵ took place:

As there is such a lack of a fullness of the Spirit today, there is also a lack of spiritual power and of the gifts of the Spirit.⁶

Having returned from Norway, Paul wrote in his booklet *Zur Dämonenfrage* ["On Demonology"],

At those Pentecostal conventions in Christiania, I found a revival movement dealing with deeper purification through the blood of

³ Jonathan Paul (1853-1931) became vicar of Ravenstein after having completed his university studies. In 1899, he started serving as a free evangelist. An extensive study on his life and work has been compiled by Dr. Ernst Giese (Giese, E., Jonathan Paul, ein Knecht Jesu Christi Leben und Werk, Missionsbuchhandlung und Verlag, Altdorf bei Nürnberg, 1965)

⁴ Wessler, G., "Ein Stück Kirchengeschichte", 75 Jahre BFP freikirchliche Pfingstbewegung in Deutschland, Erzhausen, 1982, p. 4

⁵ The report about this remarkable Revival in Los Angeles has been translated by Witt, E., in Wie Pfingsten nach Los Angeles kam (German translation of the report written by Frank Bartlemann), Philadelphia-Verlag Leonberg, Leonberg, undated

⁶ Paul, Jonathan, Ihr werdet die Kraft des Heiligen Geistes empfangen, Deutsche Evangelische Buch- und Tractatgesellschaft, Berlin, 1896, p. 187

Jesus and with the endeavour to experience a stronger outpouring of the Spirit and His gifts.⁷

Besides Paul, the leader of the Hamburg city mission, Emil Meyer, undertook a journey to Norway in 1907. Later, he was to have a great influence on Karl Fix, the founder of the Volksmission. From Norway, Meyer brought two lady missionaries back to Germany. They were Dagmar Engström⁸ and Agnes Telle, who had received the gift of speaking in tongues.

1.5 Heinrich Dallmeyer and the Norwegian Missionaries in Kassel

In Hamburg, those missionaries were heard by Heinrich Dallmeyer from Kassel. He invited them and started a series of conventions in the home of the Blue Cross Temperance League on 07 July 1907.

Even those who should become their opponents later reported the meetings to have been calm and harmonious in the beginning. Thus, Christian Krust quotes from Otto Kaiser's *Erlebnisse und Erfahrungen mit der Pfingstbewegung* ["Experiences and Encounters with the Pentecostal Movement"] (1948, pp. 8-10):

On Wednesday afternoon, I attended the Bible study held by brother Dallmeyer, in which, all of a sudden and unexpected by everybody, one of the Norwegian ladies spoke in tongues. Her messages were translated. They almost exclusively were

⁷ according to Krust, C., 50 Jahre Deutsche Pfingstbewegung Mühlheimer Richtung, Missionsbuchhandlung und Verlag, Altdorf bei Nürnberg, 1958, p. 46

⁸ Kurt Hutten (1901-1979), reports the family name to be "Gregersen" (Hutten, K., Seher Grübler Enthusiasten Sekten und religiöse Sondergemeinschaften der Gegenwart, Quell Verlag, Stuttgart, 9th edition 1964, p. 490

testimonies of the Scriptures, which were directed to the congregation in shattering reverence and seriousness. The atmosphere during the meeting was, in spite of the serious messages, thus that one thought to be in heaven, directly addressed by God. Many of those present began to weep silently, which was an outflow of both the happiness emerging from profound contrition and of a deep bliss. At the end of the meeting the Norwegian spoke the promise from Luke 12:32: "Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the Kingdom."⁹

1.6 The Movement goes Astray

Later, though, the services took on a noisy and restless character. The press reported on these meetings; often, people would gather in front of the Blue Cross home yelling and mocking those participating in the meetings. On the other hand, several started believing in Christ, while others who had been sick were healed.

During this time, Dallmeyer had an experience, the beginning of which Paul Fleisch describes as follows:

On the nineteenth, a certain brother, while praying for Christ to come back again, thought, "The Lord will not return as soon as that." Suddenly the Spirit ascended upon him, he fell to the floor like dead feeling an extreme pain in his chest. When the congregation had left, he received about 32 revelations from 10:30 p.m. to 1 a.m. Each one of these closed with the Spirit's instruction to wait. After, 2–3 minutes the next revelation was given.¹⁰

Ernst Giese comments:

⁹ *ibid.* p. 47

¹⁰ Fleisch, Paul, Geschichte der Pfingstbewegung in Deutschland von 1900 - 1950, Verlag der Francke-Buchhandlung, Marburg, 1983, p. 38 (This book was published previously with the title Die Pfingstbewegung in Deutschland: Ihr Wesen und ihre Geschichte in fünfzig Jahren, Heinriche Feesche Verlag, Hannover, 1957)

In this case, the following questions must be asked: Had Dallmeyer forgotten the Word of Scripture given in 1 Corinthians 14:32, "The spirits of prophets are subject to the control of prophets"? Should this man not have realized by the strange ambiguity he was in, and by the peculiar and medially-occult manner in which he made his utterances, being prostrated on the ground, and, above all, by Schrenk's warning to beware of false prophecy, that in this night, seeking a private revelation, he had fallen victim to the occult? Several times, the Holy Spirit of God had warned him by the interpreted messages in tongues given by the Norwegian ladies to "make a difference between the genuine and the false".¹¹

From now on, the Kassel movement went astray. Fleisch and Giese describe the attitudes of the Norwegian ladies differently.¹² Both agree, though, that the ladies had warned the congregation that something other than the Holy Spirit might creep in. When their warnings remained unheeded, they left the meetings in order to follow an invitation to Switzerland.

There must have been more and more misconduct in the Kassel meetings. A man is reported to have beaten a lady with his Bible in a kind of ecstasy. A pastor, having fallen to the floor, is said to have tried to suck in the air through his gnashed teeth to make himself sound like a hissing snake, while he wound his way through the chairs of the audience like a snake. In his ecstasy, a man speaking in tongues continuously called Dallmeyer, Dallmeyer, Dallmeyer, and a woman falling to the ground tore her blouse in such a way that more of her vest than of her blouse could be seen.¹³

¹¹ Giese, Ernst, Und flicken die Netze: Dokumente zur Erweckungsgeschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts/edited by Prof. O.S. von Bibra, Ernst Franz Verlag, Metzingen, 1987, p. 58

¹² *ibid.* p. 67, Fleisch *op. cit.* p. 39

¹³ Fleisch *op. cit.* p. 41

Some newspaper articles, published by sensation-seeking reporters, attracted such masses of onlookers that in the end the police had to guard the place with their dogs in order to keep things in order. Finally, Dallmeyer was urgently asked by the police to close the meetings that had been held daily for four weeks.

Christian Krust comments:

Whoever is going to objectively evaluate the Kassel events will, above all, see, that the brethren responsible for the leadership were lacking the necessary rationality. A meeting for the purpose of spreading the gospel cannot be allowed to get out of control as it was the case there.

Further, a lack of ability and level-headedness in the leadership is obvious to clearly distinguish the manifestations wrought by the Spirit of God from those having been *produced* by the human soul, - that is, the entire mixture of fleshly, emotional and spiritual phenomena – to intervene and put things in order in an adequate way.¹⁴

1.7 Jonathan Paul Receives the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, while Dallmeyer Dissociates Himself from the Movement

As visitors from all over Germany had come to Kassel, the experience of being baptized in the Spirit spread rapidly. On 15 September 1907, Pastor Jonathan Paul received the Baptism "in the way described in Ezra 8:23," after having resisted the temptation to have hands laid on him in Christiana by brethren speaking in tongues, because he had not wanted "to be taken in tow by a spirit he did not know sufficiently yet".¹⁵ On the XIII. Silesian conference taking place in Breslau from 23 to 26 September, Paul reported

¹⁴ Krust, C., 50 Jahre Deutsche Pfingstbewegung, op. cit. p. 50

¹⁵ Fleisch op. cit. pp. 57-60 and Giese, Ernst, Jonathan Paul, Ein Knecht Jesu Christi Leben und Werk, Missionsbuchhandlung und Verlag Altdorf bei Nürnberg, 1965 (2nd edition), pp. 128 - 130

on his experience. Later, the preachers Eugen Edel (1872-1951) and Regehly were to become leaders of the Pentecostal Movement there.¹⁶

While this movement spread, conflicts arose at the same time in the Gemeinschaftsbewegung. Heinrich Dallmeyer dissociated himself; his brother August states in the magazine *Reichsgottesarbeiter*:

The gifts manifested in this movement are not truly spiritual; without exception they have been wrought by the Devil. By these, Satan has made his way into the fellowship of the Saints. In the Los Angeles movement, a strong mendacious spirit is at work.¹⁷

1.8 First Pentecostal Conference in Hamburg

From 8 to 11 December 1908, representatives of the new movement met for the first time to hold a conference in Hamburg at the beach mission centre. There were also guests from England, Holland, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland. Krust lists the following names:

Mr. Cecil Polhill, London; Alexander A. Boddy, Sunderland (vicar); T. B. Barratt, Christiana (pastor); J. Paul (pastor), J. Koch (evangelist), Blankenburg, S. E. Cooke-Collis, Switzerland; G. R. Polmann (evangelist), Amsterdam; P. Oltmann (Amsterdam); Emil Humburg, Mühlheim a. d. Ruhr; evangelist Edel, Brieg; Andrew Johnson, Orebro, Sweden; Voget (pastor), Bunde; E. Meyer (beach mission), Hamburg; and others.¹⁸

¹⁶ Fleisch op. cit. pp. 59 and 62

¹⁷ Ibid p. 66

¹⁸ Krust, C., 50 Jahre Deutsche Pfingstbewegung, op. cit. p. 59

Under the topic of the first day "Mitteilungen über Erfahrungen und Beobachtungen" ["Reports on Experiences and Observations"], A. Boddy (1854-1930)¹⁹ reported in "All Saints":

The 40 or 50 of us, having received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, meet three times a week, where we have complete liberty of prayer and singing praise. Although the Evil One is coming with all his power, although sometimes the flesh is at work – *we still thank the Lord for this Pentecostal Movement. We thank Him for being part of the great body of a Pentecostal church. We have also come here to receive a blessing.*²⁰

A decision was also made at this conference to publish a periodical paper for the purpose of orientation concerning the latest spiritual movement: *Pfingstgrüße* ["Pentecostal Greetings"]. J. Paul was asked to be the editor.²¹

The first statement given on the topic of speaking in tongues is quite remarkable, as it shows that the item of "initial evidence" was no subject for discussion then:

Let nobody think that speaking in tongues is a "Shibboleth" for us and that we consider any child of God that has not received this gift less valuable. This is absolutely not the case. We do not think that only those having achieved the goal of speaking in tongues have received the Holy Spirit. Neither do we consider speaking in tongues in itself proof of the infilling of the Spirit. We know that we can judge by the fruit what kind of person we are dealing with (Matthew 7:16). For this reason, the Fruit of the Spirit is all that matters (Galatians 5:22). Where the Fruit of the Spirit is evident, the Spirit of God has come to dwell in a

¹⁹ A good survey on the life and work of Alexander Boddy is given by William Kay in his doctoral thesis (Kay, W., *A History of British Assemblies of God*, doctoral thesis for the University of Nottingham, 1989 pp. 18-40; see also Allen, D., *Signs and Wonders The Origins, Growth, Development and Significance of Assemblies of God in Great Britain and Ireland 1900 - 1980*, thesis submitted for the degree of Ph.D. (University of London), 1989, pp. 38-57

²⁰ Krust, C., *50 Jahre Deutsche Pfingstbewegung*, op. cit. p. 60

²¹ *ibid.* p. 64

person's heart. We do not want to esteem speaking in tongues in any way higher than does the Bible itself.²²

Krust sums up his evaluation by saying that, "by this conference, the German Pentecostal Movement has been brought into being" and that the beginnings of its further development must be dated there.²³

Jonathan Paul, the preacher Eugen Edel (Brieg in the east) and Emil Humburg (Mühlheim a. d. Ruhr in the west) would finally emerge as the leaders of the movement. Emil Meyer published an address to those who had not been able to take part in the conference with the request to read the *Pfingstgrüße*.²⁴

In the meantime, the movement spread all over Germany. The Mühlheim Pentecostal conferences starting in July 1909 played an important part there. While around 1700 attended the first conference taking place from 14 to 16 July 1909, already 2500 took part in the second conference.

1.9 The Berliner Erklärung ["Berlin Declaration"]

Around 60 leading brethren of the Gemeinschaftsbewegung met in Berlin on 15 September 1909. Because of the facts on hand they felt obliged to make a definite and final declaration that the spiritual gifts that had occurred in the Pentecostal Movement did not have their origin in the Spirit of God but in "demonic spirits coming from the Abyss". A nineteen-hour meeting resulted in the so-called *Berliner Erklärung*, part of which states:

²² *Pfingstgrüße* vol. 1, February 1909, quoted in Krust, op. cit. p. 64

²³ Krust, op. cit. p. 65

²⁴ Fleisch op. cit. p. 82

This movement is inseparably connected with the movement of Los Angeles, Christiana, Hamburg, Kassel and Großalmerode... The so-called Pentecostal Movement has not come from above, but from below; a great number of manifestations are the same as in the Spiritist movement. In the Pentecostal Movement, there are demons at work, which, cunningly directed by Satan, confuse lie and truth, in order to deceive God's children. There are many cases, where the so-called "spirit-gifted" ones later proved to be demon-possessed.

Our conviction that this movement is from below, can neither be put in question by the personal faithfulness and devotion of individual leading brethren, nor by the healings, tongues, prophecies... Many times before, such manifestations used to be connected with similar movements, e.g. with the Irvingites, even with Christian Science and Spiritism. The spirit dominating this movement introduces himself through the Word of God, which will be pushed into the background by so-called "prophecies" (compare 2 Chronicles 18:18-22)... The spokespersons conveying these prophecies are mostly women. In many situations, this has - against clear Biblical instructions - resulted in women, even young girls, being in central leadership positions of the movement. The so-called Pfingstbewegung in Germany is represented before the public by its leader J. Paul. There has been no lack of discussions with him and of warnings given to the smaller and wider circle of brethren. As all that has been in vain, we have herewith got to state for his sake and for the sake of the Lord's work: We cannot acknowledge him any more as a leader and teacher in the Church of Christ; we commit him to the transforming work of the mercy of the Lord... We are not awaiting a new Pentecost; we are awaiting our coming Lord. Thus, we herewith ask all our brethren for the sake of the Lord and of His work, which Satan intends to destroy: Keep away from this movement! Whoever has fallen victim to the power of this spirit is asked to break with it and to ask God for forgiveness and deliverance.²⁵

A consensus was not thought to be a possible solution; the only way to save the Gemeinschaftsbewegung was seen in a definite separation from the "demonic" Pentecostal meetings. Only brethren opposing the Pentecostal Movement had been invited. The verdict was pronounced without even hearing the accused ones. After confirming this verdict in the following meeting of the Gnadauer Verband, every member was obliged not to co-

²⁵ Krust op. cit. pp. 67-71

operate with any brethren belonging to the Pentecostal Movement. Any violation of this decision was "not in accordance with the position of the Gnadauer Verband".²⁶

²⁶ *ibid.* p. 71

1.10 The Mühlheimer Erklärung ["Mühlheim Declaration"]

At their third conference, taking place in Mühlheim in October 1909, the members of the Pentecostal Movement responded to the Berliner Erklärung by issuing the Mühlheimer Erklärung, in which, among others, the following statements have been made:

We thank the Lord for the present spiritual movement. We consider this the beginning of a divine answer to the many years of believing prayer for a world-wide revival. Thus, we recognize this movement as a gift from above, not from below... Concerning several details, we want to clearly state that, as a matter of course, not only divine, but also soulish, respectively human, and possibly even demonic features become manifest. Yet, this is characteristic for any revival²⁷

Since 1910, in spite of various further meetings and declarations, the Pfingstbewegung had become more or less isolated. On 2 February 1914, the "Christliche Kolportage-Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung zu Mühlheim-Ruhr" ["Society for the Spread of Christian Literature, Ltd., Mühlheim-Ruhr"] was founded.²⁸ Emil Humburg became their Managing

²⁷ *ibid.* p. 73-77

²⁸ On 17 February 1938 the Reich's Minister for Religious Affairs issued the following statement, "According to the law for the protection of the nomenclature of the NSDAP as of 7 April 1937, RGBI. I, p. 442, the terms used by the German National-Socialist Workers' Party, its subdivisions, as well as by its associated unions, for its office-bearers, structures, institutions and symbols, must not be used anywhere else, neither individually nor communally."

For this reason neither using the name "Bewegung" nor "Reichs-Bewegung" was allowed any more, the Gemeinschaftsverband being legally represented by the "Missionsgesellschaft m.b.H. Mühlheim-Ruhr" that had so far been called "Deutsche Pfingstbewegung," now renamed "Christlicher Gemeinschaftsverband G.m.b.H. Mühlheim Ruhr" with effect from 29 April 1938 (Krust p. 174).

Director. At Christmas of 1914, the society already issued – in spite of the recent outbreak of World War I – the first edition of *Das Neue Testament (Mühlheimer Ausgabe) in der Sprache der Gegenwart* ["*The New Testament (Mühlheim Edition) in today's language*"], which has since been followed by several further editions.²⁹

1.11 Further Pentecostal Movements

Starting from 1907 already, free Pentecostal churches were, among others, founded in Velbert/Rhine valley, Duisburg-Hamborn and Berlin. These were to be the historical beginnings of the "freikirchliche Pfingstbewegung" [i.e. Pentecostal churches not being under the umbrella of the Lutheran state church any more. The German term is to be used in the following text.]. The freikirchliche Pfingstbewegung practised believers' baptism by immersion, while the Mühlheimer Verband ["Mühlheim Association"] continued with the sprinkling of babies.³⁰

Due to differing opinions as to teaching and its application, some brethren in 1911, did not submit to the "Hauptbrüderstag" ["Chief Council of the Brethren"] any more. Two of these, Heinrich Vietheer and Benjamin Schilling, became the founders of the freikirchliche Pfingstbewegung.³¹

²⁹ *ibid.* p. 122-123 This was the first New Testament in contemporary German, and probably the first New Testament published by Pentecostals

³⁰ Krüger, Richard, "Helles Feuer oder Glut unter der Asche? 90 Jahre Deutsche Pfingstbewegung - 50 Jahre BFP" in Wort & Geist, No. 10, October, 1997, p. 5

³¹ Morris, Philipp, Die Geschichte der neuzeitlichen Pfingstbewegung, EBS, Rudersberg, 1995, p. 44

Benjamin Schilling, born in 1865, was Baptist by origin, influenced to a great extent by the Swedish Baptist-Pentecostal Congregationalism. In his newly founded church in Berlin, he also pleaded for using the spiritual gifts more freely than J. Paul did, who to Schilling seemed to be too cautious, "driving with the hand-break pulled". When Schilling died, Erwin Lorenz, having been trained in Sweden, became his successor in 1934. In 1937, the GESTAPO³² prohibited this church.³³

Since 1922, Evangelist Heinrich Vietheer had been working with the Berlin tent mission which started many Elim churches. Other churches joined this society. The political situation caused the Elim churches to join the Baptists and Darbyists to become the "Bund Evangelisch Freikirchlicher Gemeinden" ["Federation of Protestant Free Churches"] in 1938 .

The Danzig Bible college being the centre, far-reaching missionary activities had been taking place with the assistance of the "Assemblies of God" of North America since 1928. Their leaders were the brethren Herbert Schmidt and Gustav Kindermann. In 1931, Donald Gee, the great Pentecostal pioneer in Great Britain, also taught there for the first time.³⁴

This caused the Pentecostal Movement to spread in eastern Europe among

³² The Geheime Staatspolizei (GESTAPO) was part of the secret police in Hitler's Germany. The general legal regulations for the police did not apply to them. Their decisions were not subject to being checked by the general administrative courts. The GESTAPO was responsible for death sentences being arbitrarily and summarily executed. In the Nuremberg Trials they were sentenced for being a "criminal organisation".

³³ Schmidgall, Paul, 90 Jahre deutsche Pfingstbewegung", Leuchter Verlag, 1997, pp. 96-97

³⁴ Massey, R., Another Springtime The life of Donald Gee, Pentecostal leader and teacher, Highland Books Guildford, Surrey, 1992, p. 86

Germans, Poles and Russians as well, which finally brought forth the "Freie Christengemeinden" ["Free Christian Churches"].

2. THE VOLKSMISSION IS FOUNDED IN BERLIN AND SPREADING TO SOUTHERN GERMANY

2.1 Hindenburg issues the Emergency Decree "Zum Schutz von Volk und Staat" ["For the Protection of the People and the State"]

The Weimar Republic³⁵ that had come into being in 1919, when World War I (1914-1918) was over, was being shaken by severe economic and political crises during its short existence of only 15 years. Finally, at the instigation of Hitler, the 84-year-old German president Paul von Hindenburg issued the emergency decree "Zum Schutz von Volk und Staat" on 28 February 1932. This decree meant the end of liberty guaranteed by the constitution. The KPD (Communist Party of Germany) was immediately forbidden, while political opponents would be eliminated without any legal proceedings. Nevertheless, the NSDAP (Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei, ["National-Socialist German Workers' Party"]) missed the absolute majority at the new elections taking place on March 05. The 81 mandates of the KPD were withdrawn at once; the newly constituted parliament met on 21 March in the Potsdam military church. 288 National Socialists, 52 German Nationalists, 73 representatives of the Zentrum [Catholic Centre Party], as

³⁵ A federal republic of 17 states being ruled both as a whole and in each individual state according to democratic and parliamentary principles. The legislative body was the Reichstag with the very limited assistance of the Reichsrat. The highest executive body was the German president who was authorized to appoint the German chancellor and the German government.

well as some representatives of the splinter groups celebrated the "Day of Potsdam". The SPD [Social Democratic Party of Germany]³⁶ that had decreased from 120 to 94 members did not join them until two days later. Unitedly, they voted against the Enabling Act that had been accepted by the other 441 members of Parliament, and which was to eliminate the first German Republic for good.³⁷

2.2 Hitler passes the "Ermächtigungsgesetz" ["Enabling Act"]

On 30 January 1933, the political right wing parties had finally reached their goal - Hindenburg appointed Adolf Hitler German Chancellor. Any reservations on the side of the aged military hero would be appeased by referring to the enforced coalition with the NSDAP and to the present constellations in parliament. "Democracy had already died, yet, it was not sure in which direction it would fall," an observer mentioned later. And in fact, Hitler immediately set about terminating democracy for good. He had new elections called – the last ones ever -, as he proudly announced – and, in order to support his party, he applied all instruments of power, giving all

³⁶ By the name of Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (SPD), Socialism was re-created in the year 1890 after abolishing the Socialist Law. The increasing strength of the Berlin SPD is reflected in the results of the elections for the Reichstag: 1880: 126 317 votes, 1893: 151 122 votes, 1898: 155 411 votes, 1903: 218 238 votes, 1907: 251 215 votes – this equals to 66.2 per cent of the total number of votes. 1912 the votes in favour of the SPD even amounted to 74.9 per cent; in other words: Three quarters of all Berlin citizens voted for social democracy (Berger, J., Berlin freiheitlich & rebellisch, Goebel Verlag, Berlin, 1987, p. 121).

³⁷ Gödeke, Peter, *Schlagzeilen unseres Jahrhunderts - Was die Welt bewegte*, Naumann & Göbel Verlagsgesellschaft mbH, Köln, 1995, p. 78

the other parties over to the terrors of the SA³⁸ without any protection. The arson of the Reichstag he used as an opportunity to crush the Communist Party. Still, he did not have the absolute majority yet, as the NSDAP had not won more than 44 % of the votes. This meant that Hitler needed a coalition partner for a cabinet reshuffle. He wanted more than the absolute majority, though. With the help of a two-thirds majority, he intended to "legally" annul the constitution. On 23 March 1933, the members of the Reichstag met at the Kroll Opera. In military manner, wearing brown SA uniforms, the National Socialists marched in. Many Reichstag members were missing. The members of the KPD party had been arrested, as well as many social democrats. The government had introduced a bill by which it was to be enabled to pass any laws at will without the consent of the Reichstag for the next four years, even if those laws should lead to constitutional amendment. "Beat Brüning to death!" the SA squad yelled, when the former German chancellor and member of the Zentrum, was going to leave the hall in order to avoid voting. Only the social democrats resisted:

We uphold the principles of a nation under the rule of law, of equality, of social rights that have been laid down in the Weimar constitution. We German Social Democrats pledge ourselves solemnly in this historic hour to the principles of humanity and justice, of freedom and socialism. No enabling act can give you power to destroy ideas which are eternal and indestructible.

For the next 12 years, this should have been the last free speech held in Germany, by which the member and party spokesman Otto Wels (1873-

³⁸ SA = "Sturmabteilung" ["Storm Troops"]; the task force of the NSDAP having had military training

1939) explained the refusal of the Enabling Act by the SPD. Nevertheless, Hitler gained his two-third majority.³⁹

2.3 "Gleichschaltung" ["Forced Coordination"]

The wave of arrests reached all other political parties – arrests, not carried out by organs of the state, but by the SA or SS⁴⁰, accompanied by dreadful maltreatment and committal to the first concentration camps, "in a totally unbureaucratic way", as national socialist newspapers used to boast. A first wave of emigration set in. The parties, robbed of their heads, having become insecure, split, being spied on, gave in and dissolved. KPD and SPD were banned.

The trade unions were smashed, the constitutions of the states done away with, the press was "equalized", while education and arts were uniformly orientated towards the principles of the national socialist government. Only forcing the churches into line would not prove quite as successful. In Protestantism, the so-called "Bekennende Kirche" ["Confessing Church"] came into being⁴¹, who firmly resisted the Gleichschaltung. So did the

³⁹ Schildt, Gerhard, *Geschichte Europas*, Westermann, Braunschweig, 1988, pp. 240-247

⁴⁰ SS = "Schutzstaffel" ["protection squad"] originally served as Hitler's bodyguards. After the "Röhm Coup" and due to Himmler's promotion, they gained the entire power of government. They were to cultivate the "Master Race" in Europe

⁴¹ Resistance church which in 1933 started to turn against the Deutsche Christen, the church of national socialist orientation. Led by Martin Niemöller (1892-1984) and Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1944), the "Pfarrernotbund" ["Pastor's Emergency League"] was founded on 21 September 1933. They met for the first free synod in 1934 to bravely oppose the government's presumptuousness concerning questions of faith and conscience. After the end of the War, the heads of the "Bekennende Kirche" played a decisive part in re-building the structure of the church.

Roman Catholic Church to a certain extent as well,⁴² after having been confused first by the offer of a generous concordat, a treaty between the German Reich and the Holy See.

All this made up the political surroundings, in which the first public meeting of the Volksmission took place in Berlin on 01 January 1934.

2.4 Karl Fix comes to Know Christ

Karl Friedrich Fix (1897-1969), the founder of the Volksmission entschiedener Christen was born August 14th 1897 in Kupferzell near Künzelsau in the state of Baden-Württemberg. He spent his childhood in Löwenstein near Heilbronn. As a young person, he was enthusiastic about philosophy, especially about F. Nietzsche. This way, he also came into contact with spiritistic circles, with clairvoyants, fortune-tellers and mystics.⁴³ Five months after having finished his apprenticeship as a textile businessman in March 1914, he took part as a volunteer in World War I;⁴⁴

⁴² Johannes Baptista Sproll, head of the Rottenburg diocese, may serve as an example. From the beginning, he was a special object of GESTAPO control, as he repeatedly preached against the national socialist world view. On 10 April 1938 he did not take part in the plebiscite on Austria's entry. Jesuit Alfred Delp is also worth mentioning. He was a member of the "Kreisau Circle", where on the estate of Duke Helmut von Moltke some opponents of national socialism used to meet in order to discuss a re-structuring of Germany in the spirit of Christianity after the War (see also chapter 13 "Die Kirchen und das Dritte Reich" in Albers, W., Kurswissen Kirche - Staat - Politik, Klett Verlag, Stuttgart/Dresden, 1994, pp. 115-134.

⁴³ Fix, K., Frevel - Grauen - Grausen: Selbstmord, Karl Fix Verlag Deutsche Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Heilbronn, 1948 p. 41

⁴⁴ Fix, K., "Aus dem Kleinsten sollen tausend werden..." Ein Zeugnis über das Werden unserer Schriftenmission, Verlag Deutsche Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Schorndorf, II. Auflage 1957, p. 4

yet, at the end of the War, as a 21-year-old, he was "sick in body, soul and spirit".⁴⁵ Attracted by the SPD slogan "No more War!", he made his way into politics and became a socialist. Having been a gifted writer from his earliest youth, he became a journalist with the "Heilbronner Stimme".⁴⁶ In this position, he functioned as a local reporter, a film critic and a representative of the press. From 1928-1932 he served as a "reporter of an uncountable number of political meetings."⁴⁷ Suffering from a serious cirrhosis of the liver caused by excessive drinking,⁴⁸ people had given him up.⁴⁹ In his tract, entitled *Volle Erlösung in Christo Jesu* out of which an excerpt had been printed in the magazine *Der feste Grund*, he, who had once written satirical stories against the Christian faith, confessed:⁵⁰

From my earliest youth, my entire life meant restlessness, searching endlessly without finding. Eagerly, I would devour all kinds of knowledge, I would miss out on sleep and on fulfilling my duties. Often, I was depressed, considering suicide. Finally, I was in such inner bondage that many times my own dark thoughts seemed to be eating me up. I was given lots of "poison", Bromine, etc. My despair I fought by using drugs, of which I needed certain doses to be able to live. I was eaten up by poisonous bondage and addictions – a hopeless case. A child

⁴⁵ Fix, K., Preiset mit mir den Herrn 30 Jahre Volksmission entschiedener Christen Berlin 1. Januar 1934 bis 1964, Verlag Deutsche Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Schorndorf, 1964, p. 5

⁴⁶ Gast, H.J., "Heimat für Heimatlose" in 60 Jahre Volksmission Berlin 1934 - 1994 Festschrift, Berlin, Volksmission Berlin, 1994, pp. 11-12

⁴⁷ Fix, K., "Aus dem Kleinsten sollen tausend werden..." op. cit. p. 5

⁴⁸ Fix K., Bibel und Krankheit, Karl Fix Verlag Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Vaihingen/Enz, 1951, p. 17

⁴⁹ Gast op. cit. p. 12

⁵⁰ Velke H., Erliebte Gnade, Missionsverlag Gottlob Ling, Bauschlott, 2nd edition 1994, p. 18

saved me from committing suicide. I had become a living corpse, a burden to myself and to others.⁵¹

Many people contributed to his conversion. His Christian mother and a cousin who had been praying for him for over 15 years, as well as a leading Mennonite brother, Karl Fix particularly mentions in his book entitled *Preiset mit mir den Herrn*. In his characteristic expressiveness, he describes how, sitting on a bench near his wife's grave in the churchyard,⁵² this Mennonite brother kept repeating the same sentence over and over again, speaking it right into the darkness of his life, "And even, if no one else will be able to help you any more, there is One who can still help you – it is the Lord Jesus Christ, the same, yesterday and today and for ever." This preacher, being called a "friend" by Fix, activated prayer groups to pray for Fix. He also supplied him with Christian literature. There was one booklet by Fritz Binde⁵³ called *Vom Atheisten zum Evangelisten*. It had a special impact on Karl Fix. The Mennonite preacher and Swiss businessman Alfred Geistlich introduced Fix to Evangelist Emil Meyer, through whom many

⁵¹ Grunewald E., "Segenstag in Berlin", *Der feste Grund*, No. 15, vol.6 (1 August 1935), p. 2. Fix gives tells his detailed biography in Frevel - Grauen - Grausen: Selbstmord, op. cit. pp. 40-45

⁵² On February 14th 1932, after having been married for 10 years, his first wife Hermine died. Bereft of his wife, left alone with his 9-year-old boy, Fix fell into deep depressions (oral information given by his son Johannes Fix on 27 Mai 2001).

⁵³ Fritz Binde (1867-1921) had been a socialist and anarchist before coming to believe in Christ. After his conversion, he first worked with the Deutsche Zeltmission, the German tent mission, then he became an independent evangelist, counsellor and writer (Bauer H., and others, Eine Saat geht auf 75 Jahre Süddeutsche Vereinigung für Evangelisation und Gemeinschaftspflege 1910 - 1985, Stuttgart, Süddeutsche Vereinigung für Evangelisation und Gemeinschaftspflege, Stuttgart, 1985 p. 12

signs and wonders were wrought. He sent Fix his booklet *Aus Satans Bann*.

When Fix had studied it, he wrote,

Reading this booklet, the Law of Sin and Death became totally clear to me inwardly – my being absolutely lost and entangled in the bondages of darkness. On the other hand there is only one way out: The redemption accomplished by our Lord Jesus Christ.⁵⁴

When Fix once wanted to attend evangelistic meetings held by Emil Meyer in Kassel, he was so weak, that he had to find a hotel first in order to "dope" himself, that is, to take his strong medication. Dr. Bircher-Benner, the famous doctor from Zurich, had already confirmed to him in 1925, that his life only hung by a thread and that he might die any moment.⁵⁵

For 8–10 days, Evangelist Meyer prayed with him daily, until, as he writes, he experienced the power of God making him whole in body, soul and spirit. Fix remembers:

Every day we had at least two services, counselling sessions and prayer meetings. The Word of God that was being shared there had an immense impact on me. I also listened to many testimonies of people who had an encounter with God, which made me want to write them all down. Being a journalist, I was used to turning every event into money. That night, though, an inner voice said to me, "What are you doing here? You do not match these religious people!" When this thought came home to me, I was hit by deep sorrow about my deepest inner being lost – and suddenly everything was there! The power of God came over me in such a mighty way that even other persons realised that something extraordinary had happened to me. During my years of despair I would not be able to find sleep for many, many a night in spite of taking the strongest drugs; I would rather see everything through clouds of depression. That night, though, was to be the first night in my life, in which I could not

⁵⁴ Fix, K., Preiset mit mir den Herrn op. cit. p. 6

⁵⁵ Fix, K., "... und rufe mich an in der Not, so will ich Dich erretten!", Karl Fix Verlag Deutsche Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Schorndorf, 1946 p. 6

find any sleep for gladness and joy. For about 24 hours I could not keep my mouth shut because of sheer joy. Great things had happened – God had had mercy on me!⁵⁶

Fix followed Meyer's suggestion to accompany him on his next evangelistic campaign taking place in Berlin. He made his good relations to the press available to Meyer's purposes and helped him with his public relations. Soon, Meyer transferred to Fix his publishing business together with the responsibility for editing the periodical *Gott mit uns*⁵⁷ with the words, "During three months spent with me, you can learn more than you would learn during three years at Bible College."⁵⁸

2.5 Fix, the Founder of the "Deutsche Volksmission"

For six months, rallies were being held "all over Berlin", beginning in the Garde-Hallen in Sophienstraße on 1 January 1933. Many signs and wonders happened there. Fix was allowed to give his first "testimony". Besides "gladness overflowing", Fix also speaks of difficulties in getting acquainted with the world of those believing in Christ:

There is such a vast amount of things to learn. You don't know them all – all those different groups and associations. You don't know the definition of "Methodist", "Baptist" and "Pentecostal". As an outsider, you do not have a clue of all those groups, the fences, the minor and major popes. I am very much ashamed to

⁵⁶ Fix, K., Preiset mit mir den Herrn op. cit. p. 8

⁵⁷ Sommer G., Anfänge freikirchlicher Pfingstgemeinden in Deutschland zwischen 1907 und 1945, unpublished thesis presented to the department of theological history at the FTA, Gießen, April 1998, p. 56

⁵⁸ Fix, K., Preiset mit mir den Herrn op. cit. p. 9

say that I did not know that in my Swabian home area there existed a place called "Möttlingen,"⁵⁹ till I came to Berlin.⁶⁰

In June 1933, Fix, for the first time, heard one of the brethren witness to the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. In spite of some resistance against the outward way of "getting it", his desire was according to Luke 4:18-19 "... the Spirit of the Lord is upon me as a holy anointing, commissioned and enabled to preach the gospel to the poor", which was to be fulfilled in the autumn of 1933 in one of the branches in Saxony. Fix describes this event:

It was the first time I met a group of believers as described in 1 Corinthians 14:26. Spiritual power was at work there, visions, tongues, revelations, interpretations. During one especially anointed prayer meeting, I heard God's call, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for Me?" And my heart echoed tremblingly and fearfully, "Lord, send me" (Isaiah 6:8).⁶¹

Fix understood that the Lord had called him to start an independent "Faith Ministry" in Berlin, called "Deutsche Volksmission entschiedener Christen Berlin" ["German People's Mission of committed Christians"].

Inspired by 1 Timothy 2:4 ("God wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.") and 1 John 5:14-16, Fix outlines this commitment in his testimony as follows:

The reason for founding the Volksmission was to pray for people living in sin, bondage and sickness, and thus save body,

⁵⁹ Through the ministry of Johann Christoph Blumhardt (born on 16 July 1805), the small village of Möttlingen near Calw experienced revival and repentance, which effected the whole of southern Germany. Detailed information is given in the report on the illness and healing of Gottliebin Dittus in Blumhardt's: Die Krankheitsgeschichte der Gottliebin Dittus in Möttlingen. Der Tatsachenbericht an die vorgesetzte Kirchenbehörde, 1844, Verlag Goldene Worte, 15th edition, Stuttgart, 1975

⁶⁰ Fix, K., Preiset mit mir den Herrn op. cit. p. 9

⁶¹ *ibid.* p. 12

soul and spirit... The purpose of being an evangelistic movement can never be to satisfy itself, but its calling is to save souls. Besides that, saving souls is the main prerequisite for being a biblical church.⁶²

2.6 Public Meetings in Liniestraße

Selma Bischof was a sister in Christ coming from the south of the state of Brandenburg. When she was in prayer, God gave her the inner impression that Karl Fix should found a church in the north-east of Berlin where the poorest used to live, and that this church should "be a manifestation of the full salvation in Christ".⁶³

The "Verein für Urchristen" ["Society for Early-Church Christianity"] provided a church hall for Karl Fix in the Liniestraße, which he could rent for several months for daily use. The first service took place on 1 January 1934. Every morning, there would be a prayer meeting, every night an evangelistic meeting. During the day, open-air meetings were conducted in the large Berlin back yards that were situated in the midst of blocks of up to 100 flats. Fix writes that about 95% of the over 1000 people that attended the services during the first year, experienced Jesus as their physician, while many others were set free from bondage and vices and were baptized with the Holy Spirit.⁶⁴

⁶² *ibid.* pp. 13-14

⁶³ Gast, H.J., "Heimat für Heimatlose" *op .cit.* p. 12

⁶⁴ Fix, K., Volksmission entschiedener Christen Weg und Werk, Verlag Deutsche Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Schorndorf, 1956, p. 9

2.7 Volksmission Registered and Banned

Although Fix had not intended to found an officially registered church in the beginning, he followed the advice of his hosts, an elderly couple, to do so. Thus, the founding of the church as a registered body of 35 members and about 75 friends took place on 27 June 1934. Only one week later, Fix was summoned by the police. The regional officer told him that according to section so-and-so his meetings were prohibited and that he should not dare to open up another business like that in Greater Berlin.⁶⁵

For the time being, the church met in private rooms, until, after making enquiries and studying the Reich's law for weeks, the section, responsible for the ban was discovered: "Selling of, and dealing with, illegal medicine." The president of the Berlin Pankow police explained to Fix by reading Fix's article *Willst du gesund werden* ["Do you want to get well?"] from *Heilsbote No.7*, that practising prayer for the sick had been the reason for the ban. Finally, the following agreement was made with the police president: Meetings may only take place under the surveillance of the district police, and the congregation must consist of one third of friends, and two thirds of registered members. Open-air meetings were forbidden, while the magazine *Der Heilsbote* was not allowed to be printed any more.

Both members and friends were questioned by the GESTAPO, which meant an additional danger considering Karl Fix's socialist past. When Kuttler, an elderly brother in Christ, was questioned about Fix and his political background, he answered, "Earlier on, he was a socialist, but now we are involved in heavenly politics." Being asked what kind of politics, Kuttler

⁶⁵ Fix, K., Preiset mit mir den Herrn, op. cit. p. 17

answered, "We are waiting for the Lord's return." Contemptuously, the officer closed his file saying, "He will not come anyway." Fix remarks, "With this, I was not in danger any more."⁶⁶

Even the prayers were taken down in shorthand by industrious GESTAPO officers. For every word the church was held accountable.⁶⁷

Reviewing this time of oppression, Fix writes:

Let me state this very definitely considering Romans 8:28: Our work was stabilised by this ban. As for me, I was given enough time for prayer and for the Word of God, which the Lord especially used to talk to me about establishing churches the biblical way. Yet, our members were strengthened as well. We certainly knew for sure who was one of us. The name of "Deutsche Volksmission entschiedener Christen Berlin" was officially registered then;⁶⁸ we were on record with the government offices, they knew who we were and what our goals were. We had passed one of our first trials and tests.⁶⁹

Fix only counted those as members of the church, who had been baptized in water⁷⁰, and only these were admitted to the Lord's Supper.⁷¹

⁶⁶ Fix, K., Preiset mit mir den Herrn, op. cit. p. 18

⁶⁷ Fix relates how he was questioned by a GESTAPO officer at the headquarters: "A sister had prayed, 'Lord, would you please tell Sister Meier that she is not to look upon her sick leg but upon you, Lord Jesus.' What could she have meant by this?" (Fix, K., Preiset mit mir den Herrn op. cit. p. 19)?

⁶⁸ In the constitution of the Berlin Church of the year 1938, section 8, it is stated that "The Volksmission has been registered with the Secret Police of Berlin C under V 3270/ V 3250/34 including a list of members and the creed, and listed in the NSDAP registry of societies under No. 1391/38 (Berlin Area).

⁶⁹ *ibid.* p. 20

⁷⁰ It happened several times that baptisms were accompanied by healings. Helene Velke, who joined the Volksmission in 1935, relates in her autobiography Erlebte Gnade, p. 22, how she was spontaneously healed from a severe knee ailment that had been caused by calcification

Erna Müller was a great help to Karl Fix. Originally, she had been a member of Miss von Treskow's girls' group. She joined the Volksmission in its very beginnings, was healed by faith from a terrible disease and married Karl Fix on 24 April 1935.⁷²

2.8 Moving to Höchstestraße

Fast growth and tension with the "Verein für Urchristentum" urged them to look for their own premises. Finally, a former dance hall could be rented in Höchstestraße 27. For some time, it had served as a storeroom for a fruit merchant. 200 people could be seated there.⁷³ The dedication service was marked by joy overflowing, as Fix reports:

The praise session had hardly started, when our dear old brother Fritz Döhring suddenly started stuttering before breaking through speaking in tongues. The message I heard thrilled me: "Peace be with you! This is the way. Follow Me. You must enter the Kingdom of God through much tribulation. But do not be afraid. I, the Lord, I am with you. I will strengthen you..." What happened further cannot be reported. Psalm 36 literally describes the overwhelming experience we had: "They feast on the abundance of your house; you give them drink from your river of delights. For with you is the fountain of life; in your light we see light" [In Luther's translation, which was standard in Fix's time, it says, "They will get drunk from the abundance of your house..."]. Drunk with heavenly delights! My dear brethren experienced something similar. This way, we were made one in our blessed Holy Spirit for a definite mission. From then on, we were one, baptized in His Spirit, united as His body

⁷¹ Fix, K., Preiset mit mir den Herrn op. cit. p. 34

⁷² *ibid.* p. 13

⁷³ Gast, H.J., Geschichte der Volksmission Berlin, unpublished typoscript, Berlin 2000, p. 1

by the bonds of love and of the Holy Spirit under divine orders.⁷⁴

In the afternoon, Martin Gensichen, who was the guest speaker,⁷⁵ explained the manifestations which had occurred that morning, in connection with the meaning of being baptized in the Holy Spirit referring to 2 Chronicles 1:7.

2.9 Setting up the Literature Mission

The Berlin Volksmission made literature mission its major field of activity. When, after moving to Höchstestraße, they had been assigned to a new police precinct, and their relationship to the government offices had continually improved, they were only observed sporadically then. The officers attended the meetings in plain clothes.⁷⁶ A bookstall could be maintained again which was registered with the Reich's Literature Chamber via the Liebenzeller Mission, with whom the Volksmission had a good relationship then.⁷⁷ Tracts were bought from the Swiss "Verein für

⁷⁴ Fix, K., Preiset mit mir den Herrn op. cit. p. 22

⁷⁵ Martin Gensichen, born in 1879 as a son of the Berlin Director of Missions, had accepted Christ on 3 December 1900 through the ministry of Stöcker. Already in 1905 he had received a baptism in the Holy Spirit of the kind that Torrey taught. Working under Ohly in the Berlin city mission, he got into a conflict with him, because he made him write down his sermons (Fleisch, P., Geschichte der Pfingstbewegung in Deutschland von 1900 - 1950, p. 83). As a man who had travelled the USA, Canada and England, he was "privileged to come to know the great Donald Gee" (Dietze, R. "Schwimmgnade" nicht "Knöchelgnade", unpublished ordination paper, Erzhausen, archive of the BFP-Archiv, 1993, p. 13

⁷⁶ Fix, K., "Aus dem Kleinsten sollen tausend werden..." op. cit. p. 10

⁷⁷ Fix, K., Preiset mit mir den Herrn op. cit. p. 23 In the constitution of 1938, section 8, it is remarked that "Regarding correspondence, the leader of the [literature] mission has been personally incorporated into the Society

entschiedenes Christentum in Basel", but this meant nothing more than a meagre temporary solution to Fix. The entire German people should rather become acquainted with the message of the full salvation in Christ, in contrast to the "waves of national socialist propaganda flooding the people".⁷⁸ Fix writes:

Thus, I beseeched God by prayer and fasting to give us a literature mission, also making a clear promise not to seek any advantage for myself, not even to print a post office bank account onto any piece of literature (I had realised that here and there in the Kingdom of God, money, together with a post office bank account, played quite a negative role!); if possible, the tracts should be distributed free of charge.⁷⁹

Shortly after this, a farmer living near the German-Polish border, came to see Fix. His name was Otto Gohlke. Together with some brethren, he had founded the *Meseritzer Schriftenmission* publishing tracts and brochures. As they could not present themselves so well, they asked Fix to take over the editorship and the printing in Berlin. Besides publishing the tracts, they also wrote a prophetic statement on the People of Israel which "got lost in the mail". Not only did they never get back the paper, but soon after, the "Meseritzer Schriftenmission" was banned.⁸⁰

of the German Reich's Booksellers (belonging to the Reich's Chamber of Written Issues) through the Liebenzeller Mission, Bad Liebenzell, under VA 207/BII/19231.

⁷⁸ Fix, K., "Aus dem Kleinsten sollen tausend werden..." op. cit. p. 10

⁷⁹ *ibid.* p. 11

⁸⁰ Fix, K., Preiset mit mir den Herrn op. cit. p. 23

Fix then edited literature from his own publishing house ⁸¹. They were distributed with the following remark printed on them: "These tracts are distributed free of charge. Previous issues will be mailed, if the address is submitted. Please, see that these tracts are spread far and wide, pray for this work."⁸² The first 5000 tracts cost 60.-- Mark.

2.10 The GESTAPO Confiscate "Grauen, Grausen"

The fourth tract with the provocative title "Grauen! Grausen! Wehe denen, die auf der Erde wohnen..." ["Terror! Horror! Woe to those who live on earth ..."] is a testimony of Fix's prophetic vision of the coming catastrophes of World War II. Fix writes about the birth of this tract:

Concerning the tract "Grauen! Grausen!" my heart was unusually troubled. I heard many prophesies, visions and messages about the coming disaster. It had been revealed to me, and I would have liked to once more warn everybody. Yet, I knew that this way I would certainly ask for problems, as on the opposite side the "Millennium of Hitler" was being proclaimed. Pros and cons fought a long battle in my heart. Finally I said to myself: If you live in a house and you know a fire has broken out, you must shout "Fire!" at least once, even if the others say, "Be quiet, everything is completely fine."⁸³

⁸¹ The tracts had to bear the imprint, "Karl Fix, Deutsche Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Berlin N 58, Chorinerstr. 61" (Fix, K., "Lasset uns fortfahren mit der Heiligung in der Furcht des Herrn" No. 11, unknown date)

⁸² Fix, K., Preiset mit mir den Herrn op. cit. p. 24

⁸³ *ibid.* p. 25

In 1955, looking back, Fix wrote: "When before the past World War, Mussolini paid his first official visit to Hitler in Berlin, about two million people had gathered on the Maifeld at the same time. That day, the "Führer" pronounced to all the world: "If tomorrow there is a war in Europe, there will be no Jews left in Europe the day after tomorrow!" All over the world this statement had been heard. Yet, nobody had the power to prevent this catastrophe. I myself was just busy writing a tract of warning at that time. With this brochure, I wanted to warn the people living in the regions that would be especially endangered in case of a war. According to the Bible, these had to be the European countries, where the greatest number of Jews lived. These were Poland, Romania and Hungary. At that time, the brochure

When the first edition of 5000 had already been distributed, the GESTAPO confiscated the tract, taking the second edition directly from the press to their headquarters. Yet, neither the organisation nor the literature mission were banned, on the contrary it was rather spread all over the world due to contacts with the Swedish evangelist E. Grunewald. Karl Fix had invited him to conduct evangelistic meetings in the summer of 1935. Grunewald in return supplied Karl Fix with addresses of German speaking churches in Hungary and Yugoslavia. Until July 1939, when the literature mission was forbidden, more than two million large, four-page tracts had been sent to twelve countries, even as far as Canada and Brazil. One should remember that in Germany, free distribution of Christian tracts was prohibited then because of "causing public offence", and every circular letter and tract had to bear the warning "Public distribution of these tracts is forbidden". If any tracts had been complained about, they could only be sent to foreign countries, while every new edition, as well as the manuscripts, had to be presented to the GESTAPO before printing. In July 1939, the entire literature mission was banned for good.⁸⁴ Fix comments:

You need not have any illusions: World War II was about to begin. For months I had already had a service-record book with a call-up for the first day of mobilisation. Thus, I wrote a circular farewell-letter to all my friends of the literature mission quoting the wonderful word of comfort from Hebrews 13:5b and

was not granted any success. One tract of warning was confiscated by the GESTAPO right at the press" (Fix, K., Millionen Menschen müssen sterben! Ein Mahnruf an alle, Karl Fix Verlag Deutsche Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Schorndorf, 1955 (VII. edition 1962) p. 66).

⁸⁴ One of the reasons was the pacifist message, documented by statements such as "Love your enemies ..." (Fix, K., "Aus dem Kleinsten sollen tausend werden..." op. cit. p. 18)

made a little package of tracts for everyone. This was my last big distribution of literature in the Third Reich. The next day I became a "Driver" in the Third Battery A. R. 176 Potsdam.⁸⁵

The consequence of this last distribution of literature was a thorough search of the Fix' house, where almost all scriptures were confiscated. The reply to Erna Fix's protest, "My husband on the battlefield will be overjoyed when I write to him what has happened." was, "He is lucky to be there, otherwise we would take him with us".⁸⁶

2.11 All Pentecostal Churches are Banned

Although between 1935 and 1945 the Volksmission was continuously under GESTAPO surveillance, and Karl Fix permanently had to appear at the police headquarters, it was not banned, but the Pentecostal Churches were. When raising one's hands for prayer and praise was later misunderstood as an imitation of the "Hitler salute", Fix would refrain from it. He would also resist the requests made by other Pentecostal Churches to join their confederation in order to find protection from being banned referring to Isaiah 8:12-13 ("Do not call for a treaty every time that these people call for a treaty; do not fear what they fear, and do not dread it. The Lord Almighty

⁸⁵ Fix, K., Preiset mit mir den Herrn op. cit. p .29

⁸⁶ *ibid.* p .30

is the one you are to regard as holy, he is the one you are to fear, he is the one you are to dread ...").⁸⁷

When the GESTAPO asked what was the difference between the Pentecostal Churches and the Volksmission, Fix mainly referred to the way of conducting the services by quoting 1 Corinthians 14:33,40: "We mainly pay attention that our services are conducted in an orderly way".⁸⁸ Yet, the main reason why the Volksmission was not forbidden might surely have been its activities for the poor and needy. No less than a third of the monthly surplus would be used for the poor.⁸⁹

2.12 Branch Churches are Founded

Fix had a constant desire of founding new churches. Thus, branch churches, such as those in Birkenwerder, Friedrichsfelde, Borkheide, Klein-Machnow and Moabit were founded in Greater Berlin.⁹⁰ On his "trips to Saxony" he would travel to Zittau, Groß-Schönau and Waltersdorf. Often, healings accompanied the founding of new churches.⁹¹

⁸⁷ This way, Fix had also put it in section 7 of the constitution of 1938: "As the D.V.e.C. have made it their goal to serve the public without any obligations to a certain denomination – in their midst, are Protestants, as well as former Roman Catholics, Baptists, Methodists, Free Churches etc. – they will per se not promote any acquisition of members."

⁸⁸ Fix, K., Preiset mit mir den Herrn op. cit. p. 31

⁸⁹ *ibid.* p. 32

⁹⁰ Ros H. und Kaupp G. (eds) Missionarisch in die Zukunft - 50 Jahre Volksmission entschiedener Christen 1945-1995, Volksmission entschiedener Christen e.V., Stuttgart, 1995, p. 65

⁹¹ Fix, K., Preiset mit mir den Herrn op. cit. pp. 34-35

2.13 The "Weckhof" in Southern Germany

In 1935, Fix came into contact with the "Weckhof" through his relatives living in southern Germany. It was a tiny, inconspicuous hamlet in Hohenlohe, close to his birth place of Kupferzell. There, he helped in strengthening the young church.⁹² The founder of the Weckhof church, Marie Primmer⁹³, nee Wolf (1873), emigrated to America towards the end of the nineteenth century. She must have heard of the revival taking place in Los Angeles in 1906. In July 1925, she returned to Germany for a two-year stay. In the homes of her relatives she would conduct services reading and explaining the Word of God. Her niece, Rosa Munzinger, relates how already on 9 August 1925, three young persons "were baptized in the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues".⁹⁴ Water baptisms "in the Name of Jesus Christ" were carried out in the Kupfer river; the surrounding areas were evangelised on foot or by bike. As the revival movement was harshly attacked by the state church, the believers almost unitedly left the church and on 23 June 1928 founded the registered society "Freie Pfingstgemeinde

⁹² Breuninger, W., 50 Jahre Missionsgemeinde entschiedener Christen e.V., Weckhof, Missionsgemeinde Weckhof e. V., 1975, p. 13

⁹³ In Breuninger, W., 50 Jahre Missionsgemeinde entschiedener Christen e.V., op. cit., the family name of the founder is said to be "Brümmer". Yet, the correct name is "Primmer" according to a letter written by Taubert, M. as of 26 February 2001, where he mentions a letter written by hand with the sender's name being clearly readable as "Primmer".

⁹⁴ Munzinger, R., Augenzeugenbericht über die Entstehung der Weckhof-Gemeinde, unpublished typoscript, Künzelsau, 1998 R. Munzinger writes how her 11 year-old brother prophesied after having received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, "that there would still be many coming to the Weckhof, and that they would be coming from afar".

Weckhof e.V."⁹⁵ Georg Breuninger was called to be their leader. Having attended Bible seminars conducted by Benjamin Schilling⁹⁶ in Berlin, he got into contact with churches in Leipzig, Thuringia, Switzerland and Vienna. In the years between 1931 and 1939 the brethren Benjamin Schilling, Ernst Hebeisen and Hans Lack (Switzerland), as well as Karl Fix, who called the "Weckhof" his other spiritual home,⁹⁷ would come to preach there.⁹⁸ The brochure written for their 50th anniversary witnesses to the endurance of this church and the astonishment of the American occupational forces at the end of the war:

As right from the beginning the whole village had rejected national socialism, neither a flag, nor a swastika, nor a Hitler portrait could be found in any household. When the commanding officer entered the room in the Breuningers'/Eisseles' house that was used for the services, he immediately realised, by the way it was arranged and equipped, that it was a sanctuary. He was very surprised and glad by the explanation that there was a local Pentecostal church. Immediately he ordered the whole village with all its inhabitants and the numerous evacuated persons to be spared... There were no thefts, lootings, evacuations etc.⁹⁹

⁹⁵ Breuninger, W., 50 Jahre Missionsgemeinde entschiedener Christen e.V., pp. 3-5

⁹⁶ Schilling was in Weckhof in the years 1928/29. Miraculous healings having happened under his ministry have been reported (Taubert, M., Info über Weckhof-Gemeinde, unpublished typoscript, Künzelsau, 1998).

⁹⁷ Fix, K., Preiset mit mir den Herrn op. cit. p. 34

⁹⁸ Taubert M., Gemeinde auf dem Weg 75 Jahre Missionsgemeinde entschiedener Christen Künzelsau, Künzelsau, Missionsgemeinde e. C., 2000, p. 8

⁹⁹ Breuninger, W., 50 Jahre Missionsgemeinde entschiedener Christen e.V., p. 8

2.14 Switzerland and Austria

The Swiss brethren Hebeisen and Lack invited Fix to visit their churches. After having struggled hard with the GESTAPO to get the travel permit, Fix was able to minister in the "Verein entschiedener Christen", Klingentalgraben 7, in Basel.¹⁰⁰

When Dollfuß, the Austrian chancellor, had been assassinated by the national-socialists on 25 July 1934, Schuschnigg, his successor, tried to come to terms with national socialism, which had become a strong component in the meantime. Yet, he was not able to prevent the German army from marching in on 13 March 1938 and from "annexing" Austria to the German Reich, in the federation of which it had to take part in World War II. "Going home to the Reich" had been violently enforced.¹⁰¹ The Pentecostal Church having been founded in the twenties by Swedish missionaries sent by the Filadelfiaförsamlingen in Stockholm, was prohibited to hold further meetings in 1936. Public services conducted by religious groups that were not acknowledged by the government were not to take place any more, their meeting places were closed by the authorities and foreign missionaries had to leave the country.¹⁰² At that point, an Austrian railway officer urgently asked Fix in 1938 to help the banned churches.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ Fix, K., Preiset mit mir den Herrn op. cit. p. 34

¹⁰¹ Bracher D., in Unser Jahrhundert im Bild - Die dreißiger Jahre 1933 - 1939, Bertelsmann Verlag, Gütersloh, 1964, p. 488

¹⁰² Winter K., und Bergmair A. Eine Bewegung stellt sich vor 50 Jahre Freie Christengemeinden in Österreich 1946 - 1996, Lebensbotschaft-Eigenverlag, Salzburg, 1997, pp. 16-17

¹⁰³ Fix, K., Preiset mit mir den Herrn op. cit. p. 37

The incorporation of Austria had a positive outcome for the Pentecostal church in Vienna, as Fix succeeded in "having the prohibition of the meetings abolished, and in carrying on with church work in the name of 'Volksmission entschiedener Christen'."¹⁰⁴ On 14 August 1938 the Volksmission church in Vienna was re-opened in co-operation with Gabriel Germ. It was possible for Fix to visit the churches from Salzburg via Vienna to Graz. On his last "missionary itineration" in the spring of 1939, he once more preached to the associated churches in southern Germany, Austria and Switzerland to "prepare them with Psalm 91:14-16 for the things to come".¹⁰⁵

2.15 The Outbreak of World War II

At the end of August 1939, Fix was conscripted by telegram. He assigned the subsidiary church leadership to Fritz Döhring. Rudolf Lehmann from the Steglitz church was entrusted with the preaching ministry. After having served on the western front line for one year, his company was transferred to the eastern areas as an occupation unit. From there, he had to guide an ammunition supply convoy via Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria to the Russian winter front line. Weakened by the Wolhynian Fever, which had most likely been caused by a gunshot wound, he was finally admitted to a German military hospital on 20 April 1942, which saved him from having to go to Stalingrad.¹⁰⁶ Fix considered it a miracle that a comrade managed to get a

¹⁰⁴ Winter K., Eine Bewegung stellt sich vor, op. cit. p. 17

¹⁰⁵ Fix, K., Preiset mit mir den Herrn op. cit. p. 37

¹⁰⁶ Interview with Johannes Fix on 5 June 2001

transfer to the staff headquarters OKW (Oberkommando der Wehrmacht)¹⁰⁷ for him. He had to serve in the coding department, which was a secret service branch of the foreign broadcasting surveillance.¹⁰⁸ As he had to work mainly at night, he could further attend the services and lead the church through the hardest time of need,¹⁰⁹ until in April 1945 his military headquarters were transferred to the south, 50 km away from Salzburg. The leading general handed over his troops to the Americans, Fix was granted an early discharge to his southern German home, where his family had already been evacuated to in 1943.¹¹⁰ Their former home had been destroyed and all their possessions had been looted and burnt, so that his wife with their two children had to be put up in the school building of the neighbouring village, which served as an emergency accommodation for the time being.¹¹¹

Just during the hard times of bombings, many people came to believe in Christ. Thus, even the General Superintendent and Bishop of the Berlin Lutheran Church, Kurt Scharf, published the testimony of the former social democratic member of the Prussian parliament, Mrs Dr. Hildegard Wegschneider, titled *Die verborgene Gemeinde* ["The Hidden Church"], in

¹⁰⁷ The OKW was the highest administrative and command level of the German armed forces.

¹⁰⁸ Here, his office was directly under Admiral Wilhelm Canaris (1887-1945), head of the Department for Defense in the Ministry of War. As a resistance fighter, Canaris was executed in the KZ Flossenbürg on 9 April 1945 (oral information given by Herbert Ros on 9 April 2001).

¹⁰⁹ Fix, K., Preiset mit mir den Herrn op. cit. p. 39

¹¹⁰ Fix, K., 20 Jahre Volksmission entschiedener Christen Stuttgart September 1945 bis September 1965 - Weg und Werk -, Schorndorf, Verlag Deutsche Volksmission entschiedener Christen, 1965, p. 3

¹¹¹ *ibid.* p. 3

his special brochure "Wir sind doch Brüder" ["But we are Brothers"] celebrating the 1st Kirchentag, which is the national convention of the Lutheran Churches in Berlin. He introduced this testimony with these words:

"The fact that Berlin has been revived after the horrible war of nerves during the Hitler regime and the last two months of World War II, is due to its hidden assembly of Christians. As a authentic witness, I would like to present today the words of an unsuspected witness: It is the last part of the memoirs written by the 76-year-old Hildegard Wegschneider telling about her visits to the Volksmission:

Everything was totally different than what I had been used to up to then. My aesthetic feelings would not be satisfied. Yet, there were several hundred people, many of whom were elderly women just as myself, attentively listening to a speaker addressing us very simply in his sergeant's uniform. Nevertheless, he was filled with an inward truthfulness which touched my heart. I went there over and over again. Very slowly I overcame the displeasing feelings, and strong hope started growing in my heart: the people there helped me when they saw the need, and shedding unspeakably bitter tears I was able to start a totally new life. Mortifying very old patterns of thinking and feelings took a long time. They were substituted by new ones. How different it was now when the siren sounded. I knew that part of the world's history was being determined here, not by our intervention or action, but by divine power. The great battles fought by human beings on the battlefields only shadowed the great changes in human history.

Scharf commented:

This has been written by a well-known socialist lady, when she came to meet, just as by coincidence, a hidden confessing church. These churches are the healthy cells by which the body of our destroyed home town, bleeding from deep wounds, shaken by fevers, has been able to renew its life. The prayer and hope of a few thousand old men and women among millions and their courageous confession of a love which could neither be embittered nor disappointed, were the sheltering walls which

could not be penetrated by the fire of utter destruction. Hidden behind these walls, God has kept as much seed as he needed to let new fruit grow.¹¹²

2.16 A New Home – the Lazarus Hospital

On 18 March 1945, shortly before the total capitulation on 8 May 1945, all residential areas around Friedrichshain, and thus the hall of the Volksmission as well, burst into flames when the bombs were showered upon the city.¹¹³ As the Volksmission also used a small hall in Moabit, meetings could be held there for the time being, until finally the entire church was given a place to meet in the chapel of the Lazarus Hospital in Bernauerstraße for 3 years and 6 months. Some faithful deaconesses feeling at home in the Volksmission had helped obtaining it. Their conduct in the hospital work had been so positive, that "the Matron and the Reverend Diekmann willingly made their chapel available."¹¹⁴

As Fix's profession could not actively contribute to the rebuilding of the nation, he was refused the permanent right to stay by the authorities of the eastern section. This caused him to make Vaihingen/Enz in the state of Württemberg his place of residence.¹¹⁵ Nevertheless, he visited the Berlin

¹¹² Scharf, K. in "Wir sind doch Brüder - Festschrift zum 1. Kirchentag in Berlin", pp. 41-46

¹¹³ Gast, H.J., Geschichte der Volksmission Berlin op. cit. p. 1

¹¹⁴ Fix, K., Preiset mit mir den Herrn op. cit. p. 53

¹¹⁵ Fleisch, P., Geschichte der Pfingstbewegung in Deutschland von 1900 - 1950, p. 364

Church which he had entrusted to August Witt, quite often.¹¹⁶ On 8 September 1946, a baptismal service could be conducted again.¹¹⁷

2.17 How the Volksmission came to Stuttgart

Shortly after World War I, a sister in Christ - her name is not known any more – who had come to know a Pentecostal church during a longer stay in America, spoke about the Word of God every Sunday afternoon in a "House Meeting" in Hördtstraße 2, Stuttgart-Zuffenhausen. This house group got in touch with the "Freie Pfingstgemeinde Weckhof e.V.", and when the Sister was not able to hold the meetings any more due to old age, the brethren Breuninger and Egner, among others, took over this task. A special highlight was a Bible study held there by Karl Fix in the year 1937 or 1938.¹¹⁸ This house group was to become a second home to him.

At the same time, a prayer meeting of a similar kind developed in Brackenheimer Straße, which is about 10 minutes' walking distance from the Hördtstraße. Here, the "meetings" were held by Paula Gassner, who had experienced the Baptism of the Holy Spirit during a stay in Kensington Temple, London.¹¹⁹ Some of the "pillars" of the Brackenheimer Straße were

¹¹⁶ Fix, K., Preiset mit mir den Herrn op. cit. p. 53

¹¹⁷ Gast, H.J., Geschichte der Volksmission Berlin op. cit. p. 1

¹¹⁸ Ros, H., "40 Jahre Volksmission entschiedener Christen Stuttgart" in Volksmissionar, No. 11, October, 1985, p. 4

¹¹⁹ Gassner, P., In des Töpfers Hand - Die Autobiographie von Paula Gassner, Selbstverlag der Biblischen Glaubens-Gemeinde, Stuttgart, 1977, p. 31

Otto Stegmüller and Adolf Schnegelsberg.¹²⁰ In the years 1938/1939, Karl Fix made use of the possibility to minister there.¹²¹

When he was released from the American concentration camp on 18 June 1945 and sent to Heilbronn, Paula Gassner contacted him because of publishing matters. As the speaker, who had been invited for the first public meeting of the Stuttgart house groups, had not turned up, Fix was spontaneously asked to preach the word in the meeting on Sunday, 9 September 1945 in a hired hall of the Hohenstein school, which was attended by around 50 people.¹²²

In 1946, the duo became a triumvirate when Karl Keck, a Liebenzell missionary, joined them. They took over the responsibility for the meetings and for missionary activities. In September 1946, the first public baptism of 250 people, which was accompanied by many healings, took place in the Inselbad in Stuttgart-Untertürkheim.¹²³ Due to tent and open-air meetings, the Volksmission rapidly spread in southern Germany, so that presently, there exist about 60 churches in southern Germany besides the Berlin enclave.

¹²⁰ Adolf Schnegelsberg (1911-1991) later was to be the leader of the Stuttgart Volksmission for many years

¹²¹ Fix, K., 20 Jahre Volksmission entschiedener Christen Stuttgart, op. cit. S. 4

¹²² Further details can be found in the testimony of the shoemaker Otto Stegmüller in Ros H., Der Mann aus China - Leben und Wirken des Oskar Siering, Missionsverlag Gottlob Ling, Pforzheim, 1982, pp. 114-115

3. THEOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE VOLKSMISSION

3.1 The Newly Granted Printing Permission

After the victory of the Allies forces, a new freedom to spread the gospel in written form was enjoyed, especially in Western Germany. Of course, the permission of the occupying forces was needed; yet, this did not turn out to be too difficult except for the eastern sector. Having a good command of the English language was very useful for the necessary negotiations. Thus, Paula Gassner received a certificate from the military officer of the American Army granting her the right "to preach the full gospel."¹²⁴ They also obligingly helped her with the permission of the room for the meetings. As a former journalist, Fix knew about the power of the written word. Unfortunately, hardly any pre-war pieces of writing have remained.¹²⁵ Many items having been confiscated by the GESTAPO were never to re-surface. Fix writes:

¹²³ *ibid* p. 19

¹²⁴ Gassner, P., In des Töpfers Hand op. cit. p. 115

¹²⁵ Of some brochures, Fix later made a new edition: His booklet entitled "...und rufe mich an in der Not" is introduced by Fix as follows, "This brochure appeared in our former series of tracts under No. 20. It was prohibited and confiscated in 1939. Now, we are going to newly edit it as an appropriate continuation of tract No. 1 (Fix, K., "... und rufe mich an in der Not, so will ich Dich erretten!", Karl Fix Verlag Deutsche Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Schorndorf, 1946 p. 2).

Regarding the reprint of "Den ganzen Weg mit Jesu" by R. Fris, Fix writes, "This writing by the well-known Bible teacher Rikard Fris was sold by us as a tract in great numbers in earlier years. During the War we had it printed once more as a small brochure. Then it was suddenly prohibited – because of its 'pacifist' contents. It actually contains four biblical sentences about loving our enemies – quite a dangerous thing to write" (Fris, R., Den ganzen Weg mit Jesu, Karl Fix Verlag Deutsche Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Schorndorf, undated, p. 2).

What has been left for the Literature Mission after the "radical change", is I, its editor in chief, and the typewriter that I had bought in 1933, thanks to the Grace of God.¹²⁶

Karl Fix was convinced that Germany, "once having been called by the reformation to be a chosen vessel of blessings in the heart of Europe", but then "having been led astray by the Hitler demonism",¹²⁷ needed a new ministry of destiny, revival and exhortation. For this purpose, he started writing tracts and brochures in answer to this need. In January 1946, through the positive reference given on his behalf by his former chief newspaper editor, he was given the preliminary printing permission for certain Volksmission brochures by the military government, and by the end of February he was finally granted the desperately sought-after publisher's licence US-W-1056.¹²⁸ Even "certain gentlemen of the Protestant State Church" who accused him to flood the entire country with "Christian rubbish" and finally caused the military government of that time to ban this certificate, could not keep Fix from "printing his entire missionary program in the form of written testimonies to the all-sufficiency of Christ's redemption."¹²⁹ From far and wide, wastepaper would be donated; some people even sacrificed their precious libraries. Before World War II broke out, Fix was already able to print and spread the translation of a brochure written by Donald Gee without the permission of the Reich's Literature

¹²⁶ Fix, K., "Aus dem Kleinsten sollen tausend werden..." op. cit. p. 19

¹²⁷ *ibid* p. 20

¹²⁸ *ibid* p. 21

¹²⁹ *ibid* p. 21

Chamber.¹³⁰ This ministry was also intensified when new freedom had been gained. In his testimony on the founding of the literature mission *Aus dem Kleinsten sollen tausend werden* [this title is a quotation from Isaiah 60:22 "The least of you shall become a thousand"], Fix describes the objective of the 49 brochures that have already been published:

"These brochures are, above all, meant to give soundness to the new spiritual movement."¹³¹ Evangelistic and missionary efforts were promoted by the literature mission. Fix wrote in 1952:

Presently, there are over 50 titles in stock. With certain brochures, we have reached a number of over 100,000 copies, so that we can state without boasting that during the last few years we have been able to spread several million tracts by the grace of God.¹³²

3.2 German-Swiss People's Missionary Co-operation

On 30 July 1949, Karl Fix, together with Hans Lack, founded the "Deutschschweizerische Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Volksmission", ["German-Swiss People's missionary Co-operation"] in Aarburg, Switzerland; they defined the following objectives and immediately commenced their work:

1. Preaching the full gospel of Christ Jesus through the spoken and written word¹³³
2. The exchange of biblical literature between the two countries

¹³⁰ *ibid* p. 18

¹³¹ *ibid* p. 21

¹³² *ibid* p. 22

¹³³ The co-operation was represented in Germany by Verlag Deutsche Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Karl Fix, (14a) Vaihingen/Enz and in Switzerland by "Harfe-Verlag", Prediger Hans Lack, Aarburg (Aargau)

3. The mailing of brochures, Bibles and New Testaments free of charge to those being hungry and longing for salvation in the eastern sections of Germany, as well as supporting the missionary churches there.
4. The purchase of a tent for evangelistic crusades in Germany
5. The founding of a young people's home for endangered girls and boys in Berlin¹³⁴

In 1956, Fix estimated the number of Volksmission supporters to be approximately 5000 in the Berlin and the southern German mission which, at that time, consisted of about 70 branches and prayer groups. About 100 titles and 60 tracts had been published in his publishing house. In addition, the periodical *Der Volksmissionar* "had been published as needed" since 1949".¹³⁵

¹³⁴ Fix K., Das Christopheruszelt eine Posaune Gottes! Ein kurzer Zeltbericht des I. Zeltjahres 1950, Karl Fix Verlag Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Vaihingen/Enz, 1950, p. 3

¹³⁵ Der Volksmissionar No. 1, 1949 p. 4 (in 1949, there were 6 and in 1950, there were 9 editions)

3.3 The Statements of Faith and the Founding of the Society in Stuttgart

After Paula Gassner had left the Volksmission in 1951 and founded the "Biblische Glaubensgemeinde" in Stuttgart, 58 members of the Volksmission attended the inaugural meeting for the society in Stuttgart-Heslach, Schreiberstraße 22.¹³⁶ Fix considered it necessary to found a society in order to gain the official rights to buy a plot and build a centre for the mission.¹³⁷ The district's notary public, Mr G. Geiger had the name "Volksmission entschiedener Christen e. V. Sitz Stuttgart" entered into the official register of societies and associations in Stuttgart under the number VR 158.¹³⁸ The major objective of the "independent mission of evangelistic and Bible-based Christians" was defined in § 1 of the constitution as follows

The purpose of the Volksmission entschiedener Christen is to proclaim the true gospel – full salvation in Christ Jesus – based on the Holy Scriptures, through the spoken and written word among all people, freely and independently from any church organisation, true to the Great Commission given by their risen Lord, in the Spirit of Jesus Christ, and thus to awaken and cultivate the Christian life.¹³⁹

These prerequisites for becoming a member have been defined:

Whoever is based on the Word of God in faith and conduct can become a member of the society. A testimony of being born again and a profession of the biblical baptism of the believers

¹³⁶ Ros H. und Kaupp G. (eds) Missionarisch in die Zukunft op. cit. pp. 21-22

¹³⁷ Fix, K., Volksmission entschiedener Christen Weg und Werk, p. 13

¹³⁸ This name had evolved out of "Deutsche Volksmission" founded by Karl Fix and from "Internationale Volksmission" founded by Paula Gassner (Ros H. und Kaupp G. (eds) Missionarisch in die Zukunft op. cit. p. 22).

¹³⁹ Fix, K., 20 Jahre Volksmission entschiedener Christen Stuttgart, op. cit. p. 2

according to 2 Timothy 3:15-17 and Acts 2:38-39 will be required.¹⁴⁰

Probably to avoid the Volksmission being considered a sect, Fix purposely does not expect the members to leave the state church; further, he clearly states that no "special teachings" will be preached, neither will other churches be inveighed against. For this reason, he wrote in his brochure *20 Jahre Volksmission Stuttgart 1945-1965* that was published in 1965:

Therefore, there are Protestants and Roman Catholics, members of the great independent churches and many believers belonging to the Volksmission, who, out of various needs, bondage and illness have found the way to God and thus to a new life.¹⁴¹

Under the heading "What we believe and what we teach" the following Statements of Faith have been defined.¹⁴²

- 1) The Bible is the inspired, infallible, inerrant Word of God, and the final authority in matters of faith and conduct. (2 Tim. 3:14-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21; Luke 24:25-27; 44-45)
- 2) The one true God, creator, sustainer and judge of all mankind who has revealed Himself in three Persons – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (Rom. 1:19-20; Is. 45:5-6; Mt. 28:19; John 15:26)

¹⁴⁰ § 5.1 of the Statements of Faith and Fellowship of 18 May 1951

¹⁴¹ Fix, K., 20 Jahre Volksmission entschiedener Christen Stuttgart, op. cit. p. 15

¹⁴² These Statements of Faith and Fellowship have been kept unchanged even in the revised versions of the society's constitution as of 1 Oct. 1977; 14 May 1988; 10 June 1995 and 23 May 1998.

Hollenweger quotes an almost identical confession of the "Schweizerische Pfingstmission" (Hollenweger W., Enthusiastisches Christentum Die Pfingstbewegung in Geschichte und Gegenwart, Brockhaus Verlag, Wuppertal, 1969, pp. 591-592

- 3) The Fall of Man and Original Sin and the inherited Depravity of Man.
(Gen. 3:1-7; Rom. 3:23; 5:12; Gen. 8:21)
 - 4) The Incarnation of Christ, the Son of God. His Atonement and Redemption for all men accomplished at the cross. His physical Resurrection and Ascension to heaven. (Gal. 4:4; 1 Cor. 15:3-4; 1 John 2:2; Acts 10: 40-41; Acts 1:9)
 - 5) The only salvation for all men through faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. (1 Tim.2:5-6; Acts 4:12; Gal. 2:16. John 3:16)
 - 6) Repentance, Conversion and Regeneration, as well as Sanctification in Christ and Holiness through the obedience of Faith. (Acts 17:30; 26:20; John 3:3-8; Mt. 5:48; 1 Peter 1:15-16; Hebr. 12:14; 1 Thess. 5:23; Hebr. 10:10 and 14, Rom. 1:5)
 - 7) Baptism in water (by immersion) for those who have come to believe and the Lord's Supper to be held by the Church in remembrance of Christ. (Mt. 28:19; Acts 2:38; 8:36-38; 1 Cor.11:23-29)
 - 8) The Baptism in the Holy Spirit with the signs following according to Scripture. (Luke 3:16; Acts 1:4-5; 2:4; 10:44-46; 11:15-16; 19:6)
 - 9) The Spiritual Gifts and Ministry Gifts for the edification of the Body of Christ. (Eph. 4:7-16; 1 Cor.12:1-31)
 - 10) Divine Healing of physical illness through the complete Redemption wrought on Calvary. (Is. 53:4; Mt. 8:16-17; James 5:14-16)
 - 11) The Second Coming of Christ and the Rapture of the believers preceding the Millennium of Christ on earth. (Acts 1:11; 1 Cor. 15:22-24; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:51-57; Rev. 20:1-6)
-

12) The Last Judgement. Eternal salvation for all godly, as well as eternal punishment for all unrepentant. (Rev. 20:11-15; Rom. 2:2-16. Mt. 12:36; John 3:36; 5:24-29; Mt. 25:31-46; 2 Thess. 1:7-10)

3.4 Soteriology

Already in his preface to his first brochure published in January 1946, Fix stresses the fact that he is convinced of the condemnation of mankind. The greatest loss that has occurred to the German nation, as he sees it, is the "loss of biblical knowledge of God and self-knowledge". "To bring many people from darkness into his wonderful light" was to be the objective of the new tracts.¹⁴³ As a proof of the existence of God, Fix refers to God's manifestation in creation as it is described in Acts 14:17 and Romans 1:28.¹⁴⁴ The fall of the "Third Reich" and its consequences he interprets as "disciplinary measures of the holy God", yet, at the same time, he points out the option of acquiring salvation according to 1 Thess. 5:9,10 and Ezekiel 18:23¹⁴⁵ also referring to his own example.¹⁴⁶ Old-Testament covenant promises made to the Jewish people as, for example, in Deuteronomy 4:31, Fix also interprets as words of comfort for the suffering people of his time.¹⁴⁷ Fix considers his supernatural healing a command to preach the

¹⁴³ Fix, K., Brauchen wir heute noch einen Gott?, Neue Schriften der Volksmission, Nr. 1, Karl Fix Verlag Deutsche Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Heilbronn, 1946 p. 2

¹⁴⁴ Fix, K., Brauchen wir heute noch einen Gott, *ibid* p. 7

¹⁴⁵ *ibid* pp. 8-9

¹⁴⁶ *ibid* pp. 10-11

¹⁴⁷ Fix, K., "... und rufe mich an in der Not" *op. cit.* p. 3

message of salvation to all men: "Instead of dying, I have been permitted to live and to call others to live as it is said in Psalms 118:17." With great concern, Fix notices that after the fall in 1945, there were "record numbers of suicides". These actions of despair he is going to counteract with his brochure *Frevel - Grauen - Grausen: Selbstmord* ["Heinous deed – horror – terror – suicide"]. His knowledge of the philosophers shows in the quotation from Albert Camus' reflections *Über den Selbstmord* ["On suicide"]. He quotes the French existentialist and Nobel Prize winner:

There is only one really serious philosophical problem, which is suicide. To consider life worth or not worth living means to answer to the fundamental question of philosophy. All the other issues, whether, for example, there are three dimensions in this world, whether the mind has got nine or twelve categories, come only next in importance. They are nothing more than playful experiments, but as for now, we are obliged to provide an answer.

Here, Fix feels challenged to give a positive response. Besides the deterrent biblical examples of King Saul and Judas Iscariot, he also takes Walter Rathenau as a witness who states in his *Briefe an eine Liebende* ["Letters to a Lover"]:

I consider this kind of termination a metaphysical sin, sin against the spiritual realm. It stems from a lack of trust in the eternal good, from rebellion against the inward duty to obey the inner-world law... It is our destiny to take upon us some of the world's suffering by facing it, not to multiply the world's suffering by injuring ourselves.¹⁴⁸

Christ's death, Fix interprets as the "atonement for mankind",¹⁴⁹ the "shadow" of which can already be perceived in the Old Testament.¹⁵⁰ In this

¹⁴⁸ Fix, K., *Frevel - Grauen - Grausen: Selbstmord*, op. cit. pp. 7-9

¹⁴⁹ Fix, K., *Brauchen wir heute noch einen Gott*, op. cit p. 3

context, he opposes the doctrine of predestination: "This saviour Jesus Christ still stands there today with arms stretched out wide seeking to save who ever wants to be saved."¹⁵¹ Yet, at the same time, he makes clear in his interpretation of Revelation 21:1-8, that in the end there will be a definite separation between those "inside" and those "outside."¹⁵² Thus, in 1946, he publishes the tract written by Evangelist Fritz Göttler entitled *Ist mit dem Tode alles aus?* ["Is everything over when we die?"], which had already been published three times before the war. Here, Göttler makes the following statements:

There is a line among the Protestants supporting the doctrine of predestination which holds the opinion that one part of mankind is predestined for heaven, the other part of mankind is predestined for hell. God would really be a cruel despot, if this were the case! It is not true, though, but according to 1 Timothy 2:4, "God wants all people to be helped"¹⁵³

Nevertheless, Fix does not think much of explicit "sermons of penitence": "It is not proper just to force somebody, 'You must get saved!'"¹⁵⁴ Wooing and inviting – that is what the calling to Christ should be like. Fix takes Pastor John Nelson Parr as an example in this matter. After Parr had ministered as the guest speaker during a conference of the "Freie

¹⁵⁰ Fix, K., Ein reines Herz durch Christi Blut Ein Gottes-Geschenk für Gott-Suchende, Karl Fix Verlag Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Vaihingen/Enz, undated, p. 6

¹⁵¹ Fix, K., "... und rufe mich an in der Not" op. cit. p. 3

¹⁵² Fix, K., Drinnen oder draußen? Wo wirst du die Ewigkeit zubringen?, Karl Fix Verlag Deutsche Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Schorndorf, 1946

¹⁵³ Göttler, F., Ist mit dem Tode alles aus?, Karl Fix Verlag Deutsche Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Schorndorf, 1946, pp. 8-9

¹⁵⁴ Fix, K., "... und rufe mich an in der Not" op. cit. p. 7

Gemeinden" in Bremen-Rönnebeck in January 1950, Fix published a brochure of Parr's sermons entitled *Werdet Seelenretter* ["Become Soulwinners!"].¹⁵⁵

Fix's commitment to social fringe groups already becomes obvious in § 2 of the constitution of 1938 of the Berlin Church:

The purpose of the Volksmission is preaching the true gospel to the poor, the sick, the downcast, those in bondage according to Luke 4:18-19. "We do not preach doctrine, we do not define any theological issues (- we also keep from religious disputations -) love, ministering love is what we want to exercise; to help and to save – that's what we want. Our ears perceive the cry of those that have got lost knowing that we are obligated to our neighbours' needs. We try to help them being firmly convinced that our mission will be confirmed by the Lord. We are willing to happily invest our lives in serving the Lord that way. We feel special compassion for people in all kinds of bondage like drunkards etc., as well as for those suffering from an incurable illness.

¹⁵⁵ Fix, K., Werdet Seelenretter! Eine dringende Mahnung an alle Christen, Karl Fix Verlag Deutsche Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Schorndorf, 1950, p. 2
J. N. Parr describes his development in his autobiography (Parr, J.N., Incredible, Fleetwood, 1972)

3.5 Divine Healing

In February 1946, Fix extensively dealt with the issue of the healing of the sick in his series "Neue Schriften der Volksmission".¹⁵⁶ Based on the New Testament findings he shows, referring to Mark 1:27 and Luke 5:26, how Jesus, being "the same yesterday, today and forever", wrought healings and exorcisms right at the beginning of his ministry.¹⁵⁷ Fix opposes the argument that the working of miracles has come to an end with the apostolic age by referring to the authority Jesus gives in Mark 16:7-18 to all those "who believe".¹⁵⁸ 1 Corinthians 12:9 und James 5:14-16 he quotes as a proof for the fact that "healings" have not been limited to a certain period of time. He considers himself being in good company with Andrew Murray from whose book "Divine Healing" he quotes in great detail.¹⁵⁹ Then, Fix gives a survey of church history starting with the Early Church Fathers Clement and Justin Martyr whom he quotes:

An uncountable number of demon-possessed ones all over the world who could not be healed by those using witchcraft and medicine has been healed by Christian men in the Name of Jesus Christ, crucified by Pontius Pilate.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁶ Fix, K. Du bist der Gott der Wunder tut! Heilt Gott heute noch Kranke?, Karl Fix Verlag Deutsche Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Schorndorf, 1946. This brochure is mainly an abridged version of Bibel und Krankheit, first published in Berlin in 1939, to which Fix wrote the following preface in his fifth edition of 1951, "... During World War II this brochure was published in Switzerland. Since Whitsuntide we have been able to already distribute 10,000 copies in Germany."

¹⁵⁷ *ibid* pp. 4-5

¹⁵⁸ *ibid* p. 6

¹⁵⁹ Fix, K., Wenn du könntest glauben! Worte der Besinnung für Kranke, Karl Fix Verlag Deutsche Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Schorndorf, undated, pp. 9-12

¹⁶⁰ *ibid* p. 7

Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen follow in his list, until he finally quotes Clemens in the context of visiting the sick: "Therefore, let those who have been given the gift of healing for the glory of God, make intercession by prayer and fasting."¹⁶¹ After mentioning the Waldensians and Zinzendorf, Luther's prayer for Melancton who was ill, Richard Baxter and Bengel, Fix talks about the healing ministry of Dorothea Trudel (Männedorf) in the 19th century. Seckendorff, Blumhardt, Seitz, Stockmayer, Paul and Stanger - having led the "Faith Home" in Möttlingen - serve as contemporary witnesses. Fix writes, "Past the great failure of liberal theology, God himself leads his children into a real encounter with himself, this way establishing his Kingdom all by himself to be firm and everlasting."¹⁶² According to Psalm 12:6, Fix considers God's mercy to be the reason for healing. Many illnesses he ascribes to the powers of darkness and to demons. Over and over again, Fix reports of healings happening in the present in addition to his own testimony, such as the healing of a young girl "who, from her earliest youth, had suffered from violent convulsions", but was finally healed by the anointing with oil through the elders.¹⁶³

Although healing comes by grace, it is effected by faith. "Healing by faith only comes from the wounds of the risen and exalted saviour; it is wrought and imparted by the Holy Spirit and acquired by faith."¹⁶⁴ Fix clearly

¹⁶¹ *ibid* p. 8

¹⁶² *ibid* p. 10

¹⁶³ *ibid* p. 15

¹⁶⁴ Fix K., Bibel und Krankheit, op. cit., p. 3

opposes the "pious opinion" that sickness comes from God, that it is a blessing or that it serves for purification. To him, sickness is "God's judgement", which he proofs by the story of murmuring Miriam being struck by leprosy (Numbers 12), of Ahaziah consulting the idols (2 Kings 1:4) and of the sinfully reigning Joram who finally dies in violent pain (2 Chronicles 21:14,19). As New Testament proofs he mentions the arrogant King Herod (Acts 12:23), those in the church at Corinth who have "fallen asleep too soon" (1 Corinthians 11:30) and idolatrous Jezebel being active in Thyatira, who, together with her children, is to become a victim of death through a disease (Revelation 2:20).¹⁶⁵

According to Fix, healing is included in the atonement being accomplished by Christ. Referring to Matthew 8:16,17 and 1 Peter 2:24 he writes:

If now the Lord Jesus has fulfilled the Scriptures, if he has taken upon himself sickness and pain, do we then still have to carry them as well, or has he also accomplished his work for us? The entire testimony about Jesus is a clear proof for healing of body, soul and spirit being included in the atonement!¹⁶⁶

Fix's reply to the statement that "there is suffering and tribulation for Christ's sake", is that this means "that the Christian is suffering from hostility for Jesus' sake," With the help of the questions asked in James 5:13,14, "Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray... Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders..." he tries to make clear the difference between "suffering for Jesus' sake" and "sickness". Thus, he does not define

¹⁶⁵ *ibid* p. 11

¹⁶⁶ *ibid* p. 12

Paul's "thorn in the flesh" (2 Corinthians 12:7) as an illness, but as the effect of his weaknesses, which are "insults, hardships, persecutions."¹⁶⁷

Medicine was rather considered a hindrance by Fix,¹⁶⁸ thus he said to a sister in Christ who was much afflicted by pains in her kidneys and her gall bladder and who, after extensive studies of the healing testimonies, thought it right to go on drinking her herbal tea, "If I ask God for healing and at the same time think of my tea to help me – of what use is this kind of prayer?"¹⁶⁹

He can only advise the sick persons to ask God for the reason and then to confess whatever sin has been discovered. Any existing sickness must be considered an enemy:

Inwardly, you must be free from your sickness; you must realize that it is a sinful and satanic alien element which has come upon mankind no sooner than the Fall.¹⁷⁰

Faith without any doubt and the assurance "that it is God's will for man to be healthy", are essential for healing through faith, although often the lack of faith in the entire church can be a hindrance.¹⁷¹ If there is still no healing, secret sins or sins that have not been confessed and that can reach back to

¹⁶⁷ *ibid* pp. 13-14

¹⁶⁸ Nevertheless, Fix publishes a brochure containing a sermon held by Otto Witt in Leonberg on 19 August 1945 as No. 83 of his series "Neue Schriften der Volksmission", who concedes in his final conclusions on the topic of healing, "This does not exclude thankfully accepting medical skills within its proper realms" (Witt, O. Er hat alles wohlgemacht!, Karl Fix Verlag Deutsche Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Schorndorf, undated p. 16).

¹⁶⁹ Fix K., Bibel und Krankheit, *op. cit.*, p. 14

¹⁷⁰ *ibid* p. 20

¹⁷¹ *ibid* p. 22

childhood can be a reason. Here, Fix lists a whole range of them: "Whoring, adultery, self-abuse, incest, theft, secret murder (abortion), sins according to Leviticus 18:22,23; Romans 1:24-29 to cure man or animal by magic, fortune-telling with or without using cards, casting horoscopes."¹⁷²

In 1963, Fix dealt again with the topic of healing. As an introduction to the booklet published as No. 98 in the series "Neue Schriften der Volksmission", he writes, "This booklet is a newly revised part of our brochure entitled *Bibel und Krankheit* having been published for the first time in 1939, but which has been out of print for two years." Although Fix mainly offers the same arguments as before, quoting Arthur Richter in order to confirm his theses -, "According to the general view of the Bible, sickness does not belong to God's good creation; it is rather a consequence of the Fall, of sin. It was the Creator's will that man should live before him in harmonious order and in a healthy accord of body, soul and spirit. It was by sin that everything changed. Your trespasses have brought confusion where once there was order (Jeremiah 5:25)," - he develops a more moderate attitude towards the origin of sickness, "... superficially tracing back certain suffering or sickness to certain sins is clearly disapproved of, as this does not meet the depths of correlations (the Book of Job; John 9:2,3; 11:4)."¹⁷³ Regarding the physicians, he quotes J. C. Blumhardt:

Medical science should be praised - in spite of its bare unbelief - to have, on the whole (I am not talking about a few odd doctors), worked and laboured unspeakably more faithfully than those serving the gospel. These, especially when dealing with

¹⁷² *ibid* p. 22

¹⁷³ *ibid* p. 8

mental cases, make quite a strange impression compared with the faithful industry and diligence of the doctors, if, in spite of the nicest word of comfort that are available, they do not know more to say than James' "Go, I wish you well", although originally the power of God has been intended for use by the servants of the gospel.

Fix additionally remarks: "Thank God there are still some doctors today who believe in the Bible (or have they just appeared lately again?) and who pray with the sick besides administering medicine for their healing."¹⁷⁴ Fix does not want "to make a law" out of the question whether a sick person should consult a doctor or not. He points out that true children of God will - first of all - always pray for the leading and guidance of the Holy Spirit. In his list of recommended literature there also appear, besides H. v. Seckendorff's "*Hausandachten - Zeugnisse über Glaubensheilung*" ["Home Devotionals – Testimonies of Faith-Healings"], O. Stockmayer's "*Krankheit und Evangelium*" ["Sickness and the Gospel"] and Hans Mallau's "*Wenn du könntest glauben*" ["If only you Believed"] Donald Gee's "*Trophimus ließ ich krank zurück, Probleme der Glaubensheilung*" ["Trophimus I Left Sick" – Problems of Faith-Healings"].¹⁷⁵

Fix is also convinced of the healing effects of fasting. This he makes a topic in his jubilee edition No. 100 of the "Neue Schriften der Volksmission" series.¹⁷⁶ From an Old Testament survey about Moses' forty day fast (Exodus 34:28), Elijah's journey through the desert (1 Kings 19:8) and

¹⁷⁴ *ibid* p. 14

¹⁷⁵ *ibid* p. 16

¹⁷⁶ Fix, K., *Beten und Fasten - Das Heilfasten*, Karl Fix Verlag Deutsche Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Schorndorf, 1946

David's intercessory fasting for his enemies (Psalms 35:13), Fix continues with the story of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness, the exhortation of his disciples lacking authority (Matthew 17:21) and the dynamic expansion of the Antioch Church (Acts 13). Thus he explains the way of fasting in the Scriptures.¹⁷⁷

Although Fix deals with spiritual fasting here, he does not deny the reviving effects of "remedial fasting" as he quotes its promoters Prof. Dr. med Alfred Brauchle, Dr. Franz Mayr having invented the "Mayr-Cure" and finally he had the privilege of listening to the 85-year-old Dr. Buchinger sen.¹⁷⁸ About the latter, he remarks:

It is very interesting and especially important for those loving the Bible how Dr. Buchinger makes clear the difference between sickness and chronic illness. Our chronic illness is the sum total of all the numerous little flaws, weaknesses and bad habits of our life.¹⁷⁹

Dr. Kapferer's recommendation of totally refraining from any nourishment in order to cure feverish and inflammatory illness Fix has proved by himself to be successful.¹⁸⁰

3.6 The Believers' Water Baptism

¹⁷⁷ *ibid* pp. 3-6

¹⁷⁸ *ibid* pp. 7-13

¹⁷⁹ *ibid* p. 14

¹⁸⁰ *ibid* p. 10

In May 1946, Fix deals with the "biblical believers' baptism" for the first time. He also uses the term "adult baptism" in contrast to "christening children". In his introduction, he particularly emphasizes that he is not a "baptism fanatic", but that "there is no way either for anybody to neglect or avoid this biblical truth".¹⁸¹ Adult baptism he considers "an act of obedience", and from his own experience he witnesses many healings to have taken place right during the baptisms and many have been baptized "with the effect of receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit according to Acts 2:3."¹⁸²

To Fix, certain Old Testament events are foreshadowing the New Testament baptism, such as the ceremony of circumcision (Genesis 17 / Colossians 2:11-12); the Flood (1 Peter 3:21) and the Israelites' crossing the Red Sea (1 Corinthians 10:1-2).¹⁸³ Fix further argues that Jesus himself was baptized as an adult and that during his farewell recorded in Matthew 28:18-20, he commanded the believers' baptism. Mark 16:16 containing the promise "whoever believes and is baptized..." he quotes as a proof that there is nothing like christening children in the New Testament:

In this command to be baptized, it is evident, that christening children that is carried out by the church these days could never have been meant then. Many vicars even are convinced of this. A baby can neither be taught, nor can it believe anything; it can neither be commanded to do anything, nor is it able to carry it out.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸¹ Fix, K., Die biblische Glaubenstaufe, Karl Fix Verlag Deutsche Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Schorndorf, 1946 p. 2

¹⁸² *ibid* p. 5

¹⁸³ *ibid* pp. 6-7

¹⁸⁴ *ibid* p. 9

Fix firmly rejects alternatives:

Here in Germany, there is a movement of believers who state that it is not important whether one has been baptized as a believer or not; that it is rather important to be baptized with the Holy Spirit!¹⁸⁵ Yet, the Apostle Peter teaches us something different, as it is told in Acts 10:48, "So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ."¹⁸⁶

In the repetition of the act of baptism as in the case of the twelve at Ephesus (Acts 19:1-7), Fix sees a "proper" baptism fully justified for those who have been christened.¹⁸⁷ Referring to Ephesians 4:5 and 1 Corinthians 12:13, Fix considers baptism as the expression of being a new person in Christ, as the bond uniting all believers:

The Church of God exists worldwide, yet, it is one in him; its unity needs not be organized; it rather grows together like an organism, "built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself the chief cornerstone... to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit."¹⁸⁸

Instead of baptizing babies, Fix recommends them to be "dedicated" and "blessed" by the elders of the church referring to Mark 10:13-16.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁵ Here, Fix probably opposes the Mülheimer Gemeinschaftsverband who gives the following opinion on water baptism, "Regarding the practica of baptism, we respect God's leading and the conviction of the individual conscience" (Krust, C., Was wir glauben, lehren und bekennen, Missionsbuchhandlung und Verlag, Altdorf bei Nürnberg, 1980, p. 136).

¹⁸⁶ Fix, K., Die biblische Glaubenstaufe, op. cit. p. 11

¹⁸⁷ *ibid* p. 12

¹⁸⁸ *ibid* p. 13

¹⁸⁹ *ibid* p. 14

The paper *Die Kirchliche Lehre von der Taufe* ["The Church's Doctrine of Baptism"], written by the Swiss Professor of Divinity, Karl Barth, and published in the summer of 1947, causes Fix in 1953 to once more deal with the "pious mass production of christening children".¹⁹⁰ Knowing that the Lutheran Church will be offended by Barth's paper, Fix quotes him as follows:

The promoters of christening children betray by their searching for New Testament arguments that it is of no avail to put the exegetical question..., since the New Testament arguments that are in favour of baptizing babies are less than just meagre.¹⁹¹

Not only Barth serves as a welcome advocate of the believers' baptism to Fix, but also A. Niden and Otto Baumgarten with his brochure entitled *"Die Gefährdung der Wahrhaftigkeit durch die Kirche"* ["The Endangering of Truthfulness by the Church"]¹⁹² as well as with his *Real-Enzyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche* ["Encyclopaedia for Protestant Theology and Church"]¹⁹³ further back up his baptismal practice.¹⁹⁴ Fix, as the founder of a free church, finds support in Baumgarten's statements:

¹⁹⁰ Fix, K., Kindertaufe oder Erwachsenentaufe, Karl Fix Verlag Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Vaihingen/Enz, 2nd edition 1953, p. 2

¹⁹¹ *ibid* p. 3; Barth, K., Die kirchliche Lehre von der Taufe, Christoph Kaiser Verlag, Munich, 1947 p. 32

¹⁹² Fix quotes: "Protestant Church traditionalism is established in the christening of children" Baumgarten, O., "Die Gefährdung der Wahrhaftigkeit durch die Kirche", Gotha, 1925 p. 23

¹⁹³ Fix quotes, "It can be stated for sure that in the New Testament there is no direct trace leading to the christening of children; trying to prove its necessity by the words of introduction, its practice by verses such as Acts 2:39; 1 Corinthians 1:16, lacks logical consequence, as what is to be proven is also the initial condition" (2nd edition 1885, volume 15 p. 219)

Truly redemptive faith, the full measure of saving faith, protestant faith, that stems from an inner conviction, can neither be mediated by christening children nor by teaching a child Christian doctrine; it can only be secured by personal surrender to the Saviour and by being made a member of a true church of the saints. Yet whoever is serious about these considerations will, at the same time, abstain from a nation-wide religion claiming for itself all of those being born and christened Protestants, and will take the logical step of joining a free church or a sect.¹⁹⁵

3.7 The Baptism of the Holy Spirit

After dealing with the subject of water baptism in his tract No. 24, Fix, in his following tract No. 25 of May 1946, for the first time turned to the subject of the "Baptism of the Holy Spirit".¹⁹⁶ Feeling led by the Holy Spirit, he states in his introduction:

It would be impossible for me to testify of the good Holy Spirit, if he had not revealed himself to me and if he himself did not come to help me and take the leadership now.¹⁹⁷

When Fix has once more pointed out that, after his conversion, he would, probably, "have been rejected by every mission society as their student or co-worker",¹⁹⁸ he records how a brother in Christ drew his attention to "the gift promised by the Father" (Acts 1:4).¹⁹⁹ On one hand, the baptism of the

¹⁹⁴ Fix, K., Kindertaufe oder Erwachsenentaufe, op. cit. p. 5

¹⁹⁵ *ibid* p. 6

¹⁹⁶ Fix, K., Wie empfangen wir die Geistestaufe? Karl Fix Verlag Deutsche Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Heilbronn, 1946 p. 2

¹⁹⁷ *ibid* p. 3

¹⁹⁸ *ibid* p. 4

¹⁹⁹ *ibid* p. 5

Holy Spirit to him means a greater power to witness, on the other hand, it is the experience of the "wonderful counsellor" and, referring to Ephesians 1:13,14, "the seal, the deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until our redemption is complete". Quoting 1 John 2:20-27, Fix also refers to having received the authority to teach by receiving the Holy Spirit:

Through the anointing of the Holy Spirit, we received a blessed insight into the Word of God which enables us, in spite of all doubts, to teach others according to Scripture without being dependent on other people in this aspect.²⁰⁰

Fix reports how in his three-month struggle for receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit he would repeatedly be warned by other believers of the danger of receiving a wrong spirit and of going astray; he was comforted, though, by the promise given in Luke 11:13: "If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"²⁰¹ Fix concludes this first part, which is rather a testimony, by the confession, that God the Father has, in his grace and mercy, baptized him with fire.²⁰²

In the second chapter of his booklet, Fix deals with the question of how the church can be led towards the baptism and the fullness of the Holy Spirit. Fix records that after having studied a great deal of literature dealing with the subject, he has received the following personal answer through the Holy Spirit:

²⁰⁰ *ibid* p. 6

²⁰¹ *ibid* p. 9

²⁰² *ibid* p. 9

Lead them to the Cross! Out of the deep wounds there flows life and salvation, abundance, everything, even the baptism of the Holy Spirit.²⁰³

Thus, he simply preached "the full salvation in Christ, including the truth about the baptism of the Holy Spirit" and to "leave it to God to deal with the souls as he pleases". According to Fix, regeneration is a prerequisite of the baptism of the Holy Spirit as it is stated in Acts 2:38. This means to turn away from one's sin and to be cleansed:

Do not let anybody ask for the Holy Spirit who has not been cleansed in the blood of the Lamb before that and who does not remain in this constant cleansing process.²⁰⁴

Further, Fix considers the "baptism in the name of Jesus Christ" as an essential step towards receiving the Spirit; he tells of "knowing some" who have experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit during their baptism in water.²⁰⁵ Although he keeps in mind Acts 10, where "the Spirit fell upon people that had not been baptized in water yet", he reminds the reader of Peter commanding to still have them baptized in water.²⁰⁶ Referring to Acts 5:32 and Luke 11:13, Fix considers obedience and prayer to be further prerequisites for receiving the Spirit.

²⁰³ *ibid* p. 10

²⁰⁴ *ibid* p. 12

²⁰⁵ *ibid* p. 12

²⁰⁶ *ibid* p. 13

He opposes the arguments of some "friends" stating that they have received the Holy Spirit at their conversion and when they were born again as follows:

There is a difference between the Holy Spirit dwelling in us, just as in any believer, in a secret sanctuary, sometimes even without us being aware of it, and him totally possessing his temple by leading us and ruling over us (1 Corinthians 6:19).²⁰⁷

In the second edition of his brochure entitled *Wie empfangen wir die Geistestaufe* ["How do we Receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit"] of 1956, Fix speaks more definitely about the "many voices testifying against and warning of the baptism of the Holy Spirit" and, referring to Matthew 12:31-32, he says that "in some places, this has even become impudent blasphemous boldness".²⁰⁸ He states that "those opposing the baptism of the Holy Spirit spread much useless talk, one repeats what the former one has already said, and using conjuring formulas, they throw out the baby with the bath water". Fix states:

The result is the satanic blindness of our time: Christianity lacking the Power from on High.²⁰⁹

Now, to him the baptism of the Holy Spirit means "the triumph of salvation"; the Holy Spirit "is the seal upon being a child of God, he opens up the hidden wisdom of God and grants insights into the deep things of God (1 Corinthians 1:18-2:16)".²¹⁰ In the description of his personal

²⁰⁷ *ibid* S. 14

²⁰⁸ Fix, K., *Wie empfangen wir die Geistestaufe?* Karl Fix Verlag Deutsche Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Schorndorf, 1956 S. 3

²⁰⁹ *ibid* S. 3

²¹⁰ *ibid* S. 4

experience, Fix also mentions here for the first time that he spoke in tongues when he received the baptism of the Holy Spirit:

Unforgettable day and hour. I did not know any more what was happening to me. A stream of joy was about to make me burst. And then I praised the Lord in new tongues. "Maranatha! Our Lord comes!" must have been my first testimony then, as the witnesses of these first moments recall.²¹¹

In the meantime, Fix had found another promoter of his theses in the person of T. B. Barrat. He also published Barrat's tract called *Das Wesen der Geistestaufe* ["The Characteristics of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit"] as brochure No. 45 in his series "Neue Schriften der Volksmission".²¹² There, Barrat puts forward the thesis that "speaking in tongues can be considered the outward evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit".²¹³ In 1948, Fix had already published Donald Gee's brochure *God's Grace and Power for Today* under the title *Gottes Gnade und Kraft für heute* according to a translation by Johann Justus Meier. In his introduction, he says that he has already published Gee's writings entitled *Über die geistlichen Gaben und Gottes*

²¹¹ *ibid* p. 10

²¹² Barrat, T.B., *Das Wesen der Geistestaufe*, Karl Fix Verlag Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Vaihingen/Enz, undated

²¹³ *ibid* p. 12

Shortly after publishing his brochure entitled *Wie empfangen wir die Geistestaufe*, Fix also published Otto Witt's translation of the Norwegian W. Skibstedt's, *Die Geistestaufe im Licht der Bibel*, in his publishing house. An extensive vita of Pastor T.B. Barrat can be found there as well (Skibstedt, W., *Die Geistestaufe im Licht der Bibel*, Karl Fix Verlag Deutsche Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Vaihingen/Enz, undated, pp. 120 - 125).

große Gabe ["Concerning Spiritual Gifts"] as tracts.²¹⁴ As further recommended writings by D. Gee he lists the following:

- *Die Gaben Christi für den geistlichen Dienst* ["The Ministry-Gifts of Christ"]
- *Die Früchte des Geistes* ["The Fruit of the Spirit"]
- *Pfingsten* ["Why Pentecost?"]
- *Gottes große Gnade* ["God's Grace and Power for Today"]²¹⁵

Fix expresses his appreciation for Gee in the preface of *Gottes Gnade und Kraft für heute*:

Without making any overstatements, we can call him a divinely gifted teacher of 20th century Christianity. What makes him especially precious to us and what positively distinguishes him from many "interpreters of the Bible" is his deep respect for the written Word of God, which will never and nowhere degenerate into one-sided literalist dogmatism.²¹⁶

In 1949, Fix publishes Andrew Murray's discourse called *Der volle Pfingstsegen* ["The Believer's Full Blessing of Pentecost"] making the introductory remark:

We have already been taught a lot and granted great blessings by Andrew Murray's writings. One of these most blessed ones, though, seemed to have been "submerged" in the ups and downs of the past. In vain we have been searching for a German edition in Switzerland and in Germany. It is understandable. Publishing this brochure will take some courage. Yet, it will remain the same, and it will be more so today than it has been ever before: "What is Needed Today – The Full Blessing of Pentecost." Seldom we have read such a clear and convincing brochure that

²¹⁴ Gee, D., Gottes Gnade und Kraft für heute Das Erlebnis des Erfülltwerdens mit dem Heiligen Geist, Karl Fix Verlag Deutsche Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Heilbronn, 1946, p. 2

²¹⁵ Barrat, T.B., Das Wesen der Geistestaufe, op. cit. p. 15

²¹⁶ Gee, D., Gottes Gnade und Kraft für heute, p. 4

puts us face to face with this much needed and irrefutable truth.²¹⁷

On Whitsuntide of 1958, when publishing Hermann Dittert's theses, Fix again deals with the subject of "being born again and the baptism of the Holy Spirit, in order to oppose those stating that everyone who is a born-again member of the Body of Jesus Christ has also been baptized with the Holy Spirit."²¹⁸ This brochure having been intended to prove that Christ's promise of the baptism of the Holy Spirit was only meant for the born-again²¹⁹ and that the Spirit only fell upon those who had been born-again before²²⁰ was published by Fix "as a means of defence against many shallow unbiblical attacks."²²¹

1964, five years before his death, Fix once more turns to the "truth about Pentecost, which today does not mean much to many people" by means of his brochure *Versiegelt mit dem Heiligen Geist* ["Sealed by the Holy Spirit"].²²² Referring to John 14:21-23, Fix tries to make clear that Jesus first talks about "showing himself" to, then of "making his home" in a

²¹⁷ Murray, A., Der volle Pfingstseggen Das Eine was not ist, Karl Fix Verlag Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Vaihingen/Enz, 1949, p. 6

²¹⁸ Dittert, H., Wiedergeburt und Geistestaufe, Karl Fix Verlag Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Schorndorf, 1958

²¹⁹ *ibid* p. 4

²²⁰ *ibid* p. 5

²²¹ *ibid* p. 2

²²² Fix, K., Versiegelt mit dem Heiligen Geist, Karl Fix Verlag Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Schorndorf, 1964, p. 2

person.²²³ Although Fix acknowledges, according to Romans 8:14-16 that "a true Christian carries the Holy Spirit's testimony of being a child of God in his heart" and that, according to Galatians 4:4-7 "he possesses the Spirit of sonship"²²⁴, he still considers "being sealed by the Holy Spirit" as an experience that is following and that was received by the first Christians on the Day of Pentecost and by the Samaritan believers through the apostles' ministry (Acts 8). Fix also mentions Ephesians 1, where the Ephesian believers did not receive the "sealing" before being laid hands on by Paul in order to receive the Holy Spirit.²²⁵ This causes Fix to make the following statement:

We can speak of two experiences here: 1. The preparatory work of God's Spirit for us and 2. His actually dwelling in the heart of every single Christian.

To him, the latter is the "sealing", and according to Revelation 7:2-8; 9:4, only these will not fall victim to destruction in the "final catastrophes among the nations".²²⁶

Fix bridges the gap to those who do not believe in a "baptism of the Holy Spirit" writing

The baptism of the Holy Spirit and the sealing can happen at the same moment, yet it need not be like that. There are many who do not believe in a biblical baptism of the Holy Spirit and thus cannot experience it; yet, as they still have got the testimony of sonship in their hearts by having been born again, they also have

²²³ *ibid* p. 6

²²⁴ *ibid* p. 7

²²⁵ *ibid* pp. 12,13

²²⁶ *ibid* pp. 11,12

got the sealing by the Spirit of sonship in their hearts who cries "Abba Father."²²⁷

3.8 The Prophetic View

In his third volume of the series "Neue Schriften der Volksmission", Fix allows some insights into his prophetic way of thinking. In retrospect, he talks about the coming into being of his tract *Grausen, Grausen...*

While the impudent ones in this world were still shouting "Enjoy life", while they raucously founded an eternal earthly empire and "were thoroughly doing away with Christianity, teaching a gutless, negative approach to life", judgment had already been pronounced on this world: "Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools." And the Spirit of God testified of the coming great judgment of this world: "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth!" Well, and then, "horror" awfully vented itself upon this old earth.²²⁸ When about 10 years ago I repeatedly had to testify about the coming War, many would ridicule me; in the face of the ruins, they will keep silent now.²²⁹

Fix considers the "Axis Powers" under the leadership of Hitler, who had his own observatory for calculating special lucky days, and Mussolini, who consulted a fortune-teller before making important decisions, to be controlled by demons and by powers of darkness. "Satan had found willing tools for letting his work of destruction on this earth escalate..."²³⁰

²²⁷ *ibid* p. 14

²²⁸ Fix, K., Was sollen wir tun? Eine Frage von vielen - und eine Antwort an Alle!, Karl Fix Verlag Deutsche Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Heilbronn, 1946 p. 4

²²⁹ *ibid* p. 6

²³⁰ *ibid* p. 10

The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse announced in the Bible, and verified by Dante and Dürer,²³¹ Fix interpreted as the latest political developments in Europe. The prophecy of doom pronounced over the Babylonian king in Isaiah 14:15-17,²³² Fix, after the lost War, understands as being meant for the German nation as a whole. For him, the catastrophe of World War II was the beginning of the "time of distress" prophesied by Daniel (12:1) consisting in a series of divine judgements. He also refers to the "statesmen who were the first" to talk about doom "in the face of the atomic bomb".²³³ Fix finds the reason for a lack of repentance in Revelation 9:21 and Romans 1:28-32. In the midst of all that he hears Peter's call, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation! Repent! (Acts 2:37-42)."²³⁴

Fix had had to live through two World Wars. The "Cold War" between the groupings of the western powers (especially the USA.) and the eastern powers (especially the USSR) beginning in 1946, in connection with acquiring nuclear armaments caused this sharp-witted observer of the events of the day to deeply worry. With this apocalyptic threat, he dealt in his brochures entitled *Millionen Menschen müssen sterben* ["Millions of People

²³¹ *ibid* p. 3

²³² "Is this the man who shook the earth and made kingdoms tremble, the man who made the world a desert, who overthrew its cities and should not let his captives go home?"

²³³ *ibid* p. 6-7

²³⁴ *ibid* p. 8

have to Die"],²³⁵ *Wie sollen wir dem kommenden Verderben entfliehen?* ["How are we to Escape the Coming Destruction"]²³⁶, and *Welt im Verderben* ["A Doomed World"].²³⁷

In order to give a clearer impression of the future catastrophe of a nuclear war, Fix quotes famous scientists and philosophers, such as Karl Jaspers,²³⁸ who, in 1958, wrote the following in *Die Atombombe und die Zukunft der Menschheit* ["The Atomic Bomb and the Future of Mankind"]:

New destructive weapons have always been declared to be criminal first – once these were the cannons, the latest ones were the submarines torpedoing without giving a warning during World War I. Yet, by getting used to them, their existence soon had become an unquestioned fact.

Fix also refers to Albert Einstein, the founder of the relativity theory and Nobel Prize winner, quoting a declaration signed by Einstein not long before his death in 1955:

If hydrogen weapons should be used on a massive scale, sudden death of a small part of mankind, as well as torturing illnesses and finally dying of every living creature would have to be expected.²³⁹

²³⁵ Fix, K., Millionen Menschen müssen sterben! Ein Mahnruf an alle, Karl Fix Verlag Deutsche Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Schorndorf, 1955 (7th edition 1962)

²³⁶ Fix, K., Wie sollen wir dem kommenden Verderben entfliehen? Jeder hat eine Chance..., Karl Fix Verlag Deutsche Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Schorndorf, 1962

²³⁷ Fix, K., Welt im Verderben, Karl Fix Verlag Deutsche Volksmission entschiedener Christen, Schorndorf, 1967

²³⁸ The representative of existential philosophy (among others: *Vernunft und Existenz; Vom Ursprung und Ziel der Geschichte*) died one month after Fix in February 1969.

²³⁹ Fix, K., Millionen Menschen müssen sterben!, op. cit. p. 6

Scientist Otto Hahn (1879-1968) having been awarded the Nobel Prize (nuclear fission) in 1944, as well as the physicist Max Born (1882-1970), who has made an important contribution to the development of the modern quantum theory (Nobel Prize winner in 1954) serve Fix as further witnesses of the coming catastrophe.²⁴⁰

To him, the mutual arms race is the "program of the devil and of hell: The destruction of everybody and everything."²⁴¹ Fix is aware of him, just as Robert Oppenheimer (1904-1967), being an inconvenient admonishing voice; thus, he quotes the widely noticed warning given by this pioneer of the development of the atomic bomb in *Atombomben und amerikanische Politik* ["Atomic Bombs and American Politics"]:

We can predict a situation where two superpowers will be able to bring about the end of civilization, the risk of their own destruction being included, of course.²⁴²

Fix opposes Churchill's statement made during a speech to the House of Commons on 1 March 1955 that "the coming peace is the daughter of fear" and that in the era of the H-bomb there will only be defence by deterrence as follows:

We as Christians do not think this theory to be correct. In our Bible it is written that "what the wicked dreads will overtake him" and "while people are saying, 'Peace and safety,' destruction will come on them suddenly."²⁴³

²⁴⁰ *ibid* p. 7

²⁴¹ *ibid* p. 8

²⁴² *ibid* p. 10

²⁴³ *ibid* p. 13

When Prime Minister Nikita Khrushchev, having gained strength after the fall of Malenkov (1955),²⁴⁴ held a three-and-a-half-hour marathon speech before 1300 delegates of the Upper Soviet in 1960, he stated that Moscow was able to erase a potential attacker together with his entire country and the countries of his allies. Fix comments his threats as follows:

Here, Mr Khrushchev in advance plays the role of a leading figure in the coming empire – which means in the final catastrophes among the nations – just as biblical Christians can read it in the Revelation of John. Khrushchev's speech should alarm the nations and most of all every Christian causing them to take notice of, and evaluate the handwriting on the wall! Luke 12:54-57.²⁴⁵

Regarding the development of the hydrogen bomb and finally of the bacteriological and psycho-chemical weapons, about which Brigadier General J. H. Rothschild, being an ex-officer of the chemical corps, stated in 1960, that one ounce (app. 28.5 grams) of the bacteria causing the so-called "Q"-fever would be sufficient to infect 28 billion people, Fix considers "being born again spiritually by responding to God's plan of salvation in Christ the only cure for mankind".²⁴⁶

On this point, Fix agrees with Dr. Oswald Smith concerning the disunity of the Christians quoting him as follows:

Among all of us there are different opinions about certain issues of doctrine; yet, in one aspect we should always meet and be one: In preaching the "Good News". If we could not agree in any other aspect: in order to win lost men and women for our Lord Jesus Christ, the gospel is to be preached. Vicars,

²⁴⁴ Georgij Malenkov (1902-1988) had been Stalin's deputy since 1946. After Stalin's death in 1953, he became chairman of the Central Committee of the KPDSU

²⁴⁵ Fix, K., Millionen Menschen müssen sterben!, op. cit. p. 17

²⁴⁶ *ibid* p. 24

preachers and laymen of all churches and denominations should be able to work together hand in hand."²⁴⁷

As Joseph was used by God to avert judgment descending upon Egypt, Fix knows "Christians believing in the Bible" are obligated to be "Christ's ambassadors".²⁴⁸ As further witnesses of his call to turn to God again, he mentions Billy Graham who states on his visit to Germany on 24 June 1954, "We are at our wits' end – with politics, with science and with ourselves. Only God is able to help us"; Harold Talbot, the American Minister of Aeronautics, who declared in November 1954, "Only God can help us," and US-President D. Eisenhower, who is to have said after discussing a nuclear air-raid, "Only prayer will help here".²⁴⁹

When he analyses the "Seven Ages",²⁵⁰ referring to Fünning's *Das feste prophetische Wort* ["The Firm Prophetic Word"], F.P. Keller's *Das harrt ihrer* ["Expectation of the Saints"], and E. Sauer's *Das Morgenrot der Welterlösung* ["The Dawn of World Redemption"],²⁵¹ Fix states that "the judgments of the seals and of the trumpets according to the Book of

²⁴⁷ *ibid* p. 25

²⁴⁸ *ibid* p. 38

²⁴⁹ *ibid* p. 41

²⁵⁰ This opinion (Dispensationalism) has probably been taken from Scofield, who has written in his Bible, "A dispensation is a period of time during which man is tested in respect of obedience to some specific revelation of the will of God" (Berkhof, L., *Systematic Theology*, The Banner of Truth Trust, Edinburgh, 1958 p. 290).

²⁵¹ Fix, K., Millionen Menschen müssen sterben!, op. cit. p. 44

Revelation have already commenced".²⁵² He was also sure that, as the end of the "Cold War", the nuclear war was about to come,²⁵³ and he closes his challenging brochure with an appeal to "God's People",

The coming catastrophes cannot be "prayed off"; yet, if we depend on God and if we faithfully fulfil our duty as God's children, many people will still be saved.²⁵⁴

4. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Suddenly and unexpectedly, Karl Fix died on 19 January 1969, shortly after celebrating with his church in Berlin their 35th anniversary. Even Dr. Kurt Hutten, member of the Protestant Church Council and sect expert, having been a leader of the "Evangelische Zentralstelle für Weltanschauungsfragen" [i.e. Protestant central office for questions of ideologies and world-views] and first "Press-Vicar of the Württemberg Protestant Church", whose continuously updated book entitled *Seher, Grübler, Enthusiasten* ["Visionaries, Brooders, Enthusiasts"] has been published in its 15th edition in the meantime²⁵⁵ and who had often harshly

²⁵² *ibid* p. 60

²⁵³ *ibid* p. 63

²⁵⁴ *ibid* p. 71

²⁵⁵ Hub, D., "Sektenexperte und Vorkämpfer evangelistischer Publizistik Zum 100. Geburtstag von Kurt Hutten, dem einstigen Schriftleiter des Gemeindeblattes, Evangelisches Gemeindeblatt für Württemberg, No. 9, 2001, p. 10

criticised the Volksmission as a Pentecostal Movement in his contributions appearing in the "Evangelisches Gemeindeblatt" ["Periodical of the Lutheran Church"],²⁵⁶ had to admit in his writings that Karl Fix was being evaluated very positively by several vicars regarding his manner of preaching:

He never seemed to be soft in any way but always very masculine. – His voice is sonorous and winning, not exaggerated. This man has a broad back, he speaks good German and does not lack rhetoric abilities. – His preaching has, in a good sense, been influenced by the holiness movement led by persons like Stockmayer...²⁵⁷

The history of the Volksmission, which, due to its membership in the Bund Freikirchlicher Pfingstgemeinden (BFP) ["Federation of Pentecostal Churches in Germany"] has got the rights of a public incorporated body since 1988, is inseparably connected with the work of Karl Fix. Until breathing his last, he had inspired and motivated the fellowship of about 60 churches, granting them a sound theological basis. His care for senior citizens and for those in need led to the birth of the "Haus Elim, Alters- und Erholungsheim Leutenbach e.V." under his leadership in 1962, by which two homes for the elderly and for those in need of care are being run today.²⁵⁸ Thanks to his concern for foreign missions, the Volksmission, as

²⁵⁶ Fix, K., "Der Fromme-Leute Schreck: Die Pfingstbewegung", Der Volksmissionar, No. 20, 1951, p. 2

²⁵⁷ Sommer, G., Die Sammlung deutscher freikirchlicher Pfingstgemeinden in der Zeit des Wiederaufbaus 1945 - 1955 zur Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Christengemeinden in Deutschland (ACD) - Entwicklung und Selbstverständnis, unpublished Licentiate thesis for the Evangelisch-Theologische Facultät Eset der FTA, Giessen, August 1999, p. 132

²⁵⁸ Ros H. und Kaupp G. (eds) Missionarisch in die Zukunft, op. cit. p. 29

the first Pentecostal Church in Germany after World War II, was enabled to send Heinz Battermann to Kenya as a missionary in 1956.²⁵⁹

Although we are glad that the nuclear battle, which for Fix was imminent to be fought in the nearest future, has not taken place yet, he nevertheless was a bold prophetic warning voice at his time, when almost the whole of Germany applauded the "Fuehrer" and when every kind of criticism could endanger one's life. May his unshakeable faith and his consecrated life spur the following generation into unreserved dedication to their Lord Jesus Christ.

²⁵⁹ *ibid* p. 134

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