

## Dear evangelical German language congregation in South Australia!

Today you receive a short newsletter, due to lack of time — just two pages with sermon meditations for the two coming Sundays. And yes, we are celebrating worship services again in our churches — if God willing and "Corona" may continue to allow it!

### 6th Sunday after Trinitatis, 19 July 2020

#### "He has attached his heart to you" (Deuteronomy 7:6-12):

If my mother's mother and not my grandfather had been of Jewish descent, I probably wouldn't write this text today the way I did.

To be chosen by God, as one of the smallest peoples on earth, is a double-edged sword: an honor, a grace that makes everyone else envious, and a commitment towards God and fellow men that brings malice.

Martin Buber was a Jewish philosopher and Bible translator in Germany in the early 20th century whose translation of this text we used in the German newsletter. There he plays with the words of "**more**" and "**minor**": Not because they were so glorious, these Israelites after their refuge from Egypt, rather the opposite — God chose them to be his „special people“ and attached his heart to them as the smallest, the minor of all nations, despite all their faithlessness.

The God of the Bible, *who calls you by your name and you are his own* (Isaiah 43:1), walks with you as someone considered inferior to all others, a minor — but you are his beloved child. This did not first apply to us, the heathens in the world of nations, but to these refugees from Egypt. "*Do not be afraid ...*" precedes God calling Isaiah as his prophet, as to so many others before and after him.

But this call comes with an obligation — to keep and fulfil the commandments God gave to Moses at Mount Sinai: to work towards God's "*Shalom*", the well-being of all people. No, it is not a tribute to a sovereign ruler, but to care for one another in God's image as our response to liberation from slavery. The Lord our God remains faithful in "*a thousand generations*" to those who thus love him.

As Christians in the world of nations we are taken into this covenant through Jesus Christ. But the obligations apply to us as well: to work towards God's *Shalom* for all people and all of His creation, to care for one another.

Throughout most of its history, the Jewish community has paid bitterly for being God's Chosen People. Like my mother, the writer **Lena Gorelli** wrote to her son:

"I'm sorry I couldn't spare you this: You are a Jew. Judaism is a closed event that never ends. **Once inside, always inside. ... You can't leave, you can't run away, you can't escape** Jewish destiny. If you get baptized, or become an atheist: a Jew you will remain. For the Jews anyway — perhaps one who has gone astray, but still one of us. And for the anti-semites, you'll always remain one anyway ..."

#### Chosen by God — because he loved you ...

For you are a people set apart  
as holy for *ADONAI* your God.

*ADONAI* your God has chosen you  
out of all the peoples  
on the face of the earth  
to be his own unique treasure.  
*ADONAI* did not attach his heart to you  
or choose you because you numbered  
more than any other people — on the  
contrary, you were the fewest of all  
peoples.

Rather,  
it was because *ADONAI* loved you,  
and because he wanted to keep  
the oath which he had sworn  
to your ancestors, that *ADONAI* brought  
you out with a strong hand and  
redeemed you from a life of slavery  
under the hand of Pharaoh king of  
Egypt.

From this you can know that *ADONAI*  
your God is indeed God, the faithful  
God, who keeps his covenant and  
extends grace to those  
who love him and observe his  
commandments to a thousand  
generations.

But he repays those who hate him to  
their face and destroys them.

He will not be slow to deal  
with someone who hates him;  
he will repay him to his face.  
Therefore, you are to keep the  
commandments, laws and rulings  
which I am giving you today,  
and obey them.

Deuteronomium 7,6-12  
(Complete Jewish Bible)

## 6th Sunday after Trinitatis, 26.7.2020

### "Angels as guests ..." (Hebrews 7:1-3)

A wish, an advice, an admonition.

May your love for one another remain steadfast!

This wish alone is often more than enough  
a challenge to a fellowship,  
whose members can be so very different.

Don't forget the love for those being strangers to you ...  
Get involved with the nameless, with people  
who seem alien and different to me,  
welcome them, with an open heart  
take them in as guests.

The Right to Hospitality is sacred.  
Guests are given the best: fresh bread, tender meat.

Their dusty feet are washed.  
What a refreshment on a hot day!

They may rest in the shade.  
Their safety is taken care of.

Remember the love for those who are strangers to you  
for some of you have without even knowing  
given shelter to angels.

A messenger of God under our roof.  
What news does he bring?  
Is he coming as a trial? Does he bring blessings?

Remember the love ...

(Kathrin Reist, 2011)

### ... have given shelter to an angel ...

Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters.

Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers,  
for by so doing some people have shown hospitality  
to angels without knowing it.

Continue to remember those in prison  
as if you were together with them in prison,  
and those who are mistreated  
as if you yourselves were suffering.

Letter to the Hebrews 13,1-3 (NIV)



Joe Battista Vanni: Abraham and the three angels  
(Painting, 1629)

## Regular Worship Services in 2020

- 1st and 3rd Sunday in a months, 11:00 am: Immanuel Lutheran Church North Adelaide, 139 Archer St, North Adelaide SA 5006,
- 2nd Sunday in a month, 11:30 am: Calvary Lutheran Church Morphett Vale, 5 Windsong Court, Morphett Vale SA 5162,
- 4th Sunday in a month, 11:00 am: Tabor Lutheran Church Tanunda (Barossa Valley), 77 Murray St, Tanunda SA 5352,
- **„Online“-worship services „live“ and in German: German Evangelical Lutheran Church Sydney**  
Details: <[kirche-sydney.org.au](http://kirche-sydney.org.au)> & via Email.
- **„Virtual“ worship services as Youtube**-Video in the German Language:
  - German Evangelical Lutheran Trinity Church Melbourne-East: [Website](#), [Youtube Channel](#).
  - **St John's Lutheran Church Perth, WA:** [Youtube Channel](#).
  - Evangelical St John Church Springvale VIC (Melbourne): [Website](#), [Youtube Channel](#).

## Sources

Page 1 — Quote from Lena Gorelik: *ibid.*, *Lieber Mischa, der du fast Schlomo Adolf Grinblum geheißten hottest ...* List Taschenbuch, 3rd Ed. 2016; quotet in [Pfarrbriefservice.de](http://Pfarrbriefservice.de). Page 2 — Image: Joe Battista Vanni: Abraham and the three angels (Painting, 1629) <[archive.com](http://archive.com)>. Text: Kathrin Reist (Kommentar und liturgische Texte, 2011), via [Website Reformierte Kirche Bern - Jura - Solothurn](http://Website Reformierte Kirche Bern - Jura - Solothurn) (pdf).



## Impressum

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