



SIEBENQUELL

Protector of the Inexperienced



QUELLENANGABE: R. MÖNNERJAHN 2017

Every day that opens before us and to which we arise, signifies the stepping into new territory. However, we seldom notice it. We see before us a precise pattern of time, we know our program and have our plans. With fair certainty we know which people we will encounter and which tasks we will accomplish. The heaviness and beauty that is approaching is often very familiar to us

When we step into a new year, as we do in these days, we feel differently. The changeover is noted, prepared and then celebrated, often loudly and audibly. We take leave of a year's date that has grown familiar to us. Then many pause for a moment and take a deliberate look back. In familiar gatherings many collect the »tears« und »pearls« of the year that is drawing to a close. How much of the unplanned and the unexpected took place of which we could not have an inkling but one year ago! How many challenges lay in the beauty as well as in the heaviness which made us tread paths that were entirely new to us! Looking back, we see how inexperienced we were – as the career challenge was placed before us, as we had to let go of beloved people, as we accepted an unexpected invitation, as a child entered into our family, as illness affected us. . .

Then we can understand the praying author of Psalm 116, who connects his experiences of life to God in this way:

*I love the Lord; / for he has heard my loud pleading
And he has inclined his ear to me / on the day I called to him.
The snares of death encompassed me, / the anxieties of the netherworld assailed me, / distress and anguish affected me.
Then I called upon the name of the Lord: / »O lord, save my life! «
The Lord is gracious and just, / our God is merciful.
The Lord protects **the simple hearts**; / I was in need and he brought me aid.*

Instead of »simple hearts« Luther speaks of the »simple«. The Old Testament scholar, Erich Zenger, who primarily researched the Psalms, translates it this way: »The Lord protects the inexperienced. «

Our God is the protector of the inexperienced – what an experience, what a relief and a liberation from the pressure of having to be able to do it all. When we honestly look back, we discover when and where we were inexperienced and uncertain and tentative and still trod the path.

The Lord protects the inexperienced – what a promise for the path into the undiscovered country of a new year! We plan a great deal and yet we increasingly know from year to year that a great deal will occur that will be new and strange to us. In the face of these occurrences we can simply and honestly say: »Here I am inexperienced and can attempt some first steps – well protected. «

This thought is taken up again later in Psalm 116 and offers a gentle, soothing reminder of how we can softly sojourn into the new territory of this coming year.

*Return, my heart, to your calm / for the Lord has requited you.
For you freed me from death, / my eyes from tears), / my foot from slipping
I shall walk before the Lord / in the lands of the living.*

Rosemarie Monnerjahn

Vallendar, January 4th, 2018