



SIEBENQUELL

Go and see for yourselves.



SOURCE: ROSEMARIE MONNERJAHN 2015

The first thing that happens on the border to the Promised Land is not as self-evident as we suppose. Having finally reached the place where that which we have long desired is within reach, we are tempted to say, »Now, get in as fast as possible!«. That, however, is not God's attitude. At the threshold of the fulfillment of his promise to his beloved people, God proposes that Moses should first send explorers into the Promised Land. It is worthwhile for us to carefully take note of this. This idea, this initiative, comes from God. He does not ask, »Well, what are you waiting for?«, but first suggests, that they examine whether the land contains what has been promised.

Three important experiences for our own spirituality are contained within this part of the story.

1. God desires, that the decision of his people be well founded. We human beings should not stumble blindly into something, even if it the Promise of God. No, God himself says, that we should first go, look and explore. That does not just occur here, at the border of the Land of Promise. In Mark 6, while the disciples are constantly speculating about their possibilities of feeding the multitudes, Jesus say that they should first answer the question, »How many loaves do you have?«. Immediately thereafter, he adds, »Go and see for yourselves!«.

Why does God do this when we stand at the threshold of the undiscovered country of our future? So that we will know what this is all about, what we will have to deal with and what we are letting ourselves in for. We should go and check out the situation for ourselves so that we will discover the possibilities which the Promise of God offers us.

2. God wants all those who will bear the burden, all who will take part and all who are affected to be in on the decision. All who participate in some way who be involved in the task of exploration. That begins in Numbers 13, 2, when God insists on a representative of each tribe: »...from each of their ancestral tribes you shall send a man...« A decision which affects all cannot be taken by one, since all must carry the decision and not just the one.

3. However, God does not want the people to send just anyone. He gives a clear criterion for the selection. The chosen explorer should have leadership abilities. »...from each of their ancestral tribes you shall send a man, every one a leader among them« (Numbers 13, 2).

Tourists don't cut it here. What needs to be seen, understood and reported should lead to a long-ranging decision. The purpose of exploring is not only to be well informed, and then to stand still. What happens here is to serve the decision-making processes of the people. Therefore, they should choose people with leadership abilities in order to insure that it does not remain with considerations and speculations, but lead to concrete actions. Leaders, not philosophers, are needed here.

When we decide to be explorers of life and not spectators or tourists, then we do not need to enter the unknown country of our future with a Pollyanna outlook. Despite everything which we have learned, God is neither infuriated nor insulted when we first explore whether what he has promised is also kept and whether we then even want it, once we have seen it for ourselves. Sometimes people can yearn for something, but then change their minds when they have it directly in front of them. That is not a problem for God. Quite the opposite. The whole thing was his idea in the first place.

So much for the concept of blind faith. Do not go blindly into the land of your future, with an open and watchful eye. In the end, we will walk no path to its conclusion if we do not have an idea what we have let ourselves in for.

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