

# INTERVIEW with Johannes Matutis

Letzte Aktualisierung Mittwoch, 8. Oktober 2008

Dear Pastor,

Thank you for speaking to me over the phone today. As agreed here are the questions below which make up the email interview:

1. What is your full name including titles please, meaning how to refer to you? Pastor Joh, Pastor Matutis or any Rev etc?

Pastor Johannes W. Matutis.

2. Do you know why the street on which your church is located is called Nazareth Church Street? Is there a history behind this name?

About 200 years ago, a small Lutheran church was built there and named "Nazarethkirche" (Nazareth Church). At that time, there lived about 300 people in that place, which had 5 wind mills, and was very windy. The place was named "Wedding" in German because it was very windy. Today, more than 360,000 people live in this part of the city. In the industrial age, many workers came from all over the German Empire to Berlin and especially to Wedding because there were large chemical and electronic manufacturing plants located there. About 120 years ago, another big church was built there, and named the Neue Nazarethkirche (new Nazareth Church). The street on which both churches were located, was then named Nazarethkirchstrasse (Nazareth Church Street) Everything connected to this place somehow bore the name Nazareth. This is how we came to name our church Freie Nazarethkirche (Free or Independent Nazareth Church).

4. Regarding your message received from the Lord, do you know if this economic crash will affect the whole world or only certain countries? Any idea when this will take place?

I have received the impression from the Lord, that the coming problems will be "world wide problems". I also have the impression that we are already in the midst of it. In one of the most recent messages I received from the Lord, I was shown how Russia, China and countries like Libya and Iran formed themselves into a new powerful block. The invasion of Georgia by Russia was the beginning of a new step in the direction of the "end times". Folk migration began right there in Caucasus (Georgia amongst others). The people will also break out from there, for the final battle against Jerusalem. (Ezekiel 38 & 39). The financial crises in the USA and the West will strengthen Russia, and prepare the stage.

5. You mentioned in your prophecy "All the storms, crises, and confusion must first come". First come before what event? Do you mean must first come before Jesus returns? If yes, does this mean His return is now sooner than we think?

Yes, God showed me that the great storms, for example, so shortly after one another in the Caribbean (Gustav, Hanna, Ike etc.) would be an introduction to a great crisis in America. God does nothing without first of all revealing it (Amos 3:7). And He makes His angels spirits (Psalm 104:4). I am of the opinion that when the temptation (trial) is so great that no man can bear it anymore, the Lord Himself will come and get His own. He told me that He will not allow the righteous find their graves together with, or beside the unrighteous.

6. What do you mean by this part of your prophecy "Learn to rightly and take advantage of your high points in a timely manner, and then get out. (Like we say with food, stop eating right when it is tastiest)? Can you elaborate please?

It means separating oneself from something on time.....not further investing in things that are headed for doom. For example, there would be no sense in setting up a grand clean up exercise on the Titanic, when it is obvious that the ship is sinking. It means forsaking systems that are going under, on time... Or just like Lot, leaving Sodom as long as Sodom still exists (before disaster strikes). Lot was led out of Sodom. God could do nothing, as long as Lot was still in Sodom. (Genesis 19: 15-17)

7. What do you mean by this please? "My children, the day is before the door, when one will get even nothing more for his money". How do people purchase things they need then? Are you referring to the great tribulation? If yes, do you think we are on the brink of entering this tribulation. I know many scholars talk about the rapture coming first or the rapture coming at the end, but we won't go into that. Unless you have something to say about it.

I believe that the children of God will experience a part of the great tribulation. The Lord will deliver His own at the sound of the last trumpet. (1 Thessalonians 4: 16, 17). The 6th trumpet is the last trumpet (Rev 9:13-20), which will then

signal the end. I believe that Christians will not experience this time after the last trumpet.

8. What do you mean by this please? "I will make a clear cut demarcation between you and the world..." Do you mean the way the great plagues did not affect the Israelites in the land of Goshen the way it affected the Egyptians?

God will not allow His children share the same fate with the unbelieving. He will make a demarcation (differentiate) between them that serve and obey God, and them that do not. Malachi 3:14-20. Whoever trusts in God, and does His will, will survive the crises. Just think about the parables of the wise builder and the wise virgins (Matt 7:24-27/25: 1-12).

Even in the letters to the church, the risen Lord writes thus: Because you have kept the word of my patience, I also will keep you from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon the entire world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. (Rev. 3:10)

9. It is said that Europe has gone cold in its fervency for God and there is no fire in Christians. Living and preaching in Germany, especially through street ministry do you find this to be so? Or do you think there is a strong revival coming to Europe/Germany too?

It is possible that the people will turn to God when things become worse. At the moment, they are obdurate and people generally come to the Lord as individuals. These are those whom the Lord had predestined for eternal life; particularly the ones who had or have praying relatives somewhere. Going by the various conversations we have with people on the streets and in other places, we discover that people are disappointed in the Church and in Religion, but not so much in God. Many tell us that they still pray when they are in need.

10. What was your Action Jericho mission? Can you elaborate a little more than what is on your website?

I came to Berlin in 1988. At the time, Berlin was like an island in the "Red Sea", surrounded by Communism. I tagged my mission work "Aktion Jericho" (Action Jericho or Jericho Rally). I prophesied publicly, that the Berlin wall would fall. This came to pass a year after the prophecy.

11. Why did you move from Heilbronn to Berlin? From your testimony such as Action Jericho and what the TAZ newspaper reported, it seems you had a mission/objective in moving to Berlin? Did God tell you this objective before you went there? If so what was the objective?

I was 40 years old at that time. About this age, men find themselves in the "midlife crisis". This is very likely what was happening to me. I had a very good and growing church work in Heilbronn. I should have continued there. Our meeting place was too small, and I did not really want to continue there. I knew I would have to change some things about myself when the work got better. I therefore started watching out for a new move of God in my life. My wife and I visited West Berlin in 1987, where I preached to the American soldiers on a weekend. On an afternoon when we were free, we looked around the city. As we walked through the centre of West Berlin (Breitscheidplatz), we found ourselves before the Kaiser-Gedächtnis-Kirche (Emperor William Memorial Church) and suddenly we looked at ourselves. God spoke exactly the same thing to both of us. We saw the destroyed church steeple like a stretched out finger pointing to heaven, and the words of this German hymn came to us: "Great God we praise you" – Lord have mercy, have mercy... On the ground, in front of the church, were drug addicts, homeless people, and so many other people who needed help. It then became clear to us at that instance that we had to come to Berlin. At this exact place, we started off with open air church services, where I preached for 3 weeks non-stop. 12. Why was TAZ a secular newspaper talking about you?

The TAZ was an atheist newspaper and the mouthpiece of the anarchist scene. With these church services in the middle of Berlin before this backdrop, I attracted a lot of attention. The Press, Television and Radio stations were constantly present, making their reports. We prayed publicly on the streets, and people came to Jesus. It was a small revival. So it was that the TAZ was present on the 3rd September 1988 as we started our church work.

13. Why is it important for the future generation to know where the Berlin wall once stood.

For me, this is an important signal from God. When on the 10th November 1989, we held a special thanksgiving service at Checkpoint Charly (crossing point between East Berlin and West Berlin during the Cold War), and then worshipped God further in our church service, there came many prophecies. As we sang choruses, a stranger, a brother, inspired by the Holy Spirit called out. "Pastor, read Revelations 3:8" And I read thus "behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it" We continued to praise God even more, and then spoke another brother from the other side of the hall saying, "Pastor, the Lord showed me we should also read the preceding verse, which reads "he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth" This really shook me. The incidence impressed further upon the joyful atmosphere of the church. Then came an old "Pentecostal", who started demonstrating, going up and

down and saying "thus says the Lord"; pointing to the floor "the day is coming, when we will have to show our children where the Berlin Wall stood". This prophecy has come to pass today. From North to South, all that can be seen in the place where the Berlin wall stood, are paving stones, placed there by the city of Berlin, and every hundred metres there is an iron cast marker which reads "Here Stood The Berlin Wall", exactly as God had told us it would be.

14. Can you describe the day the wall came down? What it meant specifically to you and your church and whether God spoke anything to you just before and just after it happened?

We came to Berlin as a result of a Godly vision. Even before we came here, God had told us He would cause jubilation in the East and West (Psalm 65). So it came to be that I was the only pastor permitted to hold a special thanksgiving service at Checkpoint Charly (at the border between East and West). Over Radio and Television, I invited the people over, asking them to bring candles along. Thousands came from the East and West. Later on, I held services in East Berlin for almost a year in the space under the Television tower in Berlin, until little by little, East and West Berlin grew together as a city. Up till today, a large part of our church attendance stems from East Berlin. 15. What does it mean for Christians and evangelism now that the wall has come down. Are there many changes? Can Christianity now be preached in the former Communist nation, East Berlin?

Yes, we have complete freedom to preach the gospel in both parts of the city. Immediately after the fall of the wall, we reached out especially in schools under the theme "Believers' Courses or Information on the faith". The people were really interested. I observe things today, and I can see what was embarked upon for God at that time, which still stands today. We as a church, have upheld the house fellowships we started then in the eastern part of the city till date. Today, it is much more difficult to start something afresh.

16. Does DDR mean East Germany?

Yes, that denotes East Germany. 17. How do Germans reconcile themselves with the Holocaust and mass genocide of Jews?

They feel guilty. As soon as Konrad Adenauer, the first German Chancellor stepped into office, he gave Israel a blank check to the tune of Millions, as compensation for the murdered Jews. Germany is always on Israel's side. After the reunification of eastern and western Germany in 1990, the German government paid 17 Million DM (Deutschmarks) as compensation for the Holocaust, to Israel. This was a symbolic sum: "a Mark- for every brother of the DDR". Every property that had been seized from the Jews by the Nazis was also promptly returned to them. Furthermore, the administrative arm of the city of Berlin rebuilt the Synagogue which had been in East-Berlin, with a gold plated dome. The German government does everything in its power to keep the memory of the Holocaust alive, punishing very severely, every form of glorification of the NAZI symbol and history. 18. It is mentioned on your website : "Apart from that, he has gathered around 200 tonnes in aid, for people in need, and transported them to the then commonwealth of independent states, Romania, ex-Yugoslavia amongst others". Does this mean the aid was gathered from East Germany to help Romanians and Yugoslavians?

We collected the relief supplies from the people of Berlin, from the East as well as the West. Many from the East also gave their clothes, so they would have space for the new western clothes.

19. Can you describe what it was like to enter and preach in East Germany in the early stages? Was there any threat to you? Can you please recount two or three stories, especially where God's Hand of Protection and Providence could be seen?

One always had to do it secretly and under cover. I would register myself in a particular East German city, and use the time to also preach in other cities. I would discontinue the use of my West German car and rather use their own kind of car, the "Trabbi", to avoid undue attention and subsequently being searched. One time, I was officially invited by the Lutheran Church. I was told by the then Pastor of the church that people came, builders to renovate the church windows. They also had to employ the use of Omnibuses to bring people from the villages, so that I did not have to preach to an empty church. In the southern part of the DDR, I had to hold some meetings secretly in a sheep pen. There, God healed the son of the Secretary to the Communist party in that region. She became so overwhelmed by and convinced of God's power, that she soon afterwards, handed over the books, and resigned from the party. This raised a lot of dust. The State Police confiscated everything belonging to the church, and closed it down. During this period, I made the acquaintance of a German politician, to whom I explained the situation. Consequently, the church had its properties restored and started meeting again at the sheep pen. That was in 1982, long before the fall of the Berlin wall. 20. It is mentioned you smuggled bibles into Eastern Europe. Which countries

and is the Bible forbidden in these countries? Why? Again can you give us in detail some stories of any miracles and God intervening during the 28 visits you made?

Since 1974, I had smuggled bibles into the eastern block, especially Romania, and from there to bring them to Russia. During this initial trip (1974), I experienced my first great wonder of God's protection. I got to Yugoslavia, a few kilometres from the Romanian border. There I knew some Christians, so I held a church service, spent the night, ready to continue my journey the next day. During the service, God gave us a prophecy. "My children do not be afraid. I will strike them all with blindness". We drove off. On getting to the border post, we were asked what we were bringing into the country. We told them the truth! "Bibles" we said, each of us displaying his own copy. These they searched thoroughly, but gave back to us. They then asked us to offload our truck, which we did, with the exception of the cartons of bibles, which I left in the truck. The 2 customs officers who searched us brought these out by themselves, and tore the cartons open, on which were clearly written "Biblia". "We have been caught" I thought to myself. But they just pushed the cartons back, asked us to pay duty on the medication we had with the bibles, and were allowed in to the country. They had been truly struck with blindness. After driving for 17 hours, we arrived at our destination very early in the morning. We had been given an address to deliver the bibles. So we stopped at the market place to rest a little, and asked God for direction. An old man knocked on our truck window (he had been riding past in a bicycle) and asked us if he could invite us to tea. We went with him, and had breakfast there too. It was dangerous to reveal oneself. While we were eating, someone came to this family to say it was dangerous to stay there. Without finishing our food, he drove with us to another family outside town. On our way there, he asked us if we were believers. We responded in the affirmative. When we arrived, we were received in the atmosphere of a Pentecostal prayer meeting, and that at the crack of dawn. Someone then asked us if we had bibles. We needed to be very careful, so we said we had our bibles with us. Then they began to praise and extol God even more. We sensed that we were in the right place. The brother who owned the house then told us that someone from the northern part of their land came to him that night, in whose church only the pastor had a bible, and that he also needed one. The Lord had told him to come here. Our host therefore asked if we had a bible for this brother. The brother had been waiting in the next room. I went with him to the car, and gave him a carton of bibles. Right there on the street, he knelt down and thanked God, saying "Lord, I asked you for a bible, and you have given me a whole carton of bibles". We then left the other carton with the brethren with whom we had just been. Our host then told us that we had to leave immediately, as it was too dangerous to stay any longer, the reason being that a foreign plate number is easily detectable. Our mission was thus fulfilled.

21. What do you mean by "rode with your courier" 28 times into Eastern Europe? What is a courier? And how did you avoid getting caught? What would have happened to you if you had been caught with the bibles?

We were so blessed and full of joy while transporting these bibles. Whenever we told the people in our home church about our experiences while transporting bibles, everyone wanted to be part of the next trip. We collected money, bought a caravan, to which we built an extension, and then used as our "mobile smuggle wagon". Most of the time, couples with their children drove with this wagon on holiday, stayed a few days and then returned. We did this for years without any one noticing. We also used different border crossing points. 22. Can you please tell us at least two detail stories on the Christians you

helped out of Communist prisons? What were they there for? How did they get caught? How long were they in prison? Under what charge? How did you get connected with them? How did you get them out? If you can give their names would be good, otherwise an alias is fine with me, but if alias, please state alias, so I know. Please also state the year on which these incidents happened. What can Christians be in jail for in these Communist countries? What law are they breaking?

At that time, one needed only to believe in God to be arrested. They did not commit any crimes. It was forbidden to believe in God in the eastern block. They were also arrested for baptising children, as it was forbidden to preach the gospel to children and youths. In Russia, I worked together with the underground Christians, especially the unregistered ones. One of the leaders of this group was in prison for 28 years. Today, Christians are no longer imprisoned in Russia for their faith. They still have the freedom to gather at will. But at the moment, the doors are closing again to the gospel. The orthodox churches are putting a lot of pressure on the independent churches/fellowships. An example of this is that one can hardly find a place of fellowship to rent. But for 70 years, something different was obtainable in the Soviet Union. In St. Petersburg (Russia), I was told a very moving story, shortly after "Glasnost". I was the guest of a Pastor's family, whose son insisted on playing a song for me on his guitar. I asked him to play, and when he did, his father started weeping. I asked what the song meant, and was told that on the day the secret police stormed their church service and took every man in the congregation hostage, the women were shaking, and they were all as if paralysed. Then this young man picked up his guitar, and played this same song, and with the song, they all went to prison.

I will tell you one more story. I had been invited to preach in a prison in Germany. I however had no desire to do so because I heard that only a few prisoners would come to listen, and I had to drive over 500km to get there. I therefore had the engagement cancelled. When I did that, my wife asked me "what would Jesus have done?" I knew

the scripture &ldquo;I was in prison and you did not visit me&rdquo;. I had no peace. I requested from Amnesty International for a prisoner whose release I could try to secure. They gave me a name, and the case history. He was a 42 year old Bulgarian with 2 children, who had been sentenced to penal servitude (forced/compulsory labour) without hearing. I wrote 150 letters, petitions and newspaper articles with respect to this case. Our then Foreign Affairs Minister, Genscher took my requests to the Bulgarian President, Schiwkow, asking how Pavel Ignatov was doing. Three days later, I received a message from the Bulgarian Foreign Affairs Ministry, that Pavel and 2 others, whose release I had not even requested, were free, and waiting outside the prison. Today, Pavel is a successful Pastor in Sofia, Bulgaria. The other brother, Sergej, was with me for 3 weeks in Berlin. 23. Since you are originally Lithuanian, a country under Russia, what do you

think of the present invasion of Georgia by Russia? What is the Biblical meaning of this?

I believe that Russia is stepping on the stage, and will spearhead &ldquo;Gog and Magog&rdquo; found in the bible in Ezekiel 38 and 39. Once before, the folk migration started in Caucasus, and from there, the invasion of Israel will begin. Russia is assuming an end time role. This year, the European Union entered into the Mediterranean Union, a union of up to 40 nations which formerly constituted the Roman Empire. A country is missing from this group, which is Libya. The bible states emphatically that Iran and Libya both belong to this army of &ldquo;Gog and Magog&rdquo;. (Ezekiel 38:5-6)

24. Are there many Christians in Lithuania? Is there great hardship in that country or is it fairly rich like the rest of Europe? How did you come to know Jesus and serve him with so much passion?

I have been to Lithuania a number of times, and have also preached there. They are not yet very rich, but one can basically buy whatever one needs. With regards to my conversion; my great great grandfather was a travelling preacher. When I was about 10 years old, he was very old and dying. My mother and I went to visit him and he called me to him. He asked me to close the door, and then laid his hand on me murmuring something. I did not understand what was happening. For many years, I did not understand it, but today, I understand that he had been blessing me. At that time, the members of my family were not yet Christians. We became Christians when we got to Germany, through a German evangelist. Then my father received healing. He was an early retiree, with a serious heart ailment. After he was prayed for, he was instantly healed, and was able to walk. He also worked for another 15 years. This strongly motivated my faith in the living God. 25. Why did the Federal Govt give you two hospitals, tent and a soup kitchen? Was it for the East Germans and why did the govt choose you?

As a church, we were well known for our various humanitarian activities. We therefore wrote applications at the dissolution of the army of the DDR to the various authorities, and received as a result, 60 army trucks as well as 2 Poly Clinics which we merged together, and sent to Romania. This was used to equip a section of the local hospital. The Government knew that I had good contact to various churches in the former eastern block, and therefore would best know where to put these things to use. They trusted me.

26. What is the state of Christianity in East Germany today? Is it flourishing?

A large part of the population has no contact to church. They grew up without the church. Many of the earlier citizens of the DDR tend rather towards New Age and Esotericism than to Christianity. 27. What do you also work so closely with Romanians? Are they on your border?

No. Romanians are a people who love to wander. You can find them all over Europe. In those days, they could easily come over to East Berlin. So it was that we would suddenly find them at our doorsteps. They came to me, because I already knew some people from there. But the real initiator of our Romania Mission was a newspaper report. I read one morning that about 16,000 Romanians had arrived the East Berlin Railway Station as refugees, were lying around everywhere and the government did not know how to proceed with their case. At that time, my future son-in-law was doing his practicals with me. He could speak Hungarian and had learnt some Romanian in school. I took him to this Railway station, and on seeing the mass of people, thought to myself that there must definitely be believers among them, whom I know from Romania. I quickly walked into the next stationary store and bought me a poster, pen and cello tape. I had him write on this, Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever, and then PENTECOSTALE, as the believers called themselves in Romania, as well as our church address. I asked the policemen who monitored them if I could hang the posters up, and they permitted me to. I returned to our church hall in the western part of the city, and there stood the first 7 Romanians already. They had made it to this place, but were no longer allowed to go back to their relatives at the train station. We had to put in applications for asylum for them for the purpose of family reunification etc. With that, our Romania Mission was initiated. After the Yugoslavian war, many refugees came to Berlin from Bosnia. More and more Romanian refugees were also sent to Germany, in order to create space for more refugees there. Ever since Romania became part of the European Union, many have returned to their countries and reintegrated themselves and in some cases into the churches.

28. You mentioned that you've been to India to preach. What do you think of the present violence against Christians and churches in Orissa?

I had never had any form of difficulty in the past, travelling to India. When however I started making arrangements to travel there in November 08, Pastors in Madras/Chennai advised me to postpone the trip, as they could not guarantee my

safety.

29. It is mentioned you also work with artists to spread the gospel. How do you do this? What sort of artists? Any names you can give us of artists who have worked with you in the past, for what event and what was the artist role? Can you give any testimony of the positive effects?

Many German Sports people and Olympic medallists have become believers through my ministry. Examples are Andreas Wecker and Ralf Schumann. They allowed me baptise them, and also wedded in church. They partner with us in the area of missions. Students of the "Akademie der Kunst" (Academy of Arts) also come to our church services. 30. What is your greatest satisfaction or fulfillment that you see today in all the years of your ministry?

I am always delighted when I am able to encourage people. I am even more delighted when people find Jesus through my ministry; start to do something for God themselves, even better and more frequently than I do, especially the ones I would have loved to do. An example: As a young pastor, I had wished to become a missionary. I therefore searched out an area which would not yet have been reached by missionaries. At that time, it was Nepal. I prayed that God would send me to Nepal. In those days, a young man came to one of our outreaches one evening, gave his life to Christ, was baptised that same day and filled with the Holy Spirit. Not long after, he and his wife relocated to Nepal to be Maths and English teachers respectively. They also began doing God's work in that land. 31. Is there anything you would like to emphasise to those who are reading your latest prophecy?

Yes. I had a vision yesterday. I was at a big Pastors' Conference in America, where I happened to be the only foreign guest. The moderator asked if I happened to have a further word from God to minister to them but I was not prepared for that. As I stood up to proceed to the front, an angel of God stood by me. He said to me. "Fear not. Go and speak. I will give you the topic". "Emptiness" he said. Suddenly, an anointing came over me. I preached so strongly that I woke up with a hoarse voice. I can still remember the words very well, which the Lord asked me to speak to these pastors. I said, "God's glory will fill only empty and cleaned out hearts. We must also be completely empty of self, and our works. Our heads are so full of God, but this is too little for God. Our hearts must also be full of God. It then happened that during this preaching many pastors walked out, stood at the doors and chatted while they smoked. It appeared that the thing I was saying were not important to them. However, a few of them went on their knees, prayed and sought God and then went home together, determined, blessed and happy, through another door. At the same time, the others left and dispersed. God showed me that there will soon be a great demarcation throughout Christendom, into those with oil in their lamps, and those who want to remain "empty".

32. Have you given any such prophecy like this in the past?

I have received many messages from God. One that occurs to me right now is this: I was working in the garden. Suddenly, the Lord asked me to take the next possible flight to Yugoslavia, where I was to deliver a message to the believers. I had a few good messages I could have preached, but had not received a definite word from God up till then. I arrived at the church in Vincovci, and was given an opportunity to preach. I still had received no definite word from God as at yet, for this church. I then looked outside the window. On the other side of the church was a large, old barn. The Lord then spoke, asking me to tell the church to buy that barn as soon as possible. I changed my message accordingly, and gather money for the purchase and the brethren bought that barn in the next few days. It was not quite a month before war broke out in Yugoslavia, during which an American bomb destroyed both the church hall and the barn. After the war, the US army built a magnificent modern fellowship centre on this piece of land and adjoining barn for those brethren in Vincovci as compensation, at the expense of the American government. Thank you so much Pastor Johannes