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Bischof Mussinghoff, liebe Freunde,

aus Respekt für unseren ausgezeichneten Hauptredner und die Stadt, in der unsere Konferenz stattfindet, beginne ich meinen Vortrag auf deutsch. Vielen Dank dass Sie Ihre tiefsinnige Betrachtung der Beziehungen zwischen Katholiken und Juden mit uns teilen. Ich begrüsse Ihren Aufruf zur Entwicklung neuer Theologien des Judentums und werde darauf Bezug nehmen.

Bei der Betrachtung theologischer Aspekte im jüdisch-christlichen Dialog trifft man unmittelbar auf ein Hindernis: es gibt sehr viel mehr christliche theologische Schriften über das Judentum als jüdische über das Christentum. Lieber Bischoff, Sie haben wichtige deutsche Autoren erwähnt. In der englischsprachigen Welt sollten wir katholische Gelehrte wie Boys, Cunningham und Pawlikowski nennen; protestantische Gelehrte wie die Eckhardts, Soulen und van Buren. Sie alle haben bedeutende Beiträge zu christlichen Theologien des Judentums geleistet.

Soweit es jüdische Autoren angeht, fallen mir die Namen Signer, Wyschogrod, Novak und Greenberg ein. Aber obwohl sie alle Artikel über die jüdische Beziehung zum Christentum geschrieben haben, hat keiner eine detaillierte jüdische Theologie des Christentums angeboten. Mir scheint, dass der Aufruf von Claude Montefiore nach der Schaffung einer jüdischen Theorie des Christentums vor 75 Jahren immer noch unbeantwortet ist.

Es ist wichtig, den Grund für diese Einseitigkeit zu verstehen. Der Anstoss zu einem Dialog kam zwangsläufig von der christlichen Seite. Aus christlicher Perspektive erneuerte das Wiedererkennen sowohl der Tatsache, dass das Christentum aus dem Judentum entstand, als auch der Erkenntnis dass die christliche Lehre einen bedeutenden Beitrag zum Leiden der Juden machte, das Interesse am Judentum. Zusätzlich zum anhaltenden Vermächtnis des Holocaust

muss ein weiterer Faktor bei der Schaffung von Theologien des jüdisch-christlichen Dialogs ins Zentrum der Aufmerksamkeit rücken – die Existenz von Lehren, die am besten als „Glaubenseigenarten“ beschrieben werden können.

Diese Bezeichnung kann als jene Punkte beschrieben werden, für die Christen und Juden eine universelle Bedeutung und Endgültigkeit beanspruchen. Aus jüdischer Perspektive beinhalten sie zum Beispiel eine Hervorhebung der Torah, die Überzeugung, dass der Bund Gottes mit dem Volk Israel andauert und dass die jüdische Bindung zum Land Israel göttliche Billigung hat. Aus christlicher Perspektive beinhalten sie die christliche Überzeugung, dass Gott mit dem Leben, dem Tod und der Auferstehung Christi eindeutig für die gesamte Menschheit gehandelt hat.

Das Christentum kombiniert einen Anspruch auf universellen Geltungsbereich mit der Forderung nach Glaubensexklusivität: Christus ist der Herr aller und der Erlöser aller. Am Ende des Matthäusevangeliums (28:19) schreibt Jesus den Befehl zu „gehet hin und machet zu Jüngern alle Völker“. Derselbe Christus wird beschrieben gesagt zu haben „ich bin der Weg, die Wahrheit und das Leben: niemand kommt zum Vater denn durch mich“ (Johannes 14:6). Und die Aufzeichnungen frühchristlicher Predigten beinhalten den oft wiederholten Text „Und in keinem andern ist das Heil, auch ist kein anderer Name unter dem Himmel den Menschen gegeben, durch den wir sollen selig werden“ (Apostel 4:12).

Das bedeutet, dass Dialog nicht einfach nur auf gemeinsame Bereiche beschränkt werden kann, auch wenn diese immer eine Brücke bieten werden. Wer im Dialog engagiert ist, muss die Existenz dieser „Glaubenseigenarten“ anerkennen. Wenn wir den Schwung wieder erreichen wollen, der der bahnbrechenden Veröffentlichung der Nostra Aetate beim 2. Vatikanischen Konzil 1965 folgend, während des Pontifikats von Johannes Paul II aufgebaut wurde, müssen wir über die Tatsache nachdenken, dass sowohl Judentum wie Christentum Bestandteile beinhalten, die, obwohl sie im Prinzip geteilt werden, in der Praxis spaltend wirken, wie zum Beispiel die Frage der Identität des Volkes Israel. Aus beider Perspektive sind diese Merkmale ein zentraler Punkt in ihrem Verständnis vom Willen Gottes. All dies Überzeugungen sind strikt unreduzierbar.

Obwohl die Glaubenseigenarten von aussen gesehen besitzergreifend erscheinen mögen, so spiegeln sie von innen jedoch eine Erfahrung wieder, die nicht ignoriert werden kann. Es ist nicht hilfreich, solche Erfahrungen als arrogant zu verdammen, denn ihre Bedeutung ist von solch grosser Bedeutung, dass sie abzustreiten wie ein Akt der Leugnung des eigenen Glaubens erscheinen würde. Ein echter Dialog wird nicht durch die Anerkennung dieser Glaubenseigenarten verhindert, genauso wenig wie durch die Annahme beider Partner, dass die äusserste und tiefste Erkenntnis vom Willen Gottes bei ihnen liegt.

Vertrauen wir uns genug als Partner und Freunde, um zu beginnen, Theologien des jüdisch-christlichen Dialoges zu schaffen, die es Gegensätzen erlauben nebeneinander zu bestehen, ohne vorzugeben dass sie kompatibel gemacht werden können? Sind wir reif genug, um Meinungen zu respektieren, die mit unseren eigenen im Konflikt stehen, ohne eine naïve Ubereinstimmung erreichen zu wollen? Das sind die Fragen, die bei der Erstellung von Theologien des jüdisch-christlichen Dialogs erörtert werden müssen.

Ich werde kurz ein Schlüsselkonzept untersuchen, nämlich den Bund, der so im Mittelpunkt von vielem, was Sie gesagt haben, steht. Da ich dieses Konzept im Detail analysieren möchte, vergeben Sie mir bitte, wenn ich meine Überlegungen und meine Antwort auf englisch fortsetze.

Few biblical concepts have been as troubling to Jewish–Christian relations as covenant. More specifically, the Christian claim to be the successor covenant people, elected by God to replace Israel because of the latter’s faithlessness, led to the substitution theory, also known as

replacement theology. This is the teaching that, since the time of Jesus, Jews have been replaced by Christians in God's favour, and that all God's promises to the Jewish people have been inherited by Christianity.

There is a dilemma at the heart of today's Christian understanding of Judaism, demonstrated by *Nostra Aetate*. On the one hand, the document states that "the church is the new people of God" while, on the other, "the Jews remain most dear to God because of their fathers, for He does not repent of the gifts He makes nor of the calls He issues (cf. Romans 11:28-29)".

This dilemma introduces us to a crucial question in today's relationship – can Christians view Judaism as a valid religion in its own terms (and *vice versa*)? Directly related to this is the need, from a Christian perspective, for reflection on the survival of the Jewish People and of the vitality of Judaism over 2000 years – this is the 'mystery of Israel', upon which Paul reflected in his Epistle to the Romans and which you, dear Bishop, considered in your talk.

Questions also need to be considered from the Jewish perspective. What was the divine purpose behind the creation of Christianity? What are the implications for Jews that as a result of the Jew Jesus, 2 billion Christians now read the Jewish Bible? Martin Buber for instance, considered Jesus as "my elder brother". Buber's writings have greatly influenced Christian theology, notably his remark that "the Covenant has not been terminated", pre-empting and possibly prompting re-consideration of Paul's chapters 9-11 in his Letter to the Romans that God has not forsaken the people of Israel.

Nostra Aetate also demonstrates Christianity's abandonment of its historical religious animosity and misleading caricature of Judaism. Positively this might be expressed as the necessity to understand the faith of the other in terms of his or her self-understanding. This process has not led to a separation from all things Jewish (as proposed by the second century heretic, Marcion, who called for a total separation from the Hebrew Bible and much of the New Testament) but, in fact, to a closer relationship with "the elder brother".

For Christians, the question of the validity of Judaism challenges some of the proclamations of Christian triumphalism. The issue at stake is whether Christianity can differentiate itself from Judaism without asserting itself as either opposed to Judaism or simply as the fulfilment of Judaism.

I believe a study of covenant may help us. Cardinal Walter Kasper, alongside Archbishop Rowan Williams and Chief Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks, suggested in an address at the Centre for the study of Jewish-Christian Relations in Cambridge that 'the term "unabrogated covenant" should become the starting point for a renewed theology of Judaism. Reflection on conversation about covenant will further the growing *chevruta*, partnership, between Jews and Christians and fulfil Anselm's dictum, *Fides quaerens intellectum* ('faith in search of understanding').

It is unfortunate that although Paul's comments on the people of Israel and their relationship with God are complex and sometimes hard to follow, they are commonly and misleadingly simplified. He is generally viewed as arguing that membership of the true Israel is not determined simply on physical descent from Abraham, but rather on the spiritual affinity to Abraham's trusting relationship with God. In other words, Israel is simply composed of a combination of Jews and Gentiles. The former, due to their spiritual past, include those who have extended their trust relationship in God to a dependence upon Jesus as Lord; the latter includes those Gentiles who have entered into the covenantal relationship with God by their acceptance of Jesus.

This, however, is a facile interpretation of Paul's assessment for it simply imputes to him the view that the old becomes new. As you mentioned, Bishop, Paul struggles deeply with the meaning of the election of Israel and the election of the Church. It is true that the church fathers (even the

Epistle to the Hebrews), such as Justin Martyr, believed that Christians are the true Israel (*verus Israel*), and not the Jewish people. And within a few decades of the formation of Christianity, Christians, not Jews, were viewed as the children of Abraham and God's covenant with Abraham was effectively established with gentile Christians - Jews were excluded.

Reflection on the biblical concept of covenant will remind Christians that the Jewish people remain part of the people of God. Indeed, we might suggest that both Israel and the Church are elect and both participate in the covenant of God. Paul's attempt to explain what he identifies as the 'mystery of Israel' is based upon his interpretation of the "remnant" of the Jewish people. This emphasis is not simply dependent upon the existence of the remnant but upon the impossibility for him that the Jewish people as a whole could first have been elected by God and then later displaced. For Paul God would not simply elect and then reject.

As Pope John Paul II said on more than one occasion, the Church's election derives from that of Israel but this does not imply that God's covenant with Israel is broken. Rather, it remains unbroken – irrevocably (Romans 11:29). For Paul, the mystery of Israel is that their rejection and their stumbling do not mean that they cease to be accepted by God. Rather, they allow the Gentiles to participate in the peoplehood of Israel.

Indeed, so strongly does Paul make this point that he offers a severe warning that gentile Christians should not be haughty or boastful toward unbelieving Jews – much less cultivate evil intent and engage in persecution against them. Tragically, his words remained a warning almost totally forgotten by Christians over many, many centuries. Christians have remembered Jews as "enemies" but not as "beloved" of God (Romans 11:28) and have taken to heart Paul's criticisms, forgetting Paul's love for Jews (Romans 9:1-5).

Romans 9 – 11 provide a biblical justification for Christians to re-assess attitudes towards Jews and maintain the continuing validity of God's covenant with his Jewish people. If the Church, as the New Israel, replaced the Old Israel as the inheritor of God's promises, does this mean that God reneges on his word? If God has done so with regard to Jews, what guarantee is there for the Churches that he won't do so again, this time to Christians?

Of course, you could argue that, if Jews have not kept faith with God, then God has a perfect right to cast them off. It is interesting that Christians who argue this way have not often drawn the same deduction about Christian faithfulness, which has not been a notable characteristic of the last two millennia. Actually, God seems to have had a remarkable ability to keep faith with both Christians and Jews, when they have not kept faith with him, a point of which Paul is profoundly aware in Romans 9-11. He goes out of his way to deny claims that God has rejected the chosen people, and asserts that their stumbling does not lead to their fall.

It seems to me that we have reached a moment in the Jewish-Christian encounter to consider how a negative formulation ('unabrogated covenant') can be understood positively. Friendship is not built on a lack of hostility but rather on common values and mutual benefit. Similarly, the relationship between Christianity and Judaism requires a positive foundation and I invite Christians and Jews to reflect on the positive meaning of covenant.

Reflection is not limited to Christians, but is also required by Jews, as Professor Ruth Langer will discuss tomorrow. Many Jews retain an infantile understanding of Christianity. There is an urgent need for Jews to confront the mark that centuries of Christian antisemitism have left on the Jewish psyche. It is perhaps for this reason above all that there have been numerous Jewish writings which consider the political, historical and sociological relationship with Christianity but few which can be categorised as theological.

For many Jews, the legacy of *l'enseignement du mepris* (the teaching of contempt), has also led

the Jewish encounter with Christianity to consist primarily of an attempt to educate Christians about Judaism in order to prevent, or at the very least to minimise the possibility of a resurgence of Christian antisemitism. However, a theology of dialogue and a Jewish theology of Christianity should not be built on removing antisemitism for genuine friendship is more than a lack of hostility.

So how should Jews reflect on covenant in terms of our relationship with Christianity?

We might begin with The *Covenant with Noah*: “The children of Noah (that is, people other than Israel) were given seven commandments: Laws (i.e. to establish courts of justice), (the prohibitions of) Idolatry, Blasphemy, Sexual Immorality, Bloodshed, Theft, and the Limb from a Living Animal.” (Tosefta *Avoda Zara* 9.4). These laws are an attempt to formulate moral standards for the world without a concomitant demand for conversion to Judaism. As such, they acknowledge the right of peoples to their own formulation of faith provided only that a minimum standard is met. Rabbi Johanan of Tiberias (third century) said: “Whoever denies idolatry is called a Jew.” (BT *Megilla* 13a.)

The rejection of idolatry, rather than any doctrinal definition of God, is the foundation of Noahide laws as conceived by the rabbis. The concept of the *sheva mitzvot* (seven commandments) is a powerful model for contemporary theologians in their search for a theological basis on which to affirm the validity of Christianity.

There are also other resources already available *within* Judaism to create an environment in which Jews can not only regard Christians with respect, but also seek to work together for a more just society and a better world. These include some of the practical suggestions made by Bishop Mussinghoff.

A Jew might also turn to the concept of ‘ Righteous Gentiles’, referring to Rabbi Joshua ben Hananya who propounded the view, later generally accepted, that ‘ the righteous of all nations have a share in the world to come’ (Tosefta , *Sanhedrin* 13), though they were not converted to Judaism. Judaism does not have an equivalent to Augustine"s *extra ecclesiam non est salus* (‘there is no salvation outside the Church’). The concept of ‘righteous gentiles’ provides a basis for the affirmation of the spiritual worth of Christians.

Thus, we seek to create the theological space for Christians whilst remaining faithful to the Jewish concept of covenant; this perhaps parallels Paul’s reflection in Romans 9-11, the scriptural and theological basis for *Nostra Aetate* and for modern Catholic theologies of Judaism, which seeks to create theological space for Jews whilst remaining faithful to Christian interpretations of the significance of the Christ event.

One final example, we Jews might refer to – the rabbinic principles of *tiqqun "olam* (‘establishing the world aright’), *darkhe shalom* (‘ the ways of peace’) and *qiddush Hashem* (‘ sanctifying God"s name’, i.e. behaving in such a manner as to bring credit to God), which can be brought to govern our relationships to Christianity

This, it seems to me, is more promising than interpreting Christianity (and Islam) as ‘Preparing the Way’ for the acceptance of Torah developed by medieval authors such as Judah Halevi (c. 1075-1141) and Moses Maimonides (1135-1204). In the medieval Jewish mindset, the most positive view of Islam and Christianity was that they are in error, but can be accommodated as part of the divine design in the process of world redemption, which seeks to bring the nations gradually to God. This medieval view is the counterpart of the Christian idea *of praeparatio evangelica*, or of the Muslim claim that Jewish and Christian scriptures are imperfect forerunners of the final, perfect revelation. Even Menahem ha-Meiri (d. 1315), who expounded a theistic morality and who coined the phrase *umot hagedurot hedarkei hadatot* ("nations bound by the ways of religion’) only made possible a positive assessment, not of doctrine, but of the Christian way of life.

However, I believe that the suggestions I have briefly outlined will help Jews in their reflection on an appropriate relationship with Christianity; a study of the covenant between the Jewish people and God, a study of the biblical covenant promised to Abraham and revealed to Moses; a study of the covenant which emphasises the unique relationship between the Jewish people and God; a study of the irrevocable covenant will enable Jews to create the theological space for Christians not only to possess their own special relationship with God but to see their reflection in a Jewish mirror, which may serve both to deepen Christian faith in Christ and Christian respect for their elder siblings.

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