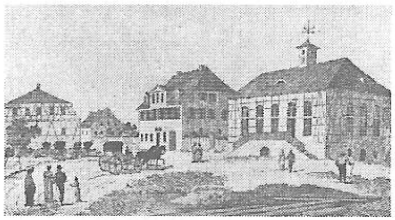



Origins of the

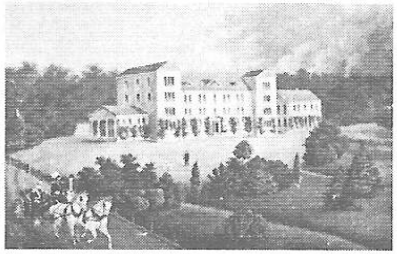
Temple Society

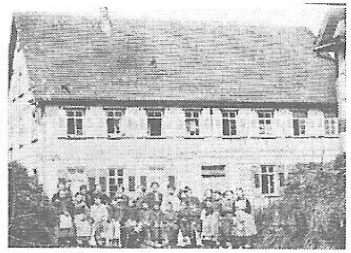
Stages of its formation




Süddeutsche Warte,
religiöses und politisches Wochenblatt
für das deutsche Volk.
Nro. 43. 1869.

Series of seminars presented
by the Templer Community
in Stuttgart, 2003





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Series of seminars presented
by the Templer Community
in Stuttgart, 2003

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PART I

1845 – 1853

Discontent with the Church

1. Pietism in Württemberg

The beginning of the 19th century was a time of great religious and spiritual vitality. People were still deeply anchored in religious life and Church order. *Pietistic devotion* was practised in large parts of Württemberg. This movement of religious renewal originated with the Protestant theologian *Philipp Jacob Spener* who, in a treatise published in 1675, had levelled massive criticism at all the estates of Church and society and instigated a program of reforms. He advised believers to form lay groups who were to meet outside of regular divine service hours for sessions to study the Bible in greater depth and sing hymns. He wanted to bring about the "universal priesthood of all believers".

This put him severely at odds with the standpoint of the official Church which, since Luther, had placed its main emphasis on believing in the "correct faith" (justification of man before God by faith alone).

Spener's followers were mockingly called '*Pietists*' (sentimental hypocrites) at first, but the name was eventually accepted for people of this kind of piety in which inner life and living faith were important. Christian faith was supposed to pervade all of human life (everyday Christianity) and encourage decency and discipline. The Bible was to be the supreme guideline in matters of faith; in it one read divine wisdom.

2. Living conditions at the start of the 19th century

In Württemberg, the early 19th century was determined by political oppression, economic and social hardship and religious discontent. The sovereign, *King Friedrich I*, ruled with an iron hand. He demanded rigorous obedience from his subjects and tolerated no opposition. The people were controlled everywhere by police and censorship. Communities throughout the land lost their independence by the creation of a bureaucracy with powerful regional offices. Public life was rigidly organised.

Friedrich was obligated to Emperor Napoleon to supply him with conscripts for his army, which took many young men away from their families and livelihoods. There was a shortage of farmers, tradesmen and teachers everywhere. In addition, there was a famine due to crop failures from 1814 to 1816. Food prices skyrocketed and many families starved.

Just a few years earlier, in 1809, a *reform of divine services* ordered by the King had caused great disquiet, particularly among the Pietists. Friedrich exercised his power not only over education and health but also over church life. He considered himself to be the head of the Churches, all of which had to be subservient to the State.

Under the "Divine Services Reform", Church rituals like baptism, confession, communion, marriage and confirmation were reorganised and given new prescribed texts. The church year was no longer to begin on the first Sunday of Advent but on the first of January. The Pietists, who placed great emphasis on deep inner piety, thought the reorganisation reduced religious life to superficiality. People said the old liturgy was created prayerfully while kneeling, but the new one while lounging in a sofa corner. Many, including some clergymen, announced their open resistance.

Discontent with restrictions and lack of freedom in the religious domain led to a large number of citizens (called "Separatists") leaving the State Church and seeking their salvation in emigration, although emigration was prohibited from 1807 to 1816. This ban was lifted under King Friedrich's successor, when mass emigration from Württemberg resulted. Many thousands turned their backs on their homeland to try their luck in America or southern Russia. Apart from religious discontent, it was mainly economic hardship which drove them abroad.

3. The foundation of the Community of Brethren in Korntal



Gottlieb W. Hoffmann

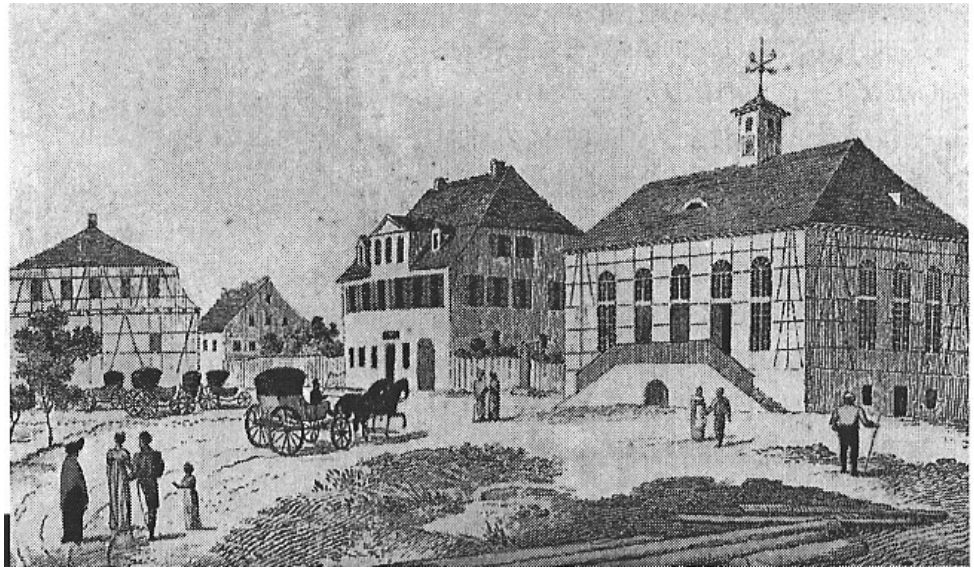
Gottlieb Wilhelm Hoffmann (1771-1846), mayor of Leonberg and Royal notary, was one of those who wanted to do something to stem this mass emigration. Thanks to his connections at the Court, he eventually succeeded in receiving, on behalf of the disgruntled Pietists, a grant of farmland near Stuttgart where they were allowed to build a community with its own liturgy. In 1819, together with thirty-eight other families, Hoffmann moved to their new land and founded the privileged *Korntal Community of Brethren* which has preserved its independence to this day. Gottlieb Wilhelm Hoffmann was appointed the first community leader. He also managed the community guest house which served the needs of out-of-town visitors.

Recommended reading: "Große Hoffnungen – kleine Schritte. Lesebuch zur Geschichte der Evangelischen Landeskirche in Württemberg", Quell Verlag, TGD-Nr P-169. [Reader on Church history].

4. Life in Korntal

Hoffmann's younger son *Christoph* was just four years old when Korntal was founded. He grew up in this congregation which set great store by good Christian upbringing and education as well as harmonious community life, characterised by love of fellow man. It was to serve other Pietists as a model for a "*community of true believers*". Christoph Hoffmann writes in his memoirs that as a child he felt that the Kingdom of God must be equivalent to Korntal.

> "Korntal felt like a small republic in which things were decided and run not by mere tradition or by the precepts of any external power but by free decisions taken and implemented by the wisest and best men. One did not feel pushed into a corner at all and, since every Sunday many outsiders flocked to the small village, it looked rather like the city on the mountain which cannot remain hidden. Only Adam himself may have felt happier in paradise than I did in Korntal, in an environment which, in its safety and perfection was unsurpassed in every way."
>
> (*Chr. Hoffmann in "Mein Weg nach Jerusalem" Vol. 1*).

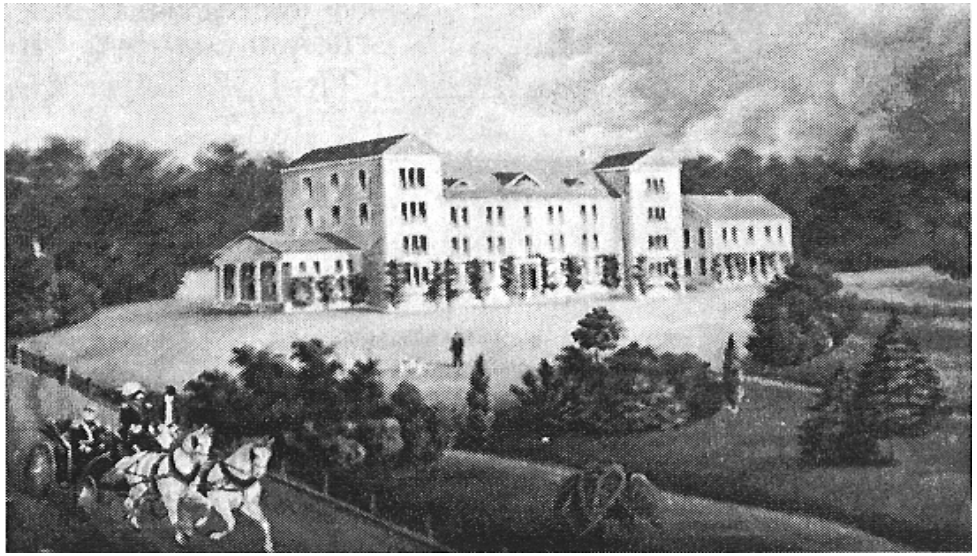


Life in Korntal

Recommended reading: W. Roth, "Die Evangelische Brüdergemeinde Korntal" TGD: P-089

5. The *Salon* School

Although his father was basically *opposed* to the ecclesiastical theologians because of the clashes between Pietism and the Church, he nonetheless consented



The classical grammar school of the Paulus brothers at the Salon was a private secondary boarding school from 1835-1879. Its principal, Philipp Paulus, was a grandson of Phil. Matth. Hahn.

when Christoph expressed his desire to study theology. Christoph entered the famous Tübingen *Stift* [seminary] where he came into contact with all the spiritual trends of the times. He passed his final examination in theology in 1841. He was now eligible for a Pastor's position but did not apply for one, preferring to be a teacher in philology and history at the *Salon*, a *private school* in Ludwigsburg run by the *Paulus brothers* (his brothers-in-law).

> "The moral education at the school meant encouraging its pupils to attend church regularly, to be mindful of their every action and to pay attention to the life purpose offered here. It was also the school's task to involve the pupils in its domestic and religious life and lead them in special tuition to authentic inner life in, with and for God."

From Rudolf F. Paulus, "Die Wissenschaftliche Bildungsanstalt auf dem Salon" in "Ludwigsburger Geschichtsblätter" 39/1986, TGD T-125.

6. The turmoil of Tübingen and the Rationalists

While Christoph Hoffmann pursued his teaching activities at the *Salon* school, he and his brothers-in-law heard about the inaugural lecture of Professor *Friedrich Theodor Vischer*, held before the students of the University of Tübingen in 1844. Vischer mocked the "old faith" in a personal God which was prevalent in the Church. He said it was hollow delusion and idolatry and he intended to fight and undermine it wherever he could.

Vischer and many other intellectuals belonged to the Tübingen "*critical school*" who, by a process of enlightenment and rational thought, had arrived at a position in sharp contrast to Pietistic perceptions. It was important to the Rationalists not to believe anything unless it was made acceptable by clear logical reasoning. Consequently the yardstick of historical criticism was also applied to the biblical Scriptures. This was in most glaring contrast to the prevalent perceptions of the Pietists.

The religious activists around Christoph Hoffmann at the *Salon* could not possibly accept a public stance such as Professor Vischer's. They felt it was an *attack on Christian faith*. Hoffmann wrote a pamphlet entitled *"Twenty-one theses against the new unbelievers"* which he distributed amongst the Pietists:

2. "Anyone who says the old Christian belief was an old edifice of lies, blasphemes against Christ and the Church and slanders all Christians.
10. Anyone who dares publicly to declare that the Christian religion is defeated, is a conceited fool.
20. Any Christian who listens to an attack on the Christian Church, or even hears about it, has the holy duty to openly defend it."

(*Excerpt from Hoffmann's "21 Theses*")

TGD archives: "21 Sätze..." (1844) T-261; "Sendschreiben an Prof. Vischer..." (1845) T-262; "Wahrheit meiner 21 Sätze..." (1845) T-263, all by Christoph Hoffmann.

7. The *Süddeutsche Warte*

Hoffmann's pamphlet, which was followed by more, found much resonance among the Pietists. He and the Paulus brothers were encouraged to continue exposing such "ills of the times" ruthlessly. This led the men at the *Salon* in May 1845 to found a *weekly journal* called *Süddeutsche Warte.* The main subject of the journal was designated as "the condition of all of German culture and its important manifestations in church, school, state and social life". More than a thousand subscribers were won, even before the first issue was published.

FIRST STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT ON THE PATH TO THE TEMPLE:

Christoph Hoffmann and the Paulus brothers defend traditional Pietist Christian standpoints and attract public attention with the *Süddeutsche Warte*

✳

The "*social question*" became the main topic of the articles published in the Süddeutsche Warte. This had become an issue because of the discrepancy between the industrial economic boom on the one hand and the deplorable social conditions on the other, and led to seeking ways and means to deal with this sorry state of affairs in the quickest and most effective way.

See: "*Gott und Welt in Württemberg – eine Kirchengeschichte*", P-267.



Christoph Hoffmann (1815-1885)

For a long time, the Church was incapable of reacting to the collapse of the old social order. This incapacity was sharply criticised by Hoffmann and his friends. They were of the opinion that improvement of social conditions was above all a *matter for the Church*, which was then in fact a *State Church*, with all the power of the State at its disposal. (The King was the supreme head of the Church. The Consistory, the top echelon of the Church, was an administrative State Authority and Pastors were public servants like any other officials). In Hoffmann's and his friends' view, the State created the prerequisite conditions for Christian faith to become effective.

However, this attitude of the publishers of the *Warte* changed with the upheavals of **1848.** His ten month stint as *political representative* in the Frankfurt National Assembly was a big disappointment for Hoffmann and made him change his mind. He recognised that the Christian State was only an illusion which had never existed. He wrote in the *Warte*:

> "The principles of salvation of the Protestant Church lie in the dust. The teacher colleges are increasingly disregarding the wholesome doctrine of the Church, it is falling victim to the hollow and pernicious ideas of an ungodly zeitgeist, and all beneficial discipline on the part of the Church is on the wane – in fact, the Protestant people are in the process of deserting Christ."

The rug was pulled from under the feet of the writers of the *Warte* by what in their opinion was the obvious bankruptcy of the Christian State. They came to the conclusion that the State Church, which they had once supported, had gambled away its former status and had to sever its links to the State if it wanted to remain effective. *Separation of State and Church* was now their demand, and they raised it in public. Christoph Hoffmann writes:

> "I was cured of the illusion that the existing system of the Protestant Churches in Germany was true Christianity and that the political situation brought tumbling down by the revolution was the Christian State. Now I knew that both true Christianity itself and Christian life in State and society must still be sought and realised in the future."

8. The "Evangelical Association" and "Voices of Prophecy"

At the *Salon* and in the office of the *Warte*, they contemplated how to save the true Christian faith. In **1849** an "Evangelical Association", headed by Philipp Paulus, was founded to promote its goals in Pietist communities around the country.

They decided to strike out on their own because the Church, due to its intricate connection with the State, could no longer be trusted to act. An "*Evangelical School*" was established in the buildings of the *Salon* to train young people in missionary and preaching work and later send them out into the country to rekindle Christian faith.

SECOND STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT ON THE PATH TO THE TEMPLE

Searching for true Christianity, Christoph Hoffmann in his book "Voices of Prophecy" designs a model for a People of God after the Prophets' example

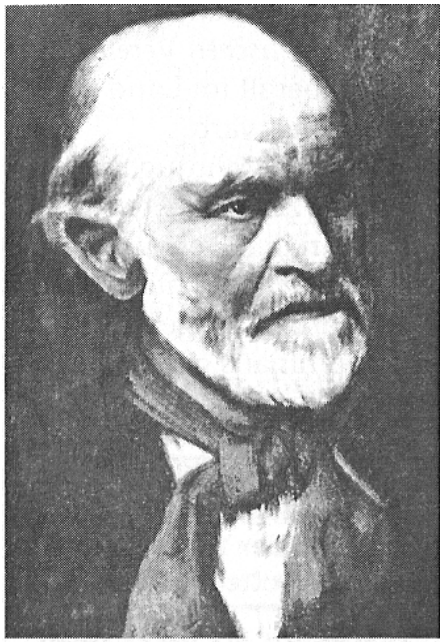
⁂

The Pietists' strong alignment with the Bible, particularly with the great Prophecies of the Old Testament, becomes apparent in a book Hoffmann published in **1849** entitled "*Voices of Prophecy about Babel and the People of God*" (TGD no: T-074):

> "The basic idea of this book was the need for a people such as the people of Israel up to the time of Christ. Compared with this People of God, all political hustle and bustle around me seemed hopeless, a work of limited human wisdom and an image of that Babel where Israel was led into captivity because of its defection from its divine destiny."

9. Georg David Hardegg

Around this time, the name Hardegg surfaces in the chronicles of the *Warte*. Hardegg was a committee member of the Evangelical Association and became increasingly acquainted with Hoffmann, whose "Voices of Prophecy" he had read with the greatest interest. He challenged Hoffmann to get serious with his idea of God's People and "*move out of Babel*", as stated in Revelations.



Georg David Hardegg (1812-1879)

Georg David Hardegg, three years older than Hoffmann, was a merchant by trade, but no theologian. He was born in Eglosheim near Ludwigsburg and not raised in a Pietist community. During the 1830s he ran with the republicans and revolutionaries, which earned him a seven year prison term and subsequent banishment from Württemberg. He returned to Ludwigsburg in 1844.

During his imprisonment on Hohenasperg he studied the Bible intensively, hoping to find pointers to the purpose of his life. In Christoph Hoffmann he saw someone who followed the same direction, and a *close friendship* developed between them. Hardegg provided Hoffmann with decisive confirmation for his ideas and spurred him to action.

Recommended reading: "100 Jahre Tempelgesellschaft" (1961) TGD no: T-050.

THIRD STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT ON THE PATH TO THE TEMPLE

Hoffmann's ideas are confirmed by Hardegg. Hardegg pushes for their realisation.

⁂

10. Hoffmann becomes the sole publisher of the *Warte*

It is an old truth that a critic's critical stance inadvertently creates enemies. So it was with the publishers of the *Warte* who fought for an *improvement in church work*, not only by writing, but also by personal effort through their "Evangelical Association". The reformatory measures effected by the Protestant Consistory in the meantime, such as the institution of parish councils or the introduction of a primary school reader, were considered of little significance by the Salon people and as distracting from the main issue. This judgment so upset most of the theologians that they increasingly broke off their connections to Ludwigsburg.

The "Evangelical Association" had founded about fourteen self-governed local associations in Pietist communities all over the region where men from the *Salon* held meetings in taverns or private houses to spread their ideas. This had to be a thorn in the flesh of the local Pastors because, obviously, church life bypassing them was practised here. It is not surprising therefore, that these Pastors lodged complaints with their relevant authorities, even though they could not really accuse the *Saloners* of any deviation from the official Church doctrines. So, work in the editors' office and in the Association became more and more impeded and paralysed.

In **1852**, Philipp and Immanuel Paulus informed their brother-in-law Hoffmann that they wanted to give up the journal because it apparently no longer satisfied a real need. Working for the *Warte* no longer seemed worth the trouble. To give it up altogether would have gone against Christoph Hoffmann's inner conviction. He felt that nothing had changed in his mission since founding the paper and that this mission continued to be essential and important to him. His memoirs state:

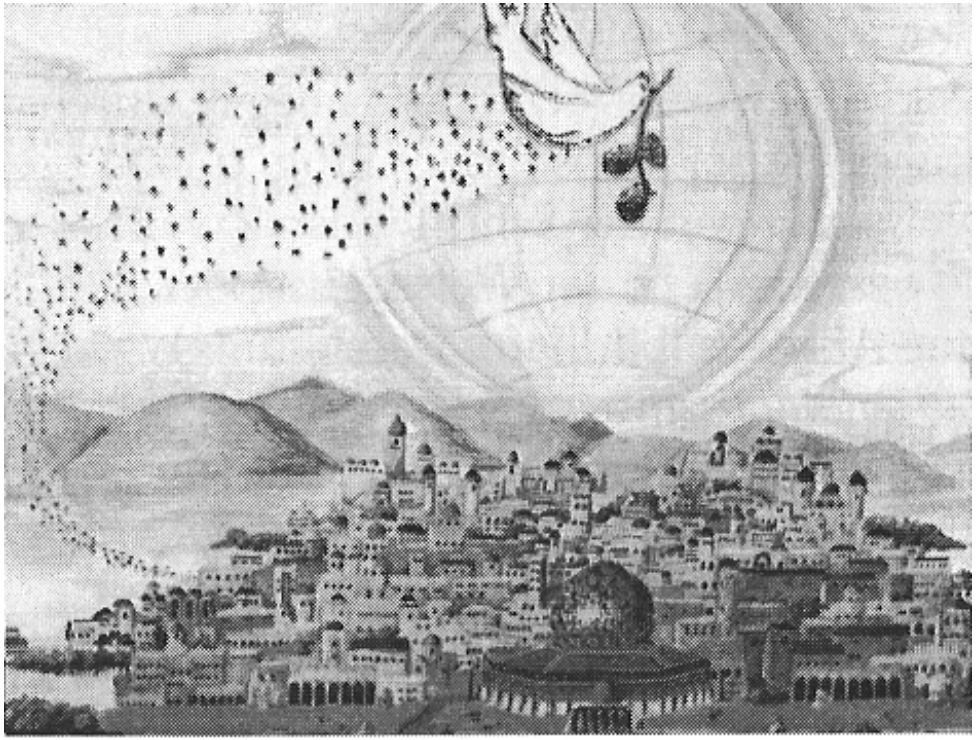
> "God has placed the Warte into our hands, and we must not wilfully give it up. I therefore declared to my brothers-in-law that, if they abandoned the Warte, I would take it on by myself at my own risk and continue to run it as proprietor. And so it happened from July 1, 1852." *(Mein Weg nach Jerusalem)*.

Hoffmann then managed the magazine for sixteen years, at times under the most difficult conditions, until his emigration.

11. Hoffmann and the idea of God's People

The early fifties saw a number of crop failures in Württemberg which led to famine and increasing poverty in the population. Charitable organisations did try to alleviate the oppressive conditions but could not achieve significant improvement.

> "In 1853 the question of what could be done about the current poverty and social ills in general was repeatedly debated in the Evangelical Association. I felt that, while in cases of need one had to give as much as possible, the social disease was not going to be cured by this. More comprehensive help was needed, and not only of the material kind, because moral defects and maladies constitute the greater part of the social problem. In the course of my talks the idea, already familiar from my "Voices of Prophecy", recurred to me that heeding the prophecies of the Holy Scriptures would be the proper remedy for us, as it once was for Israel and the First Christian Community. So far, however, I had not considered the external aspect of human life and its significance for the present and, indeed, could not have thought about them because I was not yet sure whether all the quotations in the Bible about the restoration of the Holy Land were to be understood literally or allegorically, as commonly practised by the Church."
>
> *("Mein Weg nach Jerusalem", Vol. II).*



Jerusalem, the promised City of Zion (Collection "Children of the World paint Jerusalem"), Israel Museum Jerusalem.

12. The Crimean War draws attention to the Middle East

In the spring of **1853**, a dispute about the sacred sites in Palestine erupted between Russia and Turkey. This triggered the Crimean War in a matter of months. The Middle East was suddenly the focus of political interest. The end of centuries of Turkish rule in Palestine seemed in sight.

> "Thus a question mark hung over the future of the very land which, according to the simple meaning of the words in the Scriptures, belonged to the true Israel, i.e. the people who would unite to find the right solution for the social question. Like a bolt of lightning the conviction hit me: it was not the traditional church interpretation that was true, but that which corresponds to the needs of mankind. For me, this confirmed the break with the interpretation of the prophecies prevalent amongst theologians and this necessarily led to further changes in my relationship with the Church.
> My decision stood firm. I told the members of the Association immediately that I would put myself and the *Warte*, of which I was now the sole publisher, at the service of this new idea, namely the gathering of God's People in Jerusalem."
>
> *("Mein Weg nach Jerusalem", Vol. II).*

In Pietist society, people were familiar with the stories of the Bible from a young age. The City of Jerusalem plays a prominent role in the prophetic books of the Old Testament as well as in the Revelation of St John in the New Testament. For the Prophets it was the "navel of the world", the origin of God's Kingdom and the point of assembly for all nations. For the author of the "Revelation", Jerusalem was the symbol for the glory of God and Christ at his second coming.

FOURTH STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT ON THE PATH TO THE TEMPLE

Hoffmann recognises the importance of gathering God's People in Jerusalem and makes it his life's commitment

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Recommended reading: Peter Lange, "Warum musste es ausgerechnet Jerusalem sein? Christoph Hoffmann's Jerusalemsglaube", insert of "Warte des Tempels" 9/2003.

13. Justification for gathering in Jerusalem

In many editorials of the "Süddeutsche Warte" Hoffmann submitted his reasons for the assembly idea:

> "The Holy Land, according to an unrevoked divine declaration, is the eternal property of God's People. Tired of the abuse inflicted on this Land by Christians, supposedly members of God's People, God left it to the Muslims for a long time. Now their time is up. No one has the right to claim the inheritance that is about to be abandoned but its rightful heirs – the People of God."

He argued that *Abraham* had been promised by God that *from his seed* would grow a great nation. The Apostle Paul had later made it clear that this promise was not meant only for the nation which had emerged *from the Law* (of circumcision) but also for the nation that had emerged from *Abraham's faith*. In fact, the true *seed of Abraham* was *Christ*.

This raised the question why this People of God had to have *Palestine*, of all places. Does it matter, Hoffmann was asked, where a man spends his short life on earth?

"We can be Christians anywhere on earth, but a Christian nation, a People of God, can only grow on the soil of its Fathers, surrounded by the monuments of divine deeds. Only where Abraham had believed, David had fought and Christ had suffered can this People recognise the place and purpose of its destiny."

What did he mean by this "People of God"? What were his assumptions?

> "What we have to consider and discuss is not whether, and how, we might make a move to the Promised Land but whether, and how, we are able to become a People of God. For let us not deceive ourselves: we are not this People yet. It requires a complete change of our total lives and a rebirth of all that is, through the power of God's Word."

PART II 1854 – 1860

Hoffmann's ideas assume concrete form; a community is built at Hardthof

14. Hoffmann's religious standpoint

In this phase of his development, Christoph Hoffmann still stood firmly on the bedrock of *Church belief*. As can be read in his biography, he had not distanced himself from the Augsburg Confession.

His core beliefs, however, had centred on the insights he gained from the *Bible*. His intense preoccupation with the Scriptures stemmed from his Pietistic upbringing and schooling.

> "For me, the yardstick of true Protestant thinking was now no longer what is expressed in the Augsburg Confession but what is taught by Holy Scripture."

In his understanding of the *Biblical Prophecies*, however, he now deviated considerably from Church doctrine by saying, for instance, "an earthly Messianic Kingdom, far from being a *worthless fancy*, was a *most* essential and very *important matter* for our lives". He also said that, although this had been clear to him since 1848, he now had "removed all doubts in this respect by his literal interpretation of the Apocalypse (Rev. of St John) and the rest of the prophecies". He does not see the prophecies of the Bible as *allegories* (parables) but rather as quite real *instructions for action*.

By this deviation in interpreting the prophecies, he found himself at considerable odds with other theologians and church representatives, above all with the Pastor of Korntal, *Sixt Karl Kapff* who, in the meantime, had risen to the office of Prelate and Member of the Consistory.

> "I could now no longer act as a spokesman for the Protestant State Church nor speak in the name of Pietism nor count on the support of my friends at the *Salon* but found myself deserted by all. And yet I knew that I thought and worked in the same spirit as I did ten years before, except that my striving was now tempered by experience and had taken more definite shape. This largely alienated my former colleagues, but liberated me from many misperceptions about the poor state of affairs in Christendom and enriched and deepened my knowledge."
>
> *(Mein Weg nach Jerusalem Vol. II)*

15. Hoffmann's followers separate from Pietism

In **1854**, the men who agreed with Hoffmann's aims and were determined to remain true to the cause, in spite of opposition, united in a group. This led to setting up a "*Voluntary Committee for the Gathering of God's People in Jerusalem*" whose members, in addition to Hoffmann, were *Georg David Hardegg, Christoph Paulus* (Hoffmann's brother-in-law and brother of former friends Philipp and Immanuel) and *Louis Höhn* (also a brother-in-law of Hoffmann, married to Beate Paulus). These four decided to stage a *public meeting* at the "Waldhorn" in Ludwigsburg on 24 August 1854 for the purpose of discussing and spreading their ideas. The four men had resigned from the Evangelical Association.

FIFTH STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT ON THE PATH TO THE TEMPLE

Hoffmann proclaims the "Society for the Gathering of the People of God in Jerusalem"

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The meeting seems to have been well attended. Old chronicles indicate that among the participants were men like *Conrad Schick* (future architect in Jerusalem) and *Johann Ludwig Schneller* (future founder of the *Syrian Orphanage* in Jerusalem). Both of them seem to have spoken *in favour* of gathering the People of God.

After extensive debate, it was decided to submit a *petition* to the German Federal Assembly in Frankfurt, asking for support in this matter. It was agreed that anyone signing the petition by the end of September, would thereby become a *member* of the "Society for the Gathering of the People of God in Jerusalem". A total of 439 signatures was collected. From now on these like-minded friends called themselves "Friends of Jerusalem". This was in fact the hour when the "Temple" was born.

The petition was handed to the Federal President personally by Hoffmann and Hardegg on 31 October but was in fact never accepted for debate by the Federal Assembly:

> "We have formed a society with the intention of building communities in the Holy Land which strive to replicate the conditions of the first Apostolic community in Jerusalem. The code of law for these communities is the Holy Scripture of the Old and the New Testaments. The communities shall be the beginning of a people whose chosen task is the fulfilment of Divine Law under all life conditions so that Jerusalem will become a source of light for Christianity and the whole world."

16. The slogan “Exit from Babel”

At this stage, Hoffmann does not yet contemplate separation from the Protestant State Church. On the contrary, he was decidedly opposed to suggestions of that nature. Reformation of life would not be gained by leaving the Church. The First Christians also did not leave their community’s Israelite worship. If there was talk of *exit from Babel*, as demanded by the so highly esteemed book of Revelations in the New Testament, then only in the sense that one should renounce all perversity and false doctrines and submit totally to the will of God and His law. The Gathering of God’s People in *itself* constituted an exit from Babel.

Hardegg formulated it more pointedly: “No, *exit from Babel* does not mean leaving the Church but it does mean leaving behind the condition of a populace ruined by overt and covert vices and crimes, trying to whitewash its own downfall with pomp, parties, buildings and dissipation of every kind.”

The *livelihoods* of the leading Friends of Jerusalem were extremely insecure. Christoph Paulus and Louis Höhn had lost their positions as teachers at the *Salon* school because of their membership in the Voluntary Committee. Christoph Hoffmann had already quit his teaching job the year before because of disagreements with his brothers-in-law at the *Salon*. He now had to meet living expenses, as well as publish the *Warte* from his savings.

He also had to look for another place to live with his family. An attempt to again settle in Korntal failed because the Brethren feared he would cause too much disturbance. He therefore took up residence in Ludwigsburg in close proximity to Hardegg. This led to Hardegg dictating the practical measures for their further steps. When thirteen years later, emigration to Palestine finally became reality, it was largely thanks to Hardegg’s push and practical sense.

How much Hoffmann had by now become alienated from his Pietistic background is clearly indicated by a letter from his brother *Wilhelm Hoffmann* who, a theologian like himself, was Privy Councillor and Court Chaplain in Berlin:

> “Rumours have reached me, and fill me with pain and anxiety, that you want to move to Ludwigsburg instead of to the *Salon*, not to work as a teacher, but to pursue the Jerusalem matter, and that the people of Korntal have refused to have you back so as not to become, or be seen to become entangled in this matter, and that the government is considering banning the *Warte* in order to curb the agitation about emigration and save its citizens from disaster.
>
> I ask myself daily among continual thoughts of love and care for you: “what could he have achieved! What could he still achieve, if he would only enter the spheres of the Church, historically regulated by the Lord, the State or the School, and work there like the rest of us! How useful his gifts and strengths would be to a state like ours”, but they would have to belong to the Church, not to separatism.”

(from: “Mein Weg nach Jerusalem”)

One important developmental step in **1855** was the publication of Hoffmann’s book “*History of the People of God as a solution to the social question: by what means can a healthy social life be established and by what forces can a sick or deceased people be born anew*?” Another was the work on a draft “*Constitution for the People of God*”. This draft briefly presents the fundamental principles and objectives of the Society in addition to “the Law of the People of God, the institution of Divine Service, teaching and education, ownership of land, support for the poor and combatting usury”, as well as ways and means of achieving all this.

17. A further step in gathering the Friends of Jerusalem

Georg David Hardegg, among the leading ‘Friends’ financially the most secure because of his leather business, was obviously the first who had the idea of establishing a *trial community at home* as a preliminary step before settlement in Palestine. The others agreed and began looking for a suitable location. In early **1856** a rather neglected hamlet by the name of Kirschenhardthof was offered for sale. This meant, however, that the Friends now had to get involved with agriculture.

> “In a dream it was as if my father came to me and asked about the house into which we were about to settle. I led him into a large farmhouse. He asked whether the contract of sale had already been drawn up. When I said yes and showed him the document, he asked for pen and ink and added his name to our signatures.” (*Christoph Hoffmann*)



The first community house in Kirschenhardthof

The first to move to Kirschenhardthof were *Christoph Hoffmann* and *Louis Höhn* on 20 April 1856, followed by *Christoph Paulus, Georg David Hardegg* and the pharmacist *Wilhelm Paulus* (brother of Christoph). The foundation stone for the community's *assembly hall* was laid as early as 2 July and the first big gathering took place on 28 August. Three *schools* were established in the autumn.

SIXTH STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT ON THE PATH TO THE TEMPLE

Kirschenhardthof – the first trial community

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18. The first clash with the State Church

Many critics and sceptics voiced their opinions about these Jerusalem ideas when the matter became public after the inaugural meeting in Ludwigsburg. The *critical* voices gradually turned into *hostile* voices which emotionally and polemically railed against Hoffmann and his ideas.

The issue of the Jerusalem Friends was also discussed in the committees of the Church and dismissed as untenable. Some Church representatives tried their utmost to fight Hoffmann and his reform movement. An event which put further pressure on Hoffmann's relationship with the Protestant State Church was the birth of a child to a family on Hardthof who wanted Hoffmann, the graduate in theology, to perform the christening. Hoffmann said he would if the Pastor of Erbstetten had no objections. The Pastor did not want to decide this on his own, so he asked his superior in Marbach, the Dean, who in turn approached the highest Church authority, the Protestant Consistory. This body decided in the negative and simply forbade the local Pastor to "entrust the former candidate Christoph Hoffmann with clerical duties".

Hoffmann objected and proved that his qualifications obtained at Tübingen not only gave him the right to perform these duties but that he had, in fact, already performed them in Ludwigsburg. He added that he thought the Consistory's grounds were un-biblical because, according to the teaching and practice of the Apostles, the right to officiate in Church was not to be restricted by arbitrary directives.

Hoffmann also requested the Consistory to tell him whether his work and his teaching contained anything contrary to the Bible. The Consistory, however, would not enter into any more discussions and was not prepared for any further talks.

Hoffmann did not want to give up; he placed great significance on this question of authority and was determined to keep fighting the Consistory. His friends, on the other hand, were against it, they thought this academic quarrel would come to naught in any case. With a heavy heart, Hoffmann gave up making any more submissions.

19. Criticism of Church and school system

Meanwhile, in the various regions around the country where Pietists had adopted the ideas of the Friends of Jerusalem, elders had been appointed who maintained contact with the Kirschenhardthof Centre. They were informed by articles in the *Warte* of the progressively deteriorating relationship with the Church and the criticism which was levelled at it. For example:

> "The decline of the Church is an acknowledged and generally accepted fact. There are different opinions about what this corruption consists of, but there is general agreement that things are bad in the Church and that it does not fulfill its purpose of liberating the people from torment and depravity. The Church has almost completely lost its influence on the upper and middle classes, it can no longer do anything with the lower classes in the cities, and on the land it is in the process of losing what is left of its power over the minds of people."

It was said the Church should embrace reforms of the school system in particular: "Reforms of Church and School are not about changing *physical facilities* which are good enough in both cases but about the *spirit* in which these institutions are run and about the *aims* towards which they must strive." The evil had to be tackled at its roots.

20. The fact-finding expedition

The Friends of Jerusalem cannot be accused of having plunged into adventure prematurely and without forethought. This is borne out by their decision to meticulously study conditions in Palestine before their emigration. *Hardegg, Hoffmann* and the winegrower from Rotenberg, *Joseph Bubeck*, were to be the scouts.

The three men were abroad for almost five months, visiting the most important localities and regions in Palestine. They reported to a large public gathering in the *Kursaal*, a large hall in the city of Cannstatt, on 8 September 1858. This report was anything but positive. It highlighted the entirely underdeveloped and largely neglected condition of the Holy Land and expressed doubts whether Europeans were able to even live there.

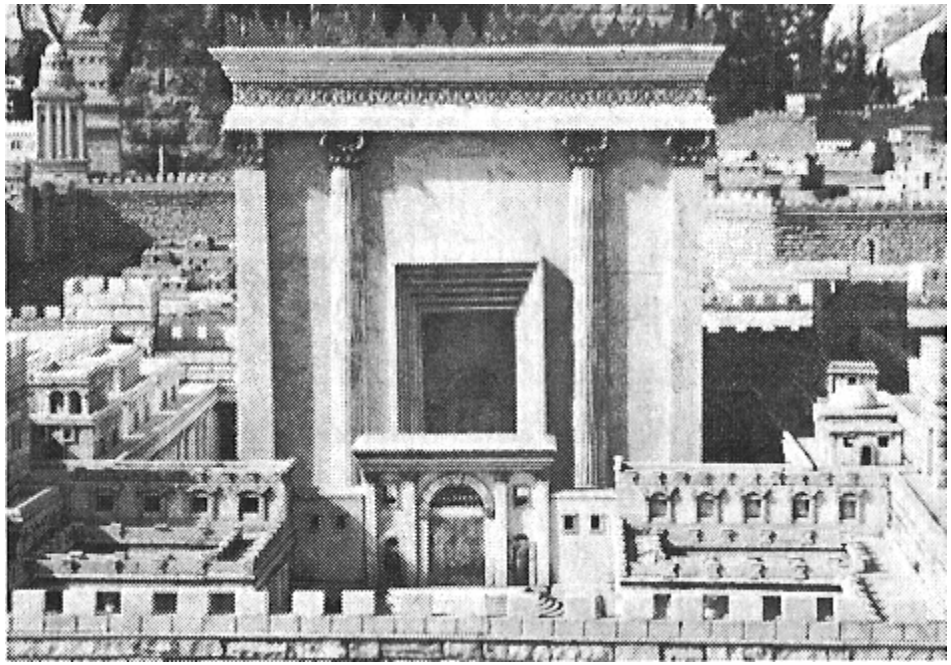
This negative report was not able to shake the resolve of Hoffmann's followers. Admittedly, they did postpone an immediate exodus, but decided to first send young men ("missionaries') to Palestine, to learn the Arabic language and study conditions in the country in more detail. In the meantime, work should continue in establishing the *spiritual Temple* in Germany.

One Hardthof resident characterised the first trial community like this: "I thank my Maker for having led me into a community which strives for the highest and most beautiful aims known to mankind."

21. Building the Temple

Now a new concept was introduced into the ideology of the Friends of Jerusalem: *the Temple.* When explaining the concept, Hoffmann referred to the passage in the Bible where Jesus says when driving the merchants from the Temple: Destroy this Temple and in three days I shall raise it up (John 2:19). The quotation was to be understood spiritually:

> "Building the Temple is essentially the restoration of man to his lost glory; hence this structure extends to all areas of human life; it encompasses all energies of soul and body which, as we know, are in discord and have been harmed by faulty application to improper purposes. The Church whose sole and only reason for existence is to attend to this work, has re-linquished it and has become a useless institution. Youth education has lost its way and operates either in mindless aimlessness or in the wrong direction. In both cases, this inhibits true development and is detrimental to the perfection of mankind; the quality of life in family and society is ruined, and in danger of disintegration. Working to rectify all these defects in the spirit of Jesus Christ means helping to build the Temple and is the beginning of the restoration of Jerusalem."



Model of the Herodian Temple, the "Second Temple", in Jerusalem (reconstruction by M. Avi-Yonah). This temple was begun by Herod the Great in 20 BC and was finished forty-six years later. (Source: "Archäologisches Bibel-Lexicon").

22. The final break with the Church

It is obvious that, due to their harsh criticism, the relationship of the Friends of Jerusalem with the State Church was stretched to breaking point. The *Warte* was decried as a rag of defamation and the Hoffmannians were met with open hostility. Unfortunately there was too much polemic and not enough debate – probably on both sides.

When the Church Authority found out that Hoffmann was instructing confirmands at Hardthof, they asked whether he also planned to perform the confirmation ceremony. Hoffmann was noncommittal at first; but to make sure he would not go ahead, the Consistory sent a policeman who, because of a delay, arrived when the official ceremony was over.

This was the last straw for the Consistory. Hoffmann was asked whether he planned to finally submit to church regulations or wanted to leave the State Church. Hoffmann replied that in view of his fundamental differences with the highest Church authority, he could not submit to its directives on all points.

SEVENTH STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT ON THE PATH TO THE TEMPLE

Hoffmann insists on his authority to officiate.
He and the community are expelled from the Church

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Without taking any further notice of these comments, the Church Authority summoned the whole congregation to the Regional Office in Waiblingen and announced Hoffmann's expulsion from the Protestant State Church. The members were confronted with the question whether in future they still intended to take part in Hoffmann's meetings and services, which they answered in the affirmative. Consequently, they were also declared expelled from the Church on 7 October **1859**.

> "The Consistory had tried to make the inevitable break between us and the Church look like we *resigned* and had conceded that we had not been expelled from the Protestant Church as a whole, but only from a part of the same, namely its Württemberg division. This meant that our rights as members of the Protestant Church were still expressly recognised. To help us preserve these rights we thought it necessary to issue a public declaration regarding the path we discovered in Holy Scripture. This was done in a pamphlet entitled 'The spiritual Temple, or the path to salvation from spiritual and physical want and the dangers of the times, presented by the community of Kirschenhardthof'."

23. The 'churchless' era

The *'first Synod for the restoration of the spiritual Temple'* was held in Stuttgart on 8 February 1860. About four hundred people from all regions of Württemberg attended. Hoffmann first described the desertion from Christianity, which was revealed by the way churches and sects were run and showed its fruits in the deteriorated conditions of society. Through various clashes with the Consistory, he had reached the view that the Church no longer acted from, or was based on biblical foundations, this being clearly shown by the various actions taken against his person.

His thoughts now revolved more and more around the question what "true Christianity" actually was. He saw the *essence of Christianity* as being realised by working at building the spiritual Temple. He indicated the most important prerequisite was the *spirit* in which the work was done: *"He who walks righteously and speaks what is right, who rejects gain from extortion and keeps his hand from taking bribes, who stops his ears against plots of murder and shuts his eyes from contemplating evil, will dwell on high, his refuge is a mountain fortress, his bread shall be given him and water will not fail him."* (Isaiah 33:15-16).

After discussing several other questions, the decision was taken to make a submission to the King of Württemberg, the highest Bishop in the land, to describe the deep misery in society and in the Church and to protest against the expulsion of the community from the Church and to call a second Synod for this purpose.

The first Synod was reported in the public press in an inaccurate and dismissive manner.

Recommended reading: Friedrich Lange, "Geschichte des Tempels", 1899, T-008; Paul Sauer, "Uns rief das Heilige Land", 1985, T-018 [The Holy Land called]; "Templer-Handbuch", 1992, T-051 [Templer handbook]

PART III

1861 – 1868

Hoffmann and Hardegg go their own way

24. The petition to King Wilhelm

The relationship between the representatives of the Church and the Friends of Jerusalem rapidly deteriorated. Many Pastors of the State Church took a stand against Hoffmann and his like-minded friends in open letters and newspaper articles. Hoffmann had long been condemned by the Church leaders in the Protestant Consistory. The reports about him in the government's files multiplied. One of these reports by the then Minister for Education and the Arts, von Rümelin, dated 18 April 1860 states:

> "Christoph Hoffmann, 44, Protestant theologian and head of a religious sect for 7-8 years is a man of unusual gifts and knowledge, of honourable conduct and character but at the same time a stubborn and reckless fanatic of great presumption. Based on some prophecies from the Old Testament he designates the gathering of a 'People of God' and the establishment of the Temple in Jerusalem as the aim of mankind and the method for rising above the totally depraved and hopeless condition of the political, social and religious circumstances of the present time. The Consistory has stripped him of the faculty to perform religious functions as a Protestant Pastor because of his intense incitement. Since he refused to comply, the Consistory treated his refusal as a declaration of resignation from the Protestant State Church. This was accepted by Hoffmann and his followers who now have to be considered adherents of a sect. The safest method to render this sect harmless is in my opinion to leave them alone, lest they become martyrs. However, judging by their principles and the way they apply them, I do not consider this sect to be harmless at all, but highly radical in its tendencies."
>
> *From: "Große Hoffnungen - kleine Schritte im 19. Jh.", p. 272 f, P-169.*

In spite of the resistance in Church circles, the Friends of Jerusalem did not want to give up new initiatives in matters of reform. The King, being the top representative of the State Church, 'would surely have suitable ways and means at his disposal to enforce reforms'. Hence this request found expression in the petition to Wilhelm I: "Would the King most graciously command measures for the improvement of conditions in society, particularly in the Church and in the schools, in accordance with the understanding of the spiritual Temple."

The chronicles do not indicate how the suggestions for reform had actually been envisaged. Regarding schools, the wording of the petition merely reveals that the system was inadequate, and that in spite of the existing educational institutions "the young people were infected with vices to a frightening degree", and that "a truly Christian education system" was "a screaming necessity".

With respect to people's social lives it was postulated that "the means for alleviating this severe social disease lay in applying the truth of the Gospels, and the means for improving the circumstances of nations lay in heeding the prophecy about the destiny of Jerusalem".

A letter to the Mennonite community of Gnadenfeld in southern Russia illustrates more clearly how the Friends of Jerusalem wished their educational reforms to be understood:

> "We would like you to consider whether, in carrying out your educational work, you wish to rely on the crutches of mere knowledge, after the German pattern, or whether you will decide to base your education on the Bible, namely the application of the Law and the Gospels. We point out that, according to Scripture, the issue for man from the cradle onwards is to overcome sin, death and hell, as Christ did, and that there are more important things in life than these visible results of learning that you get to hear in examinations."

At a *second Temple Synod* on 19 April 1861 in Stuttgart, the petition was passed, and signed by "two hundred men". A delegation consisting of Hoffmann, Hardegg, Paulus and Johann Georg Frank of Linsenhofen, presented it at an audience with the King at which, ironically, Councillor von Rümelin was also present, the same who had composed the critical note about Hoffmann. The King promised to have the matter investigated, with the provision that he also would have to grant the opponents of the Templers an equal hearing.

25. The foundation of *der Deutsche Tempel,* the *German Temple*

After weeks had passed without a reply to the petition, the Friends of Jerusalem lost their patience. In June **1861**, the committee of Kirschenhardthof invited forty-two men from Württemberg and the adjoining regions of Baden and Bavaria to Hardthof for a meeting to prepare the *third Synod.*

EIGHTH STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT ON THE PATH TO THE TEMPLE

The Friends of Jerusalem resign from the Protestant Church and found their own religious community

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Hoffmann's biography reads as follows:

> "I do not recall who at this meeting first uttered the phrases 'resign from the Church' and 'exit Babylon', but all those present were gripped by the unanimous conviction that this was the decisive step they had been looking for. A short declaration of resignation from the existing Churches was drawn up, justifying its reasons by reference to Revelations 18. Every single person present signed the declaration and it was decided to publish it in the *Warte*. Since this also incorporated the decision to unite for the work of building the Temple, the newly created society was given the name 'Deutscher Tempel'. A Bishop and a council of twelve Elders were appointed."

> "*In view of the general disorientation of mankind caused by the fact that none of the existing Churches aspires to making man into a Temple of God and establish the sanctum in Jerusalem for all nations we, the undersigned, declare to dissociate ourselves from Babylon, that is to say from the existing Churches and sects and unite to establish the German Temple to carry out the Law, the Gospel and the Prophecy*".
>
> *The founding declaration of June 18/19, 1861 (with sixty-four signatures)*

Christoph Hoffmann writes in *Mein Weg nach Jerusalem* how his father came to him again in a dream and asked to be allowed to add his signature to the founding document. This shows how in spite of his firm decision Hoffmann obviously kept asking himself whether he really was on the right path, the path willed by God.

Since Hoffmann writes that he could not recall who had suggested resigning from the Church, he certainly was not the one who did. It could not possibly have been in his interest for the remaining Friends of Jerusalem to leave the Church, because he thereby would have lost every chance of exerting influence on the Church and destroy the bridges to the very institution he wanted to reform.

It seems, however, that he did not protest against resignation but signed the founding declaration along with the others. Was it because he realised that in spite of his persistent striving, he had not achieved a change of conditions and that he and his friends now had no choice but to pursue their goal with a church of their own?

Neither his biography nor the annals indicate that the Friends of Jerusalem had any doubts about the righteousness of their goals. We have to assume that they believed they were able to gather the 'People of God' even *without* the blessing of the Church.

"I leave the State Church because:

1 I no longer find the necessary nourishment for my spiritual needs in the Church.

2 I would like to enter the Kingdom of God, but the Church says *it* cannot do it and has therefore given up its calling to establish God's Kingdom on Earth;

3 In the Church, the goals set mankind, as established in the prophecy, are not only not taught but are actively opposed, as for instance the establishment of the Kingdom of God on Earth in the spirit of the prophets. The latter, dear

Sir, you have taught, yes, but you have not shown me a way to get there. Not until I joined the *German Temple* did I learn to recognise the path. That is why I am utterly resolved to walk this path shown to us by God – together, in fact, with the members of the German Temple whom the Church persecutes unjustly."

Declaration by a Templer woman to the Protestant Prelate Kapff.

Despite all the cited reasons, the decision to secede from the Church must be called extremely courageous. Such defection to a "sect" was like a stigma one carried forever. Church and daily life were so intertwined that those who wilfully broke this bond were ostracised, despised and treated with hostility by their fellow citizens.

The event of Kirschenhardthof was soon known all over the country and the newly formed German Temple was strongly opposed by the Church as expected. Not only did many local clergymen carry on in their sermons about the 'nonsense' of the Templer belief in the prophecies, they also took measures about which we can only shake our heads today, like forbidding bell ringing, or prayers at the grave, or refusing to bury apostates at all. At times the populace resorted to physical violence against members and Elders of the Temple Society. Fanatical hostility occurred in many places.

Recommended reading: Friedrich Lange, "Geschichte des Tempels", p. 261, 276f.

Five aims of the community were cited in a proclamation published in the *Warte*:

1. Something should be done to prevent family breakdown
2. Material means should be properly used; the rich should help their poorer brothers to a basis of sustenance.
3. The German Nation should be made aware of the establishment of the Temple in Jerusalem and its work in Palestine.
4. Education of German youth should be one of the most important concerns so that young men and women will really become temples of God.
5. A centralised authority for the pursuit of the stated aims should be sought in Germany.

26. Further developments after the foundation of the Temple Society

A *petition* to the Württemberg Chamber of Representatives was drawn up in September **1861** in which the following demands were raised:

1. State Churches should be abolished
2. It should be left to the members of all denominations to formulate their own constitution and organise their own fundraising.
3. All Christian denominations and sects should have equal status before the State.

The *third Synod* of the Temple Society took place on Kirschenhardthof at the end of September. About two hundred men gathered, of whom the greater part had already become Templers. They decided to adhere to the idea of building the Temple in Jerusalem, but agreed to first pursue further consolidation in Germany before colonisation projects were tackled.

Two *resolutions* were adopted at the *fourth Synod* in **1862.** One said the Temple Society was the only denomination that set the right goals for mankind; the other rejected vaccination as "an inadequate means for producing a better state of health".

In the sixties the Temple Society was actually run by the committee chairman, Georg David Hardegg. In matters of community management the "Bishop" of the Templers, Christoph Hoffmann, deferred to Hardegg, but on one issue they fell out with each other. Hardegg was inclined to overemphasise the spiritual gifts and powers of humans and believed they ought to be developed and fostered in the Temple Society. For Hardegg, gifts and powers included *healing by prayer*. Hoffmann did not agree that miracle healing be declared a prerequisite for service in the Temple Society. A vehement discussion developed, especially because a Templer, Martin Blaich, was actually engaged in this practice at Kirschenhardthof. After several unpleasant altercations, during which Hardegg's authoritarian style of leadership and his intolerance of diverging opinions played a large part, Hoffmann's view finally prevailed.



Christoph Paulus (1811-1893)

The system of education on Hardthof which, it was hoped, would be emulated by the public, was evidently of a high standard. Even Pastor Jäck of Erbstetten, who otherwise did not think much of the aims of the Templers, had high praise indeed for their school, "whereas, in intellectual and technical respects, the same compares favourably with many others, and appeals because of its good discipline and order". Christoph Paulus was one of the headmasters in the community.

27. Emigration to Palestine begins

Made insecure by the war between Prussia and Austria in 1866, into which they did not wish to be dragged, several of the younger Templers decided to go ahead with the planned emigration. Some of them left for Russia in the summer of **1867**, others prepared for settlement in Palestine on their own initiative. Hoffmann tried to hold back these impatient ones. He thought the Temple Society in Germany was not yet sufficiently consolidated.

Hardegg, however, was determined to act. He had heard of *Henri Dunant's* plans to open up Palestine for modern agriculture, industry and commerce and to bring it under Christian sovereignty in a peaceful way. This was music to his ears. He went to see Dunant in Paris and they agreed on a draft contract for the acquisition of land for settlement in Palestine.

The committee and the Elders of the Temple Society approved the contract in a meeting held on 2 October **1867** but the hopeful expectations proved to be false. Dunant, the once rich banker, had lost his entire fortune in a risky development project. His political influence declined, and he could no longer honour his promises to Hardegg.

For all his impatience, Hardegg was well aware that no settlement project had any chance of success without a plan and a responsible approach. An important step in this direction was the setting up of a *settlement fund* which accepted interest-bearing deposits.

The setback with the failed Dunant plan, although painful, could not stop the thrust of those willing to emigrate. The Elders' council met soon after and decided, for the time being, to establish a *Temple outpost*, namely in Nazareth, with Christoph Hoffmann as leader. Hardegg also joined the first travel contingent when many Elders urged him to do so. Christoph Paulus was to take over the leadership of the Temple Society in Germany.

NINTH STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT ON THE PATH TO THE TEMPLE

The leaders of the Temple Society move to Jerusalem

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With this step, reports the *Warte*, the Templer leaders had reached the point of no return which occurs in the lives of all reformers.

On 26 July **1868**, a *farewell meeting* for the travellers took place on Kirschenhardthof. It had to be held in the open air because, reportedly, 1200-1500 members and friends attended. Christoph Paulus said in his farewell speech:

> "The number of members of the Temple Society who have united to establish the Temple in Jerusalem bears no relationship to the magnitude and difficulty of this task. This is, however, no reason to be discouraged, for it has always been God's pleasure to get big things done by small numbers."



Süddeutsche Warte,

religiöses und politisches Wochenblatt

für das deutsche Volk.

Nro. 43. Donnerstag den 22. Oktober 1868.

Bericht*) über unsere Schritte in Constantinopel.

Da wir Raths geworden sind mit dem nächsten österreichischen Dampfschiff den 8. Oktober von hier nach Beirut abzureisen, so ist es Zeit einen Bericht über unsre Thätigkeit hier und über den Stand der Unterhandlungen mit der hohen Pforte zur Veröffentlichung in der Süddeutschen Warte abzusenden.

Wir sind am 1. September wohlbehalten hier angekommen, haben bei der Gesandtschaft des Norddeutschen Bun-

1) Ihrer Gesellschaft eine Landstrecke von 3 Quadratmeilen (beym carrées) sei es an einem Stück oder in benachbarten Parcellen auf einem Theil des Berges Carmel zur Wahl und zum Anbau vorläufig in Pacht abgegeben würde. Da das Land sogleich in Anbau genommen und verschiedene Gebäulichkeiten daselbst errichtet werden müssten, so möge die Hohe Pforte jetzt schon den Preis bestimmen, welchen die Gesellschaft nach Ablauf von 5 oder 7 Jahren zu bezahlen haben würde, um alsdann auf Zeit und Fell in deren eigenen,

First travel report in the 'Süddeutsche Warte'.

The leaders of the Temple Society and their families (thirteen persons in all) boarded the train in Waiblingen on 6 August 1868.

After an extended stay in Constantinople, where they sought agreement with the Turkish authorities in respect to the acquisition of land in Palestine, they reached *Haifa* on 30 October 1868. The small port city on the beautiful bay offered such favourable conditions for a settlement that the plan for the Templer outpost in Nazareth was dropped.

> "They had preached the idea for fifteen years, but began making practical decisions only four months before departure, and then did not carry them out. The Templer leadership's claims that the settling had been meticulously planned are thus unfounded. Accusations that the leaders had acted irresponsibly towards their members are equally unjustified. On the contrary, it was precisely their sense of responsibility which allowed Hoffmann and Hardegg to risk changing their plans at the last minute and be the first to travel to Palestine before anybody else. They took on the main dangers themselves, hoping to better be able to plan their future projects and control the speed of the desired development with knowledge of local conditions obtained on the spot. It was the wisdom displayed by Hoffmann and Hardegg in the execution of their difficult task which avoided the failure many had predicted."

"*Alex Carmel in: "Die Siedlungen der württembergischen Templer in Palästina 1868-1914", Kohlhammer-Verlag, 3. Aufl. 2000, TGD no T-300.*



The community house in Haifa, built in 1869, is the first building in the new settlement and the second community house of the Templers.

Appendix

Memorandum on the work of the Temple in Palestine

Written in the spring of 1875 by Christoph Hoffmann and Christoph Paulus in: "Occident and Orient", Jaffa 1875, second edition 1926; TGD no. T-006.

Awakened by the spiritual upheaval which the year 1848 had brought to a large part of Europe and to Germany in particular, several men in Württemberg, including the authors of this memorandum, were motivated to search for lasting foundations for human society.

We had recognised that the traditional custodians of European society, the Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches, were no longer in a position to protect the masses from the proliferation of greed and sensual lust which undermine the continued existence of families and nations.

We saw that, if these hostile forces were not checked, even the noblest endeavours for freedom and education would not come to fruition. We knew from personal experience that Christianity at its source, namely the Holy Scriptures, offered the remedy for this disease.

We therefore searched the Holy Scriptures for the best remedy against the corruption of humanity and found that this remedy lies in the creation of a society built entirely on the ideas of the Holy Scriptures. The model in the outer way of life of this society is found in how the People of Israel functioned at their peak, while the model in respect of spiritual life is found in the First Christian Communities.

We directed our vision to Jerusalem and Palestine because the Holy Scriptures designate the city of Jerusalem and its surrounding land as the place on Earth where this strictly biblical way of life had to begin.

In 1868 we saw ourselves in a position to begin the project in Palestine, albeit to a very modest extent, after having worked at the formation of a Society for this purpose for twenty years during which it had grown, under the name "Society of the Temple", to five thousand souls in Germany, America and Russia.

According to its purpose, the first priority of the Temple Society's work in Palestine had to be the formation of communities which sought to realise the biblical way of life. The purpose of our colonisation is thus neither political nor national. We follow the maxim of St Paul, who states in Romans 13:1: "Each be subject to the sovereignty that has power over him" both in the colonists' relationships with their home countries and also with the Ottoman government which rules the Holy Land.

Neither do we pursue our colonisation in the interest of any of the Church systems into which the West is divided. As Christians and Protestants we adhere strongly to the truth of the Holy Scriptures without being sworn to any fixed creed and we see it as the challenge of the times, considering the obviously deficient and moribund condition of the Papal system, to put into practice the biblical way in all areas of life and thereby put an end to all confessional schisms.

Since the Bible does not set limits to humanity's spiritual and physical development and even asks us to strive for the highest gifts of the spirit, we seek to promote the spiritual and secular education of our members with the help of every means that science has to offer.

Concerning relations with the indigenous population, our purpose must not be to exploit them for our own advantage, but to lead them by being examples of honesty, justice, order and diligence and to help alleviating their ignorance by imparting European culture, thus contributing to the elevation of their spiritual and moral standards and material wellbeing.

Thereby we hope, without planning to gain converts in the short term, to provide access for Arabs, Christians, Muslims and Jews to true Christianity which expresses itself in actions, and also to bring the country itself closer to conditions worthy of its great destiny.