



*Network for Revival Prepare Issue 36 - March 2022*

## **What is God saying to us through the Ukrainian crisis?**

I believe that God is calling out to us loudly: “See what is going on. Recognise its significance. See how the world needs revival.” Whatever happens in Ukraine and however much longer the crisis lasts, God is calling us to wake up.

We know from history that when God moves in Revival, it doesn't just affect individuals and the church. It has a profound effect on society. Revivals in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries led to action in the anti-slavery movement, education reform, prison reform, temperance (in an often alcohol-soaked society), and women's rights movement. Later revival led to extensive action against racism. Some historians believe that Revival prevented revolution in Britain.

I believe God is calling us to pray for Revival on various levels: on the individual level – people turning to God; on the church level – churches turning to prayer and true discipleship - but also on the level of the transformation of society. Just imagine what would happen if Revival swept powerfully through Russia and changed public opinion in a godly direction.

We urgently need to pray for the world situation, which is very serious and for all those people who are suffering. But the focus of our prayers needs to be on Revival transforming society.

Jesus calls us to watch - to look for and note the signs of the End. If we don't, we are not obeying him. Yes, signs have happened over the centuries but we are in a much more serious and significant situation now – the world is at a turning point. I like to think of the signs as like those on a motorway. They are repeated time and again, but we are getting nearer to the destination all the time.

We live in a global village:

- with very advanced communication, including of the gospel.
- where false information – fake news, unbalanced conspiracy theories (false prophecy) - can be spread like never before.
- where pestilence can spread around it like wildfire, as we are still experiencing.
- with incredibly powerful weapons, which could destroy it.
- with greater persecution of Christians than ever.
- where factors such as global warming will cause enormous suffering and hunger.
- where Israel has been restored after 2000 years.

All these are late Signs of the End - of the imminence of the Return of Christ. We don't know the timing but he is coming. (I focus on the Sign of War in this letter but hope to look at other Signs in future editions). Obviously, we don't just sit and watch the Signs of the End. We pray and, where possible, take action about those suffering as a result of them happening.

Since the fall of the USSR in 1991 we have been lulled into a false sense of security, thinking that the dangers (including nuclear dangers) of the Cold War have gone. But the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the serious threats of Putin have dramatically woken us up. We are not free of the possibility of power-seeking world leaders starting terrible wars and threatening to use nuclear weapons. There can be others after Putin. China is hugely powerful. Putin and Xi Jinping have recognised the waning influence (and decadence) of the Western nations, the gridlock which the very divided US political system can often produce, and they are aiming to replace them in dominating the world. Relaxed confidence in a stable, secure, free and democratic order has gone. The Ukraine invasion is a wake-up call – not just to Western politicians but to ourselves as we pray for Revival.

Ex-RAF chief, Air Marshall Edward Stringer recently warned that nuclear war is “no longer unthinkable” and said it is “terrifying” to think could only be a “few steps” away. Other experts have said there are now more armed conflicts brewing in more places around the world than at any time since the Second World War.

We must also remember the important aspect of divine judgment on individuals, groups and countries who dishonour, offend and ignore the Lord. Britain is one such country which will experience judgment because it has largely turned away from God, away from its Christian heritage. There are aspects of judgment in the present world situation. But we know that one of the most important effects of Revival is to bring people to repentance. How wonderful it would be to see, not only individuals and churches, but the British nation come to repentance on a wide scale.

So, God is calling us through the Ukrainian crisis to pray earnestly for him to come in Revival to transform society, bringing repentance and faith.

## **How should we react to the Ukrainian crisis and other Signs of the End?**

We can thank God for the good effects of the crisis e.g. the bringing together of many nations, especially western nations in opposition to the evils being perpetrated and the widespread kind hospitality being offered to Ukrainian refugees in numerous countries. We also hear that large numbers of Ukrainians are turning to God in prayer.

I know that there is a great deal of suffering and a widespread fear of worse to come, including nuclear threats, which could affect the whole world. I include, alongside the urgent need to pray for Revival, the following suggestions:

1. Remember the Lord is sovereign, infinite and loving.
2. Pray for those suffering
3. Thank God for and pray for those helping the suffering.
4. Pray for repentance by those causing suffering.
5. Pray for God to work out his loving purpose through the event.

### **6. PRAY FOR REVIVAL**

7. Remember Jesus told us to watch.
8. Stand back and see the bigger picture. (Ask what God is saying in each case).
9. Pray "Come, Lord Jesus."

God bless you,

Tony

In Network for Revival God has called us to “make ready a people prepared for the Lord.” This includes:

- Encouraging people to seek holiness and true biblical discipleship.
- Encouraging people to major on prayer for Revival.
- Encouraging churches to be radically biblical in the power of the Spirit (see [Church Development](#) for information and resources).
- Encouraging people to “Watch!” for the return of Jesus (Mk 13:32-37 – see [Eschatology](#)).