

CALL OF THE WATCHMEN

April 2022

Messengers of a new era

"I am not calling you to war. I am calling you into my peace", is what I suddenly hear Jesus is saying clearly within me. And then: "It's spring time, Alexander! The season of singing has come. I'm doing something new." (Song of Songs 2:10-13). At the same time, I sense how Jesus is longing for a closer bond with his bride, his church, and I feel within me his love for all people more strongly than I have ever experienced it before. With such a desire, both strength and vulnerability are alive and active in equal measure. But it is in this desire that we find the meaning of life!

It is the song of the bridegroom for his bride, for a bonding and union with her, which can be heard ever more clearly. He knows that pride and self-centredness prevent us from becoming completely dependent on him. But his love courts us and little by little takes away whatever stands in the way for us to be closely bound to him. At the same time, a power emanates from this love, which transforms us and makes everything new, and which will have such an influence in our world once again, that we will only be amazed!

For months I have wondered how this affects how we pray. Is it perhaps time that we took off our old war clothes? Because something has changed. This much I understand. It is changed hearts that turn this world upside down. Our prayers have to flow out of the deep awareness of our bonding and our oneness with Jesus. We need time with him so he can share his secrets with us. Here lies the secret of our identity, our strength and effectiveness: in our being and our bonding with him. Our "warfare" is not primarily done outside of us. I would suggest that it is the heart inside of us, which trusts in him completely, that can shake the kingdoms of this world. We rule from a place of rest and in full unity of purpose with Jesus.

It is time to share the knowledge of God with the nations and to sing the song of a new era! It is not the devil who heralds the changing of times and seasons, even though he is always doing everything to sow anger, hatred and discord among us. But our God always remains the one who is active in writing history. Let us not have the perspective that evil will eventually win out and a vision of global destruction, but rather believe in the transformative power of the cross – in the redemption and restoration of all things, in the power of atonement, in the peacemakers who will herald in a new age, and in the bride, the church, rising, shining and praying from a deep place of intimacy with Jesus.

-AS-

Pray for the healing of the nations

God loves the nations and we want to pray for their healing and destiny. We want to be politically impartial and release reconciliation and forgiveness in prayer as messengers of a new era and as peacemakers. It is the cross of Jesus under which we all stand together. Before we pray for the Ukraine and Russia, let us open our hearts to God. How is all this still influenced by the Cold War era? Where do we still find pride and a sense of moral superiority over the East in us? Jesus wants to heal that. Then let us hear and pray prophetically for the Ukraine and for Russia and so pronounce blessings and healing on the two nations. We want to give them something to eat from "the leaves of the tree of life" and speak out God's words of encouragement to them (Revelation 22:2):

- **Ukraine**, you shall experience God's comfort and help. May your sons hasten back! The sun of righteousness shall rise upon you with healing in its wings ... etc. (Matthew 5:4; Isaiah 49:17; Malachi 4:2)
- **Russia**, peacemakers shall come to you. Blessed are the peacemakers. Blessed are the merciful. Love should overcome evil ... etc. (Isaiah 52:7; Matthew 5:7+9; Romans 12:21)

But we can also pray that what is in the dark will come to light and that corruption will be revealed. That the Jewish people in both countries will be called "home" to Israel and that spiritual revival is coming. Jesus wants to share his heart with us for the Ukraine and Russia. Perhaps God will literally give you a song which you begin to sing over the nations during your prayer time. Lord, release the "Sound of Heaven"!

-AS-

Prayer for God's counsel and guidance

We are currently experiencing how the national and international security under which we have lived in the past few decades is beginning to falter with Russia's invasion of the Ukraine. The West is responding to a great extent in a united manner. The war in the Ukraine now poses far-reaching questions with regard to **political**, **diplomatic** (international relationships, understanding of national interests), **economic** (dilemmas, sanctions, embargo – yes/no/partial) and **military** (weapons deliveries to the Ukraine, realignment of military resources in Europe) issues. How can the war be ended as quickly as possible? And what is the role of Germany in service and leadership? What does the future hold in terms of political and economic ties between West and East? And who has God called from all the nations to be his "spokesperson" at this time and to bring representatives from the Ukraine and Russia together to negotiate and create understanding?

We want to ask God for his counsel (Isaiah 46:10; Psalm 33:11). How can we create a vision for the future together with him? Let us take care that our prayers are not influenced by Cold War perceptions and experiences. We don't want to look into a new era through "old glasses". Nor do we want to get caught up in ideological arguments of "good and evil," but rather ask for a sharpening of our spiritual eyes to see, understand and to set free the plans of heaven for this time. We can always bring our questions before God and ask him for wisdom. Let us be still for a few minutes, listen, and wait expectantly before God for the "counsel of heaven", pen and paper in hand. Write down your impressions, share them with each other and then pray together.

-AS-

A new order for peace and security

The war goes on despite appeals, negotiations, threats, and economic sanctions. Germany is under pressure to cut off the supply of gas from Russia. In doing so, we would be mostly penalising ourselves. With the phasing out of coal and nuclear power, Germany is dependent on Russian gas for its basic supply of energy, to the extent that, even in the medium term, the supply can only be partially covered by other means; especially

as alternative suppliers like Qatar do not appear to be any more reliable than Putin. So far, sanctions have not persuaded Putin to give in, but have only fuelled the confrontation. An embargo on Russian gas supplies would sever all of Russia's economic ties with Europe and lower the threshold for the escalation of the war by Russia towards the West. Deliveries of arms to the Ukraine also harbour this danger.

Russia sees strength in military terms, the West in economic and political terms. With the dependence of our economy on Russian raw materials and the failure of Russia's adherence to treaties under international law and in diplomacy, the West has been robbed of its strengths. The image of man and the world under humanism, the belief that man alone can continually improve and optimise their lives and their world, has been shattered by this war.

Prayer:

- **We bow down before God and confess our sin of self-righteousness, of seeking personal comfort, for blindness and for greed. (Psalm 51)**
- **Help can only come from God, both for the Ukraine as well as for us and for Russia. (Psalm 115)**
- **We commend our nations to the Lord such that His counsel opens new ground for us be blessed. (Psalm 2)**
- **We ask for peacemakers like Esther who will turn the tide of this war. (Luke 14:31f; Esther 8:5,6)**
- **We call Russia to come back to the family of nations in Europe. (Psalm 133)**
- **Where our human order for peace and security has been shattered in our nations, we pray for His kingdom of peace to come in power. (John 14:27)** -KH-

A clear view

I do not like driving at night. It is particularly unpleasant for me when fog, rain or snow cloud my view. It also becomes dangerous very quickly.

In these times it is not easy to maintain an unclouded view of social and political events. Maybe it is even impossible. The last two years have shown us how quickly borders can be erected, fronts are hardened and opinions clash. A "war on facts" has broken out and journalism has long since become a minefield, as "fact-checkers" seek to uncover the truth, and the expression: "fake news" has entered our everyday vocabulary.

With regard to the Ukraine crisis, many questions are asked time and time again: Can it be clearly stated what/who is good or bad? How do defence, economic and energy policies work in a globalised world? What is the value of international alliances? What does genuine help actually look like?

These questions have a very specific influence on intercession - and the question may be asked: How can we pray? A repeated prayer concern in the New Testament is the request for knowledge and wisdom. Here we can have full confidence: Whoever always wants to get to know Christ better, also gets a clear view of the world that He has created. That is why we pray to know Christ more and more and to be equipped with the Spirit of wisdom and revelation (Ephesians 1:17). We are so thankful that we may ask God for wisdom whenever we know that we lack it (James 1:5). He wants to give us a clear view.

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Protection for Ukrainian women and children

90 percent of the more than three million people who have had to flee the Ukraine since the beginning of the war are women and children. However, this does not automatically mean that the refugees are safe. Local aid organisations report that people smugglers are taking advantage of the chaotic situation at train stations and assembly points to specifically make contact with young women and children. The police and human rights organisations warn against human traffickers who take advantage of the plight of the refugees in order to sell them into prostitution in Germany and Europe. The market demand for Ukrainian women has already increased in freelance networks of such people. European governments are now stepping up their anti-human-trafficking programs, but much research and education remains to be done. In addition, in the current situation, we need successful cooperation between those offering help with those conducting the registration and verification processes, as well as access to medical and psychological care for the refugees. The willingness to help is great and we need to pray that all those seeking protection in our country experience the mercy and love of God!

Prayer:

- **Thanks for the great willingness of so many people (also within the body of Christ) to help the refugees. (1 Thessalonians 3:9)**
- **For the appropriate care for those seeking protection from abuse and human trafficking, especially unaccompanied children. (1 Samuel 17:34-35)**
- **For future orientated concepts and successful cooperation between the police, doctors, aid organisations, churches and politics. (Proverbs 11:14)**

-AS-

Prepared for the future: the church in times of crisis

The Holy Spirit clearly unites His church throughout the world. Because of the war conditions in the Ukraine, there is now the opportunity for the body of Christ in the West to recognise that the body in the East, often more firmly grounded and tested in their faith, is still there. And we now have the possibility to support our Ukrainian brothers and sisters, in a way that is unprecedented for us, by sending relief supplies, taking in refugees and through our prayers. Hundreds of thousands of refugees from the Ukraine will most likely come to Germany in the coming months. Let us pray that we are prepared for this and play our part.

Prayer:

- **Thanksgiving that the Holy Spirit is drawing together the body of Christ in East and West. (Colossians 4:2)**
- **For foresight and the necessary planning and preparations within the church for the coming challenges in such times of crisis. (Genesis 41:39-41)**

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*United in prayer with you all,
Alexander Schlueter and Team*