



MARANATHA UPDATE

March 2019

What are we perceiving ?

“If my people, who are called by my Name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land” (2 Chronicles 7.14)

There has been much prayer based on this verse of scripture over the past two decades and we have seen a huge increase in the prayer of the Church throughout Britain. During the same period there has been an increasing domination of secular humanist ideology and this has been manifest in a systematic de-Christianisation of our society.

We are now faced with utter confusion, acrimonious division and serious dysfunction at the very heart of our Government and nation; but before we point fingers at politicians and others, we must consider carefully who is responsible for the state of our nation. Scripture makes clear that the prosperity or collapse of a nation is directly determined by the spiritual orientation of its people – not the unbelieving citizens, but the people called by God's name.

So is God hearing the prayers of His people?

YES! and we are being truly humbled – not only by the inability of politicians to find the way through the perplexing checkmate of Brexit negotiations, but also by the inadequacies of our health and social services, our police forces, our schools, our local authorities and all those we expect to solve the problems in our nation. Having led the world in years gone by, we are now rendered helpless in the face of our inability to explain and address the ever-increasing distress and disorder generated by spiralling levels of mental ill health, especially in the young, uncontrollable anti-social and criminal activity, especially knife crime, worrying undercurrents of racial animosity and dangerous polarisation of political activism; and despite the claims of the Treasury we have a precariously balanced economy, which is vulnerable to collapse in the face of an unexpected disaster.

Are we really seeing an answer to our plea for God's mercy?

YES! *“Those whom I [dearly and tenderly] love, I rebuke and discipline [showing them their faults and instructing them]; so be enthusiastic and repent [change your inner self – your old way of thinking, your sinful behaviour – seek God's will]” (Rev. 3.19 AMP).* Like the Church at Laodicea, we as a nation are spiritually and morally bankrupt and blind, and our nakedness is being exposed to the world, which watches in bewilderment.

Brothers and Sisters in Christ, this is not a time for us, as followers of Jesus, to let our ‘hands hang limp’ in despondency or to ‘shrink back’ in defeat. This is a time for us to unite more determinedly, as the Body of Christ, and to pray more fervently that the Lord, in His kindness, will move us to a place of deeper repentance for our personal sin, the sin of the Church and the sin of the nation, of which we are a part. We do this in the real and confident hope that the God who calls us and this nation out of darkness will deliver and heal us to see His glorious light once again.

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Maranatha Community What Now?

We believe there is a renewed call emerging for our Community but its definition is not yet clear.

As we gathered and enjoyed united worship, prayer and fellowship on 2nd March in Leicester, our prayer was that we be ready for whatever the Lord intends for the Community. Our united declaration, in anticipation and preparation, is **'YES LORD!'**. We continue to listen, watch and pray attentively.

As we wait, we strongly encourage all members of the Maranatha Community to continue to be 'connectors', 'catalysts' and 'agents of integration'; praying and working for unity, renewal and healing in the places we live, work and worship.

A Prayer for this time

If we are to recognise and engage with the 'new thing' God is doing, we ourselves must be made new. **'Come Holy Spirit, touch our eyes, ears, hearts and minds. Release us from our old ways of being and re-form us to see, hear, love and discern as your risen Body in the world; and, as we are renewed, may we be open channels for a fresh release of your living water to those around us.'**

The State of Israel

The report of the Maranatha Spearhead Group considering 'The State of Israel' was published last year. It has been well received by those with an interest in this subject and it was very exciting to hear that Christians from local churches in Liverpool, with opposing opinions on Israel and the Palestinians, are using this report as a basis for shared Bible study. This can be downloaded FREE from the 'Read' page of the Maranatha website, or ordered from the office for £5.50 + p&p.

Call to Prayer

Leaders of prayer networks and Houses of Prayer throughout the UK have been gathering to listen to God together for several years. We have experienced God's Spirit aligning our hearts and minds with His and, during a gathering at the beginning of this year, there was agreement that a national call to prayer should be circulated. **Please share this call to pray for our nation as widely as possible.** Many will use this pattern for prayer at 12 noon daily.

In unity with Christians of all traditions, under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, we pray the Lord's prayer together with Psalm 23 over the UK. We also proclaim "Order! Order!" into the spiritual confusion over our Parliament and nation, if possible whilst ringing a bell. In unity we pray that Jesus is exalted as the Lamb of God over the nations.

There are several individuals, groups and ministries who have been prompted to proclaim the sovereignty of God accompanied by a sound - a trumpet or musical note - at intervals across the nation. **We pray the Holy Spirit will bring into resonance and harmony all the voices raised to the Lord as a crescendo, cutting through the babble of the world, making way for the voice of the Lord to be heard.**

British Values

Last year 'The Values Foundation' was formed by a group of individuals concerned about the influences now dominating our educational system. Its leadership includes Jews and Christians uniting to reassert the Judaeo-Christian foundations of our civilisation. We are excited that their key document is, 'Values - The characteristics of our British national identity', the statement drawn up by this Community in 2014. Please pray for this initiative.

Further information:
<https://values.foundation/>

Wake Up!

It is time to throw off complacency and recognise that the battle for the soul of our nation is intensifying. The exciting glimpses of God at work in wonderful ways must not blind us to the reality that we are living in an environment of escalating spiritual battle. What is our response? **"Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed."** (1 Peter 1.13).

Be Still!

As our minds are bombarded with copious information, minute-by-minute, via multiple means of communication, and we are saturated in the hostile unbelief of worldly opinion, more than ever it is essential to make time and space to **"Be still and know that I am God"** (Ps. 46.10).

One of our members has been inspired to produce helpful guidance on the discipline of silent prayer. His book 'Feather and Fire - Silent Prayer in the Secret Place' is available direct from www.featherandfire.net or the Maranatha bookshop.

Stand Firm!

Clothed in the armour of God, we are urged to stand firm. The Lord has positioned His people. Now, we must encourage each other to stand firm in faith, hope and love. As those around us experience confusion, fear and anxiety in the face of uncertainty and instability in our national structures, we must be confident that the Lord is working His purposes out and we can trust Him, even when we don't understand what is happening. **"Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful."** (Heb. 10.23).

UPRising Europe

8th-11th July 2019

Ashburnham Place

United Prayer Rising, a global prayer movement, united across generations, is holding a timely gathering in Battle, UK, this summer. Come and join in prayer and worship with Christians from 51 European nations. Info. www.uprisingeurope.org