

November, 1990

Dear friends,

It was Friday, 2 a.m. I awoke with what had become a familiar pain in my upper abdomen, but this time it went beyond terrible to horrible, taking my breath away...and I found myself in the emergency ward at Mercy hospital surrounded by nurses, family, and friends...it was my gall bladder.

The pain subsided, I went home, and later that day visited my "surgeon to be", Dr. Baker... The big question was, "do I still leave for Germany the next day?" With pain pills in hand, and doctor's release to go (but just eat clear liquids!), I met my plane the following day and arrived in time for the beginning of the Intercessors International Conference -- a week long meeting to pray for the world.

How do I describe this gathering of 110 intercessors from 40 nations? About 2/3 men, 1/3 women, they weren't the most well known leaders in the world, but it became clear through the week that they were well known to God! The leading men had been pioneers in international spiritual warfare for 20 years and more. Some had battled long for the downfall of communism, and were not surprised when the Berlin wall came down, nor at the great exodus of Jews now arriving in Israel at the rate of 1800 per day!

And now they are believing for the fall of Islam! Some had taken an intercessory team into Iraq earlier this year to tear down spiritual strongholds at ancient Babylon, which Saddam Hussein is reconstructing. (The Iraqi government thought they were archeologists, so they let them in!) Did you know that Hussein has had himself crowned as the new Nebuchadnezzar? At the site of ancient Babylon he has constructed huge images of himself shaking hands with the Nebuchadnezzar of Daniel's day.

Intercession for the Persian gulf crisis was a major focus at this conference. It was a shaking experience to hear the report from Israel's perspective from a Jewish believer who leads Intercessors for Israel...Hussein's threat to gas and incinerate Israel...the USA's denunciation of Israel in October over the temple mount incident...Israel no longer trusting the USA, knowing they are alone, and perhaps to be "sold out" in the crisis... 11-26-90

There was a great grief in the conference concerning the USA...a sense of impending judgment, at the same time being used by God to deal with Hussein. But in this, the USA was compared to Samson, who was strengthened one last time to deal with the Philistines, but brought his own death as he pulled down the temple pillars. Would God use the USA to break down Islamic pillars, but at a terrible price? But...praise God for reports of Bible studies breaking out all over among the US military in Saudi Arabia! Could He use such a desert to return the fear of God to an American generation raised on humanistic trash?

It was good to be in a non-American, international gathering as we prayed for the world. It helped me to submit to God's perspective, to let Him be God, and the just judge of the nations. It required praying out of His heart, rather than out of nationalistic or natural desires. It was awesome to agree with African, Australian, European seasoned warriors as they together led united battle charges against the powers of Islam. It brought us all to standing ovation as the black leader of Intercessors for Nigeria led out in a intercessory overthrow of ten vile rulers of African countries who needed to be deposed...all steeped in murder, witchcraft, and the rape of their own countries resources. How is it that I became assured that these leaders will actually fall because of this united prayer?

It was like living in Psalms 149 for a week:

"Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two edged sword in their hand, to execute vengeance on the nations...To BIND THEIR KINGS WITH CHAINS, and their nobles with fetters of iron; To execute on them the judgment written: This is an honor for all His godly ones. Praise the Lord!"

(over)

It is possible that we will be hosting two of these leaders for a spiritual warfare seminar at the end of January. Pray that the Lord will have His way in these plans; I believe it is time for believers in our area to benefit from the anointing and experience of "warrior chiefs" like these men.

Oh, and about that gall bladder... I guess I developed a certain yellow hue while in Germany due to blockage in there somewhere. But I got back home without any medical emergency taking place. The gall bladder was removed the second day after I arrived home. I'm recovering normally; a tube is still in my belly though...Oh, sorry...Why is it that we like to tell the whole surgical story even if no one is asking?

While in Germany, the Lord spoke a simple word to me: "Go home and continue your work of calling believers to prayer." I think we'd all agree the need remains; and the burden for our country is only greater. But, how should we carry out this burden? Is it to pray harder for the USA?

The destiny of America, God's purpose and mandate for this nation was to bless the nations of the world, to be a platform for world missions. Is it possible that the best thing the church could do for America would be to pray for other nations, especially those who have never received the good news of Jesus Christ? In these days of anxiety and turmoil in the world, it is not for us to become self-centered, to withdraw into our own concerns. I believe that God's preservation of our country will depend upon the Church rising to its challenge to spread the blessings of the Lord to the unreached parts of the world. In short, if we want to help America in prayer, pray for the world. And as we pray for our own country, let it be from God's heart, with acknowledgment of His righteous judgment of the nations, including our own.

And as I think of America, Habakkuk 1:2 comes to mind: "Lord I have heard the report about Thee and I fear. O Lord, revive Thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make it known; In wrath remember mercy."

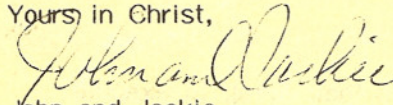
And when I think of you, and our believing friends, I remember Psalms 27:5: "For in the day of trouble He will conceal me in His tabernacle; In the secret place of His tent He will hide me; He will lift me up on a rock." God is a faithful Father, who cares for His children in every situation, regardless of world crises. He loves you!

We want to thank those of you who have helped us financially in recent days. We are still needing a higher level of monthly support, but are rejoicing in His faithfulness (and yours!) No buyers have come forward for our house; we may keep it off the market for a while, but are still looking for its sale, or another avenue of deliverance from the medical and tax bills of 1989.

Pray for wisdom for the Minnesota Prayer Watch for 1990; we are asking the Lord how He wants us to focus this ministry and help the churches in these days of great change. Pray for wisdom as we prepare another journey to New Zealand in February -- whether Asia should be part of that journey. Pray with us concerning Hungary and Romania, where we have sensed we should be in April-May. Pray for our sons, Jay and Jeff, as they search for direction in their lives. And pray also for new open doors of teaching and preaching; it is clear I am to spend more time "equipping the saints"; may His plan unfold for this!

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all." 2 Cor. 13:14

Yours in Christ,


John and Jackie

p.s. remember, for tax-deductible gifts you may write checks to Church Upon The Rock, Minnesota Prayer Watch, or Youth With A Mission; attach note "for Matthews' support". Thanks!