

## ***Crimean Peninsula, Ukraine and Prayer***

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In May 1999 in Crimea (then part of Ukraine), there were about 10 Crimean Tatar Christians while church planting in general was very difficult. God then showed us that the spiritual blockage in Crimea was related to the deportation of the Crimean Tatars on 18 May 1944 in which about 50% of Crimean Tatars died. So, we organised a number of events that Bennie Mostert [founder and director of Jericho Walls International Prayer Network] among others suggested:

- 1) International focused prayer for the Crimean Tatars on 18 May 1999;
- 2) An international prayer group that traveled with Crimean Tatar and Crimean (Russian, Ukrainian, etc) in a bus to the different corners of the peninsula. This group cleansed the land through acts of repentance celebrated with communion and then claimed the land for God's Kingdom by planting stakes in the ground; with different scripture verses as prophetic messages. The final stake was planted at 5am on 18 May 1999 at the exact time when and point from where the Crimean Tatars were deported;
- 3) Identificational repentance between Crimean Tatar and Russian Christians the evening of 17 May; and,
- 4) A Crimean Tatar partnership meeting on 19 May to discuss collaboration between churches and ministries to spiritually take the land and reach the Crimean Tatars.

### **The results were quite remarkable:**

- 1) There was no violence on 18 May 1999 despite everybody expecting war to break out in Crimea. The Crimean Tatar news agency could not understand that in a later article. What is more significant is that we think that Russia intended to occupy Crimea during that week. A friend of mine discovered that Russian special forces were ready to intervene when as they expected violence would break out. For one or another reason they were prevented from doing that;
- 2) The social and political situation in Crimea changed dramatically. The grievances of the Crimean Tatars had been finally addressed and for 15 years there was peace and economic growth until the occupation of Crimea last year. Even that was remarkable that only 2 soldiers died. If the Ukrainian soldiers and especially the Ukrainian navy would have tried to break out with force, a global war might have been ignited last year in April in Crimea;
- 3) Within the space of a 4-5 years the number of Crimean Tatar believers increased to be between 100 and 150;
- 4) Planting Russian and Ukrainian churches became much easier. In the 5 years after the prayer events, just one church planted 3 new churches. That after they struggled in the years before;
- 5) A few months after the prayer events when that devastating earthquake struck Turkey, a prophet in a church got a vision that Satan wanted to destroy Crimea as well but that there was a tent covering Crimea that prevented him from doing that. One of the leaders of the prayer campaign was in the church when the prophet said that. He told him that he could take him to the stakes that keep the tent in place! This was for me the most remarkable event in my ministry and life. In 2004 we had a year of prayer in Sussex, our region here in England. I suggested that we do something similar in Sussex because of things that happened between the Catholics and Protestants in Sussex in 1704 which is commemorated with bonfire processions every year. I have no doubt that cleansing of Sussex is needed!

Unfortunately the leaders were not very keen to do that and to a large extent the year of prayer fell flat. And we did not see the spiritual breakthroughs that we had hoped for. It seems as if the intercessory preparation, cleansing, claiming and taking of the land should be one journey. Too often there is a disconnect between intercession, repentance, prophetic, and apostolic entrance.

I believe people are quite reluctant to deal with the spiritual blockages in their communities. I've seen it in our town in England. People want revival but they do not want to admit, repent and remove the blockages.

**On the issue of Ukraine:**

1) As you might remember we mobilised prayer for Ukraine in general and Crimea in particular in April in 2014 when what we now know were Russian soldiers blockaded Ukrainian forces in Crimea. I heard that a world war might have easily broken out if Ukrainian soldiers would have tried to violently break through. In the end only one soldier died because of the restraint by the Ukrainians. It could be that God answered our prayers during that week and prevented a war from breaking out.

2) I read a quite disturbing article on atrocities committed by Ukrainian and Polish nationalists during WWII (see <http://www.kyivpost.com/article/opinion/op-ed/volodymyr-viatrovych-real-and-fictional-history-in-ukraines-archives-413382.html>). That also involves Jews. What I did not know is that apparently Jewish Bolsheviks supervised the famine in Ukraine that killed millions of people in 1932-1933 (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holodomor>). I am wondering whether some spiritual cleansing might be needed.

3) There are concerns about the Russian government encouraging a new religious cult (<http://www.kyivpost.com/article/opinion/op-ed/alexei-bayer-the-victory-cult-413353.html>) that even includes the Russian Orthodox Church. I think this is something Christians need to pray about.

4) On the issue of the atrocities during WWII, Czech church leaders told me that the toughest spiritual areas in the Czech Republic (the most atheistic country in the world if I am not mistaken) are the border regions with Germany. That is the old Sudetenland that was settled by Germans for centuries but who then had to flee when the Red Army moved in at the end of the war. Some spiritual cleansing might be needed in these areas as well.

Greetings.

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*The Global Generosity Network/Kingdom Life Publishing publication 'Christ-Centered Generosity: Global Perspectives on the Biblical Call to a Generous Life' had been released. Consider buying the electronic and printed book from Kingdom Life Publishing at <https://kingdomlifepublishing.com/product/christ-centered-generosity/>.*