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An urgent, open letter to the church in the United Kingdom (December 2023)

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Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

For some time now we have been extremely burdened for the church and nation of which we are a part. Our nation has been in steep moral and spiritual decline for many years, and has been under a measure of judgement as God has handed it over to its own rebellious desires. We see from Scripture¹ that God lets people and nations reap the consequences of their rebellion so that they may learn and come back to Him, and He mercifully gives prophetic warnings first² so that His judgements may be averted. Such prophecies have been given to our nation before³, but we have felt the Lord drawing our attention to them again recently. As we and others have listened, we believe God has given a weighty, pressing burden and highlighted relevant situations and Scriptures; our conviction is that He wants us to trumpet these publicly, and this is why we write. We have included various Bible references as endnotes, and ask you to consider them prayerfully alongside this letter.

Amongst other recent situations, the devastating surprise attack on Israel on 7th October 2023 was a sober reminder that the Lord sometimes allows a sharp, severe punishment to fall upon His people and upon nations so that they might wake up and repent.⁴ We are so grateful to live in an age of grace as believers, yet God has not changed in His dealings with nations⁵, and our nation's sins are now comparable to those of others in Scripture before they were judged. We are asleep, have been sleeping a long time, and desperately need to wake up or be woken up. A people that keep ignoring warnings and do not turn back to righteousness need divine correction⁶, and this is true of the church⁷ as well as the nation generally. Can we still ask God to hold back judgement from us, or has He given us over to an imminent and potentially catastrophic national crisis?⁸ We believe that He has – that we have passed the point of His sparing us from further judgement⁹, and the focus of our prayers and attention must now be repentance and preparation rather than a potentially false expectation of imminent revival and deliverance.¹⁰

There are always things we need to repent of as individuals and as Christ's corporate body, listening to the Holy Spirit as He seeks to make us a bride worthy of our coming Bridegroom.¹¹ We also recognise that the Lord will have different issues to point out in each church and individual believer. But as we've listened to the Lord and to brothers and sisters up and down the country, there are three overarching areas we believe God would have us consider in confession and repentance before Him and to one another:

- **Israel.** The church is not blameless when it comes to anti-Semitism. We have all seen the ugly attitudes recently shown towards God's covenant people¹² the Jews; the not-so-subtle hatred on our streets is a stain on our nation, and we should remember that those who curse Israel will be cursed.¹³ The church has not replaced the Jews but has rather been grafted¹⁴ into the covenant God still keeps with them, and some prophecies about the Jews and the land of Israel have yet to be fulfilled.¹⁵ Yet too often we teach the contrary, ignore them altogether, or downplay their significance. We must love them through spiritual, Scriptural eyes, and pray and speak up for them.
- **The sanctity of human life.** Over 10 million precious, defenceless babies have been killed in the womb since 1967¹⁶, and we as believers (individually and corporately) have often been deaf to their suffering and blind to how God sees them. Each one was divinely planned before the beginning of the world and overseen by God during his/her development¹⁷; children are a blessing from the Lord and precious in His sight¹⁸, but we have often rejected

God's intentions and the value of human life in favour of our own convenience. How we think and speak about abortion – and about related matters such as family planning¹⁹, IVF²⁰, assisted suicide and the care of the elderly²¹ – is of great importance to the Lord.

- **Relationships and sex.** Across our communities we are seeing increasing break-ups of relationships and families, as cultural attitudes towards marriage, parenting, sex and gender tear apart the millennia-old fabric we previously took for granted and relied upon. God's perfect plan for marriage (as a lifelong²² and complementary²³ relationship between one man and one woman) has been cast aside, as have His clear prohibitions of pre-marital sex²⁴ and homosexual unions²⁵, and His perfect plan for our gender.²⁶ Rather than stand as a lighthouse of refuge amidst the stormy waves, too often we have capitulated to the world out of fear or even approval. We may at times have been harsh and hypocritical rather than loving and gently steering those who were in pain; we have certainly hidden God's timeless truth and glorious saving gospel inside our cloaks by not warning people in wrong relationships, and we have often turned a blind eye to over 100,000 children in need of safe, loving homes that the church should have fostered or adopted. How does God see it all – and us?

We are so grateful to serve a God that prepares His people by giving them prophetic warnings. But we will gain nothing from the warnings if we think that they're a joke like Lot's sons-in-law did²⁷, or that they're for another time beyond us²⁸, or that God no longer speaks prophetically into the darkness and confusion of our world.²⁹ There comes a time when God can delay no longer, and we can be guilty of thinking we have more time to get ready than we do, whether for a situation like this or for the Lord's imminent return.³⁰ We want to warn you in love as our brothers and sisters in Christ to prepare for what is coming and to take up these four action points:

- **Pray.** While we must always be professing the name of Christ, and busy for the Kingdom, we believe that in this particular hour Christ urgently wants us to watch and pray with Him in the garden of the Great Intercession in Matthew 26³¹, even more than He wants us to be busy with the Great Commission of Matthew 28. How else can we know what He is saying to us in this moment, see what is coming, and ready ourselves for it, if we are too busy with work (even for His kingdom)? There is always a danger that we are taken up with apparently good activities like Martha, rather than sacrificially prioritising time at Jesus' feet like Mary.³² Through recent shocks (most notably the pandemic), we believe God has been trying to bring us to an end of ourselves and cause us to stop. We naturally hate stopping our routines, but Joel told God's people to cancel everything in response to a plague and famine, and to call everyone instead into God's house to get right before Him.³³ Intercession should be our immediate priority, and there is no better route map than that of 2 Chronicles 7:14.
- **Repent.** We have already noted above some areas for repentance, and the Lord may highlight other issues to you and your church as you seek Him. We must all draw closer to the Lord now so that we can endure the trials to come, and repentance and obedience are a key step. If we are to minister to others in distress, we must first be sure our own house is in order and the log has been removed from our own eyes.³⁴ Isaiah offers us the choice between repentance and rest or rebellion and defeat.³⁵ Which will it be?
- **Prepare.** Preparation for trials is a wise and important Scriptural principle.³⁶ We believe we are moving into a time when fear will increase, as well as lawlessness and persecution.³⁷ How will we stand firm if we haven't already learned to put on our spiritual armour, stay calm if we've not learned to trust God fully, and stay nourished if we've not put down spiritual roots?³⁸ And while spiritual preparation is significantly greater in importance, we would be wise to consider practical preparation too. How and where are we spending and saving our money? How are we looking after the physical body God has given us? Are we and those we care for ready for economic shocks or supply shortages? Have we told our friends, families and flocks what is coming for all true believers and for the world generally? Joseph prepared the nation for famine in response to God's warning; the church in Antioch did too when Agabus gave a prophetic word of a famine to come, and they made plans to support their brothers and sisters.³⁹ How would God have us prepare for ourselves, our households, our loved ones and our communities?

- **Unite.** Scripture, church history and the growing evidence in our day tell us that God’s judgement in the form of national crises can significantly change how we ‘do’ church. Many believers who are wholeheartedly following the Lord and concerned about the situation we’re facing are already moving closer to one another, drawn by the Spirit. As an apostate church becomes more easily identifiable and more closely aligned with the world, God’s remnant must separate from those who persist in error, and align themselves instead with like-minded believers, whether in a traditional church context or in informal house churches. While we can only be united with those who are of the truth⁴⁰, we must be willing to lay aside secondary issues where appropriate⁴¹, not forsaking fellowship because of minor disagreements but pursuing it ‘all the more’ as the day of Christ’s return draws near.⁴²

Finally, we believe the Lord recently gave us a direct word of prophecy, which is a message from Him to those who have strayed from His word and are in danger of judgement. We invite you to weigh this word as others have done, to receive anything that’s relevant for yourself or how you pray for others, and to consider passing it on to others along with this letter. It is included below this letter as an appendix for your convenience.

All of us are weak, and it is only by the grace of God that we can continue to stand. We humbly submit this letter to you as a warning, an exhortation, an invitation, and hopefully an encouragement. Please do listen to anything the Lord may be saying through these words, and we pray that you will know the Lord’s blessing and direction as you seek His face.

With love, in His greater love,

Ashley Thompson and Josh MacDonald

Co-Directors, Intercessors For Britain

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¹ Ps 81:11-14, Gal 6:7

² Amos 3:7, Jer 7:25-29

³ E.g. www.bit.ly/ifb-127; www.bit.ly/ifb-128

⁴ 2 Chr 12:1-8

⁵ Heb 13:8; for examples of New Testament judgement, see Acts 5:1-11, Rev 2:5,16,21-23

⁶ Isa 26:9, Ps 78:34, Luk 19v41-44

⁷ 1 Pet 4:17, Jer 7:12-14

⁸ Psa 81:11-12; Jer 20:4b-5

⁹ Jer 44:22, 2 Kgs 24:4, Gen 15:16

¹⁰ Jer 28:1-9

¹¹ Tit 2:14, Eph 5:25-27

¹² Gen 17:7-8, Jer 31:35-37, Rom 9-11

¹³ Gen 12:3, Num 24:9, Zech 2:8

¹⁴ Rom 11:1,15-27

¹⁵ Isa 2:1-4, Jer 31:31-34, Zech 14 etc.

¹⁶ www.bit.ly/ifb-130

¹⁷ Ps 139:13-16, Jer 1:5

¹⁸ Ps 127:3, Mrk 10:13-16

¹⁹ www.bit.ly/ifb-131

²⁰ www.bit.ly/ifb-131

²¹ Lev 19:32, Mat 15:4-6

²² Mar 10:2-12, Mal 2:16

²³ Eph 5:22-33, 1 Cor 11:11

²⁴ 1 Cor 7:2, Heb 13:4, 1 Cor 6:18 (the Greek word for ‘fornication’ or ‘immorality’ is *porneia*, which includes all forms of sex outside of marriage)

²⁵ Lev 18:22, Rom 1:26-27, 1 Cor 6:9-10, Matt 19:4-5

²⁶ Deut 22:5, Gen 1:27,31, 1 Cor 7:17-20

²⁷ Gen 19:14

²⁸ Eze 12:27-28

²⁹ 1 Thes 5:19-21, 1 Cor 13:8-13 (note that “perfect” and “face-to-face” knowledge hasn’t come yet)

³⁰ Luk 12:42-48, Mat 25:10-13

³¹ Mat 26:36-41, Is 59:16, Ezek 22:30-31

³² Luk 10:38-42, Jhn 12:2-3

³³ Joel 1, 2

³⁴ Mat 7:3-5

³⁵ Isaiah 30:15-16

³⁶ Rev 2:10, Mat 24:24-26, Luk 21:14

³⁷ Luk 21:25-28, Mat 24:9-13

³⁸ Eph 6:13, Mat 24:6, Jer 17:7-8, Ps 1:2-3

³⁹ Gen 41, Acts 11:27-30

⁴⁰ 1 Cor 5:11-13, 2 Cor 6:14-18

⁴¹ Rom 14, 15:7

⁴² Heb 10:23-25

My sheep – hear My voice!

A prophetic word received on 3/11/2023 by Josh MacDonald, Co-Director of Intercessors For Britain

Linked scriptures: Isaiah 5v1-6 and John 10, esp. vv14-16, 27

We believe this is a word from the Lord in this moment for the church in the UK, and is especially intended as a merciful warning and tender exhortation to those spiritual sheep who have – some knowingly, and some unknowingly – been led astray from the safety of God's truth to a place of great eternal danger by lying wolves in sheep's clothing who do not submit to the authority of scripture and have come to destroy.

“My sheep - hear My voice.

I placed you in a field, a pleasant pasture, that was good. It was the place you were supposed to be. It was walled, it was boundaried, and in that field was the food of My word and the protection of My presence. It was high, and well-appointed, and you had need of nothing. But one or two of you opened the gate, and now so many of you are gone.

That gate was your protection. That gate is your defence. The lines for you had fallen in pleasant places, but My Word and My presence were not enough and you lifted the latch, and now you are gone. My sheep, oh so many sheep, are My sheep no more. You have entered someone else's field; you have run easily, and willingly, down the hill and into the pasture of another, and you are gone. You cannot hear My voice and the gate stands open, a steady stream of My sheep passing on their way to the stranger's field. They hear another shepherd's voice, someone who is not Me, and who does not speak My words.

You must now learn that the pasture you have chosen is not safe, and full of wolves. You must now learn that the grass you have chosen could not last forever, and it will shrivel up and dry, and you will hunger and thirst. You will no longer find any shepherd there – they will all abandon you. You did not notice that there were no walls, but you will realise, and you will tremble.

My sheep. Look up. My field remains, with its strong walls and green pasture, and the gate is open. See those sheep that still remain with Me, and join them again under the sound of My voice and the safe blessing of My protection. Turn, follow Me, come back and let Me close the gate behind you before it is too late. In My field you will be safe. You will find food, you will bear fruit, and there – and only there – will you weather the storm that is coming on the whole earth.

Hear My voice, and live!”