

The lamps - beyond Europe.

So far, the lamps ministry has focused on Europe. This is natural, as Europe is where we are. The European word has provided us with the foundation for the work of the lamps. Here are the lessons we have found there:-

- 1. We have to light the fires of passion, evangelism and repentance.**
- 2. We have to pull down the strongholds.**
- 3. We have to help find the lamps.**
- 4. We have to lead the way in fervent love.**
- 5. We need a clear vision of what God is wanting to do.**
- 6. We need to be pure and holy, and help others to come to this position.**
- 7. We have to love sacrificially and we have to live the changed lives which will challenge.**

This is our “learning”, but not our function. The call to be a lamp is a deeply emotional one. Once we have understood that, then we go off and begin to pray. As we say at all our meetings “No booklets will come to you, there is nothing to join. We have to go away and start praying.” This very simplicity is what appeals to so many of us. The lamps teaching gives us courage and a sense of value. Then we go off and pray. It’s good to learn more about prayer and intercession, and the lamps vision has plenty to share. This is the list so far, and it gives plenty of scope for growth.

The heart of the intercessor.

Spiritual warfare.

Repentance and the lamps.

The protection of the lamps.

The challenge of the lamps.

The power of the lamps.

The power of the blood of Jesus.

The prayer of the lamps.

Strongholds.

Drawing strength for Gethsemane.

Seven strong foundation stones.

This is all good, but I need to say again that no lamp need ever read a single word of this. Once God has touched the heart, then we get on with our task, and our task may be wider than we think. Take, for instance, the picture of Ecuador, from the gateways material:-

Ecuador

This is the passage from the third Istanbul mission, referring to Ecuador.

“I was overwhelmed with sorrow - not mine but the Lords. Just as yesterday I was feeling his compassion, so today his sorrow. It’s strange - I don’t feel it, yet I sense it. This sorrow is pouring onto Ecuador. But it’s a sorrow of love, not of sadness. I know that doesn’t look quite right. I can explain it better that I can write it.

So Ecuador is in a good position – or is it? This is something we are going to have to wait on.”

It didn’t surprise me to see the latest news from Ecuador, which shows a nation in turmoil, reflects just what I was seeing in the gateway. The Lord’s compassion was like a great lake, but it was held back by a dam of some sort. Beyond the dam lay Ecuador. I dived into the lake, and was completely overwhelmed with - with what? This is my problem. Was I overwhelmed with the Lord’s love for Ecuador?, Or was it his desire to bless? Was it his joy? I searched for the words to express the feelings, and deep down I felt sorrow mixed with compassion. This troubles me greatly. It was obvious to me that the Lord wanted to bless this nation. But it seemed to me that the blessing would not come. The intense sadness suggested that sorrow, trouble, disturbance and hopeless would come. The Lord, being who he is, was feeling this for himself, making it his own as it were, and in that there is great hope.

If hard times are to come for this nation, then they will be hard times shared by the Lord, not just ignored by him.

Against this background, here is the latest news from Ecuador. I leave readers to draw their own conclusions.

Ecuador's police chief resigned on Friday and the country remained in a state of emergency one day after an uprising by officers who held President Rafael Correa for more than 10 hours. Army special forces stormed the hospital where Mr Correa was being held and rescued him after a tense standoff .

A defiant Mr Correa condemned the police rebellion as an attempted coup. "We will never accept negotiation under pressure, but only dialogue," he said, later adding: "The coup attempt may have roots out there; we have to find them and pull them up." Mr Correa called the renegade policemen "cowards", claiming they had not even read the law they were opposing, and vowed that there would be "no pardon or forgiveness". The new law would reduce their benefits and limit salary increases.

Freddy Martinez, the police commander, resigned on Friday and police began talks with Lenin Moreno, the vice-president, to resolve the pay dispute. Mr Correa, who was attacked with teargas on Thursday, blamed supporters of Lucio Gutierrez, the former president of Ecuador, for the attempted coup.

Mr Gutierrez, who was himself overthrown in a coup in April, 2005, denied involvement and accused Mr Correa of leading a "totalitarian government that doesn't respect the human rights of Ecuadorians".

Ecuador is a politically unstable country and has seen seven presidents in the past 13 years, with three overthrown in coups. Mr Correa, a close ally of Venezuela's Left-wing President Hugo Chavez and Bolivia's President Evo Morales, is pushing through a "citizen's revolution" in a nation where 35 per cent of people live below the poverty line. He has increased social security benefits, introduced a minimum wage and invested in health, education and transport.

I think the gateways picture is a very encouraging word for Ecuador. The Lord longs to bless. Circumstances, however, seem to get in the way. What can break these circumstances, and bring the blessing? **The lamps!** If lamps in Ecuador begin to exercise their ministry, then the blessing will pour down. The Ecuadorian lamps have to be touched by the Lord, and then take up their work, in much the same way as we have learnt ourselves:-

- 1. They have to light the fires of passion, evangelism and repentance.**
- 2. They have to pull down the strongholds.**
- 3. They have to help find the lamps.**
- 4. They have to lead the way in fervent love.**
- 5. They need a clear vision of what God is wanting to do.**
- 6. They need to be pure and holy, and help others to come to this position.**
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We could apply the same principle to the Caucasus. Here is the material for the Caucasus from the Gateways material:-

The Caucasus is a very sad crossroads. So many years of fighting and terrorist activity. So much lawlessness and insecurity. The very area cries out for mercy, and the blood of the innocent cries out for justice. The living parable is Beslan, where the faces of the murdered children challenge in their very muteness. These children cry out, "You took our today, and we have no tomorrow."

Later, when I was reflecting on this, the Lord spoke to me again about Beslan and the Caucasus. I saw a frightened child, trapped in a room, running around trying to find a way out. But there was no one to help. A great sadness swept over me. I remembered the song I sang in Pastor Kolbe's cell in Auschwitz. "Jesus, remember me, when you come into your kingdom." I remembered that when I sang it in Auschwitz, it rose up into the darkness of the cells around me, and the darkness had to move back from the sound of worship. I saw myself standing outside the Gym in Beslan. There were many mothers there, and they asked me "Why should we let you in?" I replied "because I am very sad." They parted and I went in, and stood in front of the faces of the children. Then I knelt at the cross and sang "Jesus, remember me." Then I heard many children, crying all across the Caucasus

The same principles apply here as apply in Europe and Ecuador. The lamps are needed. They are needed in Europe, in Ecuador, in the Caucasus and in many other places. They are shining in different circumstances, but their work remains very much the same. We cannot limit our search to Europe.

How do we find them?

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October 2010

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