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[Concerns about the suffering of the Ukrainian people who are under attack by Russia]

- *Offering help to those in need*

It is God's word, it is God's heart, it is God's light that embraces all of humankind. We speak at times about what God wishes, what God feels, what God knows, what God sees. These anthropomorphic representations are just that. They are descriptions of a superficial nature that help to present the reality of God's presence and the reality of your own spiritual lights as a presence. So, when we say that God is saddened or that God feels and knows of suffering, the truth goes far beyond such words.

Rather than thinking of God in a human form of understanding, it is important to stretch your vision and abilities in order to glimpse God's presence at a far deeper level than what those simple words can describe. Words being limited as they are, it is nevertheless important to know that in the midst of all the suffering, the destruction, the injury and death, the fears, the anxieties, the anger felt by many, the presence of that loving force is undeniable.

You are not given human life for the purpose of experiencing ease, although all lives have encountered at some point a measure of comfort. You are provided the gift of life so that you become stronger through your confrontation with darkness, with negative energy. It is only through your experience of being loving that you are truly carried through that darkness. Achieving an ability to be loving in such darkness is only possible by experiencing love as it can be offered, when all around one knows only of darkness, of pain, suffering, loss. It is precisely the experiencing of being loved that is the most effective principle that can govern your response. By that we are suggesting that to be responsive in a way that reflects God's light, you do what you can do that is loving toward others, and in the experiencing of your acts of being loving, those who suffer experience what it means to be loved. It is through that experiencing that they begin to see their path illuminated in a sense of pure direction being more visible. They are strengthened in their encounter with darkness because they know what it means to be loved.

Such experience on the part of those who suffer certainly does not mean that they are freed of their suffering, but they are strengthened in their suffering, and through that strengthening, there can be a sense of resolution. If one loses all belongings and knows of the love of others, the loss inflicts less pain. The loss has less impact. It is still there. The loss is not obliterated, but the capacity to get through is strengthened.

How is it then that you offer love to those who suffer, those who are far away, those whom you have never met? Most importantly, as you have recognized, is your ability, your willingness, your commitment to identify those in darkness with a light that can be offered through your own energies. We speak countless times of the power of prayer. Certainly, that is a way of feeling connected, but there are other ways, of course, that you

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can pursue so that you feel an attachment to those in need. Feeling such a connection can have several consequences, some which are beneficial and some which may be destructive. Being connected to those who suffer does not mean to direct negative energies, to direct darkness as it were, anger or bitterness. Such energies are often the result of feeling connected, but that connectedness can be expressed in positive ways.

We have spoken of the impact of your actions being felt in all directions. That principle applies here. If you wish to strengthen the light of someone who is suffering, the greatest way is by offering love. That offer of love, wherever it is given, increases the positive energies that surround the reality of human life. We could say if you are interested in world peace, be at peace with your neighbor. That effort to express your love through your relationships with those you know increases the presence of love worldwide. By the same token, if you are opposed to the cruelty that one person can inflict upon another, spreading your own anger to someone else serves only to heighten the negative energy that is part of humankind.

If you want the world to be more loving, be more loving in whatever way you can. If you are concerned about the sufferings of many in a distant land, act as you can to address the suffering of someone close at hand. The very act of giving of yourself, the very act of supporting another in need is precisely part of the response that is a godly response to the sufferings of others. If you are concerned about relationships between nations, first address your relations with those at hand. You wish for tolerance in the world, but achieving such tolerance is only possible when you become more tolerant. Being tolerant is not a theoretical construct that should be adhered to by others. It should be at the very core of who you are.

We used the symbolism of a trampoline for good reason, as it is obvious if one person moves the slightest amount, others are impacted. That is a direct analogy to the reality of energy that is available to all people. Help your neighbor, and you are helping all. Be peaceful with those with whom you are so close, and such energy of peace will have an impact far beyond your shores.

Yes, prayer is essential, but prayer is the foundation for action. The kind of action you are engaged in has an enormous impact on the energies that radiate outward. Being loving is a step that you take so that others may feel and experience loving actions, loving support, and in the experiencing of being loved, one is empowered to be loving, and that act of being loving has an impact far beyond what you can perceive.

Human beings are a single unit. Human beings are on the same trampoline. Acts of good that are local lead to acts of good that are universal. Offering love to another expands the capacity to be loving, and that energy expands and multiplies. It has an impact on all who live. No one lives on an island with no impact on anyone else. If you don't care about the needs of others, others won't care about the needs they observe. Such actions do not prevent widespread suffering, but they empower the spirits of those who suffer, and it is in their enduring that they are strengthened in spirit. It is that

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strengthening that is so crucial to feeding the spirit within. When you are strengthened in your commitment to being loving, others are also strengthened.

How you express your support for another, how you express your affirmation of the sacredness of another will differ one person from another, but that affirmation offered in love is the essential component. It is important during these times of great concern that you be strengthened in your full commitment to the belief of God's presence being constant. When you focus your attention on the vision of the heart, your vision is only given clarity through the love that is offered.

Yes, pray for those who suffer, but pray to be aware of those who are close who suffer as well. Be strengthened in your capacity to be loving. Strengthen your capacity to uplift, to surround with strength that is spirit. Strengthen your capacity to hear the cries from those who suffer. Find ways of identifying with those who need help. Offer the love you can offer in the way you can offer.

Try not to be overwhelmed by the magnitude of such widespread suffering that you lose your own sense of being able to make a difference. You are not powerless. You are not helpless in the face of such tragic events. You do what you can do. You offer the love you can offer. You affirm those you can affirm. You identify those you can identify with. Find ways of reaching out even if to one other person. You will be empowered then to reach out to more people. You will find the inner vision of the heart that clarifies your view of expressing God's presence in your own personal ways.

Humankind is indeed a family. You are all related. Anything you do impacts others, and what others do continues to radiate outward as an expression of God's reality, the energy, the light, the true life.

You are blessed in your efforts to reach out. You are blessed in your efforts to be loving. You are blessed through your efforts to bring light and hope and love across the human presence always. Be at peace. Be committed. Be loving.

Amen.