



## THE STATE OF THE NATIONS

(Isaiah ch 10 vl—19)

I heard a Christian in the Conservative Party say that Britain needed strong defences against the USSR because that country had the power to destroy Christianity entirely if it had supreme control of the world.

Now there may indeed be a case for engaging in warfare against a rapacious regime because it is evil (though my reading of Scripture doesn't support it), but this short passage shows that there is never a case for defending the faith against atheistic nations out of fear for its survival. How easy it is to be overawed by the nuclear might of the superpowers, and cowed by their ungodliness. But God isn't worried! Far from it! It is he who has brought these nations to power, for his own purposes. God's activity in world history is awesomely complex, but the Biblical teaching is quite clear: the nations are God's instruments, unwittingly, even unwillingly, serving to glorify him and his Kingdom.

Look at Assyria, invincible in its day, overrunning the known world in

general and god's people in particular in a spirit of pride and self-glory. And yet, through Isaiah, God reveals that Assyria is merely a club, or an axe, which he has picked up to perform his righteous judgement against Israel. And in its turn, says God, this arrogant military machine, which would laugh at the idea of being his servant, will itself be consumed for its sin, as indeed within a century it was.

Perhaps Russia has been raised up to punish the Western Bloc for its rampant immorality, greed and apostasy - it would be presumptuous, without the same kind of inspiration given to Isaiah, to try to fathom God's present purposes. But what we can say, with confidence, is that whatever happens on the International Stage only happens because it suits God's almighty purpose that it should\*\*\*

JCG