INTERCESSORS FOR AMERICA



Praying For Government

Day One: GOD'S PROMISE TO HEAL OUR LAND

God desires the Church to exert a controlling influence in the affairs of this world through prayer. This is clearly stated in the Scriptures. If the Church fails to do it, then it has become salt that has lost is savor.

In 2 Chronicles 7:14 we read: *"… if My people, who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land."* This is a revelation given by the Lord to Solomon after he had dedicated the temple. Some reading this undoubtedly are thinking: "That promise was spoken to Solomon in the Old Testament and does not have much meaning for us today. Let me deal with this objection briefly."

In 2 Corinthians 1:20 we read: *For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.* Not some of the promises—but all the promises! Not were, not will be—but are! Not merely Yes, but if you are still doubtful, Yes and Amen! In Christ, to the glory

of God through us. “Us” refers to all Christians, including you and me. How do we glorify God? By claiming His promises! The more of God's promises we believe and claim, the more we glorify God. All God's promises are available to us in Christ today.

Referring back to the promise in 2 Chronicles 7:14, I believe you can see how this promise refers to you and me today! God speaks of “My people who are called by My name.” This is the New King James Version. The literal Hebrew translation is: “My people upon whom My name is called.” God's people are those upon whom His name is called. If you are a Christian, what does that mean? It means that the name of Christ is called upon you. You are associated with the name of Christ. You are identified as a Christian by the name of Christ. So this promise applies to Christians: God's people upon whom the name of Christ is called.



God says that if His people will do four things, He will do three things. God's people have to do four things first, before God will do the three things that He is committed to do. It is a conditional promise. God does not say He will do it unconditionally, but He says, “*If* My people will meet My conditions, then I will do these things.”

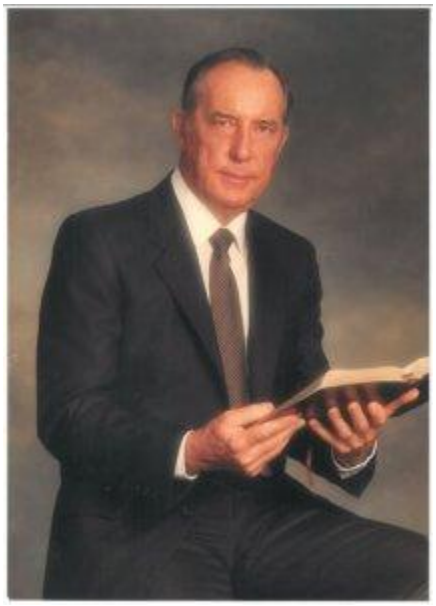
Looking to the end of the verse first, the last thing that God will do for His people is to heal their land. It is clear that this is the land in which they live. God says that it is within the power of His people to do things which will cause God to heal the land in which they live. Look at the land in which we live. Does it need healing? There is only one answer. Yes! The fact that the land needs healing indicates that God's people have failed to do what God told them they should do. The responsibility is with us Christians not with the drug addict, not with the prostitute, not with the man who never darkens the door of a church. The responsibility is with the people upon whom Christ's name is called!

For Personal Prayer:

- Are you willing to examine your heart on this issue? Have you given up hope for revival in America? Many have, and at times prospects may seem bleak. But remember, things often look darkest just before the dawning of a new day. As you follow these five devotionals, try not to rush through them. Ask God to renew your own hope and faith.
- Above all things, please don’t feel condemned. Regardless of one’s age or experience spiritually, God wants us to have hope, peace, and abiding faith. You are not too young or

too old to intercede for our country. Meditate on Matthew 11:28-30, where Jesus invites you to "find rest for your soul" as you are yoked in fellowship and service with Him.

- Give thanks for the positive things happening behind the scenes in Washington, DC. There are many Christian staff members serving the Lord on Capitol Hill, in the White House, and in both the House and the Senate. They, too, are praying for God to "heal their land." Will you join that growing band of intercessors?



*Author Derek Prince (1915-2003) was an internationally known Bible teacher and a "founding father" of IFA. Born in India of British parents, he became an American citizen primarily due to his unwavering belief that our biblical heritage made America the strongest hope to ignite a revival for the restoration of godly government and a restoration of biblical standards before the return of Jesus Christ, Lord of the Church. His best known book among intercessors (*Shaping History through Prayer and Fasting*) portrayed his belief in prayer and fasting to receive God's highest blessings, both for individuals and for our nation.* Praying for the Government *was originally published in* New Wine *magazine in the 1970s. It is available from IFA as a booklet, and is the basis for these devotionals. In general, we present the author's own words; however, some editorial adjustments are made for space and clarity.*

Day Two: "SALT OF THE EARTH"

If our land is not healed, there is only one reason. We have not done the things that God requires. I believe that is the truth. It is simply another way of saying what Jesus said in Matthew 5:13: *"You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out, and trampled underfoot by men."* If our land is not healed by our presence, then our salt has lost its flavor.

What does salt do? First of all, it gives flavor. As long as we are present in the earth we give flavor to the earth in the sight of God. In other words, God accepts the world because of the Christians. While He allows suffering among His people and even martyrdom in His Church around the world, God primarily deals with the world in grace and mercy, rather than wrath and judgment, because of the Church's presence.

I believe emphatically that it makes a difference where I go. I discovered this during World War II. Other soldiers were safer where I was. Unsaved soldiers knew this. When we were in tight corners in the North African desert, some of those blaspheming soldiers would turn to me and say, "Corporal Prince, I am glad you are with us." What did Elisha say to Elijah? *"My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and its horsemen!"* (2 Kings 2:12). Where were they? Not around the kings but around the prophets.



Derek Prince in the Army

Christian believers are the people who are the defense of the country. We are the bulwark of any nation. Consider the example of Sodom. Abraham said to God, "If there are ten righteous men, will you spare the city?" And God said, "Yes." But He could not spare the city because He could not find ten righteous men. I do not know how many men there were in Sodom, but I know that the same proportion still applies. Ten righteous men can save a city the size of Sodom. One hundred righteous men can save a city ten times the size of Sodom. One thousand righteous men can save a city one hundred times the size of Sodom. And so on in proportion. I feel sorry for this earth when the Church leaves. There will be no more salt. Then wrath and judgment will be poured out without any limitation or restriction. But while we are here, we are the salt of the earth.

Salt also preserves. It holds back corruption. In the days before refrigeration, meat was preserved with salt. It kept back corruption. What are we here for? To keep back corruption. Corruption in all its forms—moral, social, political. As long as we are here, we do this. Jesus said, *"If the salt has lost its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be*

thrown out and trampled underfoot by men." When the church ceases to fulfill its function as salt, it will be thrown out and trampled underfoot of men. These men may be communists or Nazis or followers of some other "ism" that has not yet come forth on the horizon. But it will be men who will trample underfoot the Church that is not fulfilling its role in the world as salt.

(Editor's note: As we may easily learn from his prolific writings and numerous teaching messages, Derek Prince is not here or elsewhere suggesting the world system has – or ever will have – the ability to destroy the Church. Rather, the phrase "trample underfoot" is a reference to reducing and impeding the Church's effective witness and authority. This sad situation inevitably occurred many times in Church history – as it is rampant in America today – when individual leaders and denominations in the wider professing Church water down or deny the power and authority of the Bible as God's written, inspired Word. The Lord Jesus Christ continues to build His Church, as He said He would, and God's Word will abide forever.)



For Personal Prayer:

- Those familiar with the long teaching ministry of Derek Prince know that he always sought to challenge his audience but never to condemn. Therefore, the Christian believer's response to this exhortation should be one of serious and healthy self-examination for spiritual growth as opposed to morbid introspection that hinders our progress.
- With that in mind, how do you rate your own degree of "saltiness" in your daily walk with God and people? The Bible exhorts us in a helpful way: *Let your speech (or "conversation" – i.e., regular manner of life) be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how to answer everyone* (Colossians 4:6). While we continue to pray for national revival, we can, with God's help, speak with grace and thus "season" our own world. The tongue is a powerful force (James 3:6). Will we let God have control?
- Ask the Holy Spirit for specific guidance on how to apply these exhortations regarding "salt." Each of us should ask himself/herself, "In my daily interaction with my spouse and children, am I an influence that preserves and encourages a peaceful atmosphere? Do I bring a better 'flavor' or 'aroma' to the home? Do people around me sense that I'm an influence for good? For positive change?" Ask God, by His Spirit, to show you truth.
- Will we be specific here? God says do everything without complaining or arguing. Do we? What about sarcasm, ingratitude, impatience, gossip, harsh words to our children, lashing out in anger toward family? What a difference each of us could make if we let the

Holy Spirit have control of our thoughts, our speech, and our actions! Pray these verses: Philippians 2: 14-16; Colossians 3:12-17; and 1 Thessalonians 5: 12-24.

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Day Three: GOD'S FOUR CONDITIONS

What are the things God requires His people to do? First of all, "My people shall humble themselves." That is a hard thing for religious people to do. I do not say this in jest; I mean it sincerely. You hear some people say, "God, make me humble." God never said that. God said, "Humble yourself." God will not humble you. God can humiliate you, and He may have to, but the only person who can humble you is you, yourself. Humility must come by an inward act of your will. It cannot come in any other way. If you do not choose to humble yourself, you can be humiliated in the dust but still be as proud as a peacock. The command to "humble yourself" is seen both in the Old Testament and New.

The first condition is to humble yourself and submit yourself to God. If we are submitted to God, we will also be submitted to His Word and His authority. It is easy to say that you submit yourself to God, but God's Word says: *Submit yourselves one to another. . . . Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands. . . . Children, obey your parents* (Ephesians 5:21-22; 6:1). That is where it is not so easy. Many people claim, "I am submitted to God," but when the test comes in their relationship to other people, it is obvious that they are not.

If you are to humble yourself, you must be the doer. It is not a bad thing every now and then to get right on your face on the floor before God. Have you ever done that? Say, "God, here I am and here is where I belong! I am a worm. I came from the dust and the dust is my place." Do you think that is fanaticism? Read through the Bible and see the number of men who were on their faces before God: Abraham, Moses, David, and Daniel. There is hardly even one of the great, outstanding saints of God of whom it is not recorded that they were flat on their faces before God. If it was a good place for Moses, David, Daniel and others, I do not think it should be beneath your dignity or mine.



"If My people who are called by My name shall humble themselves." This is the first step, and you cannot leave it out. God has His spiritual program arranged in grades: grade 1, grade 2, grade 3, grade 4. Until you pass in grade 1, you cannot get to grade 2. It does not matter if you have to repeat grade 1 ten years in a row, God will not promote you. That is why some people have been stuck so long in the same grade. Do not think, "Lord, I didn't make it through grade 1, but I will make it in grade 2. Let me pass this one and I'll make the next." No, it will not work!

The second step is prayer. *"If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray."* Do not start to pray until you humble yourself. Humility comes before prayer.

The third step is to seek God's face. God said, *"Pray and seek My face."* What does that mean? I understand it means to get directly into the presence of Almighty God—where every barrier and every hindrance is removed. In the Spirit of the Lord, you are face-to-face with Almighty God. You may have a prayer meeting, but that is not necessarily seeking God's face. To seek God's face, you are seeking Him in worship, not to receive provision from His hand, but to rest in His presence.

A young man came to me seeking the baptism of the Holy Spirit. He was a youth worker in a church. I told him I could see him on Wednesday evening. He said he had to attend a prayer meeting that evening. I said, "I suppose that would be no good." "Oh, no," he said, "that would be OK. We pray from 8 to 9 o'clock." That is a prayer meeting, but it is not seeking God's face. When you seek God's face, you do not stop until you get into God's presence—even if it takes all night. **There is a lot of praying that is not seeking God's face. It stops short of contact with God.**

The fourth step is to *"turn from [our] wicked ways."* Who? The alcoholic, the young people that won't go to church? No, the Christians—God's covenant people of today*!* **The hindrance to revival is inside the Church, not outside. It never has been outside.**

Do you know where judgment begins? At the house of God. *"For the time has come,"* Peter says, *"for judgment to begin at the house of God"* (1 Peter 4:17). To make it doubly clear, he adds, "It begins with us first." Then he asks, *"What will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?"* God has always operated this way. He begins with the people who know the most. *"To whom much is given, from him much will be required"* (Luke 12:48). You say, "Brother Prince, I don't have any wicked ways." I reply, "Perhaps you never got close enough to

God to see. If you had gotten into God's presence, you would have seen your wicked ways. The very fact you say you have no wicked ways just shows how far you are from God."

After these four steps, God says, *"I will hear from heaven."* God has not committed Himself to hear every prayer. Did you know that? I am convinced that in many churches prayers go no higher than the ceiling…. In fact, God says, *"If we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him"* (1 John 5:15). The difficulty is not getting God to answer, but getting God to hear.

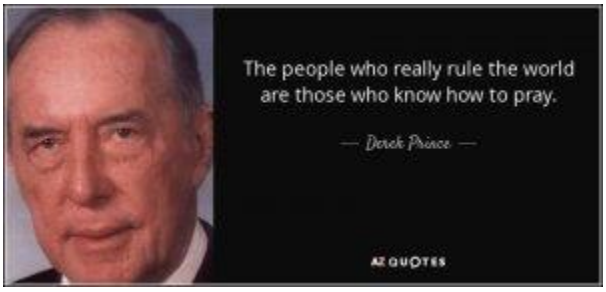
"Then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin." Whose sin? The sin of the prostitute or the drug addict? No, the sins of the Church!

"And heal their land." To me the issue is clear. **If a land is not healed, the fault is with the people of God. I have considered this, prayed over it, and meditated on it. The responsibility for the condition of modern America lies at the door of the professing church.** I believe that this is exactly the truth. If our land is not healed, the responsibility rests with us. I share the responsibility with you. I am not telling you something that is true about you but not about me.

For Personal Prayer:

- Each of the four conditions God gives as precursors to revival deserves its own devotional study, but that is beyond the scope of our purpose. If you have read this far, you are interested in revival and willing to make personal application. What is your reaction to the author's insistence that we "humble ourselves"? Some say, "But I pray against pride every day." Ask God to help you understand the difference and to humble yourself.
- None of us wants to think we have "wicked ways" in our life. Such things are often subtle to present-day believers. With God's Old Testament people, it was idolatry, and its primary manifestation was intermarriage between the sons and daughters of Israel and those of the pagan nations with false gods and heinous practices. This idolatry incited God's righteous anger, bringing judgment and captivity. God still demands, *"You shall have no other gods before Me"* (Exodus 20:3).
- Idolatry is also "front and center" in the New Testament and listed as a sin from which we are exhorted to flee. It is specifically mentioned in the often-shocking list of "the works of the flesh" in Galatians 5:19-20. Are we willing to face the truth that we ourselves, as committed intercessors, are still able and willing to erect idols? But what about the same issue in today's Christian settings? Could we modern-day Christians be harboring idolatry? Ask God to speak to you about idolatry in your life.
- A second form of modern idolatry has to do with our motives. Why exactly do we want righteous government? Is it for God's glory or our own convenience? It sounds holy to say, "I want my children and grandchildren to live peacefully and in freedom under good government," but God doesn't promise a world change just so my children can avoid suffering. We will take this thought further in our Day Four devotional entitled, "Healing Through Prayer." The question is, have we made an idol out of our own concept of good government and what we want when we pray? Many of us have to confess that we have.

- Finally, ask the Holy Spirit for wisdom and moral courage in applying these "four conditions" in your life and home. God is faithful, and He wants us to succeed in our pursuit of true holiness. He will reveal our hearts as we seek His face. The Holy Spirit tenderly convicts us when we miss the mark. Always remember, God loves you and is for you. He is patient and kind. Give Him your heart, and follow where He leads.



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Day Four: HEALING THROUGH PRAYER

How can we bring healing to our nation? I am going to speak to you about prayer. I will base my teaching on the first four verses of 1 Timothy, chapter 2:1-4: *I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*

The Old Testament prophet Jeremiah wrote*, "Your words were found and I ate them, and Your word was to me a delight and the joy of my heart…"* (Jeremiah 15:16). In this devotional, we will consider the foundational Scripture passage undergirding IFA's 45-year history of serving and encouraging many fellow intercessors. And while the implications of these verses are serious, we can be filled with "delight and joy" as we align ourselves with God's purpose in calling on His people to intercede for "those in authority" – meaning government leaders.

With that introduction, let us consider these words. Paul says, "First of all … pray!" If you bypass prayer, you can have all sorts of plans, systems, and programs, but you do not have the

power to operate them. It is like having a building wired for electricity, but not connected to the generator. Nothing is going to work. The wires may be in good order, and the light fixtures may be wonderful, but you are not going to get results, because there is no power. **The powerhouse of the Christian Church is prayer, and Paul very logically says, "First of all, pray!"**

Then, what does he tell us to pray for? First, *"... for kings and all who are in authority."* Now my experience is that the majority of God's professing people scarcely ever pray for those in authority, let alone praying for them first. If you are an Episcopalian, I will grant you that in your prayer book there is a prayer for those in authority. It is a good thing it is there. But I will tell you something else from personal experience as an Anglican. It is one thing to say a prayer, and another thing to pray. These two things are not the same. A lot of people say things out of a prayer book and if you ask them five minutes later what they said, they cannot remember. It is simply a formality.

What is the first specific topic for prayer? "All who are in authority." This means the president, vice-president, senators, representatives, governors, mayors, even police commissioners — that is, "all." Do you pray for them? When did you last pray for our president? Which did you last do—criticize or pray? If you pray for people in authority, you will have less to criticize. God did not call you to criticize; He called you to pray. If you are not praying, you are disobedient. I am just a Britisher [This was originally published before Derek Prince became a U.S. citizen.], but I pray for the President almost every day. My wife will bear me witness. We pray together, and there is rarely a day that we do not pray for the leader of this great nation. I am sure that he needs prayer, and my impression is that our present president knows that he needs prayer.



Alabama Football Team prays for President Trump

What are we to pray for in relation to those in authority? It is the most logical unfolding of prayer that I can find anywhere in the Bible. In the second part of verse 2 we are told to pray *"that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence."* In one simple phrase: **"good government."** Would you not agree to that? If we are to live a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence, we must have good government. In verse 3 Paul continues, "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior." To what does "this" refer? To the preceding clause, "that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence"—more briefly, "that we may have good government."

Why does God want quietness and order and good government? For a very real and practical reason. Because He desires "that all men be saved and come into the knowledge of the truth." Under what circumstances is it easier to bring the truth to all men? Under a government that is just and impartial and maintains law and order and civil liberties? Or under a government that cannot suppress violence and disorder and cannot control the situation and is unjust and dictatorial*? Which kind of government makes it easier to bring the truth to all men? Any sensible person would have to answer: a good government.* That is why God wants good government, because it forwards the propagation of the gospel, which is His aim in this dispensation. There is nothing difficult, there is nothing complicated, it is entirely sensible and practical.

Let me say it again! **The Bible says: First of all in Christian activity—pray.** *The first topic for prayer is all those in authority.* I believe that it is the will of God for us to have a good government. Let us not talk about other countries or nations. Let us concentrate on this one. Good government for the United States is the will of God.

What does the Bible say will happen if we pray for things according to God's will? First John 5:14-15 tells us: *"Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him."* In other words, if you know that you are praying according to the will of God, then you know that God hears you; and if you know that God hears you, you know you have the petition that you presented. If it is the will of God for this nation to have good government, and if we pray for good government knowing it is the will of God, we know that God hears us; and if we know that God hears us, we know we have the petition that we desired. If we do not have good government, what is the reason? God's people have not met His conditions and prayed.

Generally speaking, you can say that *Christians get the kind of government they deserve.* There is a time lag. It does not happen instantly. **But by and large, Christians are responsible for the government they live under. If you would take less time to criticize and more time to pray, you would have less to criticize.**

For Personal Prayer:

- In this devotional study we see why we should pray for those in authority. The steps are clear from the 1 Timothy passage. What is your response to Paul's conclusion? Do you see new implications to praying for good government? The issue is not political, is it? The real goal is the expansion of God's kingdom and the salvation of many in this day of grace. With this goal, we can pray for those in authority.
- Paul prayed for rulers in the Roman government. The laws were to be obeyed (see Romans 13), and believers were to pray for the often cruel and despotic government leaders. But they were to pray for a reason and with purpose. Have you settled the matter that you may be praying for a president you didn't vote for? The ultimate goal is that those we pray for, if not already Christians, will be converted and thus, as Christians, will govern righteously.

- As we agree with the unfolding steps of these four verses, we see how gracious God is to want "all" (as many as will receive His grace) to be saved. Only then will we be prepared to shift our focus to God's glory above our own goals. Thus, we repeat the challenge – are we willing to witness to the power of the Gospel? First Timothy 2:1-4 teaches us to want peaceful conditions because God wants many more people to be saved. And to be saved, lost people must hear and respond to the Gospel message. Perhaps some of those salvation decisions will come out of our own witness. It is an exciting challenge.
- For many of us, this opens a new doorway of both challenge and opportunity. We may be a shy introvert, more at home in the prayer closet than sharing our testimony. That's all right. Paul assured the Corinthians, *"I planted the seed; Apollos watered it, but it is God who made it grow"* (1 Corinthians 3:6). As we yield to His purposes, God can and will use each believer to fulfill His eternal plan. With that perspective, a life lived in God's purpose and for God's glory will create a powerful witness to the Gospel.

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Day Five: INTERVENTION IN THE SPIRITUAL REALM

Why are God's people responsible? Because we are the only people who have the means to accomplish the results. *"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places"* (Ephesians 6:12). Paul says, "We wrestle." Some Christians punctuate this verse incorrectly. They read, "We wrestle not"—period! That is not what Paul says. Paul says, "We wrestle—but not against flesh and blood." Paul was taking his metaphor from the ancient Olympic Games. Historians agree that of the various contests in the Olympic Games, wrestling made the greatest demands upon the participants. Our Christian experience may best be compared to a wrestling match. In wrestling, no holds are barred. Every part of your being is involved. This is the Christian life. We are in a wrestling match, but not against flesh and blood. Paul says that we are not fighting human beings.

What are we fighting against?

- "Principalities"—unseen kingdoms.
- "Powers"—the realms of authority occupied by these unseen kingdoms.

- "The rulers of the darkness of this age"—more literally, "the world rulers of the present darkness."
- "Spiritual wickedness"—more literally, "spirits of wickedness."

Where is the contest taking place? "In high places," or more literally, "in heavenly places." This is a revelation of the Word of God that every Christian should know**. There is an organized kingdom set up in opposition to God and to all God's purposes. I**t is the kingdom of Satan. Jesus said that Satan has a kingdom. Furthermore, he said that Satan is in complete control of it. It is not divided, and it is in total opposition to God.

This kingdom is set up in an area called "the heavenly places." The majority of Bible commentators would agree that this is not "the third heaven," which is God's dwelling place, and it is not the first heaven, which is the visible heaven, but it is the second or intermediate heaven. There is an unseen kingdom that is above the level of this world, and it is the kingdom of darkness. It is a kingdom in total opposition and in complete unrelenting hatred towards God, all God's purposes, and all God's people. This includes you and me. The devil hates you with all that is in him. He will do everything he can to harm you and to destroy you. He comes to steal, to kill, and to destroy. He is an extremely powerful person. Thankfully, however, he is not more powerful than our Lord Jesus Christ – indeed, he is not as powerful.

It is our business as Christians to bring this kingdom down. It cannot be done by presidents or generals, because they do not have the weapons. If it were a question of fighting against flesh and blood, we would turn loose the tanks and armored cars and the airplanes. But tanks and armored cars and airplanes are totally ineffective, because it is not against flesh and blood.

Many of the political leaders are coming to the same conclusion. They may not use the language but the implication is there. It is clear to me that almost all the political leaders in this country acknowledge that they are facing problems for which they do not have the answers. That is exactly what the Bible says.

It is not against flesh and blood. You can kill Nazis, but you cannot kill Nazism. You can kill endless numbers of men, but you do not deal with the spiritual forces behind them. Merely killing men is not going to solve the problem. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 10:3-5, *"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh"*—our warfare is not in the fleshly realm, it is not in the carnal realm, it is not against flesh and blood. *"For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal"*—they are not bombs, guns, or tanks, but they are *"mighty in God for pulling down strongholds."* This refers to Satan's strongholds.

Note where the strongholds are! *"Casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ."* The alternative reading for "arguments" is "reasonings**." The warfare is in the realm of the mind: reasonings, imaginations, thoughts, and knowledge. You cannot change a man's attitude by executing him. He will go out with the same attitudes.**

We are not wrestling against flesh and blood. We are on a different plane; we have different enemies, we have different weapons. But **the weapons which God has given us are mighty!**

They are invincible, if we will use them. If we are defeated, it is not through a lack of armor. It is through the failure to use it.

I believe that behind every kingdom, every nation, and every great city, there is an invisible, evil rulership. There is a rulership over the state of Florida, there is also an invisible spiritual power controlling Miami. [Florida and Miami are not being singled out as especially evil places; they represent where the author was living at the time this original study was written.]

I have traveled widely, and I have noticed that when you go to certain cities you can feel the presence of spiritual powers. They are not always the same. I was in Berlin a couple of years ago, and the atmosphere was impregnated with sexual impurity and lust. Other cities have different influences. In Chicago the prevailing spirit is one of violence. In New Orleans it is witchcraft. If you are sensitive, you can feel the unseen powers that dominate and control. There is never a breakthrough in the kingdom of God until these spiritual powers have been brought into subjection by prayer. When that happens, the avalanche of revival will flood a nation or a kingdom or a city. The great barrier to a real move of God is in the unseen realm.

This was vividly illustrated some years ago [1950s] in Argentina. A missionary by the name of Miller went to Argentina with many plans for carrying out God's work. But God shut him up in a little mud church for more than a month, and all he could do was pray. He prayed until the spiritual powers controlling Argentina were brought into subjection. In that very strongly Roman Catholic country, God miraculously opened the way for the largest stadium in the whole country to be taken over by a little insignificant American preacher whom nobody knew. At the end of a month 200,000 people were gathering daily to listen to his message. This is one of the most remarkable moves of God recorded in church history and was the result of binding the unseen forces.



An Old Testament example of spiritual powers is found in Daniel 10. Daniel set himself to pray for 21 days with special earnestness for divine intervention on behalf of his people. At the end of this period an angel came with a revelation that was the answer to his prayers. The angel told Daniel: *"From the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I come because of your words" (verse 12).* Daniel prayed for 21 days, yet his prayer was heard the first day. Why did he have to wait 21 days for the answer? In verse 13 the angel went on to give the reason: *"But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me."* This "prince of the kingdom of Persia" was not a human being. These events did not

take place on the human plane. It was an angel who brought the message, and it was an angel who opposed the angelic messenger. Another angel, Michael, came to the assistance of the first angel. This was a spiritual warfare of angels in the heavenlies.

Notice, it was what happened on earth that decided the course of events in heaven. This is a tremendous truth. Nothing happened until Daniel started to pray**. *It was Daniel's prayers that got the angel through, not the angel that got Daniel through. Daniel got the angel through! If only God's people would see that the issues are settled by us. They are not even settled by the angels.***

Revelation 12:11 tells us: *"They"*—God's people on earth—*"overcame him"*—Satan—*"by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony."* We are the decisive factor in the affairs of the universe. I am not exaggerating one bit. If Daniel had not prayed, things would never have happened in heaven. He had to pray for 21 days to get the answer. What delayed the answer? This was not because Daniel did not pray according to the will of God. There was nothing wrong with his prayer. Satan, in the person of the prince of the kingdom of Persia, was the reason for the delay.

Many times you do not get your prayer answered, not because you are praying wrongly, but simply because you have to pray that wicked old prince out of the way. If you are not prepared to do it, you will not get the answer to your prayer. You have to pray through. You have to challenge Satan. Most people are afraid to do this. If you get into this realm, you will face problems and temptations that do not come the way of the average Christian. Unseen forces will be directed against any person who sets himself to praying intelligently for those in authority. If you do not have any guts and gumption, do not even begin. My language may seem unrefined, but I mean it.

n verse 20, after the revelation had been granted, the angel said: *"Do you know why I have come to you? And now I must return to fight with the prince of Persia; and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece will come."* None of these are human beings. They are the satanic rulers behind the early kingdoms. These kingdoms are significant because they were the ones that successively dominated the Holy Land. First Babylon, then Persia, then Greece, then Rome. Behind every one was a major satanic prince. The issue of events was decided not in the heavenly realm but on the earth below, by the prayer of one man, Daniel.

For Personal Prayer:

- This Bible lesson in spiritual warfare is a fitting conclusion to our five-day devotional series on praying for the government. While not all intercessors are called to the intense degree of spiritual warfare described here, still all who pray seriously soon learn that prayer is a struggle involving far more than asking God to change people's opinions.
- Where do you find yourself today in your prayer life? We have tried to encourage each reader's personal experience in prayer as preparation for next steps in praying for the government. The important thing for each of us is to move forward as our faith allows and guides us. Praying for revival in and across America is not the work of one week or

one month. Indeed, the present generation may be doing the groundwork for the next generation's Great Awakening.

- None of us becomes a Daniel simply by wishing or longing. Just as an Olympic swimming career begins at the shallow end of the pool, so in prayer we move slowly but surely forward until we are ready for the deeper water. Keep a journal, perhaps, and record all your "ups and downs" as your prayer experience develops maturity.
- Above all, keep on praying. Never give up. Keep your focus. Ask questions. Study God's word. A prayer mentor from the last generation once said, "The only way you can fail at prayer is to stop praying before the issue is resolved." Let that be our encouragement.

*Derek Prince (1915-2003) was an internationally known Bible teacher and a "founding father" of IFA. Born in India of British parents, he became an American citizen primarily due to his unwavering belief that our biblical heritage made America the strongest hope to ignite a revival for the restoration of godly government and a restoration of biblical standards before the return of Jesus Christ, Lord of the Church. His best known book among intercessors (*Shaping History through Prayer and Fasting*) portrayed his belief in prayer and fasting to receive God's highest blessings, both for individuals and for our nation.* Praying for the Government *was originally published in* New Wine *magazine in the 1970s. It is available from IFA as a booklet, and is the basis for these devotionals. In general, we present the author's own words; however, some editorial adjustments are made for space and clarity.*

