

Pray For Righteousness

The turmoil of our times is not new to the history of mankind, not even to our own nation. The uncertainties and unrest that seem to be prevailing have been before. The injustices that are repeated are rooted in the ungodly character of men, which gives rise to deceit, greed and corruption. When men and their governments lean on their own understanding, there is always growing trouble in the land.

Jehovah God is “ruler over the realm of mankind” (Daniel 4:17). He acts in the affairs of men, powers and principalities “according to His will” (4:35). He lifts up a nation and He brings down a nation all in accord with His justice. “Let the name of God be blessed forever and ever, for wisdom and power belong to Him. It is He who changes the times and the epochs; He removes kings and establishes kings;...” (2:20-21). The rise and fall of kingdoms are all under His watchful eyes and His holy purpose. “The LORD has made everything for its own purpose, even the wicked for the day of evil” (Proverbs 16:4). Even rumors of wars and wars ought not to cause believers, who put their trust in the Most High, to despair.

Governing authorities have been ordained by God (cf. Romans 13:1). There is no authority that exists over which God doesn't ultimately rule. Even Pontius Pilate's power was given to him according to the greater divine purpose (cf. John 19:11). Ideally, civil authorities are God's ministers for good, for wrath and for justice (cf. Romans 13:4). Christians are to be exemplary citizens of their countries, abiding by the laws of the land and showing respect to those in office (cf. Romans 13:1, 7).

“Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people” (Proverbs 14:34). Although the role of governments is to bring justice and order in societies, it does not eliminate the free will of people and leaders to act and to rule unwisely and ungodly. Power can be corrupted. Man's laws can promote unrighteousness. Men can believe a lie because they want it so in order to pursue selfish ambitions and pleasures.

The unrighteousness that prevails among our leaders today calls for fervent prayers – prayers for God's righteousness to be implanted. God, who “desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:4), calls upon Christians to pray for all men who are in authority. “First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity” (2:1, 2). We may feel that our voice is not heard in the land, that our concerns are not being rightfully represented and upheld, but we serve the God who changes times and epochs, who establishes rulers for His purpose and glory, so pray and pray and pray some more. “... The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much” (James 5:16).