

A BIBLICAL MANDATE FOR 24-7 PRAYER



Throughout Scripture, God calls His people to a life of constant communion with Him through prayer, worship and intercession. This document explores the biblical foundations for night-and-day prayer and the vital role of watchmen who stand in continuous spiritual vigilance. As we seek to align earth with the realities of heaven, 24-7 prayer emerges not as a human idea but as a divine mandate, empowering believers to live missionally, impact their communities and fulfil God's promises through unceasing fellowship with Him.

1. Scriptural basis for night-and-day prayer

The concept of night-and-day prayer is rooted in several Scriptures and Biblical principles:

- God watches over us 24 hours a day (**Psalms 121**), and in His Word, He calls us to watch and pray with Him.
- **Revelation 4-5** shows that angels and the 24 elders worship God literally night-and-day.
- The Bible teaches us to pray that God's will be done on earth as it is in heaven. In heaven, there is only praise, worship and intercession, continuing 24 hours a day. Thus, we believe that praise, worship and intercession should take place on earth 24 hours a day through 24-hour prayer watches.
- In the Old Testament, the fire on the altar was kept burning continually as a symbol of ongoing praise, worship, intercession and reconciliation (**Leviticus 6:12-13**).
- God appoints watchmen on the walls to pray for the fulfilment of His promises (**Isaiah 62:6-7**).
- God promises justice to those who call to Him night-and-day (**Luke 18:7-8**).
- Paul often spoke of night-and-day intercession for the church and for the advancement of the gospel.
- **Revelation 4:8-11** highlights the ceaseless worship of God in heaven.
- **Lamentations 2:18-19** calls for prayerful intercession for the next generation.

2. Benefits of night-and-day prayer

A 24-7 prayer watch helps to:

- Fulfil God's command for the Church to be a house of prayer for the nations (**Isaiah 56:7**).
- Deepen intercessors' relationship with God.
- Focus prayer on bringing in the harvest.
- Pray continually for personal needs and the needs of the community.
- Promote perseverance in prayer.
- Foster unity among believers, churches and denominations.
- Encourage intercessors by reminding them that they are not praying alone.

- Impact communities and the world, as history has shown.

3. Prayer and action

Prayer is not an end in itself. True prayer brings us into fellowship with God the Father, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. As we grow in intimacy with Jesus, He reveals His heart to us and leads us to people in need.

Real prayer strengthens us to live out the Great Commandment (to love) and the Great Commission (to go). It always leads to action: touching people's lives with the love and compassion of Christ.

Prayer must:

- Lead to a missional lifestyle.
- Strengthen us to follow Jesus regardless of the cost.
- Produce compassion towards all in need.
- Foster peace, reconciliation and love among Christians.
- Bring us into deeper intimacy with Jesus.
- Empower us through the Holy Spirit to be witnesses of Jesus' love to the ends of the earth.

Some people pray just to pray, and some people pray to know God.

— Andrew Murray

4. A short study on the word 'watch' in Scripture

In **Genesis 2:15**, God appointed mankind as His representatives, assigning them as watchmen and guardians of the Garden of Eden. The Hebrew word for 'watch' is *shamar*, one of three key Old Testament words for watchman. The other two are *natsar* and *tsaphah*. All three words imply protection and defence, as well as aggressive, offensive action - meaning to guard, to protect, to preserve.

In Greek, 'to guard' is expressed as *gregoreuo* and *agrupneo*, both meaning 'to be awake or sleepless', emphasising vigilance.

Historically, watchmen were responsible for:

- Looking after crops.
- Keeping watch for enemies on city walls.

Today, as in ancient times, the services of watchmen are essential to watch over and protect God's harvest (**John 17:12; Isaiah 62:6; Ezekiel 22:30**).

Pray often, for prayer is a shield to the soul, a sacrifice to God, and a scourge for Satan.

— John Bunyan