

WHEN A NATURAL DISASTER STRIKES



Do you feel overwhelmed as you learn of yet another calamity that has struck a nation somewhere? Do you sometimes feel helpless as images of people in crisis flash across your media screens? It can be that you feel it is impossible to keep up in prayer as several disasters continue to hit the globe. Following are some thoughts you may consider in prayer for all these different circumstances.

The importance of keeping perspective

At a time like this, it is important to establish a lifestyle of listening to the Lord in prayer. Cultivate the habit of daily spending time with the Lord to listen to His voice. Listen to how and what He wants you to pray for. You may find that the promptings of the Holy Spirit change over time. Do not become overwhelmed by the many requests for prayer and help that flood social media – just be sure you fully yield to do only what the Holy Spirit shows you at a particular day and time.

Things to pray for on the ground

When you hear of a disaster somewhere in the world, whether it be a flood, fire, earthquake, mudslide, tsunami, etc., you can use the following prayer guidelines.

- Pray for search and rescue teams as they continue to search for survivors. Pray for God's supernatural intervention and help to save people.
- Pray for international humanitarian teams to be dispatched to disaster areas without delay, and for various nationalities to work well together.
- Pray that rescued children will be reunited with family or a trusted caregiver, shielded from exploitation, abuse or trafficking, and nurtured in an environment of safety, love and hope.
- Pray for the effective provision and distribution of food, water and medical supplies to affected areas where people are in desperate need.
- Pray for the setting up of safe shelters to house people for the immediate and medium term, while waiting for alternative housing to be put into place.

- Ask the Lord to raise up and send counsellors to help survivors deal with the trauma they are experiencing – both their physical and emotional trauma in the light of the losses suffered.
- Pray for God's mercy so there will not be any devastation caused by further seismic activity, cyclones, heavy rainfall, strong winds, etc.
- Let us pray for God's intervention amidst every tragedy taking place across the globe, and for many souls to pour into God's kingdom. Pray for Christians to boldly proclaim Christ and demonstrate the love of Jesus wherever they are.
- Sanctions against certain nations can over time radically diminished the availability of resources and humanitarian help to reach out to those who are devastated by war, famine and natural disasters. This will also impact the rescue efforts and the rebuilding of damaged infrastructure. Please pray for such sanctions to be reconsidered at the time of disaster and for help and assistance to be made available as soon as possible, for as long as is needed. Also, that there will not be any hindrances due to unnecessary bureaucracy and red tape, and no corruption.
- Pray for the church to become 'salt and light', visible on the ground in providing help, counsel, comfort and the gospel of God's kingdom. Pray for the church to be strong, courageous and bold in this. Also pray for many instant miracles and healings to take place as they pray for and minister to victims.
- Pray for the cleaning up of the rubble to be underway in areas struck by floods, earthquakes or other disasters. Especially for engineers to inspect the safety of remaining buildings, dam walls, etc. in affected areas. Pray for help to reach the affected areas from surrounding nations—financially, humanitarian help, and especially medical supplies and the setting up of temporary hospitals and shelters.
- Humanitarian help and rescue teams usually remain in an area for up to 3 months. The greatest need arises once they pull out of an area. Please pray for the global church to establish projects that can reach out with tangible and sustainable help to the affected areas once these teams are pulled out.
- Pray for road repairs and bypasses to be built to reconnect areas that are cut off from main routes. Restored road connections will allow larger deliveries of food, medicines and other essential supplies to be brought to devastated areas.
- In disaster areas, outbreaks of diseases such as Malaria, Cholera etc. are a looming health problem. Pray for the building of field hospitals as well as water purification systems to be made available. Without clean drinking water, cholera will overwhelm communities in some areas. These diseases affect both people and animals. Floodwaters often drain away very slowly and this creates much bigger problems than when floodwaters quickly flow away.

Pray for the Church

- For believers everywhere to consciously and practically prepare themselves to be ready, should any disaster have a direct influence on them, their loved ones or their community.
- That they will have such an intimate and established relationship with the Lord that they will not feel overwhelmed but have a clear understanding of exactly what to do to help and support others in need.
- For churches to consider disaster management strategies as part of normal ministry, as well as to prepare their congregation on how to minister to and help people, both practically and spiritually, in such a situation.
- Ask for God's grace upon communities, that strong Believers will arise and play a significant role in portraying God's hope for the future and encourage people to stand together in rebuilding their communities.
- Ask that non-Christians will meet Jesus-followers who can comfort them and demonstrate God's love to them. *And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper (Comforter, Advocate, Intercessor—Counselor, Strengtheners, Standby), to be with you forever.* (John 14:16).

It is time to take up our authority in Christ Jesus

Desperate times call for extraordinary faith in action! As children of God, we have been given authority on earth. We are never to view ourselves as subdued by circumstances, but rather as seated in heavenly places with Christ (Ephesians 2:6) who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing (Ephesians 1:3). What does this mean? The following passage from the *Amplified Classic Bible* gives us a wonderful perspective in the words of the Lord Jesus Himself:

Matthew 18:18-20 - *Truly I tell you, whatever you forbid and declare to be improper and unlawful on earth must be what is already forbidden in heaven, and whatever you permit and declare proper and lawful on earth must be what is already permitted in heaven. 19 Again I tell you, if two of you on earth agree (harmonize together, make a symphony together) about whatever [anything and everything] they may ask, it will come to pass and be done for them by My Father in heaven. 20 For wherever two or three are gathered (drawn together as My followers) in (into) My name, there I AM in the midst of them. [Exod. 3:14.]*

This simply means that when, for example a storm approaches, we must take time with the Lord in prayer and listen to what He is saying to us concerning the specific matter. According to the leading of the Holy Spirit, and when we fully submit to His perfect will, we have authority to subdue that storm into obedience to the word of the Lord. When we pray like this in unity and humility, the Lord will bring about breakthroughs and answers to our prayers, averting calamity.

We can boldly pray for the supernatural rescue of individuals in impossible situations, for sharp eyes and ears to spot those in need of help, and for the multiplication of existing food resources to feed multitudes.

It also means that, in the case of an earthquake, we can pray that rescuers will supernaturally 'hear' survivors calling, that people will be fed with food and drink while still trapped, that heavy pieces of rubble will be lifted by those who seem weak in strength, that supernatural healings and restoration of broken and injured limbs can take place on the spot. These things are absolutely possible for those who believe God to do the impossible.

It also means that, when there is an outbreak of a specific disease or pandemic, we can according to the specific leading of the Holy Spirit, take authority over that disease in the name of Jesus to come to an immediate end – not only in the lives of individuals, but over whole areas and nations! There are countless testimonies of such turnarounds throughout history that fill us with faith to expect this in our generation as well (Hebrews 11).

All that is needed is a listening ear, an obedient and humble heart, and believers praying together in unity as the Holy Spirit leads them. May the Lord pour out His Spirit of Holiness and boldness upon the church in this season.

Keep current with world events and statistics

The following links provide regular updates on events in the world. These resources provide strategic practical information on where to focus our prayers on a current basis:

Wars: Click [here](#).

Earthquakes: Click [here](#).

Volcanic eruptions: Click [here](#).

Global refugees: Click [here](#).

Famines: Click [here](#) and [here](#).

Natural disasters: Click [here](#).

Disease: Click [here](#).