

Is There Ever a Time We Should not Pray for People?

(Go To Meeting)

Byron Norrod—August 20, 2021

It is truly a wonderful benefit to have the Sabbath Day, to be able to relax and build our relationship with God. To have that time after a stressful week. It's a crazy time right now.

In 2019 during the Feast of Tabernacles, there was a tornado that came down through Arkansas, Oklahoma and Northeast Texas. It caused a lot of damage, that there was deaths. Interestingly, one of my sisters lives in Dallas, Texas, and her house was right in the path of the tornado. We were praying for her and we thank God that her house was spared. It was protected; it was right in the path. While others all around her, their houses were destroyed. We thank God for His protection, **but**:

- Was it really a work of God protecting her and her home?

IF it was God's work of protection, if we believe that, ***THEN*** do we believe—on the flipside—that the people whose homes were destroyed, or whose lives were lost:

- Was that punishment from God?
- Did He send that tornado as punishment?

Yes, my sister's house was protected! OR:

- Was it that God allowed time and chance?
- Was He just staying His hand from good or from evil?
- Do we believe that this tornado could have been an example of God's punishment?

We do see God using natural events, natural causes to punish people, individuals, nations, families all through the Bible. Look at ancient Egypt. It had endured many plagues so that God could finally get what He wanted, then allowed His people to go free. ***God used the forces of nature to punish them!***

Num. 16—God used an earthquake to quash a rebellion. We see Him use barrenness, fires, floods, locust, lack of rain, plague, drought, captivities, enemies. God has many tools in His toolbox that He can use and bring about His desired effect.

Conversely, God has also used natural forces to be a blessing to those who are righteous:

- Abraham and his seed enjoy wonderful blessings

- King David always have an heir—a seed—to reign over Israel
- Jacob vs Laban where God blessed Jacob and increased his flocks and wealth

It could be easy for many Christians to believe in a prosperity doctrine, where we think that God blesses us directly for obedience.

Yes, He does promise blessings for obedience, and there is that, and we can count on His blessings. Yet, we also have to realize that there are so many cases in the Bible that supremely righteous were not blessed. How many prophets...

We do have Job, Abraham and David were very wealthy. But most of the prophets were not.

- Isaiah walked for three years poor and naked
- John the Baptist had very meager clothing and possessions
- Peter and John said, 'Silver and gold have I none, but I do have I can give to you,' and they healed a man

As a matter of fact, we also see that God gives us trials that will help prepare us to enter into the Kingdom of God. How do we read this?

Back to the Dallas tornado: I personally know of one individual who had been in the Church of God, went to Ambassador College, became graduate with a bachelor's degree in theology. But now this person is living an openly Godless lifestyle:

- rejecting God
- rejecting Truth
- rejecting so many of the things we believe

Interestingly, during that tornado that person's house and car were badly damaged. I don't know if the house was permanently destroyed or if could be repaired, I just don't know. That was really a significant thing!

- if I believe that my sister's house was protected
- if I believe that God may have sent that tornado as punishment
- if I believe that AC graduate's home and possessions were damaged or destroyed because their rejection of Him
- What is my Christian responsibility toward that person?

Is There Ever a Time
We Should not Pray for People?
(Go To Meeting)

- Do extend my hand and offer assistance?
- Do I say I'll help them out?
- Do I send relief to that person because I personally know/knew them?
- Do I pray for them?
- Do I say 'be warmed and filled' and pat them on the head and go on and not help?
- Do I wish them well?
- Do I get tough and say, 'they made their decision, their sins be upon them' and not pray for them?
- What if I get really tough and say, 'Go get 'em God'?

Are we not almost inundated with prayer requests for those who love God; Christians in the world right now. Do you know that there are supposed to be 229 Christians in Afghanistan to be executed today? Ministers in Canada are being arrested for being Christians and holding services. People are being beheaded; the Taliban just took another big city that was the greatest Christian city in Afghanistan.

- Do they not deserve some prayers? *Jesus said that if they're not against us, they're taking our part!*
- Can you not pray for them? *I can!*

If we're almost inundated with prayer requests for those who love God, might our time be better spent praying exclusively for those who love God?

- if I had nothing to give or share
- if I were bedridden and could do nothing physically and give nothing financially

Out of the goodness of my heart, should I pray for people who overtly are God-rejecting sinners. **Is there ever a time when we should not pray for people?** *I'm not going to answer the question right away!*

2-John 9: "Anyone who transgresses and does not continue in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. *But* the one who continues in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into *your* house, and **do not say to him, 'Welcome!'** For anyone who says, 'Welcome!' to him **is partaking in his evil works**" (vs 9-11). *We can't do that!*

Jeremiah was sent to Judah. The northern 10 tribes of Israel had already gone into captivity, and this is during the captivity of Jehoiakim.

Ezek. 14 is often cited and the idols that people setup in their heart. God says, 'I will answer

those people directly from Me, according to the number of idols that they have in their own hearts.'

Jeremiah 8:5—*God says*: "Why has this people of Jerusalem slidden back *by* a never-ending backsliding?...."

- How are ***we*** backsliding?
- Are ***we*** doing all we can?
- Are ***we*** serving God as much as we possibly can?
- Are ***we*** praying all that we should?
- Are ***we*** fasting like we should?
- Are ***we*** attending services if we can?
- Are ***we*** sharing one another's burdens?
- Are ***we*** 'iron sharpening iron'?
- Are ***we*** talking to one another?
- How are ***we*** backsliding?

"...**They hold fast to deceit**... [Can this be talking to us? *I don't want to hold fast to deceit!*]**they refuse to repent**. I listened and heard, *but* they did not speak right; no man repented of his wickedness..." (vs 5-6).

Verse 7: "Yea, the stork in heaven knows her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow watch the time of their migration; **but My people do not know the judgment of the LORD.**"

Even the dumb animals that have it built into them so they know what time they should migrate, going back and forth and doing the things that God has setup in them to do. They are listening to the communication of the Father and Jesus Christ! They have communication with God, and it says that God is communication with them and that they will also praise Him.

How do animals praise God? *I believe that God can speak any animal language that there is! Dr. Dolittle to the max!* God know how to speak penguin, donkey, gerbil and shark. He can tell them all what He wants them to do, and they can do His bidding!

Verse 10: "...From the prophet even to the priest everyone deals falsely."

Verse 14: "...For the LORD our God has doomed us and has given us poisonous water to drink **because we have sinned against the LORD.**"

Verse 14: "Why do we sit still?...." When the people are being punished, they're finally getting it! Finally dawning on them!

"...Gather yourselves, and let us enter into the fortified cities, and let us perish there. For the LORD our God has doomed us and has given us

poisonous water to drink... [and they get it]:
...**because we have sinned against the LORD**" (v
14). *They finally get that God is punishing them!*

If God is punishing them, is there anything
that we could possibly do to help them that God
would undo. That person in Dallas that I knew, let's
say that God was punishing that person. Let's say
that I get real generous and I send him \$5,000.

Do you know what's going to happen? *If
God is punishing that person, that \$5,000 will be
squandered, eaten up by termites.* They will find
some other problem, there will be a structural issue
and that \$5,000 would be absorbed and it will
evaporate.

Why? *Because God is working with that
person to try to bring them to repentance.* He will do
whatever He has to do to get that person's attention.
Is there any help that we can do that God will not
undo in their time of calamity? *No, because God will
absorb it!* However, there is some good that can
come of that.

Will that person not realize, later, that we
might have been planting a seed for them and
showing generosity, out of the goodness of our
heart. Even though the \$5,000 was absorbed by
termites, the person might still remember it, and they
might remember that we might have said, 'Listen
this might be a wakeup call for you. You might want
to take advantage of this and see if God is trying to
tell you something.' *That can be a witness for their
behavior!*

Jeremiah 7:12: "'But now go to My place
which was in Shiloh, where I set My name at the
first... [in other words, these are God's people He's
talking to] ...and see what I did to it for the
wickedness of My people Israel. And now because
you have done all these works,' says the LORD,
'and I spoke to you, rising up early and speaking,
but you did not hear; and I called you, **but you did
not answer**; therefore, I will do to *this* house...'"
(vs 12-14).

Could God be doing it to *our house, our
spiritual house* if we are backsliding? If we are not
repenting? *He absolutely could!*

"...which is called by My name, in which
you trust, and to the place which I gave to you and to
your fathers, as I have done to Shiloh. And I will
cast you out of My sight, as I have cast out all your
brethren, the whole seed of Ephraim. Therefore...
[talking specifically to Jeremiah] ...^{#1}**do not pray
for this people, nor lift up cry nor prayer for
them, nor make intercession to Me; for I will not
hear you.** Do you not see what they do in the cities
of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem?" (vs 14-17).

God is saying:

Look, you've got to wake up, Jeremiah. I'm
telling you, these people need to be punished
and I'm not going to hear you. Don't pray to
Me, I'm not hearing!

Jeremiah 11:14: "And you, ^{#2}**do not pray
for this people, nor lift up a cry or prayer for
them.** For I will not hear *them* when they call to Me
in the time of their distress."

Jeremiah 14:11: "Then the LORD said to
me, ^{#3}**Do not pray for this people for good.**
When they fast, **I will not hear their cry**; and when
they offer burnt offering and a grain offering, I will
not accept them. But I will consume them by the
sword, and by the famine, and by the plague'" (vs
11-12). *Tough stuff! Three times God says that!*

- Does this apply to us today?
- Are these words that God instructed
Jeremiah for us to listen to?
- **Is there ever a time when we should not
pray for people?**

Isaiah 9:18: "For wickedness burns like the
fire; it shall devour the briars and thorns, and shall
kindle in the thickets of the forest... [talking about
the people are fodder for the fire] ...and they shall
roll upwards *like* the lifting up of smoke. Through
the wrath of the LORD of hosts is the land scorched,
and the people shall be as the fuel for the fire; no
man shall spare his brother" (vs 18-19).

- If God is scorching the land, should we
pray for them?
- Will any prayer for them help anything?

Isaiah 5:25: "Therefore, the anger of the
LORD is kindled against His people, and He has
stretched out His hand against them, and has stricken
them; and the hills trembled, and their dead bodies
were as filth in the midst of the streets. **In all this
His anger is not turned away, but His hand is
stretched out still.**" *He saying that He's going to
punish them, they will suffer consequences for their
actions, and yet,*

I'm reaching out My hand to help them. If they
want My help and if they well repent, I will
accept their repentance.

As long as there is breath, there's hope!

I have to paint the picture so we can
understand as much as we possibly can. We're going
to dig a little deeper. In the Psalm, King David is the
king of ***imprecatory*** prayers. What is that? *Invoking
evil upon your enemy!* An imprecatory prayer is not

a beneficial prayer. It's one that asks God to punish them, teach them a lesson and help cause them to do right, wake up and brake their bones.

David was king of this! He says it so many times! David can almost sound vindictive or evil himself by some of the words that he says.

Psalm 69:22: "Let their table become a snare before them; and when they are at peace, let it become a trap. Let their eyes be darkened, so that they do not see; and make their loins shake without ceasing. Pour out Your indignation upon them, and let the fierceness of anger take hold of them. Let their encampment be desolate; let none dwell in their tents, for they persecute him whom You have stricken, and they recount the grief of those You have wounded. Add iniquity unto their iniquity, and let them not come into Your righteousness. Let them be blotted out of the Book of Life and not be written with the righteous" (vs 22-28).

Pretty tough stuff! David is not pulling any punches there, is he?

Psalm 58:6: "O God, break their teeth in their mouth; shatter the fangs of the **young lions**, O LORD." *Young princes who are trying to showoff and show how powerful they are!* Yet, they're causing trouble; so they're just young toughts!

Psalm 59:1: "Deliver me from my enemies, O my God; defend me from those who rise up against me. Deliver me from the workers of evil and save me from bloody men" (vs 1-2).

Verse 5: "And You therefore, O LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel, awake to punish all the nations; show no mercy to any wicked traitors. Selah." *Think about it; say it again!*

Verse 12: "For the sin of their mouth and the word of their lips, let them even be taken in their pride, and for the cursing and lying, which they speak."

What do we do with these? *The answer is:*

Verse 13: "Consume them in wrath; consume... [Why is David praying this imprecation?] ...so that they may be no more; and **let them know that God rules in Jacob to the ends of the earth.** Selah."

Psalm 58:11: "So that a man shall say, **'Truly, there is a reward for the righteous; truly, there is a God Who is judging in the earth.'**"

- Do we get it?
- What's David doing?

He's praying these imprecations because:

- David wants God to move now against the enemy; against the evildoers
- David wants God to show Him strong and faithful for the righteous
- David wants God to show Himself and spank those who are the troublemakers

To make sure that they don't get away with it so that they will know that there is a true God in Israel!

- these are *spiritual* causes
- these are *spiritual* enemies

Not just somebody that we don't like!

If we pray imprecatory prayers, if we pray these prayers for punishment on others, there are some guidelines:

We should not pray against people in the Church, people who are doing God's Word, serving God!

Why? Because now you're calling on God to make a judgment between them—whom you don't like—and you! If they're in the Church and serving God, don't pray against them!

If it's your neighbor who has dog that yaps too much, and you pray prayers of mold in his house, cause it to rain in his house so he has to leave. **NO!** that's not a spiritual enemy.

Our spiritual enemies should be the enemies of God! So, we don't pray bad prayers against people whom God is working with or through. ***But we can pray:***

- against spiritual wickedness in high places
- using God's Holy Spirit to help us discern patently evil people
- against those who are in league with the devil
- against those who are implacably rejecting God
- against those of reprobate minds (Rom. 1)
- against those who are doing child-trafficking, molestation, terrible pornography, murderers, drug dealing and whatnot

Yet, was not Paul doing some of these things, persecuting the Church and they murdered Stephen. Paul was right there, a participant!

Another thing to site on the side of not praying for people, Paul in:

1-Corinthians 16:22: "**If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ let him be accursed.** Our Lord shall come!"

What do we do with these? *In Matt. 25 we begin to see what to do with some of this ambiguity!* God uses these ambiguities in His use of natural events:

1. Revelation 3:19: “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten...”
2. He allows time and chance
3. there is punishment

Ezekiel 14:21—*God says: “...**I send My four evil judgments...the sword, and the famine, and the destroying beast, and the pestilence...**”*

- God will punish!
- God will not be mocked!
- God will send His judgment!

Before we discuss this section about God telling Jeremiah not to pray for the people, let’s see a wider scope of God’s instruction regarding prayer.

1-Thessalonians 5:17: “Pray unceasingly.” The *KJV* says “Pray without ceasing.”

Matthew 25:34: “Then shall the King say to those at His right hand, ‘Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from *the* foundation of *the* world.’”

Verse 37: “Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying...”—*after they’ve done good works!*

We are to do good works. Not that we’re earning our salvation, but our works do determine so much of what we believe. Actually, ***our belief determines our works!***

“...‘Lord, when did we see You hungry, and fed *You*? Or thirsty, and gave *You* a drink? And when did we see You a stranger, and took *You* in? Or naked, and clothed *You*? And when did we see You sick, or in prison, and came to *You*?’ And answering, the King shall say to them, ‘Truly I say to you, **inasmuch as you have done it to one of the least of these My brethren, you have done it to Me**’” (vs 37-40).

1-Timothy 2:1: “I exhort, therefore, first of all that **supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made on behalf of all men/women.**”

What about God telling Jeremiah, ‘Don’t pray for them’? There are some other instances, too. What about when Simon Magus came up to Peter and John and said, ‘I want to buy the Holy Spirit. I’ll pay you for it’? Peter replied, ‘You’re stuck in your gall of bitterness! Your money die with you!’

What did Simon Magus say? *Pray for me! Seek the Lord and pray for me!* There was no

response. (Acts 8).

I think what God was saying there was that they just shined Simon off, ‘I’m not listen.’ I don’t think they prayed for Simon, *because he had already chosen his path!*

Verse 2: “For kings and all who are in authority, in order that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life in all Godliness and respectability. For this *is* good and acceptable before God our Savior... [we should do this; this is good behavior; direct instruction] ...Who desires **all men/women to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the Truth**” (vs 2-4).

Verse 8: “Therefore, I desire that men/women everywhere pray, lifting up Holy hands without anger and *evil* opinions.”

What is Paul saying here? *That we have an obligation to pray for all men/women!* In Ezek. 22 God says that this is against the priesthood and those in the priestly line, and the leaders of the country that Ezekiel was dealing with:

- they took bribes
- they took usury
- they extorted people
- they took the best, choice pieces
- they have done violence to and profaned God’s Law
- they were unclean
- they hid their eyes

Ezekiel 22:29: “The people of the land have used oppression and committed robbery, and they have troubled the poor and needy. Yea, *they* have oppressed the stranger wrongfully. And I sought for a man among them who should build up a wall for the land, **and stand in the breach before Me...** [A breach for God?] ...so that I should not destroy it. **But I did not find one**” (vs 29-30).

Why was God seeking a man? *So He would not destroy the land, because there’s so much evil done in the land!* He wanted one man to stand up and pray for the people, *not the land!* Do you pray for the land? *I guess you can, but it’s the sins of the people that God is addressing, and that perverts the whole land!* God wanted one man to stand in the gap, specifically against the priests and unclean prophets at the time.

- Are we not qualifying to become kings and priests?
- Are we not in that pool of people from which God would like to seek one man to stand in the gap of the wall and see sin?

- Shall we not stand in the gap now for God against all the evil in this land?

God wants a man to stand in the gap so He will not destroy the land! But this is not the righteous! He doesn't want to destroy the righteous; *He wants to destroy the wicked!*

What is this for? *We have to learn the lesson that God worked to teach Moses and many of His leaders, including Isaiah!*

Exo. 32:7: and Exo 14:13-16—in one place God said, 'Moses stand aside, I'm going to destroy these people because I've had it up to here with them. Get out of the way, I'm going to make a new nations out of you.' It was a chess game! **God was in charge**, He was leading Moses in the direction that would fulfill what He was trying to teach him the action He desires. Remember how it was in Isaiah, which was in vision:

Isaiah 6:8: "And I heard the voice of the LORD, saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?' Then I said, 'Here *am I*; send me!'"

So, God led him to the conclusion that He [God] wanted him to do. That's what He did with Moses. He led him to be the intercessor and taught and trained him to be the intercessor.

That's the same with us! Should we not be saying, 'Lord, send me!' We are to learn to become the intercessors for sinful people. Yeah! They're sinners.

- we're to learn to love all people as God does
- we're to want all men/women to repent
- we're to plant seeds so that later they can come back and say:

Susan (pseudo name) prayed for me, and she helped me even when I was a sinner. She truly showed me Godly love when I was yet in my sins.

Are we not to plant those seeds?

1-Timothy 2:1: "I exhort, therefore, first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, *and* thanksgivings be made on behalf of all men."

Verse 3: "For this *is* good and acceptable before God our Savior"

Is there ever a time that we should not pray for people? NO! No there is not!

- we are to pray unceasingly
- we are to pray with Godly love
- we are to pray for all men/women

So that one day all men/women may repent! **We need to pray:**

- for them and help them as much as we can so that they can realize that we are being a witness to them
- that God compassionately shows them mercy and gives them a calling; offers and extends to them repentance, just as He did you and I while we were in our sins
- that those individuals can have a relationship with God just as God has shown us that mercy

What do we do with the instructions in Jeremiah where God told Jeremiah not to pray for those people?

I once heard of man who was visiting with a minister and a man who was not ordained and they told this man to do certain things. At the end they counseled him and said, 'You need to do this, this and that.' I do not know what the things were, and it wasn't me. They left and came back later and when they got there they gave him counsel again. They said, 'Did you do the things that we told you to do?'

The man said, 'Well, no, I didn't! I've got to be truthful, I didn't do that.'

So, the unordained man said, "Then we're not going to pray for you.' I thought, when I heard this, WOW, where's the compassion? Where's the love? Could they not see that this man:

- needed to change
- needed their help
- needed their prayers
- needed additional counseling
- needed them to continue to work with him

If the person says not to talk to him anymore, I don't want to hear it. Okay!

This man, prospective member, could not obey their instructions, so he really needed their prayers. They should have prayed with the man right then! But this is the same arrogant, self-willed, self-righteous, agenda-driven attitude of the arrogant ministry in Worldwide Church of God.

- Where is the compassion?
- Where is the love?
- Why not pray for the man?

1-Samuel 15:24: "And Saul said to Samuel, 'I have sinned, for I have disobeyed the commandment of the LORD and your word because I feared the people and obeyed their voice. And now please pardon my sin and turn again with me so that I may worship the LORD.' And Samuel said to Saul,

‘I will not return with you, for you have rejected the Word of the LORD, and the LORD has rejected you from being king over Israel’” (vs 24-26).

That and along with Simon Magus, these examples...

- What do we do with the instructions from Jeremiah?
- Not to pray for these people with these two instructions?

God gave that instruction strictly, solely, exclusively to Jeremiah!

Yes, we can take the lessons from the Bible and learn from them. But God had already made His decision about the people. He already knew that they had gone beyond repentance. *They had rejected Him!*

God knew their heart! We don't know people's hearts. We don't have purview. ***We can judge them by their actions:***

- If they are child-trafficking, *we know they're evil!*
- If they are part of the synagogue of Satan, *we can't pray for their good, bless them in their work!*

Regarding Jeremiah: God said that they are not going to change their mind! God still sat there with His hand outstretched and said He was still open to their repentance. God had already made up His mind about their spiritual condition and communicated specifically to Jeremiah, and he alone, that these people specifically had rejected repentance and actually in danger of the unpardonable sin.

He does not give us that command to not pray for anyone. We've read several of them where it says that we should pray for them.

In the case of Saul and Simon Magus, God had already torn the kingdom from Saul, and He moved on to David.

In Simon the Sorcerer was dedicated to his craft of bewitching the people for fame and profit. He had no intention of repenting and changing and following the mold that God was dictating.

God gave Samuel, Peter and John specific, peculiar insights and the knowledge that these people would not repent in this life.

Do we usurp the words that God specifically gave to Jeremiah and not pray for people? That we choose? ***No! Because we have Paul's instruction to pray for all men/women!***

Matthew 6:15: “But if you do not forgive men/women their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

Whether we pray for people or not, it boils down to our willingness to forgive. Our choice whether we forgive or not. Our choice! ***If we don't, God won't!*** If we don't forgive others, God's not going to forgive us!

Matthew 5:44: “But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, **and pray for those who despitefully use you and persecute you.**” *He's asking a lot, isn't He?*

What was Jesus' example?

John 17:9: “I am praying for them; I am not praying for the world, but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours.”

When we receive prayer requests for those who are not in the faith, not in the household of faith, not in the Church, what do we do with that? *We're supposed to pray for all men/women!* Why are we praying in that specific case for those who not of the household of faith? *It's because those people are important to our members, our brothers/sisters!* Our brethren have family who are sick, infirm, not in the Church, and they care about and love them. So, we're praying on behalf of our brethren.

Secondarily, we're praying as a witness in case such a one may be saved. When I say may be because:

1-Corinthians 7:16: “But how do you know, O wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save your wife?”

Hebrews 13:1: “Let brotherly love be present *among you* continually. Do not forget to show hospitality; for by this some have unknowingly welcomed angels *as guests*. Be mindful of prisoners... [telling us to pray for them] ...as if you were imprisoned with *them*; and think of those who are suffering afflictions, as if you yourselves were in *their body*” (vs 1-3).

I've already mentioned those 229 who were sentenced to death, to be killed today in Afghanistan, in that city that was a Christian stronghold now taken by the Taliban. Lots of people are being beheaded by the Taliban; Christians, worldly Christians, people who profess Christ. They're being killed! That's where the 'rubber meets the road'!

They're laying down their life for Christ!
Can you not pray for them? *Innocent people are being forced by religious extremism!*

- What if your family member was over there?
- What if you were being asked by your brethren for prayers for some of their family members over there?

Paul just told us, "Let brotherly love be present *among* [us] ...Be mindful of prisoners as if you were imprisoned with *them*, and think of those who are suffering..."

Samuel says that not praying for the people is sin! The people of Israel had realized that they had sinned and said:

Samuel, we get it! We chose to have a king and rejected God. We were wrong! We sinned! Now we're stuck with this guy. Please, can you pray for us, or are we stuck?

What did Samuel say?

1-Samuel 12:20^[transcriber's correction]: "And Samuel said to the people, 'Do not fear. You have done all this wickedness. Yet, do not turn aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart. And do not turn aside to go after vanities, which cannot profit nor deliver, for they *are* vain, then the LORD will not forsake His people for His great name's sake because it has pleased the LORD to make you His people'" (vs 20-22).

He's chosen you! It's His will! It's His desire! He's done it because He made the choice, not because you and I made the choice.

Verse 23: Also, I, far be it from me **that I should sin against the LORD from ceasing to pray for you.** But I will teach you the good and the right way."

What is he saying? If I'm the prophet of God, a servant of God—which you and I are—if we stop praying for a man that God has given us the desire to stand in the breach and:

- pray for the sinful people
- to pray for the sinners
- to pray for the nation
- to pray for the world

If we stop praying for those individuals, is it not sin? *That's what Samuel called it!*

The Scripture that I mentioned about the animals being able to honor and praise God, when you don't praise God nor take the time, not even

considering it worth your while to talk to God about these issues.

Isaiah 43:18: "Do not remember the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall sprout; shall you not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, rivers in the desert. **The beasts of the field shall honor Me**, the jackals and the ostriches; because I give waters in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to My people, My chosen" (vs 18-20).

Should we not honor God by praying for all men/women, as we are instructed to do?

Ephesians 6:18: "**Praying at all times with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit**, and in this very thing being watchful with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints; and for me, that boldness of speech may be given to me so that I may open my mouth to make known the mystery of the Gospel, for which **I am an ambassador in chains**, that I may speak with boldness, as it behooves me to speak" (vs 18-20).

Yes, Paul was asking us as Christians to pray with perseverance and supplication, being diligent to pray for the saints and the leadership.

But Paul is not saying that we should not pray for all men/women, because we have seen that he already did say that we should.

RECAP: Is there ever a time that we should not pray for people? NO!

1. Unless God said Himself gives us specific instructions not to pray for someone—as He did with Jeremiah—then those instructions given to Jeremiah to not pray for individuals was specifically for that time and those instructions do not apply to us.
2. We can pray *imprecatory* prayers for those who are obviously overtly evil to the core: dealing in child-trafficking, murder, drug dealing, so that they will fall into their own traps and that God would bring them under rule at this time.

We don't know if God will do it, but we can pray that they be caught in their own traps and not be able to continue to harm the innocent.

But be mindful that in the New Testament Saul—who became Paul—was a murdering persecutor of the Church. He imprisoned and was reeking havoc with the early Christians. Yet, God chose to give him a calling, and granted him repentance.

Because we can easily slip into vindictiveness, it's probably best for us not to pray imprecations.

3. The people in Dallas, Oklahoma, and Arkansas during that tornado, the people who have fallen from grace, do we pray for them? ***Absolutely!***

We don't know if God may be using that plague as a tool to regain their attention so that they might return and repent. Is that not God's will that all men/women repent?

4. Pray for your spiritual enemies! Pray for the enemies of the faith! Pray for the enemies of the Church!

Jesus said, Matthew 5:44: "But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you."

5. We're to pray for the rulers and those in authority.
 - whether we like them or not
 - whether they fit into our political mold or not

Pray for the leaders of the Church!

6. Pray for all men/women, that God grant them repentance and a calling, just as He did for us.
7. Pray for the household of faith and for the potential members of the Church.
 - pray with perseverance and supplication for all the saints
 - pray for the Church leaders of all the true Churches of God
 - pray that they may be able to speak with boldness when the time comes
 - pray with Godly love in your heart
 - pray for the least of these (Matt. 25)
 - pray with humility, that God would lead and work through you
 - pray for your loved ones
 - pray earnestly for the healing

Be an intercessor like Moses and Isaiah, for the afflicted!

- pray for deliverance

Brethren, there is never a time that you or I should not pray for all men/women!

Scriptural References:

- 1) 2 John 9-11

- 2) Jeremiah 8:5-7, 10, 14
- 3) Jeremiah 7:12-17
- 4) Jeremiah 11:14
- 5) Jeremiah 14:11-12
- 6) Isaiah 9:18-19
- 7) Isaiah 5:25
- 8) Psalm 69:22-28
- 9) Psalm 58:6
- 10) Psalm 59:1-2, 5, 12-13
- 11) Psalm 58:11
- 12) 1 Corinthians 16:22
- 13) Revelation 3:19
- 14) Ezekiel 14:21
- 15) 1 Thessalonians 5:17
- 16) Matthew 25:34, 37-40
- 17) 1 Timothy 2:1-4, 8
- 18) Ezekiel 22:29-30
- 19) Isaiah 6:8
- 20) 1 Timothy 2:1, 3
- 21) 1 Samuel 15:24-26
- 22) Matthew 6:15
- 23) Matthew 5:44
- 24) John 17:9
- 25) 1 Corinthians 7:16
- 26) Hebrews 13:1-3
- 27) 1 Samuel 12:22-23
- 28) Isaiah 43:18-20
- 29) Ephesians 6:18-20
- 30) Matthew 5:44

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Numbers 16
- Romans 1
- Acts 8
- Exodus 32:7; 14:13-16

BN:bo
Transcribed: 11/14/21

Copyright 2021—All rights reserved. Except for brief excerpts for review purposes, no part of this publication may be reproduced or used in any form or by any means without the written permission of the copyright owner. This includes electronic and mechanical photocopying or recording, as well as the use of information storage and retrieval systems.