

Prayer call issued regarding the volatile situation in our nation

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A few facts:

We face unprecedented stress in our nation. The COVID-19 pandemic is having a devastating effect on us. People are sick and dying, not only from COVID or COVID-related diseases but also from other illnesses like cancer, heart attacks, etc., and other causes such as car accidents, murder, and suicide. Families are in mourning, unable to properly say goodbye to their loved ones, unable to comfort one another as they normally would have, due to the lockdown regulations.

Many people survived COVID but are still struggling with recurring symptoms. Many people have lost their jobs and livelihood and are unable to properly care for their families. Many lost their homes and had to either move in with relatives or go to informal settlements. Normal ways of relieving stress such as socialising with family or friends, participating in sports or recreational activities, and going to church or other religious gatherings are prohibited by lockdown regulations. Mental and emotional stress, fear and physical pain increase incidences of domestic abuse, rape, drug and alcohol abuse, violence, uncontrolled anger and frustration.

The lack of service delivery by the government adds to frustration and anger. Political infighting and ethnic tribalism threaten to destabilise our nation. Unresolved conflict and injustice of the past stir up hatred and violence. The people in our nation are hurting, bleeding, dying, and desperately crying out for a Saviour. We have run out of plans. Our leaders have failed us. We are failing each other. As lawlessness increases, our compassion decreases. If we truly believe that there is a God in heaven, then now is the time to cry to him for help. He is God and we are not. He is Sovereign. Let us simply humble ourselves before Him and ask for His help.

Join us in prayer:

1. *“Not to us, O LORD, not to us, but to your name give glory, for the sake of your steadfast love and your faithfulness! Why should the nations say, “Where is their God?””*
(Psalm 115:1-2)

Heavenly Father, we humble ourselves before You. We need You. Please help us, we ask in Jesus' Name.

2. *“And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold.”*
(Matthew 24:12)

Father, we confess that our hearts are filled with anger and evil thoughts about what is happening in our nation. We have ceased to demonstrate your love and compassion to the helpless and hopeless. We do not honour your Name by our attitudes. We pray for Christians everywhere to reach out in acts of kindness – to bring hope to those who are suffering. We humble ourselves. Compassionate God, we need You. Please help us and fill us with Your love and compassion, we ask in Jesus' Name.

3. *“Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing, you will heap burning coals on his head.” Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil with good.”*
(Romans 12:19-21)

Father, we are judging, condemning, blaming and accusing each other. We have become one another's enemies. We pray for deep conviction of sin among Christians and for a desire to please God. Give us forgiving hearts. Forgive us for judging others. Help us to put aside all judgment. We humble ourselves. Righteous Father, we need You. Please help us to bless and not to curse. Fill us with your Spirit, we ask in Jesus' Name.

4. *“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.”* (Matthew 5:9)

Father, use every one of us as peacemakers and ministers of reconciliation in the sphere where You have put us. In our homes, in our workplace, in our schools, in the marketplace, and in the community where we live. Give us wisdom. We pray

that peacemakers will arise in every instance where anger and violence are exploding. We pray for police and politicians as they respond to the violence, that it will not escalate into full-scale war and destruction. We humble ourselves. Prince of Peace, we need You. Please help us to defuse the anger that is threatening to overwhelm us and destabilise our nation.

5. *"First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings, be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way."* (1 Timothy 2:1-2)

Father, we pray for the political leaders of our nation. Some of them are Christians. Stir their hearts to rise and take a stand for justice and righteousness. Remove the fear of man from their hearts. Give them courage and wisdom, that they may use their positions of influence to guide our leaders to a solution. Help us to overcome the ethnic divide and the devastation it causes in a multi-ethnic nation. Father of Mercy, we bow in absolute dependence before You. We have no answer except asking for your help and praying that our nation will come under the fear of God. Please have mercy on us, we ask in Jesus' Name.

6. *"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places."* (Ephesians 6:12)

Father, clothe us with the spiritual weapons and armour that will protect us, and help us to stay standing against the onslaught of evil that comes against us. We submit our thoughts to You. We submit our hearts to You. We submit ourselves to the truth. We offer ourselves as instruments to share the gospel. Fill our mouths with your word to speak into every situation. Strengthen our faith in Your character so that the fiery arrows of the evil forces cannot penetrate our minds, our hearts and our relationships, nor disrupt our love, our compassion, our service to the poor and needy, nor our worship and our walk with You. We pray that truth will be revealed and prevail, and that the truth will set us free. We humble ourselves before You. Please help us, Spirit of Truth. Guide us in these uncertain times to do your will.

7. *"Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. The LORD works righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed. He made known his ways to Moses, his acts to the people of Israel. The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger forever. He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us. As a father shows compassion to his children, so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear him. For he knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust. As for man, his days are like grass; he flourishes*

like a flower of the field; for the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place knows it no more. But the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him, and his righteousness to children's children, to those who keep his covenant and remember to do his commandments. The LORD has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all.” (Psalms 103:2-19)

Father, please have mercy and heal us from this COVID-19 pandemic. We need You, Lord who Heals. Please help us, we ask in Jesus' Name.