

DO YOU PRAY FOR YOUR LEADERS? : PART 1

Copyright 1994 - 2006 Endtime Prophecy Net

Last Updated : July 10, 2006

Discerning The Truth, The 666 And The Backslider, Endtime Rebellion, Ask For His Wisdom, Church Tradition, Hedonistic Rome And America, Leaders As Gods, Patriotism, Separation From The World, Lord's Prayer And Our Coming Kingdom, Pray For The World?, God Knows His Children, Depart From Iniquity Antichrist U.S. Government, God's True Sheep, Principles Of Prayer, Pray For Our Persecutors?, Government Persecution, Shake Off The Dust, Worldly Governments And Armageddon

Every now and then, one of my readers will write in, and during the course of their conversation, they will state that the Lord tells us to pray for worldly governments and leaders. Recently, while I was engaged in a discussion regarding the war in Yugoslavia, one of my readers reminded me of this again. When this occurs, I have usually made it my practice to overlook such remarks, because in my heart, I know that the plain truth regarding this matter is simply too difficult for some people to receive because of their patriotic inclinations, and also because they have already accepted the traditional view as it is espoused and taught by many churches and preachers, some of which have, in large part, compromised with the world. I am reminded of the following incident which occurred in John chapter six, after Jesus had given His 'eat my flesh and drink my blood' sermon:

"Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it? When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?...From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him."
John 6:60-61, 66, KJV

How sad. Because those Disciples were so carnal-minded, and did not yet possess the Wisdom and the Spiritual Discernment of God's Holy Spirit, which was given later on the day of Pentecost in Acts chapter two, they were not able to fully comprehend the great spiritual Truth which the Lord had shared with them that day; and thus they were offended and abandoned Him. I find it rather significant that the Bible reference, John 6:66, which just so happens to contain the infamous '666', is associated with the backslider in heart. You may recall that we are also told that those people who reject God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ during the Endtime, will pledge their allegiance to the satanic world leader, referred to in the Holy Scriptures as the Beast, by receiving the damnable '666' in their right hand or else in their foreheads. I explain the possible significance of this number in 'Mondex And The Mark Of The Beast', 'The Seven Heads' series, and other related Endtime articles:

"And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in

their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six."
Revelation 13:16-18, KJV

Notice that just as John 6:66 contains three sixes, which add up to the number eighteen, we also see the three, the six, and the eighteen in the above Scriptural reference. The three ones in the reference also remind me of the following verse which discusses the unholy trio which shall soon deceive the world:

"And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet."
Revelation 16:13, KJV

As I mentioned a moment ago, the reason that many people reject the Truth of God's Word, is because they do not have the Spirit of God, but rather they possess the spirit of the world. They are blind followers of the false god of this current materialistic world; Satan himself; the Prince of the Power of the Air, who works in, and through, these children of disobedience. In his Epistles, the Apostle Paul exposes this spiritual rebellion, such as in the following verses:

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."
1 Corinthians 2:14, KJV

"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." 2 Corinthians 4:4, KJV

"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:" Ephesians 2:2, KJV

To understand the deep Truths of the Scriptures, we must ask the Lord for spiritual guidance through the Wisdom of His Holy Spirit. If we do this with a sincere heart, the Lord will not fail to answer us; for as we are also told in His Word:

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." Matthew 7:7,8, KJV

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." James 1:5, KJV

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said

unto you." John 14:26, KJV

"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" Luke 11:13, KJV

"For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;"
1 Corinthians 12:8, KJV

As I emphasize in quite a number of my articles, it is because many people do not really have the Wisdom of God's Spirit, even some church-going Christians, and also because they do not take the time to study the Scriptures for themselves as they should, that they blindly and readily accept the false doctrines which are taught to them by their spiritual elders. Exactly why is it that some of these false doctrines become so embedded in the theology of certain churches? In my view, it is because the leaders themselves have become creatures of tradition; just like the Scribes and the Pharisees of old. The attitude of some Christians seems to be 'What was good enough for Grandma Gertrude, is good enough for me. Pastor Joe there has been preaching at our church for forty years now, so why should I change what I believe?'. I'll tell you why. Maybe what was taught to Grandma Gertrude, or to Great Grandpa Jones, by Pastor Joe, and then passed down to you, is not true or according to the Scriptures. That's why. Just because some belief or practice has been around for a while, does not necessarily make it true or correct. Please don't forget that. I discuss this topic of tradition more fully in such articles as 'Have You Read The New Scriptures Yet?'.
I discuss this topic of tradition more fully in such articles as 'Have You Read The New Scriptures Yet?'.

To reiterate then, it is my view, that it is the modern, compromising church system, which is married to the beastly governments of the world, which has largely encouraged this age-old tradition of praying for government leaders, some of whom have no interest whatsoever in what God thinks of them, or of their evil policies and practices. In this regard, I believe that we can indeed say that religion truly is the opiate of the people. In speaking of the corrupt, hedonistic leadership of ancient Rome and its sex-crazed citizens, the Apostle Paul also exposed their rejection of the God of the Bible when he wrote the following lines. Please notice in verse one, the results of their refusal to retain God in their thoughts:

"And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them."
Romans 1:28-32, KJV

How much this sounds just like the antichrists who control the government of the United States of America; and who seem bent on totally destroying the Christian values we inherited from our forefathers. I will expand upon this thought in a moment. As far as I am concerned, this practice of praying for worldly leaders is just another manifestation of the false spirit of nationalism and patriotism which has swept the world since so long ago. As world history will confirm, in some cases, praying for leaders, has eventually evolved into praying to leaders, or at least admiring them as gods! If you doubt that this is so, think of the Caesars of Rome, or of King Herod in the Book of Acts; or perhaps even the pope? Consider what Luke wrote concerning the death of King Herod:

"And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them. And the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man. And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost." Acts 12:21-23, KJV

Now, for those of you who do pray for the leaders of your country, I am not saying that you worship them as gods; so please do not misinterpret my words. I am simply pointing out what this practice has led to in some cases; however, in the United States of America, I do believe that it is quite accurate to suggest that some people, particularly some conservative Christians, are made to feel that if they are not praying for their national leaders, regardless of what kind of leaders those people might be, then there must be something wrong with them. They must not be very patriotic. Maybe they are even communists! Isn't this exactly how some of you feel? Please be honest with yourselves. Do you really pray for a certain leader because you really feel led to do so by God's Spirit, or is simply because it is expected of you, because it is a part of your tradition? Are you merely bowing to peer pressure and political correctness? I just find it truly ironic, that while the U.S. Government openly encourages separation of church and state, and tramples upon the Bible, some foolish Christians still insist that we must pray for these ungodly people. Well, by the time you have finished reading this series, I hope that I will have convinced you that this practice is not solidly based upon God's Word.

Having said the above, allow me to begin by challenging you the reader, to show me clear Scriptural proof where Jesus Himself tells us to pray for the ungodly rulers of this world. Does it make any sense to you that the Lord would tell us to pray for the evil governments and leaders of this world, and then turn around and tell Pontius Pilate the following?:

"...My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence." John 18:36b, KJV

If Jesus' Kingdom is not of this world, then neither is ours; unless of course we don't belong to Him. Now, because

our Kingdom is not of this world, we are told quite clearly in the Scriptures that we are not to entangle ourselves with the affairs of this life, any more than it is absolutely necessary, in order to get the job done; and that job is to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost and dying world. Our spiritual separation from the false materialistic world, created by the god of this world, is stated very plainly over and over again in the New Testament, as I point out in other articles. Here again are a few Scriptural examples to prove that this is so. This is not just my personal opinion; it is God's Word; and I truly hope that you the reader will accept it:

"If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."

(John 15:19)

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you," (2 Corinthians 6:17)

"No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier." (2 Timothy 2:4)

"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." (James 4:4)

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." (1 John 2:15-16)

Why does Jesus say that the world hates us? Because we are not a part of them; that's why. We are not children of the world. So let me ask you a simple question. Having read the previous Scriptures, to whom do you believe that we owe our primary loyalty and obedience? Is it to the evil, corrupt governments of this current filthy world, or is it to the coming Kingdom of Jesus Christ on Earth? There is only one Kingdom for which we are instructed to pray; there is only one Government for which we are told to pray; and the Lord Himself tells us exactly which one it is, in one of His very own prayers, which He prayed to the Father almost two thousand years ago:

"And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth."

Luke 11:2, KJV

There it is as plain as day. We are to pray for our coming Kingdom; which in fact is already here in a spiritual sense in the hearts of the Believers. This is because of our faith in God's promises regarding our own coming Redemption and Salvation at the Lord's Return. This is precisely why Jesus also said the following:

"...The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." Luke 17:20b-21, KJV

In this all-important prayer, which we have come to refer to as the 'Our Father', or the 'Lord's Prayer', knowing that His words would become world-renown, surely the Lord could have also given us specific instructions to pray for the governments of the world; but He didn't; He only said 'Thy kingdom come'. Jesus' mind and heart were, and are, totally focused on His Father's Kingdom; a Kingdom which He Himself will rule during the Millennium; and it is apparent to me, through His own example of prayer, that He is telling us that we should do the same. It is for this very reason that almost eight hundred years earlier, when the Lord gave him a brief glimpse into the far future, the Prophet Isaiah was inspired to write:

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."
Isaiah 9:6, KJV

So you see, this idea of praying for worldly governments and leaders is a fallacy. This belief, this sacred tradition, is not based upon God's Holy Word. In fact, as I clearly point out in other articles such as 'Love, Mercy, Forgiveness And Chastisement', as well as in 'Modern False Prophets And Worldly Ecumenism', not only did the Lord tell us that His Kingdom is not of this world, but through another example of His own prayers, Jesus tells us that we are not to pray for the world. When the Lord was praying in John chapter seventeen, He specifically said:

"I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine."
John 17:9, KJV

Through all of these verses which I have shared with you thus far, it becomes rather obvious that Jesus only prayed for His own followers who believed in Him; He didn't pray for anyone else. He prayed only for God's true Kingdom, as well as for His children who are, or who would eventually become, members of that Kingdom through their acceptance of Him. The Lord did not pray for the rebellious children of this world; which also includes most of its materialistic, power-hungry governments and leaders, some of whom actively fight against God's true children. Notice in the above verse that the reason that the Lord says He is praying for His followers, is because 'they are thine'; they belong to God. The implication then, is that not all are His, and this we already know to be true. If they are not even His, and will never be His, then why even pray for them? The Apostle Paul said the very same thing in his second Epistle to Timothy when he wrote:

"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from

iniquity." 2 Timothy 2:19, KJV

It is very interesting to note that Paul states that those who belong to the Lord are to 'depart from iniquity'. Is that what the governments and leaders of the world have done? Have they forsaken their evil ways? Are they even the least bit interested in departing from iniquity? For those of you who suggest that we should pray for the American president and the rest of the American leadership, allow me to ask you: Is that what they have done? Can you honestly tell me that they have departed from iniquity, or that they have any interest in departing from iniquity? Do you really believe that God is foremost in their thoughts, and that they seek His Divine Counsel in order to find out what is best for the American people? You and I both know that they do not. You and I both know that the American government is becoming more antichrist in its policies and practices with each passing year; not only in its national policy, but in its foreign policy as well. Now, before you try to convince me otherwise, please go set up a manger scene on the White House lawn; or orally recite a Christian prayer in your child's classroom; or provide me with the latest statistics on government-sanctioned abortions. Are these the leaders that you say we are supposed to pray for?

The truth of the matter is that your prayers, and I might add, your votes, have done very little, if anything, to change the American government; because some of its members are not God's children, and they do not want to change. In fact, they are either antichrists themselves, or else they are pawns of the antichrists, who control them through their offerings of money and temporal Earthly power; just as Satan did with Jesus in the following verses:

"And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it." Luke 4:5,6, KJV

Some of the people who rule in Washington, D.C. have their own agenda, and their own god, and it is most certainly not the same one that you and I worship. Don't be fooled by 'made-for-TV' news shots of the president, or of some other White House official, attending Sunday church services. Some of them are simply showmen who know how to play their roles well. A true Christian, a true child of God, simply does not do the horrible things which we see being committed by the American president and his cronies. This being the case, why then do you feel under obligation to pray for them? Why do you blindly accept this manmade tradition? Jesus and Paul both said that, 'the Lord knoweth them that are his', and those are the only ones for whom we are supposed to pray. Of course, as I stated earlier, that includes those who are predestinated to be His, who may not even know it yet; but He will reveal it to us by His Spirit. He will point out His true sheep to us; for as Jesus Himself said:

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."
John 6:37, KJV

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."
John 10:27,28, KJV

"He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." John 8:47, KJV

I will discuss this topic of predestination a bit more in part two of this series. You must remember that the results of prayer are dependent upon three primary factors; your will, God's Will, and the will of the person, or persons, for whom you are praying. Even if your will is aligned with God's Will regarding a certain matter, you can pray until you are blue in the face; and God may hear your prayers; but until that person, or persons, choose by their own free will to submit to God's Spirit working in their lives, your prayers will have very little effect. I discuss the topic of free will in more detail in such articles as 'Free Will And Personal Choice'. As I will point out later in this series, there is clear Scriptural proof which shows that there are even times when we are not to pray for certain individuals.

Allow me to reiterate then, that I do not believe that we are under any direct obligation from the Lord, to pray for the unbelieving, rebellious governments and leaders of this current world. Nowhere do we find this in any of the Lord's direct teachings. It simply does not make very much sense to me, that the Lord would clearly tell us throughout the New Testament, over and over again, that we, and our Kingdom, are not of this world, that we are not to partake of this world's temporal pleasures, that to be a friend of the world is to be the enemy of God, and that we are to come out from among them, and then turn around and tell us to pray for the ungodly governments and rulers of this world. Such a thought seems totally contradictory and confusing to me; and I know that God is not the author of confusion, for as the Apostle Paul wrote:

"For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints." 1 Corinthians 14:33, KJV

Now, to present a full, balanced Scriptural picture here, there is one place in the Gospels, where Jesus does instruct us in the following manner regarding our prayer lives :

"But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;"
Matthew 5:44, KJV

Undoubtedly, some of you may look at the previous verse and say to yourselves, 'Well, couldn't persecution conceivably originate with some government, or with some government official, who just happens to be very antagonistic to the Christian cause? That being the case, doesn't the Lord say that we are to pray for those who despitefully use us and persecute us? Doesn't that mean that we are to pray for our governments and worldly leaders?' My answer would be yes to the first part, but no to the second part. In fact, I will

readily admit that I am no stranger when it comes to being persecuted by worldly governments because of my Christian beliefs. Quite a few years ago, I was directly told by two different governments, to leave their countries, simply because I was an active Christian missionary. One country is dominated by Roman Catholicism, while the other is primarily Buddhist. Of course, looking back now, I don't doubt that it must have been a part of God's plan, in order to teach me a few lessons, as well as to motivate me to move on and do other things for Him. As the Apostle Paul tells us"

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28, KJV

Many of us are familiar with the fact that quite a few countries, including Israel, Russia, China, and many Muslim and Buddhist countries in Africa, the Middle East, and the Far East, have all passed certain laws, the purpose of which is to definitely restrict our Christian witness in some way. In recent months we have read of violent persecution against Christians in such countries as Egypt, Sudan and Indonesia. Even in the United States of America, which hypocritically boasts of being the most Christian nation upon the Earth, a great evil has emerged because of the so-called separation of church and state; which in my opinion, is itself a gross misinterpretation of the American Constitution by modern-day antichrist lawmakers. As I mentioned earlier, many of us have watched as prayer has been removed from our schools, and manger scenes and other Christian-oriented Christmas displays have been removed from government properties. We have also watched as abortion has become legalized, as the satanic theory of EVILution has infiltrated our public school system, as same-sex marriages and relationships have become common practice, as Satan's music has filled the airwaves, and many other shameful things.

However, concerning Jesus' commandment to us to pray for those who persecute us, based upon all of the other verses we have looked at thus far, I tend to believe that the Lord is speaking to us on a personal level. I believe that He is telling us how to react to those specific persons who do us harm, and nothing more. If we take into consideration a few additional verses found in the Gospels, it doesn't even seem likely that the Lord expects us to pray for a whole town when they reject our Christian witness; how much less for an antichrist national government? Notice the Lord's counsel in the following two verses:

"But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come." Matthew 10:23, KJV

"And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrhah in the day of judgment, than for that city." Mark 6:11, KJV

Notice that the Lord tells us to do two things in the face

of large-scale persecution; He tells us to flee, and He also tells us to shake off the dust of our feet in testimony against our persecutors. Nowhere does the Lord counsel us to pray for them. How much less for an oppressive government which actively seeks to restrict our Christian witness? I discuss the topic of Christian persecution more fully in the article 'Civil Disobedience And Christian Persecution'. So again, I believe that there is a very big Scriptural gap between praying for a few people who treat us wrongly and persecute us, and suggesting that the previous verse from Matthew chapter five indicates that we are to pray for world leaders and governments. Furthermore, I do not believe that the Lord advocates the long duration of worldly governments; which is basically the spirit and attitude behind the act of praying for such governments and their leaders. It is the 'God Bless America' syndrome. The older America becomes, the longer she erroneously believes that she is going to endure. It is a self-righteous spirit of pride, arrogancy and false complacency; just as we see with Babylon the Great Whore in the Book of Revelation:

"How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow." Revelation 18:7, KJV

The only Government that Jesus Christ wants to endure, is His own. It seems totally contradictory to me, for the Lord to encourage us to pray for worldly governments and their rulers, when He already knows, and has in fact told us by way of many inspired prophecies, that someday soon, many of those very same Earthly government bodies will oppose His Divine Rule. We are plainly told that because of their evil rebellion, they will have their military might destroyed at the Battle of Armageddon, and their Earthly dominion taken from them, by force, following the same. Consider the following verses which clearly confirm these facts:

"Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." Psalms 2:1-3, KJV

"Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces...And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."
(Daniel 2:34, 44)

"Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." (Psalms 2:6-9)

"Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?...And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder." (Matthew 21:42, 44)

"And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father." (Revelation 2:26-27)

"And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne." (Revelation 12:5)

"And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." (Revelation 19:15)

"And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." (Revelation 11:15)

In the second part of this series, we will continue our discussion by taking a look at such topics as the illusion of Christian America and my personal warning, being faithful to deliver our souls, political involvement versus Heavenly Involvement, the possibility of altering Biblical prophecy, the Eternal Now, our Invisible Nation, the structure of the Early Church, submitting to and praying for our leaders, praying for each other, who God does not hear, praying for the Salvation of all men, being brought before kings, Paul's ministry in Rome, the benefits of our prayers, our testimony against worldly leaders, our predestination, the temptation of worldly power and the children of wrath. I trust that you will join me.

Written by the WordWeaver

webmaster@endtimeprophecy.net
<http://www.endtimeprophecy.net>

DO YOU PRAY FOR YOUR LEADERS? : PART 2

Copyright 1994 - 2006 Endtime Prophecy Net

Last Updated : July 10, 2006

Illusion Of Christian America, Warning To America, Deliver Our Souls, Political Involvement Or Heavenly Involvement?, Can We Change Unfulfilled Prophecy?, Eternal Now, Invisible Nation, Early Church Structure, Submit To And Pray For Our Leaders, Pray For Each Other, Who God Doesn't Hear, Pray For The Salvation Of All Men, Brought Before Kings, Paul's Roman Ministry, Benefits Of Our Prayers, Testimony Against Them, Our Predestination, Temptation Of Power, Children Of Wrath

To those of you who live in the United States of America, do you really believe that your country is any better than all of the other nations which will be smitten by the Lord at His Return? I am sure that the natural response of many of you will undoubtedly be 'Why of course we are; because we are the most Christian nation upon Earth!'. If this is your answer, then you probably also believe that the people who run the government of the United States of America, are such God-fearing men and women, that they are willingly going to surrender their power to Jesus Christ at His Return. If this is what you truly believe in your heart, then I must be frank, and tell you that I think that you are deceived and living a lie; you are living in a dreamworld concocted by your own government; you are still living the illusion of 'God Bless America'; and I believe that this is one of the reasons why you still feel compelled to pray for America's leadership. You still believe that they retain God in their thoughts when many of them do not. They are working against you, yet you continue to pray for them out of your sense of patriotic duty. Can you not see this?

In like manner, if you honestly believe that Jesus Christ is going to return some day soon, and say 'Well done, America; you did a fine job of Christianizing the world; here is your piece of the pie', you just might be in for a very big surprise. Allow me to remind you that the Lord also said:

"...For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more." Luke 12:48b, KJV

God is going to require much at your hands, America, because just like the Jews, you have been made a keeper of the Holy Scriptures. You have been entrusted with evangelizing the world with the Light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. While over the years, many of your sons and your daughters have been faithful to obey the Lord's Call, and have even laid down their lives in foreign lands in order to reach the lost, by your own works, you have now proven that you have forsaken your God, and His Spirit has departed from you; and you have become 'the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird'; just like Babylon the Great Whore:

"And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." Revelation 18:2, KJV

Whereas before you were a bright spiritual beacon which shone the Gospel of Jesus Christ on many foreign lands, now you are full of darkness and death. Instead of imparting Salvation through a knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, now you export war and weapons of destruction, and contribute to the oppression of the poor, and the slaughter of innocents, through your military and economic policies. America, you have become a proud, arrogant, ravenous beast which preys upon the poor of the world. Will you be found wanting in the Scales of the Lord's Justice? Will your hands be found clean of sin and guilt, or will they be found bloodied; not only by the slain innocents of your own land through the ungodly act of abortion, but by the many oppressed and slain peoples of other lands as well, who have felt your brutal hand? Not only that, America, but you have perverted and corrupted the land which the Lord gave to you in your youth, just as He told the Jews in the days of the Prophet Jeremiah:

"And I brought you into a plentiful country, to eat the fruit thereof and the goodness thereof; but when ye entered, ye defiled my land, and made mine heritage an abomination." Jeremiah 2:7, KJV

Undoubtedly, some of you will be offended by these words, but nevertheless, they speak a truth which some of you need to hear. I don't doubt that some of you will accuse me of being just another prophet of doom, as your way of hardening your heart against the Lord's truth, but that is no concern of mine. As with the Prophet Ezekiel, and many of the Lord's other messengers of the past, my job is to faithfully share what I believe I receive from Him. If I do not do this, then He will hold me accountable, as we see in the following verses:

"Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul." Ezekiel 3:17-19, KJV

Now, I am sure that some of you American Christians will argue that instead of preaching all of this gloom and doom, I should become politically active. I am aware of the fact that some of you have erroneously misinterpreted my lack of involvement in politics, and my unwillingness to try to change the American system of government through voting, etc., as meaning that I have simply given up hope. Such a thought is the furthest thing from the truth. My choice to not fight against the corruption of the American government, or of any other worldly government, has absolutely nothing

to do with giving up hope; but it does have a lot to do with obeying the Holy Scriptures, and having hope and faith in something much better to come in the near future, after all of man's puny corrupt governments have been crushed by The Rock. In his Epistles, the Apostle Paul tells to set our affection on things above, on Heavenly things, and not on things of this Earth. In other words, we need to take our eyes off of the imperfect, temporal governments of men, and put them on Jesus, and place our loyalty in the eternal everlasting Kingdom of God, just as Christ did Himself. I discuss this very same topic in 'The Heavenly Vision: Have You Got It?'. Consider the following verses:

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." Colossians 3:1,2, KJV

"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Hebrews 12:2, KJV

"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city." Hebrews 11:13-16, KJV

Because some people do not place their eyes upon the Eternal Realm of the Spirit, but rather upon the temporal things of this Earth, they actually believe that they possess the power to change what has already been ordained by God. One young person who wrote to me, who is apparently politically active, seems to believe that we can actually change the outcome of Biblical prophecy through our choices. In my mind, this is a dangerous half-truth. While it is indeed true that we each possess the freedom of personal choice, which, depending upon the decisions that we make, will have a positive or a negative effect on our own microcosm, I do not believe that any of us can change what has already been written in prophecy. The reason it is written in prophecy, is because God already knows the outcome. He already knows what choices we are each going to make, even before we do ourselves. He knows what choices the various governments of the world are going to make as well. God is all-knowing, because He lives in the Eternal Now where past, present and future are all blended into one. He tells us so Himself in the following verses:

"I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him. That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past."
(Ecclesiastes 3:14-15)

"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:" (Isaiah 46:9-10)

While I have now shared with you my views regarding what I believe the Lord teaches us concerning the practice of praying for worldly leaders, our Scriptural picture is not yet complete. As we have already seen, we owe our loyalty, and our allegiance, first of all to the Kingdom of God. This is because we are the subjects of His Kingdom. In fact, as I point out in other articles, we are actually a worldwide, holy, spiritual nation of born-again believers, which the world does not yet recognize; but God does; and they shall too in the not-too-distant future. Consider the following verses. Even the Lord Himself made mention of His invisible nation of spiritual children, which the unbelieving Jews could not understand. Consider the following verses:

"Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." Matthew 21:43, KJV

"And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." Luke 17:20,21, KJV

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:" 1 Peter 2:9, KJV

While our spiritual nation is ruled from On High by the Lord Himself in the Heavenlies, similar to worldly nations which maintain governments in order to achieve cohesiveness and unity amongst their peoples, God has also seen fit to set up a loose structure for His children here on Earth, in order to maintain a certain degree of spiritual unity amongst the Body of Christ. I am referring to the leaders, or spiritual elders, which the Lord has raised up for the edification of His Body, the Church. The Apostles Peter, James and Paul make mention of these leaders in the following verses taken from their Epistles:

"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you...Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the saints. They of Italy salute you." Hebrews 13:17, 24, KJV

"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine." 1 Timothy 5:17, KJV

"For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders

in every city, as I had appointed thee:" Titus 1:5, KJV

"Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:" James 5:14, KJV

"The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:"
1 Peter 5:1, KJV

As I fully describe in part two of the article 'Where Are The First Century Churches?', when Paul talks about obeying 'them that have the rule over you', he is not talking about worldly leaders and their governments; he is referring to the bishops, deacons, and other elders which were set up over the local congregations; and I would like to emphasize that these were local situations. Unlike today, in which we see powerful worldwide religious hierarchies, which are controlled by one man, or by a small group of men, such as with the Roman Catholic Church, the jurisdiction of these leaders of the First Century Church was limited to a small defined area; usually to one city. The churches of the First Century were autonomous, indigenous units, bonded together, not by an overbearing, powerful hierarchy, but rather by love, and by their common doctrine of Salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. This unity was strengthened by occasional visits from travelling elders such as Paul, Timothy, Titus, and other elders, which were trained by the Apostles themselves. Please refer to the aforementioned article for more details.

The point I would like to stress here, is that it is to these leaders of the local fellowships, to whom Christians are to submit themselves first of all. In so doing, we are indirectly submitting ourselves to the Lord. Of course, in saying this, I am assuming that you have honest, humble God-fearing leaders in your local fellowship who are truly worthy of such honour. Why does Paul tell us that we are to bestow this honour upon them? Because 'they watch for your souls, as they that must give account'. In other words, your local elders must give an account to God for your spiritual wellbeing. Ungodly worldly political leaders certainly don't do this! As we have already seen, most of them are primarily concerned with lining their pockets with money, and staying in power as long as they can, by whatever means possible; even if it means through secret police, bribes, rigged popular votes, assassinations, etc. There is nothing godly about them whatsoever, because many are not His children.

Thus far, we have seen that we have our own Kingdom, our own worldwide invisible nation, and our own leadership. That being the case, I believe that one of our top priorities as Christians, is not only to submit ourselves to the spiritual elders in our lives, but also to fervently pray for them as well. As the spiritual elder of our online fellowship, I can certainly tell you that I need all of the prayers I can get. Satan does not like what I am doing by sharing the straight truth of God's Word with you. He hates it, and tries to slow me down in the flesh as much as he possibly can. Sometimes it is indeed a real struggle to complete a new article or

series. It can take days, or even weeks or longer. The main point I wish to make is that these are the real leaders for whom we ought to pray, and not for the godless leaders of the world who do not retain God in their thoughts. In fact, on a number of occasions, the Apostle Paul requested prayer for himself and his companions in various of his Epistles. Consider the following verses:

"Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me;"
Romans 15:30, KJV

"Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds:" Colossians 4:3, KJV

"Brethren, pray for us." 1 Thessalonians 5:25, KJV

"Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you:" 2 Thessalonians 3:1, KJV

"Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly." Hebrews 13:18, KJV

Of course, prayer is reciprocal in nature. Just as Paul asked the brethren to pray for him, he likewise prayed for them, and encouraged them to pray for each other. James also tells us that we should pray over our sick brethren, as I pointed out a moment ago. Consider the following verses:

"For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers;" Romans 1:9, KJV

"Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;" Ephesians 1:16, KJV

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;" Ephesians 6:18, KJV

"For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;" Colossians 1:9, KJV

"Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God."
Colossians 4:12, KJV

"We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers;" 1 Thessalonians 1:2, KJV

"I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day;" 2 Timothy 1:3, KJV

"I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my

prayers," Philemon 1:4, KJV

"Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him."

James 5:14,15, KJV

From all of the verses I have shared thus far, it becomes quite evident that the Lord and His Apostles have left us with a clear example regarding our prayer life. We have seen that we are supposed to pray for our coming Kingdom, we are supposed to pray for our spiritual elders, and we are to pray for each other. In addition to this, we are to pray for those who persecute us. If we pray unselfishly in this manner, the Lord will certainly hear us; for in quoting from the thirty-fourth Psalm, the Apostle Peter wrote:

"For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil." 1 Peter 3:12, KJV

"The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry. The face of the LORD is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit." Psalms 34:15-18, KJV

Notice that while the Lord does indeed hear the prayers of His righteous children, He turns away His Ear when it comes to the wicked. In other words, He doesn't even listen to their prayers; He just ignores them. In fact, as I point out in 'Beholding The Evil And The Good', the Lord will even temporarily turn His Face away from His own children when they are overly disobedient and rebellious. You may recall that in part one, I shared the following verse where Paul tells us that the Lord's children are to depart from iniquity. If we do this, and delight ourselves in Him, He will hear our prayers and give us the desires of our hearts. I have added several more verses for your consideration:

"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." 2 Timothy 2:19, KJV

"Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart." Psalms 37:4, KJV

"Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:"
Isaiah 59:1, KJV

While I have now presented a preponderance of Scriptural evidence to explain why I am convinced that we are under no obligation to pray for the wicked leaders of this world, there is one place in the entire New Testament, where the Apostle Paul does exhort us to pray for all men, including

the leaders of the world. More specifically, he encourages us to pray for their Salvation. Of course, this is as it should be, because the whole reason we are here, is to be a Christian witness to others. I discuss the scope of God's Plan of Salvation more fully in the article 'Is The Message Of Salvation Meant For All Men?'. In his first Epistle to Timothy, his dear son in the faith, Paul wrote the following:

"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."
1 Timothy 2:1-6, KJV

As noted a moment ago, Paul is clearly encouraging us to pray for the Salvation of all men, regardless of their social status. Whether one is a king, or a pauper, he still requires the Lord's Salvation, because we have all sinned. It was this burning desire in Paul's heart, which eventually led him to the heart of the Roman Empire. Paul's words go hand in hand with what Peter wrote in his second Epistle:

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." 2 Peter 3:9, KJV

In His infinite love and mercy, God wants to give all of us a chance at Salvation, whether we will hear, or whether we will forebear. As you may already know, the fact that Paul was imprisoned in Jerusalem, taken to Rome, brought before Nero on several occasions, and was able to be a faithful witness to those of Nero's household for about two years before he was finally beheaded, was itself the fulfillment of a prophecy spoken by the Lord Himself, both in the Gospels, as well as in the Book of Acts. Consider the following verses:

"But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them." Mark 13:9, KJV

"Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name. But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." Acts 9:13-16, KJV

In addition to the fact that Paul says that we should pray for the Salvation of all men, why does he specifically tell us that we should pray 'for kings, and for all that are in

authority'? Quite simply, because in the long run, it may prove to be to our own benefit if they accept the Lord. As Paul wrote, 'that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty'. In other words, if our prayers help to win some worldly leaders to the Lord, in which case they would hopefully become more yielded to His Spirit, then there is the possibility that we might be able to live quiet, peaceable lives under those authorities, with minimal persecution. While this is indeed a wonderful thought, the truth of the matter is that we, the Children of Light, are unable to live a harmonious existence with the children of darkness for very long; unless of course we compromise our Christian convictions. Paul was not willing to do this. He remained bold in his witness; and thus, the crazed Roman emperor, Nero, who not only burned Rome, but who also later committed suicide, had Paul beheaded in order to silence his testimony.

This brings us to another interesting point, and striking truth regarding our witness to kings, presidents, prime ministers and other world leaders and government authorities. Exactly why did Jesus say that we would be brought before these dignitaries? Was it so that they could all accept the Lord, and so we could all be one happy universal Christian family? No; not by any means. That is not what the Lord said. What He did say was 'for a testimony against them'. Isn't that amazing? As I stated earlier, the Lord knows the end of the story from the very beginning. He already knows the decision that we are each going to make when it comes to our chance at Salvation. As I state in other articles, I believe that this is one of the reasons why the Lord knows those who are His, and why the Apostle Paul tells us that we are predestinated, as we see in the following verses:

"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." Romans 8:29, KJV

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will...In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:" Ephesians 1:4-5, 11, KJV

As we have already seen, because of His own Righteousness, and because of His Divine Love for His creations, God wants to give everyone a chance, even those who are in charge of the governments of this current world; but He already knows what they will choose. While Jesus was spiritually strong enough to resist the temptations of Satan when he offered Him all of the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, as I mentioned in part one, like the backslider Demas who left the Apostle Paul for the ways of the world, the evil men of this world jump at such an opportunity; preferring temporal Earthly riches, fame and power, instead of the as-yet-unseen eternal rewards of our Heavenly Kingdom. Consider the following verses:

"And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it." Luke 4:5,6, KJV

"For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia." 2 Timothy 4:10, KJV

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."
1 John 2:15,16, KJV

Perhaps this is one of the reasons why when Jesus offered prayers to His Father, He only prayed for His followers, and not for the world, because as He said, 'for they are thine', and as Paul wrote, 'The Lord knoweth them that are his'. As I pointed out in part one, the only ones who can be a part of Jesus' coming Kingdom on Earth, are those whom His Father has given Him; and based upon the previous verses, it seems that the only ones which the Father can give to Jesus, are those who are predestinated to be a part of His Kingdom. Is that easy for you to understand? If not, please read it again more slowly.

Just as Jesus already knew ahead of time that Judas would make the wrong choice and betray Him, the Lord apparently already knows where the line is drawn between the sheep and the goats, and between the wheat and the tares, even though not everyone has made their choice yet here in our physical realm of time and space. Because the score is apparently already settled in Heaven, I am inclined to think that this may be why the Lord did not leave us with any specific instructions to pray for the children of the world and their ungodly leaders. As the Apostle Paul wrote, they are already the children of disobedience, and the children of wrath, who are destined to face God's judgments. The Lord already knows that no matter how many times some people are witnessed to, or how long they are witnessed to, they will still not have a change of heart. They will continue in their rebellious ways until it is too late for them. They are brute beasts meant to be destroyed. Consider these verses:

"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Ephesians 2:2,3, KJV

"But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption;"
2 Peter 2:12, KJV

In the final segment of this series, I will conclude our

discussion by covering such topics as a world without excuse, Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch, King Agrippa and the Lord's sad disappointments, the snare of riches, God sets up kings, God's vessels of wrath, the changing tide, persecuted for our witness, the stuffed turkey, spiritual degeneracy in the Last Days, when God commands us not to pray, God's delayed judgments, God is slow to anger, the fruits of a true Christian, and some pointed questions for American Christians. I trust that you will join me.

Written by the WordWeaver

webmaster@endtimeprophecy.net
<http://www.endtimeprophecy.net>

Copyright 1994 - 2006 Endtime Prophecy Net

Last Updated : July 10, 2006

World Without Excuse, Philip And The Ethiopian Eunuch, King Agrippa And The Lord's Sad Disappointments, Snare Of Riches, God Sets Up Kings, God's Vessels Of Wrath, The Changing Tide Persecuted For Our Witness, The Stuffed Turkey, Spiritual Degeneracy In The Last Days, When God Commands Us Not To Pray God's Delayed Judgments, God Is Slow To Anger, Fruits Of A True Christian, Some Pointed Questions For Americans

You know, I daresay that there are very few countries left in the world today, if in fact there are any, where at least some of the people have not heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ at some point in their life. Our beliefs are so well known, and have been so widely propagated, by so many different means, that it is next to impossible to escape hearing about them altogether. No country is so repressive, or so tightly controlled, that it can block out all of the Light. I think that there are at least a few small pinholes where the Light of the Gospel has been able to penetrate into their world of spiritual darkness, no matter how hard their evil leaders have tried to block it out; and as I explain in 'Are You A Burning Ember For The Lord?', that is all that is required to ignite the spiritual fire.

In like manner, I seriously doubt that there are very many leaders left in the world today, if any, who have not heard the Good News of Salvation. As I was writing this series, the thought occurred to me how many government officials have been exposed to our Western culture. In some cases, this has been due to their diplomatic missions to the West, or else due to Western government officials visiting their country. In other instances, certain world leaders have received several years of military training or schooling in the West, such as in Great Britain, or else in the United States of America. Others have come to the West for medical treatment. All of this presents opportunities for them to be exposed to our Christian heritage to varying degrees. Even if they just happen to see a church building during a tour, it is still a reminder of our Christian beliefs.

To take this a step further, even if a certain leader has never ever left his own country, Christian missionaries, and Christian shortwave radio programs, have penetrated the vast majority of the world's nations. In addition to this, many Christians serve as English teachers in foreign countries, and all world leaders must surely keep a personal eye on international news and world developments in order to decide their national and international policies. Throughout all of this, they are exposed to some form of Christianity. As I point out in other articles, even if it were possible to somehow miss the Christian witness through these various opportunities, no one can possibly miss the witness that God gives them directly, the minute that they walk outside and

look at His wonderful natural Creation. As the Apostle Paul wrote:

"For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:" Romans 1:20, KJV

In short then, I believe that both the world's leaders, and the people they govern, are all accountable to God. As Paul states, we are living in a world without excuse. It is truly sad then, when these powerful leaders make such a wrong choice by rejecting the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Think of how much good they could do if they were to accept the Lord into their lives. They could influence their entire nation in a positive way. They could be extremely instrumental in the Salvation of their entire country, and the Lord would surely bless them for it. I am reminded of the wonderful story of the Ethiopian eunuch found in Acts chapter eight:

"And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing."
Acts 8:26-39, KJV

As I relate in other articles, it is believed by some Bible scholars, that it was due in part to this man's faithfulness to return to his native land, and to witness to the royal court of the Ethiopian Queen Candace, that Ethiopia became one of the first Christianized nations in Africa. In His Divine Wisdom, the Lord made this eunuch a steward of His Word, and this man was found faithful. As Paul wrote:

"Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." 1 Corinthians 4:2, KJV

On the other hand, we have the sad, sad case of foolish King Agrippa, also found in the Book of Acts. We are all familiar with the sad lament 'If I only had...'. In this case, after Paul had faithfully witnessed to this Jewish king, we find this worldly leader responding in the following manner:

"Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." Acts 26:28, KJV

What a tragedy, and what a disappointment to the Lord! If I may be so bold, what the king was really saying to Paul was 'Almost Paul, but not quite. You've almost convinced me to accept your Jesus and become a Christian, but I just can't do it. You have delivered one powerful testimony here today, but this worldly position of power and wealth is just too difficult for me to give up'. Remember again what I stated earlier in this series. Why did Jesus say that we would be made to appear before kings and other men in positions of authority? In order to be a testimony against them. You see, when they reject our witness, they condemn themselves. We don't even have to do it for them. All we have to do is to be faithful to deliver the message, and then they are the ones who choose Life or death; and this applies to every single person to whom we witness. In the case of Agrippa, and other men like him, you may recall that Jesus also said the following in the Gospels:

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Matthew 6:19-21, KJV

"...Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." Matthew 19:23,24, KJV

"...Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!" Mark 10:24b, KJV

As I point out in other articles, in their Epistles, Paul and James also tell us how not only will the rich experience problems in this life due to their accumulated wealth, but that their very same wealth, which is often obtained by less than honourable means, will actually serve as a testimony against them in the Day of Judgment:

"For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." 1 Timothy 6:10, KJV

"Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten. Your gold and silver is

cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you. Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain."

James 5:1-7, KJV

Unless I am mistaken, this king in Acts chapter eight was Herod Agrippa II, whose father, known as Agrippa I, or Herod Antipas, was eaten up by worms, as I mentioned in part one. Antipas had already angered the Lord by severely persecuting the Church; which included beheading James, and imprisoning Peter and other Disciples. When Antipas failed to give the Lord the credit for his position of Earthly power, just like foolish King Nebuchadnezzar in the Old Testament, who was also severely humbled by the Lord, apparently God felt that he had gone too far. The Scriptures make it very clear that no Earthly leader can rise to power, unless God permits him to, in order to accomplish His own Divine Purposes. Please consider the following verses:

"Lift not up your horn on high: speak not with a stiff neck. For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another." (Psalms 75:5-7)

"Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding:" (Daniel 2:20-21)

"This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men." (Daniel 4:17)

"The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will." (Proverbs 21:1)

"For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king. And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD, and thy words: because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice. Now therefore, I pray thee, pardon my sin, and turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD. And Samuel said unto Saul, I will not return with thee: for thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD hath rejected thee from being king over Israel." (1 Samuel 15:23-26)

What may be difficult for some of you to understand, is that the Scriptures plainly tell us that God will purposely raise up certain leaders to be His vessels of wrath. As I point out in other articles, such as in the series 'The Fruits Of Disobedience' and 'The Children Of God And Politics', this was surely the case with Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar, who served as the Lord's scourge against apostate Israel. If you read the Old Testament carefully, you will find a number of examples where the Lord, speaking through the mouths of His Prophets, tells the rebellious nation of Israel, that He is going to send a certain king and nation upon them, in order to punish them for their sins. Once they accomplish their purpose, the Lord then destroys them as well through their enemies. In his Epistle to the Romans, Paul explains the case of the Egyptian pharaoh who enslaved the descendants of Jacob:

"For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory,"
Romans 9:17-23, KJV

In light of all of this revelatory information, you may be interested in reading my article 'The Holocaust: Did God Make A Mistake?'. I present some challenging Scriptural views which you will not often hear within the churches of organized religion.

Returning to Paul's exhortation to pray for worldly rulers, we need to realize that at the time that he wrote those lines in his letter to Timothy, Christianity was still very young, and just getting underway; and it needed all of the help that it could get, particularly from worldly rulers and others in positions of authority, who could facilitate the opening up of their countries to the Gospel. While it was definitely no easy task to take this strange new doctrine of the resurrection from the dead to the unbelieving Jews, and then to the Gentiles as well, we do know that there were a lot of open hearts which were receptive to the Gospel of Jesus Christ; even amongst the royalty in Caesar's own household, as I stated a moment ago. We find some evidence of Paul's success in the following verse found at the end of his Epistle to the brethren at Philippi:

"All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesar's household." Philippians 4:22, KJV

Paul was a man driven by his vision for world evangelism,

which he had received from the Lord; and while we too should carry this same burning desire in our hearts to reach the lost with the message of Salvation, we must acknowledge the fact that the tide has changed. Now that we are nearing the end of man's current rule of this Earth, the situation has changed dramatically. The world is turning more antichrist by the day, and the windows of witnessing opportunities are closing. Reception has in large part been replaced by clear rejection. Those of us who try to be faithful witnesses in some way have certainly seen this. Maintaining their power and hoarding great wealth, is what matters most to many selfish world leaders today, and accepting our Christian beliefs is not on their list of priorities. As such, while it would be absolutely wonderful if many of the world's leaders were to adopt our Christian faith, we need to be realists and accept that, as we have already seen in recent months, increasing persecution against Christians seems to be the order of the day. As the Apostle Paul wrote:

"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." 2 Timothy 3:12, KJV

In a figurative sense, we Endtime Christians are trying to squeeze the last bit of stuffing into the turkey before it finally explodes. To put it another way, you can only eat so much chocolate or ice cream before you finally get sick of it. In this case, the antichrist world at large has reached a point where many of them no longer want to hear about the Lord Jesus Christ. In these final hours of the Latter Days, the more we try to share our Christian beliefs with others, the more many seem to be resisting it; and we are truly becoming hated by all men as the Lord Himself prophesied in the following verse:

"And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved."
Matthew 10:22, KJV

Allow me to again encourage you to read such articles as 'Civil Disobedience And Christian Persecution'. While we can hope and pray for the Salvation of those who are at the helm of worldly governments, we already know from reading the Holy Scriptures that, like King Agrippa and his ancestors, or like evil Emperor Nero, most of them will reject it when they are given an opportunity to accept the Lord. Not only that, but God's Word tells us that they will also continue to become even more corrupt and evil in their ways. As the Apostle Paul also wrote to Timothy:

"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." 2 Timothy 3:13, KJV

Please notice that this verse comes right after the verse I shared a moment ago regarding persecution. In other words, it is these very same evil men who will be persecuting us. Once they have knowingly rejected God's mercy through the Salvation that He offers them, then this is where I believe that all of the other verses I have shared in this series, come into play. Once they have made a clear choice against God, then I believe that we are really no longer under any obligation to pray for them. Paul exhorted us to hope and

pray for their Salvation, but we cannot force it upon them. It must be by their own free choice. Once they have rejected the Word of the Lord, Jesus Himself tells us:

"Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you." Matthew 7:6, KJV

"He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." Matthew 12:30, KJV

If Psalm thirty-four clearly tells us that the Lord does not even hear the prayers of the wicked, that He totally ignores them, as we saw in part two, then why should we continue to waste our time on them either? I can tell you from my own experience, that the more you pressure people after they have received the message of Salvation, the more they are likely to harden their hearts, and reject it further. Such people become so deceived by their own pride and vanity, that they actually reject God's mercy, as we see by the following verse:

"They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy." Jonah 2:8, KJV

In other words, God cannot have mercy upon those who reject the Truth of the Scriptures, and who live in delusion. While this may surprise some of you, as I believe I point out in the article 'Beholding The Evil And The Good', it is quite possible for a certain person, or even an entire nation of people, to become so wicked in their ways, that the Lord might specifically tell us to not even pray for them. I think that this can especially hold true for some of the evil leaders of the world. If you find this difficult to believe, consider the fact that the ancient Israelites, who were God's very own people, became so evil, and so corrupt, and had backslidden from the Lord so far in their state of apostasy, that in three different places in his book, the Prophet Jeremiah very specifically tells us that the Lord commanded him to not even pray for them. For those of you who have also found the similarities between ancient Israel and the modern United States of America, these verses might be quite an eye-opener for you:

"Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me: for I will not hear thee." Jeremiah 7:16, KJV

"Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up a cry or prayer for them: for I will not hear them in the time that they cry unto me for their trouble." Jeremiah 11:14, KJV

"Then said the LORD unto me, Pray not for this people for their good. When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt offering and an oblation, I will not accept them: but I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence. Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! behold, the prophets say unto them, Ye shall not see the sword, neither shall ye have famine; but I will give you assured peace in this place. Then the LORD said unto me, The

prophets prophesy lies in my name: I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them: they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart. Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the prophets that prophesy in my name, and I sent them not, yet they say, Sword and famine shall not be in this land; By sword and famine shall those prophets be consumed. And the people to whom they prophesy shall be cast out in the streets of Jerusalem because of the famine and the sword; and they shall have none to bury them, them, their wives, nor their sons, nor their daughters: for I will pour their wickedness upon them."

Jeremiah 14:11-16, KJV

Notice how the Lord also warns Jeremiah of the coming fate of the many false prophets in Israel, who prophesied of peace, safety and plenty, when the Lord had the exact opposite in store for them. I wonder how many false seers there are in America today who do this very same thing. They wave their red, white and blue flags and sing 'God Bless America', and are living under such strong delusion, that they don't even realize that He is about to bless them with judgment! I can hear a few of you scoffers already. 'Ah yes, there he goes again with his talk of coming gloom and doom!' Well, for those of you who are so foolish as to doubt my words, allow me to remind you that from the time that the Prophet Jeremiah began to prophesy to Israel, a total of forty years passed before God's judgments actually fell upon those evil people by way of the Babylonian invasions. In like manner, when Jesus prophesied the destruction of the Second Temple in Jerusalem, about forty years also passed before it was destroyed in 70 A.D. by the Roman General Titus and his legions. In the case of the global Flood which occurred in Noah's day, between one hundred and one hundred and twenty years passed before the rains began to descend.

The point is, God is very merciful; He is slow to anger; He gives His foolish, rebellious children plenty of time to repent of their wickedness. This is why His judgments are so righteous when they finally fall. We have the opportunity to either repent, or else to continue to fill up our cup of iniquity; and this applies on a personal level, as well as on a national level. Please consider the following verses which clearly describe the true nature of our God:

"And refused to obey, neither were mindful of thy wonders that thou didst among them; but hardened their necks, and in their rebellion appointed a captain to return to their bondage: but thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and forsookest them not." Nehemiah 9:17, KJV

"The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger for ever. He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth

that we are dust. As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more. But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children; To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them." Psalms 103:8-18, KJV

"The LORD is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy." Psalms 145:8, KJV

"It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness." Lamentations 3:22,23, KJV

"And he prayed unto the LORD, and said, I pray thee, O LORD, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil." Jonah 4:2, KJV

Returning to our main topic, as we see by the previous verses from the Book of Jeremiah, not only does the Lord tell us that He does not hear the prayers of the wicked, but He also tells us that there are times when He does not even want His own children to pray for them either. Now, this brings us to the crucial conclusion of this series. As the Lord Himself clearly tells us in the seventh chapter of the Gospel of Matthew:

"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." Matthew 7:15-20, KJV

While Jesus was applying His Words to false prophets, it is obvious that we can apply His counsel to other situations as well. Not only should we apply the Lord's Words to our own lives, but we should apply them to anyone who claims to be a Christian; even to our government leaders; and that is the gist of my main message to you in this series. For those of you who insist that we should pray for the president and other leaders of the government of the United States of America, allow me to ask you several pointed questions: While some of them claim to be Christians, and while we see some of them in made-for-TV shots attending Sunday worship services, do these men and women truly display the fruits of a true Christian in their lives? More pointedly, does the current American president display the qualities of a true Christian?

I am sure that I do not need to lead any of you by the hand

in answering this question. You are all familiar with what kinds of policies and practices he and the American Congress have supported since they came into power. You are aware of the current state of gay and lesbian rights; you are aware of the power of the pro-abortionist lobby; you are aware of how many countries have been mercilessly bombed, supposedly all for justifiable reasons, since this president came into office; and there are many other wicked things which are rumoured concerning this current president. Based upon your knowledge of these issues, can you honestly say that this man is a true Christian? Can you honestly say that he is worthy of the prayers of true Christians? Can you honestly say that you know in your heart that it is God's Will for you to pray for this man? As I pointed out in part one of this series, the results of our prayers depend upon three factors. If one of them is not aligned with the other two, then our prayers will be totally ineffective. In plain talk, they are useless. So tell me, do you believe that this president is truly trying to align his will with the Will of the Father? Does the fruit of his life prove it?

In conclusion then, as members of God righteous Kingdom, and His worldwide spiritual nation of born-again believers, I am of the opinion that in matters of prayer, our obligations are to pray for our own coming Kingdom, to pray for our own spiritual elders and our brethren in the faith, and to pray for the Lord's lost sheep who are still destined to become His children. This seems to be the overall statement of all of the verses I have found in the New Testament. Only that one set of verses written by Paul, makes any mention whatsoever of praying for worldly leaders; and even those seemed primarily concerned with the general Salvation of all men. Once they reject that Salvation, once they turn their back on God in favor of worldly power and wealth, they have made their choice to remain the children of darkness, and the children of the world, or what Paul referred to as the children of wrath, and the children of disobedience. As we saw clearly in the verse from John chapter seventeen, Jesus did not pray for the world, but only for His own children.

So what will you do? I certainly cannot decide for you, and I don't wish to decide for you. As in all of my articles, I have done my best to provide you my readers with the verses I have found which are pertinent to this subject. How you pray, where you pray, how long you pray, and for whom you pray, is of course entirely up to you. I just hope that you are not praying for someone whom the Lord has already turned His back on, and for whom He does not want us praying. The Scriptural evidence is there; you decide for yourself. As the Apostle Paul also wrote:

"...Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."
Romans 14:5b, KJV

I pray that this series has been informative, and a blessing in your life. Please pray according to God's Will, and not according to your own.

Written by the WordWeaver

webmaster@endtimeprophecy.net
<http://www.endtimeprophecy.net>