



Prayer For Nations

Have you ever been so stressed and challenged by life's dilemmas that you thought you couldn't make it another day? Like a young trapeze artist insecurely stretching every muscle to catch the next ring, you are fearful of missing the mark and falling. You imagine yourself plummeting, spiraling, and tumbling toward the ground on a collision course with disaster.

When God's people humbly pray, seek Him and turn from wickedness, He will answer them, forgive them, and "heal their land."

Discouraged and depressed, you are sure to fail. Your life is suddenly off the track and overturned like a race car that fails to negotiate a curve. Like the hare in the proverbial race with the tortoise, victory was sure, but somehow, you have been outdistanced by this slowest of creatures. And there is loss! What can you do?

I have asked this question more than once. From time to time I have come face to face with some calamity that prompts bitterness or resentment or despair or dread or some other ungodly emotion. In the midst of that situation, I

ask "What should I do Lord?" The answer is always found in God. Heaven has the answer.

There is an answer for the struggling trapeze artist. As they reach for the next ring, it comes to their remembrance that just below is the safety net. This net vibrates throughout the arena patiently declaring the good news. It says, "Rescue." It says, "Peace." It says, "Rest in me." This net of protection gives solace and comfort. It is the same with the scriptures. In the writings of the Apostle Paul to the saints in Rome we read, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." ¹ Here it is clearly stated that through the Word of God we have comfort and hope.

One of the verses that always rescues me and comforts me in times of struggle is Psalms 27:13. It declares "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living." This scripture always gives me confidence and assurance. It is my safety net! It says, "Hang in there Becky. You will see God's goodness. God will help you." And certainly, this is true. But recently, as I was studying, I noted this wonderful verse says "land of the living." It does not say "family of the living." God's

goodness is not confined to individuals or families. It includes lands, nations, and countries.

What a comfort this has been to me! Truly, I had fallen into such sad despair over national affairs that I failed to pray “For kings, and for all that are in authority.”² I simply could not confidently “mount up with wings as eagles”³ and pray for my nation. Today, the Word of God has given me new courage.

There is another promise to nations in the wonderful verses on tithing given by Malachi. After God says that the tither will enjoy blessings beyond his capacity to receive them, He makes two commitments to him. First, He will rebuke the devourer (the one who destroys) then “all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightful land.”⁴ In Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, this word “land” can be translated “earth, land, country, field, ground, nations, way, and world.” This enlarges our knowledge of God’s commitment far beyond “my house” to “my nation.”

God’s desire to work in nations is also clearly defined in 2 Chronicles 7:14. This familiar verse declares that God will “heal our land.” When God’s people humbly pray, seek Him and turn from wickedness, He will answer them, forgive them, and “heal their land.”

Now, I share these verses with you because they give us courage and strength to pray for our nation. With these scriptures in our heart, we can fly as high as the trapeze artist grasping ring after ring without despondency, without despair, without fear of failure. We know our God has purposed to “stretch out his hand upon nations.”⁵ Boldly, we petition Him to “revive thy work in the midst of the years.”⁶ We hold fast the cry of Isaiah, “Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down.”⁷ Our desire is for all to see “the glory of the Lord and the excellency of our God”⁸ so that “the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the Lord alone shall be exalted.”⁹

As we pray, we continually call to the nations saying, “It is time to seek the Lord.”¹⁰ We earnestly implore all men to, “Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted

out.”¹¹ As they cry out to Him, He will “pour water upon (all) that (are) thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground.”¹² He will send “showers of blessings.”¹³ Yet, the enemy of our soul will also come raining evil upon us like a great flood, but “the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.”¹⁴ and God will “work a work in [our] days, a work which [we] shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it.”¹⁵ This is why we pray. If we ask the Lord for rain in the time of the latter rain, He will manifest Himself in great power. He will affect individuals, families, and nations.

¹ Romans 15:4

² 1 Timothy 2:2

³ Isaiah 40:31

⁴ Malachi 3:12

⁵ Isaiah 14:26

⁶ Habakkuk 3:2

⁷ Isaiah 64:1

⁸ Isaiah 35:2

⁹ Isaiah 2:17

¹⁰ Hosea 10:12

¹¹ Acts 3:19

¹² Isaiah 44:3

¹³ Ezekiel 34:26

¹⁴ Isaiah 59:19

¹⁵ Acts 13:41

My Country 'Tis Of Thee

♪ My country, 'tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
Of thee I sing;
Land where my fathers died,
Land of the pilgrims' pride,
From every mountainside
Let freedom ring! ♪

Samuel Francis Key penned the words to this song in 1831 while in school studying journalism. A friend had asked him to translate the lyrics from a selection of German songbooks when a certain tune captured his attention. Within thirty minutes he had written this patriotic song.

Samuel Francis Key became an ordained Baptist minister in 1834. He would go on to write over 150 hymns and publish the Baptist hymnal, *The Psalmist*. He was a missionary to Europe, Turkey, India, Ceylon, and Burma. Originally titled “America” this song was sung at his funeral in 1865.

**http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/My_Country,_'_Tis_of_Thee*