

Anne Graham Lotz Prays Over Coronavirus: 'Father, Forgive Our Sin. Heal Our Land'

In light of the coronavirus pandemic, President Trump declared March 15 as a National Day of Prayer, saying, "We are a country that, throughout our history, has looked to God for protection and strength in times like these. ... No matter where you may be, I encourage you to turn toward prayer in an act of faith."

I thank God for the president's timely declaration, and I respond with the following prayer:

Father God,

In a world of famine, floods and fire; disease, death and the disruption of our everyday activities, on this day when the president has called for a National Day of Prayer, we choose to look up ... from our knees. We see You seated on the throne of glory, in control of all things (Isa. 6:1). *All things*. We know that You are a God of mercy, of grace, of faithfulness, of loving-kindness (Ex. 34:6, Eph. 2:4, 2 Cor. 9:14). So we reject fear of the coronavirus and its impact on our lives, and instead place our faith in You. You have said that Your ears are open to our cry (Ps. 4:3), that Your eyes are upon us (Ps. 33:18), and that Your arms are long enough to reach us (Isa. 59:1) and strong enough to hold us (Ps. 139:7-10). Hold us now. Hold us close. Quiet our racing hearts. Breathe Your Spirit of peace into the fear and turmoil within us.

Even as I pray for Your peace, I wonder ... could this wicked, insidious, evil virus be the trigger that sparks a spiritual awakening in our beloved nation? Are You trying to get our attention, demanding that we wake up in our relationship with You? I know we desperately need to wake up.

We have legalized defiance of Your institution of marriage; we celebrate relationships that contradict Your instructions; we exterminate life that You created and that bears Your image ... for our own convenience; we have become so secularized we don't even acknowledge You exist, much less reverence or obey You.

You have my attention. Therefore, like the prophet Daniel of old, I turn to You in humility and shame as I confess on behalf of America some of the national sins that come to mind (Dan. 9:1-19):

—I confess national addiction to sex. To money. To pleasure. To entertainment. To pornography. To technology. To drugs. To alcohol. To food. To television. To popularity. To ourselves.

—I confess our foolishness of denying You as the one, true, living God, our Creator to whom we are accountable, living as though our lives are a cosmic accident with no eternal significance, purpose or meaning.

—I confess our greed that has run up trillions of dollars of national debt.

—I confess our arrogance and pride that have led us to think we are sufficient in ourselves.

—I confess to believing that the prosperity of our nation is because we are great, while refusing to acknowledge that all blessings come from Your hand.

—I confess that we depend upon our military might and our weapons systems to protect us from harm and danger while denying, defying and ignoring You.

—I confess that we have succumbed to the pressure of pluralism in our desire to be inclusive so that we honor other gods as though You are just one of many.

—I confess that we have allowed the material blessings You

have given us to deceive us into thinking we don't need You.

—I confess that we live as though material wealth and prosperity will bring happiness.

—I confess that we have marginalized truth and mainstreamed lies.

—I confess that we have become one nation under many gods, divided and polarized, with license to sin and justice that no longer follows the rule of law.

Holy Spirit of the living God, remind us of the need to turn away from our sin and get right with You (John 16:8).

Lord God, have mercy on us! As we repent of our sin and return to You, return to us! There is no one like You to help the powerless against this mighty disease. Help us, O Lord our God, for we rely on You and in Your name we come against this vast, invisible enemy (2 Chr. 14:11).

Once again, we hold You to the promise You gave to King Solomon. You said, "When I shut up the heaven and there is no rain, or when I command the locusts to devour the land, or send pestilence on My people, if My people, who are called by My name, will humble themselves and pray, and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and will heal their land. Now My eyes will be open and My ears attentive to the prayer of this place" (2 Chr. 7:13-15).

We hold You to Your word as we plead with You. Hear our prayer. Forgive our sin. Heal our land. We are standing in the gap for our nation.

We pray in the name of the one who is our deliverer. Our beautiful and only Savior. Lord of the nations. Son of God and Son of Man. The living, reigning, soon to return Lord of lords and King of kings, Jesus Christ.

In His name and for His glory we pray, amen. {eo}

Anne Graham Lotz, second child of Billy and Ruth Graham, is the founder of AnGeL Ministries and former chairman for the National Day of Prayer Task Force. She has authored 15 books, including her new release, *Jesus in Me: Experiencing the Holy Spirit as a Constant Companion*,

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