

1 Timothy Prayers to Bring God's Will to the Middle East

The situation in the Middle East is so complex that often one is not sure just exactly what to pray for. Many well-meaning believers get so caught up in one aspect of the conflict or another that they miss the overall picture. Sometimes, with misdirected zeal, we can even be found praying contrary to God's will.

I thought it would be good therefore, in the context of interceding for events in the Middle East, to review some basic principles from 1 Timothy 2:1-5 (NKJV):

1. "I exhort, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions and giving of thanks be made for all men."

The phrase "all men" has to do with the fact that God loves everyone. In the current conflict it also has ethnic implications. Most Christians end up on one side, either praying for only the Jews or only the Arabs. We must pray for God's goodness to be extended to both peoples.

2. "For kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence."

A matter of priority is to pray for God's wisdom and integrity to work through the top government leaders. We need to pray for Jewish and Palestinian leaders, as well as the various cabinet members. We need to exercise supernatural faith that God's will can be done through them.

If we pray for more wisdom and clearer thinking for government leaders, the security situation can be improved.

The government leaders have a "deaconate"-type function (Acts 6) to produce a society with peace and order. The government

leaders are not going to solve the spiritual questions. That is our job. Let us not put upon them the exaggerated expectations of bringing about the messianic kingdom. That comes through prayer and evangelism. The role of political leaders is to limit violence, allow for civil rights and justice and bring order to the government institutions.

3. "This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our savior, Who desires all men to be saved."

More important than land occupation, improved economics or civil rights is the issue of eternal salvation. Though all the political issues of the Middle East have enormous prophetic significance, the No. 1 priority remains evangelism. Freedom of religious expression, therefore, is an issue that cannot be overlooked. However, even in the midst of opposition and challenging social issues, the gospel can go forth in a wonderful way.

Let us remember to keep praying and giving for advancement in indigenous evangelism and discipleship for both Israelis and Palestinians.

4. "For as there is one God and one mediator between God and man, the man Messiah Yeshua."

With all the religious zeal in the Middle East, even the most dedicated follower of Yeshua can often be swept away from one simple, central factor: there is no peace without the Prince of Peace. Yeshua (Jesus) is the only answer. Well-meaning efforts are doomed to failure as long as the great majority of Israelis and Palestinians reject Him. The biblical promises of the land, peace, prosperity and so on will only find their total fulfillment only in the Messianic kingdom when He returns.

In the meantime, as the kingdom of God grows in the Middle East, so will the outward blessings in the political and natural realms follow. The current conflicts in the Middle

East are not disconnected from the historical and universal rebellion of mankind against God and His anointed King (Psalm 2:1-7). Submission to Yeshua the Messiah is what will bring the conflicts to an end. {eoa}

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