

A Prayerful Response to Terrorism



By Dave Butts

There is no doubt that we live in an age of terror. The threat of terrorism affects us every time we go to an airport, or cast a vote. It affects the policies of nations and the daily lives of individuals. Nations are mobilizing to face this increasingly dangerous threat.

What is the Church's response to terrorism? It certainly affects us. In some places, the Church has been the target of terror attacks. In order for the Church to fully engage this threat, we must see the spiritual aspect of what is happening. Read the following passage of Scripture from Isaiah, and see whether or not it is able to be applied to terrorists today.

"...Their deeds are evil deeds, and acts of violence are in their hands. Their feet rush into sin; they are swift to shed innocent blood. Their thoughts are evil thoughts; ruin and destruction mark their ways. The way of peace they do not know; there is no justice in their paths. They have turned

them into crooked roads; no one who walks in them will know peace" (Isaiah 59:6-8).

Terrorism is not merely a matter of physical struggle. It is a spiritual battle as well. This type of blind violence is indicative of Satan's handiwork. Jesus said of Satan in John 8 and 10 that he is a liar, a thief and a murderer. His intent is to steal, kill and destroy. In Revelation chapter 12, the devil is described as he who leads the whole world astray. He is filled with fury because he knows his time is short.

While in Thailand recently, I heard British prayer leader, Brian Mills, say, "Satan undermines truth, is full of self-importance, has revealed that children are a legitimate target, is vehemently anti-Jewish and anti-Christian, and seeks to interrupt our communication with God, and with one another. In short, Satan is a terrorist! We see a spirit of violence, intrinsic within radical Islam, being turned outwards."

Because the struggle against terrorism is one aspect of the cosmic war between the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of the prince of this world, Christians must step to the forefront of the battle. As in all of our warfare, prayer becomes a major weapon in our arsenal.

In World War II, Rees Howells and a group of English intercessors gathered together regularly to watch and pray over the major battles and events of the day. There were numerous occasions where God stepped in to show them what must happen even in advance of the events themselves. These faithful intercessors prayed strategic prayers that changed the direction of military events.

It is time today, in our current warfare against terrorism, for the watchmen to again rise up. The Old Testament uses the term watchmen on several occasions to define and describe the actions of intercessors such as Rees Howells and those who

prayed with him. The prophet Isaiah cries out, *"I have posted watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; they will never be silent day or night"* (Isaiah 62:6).

What do watchmen do?

- They watch and pray.
- They are to be on guard constantly and so provide protection. *"Arise, cry out in the night, as the watches of the night begin"* (Lamentations 2:19).
- They are to listen. Jeremiah 6:17 says, *"I appointed watchmen over you and said, 'Listen to the sound of the trumpet.'"*
- They are to warn. *"Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; so hear the word I speak and give them warning from Me"*(Ezekiel 3:17).
- They are to call on the Lord. *"I have posted watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; they will never be silent day or night. You who call on the Lord, give yourselves no rest"* (Isaiah 62:6).

God has called His people to be watchmen. We are not to be passive observers or victims in the war against terror. We are to watch and pray. When we read news, we pray. As we watch television news, we pray. As we engage social media, we pray.

In this kind of battlefield mentality, our prayers must be militant as well. We must pray for a hedge of protection for those on the frontline of battle. We ask God to protect the innocent. It is at times like this that we ask the Lord of the Hosts of Heaven to move out against the enemies of God. We pray that the purposes of God would be fulfilled in the midst of these threats.

Every nation needs watchmen. God is calling us to the walls to watch and pray. Our prayers will make the difference in the

fight against terrorism. In the darkness of our current situation, God is calling His people to be light. Through our watchful prayer, we release the powerful light of Christ into the battle. Truly, the battle is the Lord's: *"...This is what the Lord says to you: 'Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God's'"* (2 Chronicles 20:15).

Additional Reading: [Praying for Our Enemies](#) and [Prayers for First Responders](#)

–Dave Butts (1953-2022) was the president of Harvest Prayer Ministries, and the author of multiple books, articles and resources on prayer. Some of his books are [Prayer, Peace and the Presence of God](#), [The Giving Church](#), and [Prayer Ministry Volunteer Handbook](#) co-authored with his wife, Kim.