

**LET
GOD
ARISE!**

*The Battle Belongs to the Lord
Prayer Guide #8*

Rev. Dr. Don L. Davis



Esther, Nehemiah, and Ezra: The God of the Impossible

Esther 4.13-14

O God Our Help in Ages Past

Isaac Watts and William Croft

O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home:

Under the shadow of thy throne, Thy saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is thine arm alone, and our defense is sure.

Before the hills in order stood, or earth received her frame,
From everlasting thou art God, to endless years the same.

A thousand ages in thy sight are like an evening gone;
Short as the watch that ends the night before the rising sun.

Time, like an ever-rolling stream, bears all its sons away;
They fly, forgotten, as a dream dies at the opening day.

O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,
Be thou our guide while troubles last, and our eternal home!

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The Lord is our shield and refuge

Ps. 84.11 - For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord bestows favor and honor. No good thing does he withhold from those who walk uprightly.

Ps. 115.9-11 - O Israel, trust in the Lord! He is their help and their shield.
[10] O house of Aaron, trust in the Lord! He is their help and their shield.
[11] You who fear the Lord, trust in the Lord! He is their help and their shield.

Gen. 15.1 - After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision: "Fear not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great."

Deut. 33.29 - Happy are you, O Israel! Who is like you, a people saved by the Lord, the shield of your help, and the sword of your triumph! Your enemies shall come fawning to you, and you shall tread upon their backs.

Ps. 3.3 - But you, O Lord, are a shield about me, my glory, and the lifter of my head.

Ps. 5.12 - For you bless the righteous, O Lord; you cover him with favor as with a shield.

Ps. 18.2 - The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

Ps. 84.9 - Behold our shield, O God; look on the face of your anointed!

Ps. 91.4 - He will cover you with his pinions, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness is a shield and buckler.

Ps. 119.114 - You are my hiding place and my shield; I hope in your word.



Unless otherwise noted, all Scriptures are taken from the English Standard Version (ESV)

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Prov. 30.5 - Every word of God proves true; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.

Cry out to God for help

Ps. 50.15 - And call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me.

Ps. 130.1-2 - Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord! [2] O Lord, hear my voice! Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my pleas for mercy!

Ps. 18.6 - In my distress I called upon the Lord; to my God I cried for help. From his temple he heard my voice, and my cry to him reached his ears.

Ps. 20.2 - May he send you help from the sanctuary and give you support from Zion!

Ps. 22.19 - But you, O Lord, do not be far off! O you my help, come quickly to my aid!

Ps. 27.9 - Hide not your face from me. Turn not your servant away in anger, O you who have been my help. Cast me not off; forsake me not, O God of my salvation!

1 Kings 8.27-30 - But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you; how much less this house that I have built! [28] Yet have regard to the prayer of your servant and to his plea, O Lord my God, listening to the cry and to the prayer that your servant prays before you this day, [29] that your eyes may be open night and day toward this house, the place of which you have said, 'My name shall be there,' that you may listen to the prayer that your servant offers toward this place. [30] And listen to the plea of your servant and of your



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people Israel, when they pray toward this place. And listen in heaven your dwelling place, and when you hear, forgive.

2 Chron. 30.27 - Then the priests and the Levites arose and blessed the people, and their voice was heard, and their prayer came to his holy habitation in heaven.

Ps. 30.2 - O Lord my God, I cried to you for help, and you have healed me.

Ps. 33.20 - Our soul waits for the Lord; he is our help and our shield.

Ps. 34.17 - When the righteous cry for help, the Lord hears and delivers them out of all their troubles.

Ps. 35.2 - Take hold of shield and buckler and rise for my help!

Ps. 38.22 - Make haste to help me, O Lord, my salvation!

The help of man is futile and vain

Ps. 146.3-6 - Put not your trust in princes, in a son of man, in whom there is no salvation. [4] When his breath departs he returns to the earth; on that very day his plans perish. [5] Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord his God, [6] who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, who keeps faith forever.

Ps. 62.9 - Those of low estate are but a breath; those of high estate are a delusion; in the balances they go up; they are together lighter than a breath.

Ps. 118.8-9 - It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in man. [9] It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in princes.



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Isa. 2.22 - Stop regarding man in whose nostrils is breath, for of what account is he?

Isa. 31.3 - The Egyptians are man, and not God, and their horses are flesh, and not spirit. When the Lord stretches out his hand, the helper will stumble, and he who is helped will fall, and they will all perish together.

Jer. 17.5-6 - Thus says the Lord: “Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart turns away from the Lord. [6] He is like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see any good come. He shall dwell in the parched places of the wilderness, in an uninhabited salt land.”

The Lord alone provides the strength and grace we need to persevere

Ps. 40.4 - Blessed is the man who makes the Lord his trust, who does not turn to the proud, to those who go astray after a lie!

Ps. 62.8 - Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us. Selah Mic. 7.5-7 - Put no trust in a neighbor; have no confidence in a friend; guard the doors of your mouth from her who lies in your arms; [6] for the son treats the father with contempt, the daughter rises up against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; a man's enemies are the men of his own house. [7] But as for me, I will look to the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me.

Ps. 2.12 - Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way, for his wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

Ps. 34.8 - Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!



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Jer. 17.7-8 - “Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. [8] He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit.”

Blessed are the ones who makes the Lord their refuge and trust

Ps. 40.4 - Blessed is the man who makes the Lord his trust, who does not turn to the proud, to those who go astray after a lie!

Ps. 84.12 - O Lord of hosts, blessed is the one who trusts in you!

Prov. 16.20 - Whoever gives thought to the word will discover good, and blessed is he who trusts in the Lord.

Isa. 26.3-4 - You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you. [4] Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord God is an everlasting rock.

Isa. 30.18 - Therefore the Lord waits to be gracious to you, and therefore he exalts himself to show mercy to you. For the Lord is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for him.

Jer. 17.7 - Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord.

Rom. 9.33 - as it is written, “Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”

1 Pet. 2.6 - For it stands in Scripture: “Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”



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God is with us

Deut. 33.29 - Happy are you, O Israel! Who is like you, a people saved by the Lord, the shield of your help, and the sword of your triumph! Your enemies shall come fawning to you, and you shall tread upon their backs.

Ps. 33.12 - Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people whom he has chosen as his heritage!

Ps. 46.7 - The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

Ps. 46.11 - The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

Jer. 16.19 - O Lord, my strength and my stronghold, my refuge in the day of trouble, to you shall the nations come from the ends of the earth and say: "Our fathers have inherited nothing but lies, worthless things in which there is no profit."

God is providential in all his dealings with his people and his creation

Exod. 15.26 - saying, "If you will diligently listen to the voice of the Lord your God, and do that which is right in his eyes, and give ear to his commandments and keep all his statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you that I put on the Egyptians, for I am the Lord, your healer."

Exod. 34.24 - For I will cast out nations before you and enlarge your borders; no one shall covet your land, when you go up to appear before the Lord your God three times in the year.

Lev. 25.18-19 - Therefore you shall do my statutes and keep my rules and perform them, and then you will dwell in the land securely. [19] The land will yield its fruit, and you will eat your fill and dwell in it securely. Deut. 5.29 - Oh that they had such a mind as this always, to fear me and to keep all my commandments, that it might go well with them and with their descendants forever!



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Deut. 5.33 - You shall walk in all the way that the Lord your God has commanded you, that you may live, and that it may go well with you, and that you may live long in the land that you shall possess.

Ezra 8.22 - For I was ashamed to ask the king for a band of soldiers and horsemen to protect us against the enemy on our way, since we had told the king, “The hand of our God is for good on all who seek him, and the power of his wrath is against all who forsake him.”

Neh. 9.25 - And they captured fortified cities and a rich land, and took possession of houses full of all good things, cisterns already hewn, vineyards, olive orchards and fruit trees in abundance. So they ate and were filled and became fat and delighted themselves in your great goodness.

Ps. 37.3 - Trust in the Lord, and do good; dwell in the land and befriend faithfulness.

Ps. 44.1-3 - O God, we have heard with our ears, our fathers have told us, what deeds you performed in their days, in the days of old: [2] you with your own hand drove out the nations, but them you planted; you afflicted the peoples, but them you set free; [3] for not by their own sword did they win the land, nor did their own arm save them, but your right hand and your arm, and the light of your face, for you delighted in them.

Ps. 65.9-10 - You visit the earth and water it; you greatly enrich it; the river of God is full of water; you provide their grain, for so you have prepared it. [10] You water its furrows abundantly, settling its ridges, softening it with showers, and blessing its growth.

Ps. 68.6 - God settles the solitary in a home; he leads out the prisoners to prosperity, but the rebellious dwell in a parched land. Ps. 69.35-36 - For God will save Zion and build up the cities of Judah, and people shall dwell



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there and possess it; [36] the offspring of his servants shall inherit it, and those who love his name shall dwell in it.

Let us acknowledge God's provision and deliverance in our worship and service

Isa. 12.2-6 - Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid; for the Lord God is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation. [3] With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. [4] And you will say in that day: "Give thanks to the Lord, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the peoples, proclaim that his name is exalted. [5] Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously; let this be made known in all the earth. [6] Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel."

Jer. 17.14 - Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved, for you are my praise.

1 Chron. 16.35 - Say also: "Save us, O God of our salvation, and gather and deliver us from among the nations, that we may give thanks to your holy name, and glory in your praise."

Ps. 14.7 - Oh, that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion! When the Lord restores the fortunes of his people, let Jacob rejoice, let Israel be glad.

Ps. 79.9-10 - Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of your name; deliver us, and atone for our sins, for your name's sake! [10] Why should the nations say, "Where is their God?" Let the avenging of the outpoured blood of your servants be known among the nations before our eyes!

Heb. 13.15 - Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name.



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1 Pet. 2.4-6 - As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, [5] you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. [6] For it stands in Scripture: “Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.” ■

“GET REAL. Can the inner cities of the world be won in our generation?”

What a question! Certainly, the cities of the world are in peril. From economic upheaval, overpopulation and shortage of resources, rampant violence, overcrowding and congestion, to political corruption, mind-numbing diversity, and social anxiety, most major cities of the world are in crisis. With few exceptions, the mega-cities of the world deal every day with difficulties, challenges, and issues that make even world’s best experts and most ingenious solutions ineffective. Is there any wonder why the churches in these cities can easily fall prey to the same kind of cancerous negativism and unbelief, living with a siege mentality overwhelmed by the sheer size and dimensions of the world’s problems?

Truly, it will take divine power, a God to win the populations and transform the cities of the world.

During the history of the people of God, he has demonstrated his ability to intervene in the midst of virtually impossible situations. Esther’s foolhardy plea to the king in the face of the threat of annihilation of the entire Jewish race, the crumbling and ruin of Jerusalem’s walls and Nehemiah’s deep burden to rebuild it in the face of terrible opposition, and Ezra’s efforts for revival of a broken remnant returning from captivity—these projects, on their face, seem totally unlikely if not hopeless.



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In and of themselves, these champions of faith would have flatly failed. Without the direct intervention and providential resourcing of the Lord God, none of these great deliverances would have occurred. In every case, the man or woman of God had to trust God to do the impossible, to provide the unlikely, to accomplish the incredible. In every situation where the people of God trusted and obeyed, God came through.

This is the firm, clear, and unyielding truth of all of God's dealing with his own testified to in the holy Scriptures. Our God, the one, the triune invisible God, never reneges on a promise and never forgets his covenant. He alone is the help of his people, he is their shield and strength, their hope and security. He alone is able to fight and defeat his enemies, especially that enemy whom Scripture sees as the root and fountain of all that is polluted and wrong in the world today, that ancient foe of God and humankind, the devil. No new legislation or governmental initiative, no international treaty or upcoming election, and no political party or human authority can put down the powers that plague humankind and the universe. Only God in Christ can win the day. Only the Lamb is strong enough to provide us with the grace to help in time of need.

During this Season after Pentecost we are reminded of Christ's headship. Through the grace and mercy of our Father, Christ Jesus is the High Priest of heaven and Head of the Church. Because he lives, he is able to hear us, come to our aid, help us in time of trouble, and provide us with the guidance and resource to obey him fully. With so many cities yet to hear of the saving love of God in Jesus, it will require God's own power and strength to continue and finish the Great Commission mandate. Notwithstanding our sincere efforts to complete the task, only God in the name of Jesus through the supply of the Holy Spirit can break the chains that bind the hearts and minds of millions of city dwellers worldwide.



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In the Lord alone is the power to prevail. And, though the task seems impossible and overwhelming (by human odds, at least), we know that our God is the same God of Mordecai, Esther, Nehemiah, and Ezra, the same God who can take our measly and grizzled efforts and multiply them for his glory. As this has always been the case in spiritual warfare, so it is for us today.

If anything should have become clear for us so far this year focusing on the strategies and tactics of spiritual warfare, we should know by now that in our own strength we cannot win. We will never prevail in our own power, and cannot overcome the sizable and intimidating forces of the dark and the night without the direct, immediate, and sufficient intervention of God's divine power. Let us share the same spirit of Mordecai and Esther who once faced challenges beyond their natural ability and power:

Esther 4.13-16 - Then Mordecai told them to reply to Esther, "Do not think to yourself that in the king's palace you will escape any more than all the other Jews. [14] For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" [15] Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai, [16] "Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf, and do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my young women will also fast as you do. Then I will go to the king, though it is against the law, and if I perish, I perish."

God has raised us up, believers in our generation, for such a time as this. Let us, in the fear of the Lord, with our faith squarely anchored on his provision and Spirit, proceed in reckless obedience, knowing that our God can give us the victory. However, if he chooses in our case to not intervene on any given battlefield, let us fight still confident that, ultimately, his covenant promise will be accomplished in his time and in his way. Nothing and no one can



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thwart the will of our God. Let us go forth into prayer, obedience, and mission confident that the word of our God cannot be broken and is forever settled above. Let us go for the sake of his call, and remember what is at stake in the salvation of millions of souls yet to be brought into the Kingdom of God.

This month, let us renew our commitment to sustained, fervent, and faith-filled intercession for the salvation of the nations. Do not be ashamed to cry out to the Lord for his help, claiming him as your shield and strength, as you obey the Great Commission where you live. Let us stir ourselves afresh, even in the face of what appears to be overwhelming odds against the grace of God taking hold in our cities, for our God is a God of *Easter* and *Pentecost*.

Our God *can* bring the dead to life again. Our God *can* pour out his divine power on earthen vessels. Our God *can* do the impossible to deliver his own and glorify his name.

Matt. 19.26 - But Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

Mark 10.27 - Jesus looked at them and said, "With man it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God."

Luke 1.37 - "For nothing will be impossible with God." In a real sense, our original question, "Can the inner cities of the world be won in our generation?" is no harder than saying "Can God deliver his people from Haman's vicious plot to destroy the Jewish people?" or "Can the walls of Jerusalem be rebuilt by Nehemiah in the face of cynical and cruel opposition?" or "Can new spiritual vitality be breathed into a broken, demoralized, and humbled community under Ezra?" Odds don't phase omnipotence. God has never been intimidated by anything, and he never will be.



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Let God arise in the inner cities of this nation and our world, and let his Holy Spirit draw thousands upon thousands of city dwellers to the throne of grace, where they can find salvation and grace to help in their time of need. ■



The Season after Pentecost: God, Our Help and Shield

*Ps. 3.8 - Salvation belongs to the Lord; your blessing be on your people!
Selah*

Ps. 62.11 - Once God has spoken; twice have I heard this: that power belongs to God.

Jer. 32.27 - Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh. Is anything too hard for me?

Biblical Principle of the Month

During this Season after Pentecost, let us not be intimidated at the appearance of evil in the cities of America and the world. In spite of the senseless violence, wicked corruption, and general darkness of the city, Jesus of Nazareth is the risen Lord and Messiah, who has poured out with the Father the Holy Spirit into the world. As Victor and Conqueror, he provides us with the grace and strength to persevere in the face of trial and trouble. As we depend on him, we can expect him to do beyond what we ask or think, for he and he alone possesses all authority and power. Let us claim his leading and his provision. The cities are winnable, for God is able to draw the nations to himself.

Eph. 3.20-21 - Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, [21] to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

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