

## GUIDED PRAYERS FOR AFGHANISTAN AND HAITI

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### From Wellspring Covenant Church:

*God of Shalom, hear our prayer.*

*You once likened yourself to a mother hen who wanted to gather her baby chicks to herself to protect them from danger. Will you not do that now?*

*We remember the story of Hagar in scripture – a woman from a vulnerable people group who was desperate to save her son and herself. Running for her life, she was joyfully surprised when you showed up in the desert, provided her with comfort and care, and revealed yourself to be the God who Sees.*

*In your eternal kindness, See now and save the vulnerable! Whether in Kabul, or in rural Afghanistan, or in the rubble of Haiti's towns, protect all who need a safe place. Preserve life. May all who need protection, resources, comfort, medical attention, courage –escape– find what they need supplied for them even in unexpected places. True to your good character, may you show up for a million Hagar's in a million places, even when it seems impossible.*

*God of justice, thwart the plans of all who exploit their power over the vulnerable. Cause them to fall into their own traps. Bring chaos to their plans and subvert their schemes. May those who live by the sword find their weapons of warfare insufficient and ineffective to bring about the change they seek. Help them pursue better ways of being and doing in the world.*

*God of comfort, bring comfort and your courage to those who are shattered and in shock. Whether in Afghanistan, or Haiti, or in countries around the world hurting for their sisters and brothers, may your Holy Spirit pray and intercede when there are no words left to say. In the name of the One who came so there could be life – life everlasting, Amen.*

### From World Relief Seattle:

*“Please God, give us the courage not to look away.”*

**From Black Liturgies, by Cole Arthur Riley:**

For those that feel helpless when the world is aching:

If you feel helpless in the wake of the earthquake in Haiti and the Taliban's control in Afghanistan, good.

Your inherent expectation that your role is "savior" or that you should know and understand what's best for countries that aren't yours, is precisely what must be dismantled for their protection.

Most people in the US have no business centering our own opinions and emotions right now.

Listen, learn, take responsibility, give reparations: lean into the sacred practice of decentering.

INHALE: *I am not the savior*

EXHALE: *I am not the answer*

INHALE: *God, help me enter their pain*

EXHALE: *Without centering mine*

**Also from Black Liturgies, by Cole Arthur Riley:**

Protect the part of you that still winces at pain. Refuse to become too familiar with tragedy. Our souls were made to stir.

PRAYER:

*God who is moved to tears,*

*In a world of so much trauma and tragedy, it is difficult to not become numb. We confess we are desensitized to the cries of our neighbors. We confess that global terror rolls off us like water. Help us from our familiarization with pain, that it would always rouse our spirit. Keep us from that obsessive attunement which is prone toward savior complexes and feigned allyship, and lead us into a kind of solidarity that reminds us that in pausing to bear witness to suffering, we do not become the rescuer. We do not become the voice. And free us from the responsibility to feel every pain at once. Help us to discern our capacity for solidarity, for lament, and when we stand and when we rest and allow others to do so—remembering that our activism is shared among a collective. We are not alone.*

INHALE: *I will not become numb to oppression*

EXHALE: *God, stir my stagnant soul*

INHALE: *I don't have to hold every pain at once*

EXHALE: *I can feel and not be consumed*