



# USE YOUR GOD-GIVEN AUTHORITY

**BY JOHN D ROBB**

The prophet Jeremiah felt so immature and inadequate as God called him to a ministry of prophetic prayer for the people of Israel and other nations. We often feel just the same, as if our prayers will make little difference, but they can actually have the awesome power of the Almighty to change the history of nations!

The Lord told Jeremiah that He had put His words in the young prophet's mouth and that as that happened, He was appointing him "over nations and kingdoms to uproot and tear down, to destroy and overthrow, to build and to plant" (Jer. 1:9-10). Modern Bible scholars say that later history demonstrated that Jeremiah's prophetic prayers and declarations were actually fulfilled in the way things worked out for Israel and those other nations to which his ministry was directed.

For those of us who follow Jesus Christ, the Lord of Lords and King of Kings, and who are also members of His eternal family, should we expect anything less to happen when we pray for nations? If anything, we ought to expect far more! According to the Apostle Paul, we have been raised in Christ to sit with Him in the heavenly places (Eph. 2:6). Through the Spirit and joined to our victorious King, we are actually "far above all rule and authority, power and dominion (1:20-22).

Jesus told His disciples that **all** authority had been given to Him, and therefore they should go and make disciples of all the *ethne* (people groups) on earth (Mt.28:18-20). They had also already observed that the spirits were subject to them and heard the Lord tell them: “I have given you authority to tread on snakes and scorpions and to overcome **all** the power of the enemy” (Lk. 10:17-19). He had also most categorically taught them that **whatever** they bound on earth would be bound in heaven and **whatever** they loosed on earth would be loosed in heaven. In the same teaching session, He clearly tied this exercise of authority that would move from earth to heaven, affecting things there as well, to their practice of the prayer of agreement. Such authoritative praying will apply to **anything** His followers agree on with one another (Mt. 18:18-20).

In the case of Jeremiah, it is the presence and guidance of the Lord as the prophet prays that causes his words to carry such immense authority. However, because of our position in Christ and the resulting link with heaven itself, Jesus has extended even more authority to His own family members who are willing to exercise it. They can use this awesome power in “whatever” circumstance they face and pray about “anything” they encounter. No limits are given by the Lord. Have we grasped this in our own experience yet, or are we holding back like the unsure and inadequate prophet of old?

In the 1990’s, while serving with an international humanitarian organization, colleagues and I were driven to desperate prayer by the number of hopeless, impossible ethnic conflicts happening in the countries our organization was seeking to serve. Our relief and development staff cried out, saying they needed prayer more than money. Although I had never mobilized prayer before and had mainly been a mission activist, I began to take ministry teams into war zones. We decided to take God’s ancient promise literally, that He would come in and heal a country when His people went through a process of humbling themselves, praying, seeking His face and turning from their evil ways (2 Chr. 7:14).

Over and over again, we were utterly amazed at what the Lord did as spiritual leaders of all denominational and ethnic backgrounds urgently came together for these national prayer initiatives. As they went through a process of repentance and reconciliation followed by united, authoritative prayer, history would be changed before our eyes. Political leaders on both sides of those hopeless conflicts would then implement what we had transacted with the Lord and one another. Peace agreements sometimes happened while we were still in the midst of the initiative or shortly thereafter. Everyone knew that it was God being

faithful to His promise as His people stepped up to using the authority He had delegated.

Our teams saw at least nine such civil wars and ethnic conflicts ended this way. We also saw other marvelous transformations as the Spirit of the Lord removed wicked political leaders from power, brought about the revival of apathetic believers, and ignited mass turnings of hitherto unresponsive unbelievers to Christ. Having now done such initiatives in 61 nations, we know these things occurred not through serendipity but by the merciful interventions of God!

Let me urge you along with other brothers and sisters in Christ you are close with--even a small number will do--to take the awesome authority you have already been given and use it to transform your nation, believing God for even the biggest challenges you face. You will be amazed at how things can change, even suddenly with a whole new socio-political atmosphere becoming evident. "According to your faith will it be done for you" (Mt. 9:29)! Of course, we must be careful not to do this presumptuously or arrogantly but humbly and dependently, always relying on the guidance and anointing of the Holy Spirit to reveal how we ought to pray. We also need to be always watchful, maintaining His love and unity with all those on our team. This is a recipe for breakthrough after breakthrough as God's people have experienced through the centuries.

It is all from Him, through Him and to Him--glory be to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit!

John Robb