

Powerful  
Prayers  
*for* Troubled  
Times

STORMIE  
OMARTIAN



HARVEST HOUSE PUBLISHERS

EUGENE, OREGON

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## **POWERFUL PRAYERS FOR TROUBLED TIMES**

**Formerly titled *The Power of a Praying® Nation***

Copyright © 2002, 2011 by Stormie Omartian

Published by Harvest House Publishers

Eugene, Oregon 97402

[www.harvesthousepublishers.com](http://www.harvesthousepublishers.com)

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Omartian, Stormie.

Powerful prayers for troubled times / Stormie Omartian.

p. cm.

Rev. ed. of: The power of a praying nation.

ISBN 978-0-7369-3922-5 (pbk.)

ISBN 978-0-7369-4202-7 (eBook)

1. x Christianity. 2. Christianity and international affairs. 3. Christianity and politics—United States. I. Omartian, Stormie. Power of a praying nation. II. Title.

BV227.O53 2011

248.3'2—dc22

2011008916

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**Printed in the United States of America**

11 12 13 14 15 16 17 / BP-SK / 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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## When Tragedy Hits Home

Our lives changed on September 11, 2001. Of all the many horrific aspects of that tragic day, it seems that the moment the first World Trade Center building fell, something fell in our hearts as well. It was the end of an era. The illusion of safety we had enjoyed for years was gone, as well as our apathy. The things in life we thought could never fall did. And something fell in us too. But in many of us, something was also awakened.

The thousands of lives destroyed that day were not soldiers on a battlefield. They were civilians who had said goodbye to their loved ones that morning, never dreaming it would be for the last time. They were fathers and mothers, husbands and wives, sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles,

cousins, grandparents, and friends who would never come home again. Numbers of children were left without a father or mother. Mothers and fathers were without the son or daughter they had sacrificed their lives to raise. Family members, loved ones, valued acquaintances, coworkers, employers, employees, business partners and associates were now forever bereft of the people who gave their lives meaning. We wondered, *If this could happen to them, could something like this happen to us too someday when we least expect it?*

This national disaster affected all of us in some terrible way. We mourned with those who mourned, wept with those who wept, and extended ourselves to do whatever we could to help, but it never seemed enough in the face of such unimaginable tragedy. The loss was too great. The destruction too massive.

Immediately afterward, prayer suddenly became the right thing to do. God was invited back into our public gathering places. This not only awakened new fear; it also awakened new faith. People saw that they couldn't handle life without God after all. There were many gut-wrenching questions about why this had happened, and people looked to God for the answers. They found prayer was an answer that had been forgotten for too long.

If God keeps our tears in a bottle, as the psalmist says (Psalm 56:8), then heaven must have been flooded

in the aftermath of that morning. Our flow of combined tears became a mighty river of unity that we had not known before in this country. It flowed out to others, even to strangers on the streets. And it flowed back to us in the outpouring of love and compassion from people all over the world who shared our grief.

We who saw these events on television or in person will never be the same. We witnessed the unimaginable. We were exposed to incomprehensible evil. We watched thousands of people disintegrate in front of our eyes. We may have gone back about our business because we had to, but it will never be business as usual again. We look at each other differently now. With new eyes of appreciation. With new eyes of suspicion. We may have resumed our lives, but our minds contain the knowledge that something bad could happen at any time. We've gone back to building for tomorrow, but we can't be certain what tomorrow will bring.

Anyone who doubted the existence of evil can't deny it any longer. They've seen it in action. Even the pictures of ground zero, with the endless smoke rising over mass destruction, resembled what hell must surely look like. Satan had left his imprint. His destructive design for our lives was revealed in the rubble, in the ashes of lives that are no more.

Have we cried our last tear over this horrible event in our nation's history? Have we gotten to the point

where we can see our flag or hear our national anthem and forget all it meant and symbolized for us in the days following September 11? I hope not. Will we take for granted the freedom for which thousands of brave men and women have given their lives over the years? Will we again feel so secure that we think we don't have to look to God as a nation anymore? I pray not.

Even as our lives return to “normal,” it is a *new* normal that is changing every day. There is constant concern in our country about one thing after another, and two entirely different worldviews are at odds. The world seems to be spinning out of control. There are wars and rumors of wars, nations rising against nations and kingdom against kingdom, earthquakes, famines, troubles, sorrows, persecutions, and...where have we heard all this before? Oh, wait, I remember. In the thirteenth chapter of the Gospel of Mark in the Bible. God tells us that all of these things are coming, but what He instructs us to do is “watch and pray” (Mark 13:33).

And we do watch. In fact, some days when we get up in the morning, we wonder, *What horrible thing could happen next? What shocking thing will we see on our television or computer screen?* We worry about what is going on with the economy, the crime rate, our food supply, our finances, our natural resources...the list is endless. We are gravely concerned about the irresponsible and foolish things we see people doing to bring



destruction to the lives of others. We fret about hateful or disturbed people who destroy what has taken us years to build. We try to make the world a better place, but many are trying just as hard to make it worse. And we don't understand why. But God understands everything. And He wants to change things. It doesn't mean He is going to make everything perfect—it's way too close to the end times to think that everything is going to keep getting better—but it does mean He is still in the business of saving lives and protecting and providing for His people. But that doesn't just happen automatically. We have to pray. God doesn't want us to just watch what is happening; He wants us to pray about it every day. He wants us to be *watchful* so we know *how* to pray.

The good news is that God is still in control. And He wants us to pray like we have never prayed before so He can do the things He wants to do here on earth before He returns for His people. He wants us to become prayer warriors.

We who know God have already heard His call to pray, and it has awakened in us a whole new sense of urgency. We know we cannot think just in terms of our own little world. God wants us to not only pray for our families but also for our nation. And not only that—He wants us to pray for other nations and people as well. The stakes are too high if we don't. What happens

anywhere else in the world will affect us in some way. Our prayers must not cover only our own land, but they must also reach around the globe.

Don't worry if you don't know how to pray for these monumental things. God knows that "we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Romans 8:26). In other words, we won't always know the specifics of what we need to pray for, but the Holy Spirit will help us. If ever you are at a loss as to how to pray about something, pray the Lord's Prayer. Who knows if the words "Your will be done on earth" and "deliver us from evil" might save even one person's life? The Holy Spirit knows, and He will lead you to pray when you ask Him to.

In this book are specific prayers we can pray on a regular basis that will not only cover our lives and our nation, but that will also help us to become the intercessors God is calling us to be. God wants to bring new life where there has been death. He desires to bring restoration where there has been loss. But that can only happen if we turn to Him with a humble and pure heart, seek His face and His ways, and pray like never before. So let's do our part to unite this country in prayer and see the power of God move on our behalf. Let's truly become one nation under God, indivisible. Let's ask for the peace of God to bless our land and the nations

of the world. And let us continue in prayer to fight for liberty and justice for all.

### ***Prayer Power***

*Lord, I pray for the people of this country to find healing for the memories of the terrible tragedies that have happened in our land. I pray especially for those who have lost loved ones in the defense of our country. Give them a greater sense of Your presence so that they may find Your comfort. Provide for their every need. As we weep with those who weep, help us to bear their burdens in prayer. Pour Your healing love over them so they will know Your peace. Help us not forget why we must “pray without ceasing” for our nation to be protected (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Help us to remember that the only things in this world that are indestructible are You and Your Word.*

*Your Word tells us that there will be cataclysmic events that will happen in the world, but I pray that there will be an end to disasters or tragedies in our nation. Even if those kinds of events do occur, I pray that You will protect us in the midst of them. Turn the heart of our nation toward You. Awaken in us a new realization of our need for Your guidance and protection. Give us a new understanding*

*of what is really important. Your Word says that You have “borne our griefs and carried our sorrows” (Isaiah 53:4). Bear our griefs now, carry our sorrows, and put gladness in our hearts as only You can do.*

*Lord, teach me how to be a powerful intercessor for my family, neighbors, community, city, and nation. Help me to pray consistently and with great understanding. Give me revelation and insight that guides my prayers so that I may pray more effectively. Help the believers of this nation to rise up together and learn to pray in power. Enable us to teach our children how to pray as well, and help us all to understand what it means to be a nation whose God is the Lord. In Jesus’ name I pray.*

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### **Weapons of Warfare**

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*Blessed are those who mourn,  
for they shall be comforted.*

MATTHEW 5:4

*The people who walked in darkness have seen a  
great light; those who dwelt in the land of the  
shadow of death, upon them a light has shined.*

ISAIAH 9:2

*The sun shall no longer be your light by day, nor  
for brightness shall the moon give light to you;  
but the LORD will be to you an everlasting  
light, and your God your glory...and the  
days of your mourning shall be ended.*

ISAIAH 60:19-20

*This is my comfort in my affliction,  
for Your word has given me life.*

PSALM 119:50

*The effective, fervent prayer  
of a righteous man avails much.*

JAMES 5:16