

# Interfaith Prayers during Natural Disasters

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## Native Prayers – Natural Disaster

Oh Great Spirit whose voice in the winds I hear,  
And whose breath gives life to all the world-  
Hear me.  
Before you I come  
One of your many children.  
I am small & weak.  
Your strength & wisdom I need.  
Let me walk in beauty & make my eyes ever behold the sunset.  
Make my heart respect all You have made,  
& my ears sharp to hear Your voice.  
Make me wise that I may know all You have taught my people,  
The lessons You have hidden in every rock.  
I seek strength, not to be superior to my brother,  
but to fight my greatest enemy – myself.  
Make me ready to stand before You with clean & straight eyes,  
So when life fades as the fading sunset,  
may my spirit stand before You without shame.

**\*Mitakuye Oyasin** meaning “We are all related” or “All my relations”

## Mother Earth Prayer

Mother Earth hear your child, As I sit here on your lap of grass, I listen to the echoes of your voice In my brother, the Wind, As he blows from all corners and directions.  
The soft and gentle raindrops are the Tears you cry for your children.

Teach me the Lessons you offer: To nurture my children, as you nurture yours, To learn the Lessons of the Four Kingdoms, that make up this World of Physical Things, and To Learn to Walk the Path chosen so long ago.

Mother Earth, hear your child, Be a bond between the Worlds of Earth and Spirit. Let the Winds echo the Knowledge of the Grandfathers.

Who await, unseen, yet visible if I only turn my eyes to their World.

Let me hear their Voices, in the Winds that Blow to the East.

From the East: I seek the Lessons of Childhood: To see with the trusting innocence of a small one, The Lessons of Spirit, Given in Love by our Creator.

From the South: to Learn the Ways of Questioning: The Fire and Independence of adolescence, The Truths, and how they help us Grow along this Path.

From the West: where the Grandfathers teach us Acceptance of Responsibility That come during the years of Marriage and Family.

That my own children grow Strong, and True.

From the North: where the Elders, who by their long lives Have learned and stored Wisdom and Knowledge. And Learned to Walk in Balance and Harmony with our Mother, the Earth.

Mother Earth, hear your child. Hold my hand as I Walk my Path in this World. Guide me to the Lessons I seek, bring me closer to Our Creator, Until I return to the Western Direction, to once again Enter the World of Spirit, Where the Sacred Fire Awaits, and I rejoin the Council of the Elders, In the Presence of the One Who-Created-All.

— Kiiskeen'tum- She Who Remembers

## Earth Prayer

Grandfather, Great Spirit, once more behold me on earth and lean to hear my feeble voice.  
You lived first, and you are older than all need, older than all prayer.  
All things belong to you — the two-legged, the four-legged, the wings of the air, and all green things that live.  
You have set the powers of the four quarters of the earth to cross each other.

You have made me cross the good road and road of difficulties, and where they cross, the place is holy.

Day in, day out, forevermore, you are the life of things.

Hey! Lean to hear my feeble voice.

At the center of the sacred hoop

You have said that I should make the tree to bloom.

With tears running, O Great Spirit, my Grandfather,

With running eyes I must say

The tree has never bloomed

Here I stand, and the tree is withered.

Again, I recall the great vision you gave me.

It may be that some little root of the sacred tree still lives.

Nourish it then

That it may leaf

And bloom

And fill with singing birds!

Hear me, that the people may once again

Find the good road

And the shielding tree.

— **Black Elk**

### **Zuni Prayer**

Cover my earth mother four times with many flowers.

Let the heavens be covered with the banked-up clouds.

Let the earth be covered with fog; cover the earth with rains.

Great waters, rains, cover the earth. Lighting cover the earth.

Let thunder be heard over the earth; let thunder be heard;

Let thunder be heard over the six regions of the earth.

— **Zuni Prayer for Rain**

### **I Give You This One Thought**

I give you this one thought to keep

I am with you still – I do not sleep.

I am a thousand winds that blow,

I am the diamond glints on snow,

I am the sunlight on ripened grain,

I am the gentle autumn rain.

When you awaken in the morning's hush,

I am the swift, uplifting rush

of quiet birds in circled flight.

I am the soft stars that shine at night.

Do not think of me as gone –  
I am with you still – in each new dawn.

### **A Prayer for Healing**

Mother, sing me a song  
That will ease my pain,  
Mend broken bones,  
Bring wholeness again.  
Catch my babies  
When they are born,  
Sing my death song,  
Teach me how to mourn.  
Show me the Medicine  
Of the healing herbs,  
The value of spirit,  
The way I can serve.

Mother, heal my heart  
So that I can see  
The gifts of yours  
That can live through me.

### **Lakota/Nakota/Dakota Indian Prayer**

Hear me, four quarters of the world— a relative I am! Give me the strength to walk the soft earth. Give me the eyes to see and the strength to understand, that I may be like you. With your power only can I face the winds. Great Spirit...all over the earth the faces of living things are all alike. With tenderness have these come up out of the ground. Look upon these faces of children without number and with children in their arms, that they may face the winds and walk the good road to the day of quiet. This is my prayer' hear me!

### **Great Spirit Prayer**

Oh, Great Spirit,  
Whose voice I hear in the winds  
and whose breath gives life to all the world.  
Hear me! I need your strength and wisdom.  
Let me walk in beauty, and make my eyes  
ever hold the red and purple sunset.  
Make my hands respect the things you have made  
and my ears sharp to hear your voice.  
Make me wise so that I may understand  
the things you have taught my people.  
Let me learn the lessons you have hidden  
in every leaf and rock.

Help me remain calm and strong in the  
face of all that comes towards me.  
Help me find compassion without  
empathy overwhelming me.  
I seek strength, not to be greater than my brother,  
but to fight my greatest enemy: myself.  
Make me always ready to come to you  
with clean hands and straight eyes.  
So when life fades, as the fading sunset,  
my spirit may come to you without shame.

— *Translated by Lakota Sioux Chief Yellow Lark in 1887*

## **Earth, Teach Me**

Earth teach me quiet — as the grasses are still with new light.  
Earth teach me suffering — as old stones suffer with memory.  
Earth teach me humility — as blossoms are humble with beginning.  
Earth teach me caring — as mothers nurture their young.  
Earth teach me courage — as the tree that stands alone.  
Earth teach me limitation — as the ant that crawls on the ground.  
Earth teach me freedom — as the eagle that soars in the sky.  
Earth teach me acceptance — as the leaves that die each fall.  
Earth teach me renewal — as the seed that rises in the spring.  
Earth teach me to forget myself — as melted snow forgets its life.  
Earth teach me to remember kindness — as dry fields weep with rain.

## **Lakota Prayer**

**Wakan Tanka, Great Mystery,**

teach me how to trust  
my heart,  
my mind,  
my intuition,  
my inner knowing,  
the senses of my body,  
the blessings of my spirit.  
Teach me to trust these things  
so that I may enter my Sacred Space  
and love beyond my fear,  
and thus Walk in Balance  
with the passing of each glorious Sun.

## **Prayer of The Seven Directions**

**Begin facing EAST**– This is where the sun comes up, and so the direction of new beginnings, hope, promise, and potential. Pray that you may be open to receiving these gifts this day.\* Each turn is a quarter turn to your right.

**Turn SOUTH** – This is the direction of warmth, growth, fertility (!), also known as creativity and productivity. In addition, this direction represents faith, trust, and faithfulness in relationships. Pray for these things this day.

**Turn WEST** – This is the direction where the sun goes down. Thus, it is the direction of rest, of our dream lives, and of closure and endings that need to take place in order for there to be new beginnings. Pray for these things this day.

**Turn NORTH** – This is the direction of the cold, of winds, of strength, courage, fortitude, might, single-mindedness, focus, clarity and purpose. Pray for these things this day.

**Turn back to the EAST** – and turn UPWARD. For Native Americans this is the direction of Father Sky. Pray that your heart, mind, soul, and spirit will not forget to look upward this day, to the One who is so much greater than we are.

**Turn DOWNWARD** – and touch our Mother, the earth. Pray that everything you do this day will be in honor and reverence of our Mother Earth.

**Turn INWARD** – Place your hand on your heart and pray that all that you do this day will be true to the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, the Holy Spirit who dwells within you.

**Amen.**

<https://slife.org/native-american-prayers/>

## **CULTURAL AWARENESS WHEN WORKING IN INDIAN COUNTRY POST DISASTER**

Tips for Disaster Responders:

<https://store.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/d7/priv/sma14-4867.pdf>

## Pagan Prayers – Natural Disaster

### A Healing Prayer

Oh Great Goddess  
Mother of Mercy and Healing Send the energy of Hygeia  
to nourish from Her Sacred Bowl Send the energy of Brigid  
to heal with waters of Her Sacred Well Send the energy of Demeter  
to restore life to withering cells Send the energy of Quan Yin  
to bless the healing with peace Send Your healing wisdom to the body to restore its sacred  
balance Thank You Great Goddess Mother of All Life

### SIMPLE GODDESS PRAYER

Mother of all things, watch over me tonight, Hold me in your arms, until the morning light.



#### PRAYER TO THE MOTHER GODDESS

Blessed be the mother goddess, by all her many names. May she  
bless my family and friends. May she bless the animals of the  
world,  
and all people everywhere.

### PSALM TO GAIA

The Earth is my mother, I shall not want.  
She nurtures me in green pastures; she freshens me  
with flowing waters.  
She restores my body and awakens my  
soul. Although I walk in the shadow of changing seasons  
and passing time, I will not fear death, for the essence  
of life is within me, the peace and beauty of Earth  
comfort me. She teaches me to harvest her abundant  
gifts, she fills my heart with compassion, I drink from  
the cup of simple pleasures. As

I look to the skies with wonder at the immensity of the  
universe, I know I am blessed beyond measure to live all  
the days of my life in the bountiful house of Gaia

Bless this Day



May this day be blessed with gifts Lessons, understanding and friends May my energy be a gift to all I meet Let me be centered, healing and open May I face the day with courage kindness, insight and compassion

May my spirit and body, honor this day ~ Abby Willowroot © 1999

### Prayer for Strength

Goddess Mother help me

to be patient and strong

to see what is truly important

to act without selfishness or fear

Goddess Mother help me

to trust your wisdom

to resist the coward's way

to walk in faith and compassion

to be truly human in spirit and heart ~ Abby Willowroot © 2000



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~ Abby Willowroot © 2009 (or the year indicated on the prayer), and a link to this

webpage is included. [www.SpiralGoddess.com/Homage.html](http://www.SpiralGoddess.com/Homage.html)



<https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwjivYyallJ6AhViMDQIHWkjCFAQFnoECBAQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fchildrensnational.org%2F%2Fmedia%2Fcnhs-site%2Ffiles%2Fsupport-for-families%2Fpastoral-care%2Fprayers-for-pagans.pdf%3Fla%3Den&usg=AOvVaw2BClIT4nMFfdYD7ZEHzL3>



## **A Pagan Response to Katrina: The Goddess has immense power, both creative and destructive**

As Pagans, as worshippers of nature, how do we respond to an event like Hurricane Katrina, one of the most destructive natural disasters in the history of the United States? What does it mean to 'worship' something that, with one breath, can wipe out a major city? Do we see this as punishment, retribution for some Pagan sin? As an object lesson in the reality of climate change and global warming? As an overheated Goddess batting away some of the oil rigs contributing to her fever?

Of course, no one can speak for all Pagans; we have no official dogma. But here is my own answer, as a priestess, teacher, writer, and activist.

Pagan religions are not punishment systems. We don't worship Gods of retribution, but a Goddess-or Gods and Goddesses--of mystery, in many aspects. The Goddess has immense power, both creative and destructive: the power that pushes a root out from a tiny seed and sends its shoot reaching for the sky, the power of the earthquake and the volcano, the rain that feeds the crops and the hurricane. We respond to that power with awe, wonder, amazement and gratitude, not fear.

The great powers of nature have an intelligence, a consciousness, albeit different in magnitude and kind from our own. Everything in nature is alive and speaking: the deep, crystalline intelligence of the rock heart of the planet, the fungal threads that link the roots of trees into the nerve-net of the forests, the chattering birds and the biochemistry of plants and mushrooms are all communicating. Our spiritual practice, the practice of magic, is about opening our eyes, ears and hearts to be able to hear, understand, and communicate back. And those powers want us to communicate with them. The Goddess is not omnipotent--she is co-creative with human beings. She needs human help to create fertility and regeneration. The elements, the ancestors, the spirit beings that surround us want to work with us to protect and heal the earth, but they need our invitation.

Nature is also human nature. Our human intelligence, our particular, sharp-pointed ability to analyze, think, draw conclusions and act, our aesthetic/emotional capacity to thrill at a beautiful sunset, our deep bonds with those we love and our empathy and compassion for others, are all aspects of the Goddess Herself. Indeed, she evolved us complicated, contradictory big-brained creatures precisely to experience some of those aspects. Or to put it simply, she gave us brains and she expects us to use them.

As a Witch, as a priestess of the Goddess, I make daily time to meditate and listen, ideally in some place where I have direct contact with nature. I rarely use an indoor altar any more--instead I sit in the woods, or at least, in my garden, quiet my thoughts, open my eyes, look and listen. And what I've been hearing lately, in company with every other person I know who is in tune with the deep powers of the earth, is anguish, distress, deep rage, and dire warnings. The processes of environmental destruction, in particular, the overheating of the earth's climate, are already underway.

A few weeks ago, when we were preparing for the Free Activist Witch Camp that Reclaiming, our network of Witches, offered in Southern Oregon, I asked, "Is there any way to avert massive death and destruction." The answer I got was an unequivocal 'no.'

"The process has gone too far," was the answer. The image that came to me was river rafting and shooting the rapids. There was a point where we as a species could have chosen a different river, or a different boat, or a different channel. But now we're in the chute. We can't turn back. We can't stop.

There's a command in river rafting, used in extreme situations: "Paddle or die." If you paddle, you have some power--not enough to change the flow of the river, but enough to steer a course and avoid crashing on the rocks. If you give up, the river will most likely flip your boat, and you will drown.

When our Reclaiming group emerged from the woods, a little-reported item in the news media informed us that vast stretches of the tundra were melting in Siberia. If we were collectively using even a minimum of our human intelligence, this news should have been trumpeted on the front page with all the alarm of a terrorist attack, for it is far more dangerous.

Global warming increases the intensity of storms. Turn up the fire under a pot of water, and the bubbles will be bigger, faster and stronger. Hurricanes draw their energy from the heat in seawater. The Gulf of Mexico is abnormally warm--and hurricanes have doubled in average intensity in the last decade and a half. Hurricane Katrina was a natural phenomenon, but Katrina's progression from a Category Two up to a Category Five as she crossed the gulf was a human-caused phenomenon, a function of our choices and decisions, our failure to steer a different course.

The forms and names we put on Goddesses, Gods, and Powers help translate those forces into terms our human minds can grasp. And so the Yoruba-based traditions that originate in West Africa have given the name 'Oya' to the whirlwind, the hurricane, to those great powers of sudden change and destruction.

Santeria, candomble, lucumi, voodoo--all include Oya in some form as a major orisha, a Great Power. Offerings are made to her, ceremonies done in her behalf, priestesses dance themselves into trance possession so that she can communicate with directly with the human community.

No city in the United States has more practitioners of these traditions than New Orleans. On the night the hurricane was due to hit, I made a ritual with a small group of friends to support the spiritual efforts that I knew were being made by priestesses of Oya all over the country. We were in Crawford, Texas, at Camp Casey, where Gold Star mother Cindy Sheehan, whose son was killed in Iraq, camped near Bush's ranch to confront Bush with the painful reality of the deaths his policies have caused.

Many of the supporters there were from New Orleans, worried about their homes, their friends and families. The overall culture of the camp was very Christian--we found no natural opening for public Pagan ritual, although a number of people did indicate to me quietly that they were 'one of us.' But our little group gathered by the roadside, cast a circle, chanted and prayed.

We prayed, speaking personally in the way humans do: "Please, Mama, we know what a mess we've made, but if there is any way to mitigate the death and the destruction, to lessen it slightly, please do." That same night, Christians were praying and Orisha priestesses were 'working' Oya, and the hurricane did shift its course, slightly, and lessened its force, down to a Category Four.

And New Orleans survived. Not without loss, and death, but without the massive flooding and destruction that was feared. We all breathed a sigh of relief.

And a day later, the levees failed, and the floods came. They failed not from an Act of Goddess, but from a lack of resources. The Bush Administration had systematically cut funding for flood control and for repairing and increasing the strength of the levees. The money went to Iraq. Much of the Louisiana National Guard was also in Iraq. FEMA, the Federal Agency responsible for responding to natural disasters, had been gutted, defunded, refocused on terrorism, and its directorship given to a Bush political crony with no experience in disaster response.

Now, weeks later, New Orleans remains under martial law. Official efforts at relief have ranged from inept to brutal, and the lack of planning and concern for human life, the punitive quality of the official response, seem deeply linked to prejudice and racism which devalues the lives of the poor, especially if they're black.

But ordinary people of all faiths have responded to this disaster with caring and compassion, with massive donations and relief efforts, and with shock and rage at a government which so completely fails to embody the values of human decency and respect for life that it claims to represent.

The Goddess does not punish us, but she also doesn't shield us from the logical consequences of our actions. Katrina's destructive power was a consequence of a human course that is contemptuous of nature. A Native American proverb says, "If we don't change our direction, we're going to wind up where we're headed." Katrina shows us a glimpse of that awful destination.

And she also shows us hope. We can change, and if we truly awaken to the need, maybe we will, before it is too late. The outpouring of concern and efforts to help, the hope, determination and vision of some of the citizens of New Orleans who remain, the grief we feel for the dead and the losses and the compassion that a huge tragedy evokes are the tools we need to set a different course, one that honors nature and human life, that uses our human intelligence to restore and regenerate the natural world, awakens our compassion, and kindles our passion for justice.

When we set a new course, all the powers of life and growth and regeneration will be flowing with us. And when we ally with those powers, miracles can happen.

<https://www.beliefnet.com/faiths/pagan-and-earth-based/2005/09/a-pagan-response-to-katrina.aspx>

## Pagans and witches offer prayers for peace in Ukraine

*Concerned for the people of Ukraine, pagans offered prayers and energy work for peace.*

(RNS) — “We stand here helpless under this crescent Moon. We stand here helpless as the inevitable happens,” reads the beginning of a [pagan prayer for Ukraine](#) and its people, written H. Byron Ballard.

After news of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine spread, pagans and witches joined thousands of other faith leaders in praying for peace and for strength. Ballard, an Asheville-based witch and priestess, shared her personal prayer and a photo of her altar, welcoming others to join her in holding space for the Ukrainian people.

Her prayer continues: “Holding in our hearts the children, the elders, the soldiers called up and those left behind. The trees and brooks, the lambs, the calves—all held here in the folds of our ragged souls. To your fear, your peril, your rage and resistance, we stand witness. We stand with you and for you, your grief our grief. May Justice be served! May allies come swiftly! By this crescent Moon’s frail light, we stand.”<sup>2</sup>

In her call to action, Ballard requested that those who join her in “energy work” focus on the Berehynia statue in Kyiv. The monument, standing in the city’s central square, was erected in 2001 as a symbol of Ukrainian independence. It depicts a woman holding up the Guelder Rose, another national symbol.

The statue, however, stands for more than just Ukraine’s political sovereignty, the reason Ballard specifically called attention to it.

Artist Anatoliy Kushch, inspired by Slavic mythology, based his female figure on Berehynia-Ornate, the mother of all living things and the goddess of home and family. In that way, the statue is as much a spiritual protector and guardian as a secular symbol of the country’s strength.

The altar of H. Byron Ballard during her prayer for Ukraine. Photo via Facebook/Byron Ballard

Ballard’s call to action was answered by hundreds of people, shared on Facebook alone over 700 times, by both pagans and non-pagans alike. One friend added her own “Catholic twist” calling for additional protection from both God and Mary.

Ballard wasn’t the only pagan calling for peace and calm. Across the country, pagans lit peace candles on their altars and asked their gods to protect the region’s people.



Author Najah Lightfoot called for an end to the violence, saying: “I send my prayers for strength and protection to all those in harm’s way. May this end swiftly. May those fighting for peace be strengthened.”

Popular witchcraft author Mat Aurnyn publicly shared [his own prayer from a personal working](#), calling on Hekate to lend “protection and safety to Ukraine.”

Holli Emore, executive director of Cherry Hill Seminary in Columbia, South Carolina — which trains pagan clergy and chaplains — called for an end to the conflict in Ukraine.

“World leaders such as Russia should be leading with peace-building support rather than seeking territorial dominance,” Emore said in a statement. “We ask our wider pagan community to join us in supporting an immediate cease-fire and de-escalation.”

Independent calls for collective energy and spell work to promote peace are now popping up in a variety of online and offline witchcraft communities. The dates of such events vary.

Joining all these prayers from her home in Florida, pagan priestess Christian Wilson also expressed something that many in the U.S. are feeling — helplessness. She said, “I lift a prayer for the world because that is all I can do right now.”

<https://religionnews.com/2022/02/25/pagans-and-witches-offer-prayers-for-peace-in-ukraine/>

## Muslim Prayers – Natural Disaster

### Duas for Calamities and in Times of Distress

Dua is a simple yet extremely powerful tool that Muslims have. It is an essential act of worship that can be done at any time, as Allah (SubhanahuwaTa'ala) loves His slave who asks Him. Dua is the most potent weapon of a believer. Dua should be the first thing that comes to our minds when calamity strikes, but unfortunately, we think about all the medicines and people that can help us before turning to Allah. In addition to making Dua, [reading Quran](#) has a calming effect on our hearts, mind, and bodies. Doing Istighfar 70-100 times a day can help us ward off difficulties and calamities.

In addition to our daily Duas, listed below is a list of Duas that one can make at the time of distress and calamity:

رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنْفُسَنَا وَإِنْ لَمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ

"Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves, and if You do not forgive us and have mercy upon us, we will surely be among the losers."

*Quran 7:23*

رَبَّنَا فَاعْفُفْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَكَفِّرْ عَنَّا سَيِّئَاتِنَا وَتَوَفَّنَا مَعَ الْأَبْرَارِ

"Our Lord, so forgive us our sins and remove from us our misdeeds and cause us to die with the righteous."

*Quran 3:193*

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ

"There is no deity except You; exalted are You. Indeed, I have been of the wrongdoers."

*Quran 21:87*

حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ

"Sufficient for us is Allah, and [He is] the best Disposer of affairs."

*Quran 3:173*

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ ، اللَّهُمَّ أَجْزِنِي فِي مُصِيبَتِي ، وَاخْلُفْ لِي خَيْرًا مِنْهَا

"To Allah we belong and unto Him is our return. O Allah, recompense me for my affliction and replace it for me with something better."

*Hisnul Muslim*

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْهَمِّ وَالْحُزْنِ، وَالْعَجْزِ وَالْكَسَلِ وَالْبُخْلِ وَالْجُبْنِ، وَضَلَعِ الدَّيْنِ وَعَلَبَةِ الرِّجَالِ

"O Allah, I take refuge in You from anxiety and sorrow, weakness and laziness, miserliness and cowardice, the burden of debts and from being overpowered by men."

*Hisnul Muslim*

Dua for seeking Allah's protection for children:

أُعِيذُكُمَا بِكَلِمَاتِ اللَّهِ التَّامَّةِ، مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْطَانٍ وَهَامَّةٍ، وَمِنْ كُلِّ عَيْنٍ لَامَّةٍ

"I seek protection for you in the Perfect Words of Allah from every devil and every beast, and from every envious blameworthy eye."

*Hisnul Muslim*

أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْهِ

"I seek Allah's forgiveness, besides whom, none has the right to be worshipped except He, The Ever-Living, The Self-Subsisting and Supporter of all, and I turn to Him in repentance."

*Hisnul Muslim*

Dua for visiting the sick:

لَا بَأْسَ ظَهَرَ إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ

"Do not worry, may it (the sickness) be a purification, if Allah wills."

*Hisnul Muslim*

Dua for the terminally ill:

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَارْحَمْنِي وَأَلْحِقْنِي بِالرَّفِيقِ الْأَعْلَى

"O Allah, forgive me, have mercy upon me and unite me with the higher companions."

*Hisnul Muslim*

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي عَبْدُكَ ابْنُ عَبْدِكَ ابْنُ أَمَتِكَ نَاصِيَتِي بِيَدِكَ، مَاضٍ فِيَّ حُكْمُكَ، عَدْلٌ فِيَّ قَضَاؤُكَ أَسْأَلُكَ بِكُلِّ اسْمٍ هُوَ لَكَ سَمَّيْتَ بِهِ نَفْسَكَ أَوْ أَنْزَلْتَهُ فِي كِتَابِكَ، أَوْ عَلَّمْتَهُ أَحَدًا مِنْ خَلْقِكَ أَوْ اسْتَأْذَنْتَ بِهِ فِي عِلْمِ الْغَيْبِ عِنْدَكَ أَنْ تَجْعَلَ الْقُرْآنَ رِيعَ قَلْبِي، وَنورَ صَدْرِي وَجَلَاءَ حُرْنِي وَذَهَابَ هَمِّي

"O Allah, I am Your slave, son of Your male, son of your female slave. My forelock is in Your Hand. Your Judgment upon me is assured and Your Decree concerning me is just. I ask You by every Name that You have named Yourself with, revealed in Your Book, taught anyone of Your creation or kept unto Yourself in the knowledge of the unseen that is with You, to make the Qur'an the spring of my heart, and the light of my chest, the banisher of my sadness and the reliever of my distress."

*Ibn Hibban 972*

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْعَفْوَ وَالْعَافِيَةَ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْعَفْوَ وَالْعَافِيَةَ فِي دِينِي وَدُنْيَايَ وَأَهْلِي، وَمَالِي، اللَّهُمَّ اسْتُرْ عَوْرَاتِي، وَآمِنْ رَوْعَاتِي، اللَّهُمَّ احْفَظْنِي مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْ، وَمِنْ خَلْفِي، وَعَنْ يَمِينِي، وَعَنْ شِمَالِي، وَمِنْ فَوْقِي، وَأَعُوذُ بِعَظَمَتِكَ أَنْ أُغْتَالَ مِنْ تَحْتِي

"O Allah, I seek Your forgiveness and Your protection in this world and the next. O Allah, I seek Your forgiveness and Your protection in my religion, in my worldly affairs, in my family and in my wealth. O Allah, conceal my secrets and preserve me from anguish. O Allah, guard me from what is in front of me and behind me, from my left, and from my right, and from above me. I seek refuge in Your Greatness from being struck down from beneath me."

*Ibn Majah 2/332 and Abu Dawud*

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي لَا يَضُرُّ مَعَ اسْمِهِ شَيْءٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

"In the Name of Allah, Who with His Name nothing can cause harm in the earth nor in the heavens, and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing." (Recite 3 times)

"Whoever recites it three times in the morning will not be afflicted by any calamity before evening, and whoever recites it three times in the evening will not be overtaken by any calamity before morning."

*Abu Dawud 4/323, At-Tirmithi 5/465, Ibn Majah 2/332*

أَعُوذُ بِكَلِمَاتِ اللَّهِ التَّامَّاتِ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ

"I seek refuge in the Perfect Words of Allah from the evil of what He has created." (Recite 3 times)

Narrated by Anas bin Malik (R):

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "None of you should wish for death because of a calamity befalling him; but if he has to wish for death, he should say: 'O Allah! Keep me alive as long as life is better for me, and let me die if death is better for me.' "

(Sahih al-Bukhari 5671)

It was narrated from Abu Huraira (R) that:

Allah's Apostle (ﷺ) used to seek refuge (in Allah) from the evil of what has been decreed, from misery, from the mockery of (triumphant) enemies, and from severe calamity. (Sahih Muslim 2707)

Dua for All evil diseases:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْبَرَصِ وَالْجُنُونِ وَالْجَدَامِ وَمِنْ سَائِرِ الْأَسْقَامِ

"O Allah, I seek refuge in Thee from leprosy, madness, elephantiasis, and evil diseases"

*Sunan Abi Dawud 1554*

<https://studioarabiya.com/blog/arabic-dua-s/duas-for-calamities-and-in-times-of-distress>



## Dua For Extreme Calamity

Dua For Extreme Calamity and for safety from sudden calamities can be use for relief from calamities. You can use our dua for protection from natural calamities to save your life from all calamity.

A calamity can be anything from a natural disaster coming our way to the death of dear ones. A real calamity harms our faith and our high ethics. It is a belief that calamities that are not related to religion are not actual calamities.

Calamities are the test, and yet they are like medicines even though it is resentful. Some calamities are a means of absolution for sins, and some others such as disease are blessing from Allah, which serves as refinement.

### Dua For Extreme Calamity

It was narrated when Allah wants suitable for his people, he bound the punishment for him in this world only, but when Allah wants ill for his people, he restrains his punishments for his sins until he comes with all his sins on the Day of Resurrection. Each calamity is because of a sin that has to be forgiven.



In one hadith, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) says that Allah sends the most violent and most severe calamities to the ones whom he loves the most.

And also If a human being does not deserve a place prepared for him in (Heaven) with his deeds, Allah sends a calamity to his body or his properties or his family so that he is made to deserve this place through his patience to this calamity.”(Ahmad bin Hanbal V-272).

Calamity hits a believer so that he will deserve a perfect place in Heaven, and this is the only reason why Prophet experienced a lot of calamities and misfortunes.

## Dua For Safety From Sudden Calamities

[Dua For Safety From Sudden Calamities](#), Sudden calamity strikes when they are least expected. They strike without any warning. So always remember the value of Allah’s blessings during times of difficulty and show gratitude.

Always be thankful, and Allah will increase you. We must learn to have faith in Allah as his timing is perfect in every matter. It’s we who do not understand the wisdom behind them. It’s he who knows what is best for you. Many ignorant think that they can make better choices in life than Allah can.

Whoever recites the given below wazifa three times in the morning then Allah will protect him/her from any calamity before evening. Whoever recites it three times in the evening will not be hurt by any calamity till morning.

Allaahumma anta rabbi laa ilaaha illa anta alaika tawakkaltu  
wa anta rabbul arshil kareemi ma shaa Allahu kaana wamaa lam  
yasha`lam yakun wala haula wala quwwata illa billahil aliyil azeem  
a`lamu annallaha alaa kulli shayin qadeer wa annallaha qad ahata  
bikulli shay in ilma Allah humma innee aaozubika min sharri nafsi  
wa min sharri kulli daa abbatin anta aakhizum bina siyatihaa  
inna rabbi alaa siratim mustaqeem

### **Dua For Relief From Calamities**

We should remember that when a Calamity occurs, we don't panic as panicking will not make it go away; in fact, it makes the situation worse. It is noted that panicking makes enemies happy, and friends feel upset, which means it makes Allah angry and Shaitan happy.

Allah is the best of all the planners; you must reach out to Allah for relief. We miss out on the reward which Allah has granted us a chance to turn back to him and to test the patience. This missing out can result worse than the calamity itself. And the reward of being patient will be many times greater than what one has lost due to calamity.

For all your problems, we have come up with the most effective solutions. We provide specific dua for your particular issues. In your hard times, when you have nothing to do to solve it, reach out to Allah. Reciting the dua for relief from calamities will take you out from calamities and bring happiness.

Shaykh al-Islam [Ibn Taymiyah] (may Allaah have mercy on him) said: A the calamity that makes you turn to Allah is better for you than a blessing which makes you forget the remembrance of Allah."

### **Recite this Dua when afflicted with calamity-**

Inna allahi Wainna Ilayhi rajiun, Allahumma ajuurni fi musibati wa akhlif wli khairum minha

("Certainly we are from Allah, and we are to return to him. O Allah, show mercy upon us by granting a reward that relieves us from calamity and brings joy).

**Dua For Protection From Natural Calamities**, It's the universal truth that you will cry a lot someday if you laugh a little. You are happy for a day; you can be miserable for a lifetime. There is one-day happiness; then there will be moments of sorrow.

We must never forget one thing that we must turn to Allah before He turns to us. The Prophet (peace be upon him) use to recite this given dua during strong winds – words by Aisha (raduallahu anhu)

“Allahumma inni asaluka min hayriha ya hayrin ma fiha ya hay’rin ma ursilyat bihi ya aguzu b’ka min ya shar’ria ya shar’ri ma fi’ha ya shar’ri ma ursilyat bihi”

(“Oh, God! I ask You to let this wind have good effects; I wish that it was sent with good intentions and brought good. I’m asking for protection from tragedies that can bring this wind, as well as the consequences that can harm me”.)

Allahumma la Taq tuna bi ghadhabik wa la think na bi ‘adhaabik wa ‘aafina qabla dhaalik

(“O Allah, don’t end our lives with Your wrath and do not make us perish with Your punishment and forgive us before that.”)

Allahumma hawalayna wa la ‘alayna. Allahumma alal akaami (wal ajaami) wal dhiraabi wa butunil ‘awdiyaati wa mana bi tish shajar.

(“O Allah, let the rain fall around us and not upon us, O Allah, (let it fall) on the pasture, hills, valleys, and roots of trees.”)

<https://www.quranicremedies.com/dua-for-extreme-calamity/>

## Jewish Prayers – Natural Disasters

### Prayer for an Approaching Hurricane

*Avinu Shebashamyim:*

God of the heavens: nature and all that You have created are truly awesome. Often, we; take these wonders for granted. Teach us to cherish all of your gifts.

Try as we might, we know that we cannot control the oceans, the mountains, the weather. We also firmly believe that ever since the time of Noah, You do not send floods, make the earth shake, or dispatch weather formations, such as hurricanes, as warnings or punishments.

So we ask, as this hurricane approaches land and approaching our brothers and sisters, that You shelter all who will be in its path. Watch over everyone, their loved ones, friends, and fellow people, many of whom are preparing to evacuate. Guard them as they prepare, perhaps to leave their homes again. Give them strength, courage, and resolve to ride out this storm; answer their prayers and ours that they be blessed with goodness and be spared from harm.

*Baruch ata Adonai, Elohanu Melech Haolam she kocho u-gevurato maleh olam.*

Blessed are You, Source of Life and Nature, whose awesome power and strength fill our world and inspire us to be strong in the face of all of life's difficulties.

<https://reformjudaism.org/beliefs-practices/prayers-blessings/prayer-approaching-hurricane>

## Psalms for Times of Distress

### Chapter 20

- [1.](#) For the Conductor, a psalm by David.
- [2.](#) May the Lord answer you on the day of distress; may the Name of the God of Jacob fortify you.
- [3.](#) May He send your help from the Sanctuary, and support you from Zion.
- [4.](#) May He remember all your offerings, and always accept favorably your sacrifices.
- [5.](#) May He grant you your heart's desire, and fulfill your every counsel.
- [6.](#) We will rejoice in your deliverance, and raise our banners in the name of our God; may the Lord fulfill all your wishes.

- [7.](#) Now I know that the Lord has delivered His anointed one, answering him from His holy heavens with the mighty saving power of His right hand.
- [8.](#) Some [rely] upon chariots and some upon horses, but we [rely upon and] invoke the Name of the Lord our God.
- [9.](#) They bend and fall, but we rise and stand firm.
- [10.](#) Lord, deliver us; may the King answer us on the day we call.

## Chapter 22

- [11.](#) For the Conductor, on the ayelet hashachar, a psalm by David.
- [12.](#) My God, my God, why have You forsaken me! So far from saving me, from the words of my outcry?
- [13.](#) My God, I call out by day, and You do not answer; at night-but there is no respite for me.
- [14.](#) Yet You, Holy One, are enthroned upon the praises of Israel.
- [15.](#) In You our fathers trusted; they trusted and You saved them.
- [16.](#) They cried to You and were rescued; they trusted in You and were not shamed.
- [17.](#) And I am a worm and not a man; scorn of men, contempt of nations.
- [18.](#) All who see me mock me; they open their lips, they shake their heads.
- [19.](#) But one that casts [his burden] upon the Lord-He will save him; He will rescue him, for He desires him.
- [20.](#) For You took me out of the womb, and made me secure on my mother's breasts.
- [21.](#) I have been thrown upon You from birth; from my mother's womb You have been my God.
- [22.](#) Be not distant from me, for trouble is near, for there is none to help.
- [23.](#) Many bulls surround me, the mighty bulls of Bashan encircle me.
- [24.](#) They open their mouths against me, like a lion that ravages and roars.
- [25.](#) I am poured out like water, all my bones are disjointed; my heart has become like wax, melted within my innards.
- [26.](#) My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaves to my palate; You set me in the dust of death.
- [27.](#) For dogs surround me, a pack of evildoers enclose me; my hands and feet are like a lion's prey.
- [28.](#) I count all my limbs, while they watch and gloat over me.
- [29.](#) They divide my garments amongst them; they cast lots upon my clothing.
- [30.](#) But You, Lord, do not be distant; my Strength, hurry to my aid!
- [31.](#) Save my life from the sword, my soul from the grip of dogs.
- [32.](#) Save me from the lion's mouth, as You have answered me from the horns of wild beasts.
- [33.](#) I will recount [the praises of] Your Name to my brothers; I will extol You amidst the congregation.
- [34.](#) You that fear the Lord, praise Him! Glorify Him, all you progeny of Jacob! Stand in awe of Him, all you progeny of Israel!
- [35.](#) For He has not despised nor abhorred the entreaty of the poor, nor has He concealed His face from him; rather He heard when he cried to Him.

[36.](#) My praise comes from You, in the great congregation; I will pay my vows before those that fear Him.

[37.](#) Let the humble eat and be satisfied; let those who seek the Lord praise Him-may your hearts live forever!

[38.](#) All the ends of the earth will remember and return to the Lord; all families of nations will bow down before You.

[39.](#) For sovereignty is the Lord's, and He rules over the nations.

[40.](#) All the fat ones of the earth will eat and bow down, all who descend to the dust shall kneel before Him, but He will not revive their soul.

[41.](#) The progeny of those who serve Him will tell of the Lord to the latter generations.

[42.](#) They will come and relate His righteousness-all that He has done-to a newborn nation.

## Chapter 69

[43.](#) For the Conductor, on the shoshanim,<sup>1</sup> by David.

[44.](#) Deliver me, O God, for the waters have reached until my soul!

[45.](#) I have sunk in muddy depths without foothold; I have come into deep waters, and the current sweeps me away.

[46.](#) I am wearied by my crying, my throat is parched; my eyes pined while waiting for my God.

[47.](#) More numerous than the hairs on my head are those who hate me without reason. Mighty are those who would cut me off, those who are my enemies without cause. What I have not stolen, I will then have to return.

[48.](#) O God, You know my folly, and my wrongs are not hidden from You.

[49.](#) Let not those who hope in You be shamed through me, O my Lord, God of Hosts; let not those who seek You be disgraced through me, O God of Israel,

[50.](#) because for Your sake I have borne humiliation, disgrace covers my face.

[51.](#) I have become a stranger to my brothers, an alien to my mother's sons,

[52.](#) for the envy of Your House has consumed me, and the humiliations of those who scorn You have fallen upon me.

[53.](#) And I wept while my soul fasted, and it was a humiliation to me.

[54.](#) I made sackcloth my garment, and became a byword for them.

[55.](#) Those who sit by the gate speak of me, and [of me] are the songs of drunkards.

[56.](#) May my prayer to You, Lord, be at a gracious time; God, in Your abounding kindness, answer me with Your true deliverance.

[57.](#) Rescue me from the mire, so that I not sink; let me be saved from my enemies and from deep waters.

[58.](#) Let not the current of water sweep me away, nor the deep swallow me; and let not the pit close its mouth over me.

[59.](#) Answer me, Lord, for Your kindness is good; according to Your abundant mercies, turn to me.

[60.](#) Do not hide Your face from Your servant, for I am in distress-hurry to answer me.

[61.](#) Draw near to my soul and liberate it; redeem me, so that my enemies [not feel triumphant].

[62.](#) You know my humiliation, my shame, and my disgrace; all my tormentors are before You.

[63.](#) Humiliation has broken my heart, and I have become ill. I longed for comfort, but there was none; for consolers, but I did not find.

[64.](#) They put gall into my food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

[65.](#) Let their table become a trap before them, and [their] serenity, a snare.

[66.](#) Let their eyes be darkened so that they cannot see, and let their loins continually falter.

[67.](#) Pour Your wrath upon them, and let the fierceness of Your anger overtake them.

[68.](#) Let their palace be desolate, let there be no dweller in their tents,

[69.](#) for they persecute the one whom You struck, and tell of the pain of Your wounded ones.

[70.](#) Add iniquity to their iniquity, and let them not enter into Your righteousness.

[71.](#) May they be erased from the Book of Life, and let them not be inscribed with the righteous.

[72.](#) But I am poor and in pain; let Your deliverance, O God, strengthen me.

[73.](#) I will praise the Name of God with song, I will extol Him with thanksgiving!

[74.](#) And it will please the Lord more than [the sacrifice of] a mature bull with horns and hooves.

[75.](#) The humble will see it and rejoice; you seekers of God, [see] and your hearts will come alive.

[76.](#) For the Lord listens to the needy, and He does not despise His prisoners.

[77.](#) Let heaven and earth praise Him, the seas and all that moves within them,

[78.](#) for God will deliver Zion and build the cities of Judah, and they will settle there and possess it;

[79.](#) and the seed of His servants will inherit it, and those who love His Name will dwell in it.

## Chapter 150

[80.](#) Praise the Lord! Praise God in His holiness; praise Him in the firmament of His strength.

[81.](#) Praise Him for His mighty acts; praise Him according to His abundant greatness.

[82.](#) Praise Him with the call of the shofar; praise Him with harp and lyre.

[83.](#) Praise Him with timbrel and dance; praise Him with stringed instruments and flute.

[84.](#) Praise Him with resounding cymbals; praise Him with clanging cymbals.

[85.](#) Let every soul praise the Lord. Praise the Lord!

## FOOTNOTES

[1.](#)

A musical instrument shaped like a shoshana, a rose (Metzudot).

[https://www.chabad.org/library/article\\_cdo/aid/809299/jewish/Psalms-for-Times-of-Distress.htm](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/809299/jewish/Psalms-for-Times-of-Distress.htm)

## Is There a Blessing for a Hurricane?

By [Yehuda Shurpin](#)

When a hurricane hits, we pray that everyone should be safe and secure, dry and warm. And we pray for the security of their property. But we also say a blessing. [Every act of nature is a G-dly act](#), but a hurricane, after all, is an awesome demonstration of our smallness and the vast power of our Creator, right before our very eyes.

There are two blessings to choose from upon witnessing extraordinary natural phenomena—including extremely strong winds.<sup>1</sup> Those two blessings (of which only one may be said on each occasion) are:

1. **Baruch Atah Ado-nai Elo-hei-nu Melech haolam, osay ma'asei bereisheet.**

*Translation:* Blessed are You, L-rd our G-d, King of the universe, Maker<sup>2</sup> of the works of creation.

2. **Baruch Atah Ado-nai Elo-hei-nu Melech haolam, shekocho ugevurato malei olam.**

*Translation:* Blessed are You, L-rd our [G-d](#), King of the universe, whose power and might fill the world.

Now, the Jerusalem Talmud explains that you should say the second blessing, “whose power and might fill the world,” only when the wind blows vehemently. Otherwise, if there are merely stronger-than-usual winds, you should recite only the first blessing, “Maker of the works of creation.”<sup>3</sup>

The question is, how severe must a wind be to be considered “vehement”? Hurricanes, for example, are categorized from category 1, having winds of 74 to 95 miles per hour and causing





very moderate damage, to category 5, over 155 miles per hour and capable of causing catastrophic damage.

Since the [Jerusalem Talmud](#) does not elaborate on this matter, and neither do we have any clear tradition, Mishnah Berurah states that it is best to simply say “who reenacts the works of creation,” which is appropriate in either case.<sup>4</sup>

On the other hand, others write that if the wind is strong enough to break windows, shake doors, lift heavy objects off the ground or anything similar, you should make the first blessing, “who reenacts the works of creation.” That pretty much sounds like a typical category 1 hurricane.

But, they say, if the wind becomes so strong and dangerous that it is liable to cause casualties, then you should make the second blessing, “whose power and might fill the world.”<sup>5</sup>

Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi, however, follows the plain language of the Shulchan Aruch, which does not take the statement of the Jerusalem Talmud into account. He makes no distinction, stating that you can say either blessing, as long as the wind is a very strong one.<sup>6</sup>

The appropriate time for the blessing is while the wind can be heard clearly and loudly—or at least, while its powerful effect is clearly apparent, but no more than one or two seconds afterward.<sup>7</sup>

By the way, you don’t have to wait for a hurricane to say either of these blessings. They are also said on [shooting stars, comets, earthquakes, volcanoes](#), lightning and thunder. Majestic mountains and rivers are also candidates—but not all of them. As Aruch Hashulchan writes, the blessing is reserved for those sights in which the magnificent work of their Creator is especially apparent.<sup>8</sup> Also, if you’ve seen the same sight in the last 30 days, don’t say the blessing again now.<sup>9</sup>

And while you're shackled up indoors, waiting for the weather to calm down, here's a nice animation about blessings on spectacles of nature: [Is There a Blessing for Seeing a Meteor Shower?](#)

## FOOTNOTES

[1.](#)

See Talmud, Berachot 54a and 59a.

[2.](#)

Note that some *siddurim* have *oseh*, which would translate as “who makes,” or “who re-enacts.” The Chabad *siddur*, however, has *osay*, which translates as “the Maker of.”

[3.](#)

Literally: “the works of the beginning.” The implication is that the Creator not only made all these phenomena “in the beginning,” but continues to reenact the act of creation at every moment, as He sustains the creation in perpetuity. See [What Is B'riah?](#)

[4.](#)

Rabbi Yisrael Meir Kagan (1838–1933), Mishnah Berurah 227:4.

[5.](#)

See Piskei Teshuvot 227:4, citing Rabbi Yair Chayim Bacharach (author of Chavos Ya'ir), in his work Mekor Chaim, Orach Chaim 227.

[6.](#)

Seder Birchat Hanehenin 13:15. See commentary of Magen Avraham to Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 227:1.

[7.](#)

See Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 227:3, and Mishnah Berurah 227:13.

[8.](#)

Rabbi Yechiel Michel Epstein (1829–1908), Aruch Hashulchan 228:2.

[9.](#)

Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 224:13.

[By Yehuda Shurpin](#)

[https://www.chabad.org/library/article\\_cdo/aid/2022103/jewish/Is-There-a-Blessing-for-a-Hurricane.htm](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/2022103/jewish/Is-There-a-Blessing-for-a-Hurricane.htm)

## Prayer for Burnt Forests

Prayer for Burnt Forests, the latest video in the My Golem series, extends upon the Jewish imperative of tikkun olam (to heal the world) by upholding the land's right to rest and recuperation, after having suffered for humanity's sins. Together with Rabbi Zach Fredman, Weitz has created a prayer intended to be read and delivered in nature as a gesture of respect,

restoration, and genesis. In the video, Weitz's golem traverses the recently-charred landscape of Tongva land in Southern California, performing the prayer as a ritual dance.

In Prayer for Burnt Forests, ecology is framed within the traditional Jewish concept of fire as a force for hope and as a foundational element in spiritual ritual. In a modern twist, however, Golem's fire is specifically a decolonizing "cultural fire," which connects her religious awakening to California's Indigenous practices of fire ecology. As a diasporic justice seeker, Golem adapts her culture's ancient traditions with contemporary urgency, while honoring local communities, the land, and long-established local practices. At stake is the larger conviction that advocacy for traditional ecological knowledge, combined with ancient Jewish practices, can be a powerful means of healing and reshaping climate and land management policy.

To pay respect and recognize Native Nations, consider learning about the indigenous land you reside on and looking into indigenous land rematriation.

## Video and downloadable prayer in Hebrew and English

[https://www.thecjm.org/learn\\_resources/724](https://www.thecjm.org/learn_resources/724)

### A Prayer for Burnt Forests

By Rabbi Zach Fredman and Julie Weitz

Around my feet I carve a circle in the earth And sing to you on behalf of the trees  
the animals and the water Allthepeoplesoftheearth.

From the ash of death we reach to the source of life ecosystem of being, whose presence has  
been called by all the ancestors who've gone before us,  
in many forms by many names  
We call to you angels of creation  
Earth, Water, Wind and Fire  
From land that is not ours.

We who live by your gifts and study your ways Take heed of your natural law --  
All that gives life takes life away  
In reciprocity  
Are your elements a blessing.

We who forsake and defile the wisdom of Indigenous ancestors ask forgiveness for our sins --  
Dispossessing the people of cultural fire  
Denuding the forests of sacred trees.

Loveroflifeletuslive Lettherageofwildfiredim Let the earth hold firm  
Let the wind blow over us with kindness and grace.

## תפילת יערות שרופים

מתוך אַפְרָהִימוֹת־נִקְרָאֵאל מִקּוֹרֵהָיִים עולם של הויה שנכחותו נקראה בְּפִי־כָל־אֶמְהוּתִינִי.

שהלכו לפנינו ברובי צורות ברובי שמות קוראים־אֵלִיכֶם מלאכי בראשית אדמה , מים , רוח , ואש־מִתּוֹךְ . אֲדַמָּה יִנְסֶנָּה יִשְׁשֶׁנָּה יִשְׁשֶׁנָּה יִשְׁשֶׁנָּה .

אֲנִי הִנֵּנִי טֹשִׁים וּמִמֶּאֱיֹתֶיךָ יִלְדִינוּ מִבְּקֵשִׁים מְחִילָה עַל־קִטְאוֹתֵינוּ יִגְבַּת  
אֲשֶׁר הִתְרַבּוֹת־מֵהַעַמִּים עֲקִירַת הַיַּעְרוֹת מַעֲצִים קְדוּשִׁים

אֲהַבְתִּי הַחַיִּים תְּנִי לִנּוֹלְחִי וְתִנִּי לְעַמְּאֵשׁ הַפָּרָא לְדַעְרָתְנִי לְאַדְמָה כֹּחַ לְהִתְחַזֵּק  
נִי לְרֹחַ חֶרֶף מִמֶּעֲלֵינוּ וְבַחֲסוּ וְבַחֲסוּ

אֲנֹכִי עֹשֶׂה יַצְוֵי יְהוָה בְּצִלְמִי יַצְרִים עֲדִינִים פִּזְנִים אֶל עֲדִינֹתְךָ יוֹשְׁבֵי בְּתֵב־בְּסִתְרֵךְ לִיּוֹן לֹא צָנֹז מִצָּכָא  
עד עד שרמייך ינועו

[https://res.cloudinary.com/the-contemporary-jewish-museum/image/upload/v1624292666/exhibition/2021\\_golem-prayer-card-takeaway\\_v03.pdf](https://res.cloudinary.com/the-contemporary-jewish-museum/image/upload/v1624292666/exhibition/2021_golem-prayer-card-takeaway_v03.pdf)

*Written by Rabbi Zoe Klein of Temple Isaiah, Los Angeles, CA in honor of those affected by Hurricane Katrina*

## Page 28

How much water is inside a flood  
And how long does it take to recede?  
As long as it takes to restore hope  
To the people in desperate need.

How much water is inside a storm  
And how long does it take to clear?  
As long as it takes to rebuild a home  
And restore everything that is dear.

How much water is inside a city  
When a levee suddenly breaks?  
As many as are the tears that are cried  
When so many million hearts break.

### **To the Victims of Katrina**

If this synagogue could open her doors  
Wide as a mountain pass...  
If this synagogue could open her sanctuary  
Wide as a superdome...  
If this synagogue could open her mouth,  
She'd sing out to her human family:  
    "Give me your tired, your poor,  
    Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,  
    The wretched refuse of your teeming shore,  
    Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,  
    I raise my eternal lamp  
    To guide you to my door...  
I have soft mats for you to sleep on,  
Strong shoulders for you to weep on,  
Kind words for you to keep on  
Believing in yourself..."  
This synagogue will open her heart  
Wide as the arc of the covenant,  
    A torrent of empathy and love,  
    A white winged, olive bearing dove.  
    May our support be evidence of hope.  
    May our empathy lead loved ones to cope.  
    May our love be wings with shelter beneath.  
    May our tears wash, soothe and soften the grief.

## **May It Be Thy Will**

Traditionally we recite three times a day:

May it be Thy will that the Temple be speedily rebuilt in our own time.

Today we recite,

May it be Thy will that homes be rebuilt in our own time,

In time for families to come home.

May it be Thy will that streets be repaved in time

For needed supplies to reach their destination.

May it be Thy will that hospitals be restored in time

For the suffering to receive treatment.

May it be Thy will that businesses be renewed in time

For people whose lives depend on them.

May it be Thy will that neighborliness be mended in time

Before transgressions are committed through looting and crime.

May it be Thy will that communication be repaired in time

For families and friends to reach out to the ones that they love.

May it be Thy will that electricity and clean water be brought back in time

For widespread disease to be prevented.

May it be Thy will that hearts be rebuilt in time

For people to be rescued from the mires of depression.

Dear God, we ask for all of these things to be rebuilt,

Speedily in our own time.

Renew us as of days of old.

## **Jonah**

From the belly of the fish

At the bottom of the sea

Jonah prayed:

"In my trouble I called to the Lord...

And You heard my voice...

The floods engulfed me;

All your breakers and billows

Swept over me.

I thought I was driven away

Out of Your sight...

Yet You brought my life up from the pit...

When my life was ebbing away,

I called the Lord to mind;

And my prayer came before You..."

Dear God,

Please place a prayer

Into the lips of those who are lost and afraid.  
When they call You to mind,  
May their prayer come before You  
As did the prayer of Jonah.  
Answer them, dear God,  
And bring them out of an ocean of destruction  
And safely onto dry land.

<https://rac.org/four-prayer-poems-natural-disasters>

## Prayer after the Tornadoes

*by Alden Solovy*

G-d beyond my understanding,  
The sky has turned violent,  
Crushing homes and lives,  
Upending dreams,  
Toppling the foundations of hope and  
sustenance.  
Crisis and chaos,  
Confusion and loss,  
A scene of sweeping destruction.



G-d of justice and mercy,  
We pray for the people of \_\_\_\_\_ [Nashville][other location],  
And the victims of any disaster,  
Any violence, suffering or despair.  
Grant them shelter and solace,  
Comfort and consolation,  
Blessing and renewal.  
May people of righteousness and mercy  
Come swiftly to their aid.  
Grant them endurance to survive,  
Strength to rebuild,  
Faith to mourn,  
Courage to heal,  
And devotion to each other.

G-d of heaven and earth,  
Heavenly Guide,  
Hand of love and shelter,

Grant the people of \_\_\_\_\_ [Nashville][other location],  
Your protection,  
Your radiance,  
And Your peace.

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<https://ritualwell.org/ritual/prayer-after-tornadoes/>

## **A Rabbi's Prayer in Response to Natural Disaster**

How does one pray in the wake of this week's events in Haiti? Or does that really beg the question of how we pray on any given day in the face of equally painful, if less grand, tragedies? I am not sure, and frankly right now, am not sure that I care.

I know that words elude me, but I want to express at least some response to these events in words. Thanks to [Rabbi Jason Miller](#) who reminded me of a prayer authored by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, Chief Rabbi of the British Commonwealth. I share it because it gives voice to at least some of what I am feeling, even if not all about which I am thinking, as I reflect on the suffering in Haiti.

## **Prayer in Response to Natural Disaster**

*Sir Jonathan Sacks, Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth[1]*

Adon ha-olamim, Sovereign of the universe,

We join our prayers to the prayers of others throughout the world, for the victims of the earthquake which this week has brought destruction and disaster to many lives.

Almighty God, we pray You, send healing to the injured, comfort to the bereaved, and news to those who sit and wait. May You be with those who even now are engaged in the work of rescue. May You send Your strength to those who are striving to heal the injured, give shelter to the homeless, and bring food and water to those in need. May You bless the work of their hands, and may they merit to save lives.

Almighty God, we recognise how small we are, and how powerless in the face of nature when its full power is unleashed. Therefore, open our hearts in prayer and our hands in generosity, so that our words may bring comfort and our gifts bring aid. Be with us now and with all humanity as we strive to mend what has been injured and rebuild what has been destroyed.



Ken Yehi Ratzon, ve-nomar Amen.  
May it be Your will, and let us say Amen.

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[1] Rabbi Sacks originally wrote this prayer following the Indian Ocean Tsunami in 2004. The current wording is slightly modified to respond to the recent earthquake in Haiti.

<https://www.beliefnet.com/columnists/windowsanddoors/2010/01/a-rabbis-prayer-in-response-to.html>

## **An Approaching Hurricane**

God of the heavens: nature and all that You have created are truly awesome. Often, we; take these wonders for granted. Teach us to cherish all of your gifts.

Try as we might, we know that we cannot control the oceans, the mountains, the weather. We also firmly believe that ever since the time of Noah, You do not send floods, make the earth shake, or dispatch weather formations, such as hurricanes, as warnings or punishments.

So we ask, as this hurricane approaches land and approaching our brothers and sisters, that You shelter all who will be in its path. Watch over everyone, their loved ones, friends, and fellow people, many of whom are preparing to evacuate. Guard them as they prepare, perhaps to leave their homes again. Give them strength, courage, and resolve to ride out this storm; answer their prayers and ours that they be blessed with goodness and be spared from harm.

Baruch ata Adonai, Elohanu Melech Haolam she kocho u-gevurato maleh olam.

Blessed are You, Source of Life and Nature, whose awesome power and strength fill our world and inspire us to be strong in the face of all of life's difficulties.

- *Rabbi Fred Guttman*

## Hindu Prayers – Natural Disasters

A Few Thoughts About Prayers in Hinduism



by Jayaram V

**Question:** *How to pray effectively? Is there any guidance or are there any rules about praying in Hinduism?*

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*Find here a few thoughts about the art of praying in Hinduism, prayer rules, and how prayers can be used for peace, prosperity and happiness.*

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In Hinduism prayers and mantras are mostly in Sanskrit. Many people do not know the language. Hence, people often chant them without knowing what they mean. It is a challenge to keep the mind focused and experience devotional fervor when you do not know the meaning of your prayer.

However, India is rich in cultural and linguistic diversity. Numerous prayers are available in native languages also. Since many people are familiar with more than one language, in religious congregations you will often hear them praying together in multiple languages. It is a great example to show that God and prayers bring diverse groups of people together and promote

social cultural and religious harmony. Some Hindus are so tolerant that they participate in the prayer sessions of other religions.

### **Vedic prayers**

The Vedic prayers are the oldest living prayers in the world today. Some of the earliest Rigvedic prayers are probably 6000-7000 years old. They are also the earliest, complex prayer compositions known for their poetic value, metrical purity, imagination, and deep symbolism that speak highly of the mental brilliance of the people who conceived them and used them in their ritual and spiritual practices.

Vedic prayers are also complex and couched in deep symbolism. Since they are ritual prayers, they are mostly chanted by qualified Vedic priests during sacrificial ceremonies and in temple rituals. However, many people also use them in domestic rituals (puja) and on festive occasions to worship the deities at homes or in public places. Many may have never studied Sanskrit as a language. Yet, they can utter lengthy Sanskrit prayers during worship, which may last for hours. It is another example that language is not a barrier in devotional worship.

### **Prayers in Hinduism**

The art of praying has been perfected in India for centuries. The lives of devout Hindu revolve around prayers. Typically, they are expected to pray to the Sun and other gods in the morning, in the noon, in the evening and before going to bed. They pray before eating food as they offer it to gods, or before they begin any journey or commence a new project. They also pray for divine help to achieve success, peace and happiness, or on important occasions such as conception, birth, marriage, pregnancy, etc.

Hindus pray both individually and in groups. Group prayers are generally meant for the welfare of the family, the community or to appease the gods who play an important role in ensuring the orderly progression of the world, good harvest, peace and prosperity. People also pray in groups on festive occasions, when there are difficulties and natural calamities or when there are no rains or food.

In the past, it was common for warriors to perform rituals or pray to God before going to war, seeking victory and the destruction of the enemy. Prayers are also used in Hinduism for divine intervention to cure diseases, ward off evil, attack enemies, discourage or weaken the rivals in love affairs, punish adulterers, seek protection against sorcery, bewitch the opposite sex, increase luck, and so on.

### **The early notions of prayers**

The Vedic people gave a lot of importance to the art of praying. They put a lot of emphasis upon the study of the Vedas by heart, correct pronunciation, purity of the mind and heart, the right choice of the prayers and deities, sanctity of the time and place to pray, a structural or systematic approach to praying, and adherence to righteous conduct in the use of prayers and mantras. They believed that each prayer had a hidden deity who propelled that prayer to reach gods when it was correctly chanted.

Brahman provided the power that enabled the deity to carry the sounds of that prayer to the heaven and prompted them to visit the ritual place to accept the offerings. Brahman was the silent witness and participant in all prayers. He was the object, the subject, the offerer, the recipient and the facilitator, although the prayers were never addressed to him directly but to gods who were but his aspects and personifications. The tradition still continues in Hinduism with some modifications and modern adaptations.

### **The dynamics of Hindu prayers**

Truly speaking, the most important requirement to perfect the art of prayer in Hinduism is sincerity or purity. Your prayer must be sincere. Your purpose must be pure. It is much better, if it is selfless and meant for the welfare of the world or others. In Hinduism, the priests rarely pray for themselves. They pray for others and beseech the gods on behalf of the devotees. This is a noble concept, which is sometimes lost when the priests act with greed, or when people focus upon the costs, the gifts and the fees paid to them for their services.

It is not required that you should only use standard prayers, which are found in the scriptures or used in the rituals. There are advantages in using them, but you can create your own. You can pour out your heart to your personal God in any language and in any manner. A prayer in Hinduism is a personal communication, as in any other tradition. It is a bridge that connects the devotee's heart and mind to the transcendental world or to the heart of God, which is beyond all names, forms, words and languages. God does not need words to know your heart. Therefore, even the use of reverential silence with prayerful attitude and clarity of purpose can be as powerful and effective as any Vedic prayer. Besides, you can create your own prayers in any language in which you are comfortable.

There are advantages in using Sanskrit prayers, especially when you perform traditional rituals since they have to be performed according to a well-established procedure and specific purpose. On such occasions, it is better to become acquainted with their true meaning, even if you are not chanting the mantras. You should also remain attentive and focus your mind upon the chants and utterances of the priests so that you will allow the vibrations to reach your mind and purify it. Fortunately, we can now access on the Internet numerous translations of Hindu prayers, which were originally composed in Sanskrit or other languages which you do not know. It is worth studying them so that when you pray or the Brahmanas pray, you know what you are praying for, and what your prayers mean.

Emotions play an important role in the devotional worship and prayers of Hinduism. The ideal is that when you pray, you must put all your emotions in it, and pray with your heart and soul. Only then, your prayers will be effective, and you will be able to establish a deeper connection with the deity you worship. If your prayers come only from your lips, they will not travel far into the wider spaces of Brahman and touch the hearts of the deities you worship.

Whatever approach you may follow in your prayers, let your prayers be spontaneous, according to your needs, aspirations, goals, desires, and circumstances. Let them arise from your heart and be infused with love and devotion for the deity you worship. Those prayers are the best, in which you pour out your emotions and establish a deeper connection with the deity in your subtle mind.

## **The purpose of prayers**

Praying is the first step. The purpose of any prayer in Hinduism is to express your gratitude to the gods, make mental offerings to them, and keep your mind filled with divine thoughts. When you fill your mind with the thoughts of gods in prayers, you manifest them in your consciousness, and their qualities and virtues begin to strengthen in you. Prayers awaken your divinity and improve your karma. They are your wings to the worlds of gods. They qualify you to divine grace and mercy (anugraha).

Prayers are also the best means to religiosity, spirituality, mental purity, and virtuous conduct. When you sincerely pray, you make the divine power in you active. Since it is a cleansing and transforming power, you will be immensely benefited when you have an active divine force working in you. Your body is a universe in itself. It is the temple of God. All the deities in the macrocosm are present in it as their physical and mental aspects.

However, since the gods exist in your microcosm also, they are susceptible to the modes, impurities and modifications of your body. When you pray, they get their share of offering from your prayers, become cleansed and energized, and help you to keep yourself mentally and physically pure. In Hinduism, prayers are meant to nourish gods and make offerings. This has been its primary purpose. Since, the same gods are also part of your being, praying is the best way to nourish them and practice your dharma.

## **Rulers for effective prayers**

The following are few important additional aspects of prayers in Hinduism, which are worth mentioning.

### *1. Prayer with your mind and heart*

In Hinduism, you will find both external and internal rituals. Meditation, contemplation and mental worship are internal rituals. Comparatively, they are far more powerful. Hence, prayer as a mental activity is also more powerful than worship as a physical ritual. You can combine the power of your mind with the power of your prayer and use prayer to communicate with God, fulfill your desires, manifest your destiny or cleanse your mind and body. To augment the power of prayer, you can visualize the deity in complete detail and fix your mind upon him or her. Keep your mind free from distractions and feel their presence, as you make mental offerings with love and devotion in your heart.

### *2. Praise the deity*

Praise is an important part of appeasing any deity. It creates rapport and serves as a declaration of faith, loyalty and commitment. Traditional Hindu prayers are mostly encomiums. Therefore, use praise in your prayers and appreciate the qualities, virtues, victories, powers, manifestations and deeds of the deities you worship with love and sincerity. When you remember their greatness, powers and manifestations in your prayers, they will manifest in your consciousness and cleanse you. In Hinduism, we have the tradition of chanting the hundred or thousand names of the deities (Sathanamas or Sahasranamas) during worship. It helps the mind stabilize in the thoughts of God besides cleansing it.

### *3. Ask for help and protection*

You pray because you are helpless and do not have all the powers or knowledge to control your life or circumstances. It is indeed the primary purpose of prayers in Hinduism. People pray to gods in need. They seek their intervention to rescue from difficulties. We are vulnerable to many problems and threats, and helpless against Nature and the world. Therefore, it makes sense to seek God's help to protect yourself from the destructive forces of life. It is perfectly justified in Hinduism to seek divine help to fulfill your desires or guard yourself from external or internal threats. The need is even more when you are engaged in spiritual practice and exposed to many invisible forces.

### *4. Express devotion*

Prayers are the best means to express your love and devotion to God. Those prayers are the best when they are expressed with reverence, devotion, and love. They open your mind and body to innumerable possibilities. With devotional prayers, you can establish a deeper, emotional connection with God and feel oneness. The Upanishads state that the soul resides in the heart. When you pray with your heart and mind, you stir your soul and experience intense emotions and powerful vibrations. The Puranas illustrate the significance of devotional prayers. It is said that when a group of righteous people join their minds and simultaneously pray with intense devotion for God's help and protection, he may even incarnate upon earth to save them.

### *5. Pray for others*

You should pray not only for yourself and your welfare but also for others and their welfare. By that, you will transcend your selfishness and see God in others. Therefore, it is a good practice to pray for healing and helping for others and their welfare. When you pray for others, you represent his duties and become an upholder of Dharma and an aspect of God. You exemplify virtue and righteous conduct, as you serve others as a true devotee of God. By that act, both you and the people you help earn good karma, you by serving God, and they by giving you an opportunity to help them. With prayers, you can also seek divine help to help your community, country and the world. The priests who serve in temples and at religious places enjoy a high regard in Hinduism because they always pray for others.

### *6. Pray with purity and sincerity*

God is a pure being. Therefore, the best way to connect to him is through purity only. Cultivate the predominance of sattva through virtuous conduct. When you pray, keep your mind and intentions pure. Cleanliness is also important. You should pray in clean places or in sacred places which are frequented by gods and divine beings, so that they will have more power. Many Hindus pray in the mornings after taking the bath. They also select a clean place in the house to offer their daily worship. Morning worship and prayers on special occasions are usually done before eating food. Many also avoid eating forbidden food such as meat during prayer rituals to keep their bodies pure.

### *7. Pray for positive purposes only*

Our scriptures contain many prayers and rituals which are destructive in intent and purpose. They are used to harm, hurt, destroy, delude or control others with malicious intent. The Vedas and Tantras contain harmful prayers which are meant to break relationships, cause sickness, death or financial loss, or inflict powerful spells. There are also many prayers in them with which one can invoke the fierce forms of various deities for destructive purposes. Such prayers should never be used, except in self-defense when your life and Wellbeing are endangered, or when you are engaged in a righteous war as the warriors in the epics used to do. With evil prayers, you will not only attract evil powers but also set in motion many karmic ripples in the universe, which will finally return to you and hurt you beyond your imagination.

<https://www.hinduwebsite.com/ask/how-to-pray.asp>

### **HINDU PRAYER, from Earth Prayers, edited by Elizabeth Roberts & Elias Amidon**

Waters you are the ones who bring us the life force  
Help us to find nourishment so that we may look upon great joy.  
Let us share in the most delicious sap that you have, as if you were  
loving mothers  
Let us go straight to the house of the one for whom your water  
give us life and give us birth.  
For our well-being let the goddesses be an aid to us, the waters be for us to drink. Let them  
cause well-being and health to flow over us.  
Mistresses of all the things that are chosen, rules over all peoples  
the waters are the ones I beg for a cure  
Soma has told me that within the waters are all cures and Agni  
who is salutary to all.  
Waters, yield your cure as an armour for my body, so that I may  
see the sun for a long time.  
Waters, carry far away all of this that has gone bad in me either  
what I have done in malicious deceit or whatever he I have  
sworn to  
I have sought the waters today, we have joined with their sap. O  
Agni full of moisture, come and flood me with splendor.

### **Interfaith Prayers After the Nepal Earthquake**

**27 APRIL 2015**

<https://www.uri.org/uri-story/20150427-prayers-after-nepal-earthquake>

## **A Mantra for Healing Natural Disasters – Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra**

By [Julie Phillips-Turner](#) | Last updated November 10, 2012

Have you ever noticed that when a disaster or tragedy happens we feel a strong urge to protect ourselves and others by: 1. seeking shelter and safety; 2. looking to our community for assistance, or seek to assist others; and 3. hoping and praying.

Now, understanding that a number of people consider prayer a religious act, I see it as anything we say or think that seeks intention for a particular (generally positive) outcome.

This week while “Superstorm” hurricane Sandy approached the mid-Atlantic coast of the United States, there was, no doubt, a lot of hoping and praying happening among the residents of these areas for the hurricane to be kind to their families, homes, trees, coastal areas and the towns they live in – and I was one of them.

### **Calm in the Midst of the Storm**

While listening to the wind ripping through the numerous trees in my yard, I knew I needed to remain calm and present, as well as open to whatever outcome the storm would bring to my surroundings.

Thanks to my yoga and meditation practices staying calm and present was something I had practiced a great deal. However, the day of the storm, I felt even more compelled to focus on what I had trained to do, to be and think.

### **So what better time to meditate with a mantra that protects than during a threatening force of nature like a hurricane?**

To lessen stressful thoughts of the storm, I continued with my daily meditation using my favorite rose quartz mala and a japa meditation with the Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra.

While doing my round of 108 mantra repetitions, I could actually feel the gusts of wind as they heightened during the storm. In my mind there was a surge of colors, in my body I felt a surge of intense energy flowing around me.

### **Meditation for Protection & Healing**

In yoga, similar to prayer, we use mantras which are words of the ancient Sanskrit language that are specifically linked together bring about powerful intent through their sounds and meanings. In fact, the Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra is regarded as one of the most powerful mantras for protection and healing.



It is said that by chanting this mantra, vibrations are produced which envelope the body like a protective shield and protects from evil forces and misfortunes of any kind. This mantra is said to also have healing powers, and is capable of warding off negative influences and granting peace.

After the storm finally passed my home, I felt very fortunate that I had experienced only minor power outage, downed branches and leaves and the loss of one small tree. My home, family and community were safe.

While I consider myself lucky, I can't help but wonder if my ongoing faith in meditating with the Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra helped. I can only assume so knowing the real power and intention of this mantra.

### **Helping Those in Need with Mantra**

The mantra also has healing powers that can help our own body as well as those who are suffering. Therefore meditating or repeating the Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra at this time, is a perfect way to send healing energy the communities that have been affected by hurricane Sandy.

So, next time you meditate, intently send some Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra energy to people affected by a this hurricane, or any other life threatening situation, to help transform negative energy and feelings into more positive vibrations of healing, prosperity and protection.

### **Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra**

Om. Tryambhakam Yajamahe

Sugandhim Pushtivardhanam

Urvarukamiva Bandhanan

Mrityor Mukshiya Maamritat

The literal meaning of this mantra is: "Om. We worship the three-eyed One (Lord Siva) who is fragrant and who nourishes all beings; may He liberate me from death, for the sake of Immortality, even as the cucumber is severed from its bondage (of the creeper)."

<https://www.doyou.com/maha-mrityunjaya-mantra/>

## Prayer for Departed Souls: Its Purpose and Prerequisites

by Swami Krishnananda

(Forest University Lecture given on All-Soul's Day, 1952)

Our salutations, adorations and prostrations to all those who have gone ahead of us, who have gained more experience and who are before us as ideal beacon lights in life. Today we offer our adorations to all those who are not visible to our physical eyes, but who lived on this earth-plane and who now experience a different state of consciousness. We offer our gratitude to all those who have gone before us and shown us the path.

By the remembrance of all souls, we mean the remembrance of everything that is created. It does not necessarily mean those who exist in a *preta* condition, in the astral body; but those who have abandoned their physical body and who have taken another physical body also receive our prayers. Those who exist in *Swarga-loka* receive our prayers, those who live in *Gandharva-loka*, and all those who experience pain and suffering also receive our prayers. Our prayers reach up to *Brahma-loka* and the *Surya-mandala*, because our prayers are the expressions of our soul-consciousness.

You know there are various kinds of human beings. Similarly, there are various kinds of departed souls. There are some people who feel that it is very difficult to understand how the efforts of a person in this world can influence the conditions and experiences of a person in the other world. This doubt arises on account of lack of understanding and lack of knowledge. We must know that the universe is an organic whole. It is not a dead matter. It is vibrating with energy, life and consciousness. The universe is one whole. If anything happens to any part of my body, the whole body feels it. So is the case with everything in this universe. Every atom of this universe is connected with every other atom in this universe. Planes are only relative; they are not absolute values. They are valid only to individuals. Hence an act or a thought or a feeling which is originated at any particular part of the universe shall influence others also with that degree of intensity with which it is generated. If the prayer is intense, it will be felt there in a corresponding degree of intensity.

The act of *sraddha* is an example. When we offer foodstuff or other articles which are all used in the name of the departed soul, we mean they should be received by the person 'there'. In this world of materialism, people who have no belief in the higher values doubt the validity of this act. How does a physical act in this world influence a subtle body that is in another world?

This may be explained by a modern analogy. Take, for example, telegraphic conveyance of money. If a person wants to send a money order, he just pays the required amount to the Post Office in his own town and wishes that this amount should be received by the person concerned at some other distant place. Now, that same money is not received by the other person. It is here itself. The Post Office in the other town receives the intelligence of the sender's wish. Only the feeling, the understanding, is conveyed, and that works wonders. The

intelligence causes a corresponding action to take place there. The person receives the amount at that distant place.

The same is the case with *sraddha*. It is the symbol of an internal feeling, of a *bhava*. *Sraddha* is something more than mechanical action. It is an act of prayer with *bhava* and feeling. We must not underrate our thoughts and feelings. Our thoughts are omnipotent. Every thought will fructify, today or tomorrow, in this form or another form. When we do charity in the name of a departed soul, this intelligence is conveyed to him through the planes of consciousness.

The *pitris* receive there what we give here, because we transmit an intelligence to those who are in charge of the person concerned that such and such a thing should be given to the person there. That great selfless act of sacrifice in the name of the departed soul gives wonderful benefit to him. This is possible on account of the unity of the universe, because of the omnipotence of God, because He is the Sovereign of the universe, because He is the dispenser of justice with His Supreme Wisdom.

Just as there are various kinds of men, there are various kinds of departed souls; so various prayers of different intensities are offered. Take the human beings alone. All human beings are not in the same stage of evolution. We have 'animal men' – those who have human bodies but animal qualities. Then we have men superior to them, ordinary men, who are not bad, but are not good either. That is the second stage. Thirdly, we have good men; they are virtuous. Superior to them we have saintly men; they are not merely good, they have started to unfold the divine consciousness. Lastly we have divine men or Godmen. These various kinds of people reach different conditions and have different experiences when they leave the physical body. Of course, those who are Self-realised are not in need of our prayers. They themselves are very powerful. Their Self-experience and Knowledge are so powerful, so great and so valuable, that they will help themselves. But all are not saints, all are not God-men. Those who have not reached this stage require the help of others.

#### *SOUL'S JOURNEY AFTER DEATH*

Our Puranas and Itihasas say that the soul after death passes through different experiences. It is said that an ordinary person in whom there is a mixture of good and evil, when he dies, is taken to *Yama-loka* in the beginning. If his evil traits preponderate, he will be taken to *Yama-loka*. Scriptures further say that an ordinary person does not remember his past experiences. He is in a state of swoon the moment he casts off the physical body. Our prayers give him consciousness. They give him fresh energy and solace. Because he is not a virtuous man, he is suffering; our acts of sacrifice shall be beneficial to him. Even when the person goes to *Yama-loka* he will be helped there by our acts of sacrifice. But a person who has read the Vedas, who has led a virtuous life, remembers his past experiences; others do not. In the latter case, the Puranas say that a *danda* called the *Yama-danda* is kept on the head of such a person so that he may remember his past life. It is described as a burning iron rod. At once, he remembers all his past life on earth. Then the Dispenser of Justice puts the question: "You have done so many evil deeds. What do you intend to do about them?" Then, it is said, the soul gives the reply: "I have got my relatives. They are capable of doing what is good for me. They will perform all the expiations on my behalf, and then I shall free myself from all these experiences of pain." Then it

is said that the soul is sent back to the earth. It takes about 12 days. That is why we perform the ceremony on the eleventh and twelfth days here. The soul is brought back to the earth and it is made to watch what is happening there. Before that time the body should be buried or burnt. Because attachment to the body is so much that the very perception of the corpse will create a desire in the soul to enter it once again; but those who are in charge of it will not allow this – and this would be a condition of great suffering. And, so, on the 11th and 12th days we should offer prayers, perform *havanas*, do charity etc.

Generally, we perform a *yagna* for the peace of the soul and for the satisfaction of all those who are in charge of the soul. Otherwise, it will not be able to experience the things that are sent from here. First of all, a certain *bali* (an offering of boiled rice, etc.) is offered, which is for the satisfaction of Yama. It is said that this act will satisfy Yama and He will free it from bondage. It is necessary that the soul should be purged of the evil deeds it has done. So *Bhagavata-saptaha*, and such sacrifices and *yagnas* are performed. Then we are told that the soul is released from *Yama-loka* and it goes to *Rudra-loka* and there it becomes one of the *Ganas* of *Rudra-loka*. In order that it may be released from that place, we have to perform the *Rudra-yagna*. Then Rudra releases it from the state of *gana* and it shines in a lustrous body and goes to *Brahma-loka*. It is initiated into the divine mysteries by Brahma Himself and it attains *moksha*.

So gradually the soul which is not very virtuous, which has not done any good deeds on earth is also enabled to reach the higher planes of consciousness through our acts of prayers and sacrifice.

#### WEEP NOT FOR THE DEAD

In this connection we must remember that the pains which are experienced by the departed souls are intensified by the sufferings and the grief expressed by those who are on earth. The scriptures emphatically say that, after the death of a person, no teardrop of grief should fall to the ground from anybody's eyes. It does not in any way help the departed soul. On the other hand, even a soul which is about to enter heaven will be brought back if his people are crying here. No one should, therefore, weep or cry; but everyone must pray for the peace of the departed soul. The person who has left the body can be given whatever he needs from here. Study of scriptures is a great help, offering of prayers, performing *havanas* and doing charitable deeds, and even contemplation on God for his sake – all these are of great use. When a person meditates on God, for the sake of the peace of the departed soul, it is said that it will be enabled even to attain *moksha*. The knowledge of the Guru is powerful enough to enter the heart of the disciple to dispel his ignorance; even so is the relation between the person existing here and the departed soul. For the sake of the departed soul we can meditate. It is possible to send our powerful currents of concentration and meditation to enable it to reach higher states of consciousness. For this sake, we must bear in mind that we are part and parcel of the universe, even as the departed souls are; and there is not much difference between the person who exists in a physical body and one who exists in an astral or some other kind of body.

### *GLORY OF PRAYER FOR ALL SOULS*

Our prayers are capable of producing an effect immediately. Our prayers are expressions of soul-consciousness. The prayers should be absolutely selfless. It is necessary that the idea of personal relationship should be removed when such prayers are offered. When such relationship is kept up, the prayer becomes slightly tinged with selfishness and loses its value. We must offer prayers for all souls with an impartial attitude. Only then will it be extremely powerful and bring the desired result. We offer prayers not because we want anything in return for the prayers, but because we wish to radiate peace in the universe. When collective Sadhana is done, when all people sit together and pray for the sake of the departed souls, it brings peace to everyone in this world, even the person who has departed and taken birth again – in fact, all living people will be benefited. Everyone's life will become peaceful and everyone will lead a happy life, on account of our charitable acts. It is really praying for the peace of the whole universe. So, this offering of prayers on this sacred All-Souls' Day is our attempt to bring peace to the universe and to realise in our practical life the oneness that is at the background of all phenomena. We are all one, whether we are in the physical body or astral body; each should be grateful to the other; each should pray for the other; each should wish the good and happiness of the other, so that the whole universe will be a heaven of peace, a resting place of divine consciousness.

[https://www.swami-krishnananda.org/disc/disc\\_32.html](https://www.swami-krishnananda.org/disc/disc_32.html)

## Jain Prayers – Natural Disasters

### Universal Peace Prayers for well being of all living beings

☞The following prayers radiate words of peace, compassion and harmony as we offer love, equanimity and blessings to all the living beings in our universe.

P, J, I, S

May the whole Cosmos be blessed,  
May all beings engage in each other's well being, May all weakness, sickness and faults diminish and vanish, May everyone and everywhere be healthy, prosperous, blissful, and peaceful.

I, S

May all problems be solved,  
May all obstacles be removed,  
The heart becomes full of joy,  
For those who have got in touch with their inner self.

J, I, S

May the entire universe attain bliss,  
May all beings be oriented to the interest of others, Let all faults be eliminated  
And may everyone be happy everywhere.

May all people be happy,  
May all be disease-free,  
May all attain well being  
And let no one be overtaken by miseries.

J, I, S

Ächärya Amitgati (11<sup>th</sup> century A.D.) Sämäyik Päth verse 1

Let blessings go forth unto the entire universe! May everyone rise above self interest through feeling of genuine concern for the well being of all!  
May the mental veils, which cloud our heart be completely removed from our consciousness!  
Everywhere let everyone live in peace and contentment, in health and happiness, in abundant reverence for life!

J, I, S

O God, Let my soul ever diffuse Goodwill for all living beings, Delight for those that are virtuous,  
Compassion for the afflicted ones And indifference towards the ill behaved.

O' Lord, I wish to have feelings of friendship for all beings, Delightful respect for the virtuous  
ones,  
Utmost compassion for the afflicted beings  
And equanimity towards those whose views are contrary to mine.

Let contentment, fulfillment and prosperity grow and multiply in all directions!  
Let me always celebrate a festival of blessings share with all.  
Let all wrongdoings and negativities subside and be brought to an end.  
Let all who act as enemies have a change of heart, transform themselves and turn their faces  
in the direction of all goodness.  
Let all this be so!

J, I, S  
Jain Bhrihat Shanti

[https://www.jainfoundation.in/JAINLIBRARY/books/Jain\\_Prayers\\_007730\\_std.pdf](https://www.jainfoundation.in/JAINLIBRARY/books/Jain_Prayers_007730_std.pdf)

## Buddhist Prayers – Natural Disasters

### Practices for Natural Disasters

**Date Posted:** August 2006

“A student who lived in an area prone to annual hurricanes sought Rinpoche’s advice on what he could do for protection. Rinpoche wrote a general letter to students regarding different types of natural disasters.”

[Lama Zopa Rinpoche teaching at the Seventh Meditation Course, Kopan Monastery, Nepal, 1974. Photo: Wendy Finster.](#)



You may wonder what to do, what prayers to make, when there are disasters such as tornados, hurricanes, heavy rain, storms, floods, earthquakes, or fires, as well as disasters that destroy crops, destroy entire towns and cities within an hour, cause billions of dollars of damage, and where hundreds and thousands of people die or become homeless, have no food or clean water, and so forth. Here are some suggestions on what to do, so that you can help your country and save many people’s lives. These suggestions are to prevent the destruction of houses, villages, and cities that is caused by the elements—fire, water, wind, and earth.

Even though these kinds of problems are big, if one person with a sincere heart takes refuge one-pointedly, without any doubts, in even one buddha such as Chenrezig, Padmasambhava, or Medicine Buddha, and recites their mantras (such as the name mantra), it can change the situation completely. It can avert natural disasters and prevent war. Whatever problems there are can be made less, and even completely stopped, if someone takes strong refuge and prays to even just one buddha. The weather can change in that very hour by the power of one person making prayers. There is no question that if the person who makes the prayers has realizations, such as the realization of bodhicitta, which is actually the best realization, then every single prayer has incredible power.

There are stories of many bodhisattvas and great saints in the past who were able to prevent floods, change the direction of rivers, stop them altogether, and walk across them to the other side. There is one story of Lama Kālsang Jamyang Mönlam, who had bodhicitta realizations. When Tashi Lhunpo monastery was in danger of being flooded, he wrote on a stone, “If it is true that I have bodhicitta, then the water should turn back.” After writing this on the stone, the river actually turned backward. There are many stories about the power of bodhicitta, showing how it can control and affect the elements.



There are also examples in Christianity. There is one story about the great St. Francis of Assisi. One time he was living and meditating in a cave with his disciples. His disciples asked him to stop the water that flowed inside the cave, which was disturbing their meditation. St. Francis went to the place where the water was flowing down the mountain and said, “Sister, my disciples can’t meditate.” Then the water stopped flowing from that time until the present day. It would be considered very inauspicious if the water started to flow again. The water stopped flowing due to the power of St. Francis’s bodhicitta.

St. Francis is exactly like the Kadampa geshe, even in his external appearance, even though he was from another tradition. His mind was totally pure; there was no stain of the eight worldly concerns, and he was a totally renounced, pure, spiritual person. Like the Kadampa geshe, St. Francis also asked his disciples to criticize him. He preferred to be criticized rather than praised. You can even feel his gentleness from his statues and from his face, which is a sign of having bodhicitta and a totally tame, subdued mind. He seems so peaceful and humble, and is wonderful to look at, very inspirational. All the birds loved him and always stayed around him and perched on his body. This is also a sign that he was a great holy being, a saint with bodhicitta.

In the *Bodhicaryavatara (A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life)* by the great Indian bodhisattva Shantideva, who was a scholar and highly attained bodhisattva, it says:

If the inner enemy, delusion, is subdued  
It is like having destroyed all the external enemies.

If, for example, you have leather under your feet, then it is as if the whole earth, all the thorns and bushes, are covered by leather, because wherever you walk no thorns can harm you. In the same way, once your enemy, the delusions, are extinguished, even though there might be many enemies outside, they too are stopped and destroyed—not only in this life, but forever, in all future lives.

One time in Italy there was a wolf in the forest that harmed many people, and no one could enter the forest. St. Francis of Assisi said he wanted to go and talk to the wolf. The people begged him not to go, but when St. Francis met the wolf, the wolf licked his feet, like a dog meeting his master. St. Francis asked the wolf not to harm the people, and said that in return he would beg food for the wolf, and give it to him. After that, the wolf stopped harming others. Because St. Francis’s mind was subdued and he had no ego, no self-cherishing thought, even vicious animals could not harm him.

One great Tibetan master, who was a top scholar and ex-abbot of Sera Je (one of the largest monastic universities around Lhasa, where there were many thousands of monks studying), had a cat. From the moment the cat came to live with the abbot, it stopped catching and eating mice. Even when the cat saw mice running around the room, it just stayed very quiet near the abbot. This was due to the abbot’s blessing, due to his tamed mind, his bodhicitta blessing, and

his good heart. The abbot's bodhicitta transformed even the cat's mind so that it did not harm others.

By having bodhicitta realizations, your prayers become incredibly powerful. Similarly, if someone has realizations of emptiness, their prayers also become extremely powerful. Also, if a spiritual person who has a very pure heart, unstained by the eight worldly concerns, makes prayers, their prayers will have a lot of power. If a person who is living a pure life, in pure morality (lay or ordained, but especially ordained), prays, their prayers have a lot of power.

When someone with any of these realizations prays, then the devas, nagas, and all the other beings, including the eight groups of worldly beings (who are very connected with the weather and the elements and who cause the elements to be destructive), will listen more closely and obey these practitioners. Even if the practitioner does not have the other realizations mentioned, but at least lives in morality, then these beings will obey this person, and the harm and destruction from the elements can be stopped.

Some years ago there was a tornado in Madison, Wisconsin, USA, and it was coming toward Deer Park where my guru Geshe Sopa lives. Geshe Sopa is one of the great, rare, outstanding scholars, who is very learned, very pure in morality, and has a good heart. He is also the guru of Lama Yeshe. Geshe Sopa was teaching in the university in Madison for about 20 years, but now he is retired. On the day of the tornado, Geshe Sopa had been teaching at the university, and he thought that Deer Park would definitely be seriously damaged. When Geshe-la was returning to Deer Park, he wondered what might have happened to the monks and geshees there. On the road the police were stopping all the cars and not letting them go in the direction of Deer Park. Geshe-la explained to the police that he was returning to his home in Deer Park. Then the police found out that Deer Park was a Tibetan monastery. They said that a very strange thing had happened—the tornado had been moving toward Deer Park, but then it went around Deer Park and didn't damage the center at all. Although the tornado damaged many of the houses in the area, Deer Park itself was not touched. This was due to the monks living in the center, due to the power of their practice and pure morality.

Also, a few years ago there was a very bad earthquake in Taipei, Taiwan. Many people died and a lot of houses and buildings collapsed. One simple family, who had very good hearts, who were always helping people and were extremely devoted to Buddhism, lived in a shaky, old house. The house looked as if it would easily collapse. However, after the earthquake hit, there was absolutely no damage to their house. They also had many offering bowls in the upstairs room, filled with water, that they offered to the guru, Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. They thought that the water would surely have spilled from the bowls, but when they looked, the bowls were still full, not broken, and not a single drop of water had spilled. The bowls were still completely full of water. This was because the family made many prayers and chanted Compassionate Buddha mantra every day, and they were extremely devoted, very good, pure-hearted people. So, the Dharma had protected them and their house.

Some years ago in Florida it was reported in the news that a hurricane was going to hit Florida. One long-time student rang me to ask me to make prayers. I did some Mickey Mouse prayers, and then I gave him a job (even though he had asked me to do it). I gave him the job of reciting the Bodhisattva Ksitigarbha's mantra. He made strong prayers by taking refuge in the Bodhisattva Ksitigarbha. The hurricane didn't hit Florida but went around. He was so astonished that he rang me, and said, "It worked!"

There are many methods, but here are some suggestions for you to get an idea of what to do when these problems arise. This is not only to protect yourself and your property, but also if there are problems in other places, other countries, you can definitely help by doing these practices, or whatever you can, with a sincere heart, full of faith. This will help save the lives of so many people, as well as many animals and properties. Even if we are not in danger, we have the responsibility to protect other sentient beings. When we get sick, we take medicine or go to the hospital. In the same way, these are just methods to help. Here, it is a question of staying alive or dying.

PRACTICES TO PERFORM FOR NATURAL DISASTERS\* (TORNADOS, HURRICANES, HEAVY RAIN, STORMS, FLOODS, EARTHQUAKES, FIRES, ETC.)

Tea offering to the merit field (which includes the Three Jewels [Buddha, Dharma, Sangha], mind-seal deities, bodhisattvas, arhats, dakas, dakinis, and protectors who are beyond samsara).

Offer tea to the eight worldly ones (*de gyä*), especially the eight groups of worldly devas, who are closely connected to the elements and who create the wind, water, earth, and fire and the destructive violence and disasters that are created by these elements.

- Lion-face Dakini practice
- Recite Ksitigarbha mantra
- [White Umbrella prayer](#)
- Padmasambhava prayer to remove obstacles
- [Medicine Buddha](#) puja and mantra
- [Chenrezig mantra](#) with tong-len
- Take the 24-hour [eight Mahayana precepts](#)

When reciting the prayers to the deities such as Lion-face Dakini, etc., visualize the deity and then recite the mantra with full confidence. Rely upon the deity, thinking that the deity has power and has manifested for us, sentient beings, in different aspects for different purposes.

Medicine Buddha practice is not only for healing. In addition, it is very powerful for achieving success and for solving any problems. Medicine Buddha practice is good for someone who has died, for family problems, for someone who is sick, for attaining happiness and freedom from suffering, for finding a job, for success in business, etc.

White Umbrella deity is very powerful to protect from the danger of the elements. With strong faith and strong refuge, you can put the White Umbrella deity's mantra or picture in your house. Then, you should visualize that rainfalls of nectar are emitted from the deity. This nectar stops fires and purifies the negative karma of all sentient beings. All are liberated.

\*Note: One could mistakenly understand the term "natural disasters" to mean disasters that exist in nature without a "man made" cause. It must be understood that these events are the result of karma created by sentient beings. These disasters do not occur from their own side without a cause and while they manifest as forces in nature they are the result of the actions of body, speech, and mind of sentient beings.

<https://www.lamayeshe.com/advice/practices-natural-disasters>

### **PRACTICES TO DO FOR VARIOUS NATURAL DISASTERS <sup>1</sup> (TORNADOS, HURRICANES, HEAVY RAIN, STORMS, FLOODS, EARTHQUAKES, FIRES, ETC.)**

1. Tea offering to the merit field (which includes all the Three Jewels [Buddha, Dharma, Sangha], mind-seal deities, bodhisattvas, arhats, dakas, dakinis, and protectors who are beyond samsara.)
2. Offer tea to the eight worldly ones (*de gye*), especially, the eight groups of worldly devas, who are closely connected to the elements and who create the wind, water, earth, and fire and the violence and disasters that are created by these elements that are so destructive.
3. Lion-Face Dakini practice
4. Recite Kshitigarbha mantra
5. White Umbrella prayer
6. Padmasambhava prayer to remove obstacles
7. Medicine Buddha puja and mantra
8. Chenrezig mantra with tong-len
9. Take the 24-hour eight Mahayana precepts

When doing the prayers to the deities such as Lion-Face Dakini, etc., visualize the deity and then recite the mantra with full confidence. Rely upon the deity, thinking that the deity has all the power and has manifested for us, sentient beings, in different aspects for different purposes, for sentient beings who have that karma.

Medicine Buddha practice is not only for healing. In addition, it is very powerful for success and for solving any problems. Medicine Buddha practice is good for someone who has died, for family problems, for someone who is sick, for receiving happiness and freedom from suffering, for finding a job, for success in business, etc.

White Umbrella deity is very powerful to protect from the danger of the elements. With strong faith and strong refuge, you can even put the White Umbrella deity's mantra or picture around. Then you should visualize that rainfalls of nectar are emitted. This nectar stops the fires, purifies the suffering of the insects, and purifies the negative karma of all the sentient beings. All are liberated.

<sup>1</sup> *Lama Zopa Rinpoche would like everyone to be perfectly clear and not to be confused by the term "natural disasters." While one could mistakenly understand this term to mean disasters that exist in nature without a "man made" cause, it must be understood that these events are the result of karma created by sentient beings. These disasters do not occur from their own side without a cause and while they manifest as forces in nature they are the result of the actions of body, speech and mind of sentient beings.*

<https://fpmt.org/wp-content/uploads/teachers/zopa/advice/pdf/disastersoftheelements.pdf>

## Baha’i Prayers – Natural Disasters

### 6 Powerful Prayers for Safety and Protection

“Fifty-eight percent of people living in the United States report feeling worried about their safety every single day,” according to SafeWise’s 2019 State of Safety report.

This daily habit of worrying can paralyze us with fear and disempower us from making a difference. Know that you are never alone and that God is with you — watching over all the people and circumstances that you can’t control.

I hope these Baha’i prayers for safety and protection comfort you when you are fearful, protect you when you are in harm’s way, and empower you to make this world a safer place.

#### 1. A Short Prayer for Protection From Natural Disasters

Whether you’re worried about flooding, fires, pandemics, hurricanes, or tornadoes, [Baha’u’llah](#), the prophet and founder of [the Baha’i Faith](#), revealed this short, powerful prayer for us to say. He [wrote](#):

**On the appearance of fearful natural events call ye to mind the might and majesty of your Lord, He Who heareth and seeth all, and say ‘Dominion is God’s, the Lord of the seen and the unseen, the Lord of creation’.**

#### 2. A Prayer for Safe Travel and Protection

[Baha’u’llah](#) revealed this wonderful prayer for protection and safe travels. If you or your loved ones are traveling and want to ask God to help you return home safely, I encourage you to recite [this prayer](#):

**O God, my God! I have set out from my home, holding fast unto the cord of Thy love, and I have committed myself wholly to Thy care and Thy protection.**

**I entreat Thee by Thy power through which Thou didst protect Thy loved ones from the wayward and the perverse, and from every contumacious oppressor, and every wicked doer who hath strayed far from Thee, to keep me safe by Thy bounty and Thy grace.**

**Enable me, then, to return to my home by Thy power and Thy might. Thou art, truly, the Almighty, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting.**

#### 3. A Prayer for Protection From Envy and Rancor

I’m so grateful that [Abdu’l-Baha](#), one of the central figures of the Baha’i Faith, revealed [this prayer](#) for protection from rancor and envy.

Years ago, I was around several people who were envious of me and made that clear. Their bitter comments and green-eyed glares made it extremely difficult to be around them. So, I decided to memorize this prayer and recite it every single day. Some people stopped saying

resentful remarks, and others are no longer in my life. This powerful prayer protected me from rancor and empowered me to demand respect. It helped me tremendously, and it can help you too:

**O God, my God! Shield Thy trusted servants from the evils of self and passion, protect them with the watchful eye of Thy loving-kindness from all rancor, hate and envy, shelter them in the impregnable stronghold of Thy care and, safe from the darts of doubtfulness, make them the manifestations of Thy glorious signs, illumine their faces with the effulgent rays shed from the Dayspring of Thy divine unity, gladden their hearts with the verses revealed from Thy holy kingdom, strengthen their loins by Thine all-swaying power that cometh from Thy realm of glory. Thou art the All-Bountiful, the Protector, the Almighty, the Gracious.**

#### 4. A Prayer for Help and Protection From Evildoers

Envious people can become dangerous if they turn to contempt and hatred. In [this prayer](#) that was revealed by [the Bab](#), the forerunner and herald of [Baha'u'llah](#), we implore God to help and protect us against those who want to harm us and wish for bad things to happen to us:

**Glory be to Thee, O God! Thou art the God Who hath existed before all things, Who will exist after all things and will last beyond all things. Thou art the God Who knoweth all things, and is supreme over all things. Thou art the God Who dealeth mercifully with all things, Who judgeth between all things and Whose vision embraceth all things. Thou art God my Lord, Thou art aware of my position, Thou dost witness my inner and outer being.**

**Grant Thy forgiveness unto me and unto the believers who responded to Thy Call. Be Thou my sufficing helper against the mischief of whosoever may desire to inflict sorrow upon me or wish me ill. Verily, Thou art the Lord of all created things. Thou dost suffice everyone, while no one can be self-sufficient without Thee.**

#### 5. A Prayer for Spiritual Protection, Safety, and Guidance

Baha'u'llah asks God to gladden the hearts of those who have turned towards God and keep us safe from idleness and vanity in this prayer. You may want to recite [this prayer](#) if you need [spiritual protection and enlightenment](#):

**Lauded be Thy name, O Lord my God! I entreat Thee by Thy Name through which the Hour hath struck, and the Resurrection came to pass, and fear and trembling seized all that are in heaven and all that are on earth, to rain down, out of the heaven of Thy mercy and the clouds of Thy tender compassion, what will gladden the hearts of Thy servants, who have turned towards Thee and helped Thy Cause.**

**Keep safe Thy servants and Thy handmaidens, O my Lord, from the darts of idle fancy and vain imaginings, and give them from the hands of Thy grace a draught of the soft-flowing waters of Thy knowledge.**

**Thou, truly, art the Almighty, the Most Exalted, the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Generous.**

#### 6. A Prayer for Protection and Preservation From Hardship

In a world of so much pain, calamity, and hardship, [this prayer](#) that Abdu'l-Baha revealed gives you the spiritual armor, shield, and fortress you need to guard you “**from every sickness, trial, difficulty and ordeal**”:

**O my Lord! Thou knowest that the people are encircled with pain and calamities and are environed with hardships and trouble. Every trial doth attack man and every dire adversity doth assail him like unto the assault of a serpent. There is no shelter and asylum for him except under the wing of Thy protection, preservation, guard and custody.**

**O Thou the Merciful One! O my Lord! Make Thy protection my armor, Thy preservation my shield, humbleness before the door of Thy oneness my guard, and Thy custody and defense my fortress and my abode. Preserve me from the suggestions of self and desire, and guard me from every sickness, trial, difficulty and ordeal.**

**Verily, Thou art the Protector, the Guardian, the Preserver, the Sufficer, and verily, Thou art the Merciful of the Most Merciful.**

May these prayers protect you, and your loved ones, and keep you safe from emotional, spiritual, and physical danger.

TAGS: [PRAYER](#) , [PRAYER GATHERINGS](#) , [TRUST IN GOD](#)



#### **Radiance Talley**

Radiance Talley is the community and content manager at BahaiTeachings.org. She graduated from the University of Maryland with a degree in communication, a College Park Scholars Arts Citation, and a cognate in journalism. In addition to her writing, drawing, presentation, and public speaking experience, Radiance...

<https://bahaiteachings.org/powerful-prayers-for-safety-protection/>



# Christian Prayers – Natural Disasters

## Evangelical Prayers

### 1. Prayer for Those We Don't Know Who Are Experiencing or Recovering from a Natural Disaster

#### Slide 1 of 5

*Lord, I pray for your peace and protection over those who have experienced a natural disaster or those who are currently experiencing one. Please grant them peace and protection amidst the storm, like when you calmed the raging storm out to sea ([Mark 4:35–41](#)).*

*God, even the winds and waves obey your voice. I pray that those who are experiencing a natural disaster who don't know your name may learn how great a name it is, and find rest and solace in [salvation](#) that only comes from you.*

*I also pray for the relief efforts in those areas which have experienced a natural disaster. May churches swing open their doors to the needy and provide meals and comfort to those who have lost much. May people see the light of your love from those who seek to help those in dire need now.*

#### [Luke 8:22-25](#)

*"One day Jesus said to his disciples, "Let us go over to the other side of the lake." So they got into a boat and set out. As they sailed, he fell asleep. A squall came down on the lake, so that the boat was being swamped, and they were in great danger. The disciples went and woke him, saying, "Master, Master, we're going to drown!" He got up and rebuked the wind and the raging waters; the storm subsided, and all was calm. "Where is your [faith](#)?" he asked his disciples. In fear and amazement they asked one another, "Who is this? He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him."*

### 2. Prayer for Those Experiencing Anxiety Due to a Natural Disaster

#### Slide 2 of 5

*Lord, as humans, we can often worry when control slips from our fingertips. Nothing can feel as though we have such little control more than when we experience a natural disaster.*

*Remind us that you are all-powerful and have a plan for our lives, even when we lose much to the forces of the natural world.*

*Let us remember what it says in [Isaiah 54:10](#) that even though the mountains may crumble that your love and covenant of peace cannot be taken away.*

*No power of this world or beyond can ever separate us from your love and your plan, so now, we cling to you. Give us peace, calm our [anxiety](#), and remind us of your faithfulness during this scary and uncertain time.*

*[Jesus](#), you care for the sparrows and know the number of hairs on our heads. How much more will you be with us during a natural disaster?*

### Isaiah 54:10

"Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed," says the LORD, who has compassion on you."

## **3. Prayer for Family and Close Loved Ones Experiencing a Natural Disaster**

### **Slide 3 of 5**

*God, I stand before you helpless and earnestly seeking you as my family is experiencing or has recently experienced a natural disaster. I pray over [Psalm 57:1-2](#), that my family and close loved ones may find protection underneath the shadow of your wings until the storm passes.*

*I know you have the power to calm storms, restore lives, and heal what has been broken. Please be with my loved ones now. Allow me to provide encouragement and comfort from afar and give them the peace they need that I know can only come from you.*

*Allow me to travel safely to them, if I am able, to help them recover and heal. And if I cannot get to them in a timely manner, provide them with relief efforts and surround them with friends and family who can help come to their aid in their great time of need.*

### Psalm 57:1-2

"Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me, for in you my soul takes refuge; in the shadow of your wings I will take refuge, till the storms of destruction pass by. I cry out to God Most High, to God who fulfills his purpose for me."

## **4. Prayer for Personally Experiencing a Natural Disaster**

### **Slide 4 of 5**

*God, I am at the mercy of the wind and the waves. I have seen terrible acts of nature and feel helpless, out of control, and in great need of comfort and peace.*

*Right now, I need encouragement and rest that I know can only come from you. Remind me of what the prophet Isaiah says in [Isaiah 54:11-12](#), that no matter what natural disasters I may experience, that you have the power to help me heal and rebuild.*

*Remind me of Job and how he experienced a great deal of suffering. And yet, you did not leave him. In the end, you restored him and made his cup overflow with blessings and joy.*

*For now, I need you to sit beside me and wait with me as I get well and recover. I know that healing doesn't always come immediately, but that you will continue to bless, comfort, and restore me until I can stand again.*

*I pray for those around me who have also been affected. As I recover, open my eyes to how I can be a light and help others in the midst of this tragedy. Let them see you through me, and I pray for your guiding hands over the relief efforts that are coming into my city.*



### **Isaiah 54:11-12**

“Afflicted city, lashed by storms and not comforted, I will rebuild you with stones of turquoise, your foundations with lapis lazuli. I will make your battlements of rubies, your gates of sparkling jewels, and all your walls of precious stones.”

## **God Gives Strength to Rise**

### **Slide 5 of 5**

God does not forget us in the midst of great tragedy. Instead, he sits with us during the most difficult moments and helps us to rise again.

Whether you have a friend, a family member, or even have experienced a natural disaster yourself, turn to the Almighty who holds you in his arms and protects you underneath the shadow of his wings.

In the end, the earth will experience no natural disasters and God will make everything right. But for now, we rest in the comfort of knowing God still has a wonderful plan for our lives, and no natural disaster can even come close to matching the power of our powerful God.

<https://www.crosswalk.com/faith/prayer/hopeful-prayers-for-restoration-from-natural-disasters.html>

## **5 Prayers for Hurricane and Natural Disaster Protection and Recovery**

### **5 Prayer for Times of Disaster**

Use these 5 prayers to pray for all who are directly in harm's path and for recovery efforts that continue long after the immediate danger has passed. Keep reading for a free printable of these prayers at the end of this post.

#### **1. Prayer for Those Directly in the Harm's Path**

Jesus, we lift an urgent plea for those directly in the path of a hurricane, wildfire, or natural disaster. You calmed the Sea of Galilee with a couple words. You have the power to calm any storm in our lives. Protect people who are in harm's way, provide ways out and safe places to stay while the storm rages. Keep loved ones, pets, and rescue workers safe from harm. In your saving name we pray, Amen.

#### **2. Prayer for Those Affected by Evacuating and Displaced**

Heavenly Father, we grieve for those who have lost their homes temporarily or permanently. Provide all who are displaced a safe place to rest tonight. Give people access to clean water, provisions for daily living, and security in where ever they reside now. Rest your loving hand on

recovery efforts so that children can attend school, the vulnerable will be secure, and all people will connect with their community once again. Let all people find refuge in you. Amen.

### 3. Prayer for Rescue Workers

Protect and guide all who serve as rescue workers. Give them endurance and direction as they seek to do your work of caring for those who need your healing, protection, and recovery. When they face danger, be their stronghold. We thank you for their efforts. Amen.

### 4. Prayer for Ongoing Relief Efforts

Lord God, we ask your wisdom for those who lead relief efforts in the wake of a natural disaster. We pray for our government, our churches, and our communities. May relief be fast. Give discernment to those who donate funds and keep every agency free from fraud. Open any closed doors so that people will receive shelter, clean water, and food. Bless our efforts as a nation as we care for those in need at this time. In your holy name we pray, Amen.

### 5. Prayer for Rebuilding

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, you are our source of ultimate strength. Lift up those who have fallen. Sustain those who work to rebuild after a natural disaster. Fill us with hope and remind us that you make all things new. You are our rock and our redeemer. In the name of Jesus we pray, Amen.

In times of trouble, the first and best thing we can do is pray.

## **Why Does God Allow Hurricanes (and Other Bad Things) to Happen?**

These natural disasters leave huge numbers of people displaced, homeless, and even killed. Property is destroyed. The loss of dollars is staggering to even fathom.

We are left to question, “Where is God when these hurricanes and natural disasters strike?”

I don’t have an easy answer for why God allows hurricanes and natural disasters to occur. We live in a world messed up by sin. Read more here about answers to the question, [“Why Does God Allow Bad Things to Happen?”](#)

God promises in the Bible that He hears and responds to our prayers. In 1 John 5:14 it says, “And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.”

James 5:16 tells us, “Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.”

Let's join together in praying these prayers for hurricane and natural disaster protection. We don't fully understand how God works through our prayers, but we trust that He does.

**For those of you who are or were directly in the hurricane, flood, wildfires, or other natural disaster's path, please know we are praying for you.**

If you have loved ones who are in harm's way, we pray along with you and trust in God's loving protection.

**For those of us who are many miles away, this all feels a bit disconcerting, doesn't it?** Life continues as usual and that feels somehow a relief and wrong at the same time. God calls us to pray for and reach out to the vulnerable. Offer help in whatever ways you can, big or small.

After a hurricane, wildfire, or natural disaster, rebuilding and recovery takes years. Let's continue to help and pray for those in need.

Are you or a loved one in harm's way or recovering from a natural disaster? Please leave a comment below so we may pray for you.

Be sure to also check out our [30 Days of Praising God in the Storms of Life Bible Reading Plan](#).

[https://theholymess.com/5-prayers-for-hurricane-and-natural-disaster-protection-and-recovery/#a5y\\_p=6494717](https://theholymess.com/5-prayers-for-hurricane-and-natural-disaster-protection-and-recovery/#a5y_p=6494717)

### [7 PRAYERS FOR THOSE BATTERED BY NATURAL DISASTERS](#)

Oct 11, 2017/[2 Comments](#)/in [Social Issues](#), [TOPICS](#), [World](#) /by [Janel Breitenstein](#)

Like many of you, my eyes have riveted on stories about hurricanes Irma, Jose, Katia, and Maria, which have dismantled the lives of thousands across the Caribbean. Added to these are the earthquakes in Mexico, the pummeling by Hurricane Harvey, and wildfires which have torched the western portion of the USA.



When a natural disaster hits, it leaves many in sudden, abject poverty. It destroys homes and takes away lives. It leaves many stranded without basic resources such as clean, drinkable water.

Having worked for 5½ years in Africa for an aid organization, I've had a glimpse of what poverty means. The hurricanes, however, also opened my eyes to another kind of poverty.

Victims of natural disasters are poor because they have been robbed of something more than their homes and basic facilities. Apart from losing their material possessions and essential resources, they no longer have the sense of security that they can survive the next hit.

Apart from losing their material possessions and essential resources, they no longer have the sense of security that they can survive the next hit.

They live in fear of the next storm, and have nowhere they can shelter safely. They can't even turn to their friends and neighbours, who are just as badly hit.

I caught a tiny glimpse of how it must feel to lose things that are important to you when I was robbed. During our tenure in Uganda, the thieves ran away with so much more than my purse and electronics. They temporarily extracted my peace of mind; my sense of trust; a slice of my children's innocence and my husband's sense of being able to protect his family.

This helps us better understand our role when we step in to assist victims of natural disasters. Even if we were able to wave a magic wand and restore all of their possessions, there would still exist a poverty untouched.

This forms the backbone of my prayers for those hit by natural disasters. I pray that God would restore their sense of peace, materially and otherwise.

Victims of natural disasters: We remember you, and we're on our knees. Readers: Will you pray with us for the following?

## **1. Peace**

Like the disciples in a floundering, water-logged boat, our eyes are so often glued to the turbulent waves rather than their Master.

Let them repeatedly hand all their anxiety and fear to You. As they trust You, guard their hearts in Your peace ([Philippians 4:8](#)). Let Your peace be their anchors amid any circumstances, no matter how deep the raging waters are.

## **2. Provision**

When the physical stores that we've relied on are suddenly gone in an instant, it can be terrifying to have no resources in sight.

Please care for these victims' physical needs and provide them their daily bread. Let them not worry about what they'll eat or drink or wear, but trust that You see them and care deeply for them ([Matthew 6:26](#)). Let them seek You, and lack no good thing ([Psalm 34:10](#)). In times of their deep need, give them the strength to endure anything ([Philippians 4:13](#)).

## **3. Wisdom**

There are so many decisions to be made after a natural disaster strikes. Where should reconstruction begin? What are the most important needs? What issues must be addressed in the meantime? Where are safe and trustworthy places to go for help?

Help victims and aid workers to move forward, not in impulsive fear, but to operate with Your peace, trusting in Your care and constancy. You led nomadic Israelites with a fire and a cloud. Help these victims seek Your wisdom for their next step in their recovery ([James 1:5-6](#)).

## **4. Trust**

It can be hardest to trust You when we walk through overwhelming grief and loss. Show each person the tender, specific care You have for them, and that You remember every single one of them.

Let them trust You even when You take away ([Job 1:21](#)). Help them see that any disaster, any evil that they run into, is still on Your leash and that You are still in control of their situation. Help us, Good Father, to trust You when we can't see.

## 5. Care and hospitality

Father, You have not abandoned them for even a second! Let them see You in every open door, every glass of water, every kind smile, and every gentle grasp. Provide love for them through friends, family, and strangers. Go before these victims of tragedy, paving their way in graciousness.

Motivate Your people to love generously, as an act of love to You ([Matthew 25:34-40](#)). Open our own hearts towards them in sacrificial generosity and make us our brother's keeper—even if it's a brother we've never met.

## 6. Restoration

Restore the happiness and necessities taken by these disasters ([Joel 2:24-26](#)), be it homes, vehicles, irreplaceable mementos, or clothing, and give them a peace of mind.

## 7. Refuge

Lord, be their hiding place and refuge, a constant presence and help in trouble. Let them know that You are personally and intimately involved in their lives, and reassure them that You are always with them ([Psalm 46:1](#)). We beg You to spare them any more calamity—whether it is concurrent diseases or recurring natural disasters—and show us Your undeserved favour. We rely on You, Lord!



### [About Janel Breitenstein](#)

Janel Breitenstein is an author, freelance writer, speaker, and editor for GoServeLove.net, a site mobilizing the next generation of global workers. After five and a half years in Uganda, her family of six has returned to Colorado, where they continue to work on behalf of the poor with Engineering Ministries International. Her book, *Permanent Markers: Spiritual Life Skills to Write on Your Kids' Hearts* (Harvest House), empowers parents to creatively engage kids in vibrant spirituality.

You can find her—“The Awkward Mom”—having uncomfortable, important conversations at [JanelBreitenstein.com](#), at [FamilyLife.com](#), and on Instagram [@janelbreit](#).

<https://ymi.today/2017/10/7-prayers-for-those-battered-by-natural-disasters/>



## Catholic Prayers – Natural Disasters

### A Prayer for Persons Suffering as a Result of a Natural Disaster

But I shall sing of your strength,  
Extol your mercy at dawn,  
For you are my fortress,  
My refuge in time of trouble.  
PSALM 59:17

### GRACIOUS GOD, WE PRAY FOR ALL THOSE SUFFERING FROM THE RAVAGES OF NATURAL DISASTERS.

Grant them encouragement, strength, fortitude, patience and insight as they struggle with their many losses — material, physical, emotional, and personal — and begin to pick up the pieces and create a new future for themselves, their families, and their community. Be for them a beacon of unwavering hope and confidence that there can and will be a better day. Surround them with your love and the love and compassion of others that they might be sustained in this time of trouble. We ask this through the intercession of Our Lady of Lourdes and in the name of your Son, Jesus and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. AMEN.

<https://www.chausa.org/prayers/cha-prayer-library/prayer/a-prayer-for-persons-suffering-as-a-result-of-a-natural-disaster>

### Jesuit Prayers In Times of Natural Disasters

*While it is comforting to know the many ways that local, regional and national government workers and officials are responding to a natural disaster, you may find yourself asking if there is anything you can immediately do to help. There are three practical ways:*

- *Pray*
- *Donate to a relief agency*
- *Become a trained volunteer for the next event*

### In the Storm

#### A prayer in the time of an approaching hurricane

God of the Universe, at the dawn of creation, your Spirit breathed on the waters, making them the wellspring of all holiness. You created the oceans and rivers, and all that dwell within them, and at your word the wind and the waves were born.

The seasons follow your plan, and the tides rise and fall on your command. In both calm and storm, you are with us.

On the Sea of Galilee, even when the disciples began to fear, Jesus showed that he was Lord

over the waters by rebuking the storms, so that all would know that even the wind and the waves obey him.

Creator God, we ask you to calm the wind and the waves of the approaching hurricane, and spare those in its path from harm. Help those who are in its way to reach safety. Open our hearts in generosity to all who need help in the coming days.

In all things and in all times, help us to remember that even when life seems dark and stormy, you are in the boat with us, guiding us to safety.

By Fr James Martin SJ

### **Let Our Cries Come Unto You**

Most merciful and compassionate God,

Giver of Life and Love,

hear our prayers

and let our cries come unto you.

We weep with your people

We hear the cries of orphaned children and laments of bereaved parents

We feel the desperation of those searching for loved ones

We behold the silence of vanished villages.

We see the devastation.

We are overwhelmed by the enormity of it all.

Our hearts are hushed, our minds are numb.

Let not our hands be stopped, our voices dumb.

God of the universe,

Open our hearts to feel your compassion

Galvanize in us the act of continued giving

Bond us to our sisters and brothers in need

Comfort and heal the injured, the bereaved, the lost

Strengthen the aid workers and medical personnel

Bolster the resolve of governments and those with power to help

Open through this tragedy pathways to partnerships and peace

In Your Name of mercy and healing and compassion we pray

- Offered for the people of Japan following the earthquake and tsunami of March 11, 2011

### **Pierce Our Hearts With Compassion**

Lord, at times such as this,

when we realize that the ground beneath our feet

is not as solid as we had imagined,

we plead for your mercy.

As the things we have built crumble about us,  
we know too well how small we truly are  
on this ever-changing, ever-moving,  
fragile planet we call home.  
Yet you have promised never to forget us.

Do not forget us now.

Today, so many people are afraid.  
They wait in fear of the next tremor.  
They hear the cries of the injured amid the rubble.  
They roam the streets in shock at what they see.  
And they fill the dusty air with wails of grief  
and the names of missing dead.

Comfort them, Lord, in this disaster.  
Be their rock when the earth refuses to stand still,  
and shelter them under your wings when homes no longer exist.

Embrace in your arms those who died so suddenly this day.  
Console the hearts of those who mourn,  
and ease the pain of bodies on the brink of death.

Pierce, too, our hearts with compassion,  
we who watch from afar,  
as the poorest on this side of the earth  
find only misery upon misery.  
Move us to act swiftly this day,  
to give generously every day,  
to work for justice always,  
and to pray unceasingly for those without hope.

And once the shaking has ceased,  
the images of destruction have stopped filling the news,  
and our thoughts return to life's daily rumblings,  
let us not forget that we are all your children  
and they, our brothers and sisters.  
We are all the work of your hands.

For though the mountains leave their place  
and the hills be tossed to the ground,  
your love shall never leave us,  
and your promise of peace will never be shaken.

Our help is in the name of the Lord,  
who made heaven and earth.  
Blessed be the name of the Lord,  
now and forever.

- Offered for the people of Haiti following the earthquake of January 12, 2010

## **In Our Hearts**

Compassionate Lord, we pray for those who have been devastated by recent natural disasters. We remember those who have lost their lives so suddenly. We hold in our hearts the families forever changed by grief and loss. Bring them consolation and comfort. Surround them with our prayer for strength. Bless those who have survived and heal their memories of trauma and devastation. May they have the courage to face the long road of rebuilding ahead.

We ask your blessing on all those who have lost their homes, their livelihoods, their security and their hope. Bless the work of relief agencies and those providing emergency assistance. May their work be guided by the grace and strength that comes from You alone.

Help us to respond with generosity in prayer, in assistance, in aid to the best of our abilities. Keep our hearts focused on the needs of those affected, even after the crisis is over. We ask this in Jesus' name.

## **God is Our Refuge**

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.  
Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change,  
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;  
though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult.  
God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved;  
God will help it when the morning dawns.  
The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

- *From Psalm 46*

## **For Victims of Natural Disasters**

Gracious God, I pray for the victims of this disaster, Lord, that you would comfort the lives that were spared Lord, and that you would take care of those who perished.

Lord, please bless those who are doing everything they can to help these people and also make sure that things run smoothly in repairing this great community/State/Nation.

Please help the victims to have patience and also help family members to be reunited. Lord, I pray that you will ensure that the victims do not come under any illnesses from this disaster, and I also pray that they get enough food and clean water and proper shelter for everyone.

Lord, please touch the hearts of the world to continue to pray for these people and also to donate whatever they can to help rebuild this wonderful State.

Lord , only you can make miracles happen and I am asking for one now. Amen.

- *Bridgett of Ontario, CA, adapted from "Hurricane Katrina Prayer"*

### **In Times of Natural Disasters**

Lord, please be with the rescue workers and keep them safe as they make heroic efforts in dangerous situations to rescue those in trouble.

Lord, please be with everyone waiting to be rescued, keep them safe, and bring help to them soon.

God, bless each and every person affected by this storm and surround them with Your love, protection, and angels.

Let them know there are millions of us out here praying for them and their loved ones.

We give You all the praise and glory forever, Lord, and know that even in the darkest hours, You are always with us.

- *Adapted from "Prayer for the Victims of Hurricane Katrina"*

### **Lift Up Those Who Have Fallen**

Holy One, you are our comfort and strength in times of sudden disaster, crisis, or chaos. Surround us now with your grace and peace through storm or earthquake, fire or flood.

By your Spirit, lift up those who have fallen, sustain those who work to rescue or rebuild, and fill us with the hope of your new creation; through You, our rock and redeemer.

- *Author Unknown*

## Psalm 46:1

God is our refuge and our strength. An ever present help in times of trouble.

### For the People

God of healing and mercy, we come before you with our hearts filled with grief as we see the devastation.

We pray that your presence would be felt by those who are grieving, who are injured, who have lost their homes and livelihoods.

We pray for wisdom and safety for those who are responding to the people in need and the many challenges left in the wake of the event.

We pray for our church, that it may be a witness to your compassion and care for all who suffer.

God, you are our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in times of trouble. For this we give you thanks and ask that you hear our prayers for the people of \_\_\_\_\_.

*- Adopted from a prayer of the Mennonite World Conference for the people of Japan following the earthquake and tsunami of March 11, 2011.*

### A Prayer of Relief

Loving and gracious God,

All love and mercy compels us to the side of our global brothers and sisters.

In our charity, and in our compassion, help us stand with them.

In our solidarity and in our sharing, help us stand with them.

In our advocacy, and in our prayer, help us stand with them.

And as we turn to them in their peril, we ask your grace go with us:

To feed the hungry:

-give us your grace.

To give drink to the thirsty:

-give us your grace.

To clothe the naked:

-give us your grace.

To shelter the homeless:

-give us your grace.

To care for the sick:

-give us your grace.

To reach the trapped and the stranded:

-give us your grace.

To mourn the dead:

-give us your grace.

And in reaching out, may we find you in them.

And may they find you in us.

- *Adopted from a prayer of Catholic Relief Services following Typhoon Haiyan, November 2013*

<https://www.xavier.edu/jesuitresource/online-resources/prayer-index/prayers-in-times-of-crisis/in-times-of-natural-disaster>

## **Presbyterian Church USA Prayers**

### **Prayers in Times of Trouble and Disaster God is our refuge**

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.  
Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change,  
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;  
though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult. God is in the  
midst of the city; it shall not be moved;

God will help it when the morning dawns.  
The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

(from Psalm 46)  
Prayer for peace amidst the storm

Living God, our refuge and strength, even the wind and sea obey your voice. Put the wind back  
in its place, and say to the sea: Peace! Be still!  
Fill us with great faith, and save us from the surging water,  
so that we may tell the good news of your saving love;

through Jesus Christ, our hope in the storm. (based on Mark 4)

### **A Prayer for Rescue, Recovery and Relief workers**

God our help and hope when waters rise, you brought Israel safely through the sea. Sustain all  
those who seek to save others, so that they may repair the ruined cities, raise up the former  
devastations,

and be the restorers of streets to live in; through Jesus Christ, our eternal savior. (based on  
Isaiah 58, 61)

### **Prayer in Times of Trouble**

God of wind and water, stillness and storm, your Spirit sweeps over the surface of the sea. Give  
us faith to seek you in times of trouble. Reach out your hand to us when we are sinking so that  
we may believe and worship you; through Jesus Christ, Sovereign and Savior.

(based on Matthew 14:22-33)



## **Prayer in a Time of Disaster**

Holy One, you are our comfort and strength in times of sudden disaster, crisis, or chaos. Surround us now with your grace and peace through storm or earthquake, fire or flood. By your Spirit, lift up those who have fallen, sustain those who work to rescue or rebuild, and fill us with the hope of your new creation; through Jesus Christ, our rock and redeemer.

## **A Prayer in a Time of Distress**

Almighty and everlasting God, You are strength to those who suffer and comfort to those who grieve. Let the prayers of your children who are in trouble rise to you.

Hear our prayer.

We claim your promises of wholeness as we pray for those who are ill or are suffering loss and long for your healing touch.

Hear our prayer.

Make the weak strong, the sick healthy, the broken whole, and confirm those who serve them as agents of your love.

Hear our prayer.

To everyone in distress, grant mercy, grant relief, grant refreshment.

Hear our prayer.

As we begin to rebuild, we commend our neighborhoods to your care. Give us strength of purpose and concern for others, that we may create a community where your will may be done.

Hear our prayer.

God of compassion, you watch our ways, and weave out of terrible happenings wonders of goodness and grace.

Hear our prayer.

Surround those who have been shaken by tragedy with a sense of your present love, and hold them in faith. Though they are lost in grief, may they find you and be comforted;

Through Jesus Christ who was dead, but lives and rules this world with you. Amen.

## **A Prayer When the Waters are Rising**

Lord, all around us the waters are rising.

I feel so helpless, for I cannot stop the rain from falling or the waters from rising.

I feel so powerless, for the current is strong and my body is tired.

I feel so empty, for our possessions are floating away or anchored in the muddy water. Lord, all around us the waters are rising.

Grant me your strength, since mine is somewhere downstream.

Grant me your patience, since mine is drowning.

Grant me your perspective, since my loss is in replaceable things, not irreplaceable grace. Give me eyes to see how precious your gifts are: family and friends, faith and mercy. And Lord, when the waters rise around me in my spirit, and my faith and hope are swept downstream, help me to remember how you got me through this flood.

In Your Son's name. Amen.

(The Rev. John G. Hamilton, FPC, Rochelle, Ill.)

[https://www.pcusa.org/site\\_media/media/uploads/pda/pdfs/prayersintimesoftroubleanddisaster.pdf](https://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/pda/pdfs/prayersintimesoftroubleanddisaster.pdf)

## Anglican Prayers

### ***For Emergency Workers***

God our strong deliverer: when those charged with the urgent mediation of your healing power feel overwhelmed by the numbers of the suffering, uphold them in their fatigue and banish their despair. Let them see with your eyes, so they may know all their patients as precious. Give comfort, and renew their energy and compassion, for the sake of Jesus in whom is our life and our hope. Amen.

*or this*

Divine Physician, hear our prayers for those in emergency medicine. By your healing power, grant them quick minds and skillful hands. Strengthen them in times of trauma. In quiet times, give them rest and assurance of the value of their work. Keep them ever prepared for the work you have called them to do, for your mercy' sake. Amen.

### ***For Caregivers and Others in Support of the Sick***

Lover of souls, we bless your Holy Name for all who are called to mediate your grace to those who are sick or infirm. Sustain them by your Holy Spirit, that they may bring your loving-kindness to those in pain, fear, and confusion; that in bearing one another' burdens they may follow the example of our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

*or this*

Compassionate God, support and strengthen all those who reach out in love, concern, and prayer for the sick and distressed. In their acts of compassion, may they know that they are your instruments. In their concerns and fears may they know your peace. In their prayer may they know your steadfast love. May they not grow weary or faint-hearted, for your mercy' sake. Amen.

### ***For Difficult Treatment Choices***

Jesus, at Gethsemane you toiled with terrifying choices. Be with me now as I struggle with a fearful choice of treatments which promise much discomfort and offer no guarantee of long-term good. Help me know that you will bless my choice to me, and, good Savior, be my companion on the way. Amen.

### ***In Times of Personal Distress***

Lord Christ, you came into the world as one of us, and suffered as we do. As I go through the trials of life, help me to realize that you are with me at all times and in all things; that I have no secrets from you; and that your loving grace enfolds me for eternity. In the security of your embrace I pray. Amen.

### ***For Protection***

Christ, light of light, brightness indescribable, the Wisdom, power and glory of God, the Word made flesh: you overcame the forces of Satan, redeemed the world, then ascended again to the Father. Grant me, I pray, in this tarnished world, the shining of your splendor. Send your Archangel Michael to defend me, to guard my going out and coming in, and to bring me safely to your presence, where you reign in the one holy and undivided Trinity, to ages of ages. Amen.

### ***Give Us Hope***

When evil darkens our world, give us light. When despair numbs our souls, give us hope. When we stumble and fall, lift us up. When doubts assail us, give us faith. When nothing seems sure, give us trust. When ideals fade, give us vision. When we lose our way, be our guide! That we may find serenity in Your presence, and purpose in doing Your will.

*John D. Rayner*

### ***A Prayer In Response to Gun Violence***

Let us lament with all those who are touched by gun violence  
Let us lament the shooter's choice for violence  
Let us lament laws that allow violent men easy access to guns  
Let us lament our politicians' unwillingness to work for change  
Let us lament with the hearts broken by loss today  
Let us lament all the lives cut short today  
Let us lament, O God, and then let us rise from our knees to work for change  
In the name of Christ, the prince of peace. Amen.

*The Rev. Dr. Ellen Clark-King, Former Vice Dean and Canon for Social Justice*

<https://gracecathedral.org/prayers-difficult-times/>

## United Methodist Prayers – Natural Disasters

### Prayers for Those Facing Disasters



These prayers may be offered by families, friends, or small groups who may gather for prayer and mutual support when disasters are at hand — or in their aftermath. The role of the "One" in these prayers may be shared among the group, or it may be given to a single voice within the group.

#### A PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**All: Almighty God, we confess our need of you.**

One: We take so much of our lives for granted, but in the end we cannot rely on our own strength or that of others.

**All: Almighty God, we confess our need of you.**

One: We have enjoyed the blessings of self-reliance, but in the end we cannot rely on our own selves to do what is right or good.

**All: Almighty God, we confess our need of you.**

One: We have built cities, and levees, and power grids to overcome the power of nature, but in the end we cannot rely on even the best things we have built.

**All: Almighty God, we confess our need of you.**

**We can rely only on you.**

**Into your hands we commend our lives,  
for you are our Rock and our Redeemer.**

**Have mercy on us, Lord. Have mercy.**

One: When we confess our weakness, God makes us strong.

Another: When we confess our sins, God makes us righteous through Jesus Christ.

**All: When we confess our need for God, God draws near.**

**All to one another: May the peace of God strengthen, cleanse, and hold you,  
now and always. Amen.**

## **A PRAYER OF PRAISE AND INTERCESSION**

One: In the midst of darkness, you call forth light.

In the radiance of your light, you invite us to walk into the mystery of your darkness.

**All: You are our light in this darkness, O God.**

**Be our guide, that we may not be afraid to walk where no light shines.**

One: You fill your creation with hope for peace,  
but you also remind us of nature's destructive power.

**All: Shelter us in the midst of storms,  
that we may offer shelter to those around us.**

One: May we show forth the light of your glory  
by offering ourselves in love to all who are hurting,  
and all who are helping those who hurt.

**All: When all we have is taken away,  
still you hold us as your very own.**

**Blessed are you, Lord God of the universe,  
now and forever. Amen.**

## **A PRAYER OF LAMENT**

One: We have lost everything, Lord:  
houses, businesses, paychecks, photos, and even food.

**All: Let our cry come to you, O God.**

One: We have lost every place, Lord:  
Neighborhoods, churches, places we shopped, and worked, and played.

**All: Let our cry come to you, O God.**

One: We have lost everyone, Lord:  
Neighbors, friends, classmates, teachers, colleagues, spiritual guides and companions, even  
pets.

**All: Let our cry come to you, O God.**

One: Have you lost us, Lord?

*Silence.*

One: We have what health and strength we have, O Lord.

We have this place to gather and offer our cry.

We have one another, some known to us, and some who may have gathered only for this prayer.

**All: Our cry has come to you, O Lord.**

**You hear the voice of our mourning.**

One: You draw near to those who are hurting,

lift up those who have been bowed down,

and sustain all who have no other support.

**All: We had heard of your compassion with our ears,**

**But now we see it with our eyes,**

**And feel it in our bones.**

One: You show us your mercy, O Lord.

**All: And you grant us your salvation.**

<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/prayers-for-those-facing-disasters>

# United Church of Canada

## Service of Prayer Following a Natural Disaster

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### CALL TO WORSHIP

In our day of trouble, when we are weary and our souls refuse to be comforted,

**we will call to mind your promise of hope.**

In our day of trouble, when the clouds pour out water,  
the skies thunder, and we tremble with fearful disbelief,

**we will remind each other of your power to save.**

In our day of trouble, when chaos and destruction surround us, **we will tell stories of the saints who took refuge in you.** In our day of trouble, when we seek rest and healing,

**we will meditate on your mighty deeds in worship and praise.**

### OPENING HYMN

#### May Hope Rise Out of Tragedy

Eternal Father<sup>1</sup>, strong to save,

the cyclones'<sup>2</sup> fury has been grave. We've seen the pictures, felt the pain, of all those caught in flood and rain. O hear us as we cry to thee  
for those engulfed in tragedy.

O Saviour, whose almighty hand protects all those in every land, send help and aid of every kind; grant we a way to serve may find. O hear us as we cry to thee,

may hope rise out of tragedy.

O Holy Spirit, work your art  
in every place and every heart.

Stir great compassion, healing, love. Pour down your blessings from above. O hear us as we cry to thee,  
may hope rise out of tragedy.

O Trinity of love and power,  
bless all your servants in this hour, to bring relief, to find a way,  
to rebuild, and to heal today.



O hear us as we cry to thee,  
may hope rise out of tragedy!  
Tune: MELITA 88 88 88 (*Voices United* 322/659)

Words by Paul Mittermaier  
Permission granted for congregational use.

## **OPENING PRAYER**

God of Life,  
you are as near to us as our breath.  
In times when we feel you are out of reach,  
and in times when we feel completely enfolded in your love:

**touch our eyes that we may see you;  
open our ears that we may hear your voice; enter our hearts that we might know your love.**

Grace us with your presence during these difficult times, so that we might feel your strength  
and your healing touch.  
In the name of Jesus Christ, we ask these things. **Amen.**

## **CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE OF GRACE**

Friends in Christ,  
God knows our needs before we ask, and in our asking  
prepares us to receive the gift of grace. So let us pray ...

Creator,  
storming waters have intruded on our lives, leaving us vulnerable, exposed, open:  
We come to you, broken, seeking wholeness.

In our time of need, forgive us for those things that we have done, those things that we have  
left undone,  
and those things that weigh heavily on our hearts.  
(*time of silence*)

In our time of need, provide for us those things that bring about your kingdom, the gifts of the  
spirit

and the gift of each other.

Above all, remind us always of your steadfast and abiding love. Amen.

## **SUNG RESPONSE**

“Stand, O stand firm” (*More Voices* 99)

“Dear God, who loves all humankind” (*Voices United* 608) “There is a balm in Gilead” (*Voices United* 612)

## **PRAYING TOGETHER: A COMMUNITY PRAYER RITUAL**

*(Provide multiple small containers or glasses filled with lightly salted water, or lemon water, enough for each congregant, and place them around a large bowl. If there are children, consider giving each a small container of water.)*

We recognize that water can be both a healing and a destructive force. The same water that gently welcomes us into community through baptism can harshly remove us from our homes and communities through storms. Water never disappears; it just takes on different shapes and form:

some forms that we can touch: ice, snow, water ...

some forms that we can see: blue skies and clouds ...

some forms that we can feel: mists, steam, and fog ...

and some forms that we experience like falling tears.

The tears that we cry for ourselves and for others is a form of water. Like the water you are holding, our tears are a little salty and bitter, *(Invite children to smell or taste the water.)* Sometimes life feels a little bitter.

In these moments, when life feels bitter,  
we often seek comfort in God through community and through prayer.

With these tears, tears for ourselves and tears for others, please come forward and share your prayers by pouring the bitter water, which represents our tears, into the bowl. In so doing, we symbolically gather our prayers together, reminding each other that we are one in joy as we are one in sorrow (for we are one in Christ).

*(Invite people to come forward and to say their prayers aloud or silently as they pour water into the bowl. Have on hand a small container for the empty cups.)*

## **SUNG RESPONSE**

*(One or more can be sung repeatedly as people come forward.)*

“Maranatha” (*More Voices* 19)

“Confitemini Domino” (*More Voices* 16)

“Come now, O God of peace” (*Voices United* 34) “O God, hear my prayers” (*Voices United* 948)

*(Once all those who wish to have had an opportunity to come forward, provide words of assurance similar to the following.)*

In scripture we are told that God has seen and knows our suffering and longs to wipe away every tear from our eyes. We are told that God will lead us beside still waters and restore our souls.

As we pray with our tears, may we also find the courage to give thanks and affirm the faith that we share together, remembering that we are never alone:

### **A New Creed**

We are not alone,  
we live in God's world.

We believe in God:  
who has created and is creating, who has come in Jesus,  
the Word made flesh,  
to reconcile and make new, who works in us and others  
by the Spirit. We trust in God.

We are called to be the Church: to celebrate God's presence,  
to live with respect in Creation, to love and serve others,

to seek justice and resist evil,  
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,

our judge and our hope.

In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us.

We are not alone. Thanks be to God

### **SCRIPTURE**

Alternative passages to the lectionary readings might include:

Isaiah 26:3–4 Isaiah 53:1–12 Isaiah 61:1–3 Psalm 13

Psalm 20

Psalm 23

Psalm 88

Psalm 91

Psalm 121 Psalm 130 Psalm 139:1–17

Trust in the Lord  
Surely [God] has borne our griefs Bind up the broken hearted  
How long must I bear pain?  
May [God] grant your heart's desire You anoint my head with oil  
Let my prayer come before you  
My God in whom I trust  
I will lift my eyes to the hills  
Out of the depths  
You discern our thoughts

Psalms 146  
Romans 8:18–27  
Romans 8:31b–35, 37–19 Hebrews 4:14–16  
I John 5:13–15 Revelation 21:1–7

## **SERMON**

God lifts the bowed down  
Suffering not worth comparing Nothing separates us from God's love Draw near the throne of grace  
If we ask anything [God] hears us  
A new heaven and a new earth

- A collection of prayers and worship services to be used in times of natural disasters can be found at: <http://worship.calvin.edu/resources/resource-library/worship-resources-in-times-of-natural-disasters/>
- Numerous links to prayers, liturgies, hymn suggestions, and pastoral resources for ministry amidst natural disasters can be found at: [http://www.textweek.com/response/natural\\_disaster.htm](http://www.textweek.com/response/natural_disaster.htm)

## **PRESENTATION OF OFFERING**

### **Invitation**

May we be moved by compassion,  
to share willingly and generously  
for the sake of your ministry in this world.

### **Prayer**

In times of sorrow we seek you. In times of lament we cry to you. In times of joy we praise you.  
At all times, we give you thanks. Amen.

## **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE PRAYER OF JESUS**

God of Creation,  
We live in a world where both beauty and danger are found.  
Hear our prayers for those who have been overcome by disastrous water and floods in  
(*name the city*).

For all who are in need of healing ...  
for all who are disabled by injury or illness ...  
for all who are troubled with confusion or pain ...  
for all who are in pain ...  
for all who cannot find adequate food or shelter ...  
for all who have lost their homes, churches, community centres, and workplaces ... we  
pray and ask that you help heal the pain of all who are affected.

Strengthen with your presence all who are numb with fear and distress.

Guide those who anxiously search or wait for loved ones.  
Be near those who are grieving, and bless them with your peace.

In the midst of disaster we give thanks for moments of generosity and human-kindness... Grant  
tenderness, strength, and wisdom  
to the doctors and nurses, police and military, fire-fighter and emergency responders;

to all who minister to human need in our time of distress.  
We gather these prayers by saying together the prayer that you taught us:

Our Creator ... (*Prayer of Jesus*) **CLOSING HYMN**

"I feel the winds of God" (*Voices United* 625)  
"O God, our help in ages past" (*Voices United* page 806)

### **COMMISSIONING** (*Voices United* 349)

May the Christ who walks on wounded feet walk with you on the road.

May the Christ who serves with wounded hands stretch out your hands to serve.

May the Christ who loves with a wounded heart open your hearts to love.

May you see the face of Christ in everyone you meet, and may everyone you meet  
see the face of Christ in you.

*(Consider processing the bowl used in the Community Prayer Ritual to the narthex or back of the church and inviting people to touch the water as they leave as a reminder of their baptisms, if they are baptised, or the prayers of the community that they hold with them.)*

## **BENEDICTION**

"Let us, O God, depart in peace" (*Voices United* 961)

"May the blessing of God go before you (*Voices United* 962) "May the grace of Christ attend us" (*Voices United* 963) "The Lord bless thee and keep thee" (*Voices United* 965)

*(Opening Prayer, Prayer of Confession, and scripture suggestions were adapted from resources in Celebrate God's Presence.)*

## **ADDITIONAL PRAYERS**

Consider including two appropriate prayers that appear in ***Gathering, Pentecost 2, 2013***: "Prayers of the People," on page 24, and the "Call to Worship," on page 32.

<sup>1</sup> Creator

<sup>2</sup> Rain storms

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[https://united-church.ca/sites/default/files/worship-ideas\\_emergency\\_prayer.pdf](https://united-church.ca/sites/default/files/worship-ideas_emergency_prayer.pdf)

## Poem written in response to a Hurricane

A poem written by Marc Nelesen in response to the disaster of Hurricane Katrina. After Hurricane Harvey, it was adapted and used in worship. It can be adapted to be used in response to other natural disasters.

**By:** Marc Nelesen

**Article:** posted on June 1, 2005

Poem: (written in response to Hurricane Katrina)

A city weeps  
and drowns in its tears  
And your creation groans.

Creation groans  
as chaos waters uncreate.  
Cups of suffering overflow  
filling the bowl that was once a city.

Creation groans  
as young and old - and families! -  
are untimely ripped.

The earth convulses,  
the waters roar and foam  
in this broken act  
of earthen terrorism.

Where are You in this?

Creation groans - do you hear it?  
Creation groans -  
are you sleeping warm and dry in the belly of a boat?!  
Are you "hovering over the waters" at a safe distance?  
Can't you do something about this calamity?  
Will we all die?

Don't you hear us cry for the poor of the city?  
Don't you hear us cry for the homeless,  
the lost and hungry?

Or are the cries you hear from us a different kind?

Cries about our wonderings:  
of rising gas prices,  
of the ripple effect in the economy,  
and our uncertainty about the future -  
a future we've been designing.  
And worst of all  
our selfish, Pseudo-Praise of  
"Thank God it didn't happen to us."

Are you lamenting right now  
over our inability to truly lament?  
Are you grieving our unfaith  
to complain believably?

Something must be said,  
so creation groans.

Creation groans  
offering words that we cannot express.  
We dare not for we do not have the faith.

Creation groans yearning to be set free  
from our voicelessness,  
from our notions of prosperity,  
and false security.

Creation groans:  
It groans because you have become part of it.

Creation groans  
because it wants to be born again.  
Creation groans  
yearning for a glimpse  
of the long-in-coming New City.

Creation groans  
because you are not in the wind  
nor the storm  
nor the tempest surge.

Creation groans  
because you are in the orphaned child  
the poor man  
and the thirsty woman.



You are in the one whose sweat and tears  
drip like blood  
and fill the cup  
and the bowl.

There you are.  
You and only You.  
Creation groans  
because the tears that fill the city  
are yours.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Prayer: (written in response to Hurricane Harvey)

After Hurricane Harvey, this poem was adapted and used in worship as a prayer of Lament and Confession, using the song "[Pelas dores deste mundo/For the Troubles and the Sufferings of the World](#)" which echoes the words of Romans 8:22, calling for God's assistance in a time of need, all the while, affirming a trust in a God who saves.

**Sing:** "[Pelas dores deste mundo/For the Troubles and the Sufferings of the World](#)"

**Prayer:**

Yes, Lord have mercy!  
A city weeps and drowns in its tears  
as your creation groans.

Creation groans as chaos waters *uncreate*.  
Suffering overflows and fills a city.  
The waters roar and foam:  
Lord have mercy!

**Sing:** "[Pelas dores deste mundo/For the Troubles and the Sufferings of the World](#)"

**Prayer:**

Lord have mercy!  
Our cities, communities and families are divided;  
we argue about healthcare, immigration,  
borders and race.

In your mercy,  
call us out of our self-made divisions  
and into cross-shaped love.

Move us beyond our fears and suspicions of others,  
and into Christ-like compassion.

In a world in need, help us to lead the way in love:  
Lord have mercy on us!

**Sing (second half only):** "Pelas dores deste mundo/For the Troubles and the Sufferings of the World"

<https://worship.calvin.edu/resources/resource-library/poem-written-in-response-to-a-hurricane/>

## Healing Will Come: Elegy after Natural Disaster

BY PATRICIA JABBEH WESLEY

She searches the ruins like someone  
who has wandered so far away.

Six children, I had six children,  
she tells herself. All around, her world  
has become twigs of splintered pieces  
of a long-ago life,  
                                not so long ago.

She lays down one child alongside another  
child, alongside another,  
but then, she stands there, wiping her  
eyes, looking ahead, turning over

the ruins of pieces of a place that once  
was, in the ruins of a life that once was.  
But they were six children, she says,  
                                six, dead, or alive.

A mother knows what it means  
to have six, not three, but six living  
children, not three only, dead,

and there, the tears, calming for now,  
calming, for now.

Always.

What would I do without tears,  
I used to ask myself in another world.  
What would she do without tears,  
I now ask myself, and now,  
the water from her eyes, unlike  
the water that has taken  
everything away with it.

Somewhere, always, somewhere,  
there's a day when healing comes.  
Wasn't this what life was supposed to bring,  
after death, the healing?  
Healing refuses to be lost to death,  
I say, healing will come.

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/poems/157933/healing-will-come-elegy-after-natural-disaster>

### **“Natural Disasters” by Faith Shearin**

During natural disasters two enemy animals  
will call a truce, so during a hurricane  
an owl will share a tree with a mouse  
and, during an earthquake, you might find  
a mongoose wilted and shivering  
beside a snake. The bear will sit down  
in a river and ignore the passing salmon  
just as the lion will allow the zebra  
to walk home without comment.  
I love that there are exceptions.

At funerals and weddings, for example,  
the aunts who never speak nod  
politely to one another. When my mother  
was sick even the prickly neighbors  
left flowers and cakes at our door.

“Natural Disasters” by Faith Shearin from *Telling the Bees*. © Stephen F. Austin State University Press, 2015.

<https://wordsforyear.com/2017/08/31/natural-disasters-by-faith-shearin/>

## Agencies and Parachurch orgs:

### World Vision Prayer

Matthew 25: Prayer for refugees, disaster survivors

God is with people suffering from disaster — the refugee, the earthquake survivor, the children facing famine, and families struggling from the secondary impacts of [COVID-19](#).

In 2020, very few countries around the world were left untouched by COVID-19. For many, the pandemic caused suffering compounded by new and existing challenges, such as political conflict, violence, poverty, famine, natural disasters, and humanitarian emergencies.

God calls us to follow Him in offering hope to the most vulnerable in their hour of greatest need. Following Jesus' example, we seek out the lost, injured, and threatened, providing care and protection when everything feels hopeless. Join us in prayer for refugees and disaster survivors — for all who find themselves “strangers,” as Jesus calls them in Matthew 25:35.

I was a stranger and you invited me in.—*Matthew 25:35 (NIV)*

Ami sticks close to her father and grandmother at a distribution. Her deafness adds to her vulnerability as a migrant child. (©2021 World Vision/photo by Chris Huber)

Ami, a 5-year-old Venezuelan girl, traveled almost 3,000 kilometers (more than 1,800 miles) from her home to the city of Huaquillas, on the Ecuadorian border with Peru. She traveled with her grandmother Nancy and her father, Anfernee. They arrived in March 2021.

Ami's mother abandoned the family when Ami was just a year old. Since then, Nancy has been like a mother to the girl.

“When Ami reached the age that children typically begin to speak, she was only making muffled sounds,” says Nancy. “We took her to a specialist who told us that she was deaf and that she was not going to speak. She never received therapy to help improve her condition.”

Ami's deafness and the lack of food in Venezuela motivated Anfernee to leave Venezuela in search of a place where they could provide better living conditions for her.

But at first they, like approximately 200 other families — mostly Venezuelan — lived on the streets of Huaquillas. The mayor's office reported that 20% to 30% of this population are children and adolescents.

After seven days of living along the main road, Anfernee and three other young men found a home for all their families. The weary migrants welcomed the change. They now have a place to call home.

Then on April 20, World Vision partnered with the Ministry of Social Inclusion and Economy of Ecuador and [The Adventist Development and Relief Agency](#) to distribute food vouchers, biosecurity kits, and baby kits. Show God's love to the most vulnerable in their hour of greatest need.

### **Pray for disaster survivors.**

Since the middle of the 20th century, recorded disasters have increased fivefold, with the majority stemming from weather-related disasters. By providing rapid help to people devastated by natural and man-made disasters, World Vision serves the most vulnerable in their hour of greatest need. During this time, people desperately need emergency assistance: food and clean water for basic sustenance, emergency shelter and blankets to keep warm and dry, and emergency health services.

*Merciful Counselor, we grieve with communities suffering from disasters and struggling to recover. Speed the restoration of community life so children can feel secure again. Give families strength and perseverance while they rebuild their homes and livelihoods. We pray for disaster survivors to find refuge in You.*

"Have mercy on me, my God, have mercy on me, for in you I take refuge. I will take refuge in the shadow of your wings until the disaster has passed." —Psalm 57:1 (NIV)

### **Pray for international disaster readiness.**

Many disasters strike with little or no warning, as [the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami](#) demonstrated. That morning, the tsunami traveled at up to 500 mph, radiating across the Indian Ocean before slamming into the coasts of 14 countries. Families had little time to react, much less prepare. So communities all around the Indian Ocean — even to Africa's shores — experienced widespread destruction and homelessness.

From 1998 through 2018, [91% of storm-related fatalities](#) were in low- and middle-income countries, even though these countries experienced just 32% of storms.

World Vision works across all humanitarian sectors to save lives, reduce suffering, and ensure families can begin to rebuild their lives and livelihoods. We also help communities prepare for future disasters, so people and property are safer in the years to come. [And for every \\$1 spent in disaster preparedness, countries save \\$4 after disaster strikes.](#)

*Almighty God, You know that the hardest hit when disaster strikes are people who are poor and have few resources to recover and rebuild. Inspire leaders of the world's wealthy nations to be ready to respond to disasters with compassion and generosity. Help governments invest in disaster risk reduction and preparedness training so their citizens are less vulnerable during emergencies.*

*"God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble." —Psalm 46:1 (NIV)*

World Vision provides psychosocial support to children who fled from the DRC with their families at one of the Child-Friendly Spaces within a Ugandan settlement camp. They are able to find positive ways to cope with their trauma through drawing, singing, dancing, and playing games. (©2020 World Vision/photo by Derrick Kyatuka)

### **Pray for refugees.**

The number of people forcibly displaced is at a [record high of 79.5 million](#), according to the U.N. refugee agency. Children under 18 make up 40% of that number. Some are refugees; others are displaced within their countries' borders. The [refugee crises](#) originating from Syria, Venezuela, Afghanistan, South Sudan, and Myanmar paint the poignant picture of people fleeing conflicts and [extreme poverty](#).

*Good Shepherd, no refugee is a stranger to You, and no one is ever far from Your loving care. We pray for You to watch over refugee children and families as they travel to refugee camps or relocate within their country. Shelter their souls and their bodies. Heal the hearts of refugees who have endured unimaginable tragedy and trauma.*

The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. —Psalm 34:18 (NIV)

### **Pray for peace and stability in countries with ongoing violence.**

Violence and insecurity in [Syria, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Myanmar, Venezuela](#), and the Central African Republic have destabilized the lives of millions. Poverty and gang-related violence have created a [wave of migration from Central America](#). Join us in praying for places around the world where peace is in short supply.

*Lord of the nations, You tell us in Psalm 34:14 to "Turn from evil, and do good; seek peace and pursue it." We grieve to see the lives of so many people disrupted by war and violence. This evil kills and maims people, separates families, harms the most vulnerable, and makes poverty a constant companion. We ask You to make "wars cease to the ends of the earth" (Psalm 46:9) so children and families can enjoy safety and prosperity again.*

*"He makes wars cease to the ends of the earth. He breaks the bow and shatters the spear; he burns the shields with fire." —Psalm 46:9 (NIV)*

## **Pray for vulnerable children, particularly refugees and disaster survivors.**

Refugees and disaster survivors are caught in difficult circumstances, and the most vulnerable people among them are children. According to “[The Silent Pandemic](#),” a 2021 report published by World Vision International and War Child Holland, 70% of displaced and refugee children say they need psychosocial support. That’s more than three times the estimated 22% prior to COVID-19.

World Vision’s disaster relief programs give priority to children and empower them — together with their families and communities — to become active participants in improving their well-being. World Vision operates [Child-Friendly Spaces](#), which provide a place for children to:

- Play, draw, sing, and share their feelings
- Be safe from physical danger and the evil of trafficking
- Engage in informal education
- Learn resilience and life skills needed for adapting to their new environment
- Return to or maintain a normal routine

*Loving Provider, we echo the psalmist’s confidence, “For he will deliver the needy who cry out, the afflicted who have no one to help” (Psalm 72:12). Hear and answer girls’ and boys’ cries for help and provide them with the physical and emotional support they need. Let aid distributions reach children and families who need them most. In Your mercy, we pray for You to provide refugee families and disaster survivors with what they need to survive.*

*“For he will deliver the needy who cry out, the afflicted who have no one to help. He will take pity on the weak and the needy and save the needy from death. He will rescue them from oppression and violence, for precious is their blood in his sight.” —Psalm 72:12-14 (NIV)*

## **Pray for children separated from their families or who have lost loved ones.**

In the confusion of conflict, some children become separated from their parents and families. At the end of 2019, 153,300 refugee children were [unaccompanied or separated](#) from their families. Others are sent with friends or extended family in search of better conditions. Still, others witness the death of parents or siblings and are left all alone. Losing family members — especially parents — leaves lifelong scars.

These boys and girls are more vulnerable to abuse, labor, exploitation, and trafficking. Pray that God will continue to walk alongside each child and give them hope for the future.

*Compassionate Father, we ask that You keep all separated children safe from any kind of abuse. Help children reunite with their parents and family soon. Turn the hearts of people bent toward evil so they treat vulnerable boys and girls with dignity and respect. Be a shepherd to children who are missing their parents and grieving a great loss. Heal them, provide for them, and let*



*them know Your peace that surpasses understanding and Your love that surrounds them each day.*

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.” —Matthew 5:4 (NIV)

Jemima Kiden is raising eight children in Uganda’s Bidibidi refugee camp. One of these children enjoys some of the food distributed by World Vision and the World Food Programme. (©2020 World Vision/photo by Brian Jakisa)

### **Pray for children’s health during refugee crises and after disasters.**

In low-income nations, children younger than 5 are already at [heightened risk for malnutrition](#), diarrheal diseases, and pneumonia brought on by contaminated water, reduced food, and inadequate shelter. After a disaster, children may miss important vaccinations, putting them further at risk for preventable diseases. All children in tents or makeshift shelters face winter and summer weather extremes. Many displaced children don’t have access to medicines or clinics if they fall ill.

*Great Physician, we pray that You protect girls and boys — particularly refugee children and those who have survived a disaster — from illness and heal children who have fallen ill. Help their little bodies fight off sickness and disease. Allow medical help to reach children who need it most. Help parents and caretakers find appropriate shelter for all who need it.*

“Disaster follows disaster; the whole land lies in ruins. In an instant my tents are destroyed, my shelter in a moment.” —Jeremiah 4:20 (NIV)

Six-year-old Souad uses her mother’s old cell phone to continue her school lessons in her family’s tent in an informal settlement in Lebanon. (©2020 World Vision/photo by George Mghames)

### **Pray for children’s education during refugee crises and after disasters.**

For children like Souad in Lebanon, 2020 was an unthinkable year, especially in terms of education. COVID-19 required schools to switch to remote learning in order to keep children, parents, and teachers safe.

The situation has been even harder on refugee children living in informal settlements in Lebanon. School used to be a haven for these children, an escape to a different and more colorful world, where dreams of a better life were possible, where every day they could learn something new and exciting, and where they met and played with friends in a safe and clean environment.

Now they must remain in their small and crowded tents trying to learn on their parents’ old, slow phones.

Souad already had difficulties in learning. She always needed additional support during her education. “Souad was not able to speak before she was 4 years old. She faced a lot of difficulties when she started going to school,” says her mother, Samira.

Samira, a mother of three, escaped the war in Syria five years ago and settled in Lebanon after their home was completely destroyed.

“I came here looking for safety for my family. But the last year here was really difficult due to the economic situation and coronavirus,” she says.

Still, Samira stresses her children’s education. “I want my children to keep going to school and learning, I want a better future and a better life for them,” she says. “But now the situation is hard especially for us refugees, we already had a lot of problems and now our children have to stay and study at home.”

Samira feels especially concerned for Souad and says, “Souad always had difficulties learning at school, but ever since she enrolled with World Vision, I started noticing big changes in her learning abilities in the past few days.”

She’s talking about World Vision’s partnership with UNICEF and Commonwealth & Development Office to provide remote learning through community-based early childhood education that helps keep Syrian refugee children learning during the coronavirus pandemic.

“I started teaching Souad around two months ago,” says her teacher, Malak el Riz. “At first, she was very shy and did not talk too much. She had pronunciation difficulties and was scared to say something wrong.”

Malak took the little girl under her wing. She spent one-to-one teaching time with Souad. And it’s paying off. Souad has learned to pronounce her words better, knows the letters of the alphabet, and now can easily count to 10. She’s also more courageous and even dreams of becoming a doctor one day.

“Thank God Souad is progressing with her teacher and I really hope and pray that she will have a bright future ahead of her,” says Samira.

Children on the move or in temporary housing often miss out on their education. Children not in their home countries usually can’t afford school or don’t understand lessons taught in another language. Girls and boys displaced in their own countries may not have access to formal classes or enough teachers in temporary settlements. And the average displacement now lasts more than five years — about half of a child’s school years.

*Heavenly Father, You placed in children a curiosity about their world. This spark is what ignites learning. We ask You to make a way for every displaced girl and boy to restart school and make*

*up for the lessons they missed. Help them gain the knowledge they need to reach the goals they have for the future. And give teachers the training to help these students regain what they may have lost.*

“An intelligent mind acquires knowledge, and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge.” —Proverbs 18:15 (RSV)

### **Pray for World Vision and its partners’ disaster and emergency responses.**

In 2020, World Vision assisted 27.1 million people — including 18 million children — affected by 68 disasters, beyond its COVID-19 global response. World Vision has highly trained experts to respond to catastrophes. But this critical work is only possible because of the faithfulness of World Vision’s donors and partners, who provide the resources essential for this kind of response.

*Dear Lord, thank You for donors and partners who faithfully support World Vision’s relief work around the world. Continue to equip World Vision and other organizations whose staffs work tirelessly during disasters, providing life’s essentials to meet urgent needs. Equip and inspire aid workers when they are exhausted so they can continue to help families recover and rebuild. Let support for refugees and disaster survivors never dwindle.*

“And as for you, brothers and sisters, never tire of doing what is good.” —2 Thessalonians 2:13 (NIV)

*Denise C. Koenig and Laura Reinhardt of World Vision’s U.S. staff; Chris Huber, Gabriela Becerra, and Salome Becerra of World Vision’s Ecuador staff; Derrick Kyatuka of World Vision’s Uganda staff; and George Mghames of World Vision’s Lebanon staff contributed to this article.*

<https://www.worldvision.org/refugees-news-stories/pray-refugees-disaster-survivors>

## The Prayer Institute

### A Prayer for the Victims of Natural Disasters

| October 24, 2012 | | [No Comments](#)

A Prayer for the Victims of Natural Disasters

#### Scripture Reading:

Psalm 19, James 2

#### Reflections of the Heart:

The Lord is our light and our salvation, so why should we fear? The Lord protects us from danger, so why should we tremble? It is assuring to know that our lives are hidden in the Lord!

#### Scriptural Prayer:

Father, there is none like You. You are great and Your Name is great in might. Who would not fear You, O King of the nations, for this is Your rightful due. Among all the wise men of the nations, and in all their kingdoms, there is none like You. You are the true and living God and the everlasting King. The earth trembles at Your wrath and the nations are not able to endure Your indignation. Lord, we thank You for demonstrating Your loving kindness and tender mercies towards humanity. Thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus Christ, to redeem humankind from the power of the evil one. Thank You for sending relief to the persons who have been affected by the natural disasters. Lord, even though there are tragedies, yet You are still good and Your mercy endures forever.

Father, by using the authority given to us, we speak to the fires in California and Colorado and to the flooding in Iowa and we command them to cease. We command the ground and vegetation to be dampened by rain, in the Midwestern United States. We speak to the natural processes, such as hurricanes, weather systems, and snowmelt, which cause flooding and we command that they align with the perfect will of God. Our nation has been devastated by the fires and flooding, and many families have been affected. Lord, it is Your will for us to pray for those who are suffering. We pray because You want us to weep with those who weep. We pray for the victims of these natural disasters in our nation. Lord, it is Your desire that all of humankind call on Your Name and worship You. You do not want any person to live without You. Like a mother hen, You desire to protect and care for Your creation, therefore, we expect relief for the persons who are in need. Lord, we believe that You will regard and not despise the prayers of the destitute. Lord,

we confess that we will continue to pray for these persons and help them with our giving when there is a need to be met, for faith without works is dead.

*Today, using the authority that Jesus Christ has given you, go outside and speak specifically to the weather in California, Colorado and Iowa and command the fires and flooding to cease:*

Father, please extend Your mercy and grace to the victims of these natural disasters. Comfort these persons and protect them. Please continue to provide food, clothing, shelter and employment for them. Continue to touch the heart of our nation and world to give. Holy Spirit, touch the hearts of local, state, and federal government officials to properly rebuild the levees, dams and drainage systems within the communities of our nation. Protect the firefighters, public service workers and volunteers who are serving and let Your everlasting love be felt overwhelmingly by the people. Lord, help the body of Christ to demonstrate Jesus' love through acts of giving and compassion. Lord, we ask You to send Your laborers to share Your Gospel and to gather Your harvest.

Father, forgive us for being insensitive to the needs of those persons who have been affected by these natural disasters. Forgive those persons who do not acknowledge You as the only true and living God. Forgive them for all acts of sinfulness. Lord, help them to forgive. Lord, please have mercy!

Lord, lead them not to temptation; but deliver them from the evil one.

Lord, You are the King of glory. You are the Lord, strong and mighty. You are the Lord, invincible in battle. The earth is Yours and everything in it. The world and all its people belong to You. You are worthy, Lord our God, to receive glory, and honor and power. You created all things, and they exist because You created what You pleased. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture References for the Written Text: Jeremiah 10:6-7, 10, Lamentations 3:22-23, Psalm 136:1, Romans 12:15, II Peter 3:9, Luke 13:34, Psalm 102:17, James 2:14-17, I Timothy 2:1, Matthew 9:38, Matthew 6:13, Psalm 24:8,1, Revelation 4:11

<https://www.prayerinstitute.com/prayer/a-prayer-for-the-victims-of-natural-disasters/>

## Episcopal Relief

### HURRICANE SEASON PRAYERS

On the Sea of Galilee, even when the disciples began to fear, Jesus showed that he was Lord over the waters by rebuking the storms, so that all would know that even the wind and the waves obey him.

Creator God, we ask you to calm the wind and the waves of the approaching hurricane, and spare those in its path from harm. Help those who are in its way to reach safety. Open our hearts in generosity to all who need help in the coming days.

In all things and in all times, help us to remember that even when life seems dark and stormy, you are in the boat with us, guiding us to safety.

— The Jesuit Church, America Magazine

### A PRAYER FOR FIRST RESPONDERS

Almighty God, you lend your strength to all those who are there for us in times of crisis, fear and hurt. You give courage to the first responders who continue to do this important work they are called to do, looking beyond the risk for the sake of those who need your help and protection. We give you thanks for the many ways they give of themselves, their skills, knowledge and help in troubling times. Protect them, o Lord. Extend your shielding hand over them and comfort their hearts when they are tired and heartbroken.

God, we also lift up prayers of thanksgiving and comfort for the families of first responders and all who support them. Give them hope and courage. Surround them with your loving presence and give them peace when their loved ones run toward uncertainty. All this we pray in your name.

— Sarah Swindall, Augsburg University

### A PRAYER FOR PEOPLE FACING GREAT UNCERTAINTY

God of the present moment, God who in Jesus stills the storm and soothes the frantic heart; bring hope and courage to all as we wait in uncertainty. Bring hope and peace with whatever lies ahead. Bring us courage to endure what cannot be avoided. For your will is health and wholeness; you are God, and we need you.

— Adapted from a New Zealand Prayer Book, page 765

## A PRAYER FOR THOSE WORKING TO REBUILD

Compassionate God, source of all comfort, we pray for the people whose lives have been devastated this hurricane season.

Bring them comfort, we pray.

Protect the vulnerable.

Strengthen the weak.

Keep at bay the spread of disease.

Have mercy on all those working to rebuild.

And may our response to their suffering be generous and bring you praise.

We ask this in Jesus' name.

— Adapted from Christian Aid, UK

<https://www.episcopalrelief.org/church-in-action/worship-resources/let-us-pray/hurricane-season-prayers/>

## The role of faith-based organizations in disaster recovery

<https://disasterphilanthropy.org/blog/the-role-of-faith-based-organizations-in-disaster-recovery/>

Faith-based organizations (FBOs) play a vital role in disaster relief, response and recovery. For many individuals, faith leaders and their houses of worship or social service branches are the first places they turn for comfort and assistance, and it is the first place they think of when they want to donate their money or time to help others after a disaster.

I (Cari) will never forget standing by the fence outside Plaza Towers Elementary School in Moore, Oklahoma, after the 2013 tornado. The fence, covered with t-shirts and banners from faith-based volunteer groups from all over the world, was a reminder of the compassion and importance of these groups in times of disaster.

For many, disaster events move us to consider the divine, and question the nature of the world and what brings meaning a purpose. There is a sacredness to being in communities as they recover from disaster and beauty in those who give their time, talent and money as an outpouring of their faith. As a person of faith, this moment in 2013 solidified my belief that faith-based groups belong in the post-disaster space. Since that time, I have seen FBOs do great good and great harm; and have come to understand better the role of these groups and individuals in disaster recovery and how and when to support them.

And I (Sally) have lived in Oklahoma and Texas most of my life – both states prone to disasters of all types – and I have often witnessed the importance of faith connections in times of celebration and particularly in times of sadness and challenge. It makes sense that those affected by the chaos and trauma of disasters would also turn to their faith and the structures and leaders associated with guiding it as places and people to trust to help recover and heal.

As we consider ways to reach those most in need of resources after a disaster, finding them through their own trusted faith-based organizations is often critical to providing an equitable and fair recovery. It is essential to consider local faith groups providing services as we make our funding decisions and those larger regional or national groups formed around a common faith to serve communities through disasters.

### *Types of FBOs*

- **Local houses of worship (churches, mosques, synagogues, temples).** These groups may or may not be affiliated with a larger body like a denomination; they are led by individuals and boards committed to their particular faith and their particular community. They come in all shapes, sizes and flavors.
- **Social ministry arms of denominations or religions.** Some examples are Catholic Charities, United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), Islamic Relief and Jewish Coalition for Relief (JCR). These groups are affiliated with a particular faith, but leadership and individual staff may or may not be directly involved in a local house of



worship. For many, disaster response is a portion of the broader organizational work, including other social services.

- **Nonprofits with faith-based values.** For example, Buddhist Tzu Chi, ICNA Relief, Church World Service and other social service organizations and local nonprofits have a faith tradition that often guides their work.
- **Nonprofit faith networks.** These groups are likely more local or regional, but communities of churches, mosques or synagogues often join together to support recovery.

*What do FBOs do after a disaster?*

- **Meet basic needs.** Mosques, synagogues and churches are often the gathering sites for food, water and other basic needs distribution in their communities.
- **Organize and participate in community-led long-term recovery groups.** They might act as the host site for meetings and gatherings or even as the fiscal agent for these collaborative groups.
- **Mobilize volunteers.** Serving is a pillar of most faiths, so accessing their internal congregations to rally community volunteers is often a part of their work in disasters. From collecting and distributing donated products to doing the actual rebuild work, faith-based volunteers are often crucial to a successful recovery.
- **Offer spiritual care.** We know that disasters inflict trauma on those affected by them. A trusted listener and care are often critical to calming fears and providing relief to those experiencing challenges. A CDP grantee partner shared her experience with appropriate spiritual care in her blog: [Nine “First” Things to Know about Emotional and Spiritual Care Following Disasters](#)

*What do FBOs need from funders after a disaster?*

- **Inclusion** – We must understand that they are vital anchor institutions in their communities and are often the trusted, local point of entry or engagement there. We can include them in conversations, rely on their expertise and support them in their relief and recovery efforts.
- **Accountability** – Some groups blur the line between extending a compassionate, helpful hand and attempting to bring others into their specific faith or advancing their ideology. In some cases, it is possible to work alongside these groups and provide training and resources on appropriate trauma-informed approaches to spiritual and emotional care. Other groups are committed to proselytizing or have discriminatory or racist practices or core beliefs. We strongly advocate avoiding these groups for several reasons, not the least of which is the emotional and spiritual harm they perpetrate on individuals and households. Doing your research as a funder and understanding what motivates particular groups and how those motivations manifest in how they carry out their business is extremely important.
- **Acknowledgment** – Because of their history, cultural alignment and capacity, no one FBO can respond to the whole community’s needs.

*How CDP supports FBOs in the U.S.*

Through the CDP Hurricane Harvey Recovery Fund, we granted to [Houston Responds](#), an organization that works to network local church coalitions to harness the power of the faith community to serve in disaster response and recovery. Through this relationship, we also

funded a few of their network partners, including [4B Disaster Response Network](#), which is geographically focused “from the Beltway to the Beach to Brazoria County to the Bay.” This is a broad area of Southeast Texas with diverse church populations all dedicated to serving in and supporting their communities’ resilience.

Through our funding, we helped build the organizational capacity of these organizations, and they are still working today in response to disasters that have affected Texas. Houston Responds has also spread their work into other regions, beyond the Houston metro and even into Southwest Louisiana. And CDP has continued to support their networking development through subsequent disasters as we recognize the power of networked and coordinated faith response in local community recovery.

Following the multiple hurricanes that moved from the Gulf Coast up into the northeastern U.S. in 2020, we worked with [the Episcopal Diocese of Western Louisiana](#) and the [Pennsylvania Southeast Conference of United Church of Christ](#) to act as coordinating partners and fiscal agents for the local long-term recovery groups working in each area. These faith-based leaders help provide credibility for the work of the community leaders and local organizations working together to support disaster recovery.

There are also several national faith-based organizations with which we’ve partnered and supported who work throughout the U.S. in disaster recovery. Many of these groups bring skilled volunteers together to coordinate home repair or rebuild efforts (e.g., [Mennonite Disaster Service](#) or [Nechama – Jewish Response to Disaster](#)). Or they work with local organizational chapters to bring expertise to support disaster case management and other recovery activities (e.g., [UMCOR](#), [Catholic Charities](#), [Lutheran Disaster Response](#) or [World Renew](#)).

The Midwest Early Recovery Fund funded Project Resilient Hope and the work of [Crisis Care Ministries](#) to provide training and spiritual care for clergy and faith leaders throughout Oklahoma following the 2019 flooding. A [video](#) highlights previous work by these faith leaders as they responded to wildfires in western Oklahoma.

[Wambli Ska](#) and Woyatan Lutheran Church, a Native American-led nonprofit in Rapid City, South Dakota, have received funding from CDP’s Native American and Tribal Communities Recovery Program. While assisting their relatives as they recover from layered disaster events, including COVID-19, Wambli Ska utilized traditional, cultural ceremonies including Inipi (Lakota Sweat Lodge), drum circles, dance and sage smudging, and Lakota Prayer.

Understanding and supporting the role of FBOs is essential if we want to support equitable, whole-community disaster recovery efforts. We work to develop funding strategies that include and acknowledge the spiritual and emotional needs of those impacted and is inclusive of religions and cultural norms.

## Leading your community when disaster strikes

By Clay Morgan

Just one day after Christmas, at least nine tornadoes ripped through my church's community in Rowlett, Texas. The devastating storm turned just short of our church building, yet thousands of our friends and neighbors experienced terror, property damage and the complete destruction of their homes.

In the wake of such terrible tragedy, we've learned a lot about the needs of a community in crisis, the role of a church during such times and how we as leaders prepare and respond in even the darkest times.

Many United Methodist congregations, particularly in and around New Orleans where Hurricane Katrina caused so much damage, understand the importance of preparing to face unexpected crises.

The Louisiana Conference of The United Methodist Church quickly responded to our disaster in Texas by [sending an early response team](#) to help survivors begin the painful process of rebuilding their lives. They mobilized quickly, thanks to a disaster response plan written and refined over the past decade, which outlines spiritual care teams, long-term recovery and much more.

Our churches and districts must be prepared to respond to various disasters such as tornadoes, hurricanes, fires, floods, acts of mass violence and other situations.

Here are five specific ways we give and receive by preparing for an effective response to events we pray never come.

Churches must respond when natural disasters strike. 5 ways to prepare for events we pray will never come.

### **1. HARNESS PEOPLE'S DESIRE TO DO SOMETHING.**

Few social institutions are as equipped to organize volunteers as churches. People want to help, and church leaders can turn that goodwill into useful aid even when volunteers are more eager than may be helpful.

Organizing your group's response and [clearly communicating during a crisis](#) is critical. Your church will be part of a larger effort, so it's important to add harmony rather than discord.

Take safety precautions. Every hour volunteered by someone in your group is potentially valuable for receiving relief funds, so keeping records is important. Who will provide tools and materials, and how will they be marked for later retrieval?

These issues and more will need to be determined. A dedicated page on Facebook for people interested in helping will go a long way in addressing almost all important information.

## ***2. SUPPORT CIVIL AUTHORITIES AND GAIN CREDIBILITY.***

Volunteer groups operate within the framework of civil authorities leading the rescue effort. Disaster zones must be stabilized and secured before we can roll in.

By following the lead of local authorities, volunteers should prioritize the safety of people while gaining credibility with community leaders who are grateful for considerate support.

## ***3. ENGAGE IN A MINISTRY OF PRESENCE.***

When people experience tragedy, they don't need words of advice or platitudes. What they usually need first and most is someone to sit and grieve with them.

As the hands and feet of Jesus, we find nothing as powerful as going to where hurting people are and showing them love by being in their presence. There is something so spiritual about sacrificing time in service and using our bodies physically to rebuild broken lives.

Not only are victims attracted to such selfless love, but other volunteers hoping to make a difference may also find such service to be the most spiritual experience they've had in some time.

## ***4. CONNECT WITH OTHERS OUTSIDE YOUR CHURCH COMMUNITY.***

It's amazing how quickly bonds form among survivors and volunteers laboring alongside one another and survivors. In the days following the North Texas tornadoes, we worked with local leaders, members of nearby churches, a team of Muslims committed to disaster relief and many people who never attend a church of any kind. It's been a joy to see individuals from the relief effort visit our church because of the example set by our attendees.

Some people in our communities have never encountered God or God's people in any meaningful way. Worse, they may only have negative views of the church. Perhaps they've even suffered some sort of abuse at the hands of the church. Responding in love during their time of need is a powerful way to show authentic care from healing hands representing truth, light and love.

The best way to have an impact is to reach out in unconditional love to meet the needs of our neighbors. God's light reflects brightest during the darkest times.

## ***5. COMMIT FOR THE LONG HAUL.***

Survivors of disasters, particularly the kind called "acts of God," experience trauma of all sorts, including spiritual trauma and the questioning of why something so terrible would be allowed in their lives. We can minister to these people through prayer and presence.

Some survivors might be members of our local worship assemblies and need their church family in a big way. They may also have reason to keep us at a distance for some time, which we should honor as well.

Emotional recovery often takes years. Spiritual struggles can persist long after the trauma of physical damage and loss is resolved.

The physical relief effort is also likely to take a long time. That eager response by so many to help will wane after a couple of weeks. If you can keep your people motivated to show up as long as there is work to be done, your community will be grateful.

When disaster strikes, [United Methodists respond with prayers and support](#). By preparing thoughtfully for events we hope never will occur, we position our churches to create a unique space in the community that will attract others through a ministry of presence, service and care. [Search for disaster relief projects](#) through United Methodist Committee on Relief and join the cause today.

Are these precautions worthwhile? As someone who just watched his local church community face such a tragedy, it's worth it. None of us ever knows if our community will be next on the international news feeds because of a massive and unexpected disaster.

Our response is an opportunity to be the hands and feet of a caring Creator. Your neighbors may come to know God in a meaningful way by meeting your church members in their devastated world.

#### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

- [United Methodist Committee on Relief Overview](#)
- [Learn more about UMCOR's U.S. Disaster Response Training](#)
- [UMCOR's volunteer page](#)
- [When Disaster Hits, Churches Must Be Ready](#)
- [Top Four Worst – and Best – Ways to Help After a Disaster](#)
- [Prayers, Hymns, and Other Resources for Natural Disasters](#)



*[Clay Morgan](#) is an author from Dallas, Texas who spent a decade teaching college courses in the social sciences before becoming a consultant in communications and organizational strategy. Clay enjoys writing at the intersection of culture and spirituality. He has done ministry with college students for years and loves finding creative ways to engage millennials.*

<https://www.resourceumc.org/en/content/leading-your-community-when-natural-disaster-strikes>

## How to help a friend who has been impacted by a natural disaster

Has your friend been involved in a natural disaster?

Life changes for everyone during and after a natural disaster and we can all react and cope differently. If you know a friend who has been impacted by the bushfires, there are lots of things you can do to help, even if you have been impacted too.

How we are affected isn't always determined by how close we are to the disaster or how recently it happened. Being exposed to media coverage, the stories of others, and the larger impact of the disaster on the community and the environment can be distressing and affect us even when we haven't been directly affected. That's why it can help to take a break from news and social media coverage.

**Natural disasters can have a strong impact on all of us.** When a friend's life has been impacted by a natural disaster, it can be hard to know what to do or say. It can also be complicated because natural disasters typically affect a lot of people, in many different ways. So if you live near your friend, it is quite likely that your life may have been impacted by it in some way too. When you have both been impacted, or a lot of your friends have been impacted, it is important to find a balance between being there for your friend/s and looking after yourself too. There are lots of things you can do to support your friend following a natural disaster.

The following covers information about common reactions to a natural disaster, how to support a friend who has been affected by a natural disaster, and how to look after yourself when you have been affected too.

What might your friend be going through?

Natural disasters can be hard to cope with. People can respond in very different ways which also change over time. Our fact sheet on [coping with natural disasters](#) has a lot of information that might be helpful to understand their experience a little better, and can leave you best placed to support them.

With the support of friends, family and the broader community, young people who experience natural disasters are often able to recover, and do not experience ongoing difficulties.

Things you might notice in your friend

You might notice some changes in your friend in the first few weeks and months. These might include; difficulty in relationships with others, wanting to be alone, trouble sleep, changed appetite, and possibly [alcohol and other drug use](#).

These can be common reactions and natural coping responses. However, they are linked with increased likelihood of ongoing difficulties. As a result it is helpful to try to address these early,

to prevent them from becoming a pattern of coping. It's important to **build coping strategies** that are better linked to recovery, and can help people return to living the life they want.

### Supporting a friend after a natural disaster

Finding the words to start a conversation isn't easy, especially when you don't know what kind of help you can offer.

Remember, you don't need to 'fix' things. Don't push them to talk about the natural disaster or its impact on them. Instead, let them know you are there for them if they do want to talk about it.

If they don't open up, don't take it personally or think you can't help. Simply showing you care and that you have their back can give your friend strength and hope. This also tells them that you're someone they can talk to if they do decide to open up more later on.

If they do open up, it can be really helpful to reassure them that it is OK to feel whatever it is that they are feeling. You might suggest they visit the headspace website to get some tips on how to look after themselves. It is also a good idea to suggest that they find a trusted adult to talk to about things if it is all feeling a bit much. Remember, you're their mate and not their counsellor. As a mate, you can offer a lot in being there for them, doing some things you used to do together to try and get a bit of normality and routine back in their life..



What can I say to help my friend after a natural disaster?

It's important to encourage your friend to get further help. You can say things like:

- ***"Have you talked to anyone else about this? It's great you've talked to me, but it might be good to get advice and support from a health worker. There's no right way to feel or respond. It's OK to feel how you're feeling"*** Statements like this can help your friend to feel listened to and that their experience is OK or valid. Try not to dismiss what your friend might be saying.
- ***"You don't have to talk about it (e.g., the bushfires) if you don't want to, but if you do, I'm here for you. It might be that you might just want to hang out or have someone around and that's fine."*** Never push someone to talk about a traumatic event. This can be harmful.
- ***"I know you're not feeling great now, but with the right support, you can get through this."***



- *"Sometimes I feel pretty overwhelmed too. It would be great for you to find an adult you trust who can help you with this stuff more than I can"*
- *"There are some great websites you can check out to get more information. Have you heard of [headspace](#) or [ReachOut](#) or [youthbeyondblue](#)?"*
- *"Did you know that you can get free and confidential support online or over the phone from places like [ehespace](#), [Kids Helpline](#) and [Lifeline](#)? All of these services are anonymous and can help you figure out what's going on for you and where to go for the right support."*

What if your friend doesn't want any help?

Your friend may need time and space before they want to get help, or they might not feel they need any help. You may need to be patient with your friend and try to not judge them or get frustrated if you can't get through to them at first. Give them time. It might be that they just need some time to process things.

How do I support a friend if I've been impacted by trauma too?

If you've been exposed to a natural disaster or other traumatic events in the past (e.g., other natural disasters, physical or sexual assault, a car accident), it can be tricky to support your friends.

You may notice that listening to other's experiences might bring up feelings or emotions for yourself. The sorts of things that you might notice include more clear (e.g., you are feeling very distressed) or more subtle signs (e.g., you are feeling increasingly disconnected, numb, or doing things you wouldn't normally do).

You may also find yourself comparing your reaction to the event to theirs. There is no right way or single way in which people respond to a natural disaster. So the chances are, you may well be reacting differently and that's OK. Try not to get caught up in comparing your reactions, this is unlikely to be helpful for either of you. You may be feeling angry, scared, relieved, numb, shocked or any number of other emotions. These are all perfectly normal reactions to a not normal situation.

You might be struggling to cope too, and you need to look after your own needs while also trying to be there for your friend.

To manage these things, it is a good idea to:

- Pay close attention to how you're feeling and calling in the support of a trusted adult if you're feeling overwhelmed by trying to support a friend



- Practice some things you can say to set boundaries if you are worried about them, but also feeling very overwhelmed yourself. For example, “I want you to know that I’m here for you. I am not in the best place to talk a lot about it at the moment but maybe we can support each other just by being around and doing some things we used to do together. It is really important that you do have someone to talk who you can trust, maybe I can help you figure out who that is.”
- Take some time to read more information about coping after a natural disaster to get more tips on how to look after yourself

**[Download our fact sheet for more information.](#)**

<https://headspace.org.au/assets/Uploads/Resource-library/Young-people/If-your-friend-is-not-okay-web.pdf>

When should I get help for my friend?

It is pretty normal to experience very strong emotions after a traumatic event like a natural disaster. They will normally lessen at around 6 weeks. If your friend is still noticing big changes in their emotions or is finding it hard to do usual daily activities after this time, it is a good idea to let someone know. This isn’t the wrong thing to do, although it can be difficult because you might feel like your friend won’t open up to you again. If you decide to tell someone, try to let your friend know that you’re planning on doing this first and encourage them to get involved in the discussion.

If you think your friend is at risk of harming themselves or somebody else, you need to seek help straight away, even if they ask you not to. [If your friend needs urgent help you can call 000](#). You could also ask someone you trust, like a parent or teacher for help. There’s a chance your friend might not be happy about this at first, but remind them it’s only because you care about them. In the long run, they’ll usually understand why you got someone else involved.

For more information, to find your nearest [headspace centre](#) or for online and telephone support, visit [ehespace](#).

<https://headspace.org.au/explore-topics/for-young-people/help-a-friend-impacted-by-a-natural-disaster/>