

Dear Friend,

The latter half of Esther 4:14 finishes with these words: *"Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"*

This was a plea for someone to consider her calling and the potential influence one life could have for present and future generations. This was a society at great risk for countless numbers of people, as ours now is. Laws and decrees were being passed in open hostility to the people of God of that time. However, God had already placed someone in a position to reverse this law of death and have it rewritten into a law of life.

In effect, by the foreknowledge of God, Esther had been placed where she was to offer intercession for her people. The only stumbling block to this God-inspired plan was Esther herself. Did she fully realize how God had providentially assigned her to speak with King Ahasuerus on their behalf? Did she remember her position with both its privilege and authority?

So it is with you and me. We are God's provision for the future protection of those who are powerless to speak for themselves. We have access to the throne of Almighty God. We are promised that whatever we ask, according to His will, we will receive. What Esther did, we must also now do. It's time to pray!

With you at the throne,

Pastor Carter Conlon

## IT'S TIME, AGAIN, TO PRAY by Carter Conlon

When Satan came down into the Garden of Eden, he came with a livid hatred for God that manifested every time he tried to bring to ruin that which was closest to the heart of the Lord: mankind. The devil ended up sowing a thought into the human race that would bring man to his own destruction—the idea that we can become as God in ourselves.

Yet after Satan tempted Adam and Eve, God said to him, *"Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel"* (Genesis 3:14–15).

This is the first time in the Bible that we see the redemptive plan of God. Obviously, God was not caught by surprise in the Garden of Eden. He knew that humankind would be created in His image, would subsequently fail, and then would have to be redeemed. And so God was essentially telling Satan, *"Lest you should exalt yourself, I have a plan. You are going to live to conquer and devour those created in My image all the days of your life. I will put an act of opposition between you and the woman—between your seed and her seed. And from the seed of a woman I am going to raise up the*

One who will actively oppose you and defeat you."

We know today that the One from the seed of the woman was Christ. In the original Hebrew, it says, *"You shall strike his heel."* In other words, *"He will be on a journey, but as a serpent, you will strike His heel and stop His journey. You will cause Him pain and even death but He in turn will bruise your head."* As we know the story today, Jesus would be raised from the dead and would tread upon the devil's imagination that humankind is fully within his grasp—that he has the right to captivate those who have been created in the image of God, not just for time but for all eternity.

***Do you realize the power God has put into our hands as believers in Christ?***

Not only would He bruise the devil's head, we know through the testimony of Scripture that Christ would have a seed—a people born into the kingdom of God who would have access to the throne of God by prayer. They would have the power to push back the devil's thought that he could possess the earth, its direction, its future.

We are that people! Do you realize the power God has put into our hands as believers in Christ?

We are not merely bystanders, watching the devil destroy a whole generation. God has a plan, and part of that plan is our approaching His throne and petitioning Him to move on behalf of those who have nobody to call out for them.

### ■ A SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

The Scriptures give us many examples of the incredible things that happen when God's people pray. For instance, in the book of Second Kings, the king of Syria surrounded the city where the people of God were. There was such a vast army that Elisha's servant looked over the wall of the city and asked, "What are we going to do? They are more and mightier than us!" (see 2 Kings 6:14–15).

*Not only were God's people affected by prayer, the enemy was brought to an awareness of God's power.*

"Elisha prayed, and said, 'Lord, I pray, open his eyes that he may see'" (2 Kings 6:17). In other words, "Oh, God, would You give vision back to Your people to understand once again that it is not by might nor by power but by Your Spirit? Would You help us once again to see You in absolute victory—with all power, all dominion, all authority?"

"Then the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. So when the Syrians came down to him, Elisha prayed to the Lord, and said, 'Strike this people, I pray, with blindness'" (2 Kings 6:17–18). In other words, "Confuse the enemy! Take away their vision, their unity, their strength. Do not let them accomplish their purpose."

We, too, can pray that in our generation. "Lord, do not let the enemies of righteousness advance any farther. Let their agenda drift away from them!"

*"And He struck them with blindness according to the word of Elisha" (2 Kings 6:18). It did not mean they could not naturally see; it just meant they were not seeing what they had seen before. "Now Elisha said to them, 'This is not the way, nor is this the city. Follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom you seek.' But he led them to Samaria. So it was, when they had come to Samaria, that Elisha said, 'Lord, open the eyes of these men, that they may see.' And the Lord opened their eyes, and they saw; and there they were, inside Samaria" (2 Kings 6:19–20).*

Not only were God's people affected by prayer, the enemy was brought to an awareness of God's power—a moment of conscience. This is what we need to pray for in our generation—a spiritual awakening. A spiritual awakening is a sudden awareness of sin that can come into the heart of any society, any place, any person. "Why am I suddenly thinking about God? Why is it suddenly occurring to me that what I am doing is wrong?"

*Instead of praying for the destruction of the enemies of God, ask the Lord to have mercy on them and open their eyes.*

We are not praying for harm to come to any person. Rather, we are saying, "God, blind the godless to their objective and open their eyes to the fact that they have been taken captive by powers of darkness. Cause them to understand who they truly are and what they are doing."

When is the last time you prayed that way—instead of praying for the destruction of the enemies of God, you asked the Lord to have mercy on them and open their eyes? That is exactly what Elisha did. He fed them and sent them home, and the Bible tells us that they came no more into that part of Israel (see 2 Kings 6:23). They did not come back because they had a moment of conscience!

*One of the things that the devil will do to captivate a generation is offer an alternative to Christ: religion.*

### ■ POWERLESS RELIGION

When we pray, we also have power to free those who have been captivated by deceptive and powerless religion. One of the things that the devil will do to captivate a generation is offer an alternative to Christ: religion. The Bible tells us that after Satan had sown his nature into humankind in the Garden of Eden, God came down and found Adam and Eve covered in fig leaves (see Genesis 3:7). This is what happens when darkness comes upon a society—people attempt in their own strength to cover their sin and shame.

Of course, we know that only God can forgive sin. Only God can produce fruit from a life that is yielded to Him. Jesus once walked up to Jerusalem and saw a fig tree, but when He came up to it, He found nothing but leaves. And so He cursed the fig tree, saying, "Let no one eat fruit from you ever again" (Mark 11:14).

As Jesus and His disciples entered Jerusalem the next day, Peter said, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree which You cursed has withered away." So Jesus answered and said to

them, *'Have faith in God. For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, "Be removed and be cast into the sea," and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says'*" (Mark 11:21–23). Now the only mountain in the whole vicinity was Jerusalem. Jerusalem had crafted this "fig tree religion"—self-made, man-made coverings of human effort; a false relationship with God that offered no life, bore no fruit, and had no power. While we tend to take these verses today and use them for all kinds of things, Jesus was actually talking about casting away this false covering that the devil offers humanity—assuring them that they are back in right relationship with God when they are not.

However, through prayer, you and I have the power to set free those who have settled for powerless religion. We can ask God to remove the deceptive covering and fill every church with life and truth.

#### ■ FREEDOM FROM CAPTIVITY

Another thing that happens when we pray is that God's people are brought out of captivity. Many people desire to serve Him with all their heart, but they have been taken captive by some of the forces of this world.

In Acts chapter 12, the apostle Peter was put in prison and delivered over to four squads of soldiers to guard him. King Herod intended to bring him out before the people after the Passover, which means that the authorities of that time were essentially boasting, "We have the power to corral the church. We will bring the Christians out

before the people, and the people will judge those who claim that our religion is faulty and our society is off track."

However, the Bible tells us that *"Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church"* (Acts 12:5). As the believers were in constant prayer, miracles began to happen! *"Now behold, an angel of the Lord stood by him, and a light shone in the prison; and he struck Peter on the side and raised him up, saying, 'Arise quickly!' And his chains fell off his hands. Then the angel said to him, 'Gird yourself and tie on your sandals'; and so he did. And he said to him, 'Put on your garment and follow me.' So he went out and followed him, and did not know that what was done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision. When they were past the first and the second guard posts, they came to the iron gate that leads to the city, which opened to them of its own accord; and they went out and went down one street, and immediately the angel departed from him"* (Acts 12:7–10).

***We have a very short window of mercy before us. If we do not take advantage of this moment, a fearful darkness awaits us on the other side.***

Captivity was taken captive! When Peter and the angel came to the city, the gate opened on its own accord—a picture of how nothing in our society can stop the hand of God!

When Peter knocked on the door where many were praying, the people were astonished. *"But motioning to them with his hand to keep silent, he declared to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, 'Go, tell these things to James and to the brethren'"* (Acts 12:17). Peter instructed them to tell the other brethren the news—that captivity had been taken captive by the power of God through a praying church. Had they not gathered to pray, I believe history would have been very different. Likewise, if you and I choose not to pray in our generation, the future will be different.

#### ■ A WINDOW OF MERCY

We have a very short window of mercy before us. God is calling the whole Church across the country to pray now. If we do not take advantage of this moment, a fearful darkness awaits us on the other side of this open window.

Remember, although the enemy may try to bruise our heel, we are of that seed of Christ, and we can step on the devil's head. We can cast down his imaginations, whereby he thinks he can control, deceive and destroy a whole generation. I fully believe that God intends to send an awakening to this nation. And so we must remember that the true source of our power is in prayer. It always has been, and it always will be. It's time, again, to pray.

Carter Conlon  
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## AN INVESTMENT IN THE NEXT GENERATION

by Pastor Carter Conlon

In my heart, I really feel that God has appointed Summit for such a time as this.

In 1994, Pastor David Wilkerson founded our Bible school as a place where men and women could come learn to hear the voice of God. Much has changed in the quarter century that Summit has been around, but the fundamental purpose of its existence remains the same.

Summit is not a for-profit college; the school only charges students about 50% of what it actually costs to attend. Not only that, more than half of the students receive additional scholarship funding from TSC, World Challenge, and private investors to help with their tuition.

Why would we intentionally run a business model that is not out to make money? Because Summit is an investment. We believe God is leading Times Square Church to invest in the next generation called to make a difference for Christ.

Our goal for 2018 is to raise \$250,000. We are almost a quarter of the way there, but we need your help. This

money will allow us to cover the cost of things such as office renovations, building new dorms, and campus maintenance. The more money we can raise, the more students save in the long run. Our goal is always to make Summit accessible to everyone—not just those who can afford it.



### So how do I give?

1. Go to [summitpa.org](http://summitpa.org)
2. Click on “Support Summit”
3. Donate a one-time or monthly recurring gift

In a world that is increasingly divided, Summit is training a generation to impact their peers with the transformative and unifying power of Jesus Christ. What an incredible investment to make!

### CARTER CONLON

Carter Conlon is senior pastor of Times Square Church, where he has been on the pastoral staff since 1994.

### TIMES SQUARE CHURCH

Times Square Church was founded in 1987 by Pastor David Wilkerson, author of “The Cross and the Switchblade.” It is an interdenominational church located in the heart of New York City.

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### WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Sunday 10AM | 1PM | 3PM | 6PM

Tuesday 7PM | Worldwide Prayer Meeting

Friday 7:30PM | The Gate  
2nd & 4th Fridays (ages 18-29)

### Live Webcast:

All our Sunday and Tuesday services can be watched live and replayed for seven days on our website.

[tsc.nyc](http://tsc.nyc)

