

Prayer of Protest on the 4th anniversary of the invasion of Iraq March 18, 2007

Lord God, we understand from your word that you have ordained rulers to govern the people of the earth. Some rulers have brought peace, and some have not. Some have helped to bring prosperity, and others have caused horrendous poverty and degradation for their people. Lord, we call out in protest against all those in authority who harm the innocent in the name of peace, security and prosperity for others.

Lord, we protest the human tendency to glorify and support the strong as they harm the weak, no matter what the goal. Even in popular games it is the quick, the strong and the clever who prevail, and the slower, weaker and less clever who are castigated. In schools we honor those who excel over others. Excellence is to be commended, but we protest the subtle message in every aspect of our lives that the strong deserve our praise while the weak deserve only pity and life's leftovers. Forgive our glorification of strength.

Lord, we live in a country where the voice of the people can actually make a difference. Most of us remember a war being stopped when the people demanded it. The people our government seeks to destroy know this, and use that knowledge to their advantage. They know that if they persist the day will come when invaders return to their homes. We protest the willful ignorance of history which refuses to remember that it has always been so, and that our own nation was founded in the same way, wearing down the invaders until they went home, and driving out dissidents.

We protest the foolishness that says modern day Iraq and Afghanistan will be different, when those people have been breaking the will of invaders for millennia. Have mercy on those who suffer on all sides of the conflict.

Most of all Lord, we call out in protest against the greed and selfishness in our own hearts that keeps us silent when those in authority harm the innocent in our name, promising us peace, security and prosperity if we will only support their actions. We protest our willingness to go about our business while the innocent suffer from our silence. We protest our own indifference. We protest our lack of outrage. We protest our complicity. Have mercy on us. Forgive our silence, and give us courageous hearts to protest these wrongs done in our name. We pray in Jesus' name, amen.