

WEDNESDAY A RED DRAGON

God says, *"Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
your old men will dream dreams,
your young men will see visions."*
(Joel 2:28-32 and Acts 2:17)



While praying recently a friend had a picture. It was of a red dragon flying across from Europe to the U.K.

Now, a red dragon can mean a number separate things. In this case, first, it may be a symbol for China. Secondly – and separately – it is a sign of something fiery and stormy.

The picture was completed by a net surrounding and capturing the dragon.

The picture has been interpreted as the dragon representing the COVID 19 virus approaching. But the net is interpreted as prayer catching and resisting the virus.

If you accept the interpretation or not we certainly can pray for our times.

Here are some prayers for the healing of our world.

God of love and hope,
You made the world and care for all creation.
But the world feels strange right now.
The news is full of stories about Coronavirus.
Many people are anxious because of it.
Many people are anxious that they might get ill.
Many people are anxious about their family and friends.
Be with them in their worries and help them to find some peace.

We pray too for those who are grieving , reeling from the sudden loss of loved ones. May they know Your comfort at this time.

Lord God we ask that You protect us from the further spread of this disease in our nation. We pray for all medical professionals dealing daily with the intense pressures of this pandemic and for the care workers working with little protection with those most at risk. Grant them resilience in weariness, discernment in diagnosis and compassion upon compassion as they care. We thank You for the army of researchers working towards finding a cure and we ask that You give them breakthrough quickly and bring hope to those who are ill.

Father God we pray, too, for wisdom for our leaders: the WHO, our government both national and local, heads of schools, hospitals and other institutions, that they may make the right decisions to enable our country to keep functioning.

Lord, we lift to You our concern for people who are more likely than others to become severely ill from COVID-19 — the elderly and people with chronic health conditions and those in residential care. Protect them from harm and be their comfort in this time of uncertainty.

As the virus spreads we pray for the disruption it causes to normal life, bringing new fears and anxieties:

We pray for those who have been laid off as their work disappears; for financial hardship for individuals and businesses; for the impact on the economy and pensions, when austerity has already left its mark.

We pray especially for those isolated and ill in hospital and at home who will feel especially scared and lonely and who may be crying out for loves ones or company – hear their cry, Lord.

We pray for those whose trips, both for business and pleasure, have been cancelled; and others where events, long anticipated and planned for, have been postponed;

We remember those who cannot visit loved ones in locked-down care homes;
for the elderly whose social contacts have been severely curtailed;
help us to find creative ways of keeping in touch, of assuring them they are not forgotten or ignored.

God of grace and God of mercy, hear our prayers at this time.
Strengthen us, by Your Spirit, so that we may carry on our lives as best as we are able, looking out for others, showing love in action, being faithful in prayer, and bringing encouragement, hope and peace; always trusting in You, our Rock and our Redeemer.

Thank You that even in these strange and worrying times, You are with us and Your Word promises that You will never leave us nor forsake us.

We ask these things in Your precious name
Amen.