



The Covering - Prayer Guide

Winter 2023

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www.coveringphiladelphia.com



Praying “Original Intent”

Friends,

During the last year The Covering has morphed from its original format that addressed significant issues facing Philadelphia, to a strategic attack against crime at the intersections of greatest violence, and how to pray about Leviathan / pride that many believe is the spiritual stronghold over our city. Although violence continues, we have seen great progress in the coming together of The Church of Philadelphia to contend “as one” for transformation and see our city become God’s city. An additional outcome is evident in this new prayer guide.

In future guides, we will again address the issues we face, but we want to view them through the lenses of the purposes of God, His “original intent” for our city that The Enemy has been working to pervert.

To quote John Dawson, former director of Youth with a Mission and author of Taking Our Cities for God, “Knowing your city’s redemptive gift is even more important than discerning the nature of evil principalities. Principalities rule through perverting the gift of a city in the same way an individual’s gift is turned to the enemy’s use through sin. Satan is not a creator. He cannot originate anything. He can only turn created things and people to his own purposes.”

A redemptive gift might be likened to the gifts of the spirit, given to us to fulfill the purposes of God. *Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them . . . (Romans 12: 6a)* Applied to cities, they can be said to describe the spiritual atmosphere or quality of God represented in a particular region.

We know Philadelphia is The City of Brotherly Love, William Penn’s Holy Experiment. Examining our history will reveal what that “looked like” over time, as well as the strategies of Satan to prevent God’s purposes from becoming a reality. One of our prayer strategies is to honor and re-establish the former, while canceling the effects of the latter. Thus, this guide focuses on Philadelphia’s redemptive gifts in each of the spheres or mountains of influence.

Returning to John Dawson: “The earth has been lovingly crafted as a habitation for people. God anticipated the development of your city. He marked out a place for it. God is sovereignly rebuilding the walls of our city, starting with the leadership in His churches. I believe that as we continue to meet, God will pour out revelation concerning His redemptive plans for the city. It was to the Jews living in the wicked city of Babylon that God spoke these words, “*For I know the thoughts I have towards you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.*” (Jeremiah 29:11)

We are seeing this come to pass.



Arts & Entertainment

Redemptive Purpose

To reveal truth and beauty, and to advance the Kingdom of God through creative expression.

Primary Stronghold

Idolatry - Exaltation of man or creation

Genesis 1: 1 - *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*

Romans 1: 20 - *For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.*

Exodus 35: 31-33 - *“and he has filled him with the Spirit of God, with wisdom, with understanding, with knowledge and with all kinds of skills—to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver and bronze, to cut and set stones, to work in wood and to engage in all kinds of artistic crafts.”*

Philippians 4: 8 - *“Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.”*

History

In the decades after American independence, the atmosphere of liberty in Philadelphia spawned an artistic spirit that earned our city the reputation as the Athens of America, with the first public parks, botanical garden, society for the promotion of fine arts, art school and museum in the nation. Over time we have garnered a reputation for making more art accessible, including such public art as statues and wall murals than any other city. As one writer put it, “the spirit of the city can be found in the art that follows you down the street into parks, open spaces, museums and galleries”. And then there's the creation of the city itself, as mapped out and planned by William Penn for both aesthetics and practicality and cited as “cutting-edge” for the times, with houses far enough apart to prevent the spread of fire, open spaces, wide roads that were “revolutionary” and “the first city plan in the United States to provide for “long term” urban growth.” All part of Penn's grand design for the Holy Experiment.

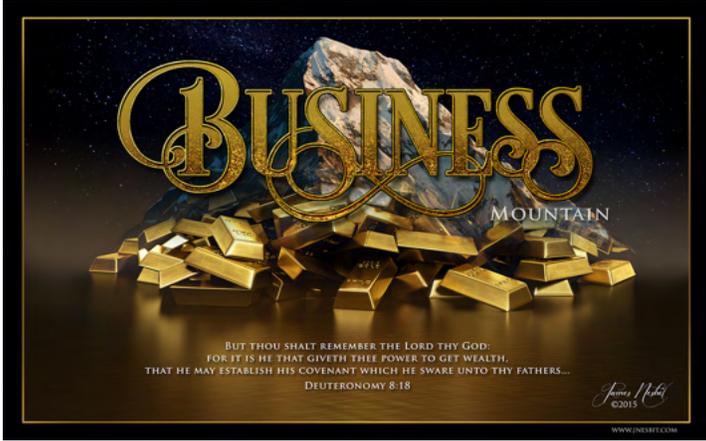
Prayers/Declarations

Thank you, Father, for the inspiration of Holy Spirit that led William Penn to design Philadelphia as a city representing You as our Creator, the God of order and beauty.

We declare the life, the love, the goodness, the joy, peace and the power of Your presence are being poured out through arts and entertainment of Philadelphia and the region. Romans 5: 5

We declare You have filled those in arts and entertainment with the Your Spirit, with skill, with intelligence, with knowledge, and with all craftsmanship. Exodus 35:31-32

And we thank You that, by Your Spirit, You are using the arts and other forms of entertainment to draw the people of Philadelphia unto You and the enthusiasm they display for concerts and sports events will turn into demonstrations of worship.



BUSINESS

Redemptive Purpose

Wealth to establish God's covenant

Primary Stronghold

Greed, mammon, poverty.

Proverbs 11:1 - *A false balance is an abomination to the Lord, but a just weight is his delight.*

Psalms 112:5 - *It is well with the man who deals generously and lends; who conducts his affairs with justice.*

Proverbs 28:6 - *Better is a poor man who walks in his integrity than a rich man who is crooked in his ways.*

Romans 13:7 - *Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.*

History

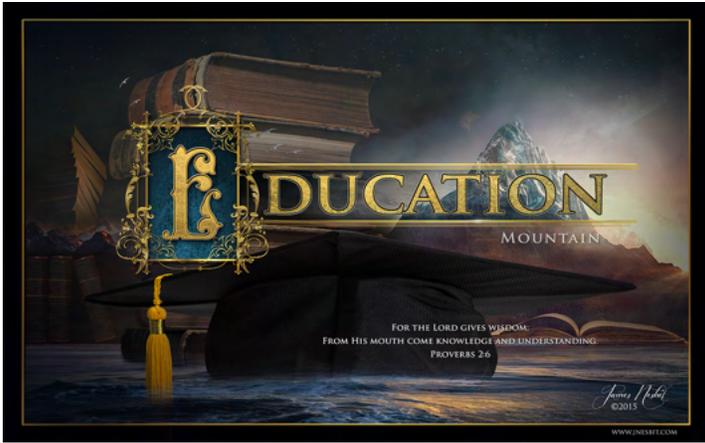
William Penn was given rights to land in the 'New World' by the King of England to pay back a debt owed to his father, but unlike many before (or after) him, Penn realized there were indigenous people living on the land. In recognition of that, Penn made treaties with the First Nations, purchasing land from them at fair prices and often paying multiple times for the same piece of land due to the way the First Nations thought of land ownership. In doing so, he set a standard of business conduct for what became Pennsylvania. Though others failed to maintain that standard, Penn is respected today for his fairness and for never breaking trust.

Prayers/Declarations

Father, we thank You for righteous roots that are bearing righteous fruit. We declare that Philadelphia is a place of equal opportunity regardless of ethnicity or background.

Father, we declare that just business practices are a delight to You and that You are rewarding those who practice such things. We thank You for the flourishing of the righteous in the business mountain.

We loose Your blessing over men and women practicing Kingdom ethics in the business mountain. We declare that they will be salt and light to those around them and that You would receive all the glory.



EDUCATION

Redemptive Purpose

To teach the truth of God and His Word

Primary Stronghold

Satan - the father of lies (John 8:44), pride, secular humanism

Proverbs 9:9-10 - *Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser; Teach a just man, and he will increase in learning. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.*

2 Timothy 2:15 - *Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.*

Genesis 2:17 - *"But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."*

History

Philadelphia is home to one of the first schools for the public in the nation. William Penn knew that the success of the new colony would depend on educated citizens. From that vision, Penn Charter School started in 1689, with the intentions to educate the rich at reasonable rates, and "the children of the poor ... free of expense." (penncharter.com) "Penn Charter is among the first schools in the United States to offer education to all religions (1689), financial aid (1701), matriculation to girls (1754), and education to all races (1770)" (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Penn_Charter_School)

Prayers/Declarations

We thank You, Lord for the righteous roots of education in Philadelphia. You were the source then and You are the source now. We pray that all decisions in the Philadelphia schools would bring honor to You.

Father, we acknowledge that our schools have many flaws in both the way they are run and the content they teach, but we are asking for your mercy to come and begin to reorder our schools in such a way that they would produce the fruit of the tree of life.

Lord, we pray for new Superintendent of the Philadelphia schools, Tony Walington. We loose the Spirit of wisdom and counsel over him, and pray that he would have a grave to innovate and lead the school district to a place of health and a place that is honoring to You.



FAMILY

Redemptive Purpose

To demonstrate the unconditional love of God

Primary Stronghold

Rejection (real or perceived)

Genesis 2: 24 - *Therefore, a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.*

Genesis 1: 28 - *Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."*

Jeremiah 29: 5-7, 11 – *"Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce. Marry and have sons and daughters; find wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, so that they too may have sons and daughters. Increase in number there; do not decrease. Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers you, you too will prosper . . . I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you, to give you a future and a hope."*

1 Corinthians 13: 12-13 - *For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.¹³ And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.*

History

Founded as a City of Refuge for families escaping persecution, and a Holy Experiment, where the fruits of the spirit might be expected to characterize Philadelphia's rule of order; our very name proclaimed love and represented a care and responsibility for the families who settled here. With the earliest laws to provide relief to the poor and churches that served needs wherever they found them, Philadelphians took care of others; from alms houses, aid to widows and orphans, and the first hospitals, to abolitionists supporting the underground railway. And many articles related to the history and growth of the city include reference to families, as if decisions about business, and whether to move location, etc were made based on the well-being of the family. But the fact that families are designed to represent the love of God put them in the cross-hairs of the enemy who attacked through increased poverty, neglect, abuse, abandonment and the soul crushing orphan spirit.

Prayers/Declarations

Father, we thank You for the restoration of families in Philadelphia, that fathers will be drawn to You and through You back to their families as leaders, protectors and providers.

We declare grace be with the families and neighborhoods of Philadelphia, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love. (2 John 3)

We declare that You are Lord over families and neighborhoods, that they should not fear, for You will be their help. (Isaiah 41:13)



Government

Redemptive Purpose

To rule and legislate with righteousness and justice

Primary Stronghold

Anti-Christ spirit, pride, corruption

1 Peter 2:13-17 - *Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good. For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people. Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God. Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor.*

Esther 5:1-3 - *On the third day Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the king's palace, in front of the king's quarters, while the king was sitting on his royal throne inside the throne room opposite the entrance to the palace. And when the king saw Queen Esther standing in the court, she won favor in his sight, and he held out to Esther the golden scepter that was in his hand. Then Esther approached and touched the tip of the scepter. And the king said to her, "What is it, Queen Esther? What is your request? It shall be given you, even to the half of my kingdom."*

History

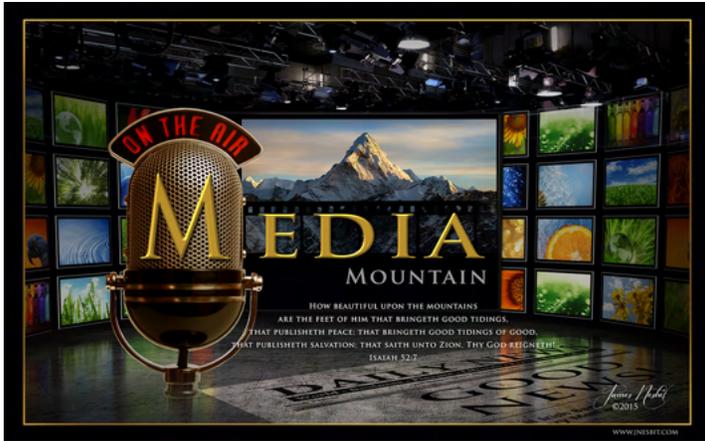
Governmentally, Philadelphia was at the core of our nation's founding, and was referred to as both the heart and womb of the nation. There seemed to be a grace on Philadelphia for things to happen here that could not happen anywhere else. Undoubtedly, this had to do with the foundation that William Penn laid - particularly with the Charter of Privileges in 1701, which were based on the Kingdom principles of righteousness and justice and pioneered ideas about religious freedom, as well as individual rights and the consent of the governed. Thomas Jefferson called Penn "the greatest law giver" and included principles found in the Charter of Privileges in the Declaration of Independence.

Prayers/Declarations

Father, in this politically polarized time, we thank You for a sound of love and liberty being released in and through Philadelphia again. Use this city to bring righteousness and justice to our political systems.

Lord, we ask You to preserve the liberties of the Church to continue to assemble freely, and preach the Gospel in the public square. Give Your people favor with political leaders when needed and allow us to speak truth to them as You give us opportunity.

We declare that the womb of the nation is becoming fruitful again, and birthing the heart of heaven into political structures, locally and nationally.



MEDIA

Redemptive Purpose:

To share the good news of the gospel and the Kingdom of God through uncensored, unbiased truth

Primary Stronghold:

Fear, terror, and manipulation of truth

Philippians 4:8 - *Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.*

2 Corinthians 10: 4-5 - *For the weapons of our warfare are not ^[a]carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, ⁵ casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.*

Isaiah 52: 7 - *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who proclaims peace, who brings glad tidings of good things, who proclaims salvation, who says to Zion, “Your God reigns!”*

Isaiah 61: 1 - *“The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, because the LORD has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to ^[a]heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound.*

History

There are many firsts in media associated with Philadelphia: first almanac, first newspaper in the middle colonies, first student newspaper, first daily paper, first African-American publishing company, penny daily, successful woman’s magazine and comic book, in addition to the first bibles in English and in a foreign language and the first religious magazine. In the nineteenth century, there were literally hundreds of newspapers, magazines and other forms of print media, all designed to inform and impact the public, from the working man with the penny papers to the papers and magazines aimed for specific ethnic groups or strata of society. Innovations in printing and expanded means of distribution meant Philadelphia newspapers had a national circulation as well. Today media continue to abound, however, the number of people groups they serve has narrowed significantly,⁷ leaving less opportunity for an open exchange of ideas and access to diverse opinions, both dangers to a free society.

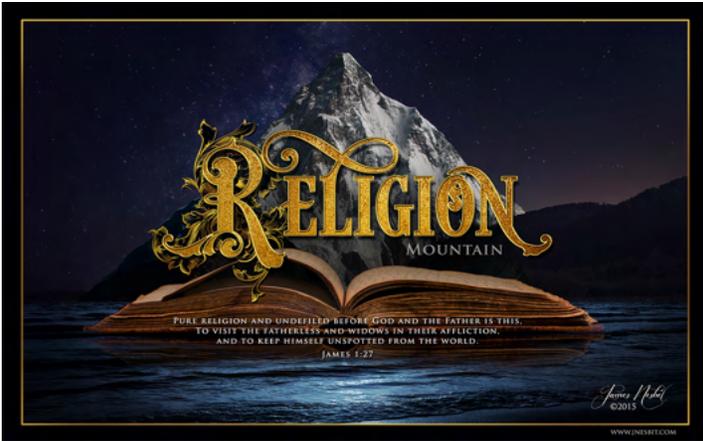
Prayers/Declarations

We declare that Your love is better than life and will be reflected in the media. Psalm 63: 3

We declare woe unto the media that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Instead, they will be guided into all truth by the Spirit of truth, speak it and print it. Isaiah 5:20, John 16: 13

We declare that the Kingdom principles on which Philadelphia was founded will once again be reflected in the media and her people will have eyes to see and ears to hear them.

We declare the competing “voices of the enemy” will be recognized for what they are and that all peoples will be equally respected and represented in the media.



RELIGION

Redemptive Purpose

Equipping the saints for the work of ministry

Primary Stronghold

Idolatry that steals worship from God

John 8:31-36 - *Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. 32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."*

33 *They answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can You say, 'You will be made free'?"* 34 *Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. 35 And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. 36 Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.*

Galatians 5:1 - *For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.*

2 Corinthians 3:17 - *Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.*

Luke 4:18 - *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed,"*

History

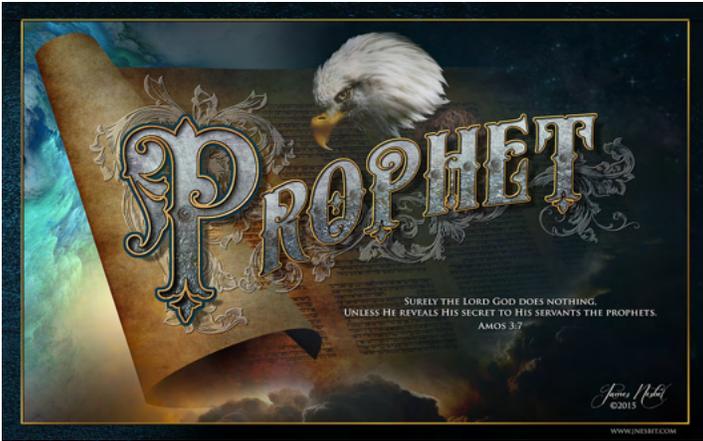
In 1688, Quakers in Germantown drafted a petition protesting slavery. It was the first such petition/protest of its kind in the colonies. The core of the petition was based off of Jesus' words in the Sermon on the Mount known as the Golden Rule; *"Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets."* (Matthew 7:12). The petition went on to argue that all people have rights given by God that should not be violated. After its initial use, the document was misplaced until it was rediscovered in 1844 and became a focal point for the maturing abolition movement.

Prayers/Declarations

Father, thank You for equipping the Body of Christ in Philadelphia to continue contending for freedom in the natural and in the spiritual. We take up the spiritual inheritance that is ours and enter into the grace to be freedom fighters.

Lord, we are aware that the forces of darkness are still hard at work to enslave the people of Philadelphia, though it be in a different manner. We pray especially for our men to be set free from the bondage of addiction, anger and fear.

We declare that a jubilee cry for freedom is rising from the Church of Philadelphia like never before. We bless the Church leaders in this City that You have given us to prepare the Body for the work of ministry. We declare increased grace over each five fold leader in this City.



GENERAL PROPHETIC

The following are prophetic perceptions gleaned from a time of prayer and sharing of several respected leaders in the Greater Philadelphia region. The points below are areas where many were sensing the same thing from the Lord.

Joel 2: 28-29, 32 - *"So I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten . . . ²⁸ "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. ²⁹ And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days . . . ³² And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."*

Isaiah 60: 18 - *Violence shall no longer be heard in your land, neither ^[a]wasting nor destruction within your borders; but you shall call your walls Salvation, and your gates Praise.*

Amos 9: 14 - *I will restore the fortunes of my people Israel, and they shall rebuild the ruined cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink their wine, and they shall make gardens and eat their fruit.*

History

William Penn named Philadelphia as a prophetic declaration of what it was to become with the unfolding of the Holy Experiment, a city representing the God who is Love. Given his knowledge of scripture, Penn had captured the "heart of God" for a habitation in which all men could live in harmony. It was "divine providence" that he was given the land grant that became Pennsylvania, and that the site he chose for the city just happened to be set along a river for ease of commerce and among the peaceable, religious Lenape who were known for their charity, and whose culture was very compatible with his vision. In doing so, however, he unwittingly made us a target of Lucifer whose purpose was/is to destroy our prophetic destiny by distorting the image of God, drawing worship unto himself and perverting "brotherly love" by means of greed, pride, lust, idolatry and the shedding of innocent blood. Through the following declarations, we are releasing the word of God to restore the prophetic destiny of Philadelphia as the City of Brotherly Love and countering Satan just as Jesus did when he said "It is written . . ." (Matthew 4: 4,7,10)

Prayers/Declarations

Romans 12: 10 *Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another . . .*

Matthew 22:36 – 40 *"Teacher, which is the most important commandment in the law of Moses?" Jesus replied, "'You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments."*

Romans 13:8 *Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.*

Galatians 5:13 *For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.*

Galatians 5: 14 *For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*

Ephesians 4:2 *with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love.*

Hebrews 13: 1 *Let brotherly love continue.*