

O God,

It has been a very long week in our country. A week of chaos that saw destruction and tragic, unnecessary loss of life. It has shown us two things, that we have known for a long time, but are now been undeniably brought to light.

Firstly, that there are millions of South Africans who are completely desperate. We know COVID-19 has exacerbated this problem, with people losing their jobs or families losing their breadwinners. While there are many memes going around of looters trying to fit flat screen TVs into their cars, we also know a lot of essentials were looted: mielie meal, nappies, clothes.

Secondly, we are all in desperate need for leadership. This week has seen political parties and factions use this as an opportunity to try gain control, or point fingers. The blame game continues – and not without reason. All the parties are guilty. Then there is horrific violence and racial profiling unfolding in Phoenix. Social media is on fire with accusations and algorithms separate us even more and drive the wedge between an ‘us’ and a ‘them’ ever deeper.

It has been a week of chaos.

“All the most powerful emotions come from chaos – fear, anger, love – especially love. Love is chaos itself.” - Kirsten Miller.

The community clean-up initiatives have shown that there is a Godly and innate human instinct to choose love. Upon seeing the aftermath of destruction, something can stir in any one of us a desire to rebuild. I’ve seen pictures of wealthy people and poor people side-by-side, brooms in hand, making their way down looted streets. For many, this may have been the first in a long time to meet someone from a different economic class on equal fields.

O God, awaken in us the desire to choose love. Every sect of our society is desperate for someone to blame. We are so fragile right now. We don’t know where to turn. We want someone to echo our feelings loud enough above the rest, so we can follow them. And as we have seen in history, tyrants can emerge from such chaos. May your love be our leader in these times. May we feel so inspired by it, that we let in touch the people who can reach. The family members on Facebook who fuel and us/them mentality. The people we encounter who ask for support.

May your love lead us, and guide our leaders.

Amen.

Opening Prayer by Sophie Joans | 2021 07 18 | CMM, Cape Town.