

Text: II Chronicles 7:12-15  
Theme: Revival-Our Only Hope  
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## “Revival - Our Only Hope”

The great revivals of the past always occurred in the blackest of conditions when the church was at its worst. I believe Habakkuk 2:3 holds true for us today, *“Though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry.”* When revival comes it will occur very suddenly (II Chronicles 29:36). Let us boldly claim the promise of God in Isaiah 59:19, *“When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him.”* As born again believers it should be our utmost desire to be revived. This should be the normal state of the true church of Jesus Christ (Isaiah 57:15); unfortunately it is just the opposite.

James 5:7 admonishes us, *“Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and the latter rain.”* I believe the early rain occurred in the days after Pentecost during the birth of the Church Age and the “latter rain” is yet to come. *“It will surely come, it will not tarry.”* I believe that we are seeing the beginning of this early rain in India and other nations across Asia. I have been in meetings where just a few have been saved but rarely if ever can I remember preaching a message when no one was saved.

Those who have this woe is me attitude need to get right with God! They need to wake up and look on the fields for they *“are white already to harvest.”* The church of America needs to wake up. It is inconceivable to think of over one billion souls in India alone going to hell. 80% of India’s population is Hindu and 14% is Muslim. Millions upon millions in just India alone are waiting to hear the pure Gospel. I believe the next great missionary movement will not come from within America, it will come from within Asia and I might add that it already is coming from within Asia. South Korea is the second most sending nation of missionaries in the world. America is still number one. I have determined to give all that I can unto my last dying breath to reach these perishing multitudes. We have barely begun to scratch the surface with our five Baptist Schools of Evangelism and church-planting ministry in India and Myanmar. May God help us do much more! May God give us likeminded partners who have caught the vision and will come over and help us!

Revival is our only hope for the present and future generations until Jesus comes again. As a nation we do not deserve such a gracious act of God. We deserve God’s judgment for our wickedness. May God be merciful to us because our iniquities have reached unto Heaven. America has been proclaimed as “the most violent of all industrialized nations.” Someone has well said, *“If God does not judge America, He will have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah.”* This is a very sad but true statement.

Ninevah was weighed in God’s balances and judgment was proclaimed against her, *“Yet forty days and Ninevah shall be overthrown.”* But an amazing thing happened. The people of Ninevah believed the preaching of Jonah. In Jonah 3:5 the Bible says, *“So the*

people of Ninevah believed God and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.” **And verse 10 says,** “God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.”

**This revival in Jonah’s day was not wanted or expected. God alone can bring about such a change. May God do it again in America! In Jeremiah 18:7-8, God has made a promise regarding evil nations,** “At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them.” **The definition of revival is,** “bringing or coming back into use; restoration to vigor or activity; a stirring up of religious faith.”

**As pertaining to religion, I believe it is returning to that “first love” spoken of in Revelation 2:4. The Lord commended the church of Ephesus for her love for the truth, her consistent testimony and her uncompromising stand, but he added,** “Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.” **I believe this “first love” refers to the holy zeal for the Lord and the propagation of the Gospel worldwide. It is that fervent love for the Lord and obedience to His Word. May God grant a revival of this “first love” that the early church knew so well, for “they went everywhere preaching the word” (Acts 8:4.) It was said of them that they literally “turned the world upside down” (Acts 17:6.)**

**If they could perform such a mighty movement without the use of airplanes, automobiles, television, radio, Internet, satellites and the list goes on, how much more should we be able to do with all of the wonderful resources available to us today. May God grant us such a fresh anointing of His blessed Spirit that we, too, will go everywhere preaching the Word.**

**But our hearts have grown cold, indifferent, apathetic and complacent. Revivals are periods of spiritual refreshing and awakening. They are supernatural in that they must be prayed for, prepared for and preached for. Revival must begin at the house of God. Lost people will become saved as God’s people get right. Evangelist Billy Sunday said,** “*Revival does two things. First it returns the church from her backsliding, and second, it causes the conversion of men and women.*”

**Let us look at our text. I believe there are at least three things that must occur for revival. Our text is Jehovah’s response to Solomon’s prayer. Jehovah’s response is conditioned upon three things taking place. God promises that “if” his people do certain things, then He will respond in hearing, in forgiving and in healing our land. Let us consider at least three things that must occur prior to revival. Every major revival, whether the revival in King Hezekiah’s day, the revival under King Josiah, or the revival that took place in Acts 2, at least three dominant things took place.**

## **I. Revival demands fervent prayer.**

**God said,** “*If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face...*” **He would act in response to such prayer. Revival demands the prayer of a Solomon (II Chronicles. 6:12-7:1). His prayer was earnest, sincere**

and fervent. His prayer came from a humble and contrite heart. His prayer was God glorifying. He implored the Almighty from the depths of His heart.

**Revival demands the prayer of an Elijah** (James 5:17-18). God promises that the *“effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much”* (James 5:16). Elijah’s prayer was one of the most unusual prayers ever recorded in the Bible. How many of us are so burdened for our country that we would ask God to stop the rain for three and a half years? Elijah was so burdened that his people would turn back to God that he asked God to withhold the rain and *“it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.”*

Most of us are so comfortable with our nice houses, cars and boats that we would not ever think of praying such a prayer to bring revival to our nation. However, that is exactly the kind of praying that is required to get a hold of the heart of God. Arthur Wallis, in *In the Day of Thy Power*, said, *“Let it be burned upon our hearts by the Spirit of God that this mighty movement that turned the world upside down was not only born out of prayer, but it brought forth prayer, and was maintained by prayer. Such praying, costly but indispensable, has ever characterized the great revivals of the past. As revivals are born out of prayer, so they are maintained by prayer; without it they cannot continue in purity and power.”*

Jonathan Edwards, whom God so mightily used to bring about America’s first Great Awakening, said, *“When God has something great for His church, it is His will that there should precede it the extraordinary prayers of His people.”* The revival of 1858 *“began with the intense longings of Jeremiah Lanphier. For some time he prayed alone, but then five others joined him and became what we now remember as ‘the Fulton Street Noon Prayer Meeting’ in New York City. There in Jayne’s Hall 6,000 met daily to wait on God in prayer. Before the revival ended, it had affected nearly every part of America. It’s influence extended to Princeton University, where 40 percent of the students were converted and 18 percent entered full-time ministry”.*

## **II. Revival demands faithful purging.**

As long as sin is tolerated in any form in our lives we will never experience revival. God’s response to Solomon was, *“If my people... turn from their wicked ways”* then I will hear, forgive and heal them. We must faithfully and honestly deal with the sin of indifference and lukewarmness. God is not going to hear our prayers as long as we tolerate bitterness, an unforgiving spirit or other sins mentioned in Ephesians 4:28-32. Psalm 66:18 says, *“If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me.”* We must purge out the sin from our lives. Hidden sin always brings God’s curse. It only took the sin of one man in Joshua 7 to withhold God’s blessing from the entire nation of Israel. The unconfessed sin of one individual within a congregation can withhold God’s full blessing from the entire congregation. Unconfessed, hidden sin brings God’s curse.

**In Acts 5, God emphasizes to the church the importance of maintaining purity within its ranks. It was no accident that God struck Ananias and Sapphira dead for their sin of deceit. God has placed this holy object lesson in the Bible to emphasize to us today the importance of purity within His church. God will not tolerate impurity within His church. He will withhold His blessing. We must “*purge out the leaven*” among us. I know this from my own experience.**

**So we learn that not only does hidden sin bring God’s curse; confessed sin brings God’s blessing. Proverbs 28:13 says, “*He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.*” In Acts 19:18-19 the new Ephesian believers “*confessed, and shewed their deeds.*” Verse 19 says, “*Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men.*” We need an old- fashioned burning of pornographic books, ungodly music and numerous other ungodly things that clutter our homes and blacken our minds and hearts. God’s people must faithfully purge out the sin within if we are to experience a mighty Heaven-sent revival.**

**When these Ephesian believers confessed openly their ungodliness and showed by their deeds the sincerity of their commitment to Jesus Christ, the Bible says in the next verse, “*So mightily grew the Word of God and prevailed*” (Acts 19:20). A.C. Stanley Smith said, “*The world cannot be expected to be conscious of its sins until the church is conscious of her sins.*”**

**The problem with America or the rest of the world cannot be blamed upon anyone but the church. Our nation is in the mess that it’s in today because the true church of Jesus Christ has sat idly by as freedom after freedom given to us by our forefathers has been stripped away. We have failed miserably in being “*the salt of the earth.*” We have hid our lights under bushel baskets instead of letting our lights shine boldly and brightly before a lost and dying age.**

### **III. Revival demands forceful preaching.**

**God said to His prophet Isaiah, “*Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgressions...*” (Isaiah 58:1). Look at God’s call to Jeremiah in Jeremiah 1:7-10: “*But the LORD said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD. Then the LORD put forth his hand and touched my mouth. And the LORD said unto me, Behold, I have put my word in thy mouth. See I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build and to plant.*”**

Revival demands forceful preaching like Isaiah and Jeremiah. These men were bold in their denunciation of sin and immorality. Oh, how we need a generation of bold forceful preachers who will not be afraid of people's faces but will faithfully, forcefully, convincingly and compassionately give forth God's precious Holy Word. People are hungry for the truth. Multitudes are perishing for want of the truth. *"How shall they hear without a preacher?"*

**Our preaching must do at least five things.**

**1. It must exalt the Savior (I Cor.2:1-2).**

Paul said, *"for I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."* *"He must increase, but I must decrease"* (John 3:30). Jonathan Goforth said, *"The call to revival must be a call to exalt Jesus Christ in our hearts as King of kings and Lord of lords."* He is Lord; there is no other! This must be our message: Christ crucified, risen and coming again.

**2. Our preaching must also expose sin.**

*"And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment"* (John 16:8). God commands all men everywhere to repent (Acts 17:30-31).

**3. Our preaching must be energized by the Spirit of God.**

Acts 1:8 states that we must have Holy Spirit power. Dr. Bob Jones Sr. said, *"It takes Holy Spirit unction to make orthodoxy function."* Our preaching must be characterized by Holy Ghost power. We are commanded to *"be filled with the Spirit."* Our preaching must always evangelize the sinner (Acts 20:20-21). We must have Acts 20:20 vision.

**4. Our preaching should always equip and edify the saints.**

Ephesians 4:12 say's the evangelist has been given to the church, *"For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."* If there was ever a day and age in which the saints needed stirring and equipping, it is in our day and age. I have never seen a day of such apathy and complacency as today. Many of the saints in our churches today are at ease in Zion. They are sleeping while the world goes to hell. May God help us equip the saints so that they will be challenged to get out and win souls and then disciple those who have been won to Christ. The goal of our Vision2020Asia ministry is II Timothy 2:2. It was never God's intention for the Pastor to do it all. It is the work of a God called evangelist to assist the God called Pastor in the building up the saints for the work of the ministry. A true evangelist will always have these five elements in every message he ever preaches. He will always preach messages that exalt the Savior, that are energized by the Spirit of God, exposing sin, evangelizing the sinner and equipping the saints.

**Conclusion:** Revival is the work of God within His church. It cannot be stirred up; it must be prayed down. It is not natural but supernatural. It is not ordinary but extraordinary, although revival should be the ordinary state of God's people. Revival is

not human; it is Divine. Today in many of our churches, psychology is more important than preaching. Organizing is more important than agonizing. Promotion is more important than Holy Spirit power.

In the Old Testament when God sent His prophets to warn the people against their indifference, coldness, callousness and bitterness, the inevitable result was revival or judgment. In Jeremiah 6:16 we read, *“Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein.”* In verse 19 we read God’s response, *“Hear, O earth; behold, I will bring evil upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it.”*

Through the Spirit-filled preaching of Jeremiah, God brought about a season of revival under the leadership of a young King named Josiah (See II Chronicles 34-35.). God mightily used Josiah. In II Kings 23:25 Josiah received this great commendation from God, *“And like unto him was there no king before him, that turned to the LORD with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him.”*

What a commendation! Oh that we might seek after God like Josiah. Eleven and a half years after Josiah’s death and the revival under his leadership, God brought swift judgment by the hand of King Nebuchadnezzar, and Israel was destroyed because they rejected God’s Word.

A renowned leader once said, *“The church is a sleeping giant, let her sleep.”* He knew the potential of the church of Jesus Christ. Do we realize the potential of the true church? Unless the true church of Jesus Christ awakens out of her sleep, multitudes will perish. May God grant us His mercy by awakening this “sleeping giant,” the true church of Jesus Christ! It is my prayer that God’s Spirit will speed the burden of this message to the far corners of the earth and grant a new awakening within His true church. *“O LORD, revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee.”*