



## Revivals And Church History :: Repentance precedes revival

Repentance precedes revival - posted by EAGLEFLYING (), on: 2020/10/16 19:57

The Ministries of Francis Frangipane

### Repentance Precedes Revival

A true revival does not just happen. There are conditions that must reside in the human heart before the Lord visits His people.

#### We Must Want Deliverance, Not Just Relief

Too often, ministries today seek to deliver people who are unwilling to repent of sins, who have not cried in their heart to God for help. The effect is that those prayed for may receive limited relief, but they soon fall back into sin and oppression. The key to successful deliverance is to discern if an individual is ready and willing to be released before we minister deliverance. Are they repentant? Have they put away their idols? Is their heart truly turning toward God?

God's pattern for us as individuals is also His pattern for the church and the city. Even as the Lord did not deliver us until we cried for help, so the war for our churches and cities will not be won until a significant number of us are crying to God in prayer. Christ's purpose in bringing the citywide church to prayer is to provide the proper heart attitudes to which the Almighty can respond.

Without the substructure of prayer and crying before God, deliverance, "binding and loosing" and other forms of spiritual warfare are significantly limited. Deliverance, according to Scripture, is the last stage of a process that began when a person's abhorrence for his present condition led him to cry to God for help.

#### The Deliverers

The Old Testament reveals God's pattern for deliverance and revival: In answer to the prayers and sufferings of His people, the Lord raised up deliverers. They were individuals who were anointed and empowered by God to defeat Israel's oppressors.

It is important to note that the effectiveness of these deliverers was never based upon their own worthiness or credentials. While they were uniquely sent by God, their arrival was synchronized with Israel's repentance. No repentance; no deliverance. As Israel cried to God, the deliverers were commissioned and anointed with the power of the Holy Spirit.

The essence of this Old Testament pattern for renewal can be applied to us in our day. We may not see actual "deliverers" as much as we will see revival emerge in those cities where prayer and repentance is deep and widespread.

Again, looking at the Israel model, national sin brought defeat and dominance by foreign powers. With foreign domination came the worship of demons and the complete seduction of Israel's heart by the enemy. As Israel blatantly defied God's laws, so came the economic, cultural and physical collapse of the nation. Where once the people enjoyed the blessing of God, now despair and misery dwelt upon the land.

It was in this context of suffering, of people genuinely and deeply crying to God, that the Lord raised up deliverers. These individuals led a repentant Israel into victory over their oppressors. As true worship was established, national peace and prosperity followed.

It should be noted that the route to revival was not set according to a timetable; it was not precisely scheduled. No one can forecast how long judgment might last or when repentance has so excavated the heart of sinful man that God is satisfied. This one fact will be true: The time it takes will always be longer than we expect. The determining factor is the acknowledgment of sin and the return to God. Once the core of the nation was securely turned toward God, healing for their land followed.

Nehemiah speaks of this pattern of repentance preceding national deliverance. He prayed:

"Therefore Thou didst deliver them into the hand of their oppressors who oppressed them, but when they cried to Thee in the time of their distress, Thou didst hear from heaven, and according to Thy great compassion Thou didst give them deliverers who delivered them from the hand of their oppressors." Nehemiah 9:27

We must not hurry this process nor be frustrated if our prayers do not immediately activate divine intervention. The Lord is waiting for the nation to break beneath the weight of its rebellion. Yet, in this we should be encouraged: Our intercession is the first fruits of what is destined to become a national response to the Almighty!

There may be, at times, flurries of spiritual activity, but before a national revival will come, there will be a nation crying to God. This period is called "the time of their distress," and it is not consummated in revival until the nation has been crying unto the Lord for a number of years.

#### Man's Misery, God's Heart

In the book of Judges this pattern occurs time and again. While Israel tumbled deeper into sin, God waited for the burden and consequences of Israel's sin to humble their souls. He waited to bring them back to Himself.

Yet, the Lord was not aloof from Israel's sorrows. Even when they were in rebellion, He felt their sufferings. When the Lord "could bear the misery of Israel no longer" (Judges 10:16), He sent them deliverers. The misery and desperation of Israel readied them for God.

We see this pattern in the Lord's encounter with Moses in Exodus. The Redeemer said,

"I have surely seen the affliction of My people who are in Egypt, and have given heed to their cry because of their taskmasters, for I am aware of their sufferings. So I have come down to deliver them." Exodus 3:7-8

Notice the Lord saw the affliction of His people; He heard their cries; He knew their sufferings. God is never far from the plight of mankind. In truth, He bears the misery of our society: Our distresses distress Him; our suffering becomes His sorrow.

Returning to our text in Exodus, observe also that it was not merely their prayers which God heard; He heard their cries. It is one thing to pray about a need, quite another to weep over it. It is those who mourn whom God comforts.

The Lord knew their afflictions and their sufferings. The prayer to which God responds is a constant cry, often born out of "afflictions" and "sufferings," as is occurring today in parts of Africa and Asia.

Perhaps the Lord has not fully answered us because our prayers are still comfortably contained within a schedule. In 1970 I came to Christ during the Charismatic Renewal. This move of God began in the constant, "day and night" cry of a million mothers. This was not the result of a mere hour of prayer; it emerged out of the continual cry of mothers (and fathers) who were deeply troubled about their children's involvement with drugs and rebellion. Their prayer was not a religious discipline, it was the heartthrob of their existence. Without the sophisticated machinery of spiritual warfare, the tears and weeping of their unceasing intercession prevailed before God, and He rescued their children.

Perhaps what delays revival in our times is that we are troubled, but we are not afflicted by the conditions of our society; though saddened, we are not yet weeping.

It must be acknowledged, however, that a growing number of God's people have truly surrendered to the vulnerability of Christ's compassions. They bear in their intercessions not only the needs of the people but the pain of the people as well. They are laying down their reputations, their jobs, yes, even their lives to see the sins of our society cleansed.

Although still a minority, these intercessors carry in their souls the anguish of their cities. They hear the cry of the oppressed; they know the suffering of both the unborn and the born. God is ready to respond to their prayer. Out of the womb of their distress, God shall bring forth deliverance.

The praying church should not limit the length of its dedication to intercession. God is looking for a life of prayer, not just a season. If the duration of time required to bring change can stop us, it is obvious that the preparatory work in our hearts is not deep enough to draw divine intervention.

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How does all this relate to revival? Spiritual renewal is the only antidote for our cities and our nation. It is God's answer to all who cry unceasingly to Him for help.

Lord, forgive us for wanting relief instead of deliverance, for looking for shortcuts instead of Your perfect will. Master, we know that Your heart cannot refuse the genuine cry of the afflicted, that You cannot long bear the misery of Your people without acting on our behalf. So, we cry to You today! Send the rain of Your presence back to us! Cleanse us from our lusts for comfort and apathy. Bring us to the place where You can honor Your integrity and bring revival to our land! For Your glory we pray. Amen.