

03 - a Call to Pray for North Korea: The Jerusalem of the East

by Ben Torrey

Ben Torrey emphasizes the urgent need for prayer for North Korea, drawing parallels to the biblical promise of restoration found in Isaiah 62.

Duration: 8:53

Scripture: Isaiah 62:1-7

Topics: "North Korea"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the promise of restoration for Pyongyang, the capital city of North Korea, as described in Isaiah chapter 62. The preacher emphasizes that God will not be silent about Pyongyang and its righteousness and justice will shine brightly. The preacher also highlights the command to pray for the establishment of Jerusalem and praises God's rejoicing over his people. The sermon concludes by expressing hope that just as Jerusalem was restored from desolation, Pyongyang too can experience restoration and be renowned throughout the world.

Transcript

Good evening, this is Ben Torrey once again. Over the past two weeks I've spoken about revival and about prayer. I've also mentioned North Korea in drawing attention to the fact that the great revival of 100 years ago occurred in what is now the capital of the atheistic Democratic People's Republic of Korea, that is, North Korea.

Today I want to focus on North Korea. Yesterday was actually the 100th anniversary of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Pyongyang. The heads of Korea's Christian denominations yesterday issued a call to the Christian world to pray for North Korea.

They declared this year of 2007 to be a year of prayer for that nation. It is truly a land that needs our prayers. I join in and support this call to prayer, for the Lord has put our neighbor to the north on my heart.

He called me back to Korea after many years away to prepare for the day when North Korea is fully open to the Gospel. After what I said last week about communing silently with God in prayer, how important that is and how much He enjoys it, it may seem strange or inconsistent for me to advocate specific strong prayer the way that I will in a moment, but let me assure you, it is not. There are many, many aspects to

prayer.

Over the years, I have come to learn that the topic is inexhaustible. There's always more to learn, to discover about prayer. What I want to share with you today is, in some ways, one of the most amazing things about it.

Several years ago, when I first began to raise the issue of the need to prepare for the opening of North Korea, the Lord led me to a passage of Scripture, a prophecy about ancient Jerusalem. That He is renewing now for the Jerusalem of the East, Pyongyang. It is Isaiah chapter 62, a beautiful promise of restoration.

I would like to share some thoughts about this passage and about prayer with you today. Let me read you the first seven verses. For Zion's sake, I will not keep silent.

And for Jerusalem's sake, I will not be quiet until her righteousness goes forth as brightness and her salvation as a burning torch. The nations will see your righteousness and all the kings your glory. And you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the Lord will give.

You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord and a royal diadem in the hand of your God. You shall no more be called forsaken, and your land shall no more be called desolate. But you shall be named, My delight is in her, and your land married.

For the Lord delights in you, and your land shall be married. For as a young man marries a maiden, so shall your sons marry you. And as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.

On your walls, O Jerusalem, I have set watchmen. All the day and all the night they shall never keep silent. You who put the Lord in remembrance, take no rest, and give Him no rest until He establishes Jerusalem and makes it a praise in the earth.

What a beautiful promise! God Himself will not keep quiet about Jerusalem. He will not be silent until her righteousness, her justice, goes forth as brightness. When we think of Pyongyang, can this be? Yes, it can.

When Jerusalem of old was destroyed and her people taken into exile, she was left as a desolate ruin, the habitation of jackals and rabbits. All who passed by her spit and scoffed. Who could believe that once again she would be restored and her name renowned throughout the earth? Who could believe that this beaten-down people and their destroyed capital city would rise to greatness again? While Pyongyang is not quite the same as ancient Jerusalem, I believe it is no accident that she became known by that same name.

Following the great revival, Pyongyang was a city filled with the glory of God, with churches old and new everywhere. Not only that, but from Pyongyang, as from Jerusalem, the word of God went out and her sons and daughters carried the gospel far and wide. Remember Jesus' promise in Acts 1.8, But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and at all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth.

Both names, Jerusalem and Pyongyang, mean a place of peace. How ironic. As we all know, this Jerusalem was destroyed in a dreadful war.

She fell to the enemy and her people were scattered. Now it has been sixty years. The time of her suffering is drawing to an end.

God will not be silent. Even as the name Pyongyang now conjures up thoughts of oppression, fear, weapons of mass destruction, horrendous prison camps, God has promised this will change. Hardly a name to link with justice and righteousness.

Can Pyongyang once again become famous throughout the world for all these things and for the glory of the true God of heaven and earth? She can and she will. Yet with this great and beautiful promise, so fitting for North Korea in all its details, read the whole of Isaiah chapter 62 carefully and meditatively. You will see.

With this promise there comes a great and amazing command to us. Verse 6. On your walls, O Jerusalem, I have set watchmen. All the day and all the night they shall never keep silent.

You who put the Lord in remembrance take no rest for yourselves. God calls us and sets us as watchmen to take no rest as we await that day. But what are we to do as we take no rest? Verse 7. And give him no rest until he establishes Jerusalem and makes it a praise in the earth.

We are to give him no rest. Can you imagine anything so amazing for the Lord to tell us to give him no rest? This is his command to us. To pray for Jerusalem, for Pyongyang, for North Korea.

And for how long must we pray? Until a very definite date. The day when Pyongyang becomes a praise throughout the earth. Mind-boggling.

God is calling us to pray to him for North Korea. For her deliverance and healing. This land that is so dark and broken needs our prayers desperately.

She is in a dangerous place and her people suffer greatly. There are many indications that the year of 2007 could be the worst famine year of them all. Crops were destroyed by massive floods last year.

Much of the world has stopped providing food aid. More and more resources go into an ill-conceived and paranoid defense posture. Pray for the international debates and negotiations that are going on with and about North Korea.

Even some of her highest officials have admitted their great need and more than once have asked Christian leaders to pray for her. Pray wisdom for the international community and for the leaders of North Korea. Pray that the Lord hasten the day of her release, when the prison camps will be opened and her people able to worship the Lord God freely and without fear.

Pray for God's provision. Pray that her broken infrastructures be rebuilt, that God's laws be established in the land. Pray that her people come to know Him and His great healing power.

Let us respond to our church leaders as they call for prayer. Let us respond to North Korea's own leaders in their request. Most of all, let us respond to our God's command to give Him no rest.

Pray for North Korea.

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