

Why Revival Tarries

by H.T. De Villiers

H.T. De Villiers calls for a desperate cry to God for revival amidst spiritual drought, emphasizing the need for holiness and prayer.

Duration: 46:08

Scripture: Isaiah 59:16, Joel 1:4-19, John 14:26

Topics: "Revival"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on the challenges and temptations faced when praying for revival in a world filled with iniquity. He shares his personal experience of feeling discouraged and questioning the effectiveness of his prayers. However, he finds inspiration in the biblical figure of Joel, who cried out to God in the midst of darkness. The speaker emphasizes the importance of being a revival intercessor with clean hands, a pure heart, and a consecrated life. He also draws parallels between the spiritual state of the people in Joel's time and the present day, highlighting the need for a true representation of the Christian life. The sermon concludes with a call to sanctify a fast, gather the people, and cry out to the Lord for revival.

Transcript

You may open your Bible and say, Joel, the prophet Joel. Do you know where you find it? Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel. Just a few verses here and there.

We read this fourth verse. That which the palmer worm hath left hath the locust eaten. And that which the locust hath left hath the canker worm eaten.

And that which the canker worm hath left hath the caterpillar eaten. Verse 14. Sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the old men and all the inhabitants of the land unto the house of the Lord your God, and cry unto the Lord.

17. The seeds rot under their clods, the garners are laid desolate, the barns are broken down, the corn is withered. 19.

O Lord, to thee do I cry, for the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness, and the flames hath burned all the trees of the field. 20. Yea, the beasts of the field pant unto thee, for the water brooks are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness.

Second chapter, verse 13 only. 21. Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God.

For he giveth you the former rain in just measure. Several translations for that in different Bibles. And he causeth to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.

So far. The prophet Joel, dear friends, gives here a very realistic account of a severe drought following a destructive plague of locusts and caterpillars. We in this country know something about it.

But this account, I take it, is also symbolical, a picture of the spiritual state of the people of Israel in Joel's day. It is a picture. And I see in it also an exact description of the spiritual state of our people in our day.

We too are a religious people, but we too give to the world a poor picture of what the Christian life really is. As a people, we are dry, very dry. Signs of the destruction wrought by the spiritual locusts are only too evident.

The seeds rot under the cloths. The corn is withered. The fire has devoured the pastures.

The water brooks are dried up. Now you know what the seed is, the Word of God. The Word of God lies buried under the cloths of ignorance, superstition, unbelief, sin, and unrighteousness.

Even in the lives of many Christians, the Word lies buried under the cloths of worldliness and neglect. Now when you listen to a message, dear friends, you must all the time apply it to yourself. All the time.

Don't hand it out to others. There are quite a few things that you have to apply to yourself already. Am I a dry Christian? Is the world lying covered under neglect in my house? What then has become of the green pastures and the waters where rest is? What has become of it? It's not there.

We read there of desert-like conditions. Well, they are still there. Psalm 23 is still in the Bible.

Not a word has been cancelled. It's still there. The pastures are as green as ever.

The river of God is full of water. But why then are the sheep, God's sheep, in such poor condition? Why are God's people so dry? I can think of only one reason. They do not heed the voice of the shepherd.

They do not follow in his footsteps. They expect him to follow in their footsteps. Yes.

I may be speaking to someone here tonight, a child of God. But dry spiritually. Lord, is that me? And trying to quench your thirst at the broken cisterns the world offers.

I believe there are many here tonight who tried that and found that it didn't work. And tonight their testimony is in the words of that beautiful hymn. You know it.

I tried the broken cisterns, Lord, but ah, the waters failed. E'en as I stooped to drink, they fled and mocked me as I whirled. How do we mock people? Years back in my life.

But now your testimony is now none but Christ can satisfy. No other name for me. There's life and light and lasting joy, Lord Jesus, found in thee.

Look it up in the hymn book. My latest is to learn a number of hymns. I have about 45 already in my head and in my heart.

Sometimes when I'm all alone I sing. I find it difficult now. I'm afraid I'll wake my wife because we're quite close together.

But it's a good thing early in the morning when it's dark and you feel down to start singing. I mean it. It's not a joke.

Sing loudly and the devil can hear. It helps you. Now where God opened the prophet's eyes.

These few words were by way of introduction. God opened the prophet's eyes to see the utter darkness, the spiritual drought, and the desperate need of his people. Thank God for that.

For my eyes are open to see down to body what's going on. But above and beyond all, God opened Job's eyes to see God. A man with a vision.

The greatest vision any man can have this side of heaven is the Spirit's vision of God. Got it? And it is the privilege of every child of God to have the Spirit's vision of God. Is that scriptural? I'm a schoolmaster, you know.

I'd like to ask questions in the audience. Who can give me scripture for that? I love John 14, 26. God says there, they who have my word and keep my word, the Father will love them, I will love them, and I will manifest myself to him.

That's clear, isn't it? And I will manifest myself to him. John 14, 21. Read it out.

Read it by heart. You fulfill the conditions. God will be true.

Our covenant with God, he will manifest himself to you. Job is encouraged and inspired as he looks to God and he prays, O God, to thee do I cry. There it is.

That's the time when he cried. When he saw the condition of his people and he had a vision of God. That's the time when you'll cry.

What a blessing in time of trouble to have someone to cry to. What a blessing in time of trouble to have someone to cry to. You got it? There's trouble and I have someone to cry to with a heart where there is no condemnation.

A heart cleansed by the blood of Jesus. A heart sprinkled from an evil conscience. Crying to God with confidence.

You think of the poor man who is unsaved. That woman has trouble. They have no one to cry to.

O God, to thee do I cry. One man in his generation for whom God was more than just a name. One man who feared God and believed God and had faith to cry to God.

Yes friends, thank God in the darkest periods of the world's history there has always been a Joel. God has his Joel's today. And when I wrote this down in my little notebook here, the question came to me.

Are you one of them? Am I one of them? A man crying to God in desperation. Eyes having been opened for the condition round about. That is the question you and I must answer alone on our knees.

Am I one of them? To those of us whose eyes have been opened to see the spiritual drought and destructive plague of locusts comes the exhortation. Comes the challenge to cry to God. Challenge.

Joel cries. O Lord, to thee do I cry. And then to us in the 14th verse.

Sanctify a fast and cry unto the Lord. I hope you will never forget this word cry. I must cry to God.

Why am I crying to God? What is the matter with me? These words mean much to me. They have a personal meaning to me. You go through your Bible, you old Christians, all over.

You have marks and notes and dates where God met with you. Words that have a personal meaning to you. So this word has a personal meaning to you.

I'll tell you why. Some years ago they came to me with power and conviction at the time when I sorely needed this message from heaven. The temptation as one sees iniquity abounding on every hand is to become discouraged and stop crying to God or to become formal in your cry to God, especially in your cry for revival.

That temptation came to me. See what's going on, Lord. What on earth is the good of me continuing to cry to God for revival? Things are getting worse.

Then I saw this man Joel in the face of seemingly hopeless circumstances crying to God and telling me to cry in this hour of darkness. Telling me to cry. But the result that I now see in the abounding iniquity and deepening darkness, the very reason for crying all the more desperately to God.

You see the point? It came to me as a challenge which I accepted for the honor and glory of the name of Jesus in the first place. Now I'm bringing this challenge to you tonight. You're going to face it.

Challenge. My prayer, friends, is that through this message, someone here may hear the call, may have a fresh vision of the Christ and adorn the glorious ministry of intercession, forbidding. God encouraged Joel, amongst other things, with promises of rain, former rains and latter rains.

Nearly there. I've been thinking of the former rains in Jerusalem and have been greatly blessed with the wonder of it all. 3,000 Jews had their eyes opened to see and to claim Jesus as Messiah.

It's a wonderful thing. A few hours time. Revival indeed and spreading far beyond the walls of Jerusalem.

Never thought of it. Jews. Speak to a converted Jew today and see what happens.

About Jesus. He'll curse you. It is important to note that the former rains came with the first coming of the Lord Jesus to this earth.

I want you to notice that. These former rains came as a result of Christ coming to this earth the first time. After his three years of ministry, his death, his resurrection and ascension and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

I want us to note specially that the revival was the immediate and direct result of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. In this connection, I was reminded of a word of Moody who said every great movement of God can be traced to a kneeling figure. And every great movement in Pretoria in the future can be traced and will be traced to kneeling figures.

When I read that of Moody's every great movement of God can be traced to a kneeling figure, of course my mind went straight away to Gethsemane. The kneeling figure in Gethsemane. Christ, where he prayed through.

It took him about three hours to pray through. Then he went out and said to Peter, put away your sword. The cup the Father gave me to drink, shall I not drink it? It's true.

God's revival can be traced to that particular kneeling figure. Oh, it came to me how the Lord is seeking kneeling figures today, men and women, who know what it means to pray through while others sleep. Even as Jesus prayed through while his disciples slept, seeking them.

Now we read in Zechariah 10.1, not now, I'm quoting to you. There God says, Ask ye the Lord for rain in the time of the latter rain, and he shall give showers of rain. Our covenant, God, you cannot lie.

Say, ask ye for rain in the time of the latter rain, and he shall give showers of rain. We are now in the time of the latter rain, have been for a considerable time. There have been scattered showers in many parts of the world since the day of John Wesley.

I believe that's where the latter rain period began, some 200 years ago. The revivals of England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Korea, part of China, part of Africa even, are but the forerunners heralding the announcers of the final latter rain that will come with our Lord's second coming to this earth. As the former rains began in Jerusalem after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and soon spread all over the known world, I take all of this, as the former rains began in Jerusalem and soon spread all over the whole world after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

So the end time latter rains will begin in Jerusalem after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit of grace and supplication on the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem and become worldwide. Did you know there will be a second pouring out of the Holy Spirit? A special one on Jerusalem and the house of David. Second time the heavens will be rent when Jesus comes the second time.

And for a second time there will be an outpouring of the Spirit of grace and supplication. Zechariah 12.10. You can look it up afterwards. And that revival will be worldwide from all over the world the nations will come to worship in Jerusalem from all over the world the nations will come to worship in Jerusalem.

Isn't that revival? It's in the Bible. This is the only worldwide revival I see in the Bible. And what revival it will be? When the remnant will have seen the remnant, you know the remnant of Israel the remaining one third will be left after that great tribulation.

When they will see Him whom they pierced and they will see the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness and will see their Messiah and will say to Him, My God for the first time and He will say to them, My people for the first time in whom I am well pleased for the first time. But now the great question dear friends is what are we to do now before the final latter rains come? Before Jesus comes? And here's where you and I come in. And the answer is we must cry to God to visit our country with one of those glorious showers with which He visited other parts of the world.

It's our only hope. It's our only hope in this time of darkness. This time of midnight darkness.

We must cry to God to visit our country with one of those glorious showers promised there in Zechariah with which He visited other parts of the world. Many are praying for this and I believe it's coming. God is no

respector of persons and if we fulfill the conditions revival will follow.

And what are the conditions? Very simple. First, holy living, holiness preaching. Second, prayer.

Remember that? These two are the conditions. Holy living, holiness preaching. And then prayer on the part of these people who live holy lives.

I remember Duncan Campbell in Cape Town the man God used so much in the revival in the Hebrides saying there from the platform I was glad to hear it he said it has been proved that all revivals in the past had their origin in the preaching of holiness. Now he must have got all of the right facts to state a thing like that. All revivals of the past had their origin in the preaching of holiness.

The question arises who must pray? See that's a funny question. All must pray. Who can pray? Who will have liberty and confidence and faith and the urge to pray? To cry? Surely not everyone.

I'm giving to you two answers. Now listen very carefully. We read in Psalm 24 Who shall ascend unto the hill of the Lord and who shall stand in his holy place? Definite question.

Very clear definite answer. And the answer is He that hath clean hands and a pure heart. Duncan Campbell the same man speaking of the revival up there in the Hebrides tells of men and women praying and waiting on God for revival for months right through the night many a time.

Months passed and nothing happened until one morning a young man in the company read the portion I've just read Who shall ascend unto the hill of the Lord and who shall stand in his holy place? Then looking down on his praying companions he said Brethren it seems to me just so much sentimental humbug to be praying as we are praying to be waiting as we are waiting if we ourselves are not rightly related to God. He said it's humbug, waste of time. You pray to God and you are not in the right relation with God.

Waste of time, never laughs. Gone, praying, waste your prayers. I know, I've got a hold on your life.

And then the strange thing happened. Then he prayed, suddenly. He lifted up his voice.

Oh God are my hands clean, is my heart pure? I believe at that moment God gave him the conditions. Clean hands, pure heart. God told him what the right relation ought to be.

Don't come to God with dirty hands and dirty heart. The account says, this happened a few years ago. He got no further.

At that moment there came to them such an overwhelming realization of God such a sense, such an awareness of the presence of God that three of them fell prostrate on the floor. Now that's common in revival. There's nothing strange.

When God comes down upon a meeting people can't sit on their chairs. They fall down. That's why I always pray, oh God we believe that always with us but do favor us with the consciousness of thy presence and awareness and realization God is here.

And when you get that awareness and that consciousness of the presence of God you can't go on like that. You simply can't. These three men fell down.

You read in Wesley's journal what happened in those revivals in those days. And you see those things can't happen in these days anymore. They ought to happen.

Depends on you and me whether they're going to happen or not in Pretoria. Oh, I pray that God, oh Lord get for thyself of Daniel's band in these days who will stand in Pretoria and be fearless though it means the lion's den or the fiery oven. Firmness.

Lord, I want to be one of them, you must say to yourself there. And that was the beginning of revival there. I need hardly enlarge on this.

We would come to a holy God and carry in his presence and cry to him to visit us with revival. We must see to it that our hands are clean, that our hearts are pure. It is our responsibility.

God made provision. God made provision for clean hands and a pure heart. You know what the provision is? The blood of Jesus.

The Holy Ghost. The rent veil. The word of God.

These four things. God couldn't do any more. They are there and these provisions are neglected and ignored.

Then we expect God to give us revival. By Christians. I'm not speaking about unsaved people or half-hearted Christians.

By real Christians. Our hands speak of our public walk before men. Our hands speak of our public walk outside.

All men can see. And our hearts speak of our inward condition before God. And of the inward condition before God is right.

Our walk before men will be right. Well that's logic. That's true.

You can understand that. Oh God, are my hands clean? This man said. Is my heart pure? What a cry.

This then is one answer to this question. Who can pray? Here's the second answer. Just as important.

Now listen. We find the second answer in the beautiful story of Elijah and the Baal Prophets. No time to read it.

You can find it in 1 Kings the 18th chapter. I would like you to read that tonight when you get time or tomorrow. Then you will realize what I'm saying here is true and why I'm saying it.

1 Kings 18th chapter. Read it through prayerfully. Now note, you'll first note there in verse 24.

Elijah says, I have done all these things at thy word. Undoubtedly this man Elijah spent much time alone with God. In the school of God.

Before he was finally sent forth. Because he says, I have done all these things at thy word. Not in the Old Testament, anywhere else.

He got it from God. There alone. And God said, this is the way you must set about it Elijah.

God had him in his school. Like God had Moses in his school for 40 years and told him exactly what to do. Exactly how to build a tabernacle and all those things.

So God had Elijah in his school. And then when he had done all these things as God said to him. The fire fell.

We read there in the Bible. The fire fell. If 13 or 14 stones had been used in repairing the altar, the fire would not have fallen.

Because God said 12. If no trench of the required capacity had been made round that altar. The fire would not have fallen.

Because God gave this specifications. Two measures of seed. If all the pieces of the block had not been put on the altar.

There is a piece lying on the other side of the altar. He didn't see it. The fire would not have fallen.

God said all. If only 11 barrels of water had been poured on that wood. The fire wouldn't have fallen.

God said 12 barrels. Four barrels three times. The lesson is obvious isn't it? Entire consecration.

All on the altar. All on the altar. Is it all on the altar? Awful thing to watch at such a time.

And the second is absolute obedience. However unreasonable God's way may appear to you. Seems very unreasonable.

Lord surely one bucket of water is enough. No 12. Here then we have the qualifications of the revival intercessor.

Clean hands. A public walk right before men. A pure heart.

My inward condition right before God. A consecrated life all on the altar. Not a little thing held back.

All on the altar. Walking in the light of the world. Absolute obedience.

Lord are my hands clean? Is my heart pure? He'll answer you. Ask him tonight when you're alone. Do business.

Don't let these days pass just like all conventions of the past. You get a little bit of blessing but tomorrow and the next day you are just where you are again in the world. These can pray in faith and with expectation and with patience and endurance.

In Isaiah 59 we have one of the many accounts of the spiritual state of God's backslidden people. Those who love Bible study can read through it. And in verse 16 we read.

And he saw that there was no man and wondered that there was no intercessor. Oh my dear friends when I read that years and years ago. Surely 30 years ago.

God looked. He saw the condition of his people. And he wondered that there was no intercessor.

I said Lord dearest one. Take me to thy school and make me thy intercessor. I'm not one now but thou canst take me like a little bit of clay and mold me and shape me.

And make me one of these intercessors they are looking for. Will you say that? Or is it a matter of unimportance to you? Oh just shake it off. And I feel sorry for you.

He wondered that there was no intercessor. What an arresting thought. Jesus in this loudest sea and age looking for intercessors.

Jesus looking for intercessors. Going up and down the ranks in this room tonight. Wondering where is that one I can call.

Jesus has a burden you may dear friends. You ever thought of it? God has a burden. He had to burden for the wall of Jerusalem.

That wall must be built up. And he could have sent men to go and build it. But he was looking for an intercessor.

Strange thing. And he found him away in Babylon in the king's house. Nehemiah.

And he shared his burden with Nehemiah. And Nehemiah prayed and he wept and he fasted. And he went and he built the wall.

God was burdened for the return of his people from captivity. The 70 years had passed. Jeremiah said 70 years in captivity and then God will bring them back.

And the 70 years had passed. And they were not coming back yet. And God looking for an intercessor.

He didn't bring them back. He found Daniel. You read in Daniel.

I think it's the 9th chapter. Wonderful isn't it? He wants to do something. He wants to save your wife or your husband or your neighbor or your son or your grandson or someone.

But he's looking for a real intercessor. Who will feel with him. With him he can share his burden.

What an honor. To have God sharing his burden with me and with you. What an honor.

I must hurry on. That's why I'm looking to see what I'll skip. Surely dear friends the truth is brought home to us by God's spirit.

We can never be satisfied with our prayer life. We think of Pretoria. God is burdened for Pretoria.

And he's looking for intercessors with whom he can share his burden. I'm quite sure there's more than one here tonight. Let's say Lord here's one.

Take me into thy school that it's taken Elijah. And make me and send me in thy time to be thy intercessor. To do what thou didst require me to do.

To see the fire falling. Thank God for the many today. Who are intercessors in this land of ours.

Because Jesus there interceded. A while back we spoke with Isaiah 59. There was no intercessor.

And that God said his right arm helped him and his righteousness. He came himself. His right arm is Jesus.

And his righteousness is Jesus. And Jesus interceded on the cross of Calvary. And that's why today you and I can be intercessors.

Otherwise we couldn't. But all the multitude who like the 7,000 in Elijah's day. You know in Elijah I thought he was the only man left.

And alone with God there on the mountain. God said to him, Elijah you're not the only one left. I have 7,000 who have not bent the knee to bail.

Elijah must have got a shock. 7,000 not bent the knee to bail. Saved, yes.

Not worshipping the devil any longer. But without fire. So without fire Elijah didn't even know about them.

God gave me a burden for the 7,000. I believe it's more near 70,000 Christians in our land. Truly saved but without fire.

Useless. Where is the God of Elijah? I heard a man praying once in a prayer meeting for rain. Where is the God of Elijah? He said there.

I thought it was a beautiful prayer. I thought my dear man said with love. Where is the Elijah of God? Where are the Elijah's of God? We know where the God of Elijah is.

But where are the Elijah's? God make me a little Elijah in a smaller edition. I've prayed sometimes. I must end there.

The temptation is to go on. But I see Mr. Scorsese behind this. Realize the time has passed.

Oh, when will the day come when we didn't bother about watches? Sitting with our Bibles around the table and taking time to think about these things and discuss them. To see the wonders of our God through his word. You know the story of Esther, don't you? Our people is about to be destroyed.

All people there in Babylon. Then that man, uncle Mordecai, Mordecai sent word to Esther. Who knows? But for this very time of crisis, you have been raised to become queen.

Don't you realize it? God saw these things ahead. And you became queen for such a time as this. You must intercede.

You must go to the king. And she did intercede. And in the process she risked her life.

And the people were saved. And that's what God says to you tonight. We are all kings and queens.

Don't you know it? Twice, twice in the revelation. Washed by the blood of the lamb and made kings and queens for our God and father. Kings and priests.

I a king, yes. You a princess. The king a queen.

This woman had influence with the king. Was the king's bride. The king loved her.

And she used that influence. And God wants you to use that influence. Unto thee do I cry.

God looking for intercessors. If you have not that cry in your heart, dear friends, I'm going to say a very serious thing now. Then you have grieved the spirit.

Speaking to Christians now. If there's not a cry in your heart to God for a while and for a condition round about you, then you have grieved the spirit. Because it is the spirit's cry.

My spirit and God's spirit is one spirit. And the spirit is looking for a heart where he can cry to God. And the spirit's cry becomes my cry.

I wonder how many of you tonight will say, Lord, I want to join your school. I want to be taught about this matter. I realize I'm not what I ought to be.

I've heard the message clearly tonight. I feel it's about time I get to business. May the Holy Spirit control and lead.

I do not know what to do.

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