



## *Network for Revival Prepare 24 November 2020*

In recent issues we have looked at six motives for prayer for revival: Pleading the love of God; Pleading the name of God; Pleading the Kingdom of God; Pleading the Blood of Christ; Pleading the promises of God and Pleading for those without hope. In the last issue we thought about Praying for angelic intervention.

### **Ways of praying for revival: Spiritual warfare**

We noted in the last issue that praying for revival is entering into the realm of the supernatural and we thought of the positive side – angels. But we need to remember that there are two sides to the supernatural.

If we are praying in depth for revival the devil will attack us. The attacks may be obvious or they may be subtle – but potentially effective. Some people go overboard on this and become extreme, even rather paranoid. But many of us soft-pedal the issue and even forget that our “enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8). We just put problems, discouragements, hindrances and perhaps even temptations down to normal human experience. We don’t recognise the devil’s involvement and strategy, so we don’t deal with the issues properly. However, “our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms” (Eph 6:12).

Remember that Jesus clearly took the demonic aspect seriously. He was, of course, severely tempted by the devil. He frequently cast out demons and he sent the disciples out to do the same (Mt 10:8). Paul warned us not to “give the devil a foothold” (Eph 4:27). He urged us “Put on the full armour of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes” (Eph 6:11). He predicted that some would “abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons” (1 Tim 4:1). James urges us to resist the devil (Jas 4:7). He wrote that those who claim to be wise but manifest “bitter envy and selfish ambition” actually have demonic ‘wisdom’ (Jas 3:15). John wrote that “the reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil’s work” (1 Jn 3:8). So, we must take seriously the demonic aspect.

We need to recognise we are in a spiritual battle. The devil hates the prospect of revival and will work overtime to prevent it happening. We need to pray for our own protection against his deceit and attacks which will increase when we are seriously praying for revival.

### **Take up the shield of faith**

Paul writes “take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one” (Eph 6:16). As we go deeper into prayer for revival the Lord will deepen our faith and we need that, partly to protect ourselves from the devil’s attacks. The Roman soldier’s large shield was covered with leather and could be soaked in water so that the enemy’s flaming arrows could be extinguished by it. I imagine myself holding such a shield when I pray strongly against the devil’s attacks in my prayer time for revival.

I also feel I can ‘hold the shield of faith’ against the devil’s attacks on other people who are vulnerable. I had to think carefully about this when I first started to do it, because I’ve never prayed like this before. I think it is legitimate because we can pray for others to be protected and set free even if they have not asked for help. We can pray for the devil to stop attacking them, so surely we can resist him on their behalf and take up our shield of faith on their behalf. After all, it all depends on the Lord acting. It a kind of priestly action – we stand between the person we are praying for and the devil. Jesus gave his disciples authority to drive out demons (Mt 10:1) and, by the nature of the case, it is reasonable to expect that this would happen sometimes without the demonised person requesting it, perhaps because they wouldn’t know they were demonised. Also, Paul prayed for the deliverance of the demonised fortune-teller who didn’t ask for it (Acts 16:16-18).

So, I ‘hold up the shield of faith’ for the protection of Christians who are under attack causing them to neglect serious prayer and Bible reading, to be into half-hearted, fleshly discipleship or to resist being filled with the Spirit or to disobey the Lord. I also hold it up for the protection of unbelievers who are under attack causing them to embrace

godlessness, materialism, unbiblical religion, occultism or false 'gods' and to suffer from spiritual blindness. I repeat that daily as I also 'hold up the shield of faith' for my own protection.

## Resisting the devil and his demons

Similarly, we can follow James' teaching "Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (Jas 4:7). I firmly resist the devil and rebuke his demons for the protection of other people – believers and unbelievers – against demonic attack, as well as my own protection. I specify the same specific attacks as in the previous paragraph.

I take up the shield of faith and pray these resisting prayers forcefully for I am doing battle using the words "I take up the shield of faith against .... I resist the devil/rebuke the demons over ...." But it must always be done in submission to God.

## An overview of the signs of the End

We are about to enter Advent which should remind us that Jesus urges us to look for the signs of the End. I think many Christians forget to do this or prefer not to do it. Two years ago, I circulated an article I had written entitled "Revival and the 'End Times.'"

(If you missed it you can find it at <https://christianteaching.org.uk/blog/biblical/revival-and-the-end-times/>).

It stresses that we are called to hasten the return of Christ by praying for revival.

**I now attach a new paper** I have written entitled "A brief overview of the signs of the End spoken of by Jesus." It is in tabular form and lists the signs Jesus told us to look for, with brief comments as to how these signs are manifested in today's world. The first page is about "*The beginning of the 'Birth Pains of Messiah' (Matt 24:8) – recurring signs pointing towards the return of the Messiah.*" The second page is about "*Later signs nearer to the return of Messiah*" and I add brief notes about the evidence of these signs in today's world too. I then add hyperlinks to articles on my Christian Teaching Resources website which expand upon these subjects.

NEXT TIME I plan to circulate the third page which is about "*Our response to the Signs of the End*" and states that the right response is **to be radically biblical in the power of the Spirit**. It will include brief notes on what this means in practice for individual Christians and for churches and hyperlinks to articles on my Christian Teaching Resources website which expand upon page 3, including "Radical Discipleship", and "Teaching on what the church should really be like."

## Relevant quotations about Revival

*Duncan Campbell* "Revival is not a time of religious entertainment, with crowds gathering to enjoy an evening of bright gospel singing. Revival is a going of God among his people, and awareness of God laying hold of the community. In a God-sent revival you do not need to spend money on advertising. In revival every service is an inquiry room; the road and hillside become sacred spots to many when the winds of God blow."

*R E Davies* "The most constant of all factors which appear in revivals is that of urgent, persistent prayer, powerful preaching and testimony and a deep awareness of the presence and holiness of God leading to a strong conviction of sin and repentance, followed by extreme joy when peace with God is received. *From: "I will pour out my Spirit."* God bless you in these difficult times. I do pray for you all.

Tony

**PS. Please remember to let me know if you change your email address.**

Revival is a supernatural event in the church and society. It is a work of the Holy Spirit which brings: an overpowering sense of God's presence leading to uplifting, inspired worship; an awesome sense of God's holiness leading to a deep conviction of sin, even amongst those outside the church; a supernatural drawing of people together and an outpouring of love for one another, all of which leads to a huge number coming to faith. People's lives and whole communities are transformed.