

Revival Cry: 'Lord, Rip Open the Heavens and Come Down'

"Oh, that You would rend the heavens! That You would come down!" (Isa. 64:1-2, NKJV).

On April 24, 2021, an Indonesian submarine sank in the southern Pacific Ocean. The news reported that the crew may have run out of oxygen and quickly sank below the *crush depth*—the pressure on the outside was greater than the strength on the inside. It is thought that it went down quickly because of an internal leaking.

This parallels exactly what is happening in America today as waves of confusion and chaos overcome the masses. Many are being crushed by the external pressures of life because the strength on the inside (their relationship with God) is not greater than the pressure on the outside.

As I recently wrote, "America's stage four cancer has metastasized to the family and the church. We are more depraved than ever before." But, believe it or not, I am hopeful."

How can I be hopeful amid such darkness and depravity? Because God is sovereign and controls the affairs of men. He often revives His people at very dark moments in history. Before an awakening broke out in Wales in 1904, for example, one observer noted, "It is ever the darkest hour before the dawn. The decay of religious faith, the deadness of the Churches, the atheism of the well-to-do, the brutality of the masses, all of these, when at their worst, herald the approach of the Revival."

Do we not see similar indicators today—dead churches, the decay of religion, the rise of rebellion and brutality? Don't give up! Instead, prepare the soil of your heart so that God

can *rend the heavens* and release a spiritual downpour. (More can be found in my new book, *Oh God, Would You Rend the Heavens?* See below.)

He Hears the Cries of His Children

Isaiah 64:1 indicates that desperation, along with repentance and humility, capture God's attention: "Oh, that You would rend the heavens! That You would come down! That the mountains might shake at Your presence." "Rend" means to burst, to blow out, to explode. What an awesome verse about an awesome God. Like any parent, He hears the cries of His children as they cry, "Oh God, would you rip heaven open and come down and help us? We are lost without you."

Yes, God is everywhere—what theologians refer to as *omnipresence*. So how can God come down if He is already here? The prophet is pleading for more of God's presence and for the overwhelming power of the Spirit to come upon us.

There are times when God seems distant, hearts feel dry, and evil is praised throughout the land. But when God comes down (literally, upon His people), we experience the joy of His presence—evil is overturned because praying men and women seek Him like never before.

As the old-timers used to say, "God heard our cries and showed up today." This is revival. This is God coming down! Would be to God that the nations would tremble again at His presence (Isa. 64:1–2).

Who Can Stop God Almighty?

Think for a moment: Who can stop God almighty? Like Joshua and Caleb, we too can say, "We are well able to take the land" (see Num. 13:30). Like David, we too can cry out, "Who is this enemy who dares to come against the living God?" (see 1 Sam. 17:26). Like the three Hebrew men in the fire, we can also declare, "My God will deliver me, but even if He doesn't, I

will not bow to you" (see Dan. 3:17–18). And like Elijah who told 850 false prophets that God would answer by fire, we too can be assured of victory (see 1 Kings 18:24). God plus one is the majority!

What entity can ruin His plans? What leader can overpower Him? What government can override Him? What army can defeat Him? "What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31b). Isaiah said that "even the mountains shake and tremble in His presence." He no doubt had Exodus 19 in mind when he penned those words. Mount Sinai was covered with smoke when the Lord's fire descended on it. The whole mountain trembled violently.

God often shakes the physical to get us to respond in the spiritual. Are you being shaken today? Is our nation being shaken? Do you see the calamity, decadence and perversion all around you? If so, then why are so many "Christians" stagnant, inactive and lifeless? Why are they not hosting *rend the heavens* prayer meetings and worship nights? Why aren't churches packed and adding more services to accommodate the hunger of God's people?

The need to rend the heavens has never been greater.

Never Let Go When God Shows Up

Do we really believe all this evil will simply reverse itself? No, it's only going to get worse unless God's people pull down heaven. It's time to afflict the comfortable and comfort the afflicted. We must cry out, "Oh God, would you rip heaven open and come down?" We must wait on God and seek Him like never before, because He "acts for the one who waits for Him" (Isa. 64:4b).

This type of waiting expects something to happen and waits patiently for it. When we wait, anger doesn't influence us, impatience doesn't drive us, impulse doesn't derail us and fear doesn't stop us. The disciples prayed in the upper room

until heaven opened and the Spirit came down. The filling of the Holy Spirit forever changed them. They were hungry for more of God. Can you say the same?

Many years ago, a very old man who experienced a revival when he was younger was asked why the revival ended. His eyes were filled with holy fire when he cried, "When you lay hold of God, never, never, never let go!" Let this be a warning as well as a reminder to never let go.

When you were first born again, you had this fire, didn't you? And then life happened. Prayer and reading the Word gradually became an afterthought. Yet nationwide revival begins with personal revival—believers one by one begin to seek God again, and before long, there are family revivals and then churchwide revivals and then community revivals. Yes, it can happen, but the seeds must be planted by individual members of the body. In other words, it begins with you.

Are we truly praying: "Oh God, rend the heavens and come down!"? Are we welcoming this type of downpour in our churches, or are we extinguishing it because of pride, sin, doubt and unbelief? It's time to break up our fallow ground and seek the Lord while He still may be found (Hos. 10:12). *We provide the sacrifice; He provides the fire.* {eoa}

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SPECIAL NOTE: The new book, *Oh God, Would You Rend the Heavens? Understanding and Contending for a Genuine Spiritual Awakening*, is available here.