

Prepare Yourself for the Roar of Holy Spirit Outpouring This Year

I sense that 2018 is the year of the roar of the Lord. In fact, the Holy Spirit gave me eight different roars that were going to be released in 2018, either starting or noticeably accelerating. One of them was the roar of the Ruach HaKodesh, the roar of the Holy Spirit.

A Cry From Behind Closed Doors

Recently, the Holy Spirit allowed me to see a brief vision. I saw the image of an influential pastor in his office. Didn't know who he was specifically, I just knew that this person led a recognized, popular and successful church. I sense the Lord is wanting to change how we gauge and see success.

We can have all the success in the world, and yet be impoverished compared to what God wants to do through us. Yes, we celebrate our ministry successes by giving glory to God. But success cannot just be measured by the attendance of weekend experiences or how many people show up to membership classes, or what kind of response our events and conferences received. It's not about book deals, social media stats and marketing, although these factors are not bad. Good can become evil when we choose to level off at good when, in fact, we could have God.

Success is not how professional our worship team sounds, how state of the art our technology is, or even how closely our children's ministries resemble Disney World or Universal Studios. We could boast all of the contemporary ministry bells and whistles—none of which is inherently bad—and yet still be destitute.

Consider Jesus' sobering evaluation of the Church in Sardis: "I know your works, that you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead" (Rev. 3:1). We will come back to that word "reputation" later. It's shocking, though, that we can have the reputation, or outward appearance of being alive, and yet be considered "dead." Sounds a lot like what Paul described as "having a form of godliness but denying its power" (2 Tim. 3:5a).

Back to the vision. I see a pastor figure sitting in a darkened office with the window shades/blinds closed. He is leaning over his desk, crying out from a deep guttural place in his spirit. You cannot fake this cry; it's the cry of the barren womb. It's the cry of a Hannah who doesn't care about reputation; she just wants a son (see 1 Sam. 1:1-20). The author of Proverbs describes the barren womb as one of the four things that never are satisfied—they never say "enough" (see Prov. 30:16).

Immediately, I remembered John Kilpatrick, the pastor during the historic Brownsville Revival (1995-2000). In the days leading up to the revival, July 15, 1995, Kilpatrick was a desperate man. Before revival broke out, Kilpatrick was enjoying a measure of success. He had a TV ministry. He had the respect and love of the congregation. The church was prospering on all fronts. I know specifics were different back in the 1990s, but ultimately, Kilpatrick was enjoying what many leaders are walking in today. And yet, he was gripped by a poverty that no numbers, respect or media exposure could fill. It was the poverty of a hungry spirit that knew there was so much more than He was presently experiencing. This compelled Kilpatrick to drive over to the church sanctuary in the middle of the night, lay down prostrate over the front pew, and cry out from the depths of his anguished, thirsty soul: "Oh God, there's got to be more! I need You, Lord!" I know it's not cool to consider ourselves an impoverished people, but the cry of a poor spirit is considered by Jesus to

be a blessing (see Matt. 5:3).

Back in my vision, I sensed this nameless, faceless influential pastor represented a generation of leaders who are burnt out with the “same old, same old” when it comes to doing church and ministry. They’ve done everything in the books, and yet, are still absolutely desperate for something supernatural: for God to rend the heavens and break in with His power. I see the hunger of John Kilpatrick being represented in the cry of new generation of millennial church leaders. They are tired of the gimmicks, they want God. *But how?*

I believe a price has to be paid. To experience a true move of God, it demands a people who are willing to say a costly and consistent “Yes” to the Holy Spirit’s movement and manifestation. We must be willing to say, “Holy Spirit, I want You—on Your terms, not mine. I want Your Presence more than my preference.” History clearly shows the results of this kind of hunger.

The Hovering Presence of the Spirit

At the same time, while pastors and leaders are crying out in the secret place for a fresh touch of the Spirit, I see entire congregations being visited by the hovering presence of the Spirit. What does this look like?

Look at Genesis 1 and notice how the Holy Spirit hovered over the waters at Creation (see Gen. 1:1-2). He was hovering, brooding. Nothing explosive happened until a decree was made from the Father.

Right now, in the church, I believe we are seeing evidence of the Spirit brooding as we witness an increased intensity in praise and worship, interest in prayer and fervency for outreach and service. These are signs that the Holy Spirit is moving among us. And yet, the brooding presence and the explosive presence are two different dimensions. Every day,

people are growing dissatisfied with religion and disinterested in trendy, cool Christianity. Regardless of people's theological upbringing or denominational backgrounds, I sense that a strong population in the body of Christ, particularly young people, want to see God actually do what Isaiah 64:1 cries out for: Rend the heavens and come down.

Yet this is where the spiritually hungry pastors and church leaders factor into the equation. Like in Genesis 1, the Spirit is waiting for an announcement. He was waiting for the Father to say "light be!" In our case, the Spirit is not going to just barge into our churches and disrupt everything; that would prove disastrous, especially if the pastors and leaders didn't want anything to do with "that Holy Spirit stuff." Rather, He is looking for a few radical friends who are willing to lay everything down—namely their reputations—to see God move in His fullness, and thus, see cities, regions and even nations transformed by the Gospel of the kingdom. What will this look like? People in the earth bringing the cries of their heart into agreement with the decree of the Father in heaven. You see, the same Father who decreed light be at Creation also made a decree concerning the move of the Holy Spirit. Simply stated, He said: "I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh" (Acts 2:17b). When we give voice to this decree of outpouring in our hearts, with our mouths and through our actions, I believe we position ourselves for that combustive explosion of the Spirit.

I am not content with a theology of Holy Spirit outpouring and open heavens without seeing the manifestation. I want to see what it looks like to see churches, families, cities and regions experience the blessing of a torn-open heaven (Isa. 64:1). I want to see the resources of one world flow into this world through an *ekklesia* that serves as the legislating, governing body of Christ in the earth, exercising authority in the spiritual airways.

I prophesy that the hovering of the Spirit will escalate into

obvious and marked “holy moments.” These are definable moments in the midst of our services and gatherings where the atmosphere is simply electric with God. Everyone recognizes it. In fact, to go on with business as usual would just feel completely wrong, like one was shutting down what God wanted to do in that moment.

It will be in these “valleys of decisions” where pastors and leaders will have the opportunity to “go for it” and say yes to what the Spirit wants to do. Or, sadly, they will also have the ability to move on with the program, completely shutting down the potential for landscape-changing revival. Even those who legitimately cried out for the move of God, interestingly enough, have the potential to say no to it.

The Idol of Reputation Is Restraining the Move of God

In studying the history of significant moves of God, both past and present, I’ve noticed a recurring common denominator. Those that God used as either catalysts to help ignite revival, or stewards to help sustain it, made a decision to completely surrender their reputation.

There is no place for the exaltation of personal reputation if we want to see a move of God. If we really want to experience the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and every blessing that accompanies it, we need to truly follow the model of the Suffering Servant, and be willing to make ourselves of *no* reputation (see Phil. 2:). Not some reputation; no reputation. If there is a trace of the love of reputation in us, I believe it can hinder us from stepping into the fullness of what God wants to release into the Earth. He’s looking for those who are all in, completely yielded. Not perfect-yielded.

I’m convinced that one of the key restraining agents for the move of God is the idol of reputation. It’s an idol because when we are motivated to preserve and guard our personal reputation, any prayer we pray for “revival” will have unseen,

unheard strings attached. God can move—just as long as He doesn't do anything that messes up my_____ (fill in the blank). Life. Church. Ministry. Public persona. After all, "I've got a good thing going here." That attitude must die if we are to break through the self-imposed ceiling of "ministry" and begin seeing God manifest in our midst.

Some heroes in modern revival include pastors John Kilpatrick, John and Carol Arnott, Randy Clark, Bill and Beni Johnson, Karen Wheaton, Patricia King and Heidi Baker. I personally know that each of these leaders paid a price to see what they saw—the price of their reputations. What did they receive in exchange? God moving in their midst and touching the nations through their yielded lives.

A Divine Synergy that Will Produce a Revival Explosion

We've seen what happens when leaders say that uncomfortable, but glorious "yes" to the holy moments of God. We get the Toronto Blessing, the Brownsville Revival and the Smithton Outpouring. We get Bethel, the International House of Prayer, the Ramp and Iris Ministries. History notes these amazing lightning-strikes of the Spirit, where regions and generations are touched by outpouring. I sense we are stepping into a season where lightning- strikes of God will not be exclusive to one church, but rather, a collective of churches throughout cities and regions. I believe it was author and minister Tim Sheets who spoke of a day coming when people would have access to a center Holy Spirit outpouring within a 15-minute drive. Let it be, Lord—Any church that says yes to the move of the Spirit. And these explosive lightning-strikes of God will be the result of two things coming into collision: The secret place cry of the pastors and leaders combined with the desperation of the people who attend church week after week.

Yes, I prophesy the lightning-strikes of the Spirit are coming to local churches. It's the local church, not the revival center, where everyday people come, week after week, for

community, service and spiritual development.

A Vision for Revival and Reformation

The Lord gave me a significant word in 2017 about the marriage of revival and reformation. It's easy to see the burning bush encounter of Exodus 3 and get caught up in the overt "revival" symbolism. We see the fire of God, an unusual manifestation of God's presence and encounter the holiness, awe and fear of the Lord. I love all of the things, and yet, if revival becomes our driving focus, I believe the very thing we wish to see transform the church will only go so far. God wants to come "down," so He can come out. In other words, He wants to move powerfully in our midst and encounter us, so that, like Moses, we experience His fire and also hear His voice. And when that voice speaks from the fire, it commissions us to become societal reformers, like it did Moses in Exodus 3 and even the prophet Isaiah (see Isa. 6).

I prophesy that in this season, as the church opens its doors to the unrestrained move of the Spirit, there are going to be dynamic and dramatic encounters that people have in the presence of God. The people who have these encounters with the fire of God are the 98 percent of everyday people who attend church week after week who have no aspirations to be pulpit preachers or international ministers. They have career ambitions. They have trade skills. They have passions, talents and desires that make them uniquely qualified to occupy certain spheres of influence.

The Lord is passionately pursuing everyday people, for He wants to invade everyday places with extraordinary power. This assignment is not exclusive to "revival people." Every day, normal people called to medicine, government, education, politics and media. People who work 9 to 5, Monday – Friday, for the Lord wants His presence in the places where the people go.

The goal is not to create a separate supernatural revival culture, where the move of the Spirit becomes exclusive to special events, conferences, revival hubs and arenas outside of the local church. These are absolutely necessary as outlets that pour into the church, but I sense the objective of the Lord in this hour is a Holy Spirit reformation in the local church that produces cultural revolution.

What Will Happen in the Day of His Power?

Pastors and leaders are crying out for more of God in the secret place.

Congregations and local church communities are increasing in hunger for the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is hovering over local churches, noticeably charging the spiritual climate.

Next, the church will be faced with a decision: say “Yes” to the holy moments the Spirit is extending—which demand a dead reputation and a complete yielding to the move of God—or say “No” and continue with business as usual, all the while, living dissatisfied because we are unwilling to slay our reputation so that Jesus can rise in our midst in Holy-Spirit power.

For those who take the ultimate glorious plunge with a “Yes,” I see local churches radically shifting. A new reputation will be established. These local venues will become known in their communities—not because of their personalities, programs or production value, but because of the presence of a person moving powerfully in their midst.

People won’t come because of some celebrity speaker or dynamic personality; they will come because word got out that a living God is moving among those people. I see two things: a normalization of the gifts of the Spirit, including healing, prophecy, deliverance and other demonstrations of power. And

yet, I don't see those becoming focal points; they will be seamless byproducts of God moving in the midst of His people. More than anything, I see the days ahead being marked by glory. Presence. Fire. Awe. Fear and trembling before a holy God. Unusual manifestations. Weight. Yes, even provocative miracles—signs and wonders that provoke responses from entire cities and regions because they cannot be ignored or avoided. I see the desperate, the seeker, the hungry and the thirsty coming and being touched dramatically by the fire of God.

For the Lord spoke to the leadership during the Toronto Blessing in the 1990s, saying, "I'm going easy on you now," as He was preparing the people for a day of His fullness and power, a day that had not yet been seen or experienced during the revivals of the 1990s. I prophesy we are stepping into that day of glory.

The signs are all around. Even leaders of past revivals such as John and Carol Arnott would say that the climate in the church is similar to the season preceding the global outpouring in 1994, but what's coming will eclipse what came. So what will we do? Will we say yes to the Holy Spirit and no to our reputations? It may be a painful exchange at first, but the testimony of every revival leader, both alive today, or chronicled in the pages of history, is ample proof that what we lay down is nothing compared to what we pick up. If seeing God move in this generation means we lay down what people think about us, so be it! We want God!