3. Revival Changes Nations

On Fire with the Holy Spirit

Will you not revive us again, that your people may rejoice in you? (Psalm 85:6).

My goal with this study is to build faith for revival by showing how the destiny of Western nations was changed by intercessory prayer. God waits for us to respond to His promise, "If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land" (2 Chronicles 7:14). We'll also talk about how the nation of Argentina was changed by intercessory prayer and revival. Then, we'll look at how God motivated Daniel to begin praying for the Jewish people to return to their land from Babylon, i.e., how the destiny of a nation was changed by intercessory prayer. Lastly, we'll talk about several prophetic Scriptures that speak of a revival in these last days for Israel and the world, which will inspire faith to begin to cry out for revival and change for our world.

Prayer and Revival Change the Destiny of Nations.

Can I prove that statement above? Let's think about Nazi Germany before and during the Second World War. After some time in Vienna, Adolf Hitler moved to Munich, where he was brought into deeper levels of the occult. The original members of the Nazis (The National Socialist Party) were hard-core Satanists. Pastor David Brown wrote an article called: *Adolph Hitler's Occult Connections*. In that article, he writes:

It was the Nazis who led a willing Hitler into deeper levels of occult involvement. Dietrich Eckart, an occultist of the highest degree, and a practitioner of black magic bragged before he died; "I have initiated him (Hitler) into the 'Secret Doctrine,' opened his centers of vision and given him the means of communication with the Powers...I shall have influenced history more than any other German.1

The demons influencing Hitler used him to murder more than six million Jewish people in Europe in his quest to completely wipe out the Jewish nation. If the British and American forces under General Montgomery in Egypt at the Battle of El Alamein hadn't stopped the German advance eastward across North Africa, the entire population of Jews in Palestine at that time might have been wiped out. In all, over seventy-five million people were killed in the Second World War.

Before the campaign to stop Hitler in North Africa, Britain was on its knees as a nation as the German military advanced across Europe. In the early months of the war, Britain stood alone against Germany, for the United States did not enter the Second World War until December 11, 1941. British soldiers in France were pushed back to Dunkirk on May 26, 1940, with Adolf Hitler having control of most of Europe by that time. Hitler only had to beat Britain. The Nazis were motivated by occult power, and if the Allies were to overcome Nazi tyranny, then it had to be by superior firepower in the form of spiritual warfare prayer. Our media does not give credit

to God's intervention of the hearts of 120 intercessors that stood with prayer warrior Rees Howells in England.

In his book, *Rees Howells Intercessor*, Norman Grubb2 writes about the life of Rees Howells, a man gifted much in the area of intercessory prayer. Rees Howells was led by the Holy Spirit to gather together 120 of the most gifted prayer intercessors called to fight in prayer as if they themselves were in the trenches. As British forces retreated to Dunkirk to evacuate to England, the government of Britain called for a day of fasting. In answer to prayer and fasting, God brought a fog over Dunkirk, France, so that the German air force could not bomb the British army of 335,000 assembling there to be evacuated by boat to Britain. Due to the North Sea being so uncommonly calm, many fishing boats, my grandfathers included, sailed the twenty—two miles across the English Channel to rescue the British Army on the Coast of France.

Many wonder why the Germans did not destroy the British army at Dunkirk, but Hitler overruled the wishes of his generals after his horoscope influenced him. God used Britain's secret army of intercessors to make a difference by engaging in spiritual prayer warfare. While Hitler prepared an invasion fleet, he started strategically bombing Britain's airfields and significant cities. Britain was down to very few fighter aircraft, i.e., the Spitfires and Hurricanes, capable of knocking down Hitler's bombers in what was called the Battle of Britain. The situation was so grave that King George VI, the King of Britain, went on national radio calling for a day of prayer and fasting for the whole nation. Such was the ominous feeling that Britain was about to be invaded and overrun.3

The most amazing thing happened as these 120 intercessors prayed and wept and called on God to save the British Isles. Adolf Hitler, against all the advice of his generals, suddenly changed his mind about attacking Britain with his invasion force. He directed all his forces against Russia in the East, breaking his peace treaty with Josef Stalin of Russia. Britain was saved, and America entered the war. God uses prayer. Was this just coincidence? No, as the prayer warriors interceded, God frustrated the plans of the evil one and turned the war completely around due to the humble prayers of a nation and 120 trained people of prayer.

Do you think God takes sides in wars between one nation and another? What motivates Him to listen to one nation's prayers against another? Is there such a thing as a moral high ground?

Interestingly, Hitler was intent upon wiping out the Jewish people. We see something similar in the book of Esther, where Haman sought to destroy the entire Hebrew race. Then, there was also Pharaoh's plan to kill every male Jewish child in the time when Moses was born. The enemy intends to steal, kill, and destroy. God calls the Church to wage an intercessory prayer war against demonic influences that use people for destructive ends: "For 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" (Ephesians 6:12). Let's look now at how God changed the destiny of a nation by bringing revival from a group of people that stood and prayed for Argentina.

² Norman Grubb. Rees Howells Intercessor. CLC Publications, 1952, pp. 285-292.

³ http://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id=45841&forum=40.

Argentina Changed by Intercessory Prayer

A young man, Alexander, and his gang of rebels sat in the front row of a revival meeting in Buenos Aires, Argentina, aiming to disrupt it. God convicted him, and he repented. His gang began to leave but fell under the power of the Spirit, and all were converted to Christ. Two of the converted rebels later went to the Bible school, where Ed Miller taught in the little town of City Bell, just outside Buenos Aires. In June 1951, he was led to cancel lectures so that the whole Bible School could pray for revival every day.

The former rebel, Alexander, a teenager of Polish descent, was still in prayer long after midnight when he sensed a strange feeling of something pressing down upon him and an intense light surrounding him. A heavenly being enfolded him with His arms. The boy was terrified and fled back to the Institute. 'The heavenly visitor' entered the Institute with him, and in a few moments, all the students were awake with the fear of God upon them. They began to cry out in repentance as the Spirit of God dealt with them.

On the next day, the Lord came again to Alexander, giving him a message and challenging them to pray for God to come in a fresh way to Argentina. The Bible school became a center of prayer till the vacation time when teams went out to preach across their city. It was the beginning of new stirrings of the Spirit across the land. They continued in prayer for four months, eight to ten hours a day, with constant weeping. Bricks became saturated with tears. One student prayed against a plaster wall daily, weeping. After six hours, his tear stains reached the floor. After eight hours, his tears began to form a puddle on the floor. While in prayer, the Lord gave prophecies to the Bible school that God would fill the largest auditoriums and stadiums; these words were spoken at a time when the average congregation in Argentina was thirty people.4

Those praying for a revival tried to get a well-known healing evangelist to come to Argentina, but he was fully booked up, and it seems that he wasn't God's choice. A little-known healing evangelist called Tommy Hicks received a word from God that he was to go to Argentina. A friend of his later confirmed this. He spent all the money he had on the plane ride to Buenos Aires, the capital of Argentina. While he was sitting on the plane and praying to himself, the Spirit of God spoke to him the word "Peron." Not knowing what that word meant, he asked the stewardess, who told him it was the name of the president of Argentina, Juan Peron. He concluded that he had to see the president. The year was 1954.

Upon his arrival in Buenos Aires, Tommy Hicks met a committee that was organizing the evangelistic crusade. He told them that God had spoken to him about finding a stadium that would seat at least 25,000 people. The committee thought he was crazy, considering that 2,500 would be far too large for his meetings. When Tommy told the committee that President Peron would give them the stadium, they laughed. Peron was known to be intolerant and uncooperative with Christian leaders. Argentina was mostly Catholic, with less than 2% of the population being Protestant. Peron was a dictator who carefully monitored every public meeting, and his wife, Evita, was deeply involved in occultism. However, the Spirit of God urged Tommy Hicks to go boldly to the presidential palace to see Peron, even though he was utterly alone. Dr. Edward

Miller, a witness of much that happened in the early days of the Argentine revival, writes about it in his book, *The Secrets of the Argentine Revival*. He writes:

Obtaining the use of press and radio was ridiculous even to consider. Under Peron's decrees, all religious activities were closely monitored and censored. All meeting schedules had to be reported to the police authorities sixty days in advance. Special permission had to be granted for any special meeting, and it was extremely difficult to gain approval for large gatherings. Records of all activities were kept in government files. Tommy's request was unfeasible; furthermore, it had never been done before. The prevailing mood of the committee did not indicate the possibility that any miraculous governmental change of decrees was even remotely possible. However, God had sent Tommy Hicks to Argentina, and if the Lord had told him to speak to Peron, then talk to Peron, he must. The committee warned him that high American government officials had been insulted and refused an interview, so how could an unknown, unrecognized, and unimportant preacher from the United States ever get an audience with Peron. But Tommy Hicks believed in his God, and he went to his hotel room to pray. God had sent him, and God was bigger than any dictator.

The next day Tommy, with an interpreter, walked up to the *Casa Rosada* or Pink House, where the government offices were located. As they neared the door, an armed guard, who also served as a porter, stopped them with a machine gun aimed at Tommy's chest and asked brusquely, "Who are you? What do you want?" Pastor Hicks carefully explained to him what he wanted; to hold a salvation—healing crusade. The more Tommy explained, the more interested the guard became. Finally, the guard asked, "Do you mean to say that God can heal?" "Yes, He can, and He will," replied Tommy. "Well, can He heal me?" queried the guard. "Yes, He can. What is your problem?" asked Tommy. "I have hepatitis, and my liver is killing me right now," the guard answered. "Give me your hand," responded the evangelist, and right there, he prayed the prayer of faith. The power of God surged through that guard's body, and in a moment, his pain and sickness were gone.

Feeling the power of God, the guard was utterly astonished. He instantly felt a release from his pain. In total amazement, he said, "Why it's all gone; all the pain is gone!" "Of course it's gone," replied Tommy, "God has healed you." The guard responded, "You come back tomorrow, and I will get you in to see the president. The next day the guard greeted Tommy and his interpreter cordially and escorted them to President Peron's door. The president welcomed Tommy and his interpreter and after asking them to be seated, asked the reason for their coming. Pastor Hicks carefully explained to Peron the plans for the citywide salvation and healing crusade planned, also asking for full rights for the evangelicals to meet in stadiums and arenas of the nation. He then explained the way of salvation and healing to the president. President Peron, at that time, was suffering from a particularly advanced case of a skin disease called psoriasis. No physician had been able to cure him, and it had become steadily worse, even causing Peron to have to deny all photographs of himself.

Peron, listening in amazement to Pastor Hicks, asked him, "Do you believe that Jesus Christ heals today the same as He did while He was here on Earth?" Tommy answered, "Of course I do. Here, give me your hand." Pastor Hicks prayed the prayer of faith for President Peron, and as the power of God flowed into him, he staggered back under the impact. Before the eyes of the onlookers, Peron's skin became smooth and soft as a baby's, and he was instantly made whole and complete. Amazed, he stepped back and exclaimed, "Caramba, Dios mio, estoy curado!" (Good heavens, my God, I am cured!). At this, President Peron sat down and signed the total freedom for the evangelical church in Argentina. In a moment, God did in one minute what was impossible for man to do.

Now, God was ready to explode in Argentina. The Atlantic stadium, with a seating capacity of twenty-five thousand people, was rented. From the very first, the crowds were small, but God began demonstrating His marvelous power to heal and save. The good news began to spread as God manifested His mighty power. Larger and larger crowds began to appear to see the *miracle worker* as Tommy was called. Ushers were soon working twelve-hour shifts, and the bleachers were occupied hours before an event. So many people had to remain outside that speakers were strung up around the outside of the stadium for them to listen. So many people came that the streets and sidewalks were filled for blocks around.

Thousands were healed and saved under the simple preaching and prayers of Tommy Hicks. He simply prayed from the platform and asked for those who wanted healing to raise their hands. Thousands raised their hands and wept as God's power surged through the crowd, both inside and outside the stadium. Wheelchairs, crutches, canes, braces, were all abandoned, and blind eyes saw as God moved in mighty revival power.

Soon, the tremendous Hurracan stadium holding 180,000 people was rented. The crowds surged into that stadium and filled it to capacity, too. God was moving, and His plan for Argentina was unfolding. The Gospel was making an enormous and lasting impact on this nation of twenty million people. Night after night in the Hurracan stadium, the power and glory of God surged and flowed. Outstanding healings and salvations took place, too numerous to record.

Crowds again were too large, and the blocks all around the stadium filled with people searching for the God who lives and acts today. A little child of over three had been unable to walk without heavy steel braces. When the mass prayer of faith was said, the mother took off the braces, and the child ran up and down the aisle. The crowds began to weep and shout as their faith in God arose with spontaneous miracles happening. A twenty-year-old man was brought into the stadium on a stretcher; he had never walked before. When the power of God flowed that night, he left the stretcher behind and ran home with the news. The next night, he appeared at the stadium, having walked under his own power on legs healed by the power of Jesus. As the healings continued and the crippled and lame walked, the blind saw, and the deaf heard, the papers and magazines of the land reported on the massive miracles occurring in the crusade.

Accompanied by their doctor, the sister of the Vice President of Bolivia brought her children in hopes that they would be healed. One of her boys was considered incurable and had suffered much. Both boys were healed at once, and when the doctor who attended them saw both running as any healthy child, he ran up to Tommy and fell on his knees and embraced Pastor Hick's legs. He looked up with tears falling down his cheeks and cried out, "Tell me about your God; I want this God! I want this Jesus! I can serve a God that will do this for little children!" Argentina rocked under the seismic impact of the Hicks healing crusade. The topic on every tongue was the crusade. When a critic would speak against the healing, ten people would stand up and talk of their healing or a relative's healing.

Oh, children of the Living God, can we impact our country like this!? We need to pray, pray, pray until the power of God comes upon our land again.5

Isn't it amazing how a revival could grow from such a small seed as a prayer meeting? "Who despises the day of small things?" (Zechariah 4:10). We tend to minimize what we can do to such an extent that we don't do anything. The enemy will whisper to us that our little effort for God makes no difference at all, but in the hands of a mighty God, great things can come from small efforts and small things. If we are moved by faith and get going with our small energies, God can and will guide us. I learned a long time ago as a commercial fisherman that I cannot steer a stationary vessel; it has to be moving through the water to be guided. When we step out in faith and start using our time, energy, talents, and money, God can add and multiply what we put in His hands, even if it is only five loaves and two fish. Small things done with great love can change the world!

What do you think made the difference in Argentina, and what are some of the obstacles that we have in the USA and Europe to experiencing a similar move of the Spirit?

Knowing God's Plan Motivates Prayer

Faith for revival arises in those who know God's promises. When God has spoken, and we know it is God's will for us to take a particular course of action, we are motivated to pray what is promised and see it brought to reality. John, the Apostle, wrote about prayer and promises from the Scriptures in this way: 14And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. 15And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him (1 John 5:14-15). Faith to grab the promise comes when we know that we are praying according to the will of God. After the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C., Daniel, the prophet, was forcibly taken to Babylon, along with many Jews who served the king of Babylon in the dispersion. Daniel read in the Scriptures the prophetic word spoken by the prophet Jeremiah:

In the first year of Darius son of Xerxes, a Mede by descent, who was made ruler over the kingdom of the Chaldeans—2in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, **understood from the sacred books**, according to the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet, that

the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years. **So I turned my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and petition**, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes (Daniel 9:1-3).

Some might say that if the Scriptures speak of something that's going to happen, why should we pray about it? Can't we just let it happen?

Are there some things that are *Que Sera*, *Sera*, i.e., "Whatever will be, will be," as in the Doris Day song? Should the Church resign itself to letting things happen, or can we make a difference through prayer?

By reading God's Word, Daniel knew that it was the Lord's will for the Jewish people to return to their land from Babylon, so he began to pray it into being. God looks for individuals who will not just wait for situations to happen, but they will pray them into being: 30"I looked for someone among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it, but I found no one. 31So I will pour out my wrath on them and consume them with my fiery anger, bringing down on their own heads all they have done, declares the Sovereign Lord" (Ezekiel 22:30-31). In this Scripture, God did not want to bring judgment. He wanted to bestow mercy, but when He looked for an intercessor, i.e., someone who would stand in the gap, there was no one.

What does the Lord mean by needing someone to stand in the gap? In Old Testament times, cities had walls to protect the inhabitants from invading armies, so when the wall was broken down, courageous men were needed to step into the vulnerable gap in the wall, and fight to prevent the enemy from getting inside the city. Karen Barber writes, "Standing in the gap is a form of intercessory prayer where our prayers bridge the gap between God and people who are cut off from God's helping presence." The "gap" is the difference between the situation now and the place where God wants it to be. A gap is a place where the wall has been broken down. An intercessor is called to stand and hold the gap and resist enemy forces.

As we look at the moral devastation in which our cities are floundering, God needs those who will stand in the gap and pray for God's mercy instead of judgment. As we consider what God wants to do in our day and our land, the question is, what do the prophetic Scriptures say about what God wants to do? How can intercessors cooperate with Him? If the Church does not pray, God will not act. He has determined that He will only operate in this world through the prayers of His people.

E. M. Bounds, the great writer on the topic of prayer, once said:

God shapes the world by prayer. The more praying there is in the world, the better the world will be, the mightier the forces against evil. The prayers of God's saints are the capital stock of heaven by which God carries on His great work upon the earth. God conditions the very life and prosperity of His cause on prayer.

 $^{{\}small 6\ https://www.prayerideas.org/how-to-stand-in-the-gap-in-prayer/.}\\$

⁷ Destined For The Throne. Paul Billheimer. Bethany House Publishers, page 51.

When we get a hold of this truth, i.e., that God has limited Himself to work only through His people, we begin to look at our world differently and change our lives to be the heavenly police force. We will take our authority over all the power of the enemy.

The Prophetic Scriptures Speak of a Coming Outpouring of the Spirit

In a prophetic word by the prophet Ezekiel, a word that stretches across four chapters, the prophet speaks of the return of the Jewish people to the land of Israel, something that's happening in our time. He continues through chapters thirty-eight and thirty-nine, telling us of an attack from the north upon the renewed nation of Israel. For the sake of time, we won't get into the details of the attack, but towards the end of the prophecy, the Lord spoke something very significant to us living in the end-times:

²⁵"Therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I will now bring Jacob back from captivity and will have compassion on all the people of Israel, and I will be zealous for my holy name. ²⁶They will forget their shame and all the unfaithfulness they showed toward me when they lived in safety in their land with no one to make them afraid. ²⁷When I have brought them back from the nations and have gathered them from the countries of their enemies, I will show myself holy through them in the sight of many nations. ²⁸Then they will know that I am the LORD their God, for though I sent them into exile among the nations, I will gather them to their own land, not leaving any behind. ²⁹I will no longer hide my face from them, for I will pour out my Spirit on the house of Israel, declares the Sovereign LORD" (Ezekiel 39:25-29).

At the end of the prophecy, God spoke that His intervention would occur during the time of regathering of Jewish people home to their land. He specifically says that He will not leave any Jewish people behind in the nations from which He is gathering them (v. 28). Furthermore, He says **He will pour out His Spirit** upon them (v. 29).

We would do well to stop and think through these words of Scripture because this writer believes that these words will be fulfilled literally. The implications are enormous because, at this time of writing (October 2019), it is estimated that between five and a half to eight million Jews are living in the United States.8 If this passage of Scripture is to be fulfilled literally, what will motivate more than five million Jews to emigrate to Israel? Will the Lord allow something political to happen that will force Jewish people to return to their land of Israel? Indeed, in Europe, Jews are already enduring persecution resulting in many emigrating to the land of Israel. Is that same kind of situation yet to happen in the USA? Whatever the reason for their return, God will fulfill His Word and will continue to bring Jewish people home to their land, and at that time, the Spirit of God will be poured out (v. 29).

God says that He will gather them to their own land, not leaving any behind. What do you think could happen to force or encourage five million Jewish Americans people to emigrate to Israel?

It is interesting to think that, often, times of renewal and revival in Church history have been preceded by events in the life of the Jewish people. Think about it: God used Theodor Herzl to

begin the movement for a national home for the Jewish people *via* the first Zionist Congress in the year 1897. From that point, Jewish people started to immigrate to Palestine. It was in 1906 that the Azusa Street Revival broke out in Los Angeles, i.e., an outpouring of the Spirit, which started the Pentecostal movement. Then, when the Jewish people regained control of Jerusalem from the Jordanians in 1967, we saw another revival and renewal breaking out, *viz*. the Jesus Revival, beginning in California and which became the Charismatic Renewal.

We cannot be dogmatic about such things, but God may allow a time of persecution of the Jewish people, forcing them to return to the only land where they can be safe, their homeland of Israel. God says that at some point in their regathering to their land, He will pour out His Spirit on the land of Israel, and I believe that at the same time, a great revival will take place all over the world.

This author contends that the prophecy by Joel about the outpouring of the Spirit was only partly fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost; it just began the period called the Last Days. In Joel's prophecy, the various other things spoken did not happen when the Spirit was poured out on the early church. Joel says that the outpouring about which he speaks will be accompanied by the sun turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the Day of the Lord, and many will turn to the Lord:

²⁸And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. ²⁹Even on my servants, both men and women, **L will pour out my Spirit in those days**. ³⁰I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and billows of smoke. ³¹The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. ³²And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved; for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be deliverance, as the Lord has said, even among the survivors whom the Lord calls (Joel 2:28-32).

Why is this significant to us Gentiles called out from all nations to be part of the New Covenant bought by the blood of Messiah? Does the New Testament give us Scriptures to encourage us to stand in the gap and pray for an outpouring of the Spirit? Yes! When the Spirit is poured out on the Jews, they will have their eyes opened to their Messiah. A spirit of grace and supplication will be poured out upon them.

And **I** will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem **a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy**, so that, when they look on me, on **him whom they have pierced**, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn (Zechariah 12:10).

Paul writes that when the Jews have their eyes opened and the veil is taken away; they will be grafted back into the olive tree of faith (Romans 11:23-24), the faith covenant of Abraham.

¹¹So I ask, did they stumble in order that they might fall? By no means! Rather, through their trespass salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous. ¹²Now if their trespass means riches for the world, and if their failure means riches for the

Gentiles, how much more will their full inclusion mean! 15For if their rejection means the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead? (Romans 11:11-12; 15).

What did Paul have in mind when he wrote that, through Israel's fall, God began to work powerfully in the Gentile world while the Jews hardened their hearts against the Gospel? In our day, God is working powerfully among the Jewish nation, and there are now more than 200 Messianic congregations of Jews and Arabs in Israel. We live in exciting times, for when Jews see their mistake of rejecting Jesus, the Spirit will be poured out on Jew and Gentile alike. The acceptance of Jesus as their Messiah by Jews and their full inclusion into the covenant of faith (v. 14) will be as new life to the Gentile world (v. 15). The sleeping Gentile church will have the breath of new life when Jews wake up to Jesus being their Messiah. It will genuinely be a revival and outpouring of the Spirit that changes nations of the world. Let it happen soon, Lord!

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