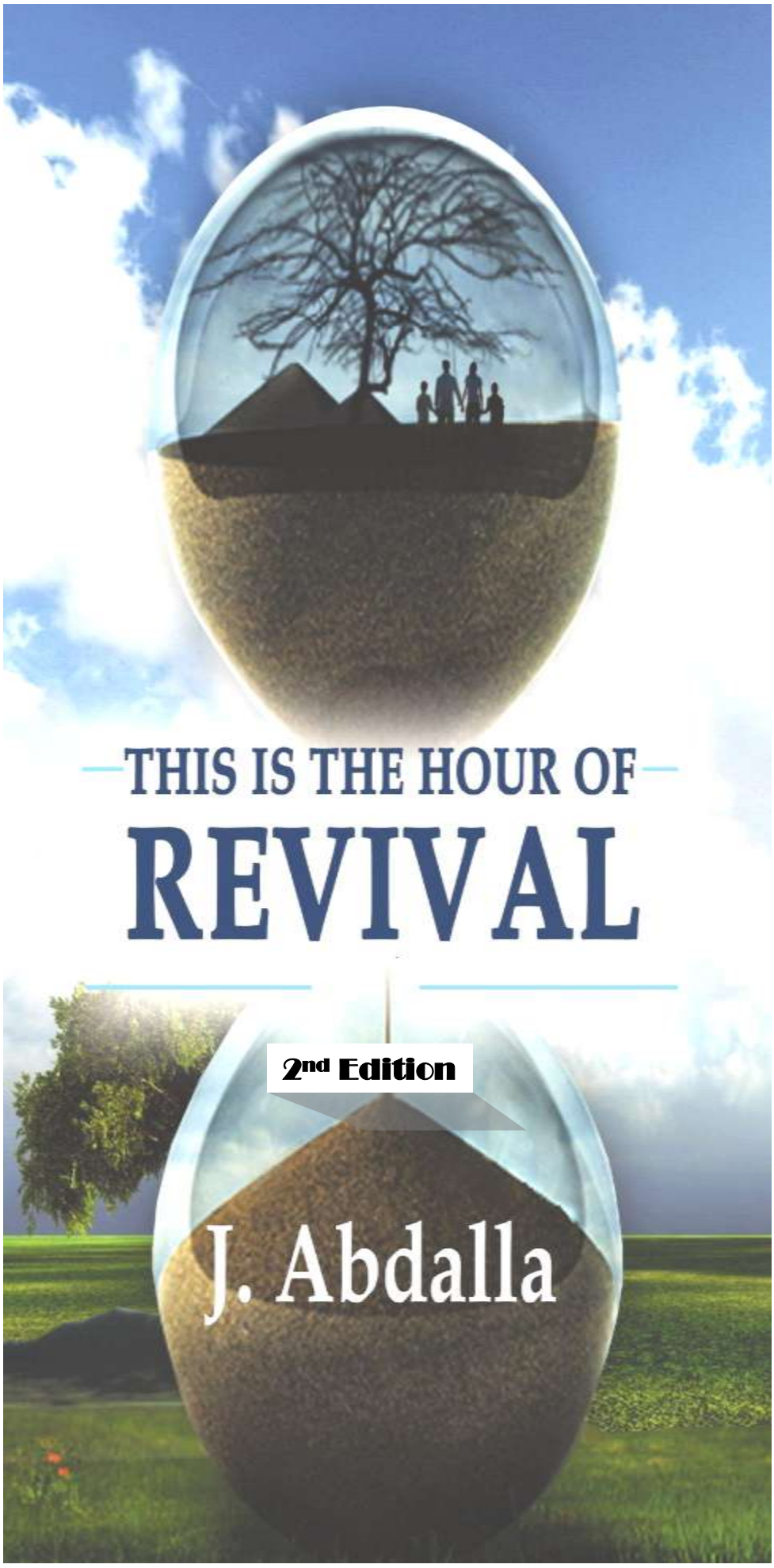

THIS IS THE HOUR OF
REVIVAL
2nd Edition
J. Abdalla

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REVIVAL

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Jacob Abdalla

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Second Edition

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DEDICATION

TO GOD ALMIGHTY
TO ALL THE HEARTS THAT YEARN FOR REVIVAL

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CHAPTER 1

THE CHURCH BY THE RIVERS OF BABYLON



<u>Psalms 137:1-4</u>: By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the LORD's song in a strange land?

The tragedy of the Church today is that it has gone into captivity and it does not even recognize it. It is like in the days of Nehemiah. The walls of Zion (the Church, the very symbol of God's presence – Jesus Christ called it 'my Father's house'), are broken down and are in ruins, and most of her members are in spiritual captivity or in distress. Many have left the Church, left the faith, backslidden, and those that have survived (survivors) are in great distress, being reproached every day. The gates of protection have also been burnt down.

The glory of the Church is equated to God's

presence in His Holy Mountain, mount Zion. For in mount Zion shall be deliverance, holiness and rejoicing. But when the children of Zion deliberately ignore God and sin greatly against Him, He allows them to be taken into captivity, into Babylon.

Babylon is the epitome of wickedness. It is described as the mother of harlots and of the abominations of the earth.

<u>Revelations 17:5:</u> And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

Babylon is the mystery of lawlessness. Ask the three Hebrew children, and ask Daniel. Babylon will seek to paralyze a child of God, dehumanize him, and deal with him so wickedly until he is worse than a pig.

A child of God will definitely remember Zion, his father's house, when in Babylon. He will long for Zion; to return to God again from the land of backsliding. We saw this in the story of the prodigal son, who thought '*far country - spiritual Babylon*' was good and

nice. He lived a riotous lifestyle, very care free and practiced wickedness with impunity, until he was reduced to feeding on pigs' food. He became less than a pig, very dirty and ugly. That is the stuck reality of Babylon. Sin usually appeals to the flesh at first and when its deception has been swallowed, it will waste the believers' life away.

This then is the reality of the collective Church today. Most of its members have been carried away into captivity, into the land of misery, poverty, idolatry, adultery and perpetual spiritual compromise; and those who are still Christians and attend fellowship, godly meetings (the survivors) are in distress and constantly being reproached by the society; and yet the Church does not even acknowledge it.

The enemy, even the devil sits on top of the Church, adulterates almost every activity of the Church, and the Church feels as if it is still Mount Zion, the mountain of God.

The Bible says that upon Mount Zion, there shall be deliverance; but the children of God

pray and there is no deliverance. The world mocks the church, challenges it at every opportunity, pours scorn on its teachings and the Church is too weak to act or respond because it is powerless. The Church is in great distress indeed. We the survivors have been cowed in, and find it even difficult to identify ourselves as Christians on the streets. We hide our identity because we do not want to be ridiculed. Boldness has departed from us.

The Church has lost the power of action; because all the areas where God should be seen have been taken over by the enemy. The devil is presenting alternatives to the '*abundant life*' that Jesus came to give us. The devil gives us alternatives to our physical, spiritual and material lives. He suggests that people do not need to seek God anymore because He has nothing to offer. Some suggest that God is dead and yet others say God does not exist. So the Church is left with only one alternative, holding the form of religion but denying the power of God.

The Church is now perfecting the act of

making friendship with the worldly image makers' and seeking the approval of man, rather than being approved by the Holy Spirit. The Church is doing the reverse of what Jesus did at the commencement of His earthly ministry. When Jesus stepped out during the Passover feast in Jerusalem, after having cleansed the temple of businessmen and businesswomen, and declared His messiah-ship, Jesus did not seek the approval of men even though many believed on Him. But today the devil has told the Church that in order to be big and be reckoned with you need to have your image cleaned up, on the pages of the newspapers and TV.

But what the Church has forgotten is that God is not interested in '*shooting stars*' and '*moon landers*' but He is seeking for every opportunity to prove Himself mighty on behalf of those who sincerely seek Him and put their trust in Him.

The Church will overcome, only by the blood of the lamb and word of their testimony, and are prepared to resist sin even unto death.

What will keep this wall of Zion intact and strong therefore is a deep relationship with God. This wall will have among other materials prayers, faith and balanced teaching of the Word.

Today ***the wall of prayer has broken down***, and now we have Churches that do not know how to pray anymore. Their members are only taught how to recite or read prayers, but are not taught to pray. The disciples asked Jesus, '*Lord, teach us to pray'* and in response to that request the Lord Jesus taught them the now commonly known as the '*Lord's Prayer*'. But we all know that what Jesus Christ did was to give them a framework for praying because all the sections of the Lord's Prayer will accommodate all our prayer requests that we can ever conceive and pray here on earth. It includes our physical life, our spiritual quest, and our material desires. It includes all our needs and wants. It is the Lord's framework for praying. However these days, Churches no longer teach its members to pray and agonize in prayer, despite the fact that Jesus laid for us examples of these in the Bible. We are

instead taught how to be well organized.

The primary function of Zion (the Church) is the '*giving of self to prayer and teaching of the Word*'; organizing how to distribute food to members in need is a delegated function.

The wall of prayer has broken down and instead of real prayer meetings; the Church now has the Church versions of social gatherings. Such social events have taken the place of prayer meetings of repentance, consecration and sanctification.

The wall of faith and trust in God has broken down and been replaced by an 'all faiths' creed and self trusting. The Church now accommodates all sorts of faiths and openly practices idolatry and rebellion against the living God. 'Sodomites' now use the sacred altar and pulpit in order to propagate their perversity; where sin is not condemned nor repentance solicited. The Church is indeed in reproach. It is so painful yet so true of the Church (of God) of our present day. They deliberately ignore the warnings given by Paul to the Romans in their Bibles. These verses state that:

<u>Romans 1:25-27</u>: Who (*these people*) changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet.

From all these heinous acts therefore, has emerged a Church that does not know the authority vested on her by the Almighty God, the creator and possessor of heaven and earth and everything in them. The Church can no longer pull down strongholds because she is hopelessly powerless. The Church does not even know how to rebuild from the ruins because the power of godly

thinking has departed from her. The church is now in distress. Such a Church lives in perpetual defeat and frustration. She prays for the sick and the sick die (instead of live). She prays to God to arise on her behalf to deal with those who do her injustice, but she is led further into bondage and destruction. Her life is that of constant trauma and defeat and whatever she does, does not seem to prosper. She has become a complete opposite of the characteristics of the person who is enjoying the joy of God's salvation as described in Psalm twenty-one. The heavens over her head have become like bronze and the earth under her feet like iron.

We, as a Church, have now become like astonishment, a proverb, and a byword among unbelievers. Some of the Church buildings are now being sold off for housing projects or other faiths. In this land of captivity, our lives are now in doubt before us and we have fears day and night, so some of the members seek for alternative ways of protection. We go to the captor's camp and seek for protection from occult mediums, transcendental meditation, and

mysticism. The Church is indeed in captivity.

So the enemy, even Satan, taunts the Church to sing one of those songs of Zion. The tormentors who have plundered our lives now require of us to sing them a song of Zion.

The songs of Zion are now sung in pubs, on football grounds and in other situations that is shameful to mention.

The Church has become a regular comedy subject, constantly being taunted and ridiculed by the media. For instance most people when they fall sick do not invite the Church elders to pray for them anymore. James chapter five verses fifteen tells us that if someone should fall sick among us, he should invite the elders to pray for him and anoint him with oil, and he will be healed because of the prayer of faith. The prayer of the Church should be the first step for a sick person before calling a physician; for in calling on the Lord first (Genesis 1:1), God will give directions and wisdom (to the physicians, if necessary) for your healing.
People also hardly go to Church for

counseling anymore. In their captivity they know that the Church has nothing to offer them with respect to their situation anymore, because they also know that they have a pastor who says one thing and does another (hypocrites).

The truth is, most of the Church is simply in spiritual ruins and its members are either in captivity or powerless survivors. The remnants that are left are simply struggling in distress and reproach; and this makes us read the book of Acts of the Apostles with nostalgia. What we now have are psychological theologians who try to categorize what God can and cannot do today. They limit the power of God to suit their spiritual depravations and captive minds. They will preach messages that will appeal to depraved minds and massage the egos of the satanic, the Churches' plunderer. They will analyse God and suggest that some of the Almightiness of God that we see in the Bible were meant for the old days only, and not meant for us. Oh, that the Church would remember that 2 Corinthians 10: 3–6 is in their Bible.

2Corinthians 10:3-6: For though we walk

in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;): Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.

We have an enemy, the devil. He is the mother of all wickedness, the plunderer of the children of God. He is the ruler of this present dark and depraved world. He is not physical but spiritual. This enemy executes his wickedness through his puppets (who are human beings). But confronting the physical puppet is useless because there is a power that is behind the puppet. We must therefore settle it first in the spiritual plane, for *what we settle in the spiritual will manifest in the flesh.*

We have a weapon mightier and more

powerful than that of the tormentors. We can pull down the captor's strongholds. We can cast down the arguments that he presents as evidence to accuse us; we can make every word he dares utter against us subject to the mighty power of Jesus Christ.

But here is the Church by the rivers of Babylon, anxious, frustrated, broken and depressed. Will the Church yearn again for Zion, having compared their lives in captivity and when they were in God? Will the surviving Church plead for the revival of the many in the valley of dry bones and valley of decision? It is time to seek the Lord.

CHAPTER 2

THE CHURCH WITHOUT POWER, THE WORLD WITHOUT HOPE



<u>Jeremiah: 1:9-10:</u> Then the LORD put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the LORD said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth. See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.

I see this picture of a world created by God and sustained upon the currents of His Holy Spirit. He watches over this earth as well as the affairs of men. He determines the speed of the earth's rotation as He pleases. He aligns it on its axis and establishes the tilts. He watches the seas and oceans and controls the tides. He sees the earth and determines the amount of sun or rain it will receive. In order to reveal His Omnipotence, God asked Job more than seventy questions in chapters thirty-eight and thirty-nine. The questions were never meant to destroy but rather to restore Job. God asks **where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Who determined the measurements? To what were its foundations fastened? Have you**

comprehended the breadth of the earth? Tell me, if you know this. Where is the way of the dwelling of light? Has the rain a father? These and many more questions tell us of the awesomeness of the Almighty God that we serve. But this awesome God established the earth, a home for mankind, and an arena for fellowship with man.

Man carries the breath of God while the body is dust (earth). So man is a combination of eternity and mortality. Man is defined spiritually as ***anthropos*** (one that looks up). Because of the breath of God that is in man, his spirit will always yearn for a higher being (spirituality). On the contrary because this body (the flesh) is earth, it will always yearn for something lower (carnality). The preacher in Ecclesiastes chapter three and verses twenty and twenty-one points out that man is from dust and he shall return to dust but the spirit goes upward (to God). That is why if man would not serve God then he would serve some other gods or self. Even the so-called atheists must serve somebody or something. So man is without excuse before God, he is either for Him or for the devil.

When God created man, He planned that man would dominate all that He had created, including his own fleshly desires. The only way to rule and dominate your fleshly desires is to always look up to God, and yearns for a constant relationship with Him. You must walk with Him just as Enoch, Noah, Elijah and a lot of people did in the Bible and in our times. If you must belong to God then you will have to crucify the flesh with its passions and desires. **Unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:20)**

God is the one that orders the affairs of this earth and can decide to change it at anytime. It is called God's sovereignty; and yet in His sovereignty He has also made it that man can ask Him to cause change and He will do it. God has proposed in His scheme of things that He will use man to cause His will to be done here on earth. In Genesis chapter eighteen and verses seventeen God said He will not do anything except He reveals it to His friend and His

prophets. In Noah's generation, He used Noah to warn his generation and brought judgment on man. Today God still reveals Himself in various ways to His Church, to those who would care to listen, understand and obey His voice. Through this relationship, the kingdom of God (His power and authority) can be superimposed upon every situation on earth, no matter how big or small. For instance, in praying for the sick, the elders are superimposing God's kingdom upon the situation through anointing and the laying on of hands on the sick person; and as God's kingdom is resident in His will, and the sick will receive healing.

<u>James:5:14-15:</u> Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

The ability to walk with the Lord God Almighty closely does not depend on our

experience, education, colour or creed. He is a God of equal opportunities. It just depends on one's close relationship with His son Jesus Christ. What we now see is a Church that depends on peoples' opinion and people's approval through image enhancements rather than people with intense personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

It is this professionalism that has made the Church to depend upon eloquence, synthesis and analysis, rather than upon God through Jesus Christ who is the Author and Finisher of our faith. The Holy Spirit, who is here with us, has been taken out of the equation, and being replaced by theological and psychological books. It is this professionalism that has made the Church to sanction immoral relationships and see it NOT AS SIN.

It is this professionalism that has made the Church not to kick against the legislation of family relationship through the doctrine of humanism rather than based on the Bible. It is the same humanism that has made the State to become a 'nanny state', outlawing

child discipline, and children left to societal chances, and the Church is silent. God says **train a child in the way that he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it.** The book of Proverbs chapter twenty-nine and verses fifteen says, **"<u>The rod and rebuke give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother</u>".** It is little wonder therefore that our children especially here in the west are bringing us shame because of the humanist laws adopted. Children now simply do whatever they like and end up rebellious. They are half educated and have no ambition. They are told to roam free like 'free-range chickens' and ignore God in their lives. Good families and well-behaved children are fast becoming very scarce. It is getting very scary.

Ephesians tells us that we do not fight against flesh and blood.

<u>Ephesians 6:12:</u> **For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.**

We are in a fight; we are in warfare. The devil has pitched the war against God and us, and for the time while we are here on earth, this war continues. But our fight is not against flesh and blood; it is against principalities, powers, and the master of spirits who are the rulers of this present darkness, against forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Our enemy is not therefore the miserable looking physical opponents (physical man) who are just puppets in the hands of their master, the devil. Our enemies are the evil and wicked spiritual beings. These are the enemies that have evaded our cities, councils, families, schools and churches and claimed territories and control the realms of the air. Such spiritual wickedness will provoke under-aged children to kill each other, the practice of witchcraft, membership of cults, ogees, spiritual killings and all manner of diseases and afflictions.

The Church is in a deep sleep and has been hopelessly invaded by every form of evil. The enemy has taken time to sow seeds of death and destruction and controlling our

cities through terror, while the Church is sleeping.

It is important to note that when the Church is asleep, the enemy goes to town. It is only the true Church of God that possesses the power to fight spiritual wickedness in high places. It is only the true Church of God that can put on the 'whole armour' of God and resist the devil and his destructive demons. But when the true Church is asleep and in captivity, all sorts of things will begin to happen. Family breakdown will be rampant as we see nowadays. There will be scary legislations, as legislators will not have the moral grounds to legislate on moral issues anymore because they themselves lack the integrity to do so. Whenever someone raises his head to try to walk the moral grounds he is put down by his past, sometimes as far back as school days. Satan cannot fight Satan, demon cannot fight demon and the physical cannot fight the spiritual. If we progress along this path of humanism then we will finally have the manifestation of the '*man of the flesh'*. The nation will be ruled by the man of the flesh according to the dictates of the powers of

darkness.

The man of the flesh is better described in a list provided by Paul to the Galatians Church. In the fifth chapter and from verse nineteen, he says that the man of the flesh will be *impure, immoral, indecent, full of idolatry, and practising sorcery. He will hold people as enemies, full of strife and jealousy. He will be ill tempered, selfish, love partying, envious of other people's progress, a drunkard, and carousing.* This is the man without God; this is the man that will legislate for us and lead us into calamity and destruction.

Galatians:5:19-21: **Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness: Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies: Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.**

This list is continued in Paul's second letter to his spiritual son, Timothy. In chapter three and from verse two, Paul stated that the man of the flesh *will love only self, utterly self-centred, lover of money and aroused by inordinate desire for wealth. He will be proud, arrogant and contemptuous boaster, abusive, ungrateful; disobedient to parents, unholy and always swearing. He will be without natural affection, a troublemaker and intemperate. Such a person will be loose in morals and conduct, uncontrolled and fierce, hater of good, rash, and inflated with self-conceit. He will hold the form of religion but does not know nor care to know its power. He will be a seducer, full of falsehood, depraved and reprobate.*

2Timothy:3:2-5: **For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy: Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good: Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but**

denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

Does this list sound familiar to our world today?

We need to consider this issue very carefully therefore, that any legislation that ignores God's command will eventually end in utter failure. In the same manner, if anyone tries to live life without God, it will end in utter failure.

Where is the Church that will enforce the will of God (God's kingdom) over the works of darkness? Where is that Church that will bring down the power and kingdom of God to this nation again?

I am firmly convinced that the Church has failed God in this respect. We have failed to raise our voice when it mattered most. We have accepted that we will live a docile lifestyle in this wicked and perverse generation that we live in. We have also failed the Holy Spirit who is always here with us. He has constantly prompted us to say or do something but we have always ignored

Him. We have failed the early Church that did everything to bring the will of God into man's situation.

I see a direct relationship between the socio-political architecture of a nation and the Christians in it. If the Church is dead or asleep, the nation will descend into all forms of wickedness. If the Church is alive, then the nation will be blessed, because as the Church goes, so goes the world.

CHAPTER 3

JUST WHAT IS REVIVAL?



<u>Psalms: 85:2-6</u>: Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people, thou hast covered all their sin. Thou hast taken away all thy wrath: thou hast turned thyself from the fierceness of thine anger. Turn us, O God of our salvation, and cause thine anger toward us to cease. Wilt thou be angry with us for ever? Wilt thou draw out thine anger to all generations? *Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee*?

The definition of revival varies among Christians and denominations. It is not unusual to find people refer to revival to mean God arising on behalf of His people to deal with His (and by extension their) enemies. Therefore, during revival many unbelievers will listen to the Christian message of 'repent or perish'. But as we can see above, the Psalmist is praying for revival, *in order for the people of God to* ***rejoice*** again. The first section of the above passage shows that God's anger has turned

away because He has forgiven the sins of His people. But until the restoration is complete the people still felt the effect of the anger of God. This suggests that the people's troubles were caused by their own sins and God disciplined them. And so the people prayed for restoration and revival. And when revival is complete it brings joy to the people of God. There is a joy of knowing and walking with the Almighty God. Daniel says, **"... but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits." Daniel 11:32.**

In order for revival to happen, there must therefore be a renewed conviction of sin and an intense desire for contrition and repentance before God. The collective Christian must set their hearts to:

a) Humbling of self
b) Praying and Seeking the face of God
c) Turning away from wickedness (**2 Chronicles 7:14**)

The individual Christian must emulate the prophet and king David in Psalm fifty-one.

He must accept that he has sinned against God and done wickedly. God is not interested in routine participation in Church activities as in a truly broken and contrite spirit, and a desire to reconnect back to Him. The Christian must cry to God to create in him a clean heart and renew the right spirit within him.

Psalms 51:16-17: **For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: *a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise*.**

Then the Lord will hear from heaven and bring restoration and revival.

When this happens, firstly, it will ***produce an unparalleled desire to live in obedience to God.*** It will engineer true love and true humility and produce almost instantaneously the operation of the fruit of the Holy Spirit as described in the fifth chapter of Galatians.

Galatians 5:22-23: **But the fruit of the**

Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

The individual will know and operate in true love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness and self control.
Revival therefore brings completeness that nothing on planet earth can bring. It opens up heavens for you and endears you to the heart of God. The Holy Spirit becomes a real friend, a partner, and a purifier. In every area of your life, you will know that the Almighty God is in charge. You will begin to respond to God's true love: you will dwell secure and do exploits.

Secondly, revival brings a new fire into your bones. You will become overwhelmed by the power of His presence. Jeremiah described it in this way, "**But the Word was in my heart like a burning fire, shut up in my bones. I was weary of holding it back and I could not**" **Jeremiah 20:9.**

When you are revived, God will lead you to know true worship, praise and thanksgiving. Like the prophet of old, you will build Him an altar in your heart, where you will constantly offer Him sacrifices of thanksgiving, praise and worship. You will begin to worship Him as your Lord and Saviour, see Him in His awesomeness and see every challenge and affliction as small measured against the awesomeness of your God. He will be your *Jehovah-Jireh*.

God's anointing will come upon you and you will find God's favour wherever you go. You will carry the glory of God with you. In the book of First Samuel chapter ten, Samuel anointed Saul king over Israel and we can see *some* of the characteristics that God's anointing brings, and what you can expect when revival comes:

i. **"...The asses *which thou wentest to seek are found*... v.2" –** God will lead you into <u>new discoveries</u> through His Holy Spirit; what you have been

praying and looking for has been found. God has answered them and taken care of the situations.

ii. **"Then shalt thou *go on forward from thence*, and thou *shalt come to* the plain of Tabor...v.3" -** He will give you divine directions; from where you are and where you will arrive at. For you will not walk alone anymore. He will direct and lead you in the journey of life.

iii. **"...and *there shall meet thee three men going up to God* to Bethel ...v.3b" -** He will change your associations. Your new association will be characterised by men and women who have great zeal for God; always on their way to meet with God. The old associations will leave. And when your old associations leave you, please do not be disappointed because it is God's appointment.

iv. **"And *they will salute thee, and give thee* ...v.4" -** He will make people to celebrate you and give you. In matters of food and shelter, God will never leave you nor put you to shame; for He will raise help for you from Zion, He will make a way somehow.

v. "And the Spirit of the LORD will come upon thee, ... and *shalt be turned into another man*. V.6" – God will change you. You shall be transformed into another man. You will not be your usual self. It shall be 'business as usual' but under new management, God's management.

vi. **And let it be, when these signs are come unto thee, *that thou do as occasion serve thee; for God is with thee*. V.7" –** God will take you into the level of dominion. You will hear God, understand what God is saying and obey Him. And as you do that, God will be with you and you will

bring God's presence into those situations.

vii. **"And *thou shalt go down* before me *to Gilgal*...v.8" -** God will take you to the place of new beginning. ***Gilgal*** was the place where the people of God first entered the Canaan, the Promised Land. ***This was where Egypt ended and the Promised Land began*.** This is your place of new beginning.

Isaiah also lists seven results of revival in the life of an individual.

Isaiah 58:7-8: Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy rereward.

1. **Your life will be driven by passion and compassion for the house of God**. You will truly love God and the children of God. You will be a problem solver, not the source or cause of problems. You will become thoroughly sad about how ignorant people really are, living life without God. Your desire every day is for the opportunity to share the truths about God's salvation with people. ***In partnership with the Holy Spirit, God will direct you to people and situations, and you will begin to see amazing results.*** You will begin to bear extraordinary fruits because wherever you go, the power of God will be there to heal, deliver and set free. You will become a battle-axe in the hands of God, hacking down strongholds of Satan over people's lives. Like the children of Israel on their way to Canaan, you become

UNSTOPPABLE. **In Daniel 11:32b: "....but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits."**

2. **Your light shall break forth like the morning** – your struggle is over, because what you have been asking, knocking, and seeking God for; God has taken care of it.

3. **Your healing shall spring forth speedily** – *restoration of all that has been stolen* from you including you physical, spiritual and material life. The Lord will restore to you all the years that the locusts have eaten. The swarming, crawling, consuming, and chewing locusts – that has consumed your health, wealth and relationship with your God. God will heal and restore you, according to Joel 2:25. This does not mean that sin leaves no scar, but God will restore you when

you have truly repented despite past disobedience, to an abundant life again.

4. **Your righteousness shall go before you** – your relationship with God will conduct your affairs. *Integrity and justice will herald your arrival on any scene.* Before you arrive at a place, they would have heard of you, and will great you and celebrate you because of the anointing of God that is upon your life.

5. **The glory of God will be your rear guard** – *the Lord will cover you at all times as a pillar of cloud by day and pillar of fire by night.* Whether through your desert places or through the flood, He will be there with you. He will be your stream in the desert and will hold you from being overwhelmed by the flood of life. For when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of

God will lift up a standard against him. Isaiah 59:19.

6. **You shall call and *the Lord will answer*** – *in all situations He will be there for you.* For the Lord will lead you to the Rock that is higher than you. He will be a shelter and strong tower for you from your enemies. Psalm 61: 1-4. He will answer you when you call.

7. **You shall cry and He will say, "Here am I"** – in a long drawn out situation, in perpetually challenging situations, *He will never leave you.*

The third thing that will happen in revival is that, you will become passionate about what you have heard, seen with your eyes and gazed at in amazement and handled with your hands – the Word of Life. **1 John 1:1-5**. You cannot stop telling the story; it becomes a lifestyle.

When we have revival in a nation the devil will be declared a ***persona non-grata*** over our cities and communities. We saw this in the case of Vashti, Hamman and Mordecai (**Esther 1:9-22**). The controlling spirits will bow to the power of God and people are released from their rebellious spirits and would be ready to receive the salvation and deliverance of God. Then that nation will experience revival.

Revival is not, therefore, a tidal wave that hits unbelievers and revive them, because they were dead. Unbelievers are dead already, they are dead people walking; and an unrevived Christian will see them as '*men walking like trees'* (Mark 8:24). We need Jesus' second touch, so that we can look up and see everyone clearly.

Revival is ***the fellowship of restored individuals who have recognized that the troubles they are in (or passing through) are the result of their sins, and have set their hearts to turn away from their wickedness and genuinely seek the Lord***

for forgiveness. Such fellowship will produce great and dynamic power, bursting the gates of principalities and powers, pulling down strongholds and setting those in captivity free.

May the Lord revive us again, so that we can rejoice again.

CHAPTER 4

THE CHURCH-

CAN THESE BONES LIVE?



<u>Ezekiel 37:3:</u> And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou knowest.
The present day Church can easily be compared to the hopelessness that Ezekiel found himself in during this vision. In verse 11 - 12, the Lord says that these bones were the whole house of Israel, and they were spiritually dead, dried, have lost hope and were cut off from God.

It is good to understand the setting of this vision in order to understand its magnitude. Not only do the bones speak of death but many deaths. But for bones to be left in the open was a great indignity and the height of indecency in Israel. To leave bones unburied until they are dry and scattered in Israel was unthinkable. Basically they were spiritually dead, despondent and dejected, with no apparent hope of being restored to life again. They were being described as being dismembered and dispersed (scattered) in the valley, until the Lord gathered them together again. This 'Lord's gathering' therefore is the hope for our generation; because the Lord is causing us

to speak about revival, which means He is willing and ready to revive His Church again. This is our hope and prayer, and may it happen in our days.

Paul in Romans 2:28-29 describes the Church as the new Israelites; we who are circumcised at heart. However our spiritual lives have fallen well below God's expectation. We live in a degenerate generation. We are being dismembered piece by piece, and our dried bones are being '*scattered in the valley*' by the gates of hell. John 10:10 says "**The thief (the devil) cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy ...**" The gates of hell have truly opened up and are taking hold of the lives of men and women. The Church has become so crippled that her views on such issues as the family, childcare, and morality are now not considered at all. They squabble over mundane and carnal things while Satan has taken over the pulpit.

The Church has neglected repentance and spiritual warfare, and does not even seem to understand how to take authority over

demonic forces any longer. Their members have become so '***churchified'*** that some of the Churches have become like a dynasty. They have been turned into enterprises and their spiritually dead children are psychologically trained to succeed 'their' father's business.

The Church has become so spiritually dead that some of them are now in partnership with *Bacchus* – the spirit of drunkenness and lasciviousness. Some of these so-called Churches rent out their premises as wine bars and others for occult meetings. Instead of prayer meetings to agonize for the move of God over this nation, some of them have people spending time drinking tea and coffee, and discussing very trivial matters.

In some of the Churches, ceremonial readings of a few verses from the Bible and the reciting of meaningless prayer verses have replaced the preaching of the Word. We now have ministers who do not see any problem with drunkenness or immorality. Services for people of sodomite (homosexuals) inclinations are now

organized regularly with their approval, and the dangers of sin are no more taught, in order not to offend people.

The gates of hell have also become so bold to even set standards of worship for the Church, in the name of political correctness. The word '*holiness'* is forgotten or conveniently excluded from being mentioned. They have become reprobates in their minds. Satan worship is so common in the city and witchcraft is celebrated on television, yet the Church stands there like mummies with their buildings looking like pyramids and tombs.

On the other hand there are some of the Churches that have turned their sacred periods of worship into disco sessions in the name of lively services. All sorts of manifestations are expressed and some even look as if they have taken drugs before going to Church. In an attempt to attract young people, these so-called Churches have become little havens for perversity and immorality.

The Word of the King is no more with these Churches and she now has a new name – ***Ichabod***, because the glory of God has departed from her; ***for the ark of God has been captured*** **(I Samuel 4:19-22)** *by the enemy*.

Truly the Church has become like dry bones that are scattered in the valley where they were slain. If one was to judge by human understanding, then like Ezekiel would only say *'Lord, you* know'.

For how on earth can the Church's principles and the laws of God replace the humanist laws that have been entrenched into the fabrics of lives again? How can the trend in spiritual depravity be reversed? How can a timid Church speak again? Can they stand on their two feet again? Who will open her grave and cause her to rise up again? Where are the prophets that will prophesy life into the Church again? When will they move the Church from seeking God's benefits to seeking the kingdom of God again? Who will lead the process of restoration back to live again, to become a

mighty army of God? Judging by every human perspective, the Church is dead and there is no hope. The bones are already dried and scattered in the valley, where they have fallen. But the Word of the Lord has the power to raise us up again. And the Lord is looking for men and women to whom he will say, "...**Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live" Ezekiel 37:4-5.**

How has the Church found itself in such a state?

1. ***Many of the so-called Ministers were not sent; they just picked up their bags and went*** into ministry. The Bible is full of references on being called of God; and the mark of God's call is the fact that the person being called into ministry *must have a message, a people, a place and a*

time. In the case of Isaiah, all these checked out and he asked the Lord for how long he was going to speak to the house of Judah? And the Lord answered him saying until the judgement that was to come upon Judah is complete (**Isaiah 6:11**). But these days we have ministers that have gone out without any message, and no specific people, place or time. They went out having their own agenda and others still because they had no better alternative. They had no motivation and no vision; and may not even have had a life-changing encounter with God. Jeremiah says of such ministers, "**I have not sent these prophets yet they ran. I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied" (Jeremiah 23:21)**. Because if the Lord had sent them, then the Word of the Lord would have been like fire, and like a hammer that

breaks the rock in pieces (**Jeremiah 23:29**). But these are just theologians who learnt about God in theological books.

2. Therefore, because these ministers were never 'called' nor were they 'sent', ***they are without God's anointing.*** They were appointed to their positions like Matthias in the Bible. We have no doubt that Matthias was a witness to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He was an eye witness to the miracles and teachings of Jesus Christ and must have been part of the wider followership throughout Jesus' ministry. Another person in this category is Joseph Barsabas Justus. In the book of Acts of the Apostles, we read that of the two (Justus and Matthias), Matthias was elected and appointed to fill up the gap left by Judas Iscariot's treachery. This was

the first time we heard of him, and also the last time. *For the avoidance of doubt I would like to state this with all humility; Matthias was a true disciple of Jesus Christ*, who knew the Lord and was faithful; but knowing Jesus and being faithful in the service of the Lord, does not qualify someone for ministry. There are different gifts in the Church **(Ephesians 4:11-13; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11)**, but not all of us are called to be apostles. ***It is therefore very deadly to appoint a man into a ministry to which he is not called nor anointed for.*** This is what has happened in many of our Churches. They only have bunch of orators and social psychologists that do not have fire in their bones. Jeremiah says, "**Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. *But his word was in mine heart as a***

***burning fire shut up in my bones*, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay". Jeremiah 20:9**. Such people only look for methods of doing things rather than the way the Master would want them to do it. They are without purpose, and powerless. They are like a boat, listing desperately on every side and drifting away into oblivion; and very sadly the congregation with them. They are full of envy and always in the forefront of discrediting what God is doing through anointed ministers. Dead dogs they are and the Lord will judge them.

3. The Church has found itself in this situation because ***many have become at ease in Zion.*** They have an '*I don't care'* attitude to the spiritual lives of the children of God in their care. They have compromised the gospel because of this world. They are like the seeds that fell among the

thorns from the Sower as described in the Gospels. The care of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word in them and they become unfruitful (**Matthew 13:22**). The mark of the presence of God among a congregation is not determined by their riches, but by the presence of the true and balanced Word of God on the pulpit. It was a true seed but lack of integrity and justice choked it. It has become a Church of pleasure, of well-paid ministers with elegant buildings and good coffee bar policies, yet powerless. They do not care about evangelism anymore since coffee is served and there is definitely no more serious praying. Such Churches will not preach the message that will offend anyone. Everyone is at ease in Zion, while there are multitudes (thousands) in the valley of decision. **Joel 3:13-14: Put ye in the sickle,**

for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great. *Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision*: for the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision. People are crying for help by their very acts, knowing very well that the day of the Lord is at hand. Yet the Church is at ease, rested and contented in Zion. God says of those Churches, "**Woe to you who are at ease in Zion..." Amos 6:1**. They are pathetically powerless, holding the form of religion yet denying the power of God. Sinners come in and are comfortable. They are full of poison, and worse than deadly vipers. God's judgment is near and it will begin in the house of God.

CHAPTER 5

SEVEN CHARACTERISTICS OF A CHURCH THAT NEEDS REVIVAL



1. ***Lack of the Word and lack of testimony***

<u>Isaiah 8:20:</u> To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

A Church in the flight of revival will have the Word and there will be undeniable testimonies. The Psalmist says **"Your testimonies are wonderful; therefore my soul keeps them. The entrance of Your Words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple" Psalm 119:129-130.**

Testimonies are undeniable facts that are legally attested to. This is what the life of the Church should be. But when the pulpit becomes a base for theological book reviews, then such congregation will never have a testimony to share; and revival is seriously needed.

I remember talking to a gentleman some years ago who had been an elder in his local church for fifteen years. He was very rich and lived in a manor house; but he told me that he couldn't remember anything that

he had that was attributed to the result of answer to prayers. Quite honestly I almost collapsed! If an elder of a Church could say such a thing regarding his personal life, what type of church would that be? Such a Church will have no light, no truth and cannot handle the truth.

The preacher might have presented his message with passion but God is looking for people whom He will anoint with compassion. Such pulpits are empty of the Word and power, dead and desperately in need of revival.

2. ***No more a place for constant self examination.***

<u>Hosea 10:12:</u> Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you.

When sinners come into the Church and they do not feel any sense of conviction of sins, then such a Church needs revival. Ploughing and planting are necessary

preliminary steps to grow a crop; in the same way, repentance would set the stage for restorations, and revival in the life of the Christian.

Hosea called his people to repentance, reminding them that a decision could not be postponed, and that God's blessing could still be restored. He also reminded them that they had planted the seeds of sin and are reaping the inevitable consequences, God punishment.

The Church should therefore be a place where the afflicted find deliverance and comfort, while the sinner is reminded of God's eternal judgement, stirred up to repentance and to obtain eternal hope in Christ. To the Christian, the Church must therefore be a place of constant self-examination.

The pulpit must guide the saints to knowing how to gain ground not how to lose it. It is a place of breaking up unfruitful grounds and making it available for the work of the Holy Spirit. When a Church does not carry out this basic responsibility, then it is simply

dead and in need of revival.

3. Rivalry and divisions

<u>Acts 1:14:</u> These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.

Some distinct characteristics of a Church that needs revival are division, jealousy and rumour mongering. When Paul was writing to the Corinthian Christians he bluntly told them that where there are envy, strife, and divisions among them, then they are carnal.

<u>1Corinthians 3:4-6:</u> For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

Paul then says that if anyone thinks that by being contentious, he is wise, then he is actually foolish because the wisdom of this

world is foolishness with God.

<u>1Corinthians 3:19:</u> For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.

The Church goes into secretiveness and rumour mongering because of a lack of openness within the leadership. ***Secrecy is a desperate attempt to generate loyalty and unity.*** The Church must have a common goal with one purpose, that of being in one accord. A praying Church will be devoid of such elements because where the Spirit of God is there is power as well as liberty. The presence of the Holy Spirit is the cementing bond that brings unity and oneness.

<u>Psalms 133:1:</u> Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of

Zion: ***for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.***

Paul urge the Ephesians Christians to walk worthy of the calling with which they were called "**...endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace**" **(Ephesians 4:1-5)**.

The lack of God's presence therefore leaves man to conceive and try to architect a device that will bring about unity. But the Psalmist says that Lord knows the thoughts of men that they are foolish **(Psalm 94:11)**. If this is the case, then revival is desperately needed.

4. Lack of passion for prevailing prayer

Acts 1:14: These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.

One of the perpetual reasons why some Churches have died is the lack of passion for prevailing prayer. Most Churches have

lost this act. Ironically, this is the one single factor that can bring about major revival in the life of an individual Christian or a Church. A Church that does not call a solemn assembly to prayer and fasting very often does not have the right to expect revival.

Joel reminded the nation's leaders that being restored to blessing requires repentance. God demonstrates His grace to people by warning them before hand and giving them the opportunity to repent. The Bible presents the day of imminent judgment for the nations, and it is something we are gradually moving towards.

<u>Joel 1:13-14:</u> **Gird yourselves, and lament, ye priests: howl, ye ministers of the altar: come, lie all night in sackcloth, ye ministers of my God: for the meat offering and the drink offering is withholden from the house of your God.** ***Sanctify ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the LORD your God, and***

cry unto the LORD.

The prophets of God were also told to blow the trumpet in Zion. It is an urgent appeal for proper response to God.

<u>Joel 2:15-18:</u> ***Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: Gather the people, sanctify the congregation,*** **assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet.** ***Let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O LORD*****, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?**

Prayer humbles you before God and endears you to His heart.

A preacher, who does not spend quality time in prayer before delivering his

message, preaches a powerless message. It might be good, nice and beautiful, but it does not mean it has achieved the purpose of God. Jesus very often retreated to isolated place to pray before meeting people. He was known to go up the mountain and spend time in the gardens. It was so often that when they were looking for him, Judas knew exactly where to find Him. **"...He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray..." Matthew 14:23**. If Jesus, who was the Word of God, did that very often how much more a Minster of God, who is human. The truth is, the level of anointing a minister operates under, is directly proportional to the time spent with God in prayer and meditation.

You may have just delivered a little message but if you have been with the Lord the impact cannot be measured; for the king will send Hid Word and the Word will heal them. Therefore any Church that has lost the act of travailing before God has also lost power and no amount of oratory can bring the glory of God back. Such a Church needs revival.

5. ***Where tradition is exalted over the Word of God***

<u>Matthew 15:6:</u> And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. *Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.*

In Churches where tradition is exalted over and above the Word of God, it causes the word of God to be of no effect. Tradition is the only power capable of delivering such a deadly poison into the heart of man and yet man feels as if he is still doing the right things.

When Jesus began His ministry, in John 5:1-15 we saw Him healing a man who had been afflicted for thirty-eight years. Infact we learnt later (v.14) that this affliction was as the result of a sinful lifestyle that the man lived. Yet Jesus healed him at the 'pool of mercy' (Bethesda) surrounded by 'five pillars of grace' (five being the number of grace). And yet because it was a Sabbath, the man was interrogated for carrying his bed after having been made well.

The Pharisees had amassed thousands of

rules and regulations concerning the Sabbath. By Jesus' time there were more than 39 different classifications of work. According to them carrying furniture and even providing medical treatment on the Sabbath was forbidden. Jesus, in healing the man with afflictions did not break the law; but he violated traditions of the Pharisees which had grown around the Law.

They were so religious in the observance of the rules and regulations of the law that they completely missed the one who instituted the Law, Jesus the Son of God. They were so religious that they preferred the man to remain with his afflictions than be healed on Sabbath. What would they have said if an Angel had come down on their Sabbath and the man was healed by going into the pool first? They could not even celebrate God's grace and mercies that had healed this man but were more concerned about the Law. In fact by the time they met Jesus, they started plotting to kill Him. Jesus later told them that they need to go and search the scriptures properly and when they do, they will discover that Moses testified of Him.

Oh! How often we have laboured the Laws of God and created our own rules and regulations concerning God's command, which has become yokes on the necks of the children of God.

Just look around you and see what tradition has done. It was tradition that caused Abraham to go into Hagar and produced Ishmael. It was tradition that allowed Jacob to marry two blood sisters. It was tradition that made Jacob to have children with his wives' maids, and it is tradition that teaches that God cannot heal today. It is tradition that teaches people to walk around with all kinds of statues and believe that they have protective powers, as if God does not exist. They may look innocent and sincere, but they are sincerely wrong. Tradition can make you to lose eternal life.

A Church that prides itself on such traditions as candles, kissing of rings, statues, ordinances and rites desperately need revival. Jesus said in Mark 7:9 that "**all too well you reject the commandments of God; you hold the tradition of men**". God honours only His Word and not tradition.

And the Word of God is the Truth mixed with Grace and Mercy.

6. Lack of vision

Proverb 29:18: Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.

A Church without a vision is a Church committed to death. Visions *are prophetic revelations or an anticipated response based on a set of planned requests.* God mediates His response or plan through his servant. It is usually a prophetic revelation, and messengers of God are expected to run with it (carry it out). We can see this in Habakkuk 2:2-4.

According to Jeremiah (**Lamentations 1:9**), when the people cease to obey the laws of God then the prophets will find no vision from the Lord. Therefore, the lack of vision in a Church is the direct result of disobedience to the Word of God. Hence there is no revelation, motivation, or anticipation. Everything becomes a routine. Church life becomes a drag as we see

today. People would prefer to be in the park than go to Church. They prefer to have fun than be in a dreary church service. The Church has no vision and no life. The church is dead.

What will bring a vision back is '**Faith';** the faith to believe God that He is able to do far and beyond what we have asked of Him.

Hebrews 11:6: But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

When Paul was writing the Book of Hebrews, many converts were ready to turn back from the uneasy Christian life, to a life more comfortable, familiar life of works and moral effort, as we see today. The choice before them was to follow the law or to depend upon Jesus, trying to appease God or trusting in Him through Jesus Christ. So Paul taught them that **Faith** meant *you cannot see the outcome, we are not sure of what lies ahead, but we are sure of the reality of God who holds the realms of our future. Those who do not have faith cannot*

see past the physical world around them.

Here then is the heart of receiving and carrying out a vision; it is usually beyond man's ability and capability, and it is only **faith** that will bring it to pass.

Satan will always attack the Christian faith so that he will cloud out the vision and if possible kill it. In a Church, Satan will always amplify the lack of resources, and will suggest that there is no need to see with the eyes of God, which is faith. He would suggest that obediently stepping out into the unknown like Abraham is madness and not for modern day Christianity. But it is important for us to know the benefits of walking by faith, as can be gleaned from Hebrews chapter eleven. Because you are obediently stepping out into the unknown:

i) God will show you divine revelation of dangers
ii) God will show you the way out of danger
iii) God will cause your life to bring conviction to sinners

iv) You will find special grace in the eyes of God
v) God will establish a covenant with you

However, once there is no vision, life is set in doldrums. People will have nothing to look forward to and the excitement of seeing the results of faith will disappear. People will gradually leave. The church will begin to dwindle and before long the building will be in the marketplace for housing developments or other faiths to acquire. That is why the Psalmist was saying that the person who keeps the law is blessed because he has a vision that is consistent with God's will for his life.

Every vision must have three dimensions:

- The dimension of God – ***what God is saying*** to you
- Your own dimension – ***what your responsibility is***
- The worldly dimension – ***what mark will this vision leave here on earth***

Whether in the Church or in the life of the individual, ***God's vision to man will***

always put man in awe of God. Any vision that is within one's capability to handle is not from God. In Exodus 3:10-11 God said to Moses,

"**Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.**"

And Moses responded
"**Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?**"

There are many examples of such 'overwhelming' experiences in the Bible. So if God says to you that the work He has placed in your hands will grow a thousand-fold in one year while you are but few people, then you will be overwhelmed and be keen to see the awesomeness of God.

Therefore, a vision is usually overwhelming, beyond natural strength, knowledge, capabilities and resources. Man will usually stand in awe at how the vision will unfold, and give God all the glory.

A vision will galvanise a Church into action, as the Lord makes provision available to facilitate the outworking of the vision.

A vision will open up the horizons for you in order to understand the awesomeness of God.

Oh! How wretched life is without a vision.
A Church without a vision definitely needs revival.

7. When there is no room for the Holy Spirit

<u>John 14:26:</u> But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

The work of the Holy Spirit is to lead us into all truth. So a minister must always be sensitive to Him and speak as a prophet of God – saying exactly what the Holy Spirit

has commanded. In Isaiah 6: 1-11 is a great example of how the Holy Spirit expects us to work with Him:

a) **In your calling recognise God's awesomeness**. Seek His presence daily and always, and as you do that, the presence of the Holy Spirit will bring about fear, reverence and worship in your life.

b) **The more of God that you see, the barer you would be** before Him and this would lead you to genuine confession and repentance.

c) **Then the Lord will touch your lips** and forgive your sins.

d) **Then you will be humble before Him** and submit to His will. And when He asks "whom shall I send?" you will be able to say, "hear am I send me".

e) But the key assignment here is not in all the above but in obeying God when He says "**Go and tell this people**".

When a minister does not have the courage to say exactly what the Holy Spirit has commanded, then revival is desperately needed. God's power and glory cannot come into our Churches until we recognise that the architect, builder and sustainer of revival is the Holy Spirit. Unfortunately there are ministers who say 40% of what the Holy Spirit has told them, 40% of psychological discussions and reviews, and 20% of either tradition or self-projection.

We can observe some pointers to the lack of the presence of the Holy Spirit in some of our worship sessions. In most of the Churches today, worship sessions and services are totally predictable. Everything is well organized and sorted. The man who will do the announcements knows that he has ten minutes. The preacher knows he has only forty minutes, the offering will take fifteen minutes and the rest of the blank spaces are filled with songs. Everyone knows when the service will start and when it will end, and so the family lunch is set in the oven. There is virtually no room for the Holy Spirit. Anything the Holy Spirit needs to do He must finish it within a set time.

But this is very contrary to how God wants us to work with the Holy Spirit. In the book of Acts 20:7-12, we read of a young man called Eutychus in Troas. The disciples were together breaking bread and Paul ministered and continued ministering until midnight. Eutychus fell asleep in a window; he fell off the window from the third floor and died. Paul went down and fell on him and he was restored to life. Then Paul continued to speak till the morning. When the Holy Spirit is in charge of our meetings it will become unpredictable. It can be a short meeting or a very long one, but the most important thing is that it is the Holy Spirit who is driving the meetings.

I have this vision of our Church meetings these days, how the Holy Spirit sitting in a chair on the platform and waiting for a chance to be given to Him to speak His people and bless them. But sadly He is never called upon; He is only and usually mentioned in passing.

We have these ministers who say that the Holy Spirit can no more teach them

anything; they are the ones who think that they can teach Him one or two things. For start, He did not attend their theological schools, and certainly did not go through their classes of philosophy and the art of preaching. They have also got all the books, references, concordances and dictionaries they need to run a Church and meetings. Such ministers just teach the people what they know, not what the Holy Spirit has commanded. This is a really sad situation. When the Holy Spirit is relegated to the background like this, then it is time to plead for revival.

CHAPTER 6

WHEN REVIVAL STARTS



<u>Mark 16: 17-18:</u> And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

Whenever I read the Bible, I am always overwhelmed by the acts of God. I am amazed at the power that God often releases to back His children in their daily lives and in circumstances. The Old Testament is awashed with great acts of God demonstrated through His children. In the New Testament, almost a quarter is dedicated to the reports of the presence of God in very authoritative, expressive and convincing ways. The God that I read about in the Bible is awesome in power and glorious in His Holiness; and sometimes I wonder what really is happening to our generation.

When you look at the Bible and indeed what the Lord Jesus Christ says is that every Christian is like a stick of dynamite, packed

with such enormous power, and always ready to attack the kingdom of darkness. In Isaiah "**He says No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn.** ***This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD.*****" Isaiah 54:17.**

The very fact that Isaiah suggested that this is the heritage (inheritance) of the servant of the Lord suggest that we as children of God are partakers of this promise. It is only Christian dynamite that is so packed full of power and protection that lay claim to this. Realizing however that we are in constant warfare, the Lord also equipped us with weapons of attack, when He said that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal.

2Corinthians 10:3-5: For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;). Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the

knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

There are two sides to this:

a) We have an enemy, commanding principalities and powers.

b) These enemies attack us by either laying siege over our lives through spiritual strangulation or physical attacks. The enemy also accuses us before God day and night.

That is why Isaiah says we should be at rest in God because no weapon fashioned against us will prosper and neither will tongues of accusations either because we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Son of God.

But what constitutes the weapons that Paul says we should put on, when he says, "...for the Weapons of our warfare are not carnal...".

These could include:

a) The Blood of Jesus – Luke 22: 20; Romans 5:9; Revelations 12:11; 19:13
b) The Word of God – Hebrews 4:12; Ephesians 6:17
c) The Name of Jesus – Philippians 2: 9-11
d) Praying and fasting – Mark 9:29
e) Praying in Tongues – 1 Corinthians 14: 14-15
f) God's Anointing – Isaiah 10:27
g) Binding and Loosing – Matthew 18:18
h) The whole Armour of God – Ephesians 6:10-18

These weapons are mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.

The power of God makes the Christian a prime target in hell, but try as the kingdom of darkness may the gates of hell will not prevail against the Church.

This chapter is a discussion on some of the things to expect when revival starts. There is a lifestyle that the Lord wants the Church to live; it was the lifestyle of early Church, it

was the lifestyle of the old prophets and we see some of them in glimpses these days. God presence was always there to lead, direct and confirm His Word through signs, wonders and mighty deeds in their lives. And this is the desire of God for us - to live this lifestyle; a lifestyle of God's presence, leadership and power. He still looks forward to the day the Church will return to that state, when He is God almighty in the midst of the congregation. These are therefore some of the lifestyle that we can expect when revival starts.

1. **And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Acts:2:2**

Services will no longer be predictable. When the saints gather, the glory of God can come down suddenly (unexpectedly) and fill the meeting place. The Holy Spirit will come to empower His Church and reveal the will of the Father to the saints. The people will begin to worship Him who lives forever and ever, in every language on earth, and heavenly ones as well. It will be

spontaneous, and it will be beautiful and awesome. At such times, structured services will not be possible; because the Holy Spirit will be driving the meeting through His saints.

2. **But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words. Acts:2:14**

Revival brings with it an unprecedented level of anointing. It gives one authority to say to the world, 'LISTEN'. It releases one from the spirit of fear and timidity and gives one a message for his generation.

3. **Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. Ac:2:41**

The heart of sinners will become like melting wax. The spirit of convictions will come upon

them, and mass repentance will be witnessed. Those who repent will stay on and be discipled. Evangelists will begin to see the fruit of their labours. It will be true repentance and not emotionalism.

Every revived Christian will truly be God's ambassador in their neighbourhood and at work, because of the power of God at work through them. Territorial spirits will be shifted and God will reign supreme. Thousands will be added to God's kingdom.

4. **Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. <u>Acts:3:6</u>**

Where the word of the king is there is power. Unique and spectacular miracles will be taking place during revival.
This man that was healed through Peter was born cripple. Everyone knew him, especially the Church members. No physician could deny this miracle because it the finger of God.

Undeniable facts of healing that will shut the mouths of critics will be taking place during revival.

5. **And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness. Acts:4:31**

During revival God will personally take charge of situations, and will handle any challenge to His authority Himself. The Lord will always be there, mighty in power.

The burning desire for the saints during a period of revival is to preach Christ with all boldness. Prayer, prevailing prayer, will be paramount.
Prevailing prayer is the type of ***prayer that will put you on top of situations.*** It is the prayer that moves the hand of God and causes the Holy Spirit to come again and again.

6. **But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said, GO, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life. Acts 5:19-20**

The angels of God will be constantly assigned to you to bring to fulfilment God's purpose for a person, a city or a nation. The angels will confound authorities and gates. Every prison door in your life will be opened. Gates, iron gates that have frustrated your progress, God will cause them to open on their own accord. You will be a constant power against all demonic forces and both of you will no longer be able to share the same territory.

7. **And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith. Acts:6:7**

The most destructive danger to the body of Christ is not the hardened unbelievers;

rather it is the body of so-called priests who behave as the anti-Christ. Through their actions they daily crucify Christ the second time. These are they that deny the divinity of Christ, sanctioning the practices of sodomy, being homosexuals themselves and holding unto tradition as the way of salvation. They are simply misguided souls who have sneaked into the church and whose lives have been sold out to the devil.

They are like the Jerusalem priests in the days of Christ who live very hypocritical lives, but when the Holy Spirit came, a great many of them became born again and were obedient to the faith. This is what will be happening when revival comes. The word of God will spread, and the Church will experience multiplication growth, and among them will be so many unbelieving and once cynical priests.

8. **But there was a certain man, called Simon, which beforetime in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some**

great one. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me. Acts 8:9, 23-24.

During revival, all demonic spirits will be subject to the word of God. Every spirit of sorcery, witchcraft, and new ageism will bow before the Ancient of Days. No power, no matter how much it has astonished the people in the city will stand the move of God. It is the time of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and no demon can stand where the Spirit of God is.

9. **And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing. Acts 8:39**

During revival extraordinary things will be happening. There will be no hindrances

when God is on the move. God is on a mission and that mission must be completed in time. God will do anything to bring it to pass as long as there is a vessel available to be used.

10. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven. Acts 9:3

People who have been called by God and have not responded will respond to Him. They will become God's conscripts by force, because He has a purpose for their lives.

11. And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. Acts 9:10

During revival people will see visions. Such visions will bring deliverance to the saints and influence the life of the city. You will no more be living in your little corner but will be a mover of nations. You will see God's plan

and purpose very clearly, and very specifically. You will have experiences that you have never dreamt of or imagined.

12. And Peter said unto him, Aeneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole: arise, and make thy bed. And he arose immediately. Acts 9:34

Healing will be a common occurrence. You will lay hands on the sick and they will be healed. There will be no hopeless situations when God is on the move. The Holy Spirit will be at work for His power will be present to heal, deliver and set free.

13. But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning him to the body said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up. Acts 9:40

During revival the dead will receive life. People who have been confirmed dead will be raised to life for the glory and purposes

of God.

14. **For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Acts 10:46**:

Speaking in tongues will be a common phenomenon during meetings. People will learn to praise God from their hearts and in tongues. They will go beyond their level of prayer with understanding. Heaven will be opened during such meetings.

15. And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and the keepers before the door kept the prison. Acts 12:6

No matter how bad the situation is, even if it appears as if you are about to be killed or going to die, the Holy Spirit will give you the ability to sleep in the midst of your troubles. Your confidence will be in your God who is Almighty and delivers from every terrible situation.

16. When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; which opened to them of his own accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him. Acts 12:10

One of the first things that will happen during revival is that your chains of bondage will be broken by reason of the anointing. God will intervene supernaturally by superimposing His will on the affairs of men, especially if they try to interfere with God's destiny concerning you. God will cause you to walk out of the prison of life and gates will be opening to you of their own accord. It does not matter anymore what the gates are made of, whether iron or brass; they will open of their own accord.

17. And the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man. And immediately the

angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost. Acts 12:22-23

God will be ready to sacrifice the wicked that would not give glory to Him, for the sake of His word and the saints. The wicked will not rule over the righteous anymore, and according to Isaiah God will give up people in exchange for the lives of the saints.

Isaiah 43:4: ***Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life.***

18. And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour. Acts 16:18

The Holy Spirit will give the saints discerning of spirits. You will know the fake from the real, whether it is God or the devil.

You will also have power to cast out demons and set people free by the power of God. No power of demon whether subtle or glaring will escape the power of God's presence.

19. **And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed. Acts 16:25-26**

Revival brings with it peace and resting in God. You will either be sleeping in the midst of the troubles or praising Him. If you are there for a specific purpose to set the prisoners free, your voice raised in praise will be as if you are in a concert hall, everyone will hear you.

20. **Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them**

before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed. Acts 19:19-20

God is in the business of glorifying Himself among unbelievers during periods of revival. When He comes to town, all spirits will disappear and their hold will be broken. The word of God will prevail in all situations including attacks from magicians and spiritual forces. It will be a time of pulling down of strongholds and spiritual powers.

21. Howbeit they looked when he should have swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly: but after they had looked a great while, and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds, and said that he was a god. Acts 28:6

During revival no weapon formed against you will prosper. You will carry deadly serpents and they will not harm you. You

are on God's mission and so your security is His responsibility. God will also do something new and unique in order to cause a revival in a place.

The summary of it all is that wherever the presence of God is, His power will be there to heal, deliver and to set people free. His anointing will be there for signs, wonders and mighty deeds. He will go out of His way to glorify His name among the heathens on your behalf. All powers will bow at the name of Jesus Christ.

Oh! How desperately the Church needs revival now.

The Church ought to be a Church of power. It has got nothing to do with pumping up meetings and making them noisy. It is not some display of good methods. It is God in the midst of His people. It is the effortless flow of the Holy Spirit through the vessel, the Church, which is you.

CHAPTER 7

FIVE STEPS TO REVIVAL



<u>Jeremiah 50:4-5:</u> In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping: they shall go, and seek the LORD their God. They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the LORD in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten.

Clearly revival is not some meteorite force from God in heaven that will hit the world and all Churches will be on fire to preach and all sinners will repent. It is not God causing all unbelievers to commit mass suicide; rather it is the believer recognising his wretchedness and setting his heart to seek the Lord. Unfortunately the Church has abdicated this basic responsibility of seeking to continually cling to God, while the individual Christian is taken through the motions of ***Churchism.***

Revival is the individual humbling self, turning away from all form of wickedness, falling on his face and seeking God with the whole of his heart. A collection of such individuals in a nation will bring about revival

in the nation.

The history of revival shows that it usually has a domino effect among nations and kingdoms. What happens during revival is that the Satan's grip over the lives of individuals and people are loosed. The peoples' lifestyle changes because they no longer enjoy the lifestyle of bondage that they once enjoyed. Many businesses that were once Satan's playground will shutdown, and people will remember God in their places of work. The current trend where people flock to places of lasciviousness and wickedness will be reversed, as people will begin to seek God with the whole of their hearts.

The effect of this will affect the neighboring community, nation and nations. This will shake the world, if such individuals continue to walk in Him. That is why all genuine revivals are a world phenomenon but always starting from an individual or group of individuals in an ordinary place, who took a conscious decision to seek God's face.

Revival is the result of an all out desire to

seek, love and please God. The individuals die to self and God is exalted in every area of their lives as well as in every situation. God becomes very real; real beyond all reasonable doubt for them. God will be ever present and to the individual He will become the awesome God, who is awesome in power, glory, majesty and dominion.

The following five steps are an attempt to share with you how you can get from where you are now in order to get to the place where you can begin to experience revival. This applies to the individual as it does to a local Church. It applies to a nation as it applies to the world.

1. Recognising that the time is NOW

To the Church is Laodicea God says, *spiritual pride is killing them.*

<u>Revelations 3:14-22:</u> And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art

neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the

Spirit saith unto the churches.

The Laodicean Church felt that they had it all tied up. They were rich spiritually and materially. They did not need anything else; everything was available, very self contained. They had the theology together and were neatly organised. They have enough money, land and members that are doing very well in business. But God knew their works. And God said to them, that making progress in those areas is not an indication of a deeper relationship with Him. God requires a deeper relationship with us than just doing well in business or career. He wants His presence to dwell with us constantly. He wants to always be with us, to lead us, talk to us, and assert His kingdom over situations through us. He wants that type of relationship and he wants it NOW.

So God pleads with the Laodicean Church as He pleads with us now; He is standing at the door of your heart knocking and seeking for permission to come in. Please note that the Laodicean Church was not made of unbelievers, they were Christians with a well

organised Christian church. But Jesus was knocking at their hearts for Him to come in. When He comes in, you will know the *power of His resurrection*.

You will also understand and partake in the *fellowship of His suffering*. It is only Jesus that really understood what it meant to be betrayed by the very persons He had sown so much into their lives. Some were healed, some were delivered, some were fed and others keep every penny He ever had in the ministry, but when it came to the crunch they all shouted 'crucify him'; Infact one of them sold him away for 30 pieces of silver. The fellowship of Christ suffering tells us that no matter how much you are hurt, you will have to forgive that person. That there is no situation in this world that is so bad, that the only solution is to take revenge. There is no room for bitterness, because bitterness is a slow killer. It will kill your faith, your future and your life. So be like Jesus, and raise your eyes up to heaven and cry, "Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing". So the time to seek God and allow Him in is NOW.
The disciples went to the upper room after

Jesus was taken up to heaven and recognised that the time is NOW for the Holy Spirit. So they waited.

God said to Joshua after Moses had died; NOW arise and go over Jordan.

<u>Joshua 1:2:</u> Moses my servant is dead; <u>now therefore arise</u>, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.

The time is now and there are clear reasons for this.

Firstly the time is now because most Christians are cold or lukewarm. The current climate is unacceptable because in the tribulations to come, many will be lost. Jesus says that if we remain lukewarm, He will spew us out of His mouth at His appearing. When He returns to rapture His Church, you will be missing despite the fact that you have been in the Church for a long time. We recall the parable of the ten virgins in Matthew 25:1-13, all of them were at the reception place. They were all waiting, but five had oil (the Holy Spirit) and five only

had the lamp (the vessel). They were all in Church, very active and waiting. But when they '*sound the trumpet*' that the bridegroom was coming, the five (foolish) virgins went out to look for oil. By the time they came back, Jesus says '*I know you not'*. We need to therefore watch, for we do not know when Jesus shall return; and when He returns and finds us lukewarm, by the time you go out to get hot (your oil), it will be too late. What will then be left for you is to follow the anti-Christ since you did not follow the real Christ.

If we are to assess the condition of our Churches today, would we not see a lot of difference between us and the Church at Laodicea? It is time to seek the Lord.

Secondly it is time because the city, the nation and the world have multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision. Human beings are very good at deception. They can hide their true feelings and present an external perspective of '*not wanting God'*. The best way to understand them is their reactions in times of crisis; they will willingly go to Church. Whenever there is an

upheaval in a nation, it usually is followed by a surge in the number of people that attend Church services. We see this when there are natural disasters like earthquakes or floods, we see this when there are terrorist attacks, and we see this during wars and catastrophes. Also when an individual is passing through very horrendous times, they seek God, but often have excuses when things get better. The truth is man is always crying for help and all they need is someone carrying God's anointing to speak into their lives. All they need is to see God at work and they will come through.

We need to also bear in mind that the day of the LORD is drawing near in the valley of decision. The heaven and earth will shake, sun and moon will grow dark and the stars will diminish their brightness. But if you are in God, the Lord will be a shelter and strength for you. Jesus says in John 4: 35-26 lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest. He is looking for people that He will bless with the Spirit of compassion, who will stand in the gap for these multitudes in the valley of decision.

The time is now because the devil has unleashed every form of wickedness against the Church, crippled her and brought the world into the Church. Churches are now more worried about material progress and the number of people on their registers than they are about teaching people holiness and living in the presence of God. Infact I do not know of any revival that started from a large congregation; it is always a small group of people who had set their hearts to seek God.

The time is now because some ministers have made a shipwreck of the ministry that God had committed into their hands by pursuing their own programs and the name of the Lord is being profaned daily. Jude had very strong words for such ministers. The people of God had been deceived by them, who appear as messengers of God but actually they are messengers of Satan. They appear like clouds that will bring rain but the wind soon blows them away. They look like productive trees but they are fruitless. These ministers promise spiritual growth but they do not satisfy the hunger of

the children of God. Not only are they not fruitless but also rootless and incapable of bearing any fruit, since they are not rooted in Christ.

Jude:1:12-13: These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.

These Ministers put on great shows but they are without substance. They boast of liberty but place the people of God in bondage to sin. *After they have done their evil deeds and made their profits they become like wandering stars, moving on to another location to exploit the children of God again*. If they continue this way, they will meet the judgement of God very soon. There is a need for them to turn back and seek the old and narrow path, the way that points to

Calvary. Ministers need to know that, like Paul, their daily cry should be, '*Oh! That I might know Him and the power of His resurrection'.* They should learn also to share in the fellowship of His suffering.

So you see the world needs you, the Church needs revival and God wants to use you to bring revival to the world. He wants you and wants you NOW.

THIS IS THE HOUR OF REVIVAL. THE TIME IS NOW.

2. Sanctify yourself

2Chronicles 7:14: If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

One of the greatest challenge that a book like this brings is the failure for many to acknowledge that the Church is indeed in great distress, their walls of protection are

broken down and the saints are in spiritual captivity, and that this should drive us to desire to make a change. This message can be taken either as criticism or with cynicism. No minister or Church would like to be criticised; but the beauty of it is that I have not set out to criticise but only reporting what the Lord has laid upon my heart over a period of time.

Jeremiah 20:9-11: Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay. For I heard the defaming of many, fear on every side. Report, say they, and we will report it. All my familiars watched for my halting, saying, Peradventure he will be enticed, and we shall prevail against him, and we shall take our revenge on him. But the LORD is with me as a mighty terrible one: therefore my persecutors shall stumble, and they shall not prevail: they shall be

greatly ashamed; for they shall not prosper: their everlasting confusion shall never be forgotten.

I tried to run away from speaking this word but like Jonah, God fished me back out. The past seven years had been very horrendous in my life. I went out with affluence and squandered my life living riotously. I lost all and became a pauper, with no means of support. I suffered the curses that came with disobedience and the heavens over me became like brass. My soul became very restless, and I saw what Deuteronomy meant when Moses said **"...you shall build a house but you shall not dwell in it; you shall plant a vineyard, but shall not gather the grapes." Deuteronomy 28:30.** I was so pulverised that it came to the point when I could not afford to buy food. Sometimes I wished the dried bread given to the ducks, someone will give me. I lost my houses and was lucky to have a 'box room' but struggled every month to pay the rent. My main food became bread and rice, and also aspirin to take care of my constant headache and Lucozade energy drink. I desired a food meant for the 'pigs' in a matter of speaking. I became so depressed

to the point when I considered suicide. My life hanged in a balance before me. I was afraid of the day and night, terrified in my heart for nothing. I was fast becoming astonishment, a proverb and a byword among my people. I was the prodigal son of modern times.

The problem with all of the above was my failure to acknowledge that things were not fine with me. And that is the danger with the church today; the failure to acknowledge that things are not spiritually right around you.

Like the prodigal son, one day I came to myself and acknowledged that I was not living a life but actually in captivity. The deception of marriages and children were all lies that Satan had put before me to keep me in the land of bondage. Satan had broken all my walls and carried me into captivity, into Babylon the harlot; until one day I said, “I will arise and go to my Father’s house, and seek for His forgiveness, and cry for His mercy and grace”. And the Lord heard me.

Nehemiah said, **And it came to pass, *when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven*. Nehemiah 1:4**

What a man! Despite the fact that he was the King's butler and all his needs were treated with royal attention, yet he did not consider this more important than the glory of Zion. He did not even think that this was a breakthrough. Many Christians today would think that being in the royal court is equivalent to '*the earth yielding its harvest in evidence of God's approval*'. But the man sat down in anguish, wept, mourned, fasted and prayed for many days, then took action.

In order for revival to come forth, there must be a total sanctification of self. Tears must flow for the current state of the church. There must be travailing in order to bring forth newness. Fasting and humbling of self before God in prayer and fasting is part of the package.

Studying the prayer of Nehemiah in the first chapter humbled me concerning this matter

of revival. He accepted responsibility for the situation of Jerusalem.

<u>Nehemiah 1:6:</u> Let thine ear now be attentive, and thine eyes open, that thou mayest hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now, day and night, for the children of Israel thy servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against thee: <u>both I and my father's house have sinned</u>.

We as a Church must accept responsibility for the current state of the Church. We must accept responsibility for the lack of God's power and His presence in the Church today. We must learn to accept responsibility, then come and humble ourselves before God and confess our sins. The land is sick, afflicted by all manners of afflictions and the children of God feel orphaned. Heaven is like brass to many Christians and many have backslidden to try other spiritual options.

It is time God's people humble themselves and pray and seek the face of God. It is time

to turn away from the sins of complacency, neglect and spiritual pride. It is time to turn away from all wickedness and seek the Lord.

God is looking for people of a contrite spirit, vessels ready for Him to use. ***If He can find you, He will turn the world upside down with you.***

3. Call a solemn assembly

I sometimes feel baffled and even amazed at ministers and ministries. Every year every Church sets out their goals for the year. The Churches will set up prayer meetings to pray for the goals or vision as is sometimes defined, but hardly do you hear of a church that has set up a group to pray for the revival of the Church, the nation and the world. Individuals who got tired of mediocrity and became hungry for God started most revivals we read of. They paid the price and triggered major revivals, because God is no respecter of persons.

In Joel 2:12, God commanded that His

children should turn to Him with all their hearts, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning. Then in verse 13, He commanded that we should "rend our hearts, not our garments". The rest of the chapter is dedicated to the need for the priests of God to call a solemn assembly, sanctify the congregation and seek the Lord.

The benefits of calling a solemn assembly from time to time and seeking the face of God can be seen in the verse 23-27. These include:

a) You **will receive the former and later rain** to ensure that good harvests for you
b) **Overflowing vats** that will enable you to bless other people
c) The **Lord will restore to you the years that you have lost** to spiritual and physical parasites
d) **You will have abundance** and will be satisfied
e) You will rejoice in your God, and you will not be put to shame

f) Then you **shall know the Lord your God** that He is mighty and with you
g) And you **shall never be put to shame.**

The call to a solemn assembly therefore is for God's people to re-examine their lives before God, especially their motives; also to confess their sins and the sins of their fathers and that of the nation. It is time to thoroughly humble ourselves before God in prayer and fasting and cry for help for ourselves and our nation. A solemn assembly is also the time to examine the consequences of a spiritually dead nation and to seek God's face to turn things round for us. It is time to stand in the gap and intercede for our children, our communities, our city and our nation. It is a time of wailing and travailing in prayers. But alas! The Church of God don't seem to care. There is this apathy that comes with the feeling that since we are not affected by events, it doesn't matter God will take care of it. But the truth is that when wickedness invades a city, it will overwhelm us like a flood, and we will all be shocked when it turns up at our

doorsteps. It is therefore foolishness to assume that we are safe; infact the Bible says when we say we are safe, that is when destruction will come upon us suddenly.

<u>1Thessalonians 5:3:</u> For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

As I write these words, I see a picture of a woman about to give birth. I see the pains, the agony and the anxiety. I also see the thrust that brought forth the baby. I see the tiredness and the tears of joy. I believe this is what it means to travail and bring forth.

Dear Bishops, Pastors and Church Ministers,

In 2 Chronicles 7:14, God was asking His people to intercede for others in their prayers. During the dedication of the temple, Solomon modelled intercessory prayer (2 Chronicles 6: 3-42). He pleaded with God on behalf of his people and continued to pray with determination until the Lord

answered. According to the Lord this type of prayer would be the catalyst for revival, and the restoration of the future (Daniel 9:3-19). I plead with you to please call a solemn assembly from time to time, and sanctify your congregation and to seek God concerning our communities and the nation. Let us draw near to God and seek His face, so that He will revive us again. Let us set aside time to cry to God concerning our children and the signs of wickedness that we see in our cities and our land. We really need revival. For God to stir up our hearts to speak about revival now means God is keen to restore and revive His people again. I pray that God will give you the grace and strength to do this. Amen.

4. Prophesy to the winds

Agonising in prayer gives birth to the ability to receive the gift of prophesy. For the Lord is eager to have someone to talk with. He will show you the state of things as they are currently and what is to take place. He will also give you a gift of faith which will enable you to see hope in any situation that

appears hopeless. You will see wickedness and decree goodness. You will speak life to dead situations and they will come back to life.

Prophecy activates the angels and accelerates the manifestation of life to dead situations through the power of the Holy Spirit. It will cause you to say like the Shunamite woman, '*it is well'* despite the fact that it does not look that way. Prophesying brings the glory of God down into a situation, and superimposes God's authority upon it. It causes God's will to come to pass in the life of His people.

Prophecy moves you from the position of 'Lord you know' to 'so I prophesied'.

Ezekiel 37:7-10: So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them. Then said he unto me, Prophesy unto the

wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. <u>So I prophesied</u> as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.

It makes you a mediator between God and hopelessness on earth. You become the announcer and executor of the will and kingdom of God here on earth.

Prophecy glorifies God, exalts the Holy Spirit and releases the presence of God beyond the level of your imagination. It brings revival to a people and a place. God does not desire to do anything without telling His servant the prophet. Anyone who is careful enough to seek God sincerely will hear God clearly and prophesy as directed.

5. Let go and let the Holy Spirit

Revival in full flight is best described in the

forty-seventh chapter of the book of Ezekiel.

Ezekiel 47:1-9: **Afterward he brought me again unto the door of the house; and, behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward: for the forefront of the house stood toward the east, and the waters came down from under from the right side of the house, at the south side of the altar. Then brought he me out of the way of the gate northward, and led me about the way without unto the utter gate by the way that looketh eastward; and, behold, there ran out waters on the right side. And when the man that had the line in his hand went forth eastward, he measured a thousand cubits, and he brought me through the waters; the waters were to the ancles. Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through the waters; the waters were to the knees. Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through; the waters were to the loins. Afterward he measured a thousand;**

and it was a river that I could not pass over: for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over. And he said unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen this? Then he brought me, and caused me to return to the brink of the river. Now when I had returned, behold, at the bank of the river were very many trees on the one side and on the other. Then said he unto me, These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea: which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed. And it shall come to pass, that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be healed; and everything shall live whither the river cometh.

It is described as water which is deep and in

which one must swim. It is a river that cannot be crossed on your two feet; you have to be carried across by following exactly the method laid down.

In true revival, you simply float in the river of God and live daily in amazement of God and the wonders of His acts. However, before you get to this stage, you have to go through the experience of ankle deep, knee deep and waist deep. At each stage, the Holy Spirit would like to ascertain that He is still in charge. Unfortunately, this is where many revivals are cut short.

Instead of letting go and letting the Holy Spirit continue to do His work in the midst of His people, many ministers at this stage begin to feel they have arrived. Each of the stages presents new experiences and new challenges but what will keep the fire on is prayer and obedience to God's Word. But in many cases, after the 'ankle deep' or 'knee deep' experience, agonising prayer is relaxed, complacency creeps in and more often than not the Holy Spirit is stopped in His work. During meetings the Holy Spirit is no more the leader, rather people now

organise things around Him. Such ministers suddenly become inaccessible because the Church is growing fast as results of the testimonies that were witnessed during the revival. Human methods and means of control are suddenly introduced and the Holy Spirit is invited only at appropriate times.

The moment the Holy Spirit discovers that He is no longer the one in charge, He will leave you alone. At that stage, the Holy Spirit is grieved and He has left you alone. You will think He is still there but actually you are just living in the hangover of yesterday's experience. God does not share His glory with any man.

If you will allow the Holy Spirit, he will take you all the way, until the stream empties into the sea, and His power and presence will affect the whole world. The flow of His presence will cause you to enjoy fruitfulness and protection. There will be no poverty, frustration or depression. The Holy Spirit will be in charge of your life.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION



The appropriate way to conclude a book like this is to ask the question,

Do we need revival? The short answer is, **YES, we do, desperately.**

Very often I get very sad when I see how hopeless the church has become. I cannot reconcile the God of the Bible and the current state of the Church. I cannot understand why there is such a big difference between the early church and the present one. I cannot reconcile the expressive power of God as we see in the Old Testament through the prophets and the powers of our minsters in the Chuches today. What really is the power of the Church today? Then I recalled the oppression of the children of Israel when they were being plucked by the Midianites during the days of Gideon. Because of the Midianites, the Israelites were chased out of their homes and had to make dwellings of dens and caves in the mountains. They were so cowed in that by the time an Angel visited; Gideon was threshing wheat and was going to hide it. Israel was so impoverished by the Midianites that they lost

all sense of value. When accosted by the Angel Gideon cried, “Where are all the miracles which our fathers told us about...”

<u>Judges 6:13:</u> And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the LORD be with us, *why then is all this befallen us?* and *where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of*, saying, Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt? but now the LORD hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.

And I looked at the Christian today, and I can see how we have become so cowed in that we would rather not be identified as Christians. We would say that ‘religion is a personal matter’. We have forgotten that Christianity is not a religion but a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ. I hear of such abominations as some Church ministers seeking power from the devil in order to make their Churches appear powerful. I hear of individuals that go after other gods and still feel comfortable in our meetings.

The Church has specialized in counseling

people in affliction and teaching them how to manage crises rather than challenging such demonic forces with the Word of God. Many times I have wondered whether Mark chapter sixteen was written for some alien Christians and not us. I cannot however find any basis for such a view, so I concluded that we have just missed it.

I looked at the city and the nation, and all I see and hear of are lifestyles of crime and desperation. The nation is full of depressed, oppressed and possessed people who are crying for someone to help.

I turn to the Church and I see and hear such hideous things as marriages of people of the same sex in the Church, pubs and Churches sharing the same buildings, witchcraft and prostitution, whilst immoral acts are given politically correct names rather than calling them by their true names.

The television stations would rather celebrate witchcraft on the air than the gospel and the Church just simply looks on, powerless.
I look at the Church and everyone is pre-

occupied with their own agenda.

So I ask the question, ***are the saints ready to pay the price for a revival?*** My natural answer is '**Lord you know'**. But this ought not to be so. God is depending on you for this to happen. He simply wants a ready vessel, holy and set apart for Him. He wants you.

You have had the courage to read this book. Take the next courageous step to be enlisted in God's mighty army. This army will cause His presence and His power to come down and abide with us. He will cause His revival to flow freely in your life, the life of your local Church and the nation.

Before you put this book down, I would like to ask if you could dedicate yourself to pray specifically for revival in your life, the church and the nation every day. You may also wish to consider organising a small group of your friends to pray for revival for our families and the nation.

The Bible says
"***Where two or three are gathered***

together in His name He will be there" Matthew 18:20. If two or more of you can meet, then God will be present. Together with other saints who are praying, let us lift up the name of the Lord once more in this city, this nation and this world.

THIS IS THE HOUR OF REVIVAL. BE PART OF IT!!!

