THE 7:14 PRAYER MANDATE

THE SERIES: BOOK ONE



The Scarcity Of Praying Men

"If My people...then will I..." - 2Chronicles 7:14



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The Scarcity of Praying Men

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Kindle Edition

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Table of Contents

Introduction
Chapter 1: The Endangered Breed
Chapter 2: The Legalities of Divine Intervention
Chapter 3: Paradise Lost, Paradise Gained
Chapter 4: If My People, Then Will I
Chapter 5: Waiting and Wasting
Chapter 6: Has God No Sons?
Chapter 7: The Danger of Holding Back
About the Author

Introduction

Praying men and women have always been the precursors for revival in any generation. Whenever men began to call upon the Name of the Lord, a mighty revival of religion was recorded in the pages of history. But there is a scarcity of praying men and women in our days. Is it any wonder, then, that the Church of Jesus Christ is in such sad state of affairs?

God Almighty has a controversy with His people today. His people are to blame for the sad state of affairs in gospel Christianity today. He holds His people responsible, not only for the backslidden state of the Church, but also for all the woes that this generation is faced with. Who, among His people, will arise for the defense of God's Holy Name?

The ebook, *The Scarcity of Praying Men*, examines the reality of this scarcity, and the utmost necessity of praying men in driving God's end-time agenda. It presents a moving argument why it is imperative for God's people to arise in defense of His Holy Name now more than ever before, beginning from the prayer chamber.

Chapter 1: The Endangered Breed

> *And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.*
>
> (Ezekiel 22:30 KJV)

In the past few centuries, the Earth has lost dozens and dozens of species to extinction, including the Tasmanian tiger, the auroch and the passenger pigeon, which went from 5 billion to zero in just a few decades. But ground-breaking scientific research is claiming the possibility of taking tiny bits of old DNA from museum specimens and actually reassemble the entire genome using new technology-and maybe even reassemble the organism itself![1]

We thank God for all that scientific research has been able to achieve. But there is yet another type of extinction that mankind may well soon be faced with, and it would take much more than mere scientific research to be able to resurrect. I speak of the extinction of praying men.

Brethren, there is a scarcity of praying men and women in our days. Many Christians today do not pray. They will do anything but pray. They will go to church. They will sing. They will dance. They will even preach and evangelize. But they will not pray. Praying men have become an endangered species in this evil hour. The most depressing gathering in many churches today is the prayer meeting. I say it again, brethren, praying men are scarce in our generation.

How do we know that praying men are scarce? Because the Father could not find any when He was looking for one:

> *And **I sought for a man** among them, that should ... stand in the gap before me for the land... **but I found none**.*
>
> (Ezekiel 22:30 KJV)

The eyes of the Father are running to and fro throughout the whole earth, seeking and searching for a man who prays[2]. But how disappointing the results of His search are, especially in our generation!

> *And he saw that **there was no man**, and wondered that **there was no intercessor...***
>
> (Isaiah 59:16 KJV)

How do we know that praying men are scarce? Because one of the major

concerns of Jesus when He returns, is whether He will find men and women on earth who still believe in the power of persistent and persevering prayer:

> *And shall not God avenge **his own elect, which cry day and night unto him**, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. **Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?***
>
> (Luke 18:7-8 KJV)

The faith for prayer is dwindling out of the Church of Jesus Christ. That tenacious and unyielding faith, like Jacob's, that says, "Except Thou bless me, I will not let Thee go"[3], is running out in our beautiful cathedrals. The Son of Man is coming, but do we have any of this kind of faith left in our churches?

How do we know that praying men are scarce? Because of the very few pastors who pray regularly. A cross-denominational survey has brought to light some very revealing statistics about the prayer lives of many pastors today. The study shows that 80% of pastors spend less than 15 minutes a day in prayer, and 95% of pastors do not pray regularly with their spouses[4].

Shocking, but yet true; and the scriptures are not silent on it:

> *The priests did not ask, 'Where is the LORD?' **My own priests did not know me**...*
>
> (Jeremiah 2:8 GNB)

> *For **the pastors are become brutish, and have not sought the LORD**: therefore they shall not prosper, and all their flocks shall be scattered.*
>
> (Jeremiah 10:21 KJV)

If our pulpits are thus prayerless, is it any wonder then that our pews are also prayerless? Indeed it is true, that prayerless pulpits beget prayerless pews. O, how scarce it is to find praying men today!

How do we know that praying men are scarce? Because of the scarcity of quality preaching in our days. Indeed there is an abundance of preaching now more than ever before. But the truth is that in spite of the multiplied preaching and many sermons, what we call "the Word of the Lord" is very rare today.

This was the case in the days of the boy Samuel:

> *In those days, when the boy Samuel was serving the LORD under*

the direction of Eli, there were very few messages from the LORD, and visions from him were quite rare.

(1 Samuel 3:1 GNB)

For a long time, they had not heard the voice of the Lord in the manner that Samuel heard that night. A word from the Lord in a dream or vision, directing, informing, instructing, or reproving, was very rare in those days. So rare that the child Samuel knew not that it was the voice of the Lord that called to him. So rare that Eli himself thought nothing of it until He had called a third time.

When we do not hear from Him, it is because we have stopped talking to Him. If He is not speaking to us, it is because we have stopped praying:

Call unto me, and I will answer thee*, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.*

(Jeremiah 33:3 KJV)

Prayerlessness is at the very roots of our poor preaching. That preaching is poor indeed, and ineffective, that has not its origin from the mouth of God. Why do you run, as though you had a Word from the Lord, when indeed you have not heard from Him?

Ye have not gone up into the gaps, neither made up the hedge for the house of Israel to stand in the battle in the day of the LORD*. They have seen vanity and lying divination,* ***saying, The LORD saith: and the LORD hath not sent them****: and they have made others to hope that they would confirm the word.*

(Ezekiel 13:5-6 KJV)

The rendition of the Contemporary English Version of the Bible for the scripture above throws more light on this predicament:

They don't warn the people about coming trouble or tell them how dangerous it is to sin against me. *Those prophets lie by claiming they speak for me, but I have not even chosen them to be my prophets. And they still think their words will come true.*

(Ezekiel 13:5-6 CEV)

Prayerless preaching does not encourage holy living, nor does it lay a strong emphasis on eternity. How many times is hell or heaven mentioned in today's well-crafted sermons? How many of the sermons today lay a strong emphasis on eternity? And why should we be surprised at all? The preacher has not been near

God's Holy Heaven, and so he cannot speak much about it!

> *The priests ...make no distinction between what is holy and what is not. They do not teach the difference between clean and unclean things... As a result the people of Israel do not respect me.*
>
> (Ezekiel 22:26 GNB)

Prayerless preaching is unctionless and powerless. The preaching is poor and ineffective because it is not preached in all the forces and energy that God supplies. The price of preaching unction is too high for many preachers today. Prayer is the price of preaching unction, and, as we have seen, many preachers today do not pray.

Unction is that part of preaching which nobody can tell what it is but everyone can easily detect its absence. Unction is that quiet but intense heat that makes preaching powerful and effective. It is that which gives preaching its force and energy, guiding the Sword of the Spirit into the very hearts of the souls of men.

Jesus, our Lord and Master, had preaching unction. When He spoke to the men en route to Emmaus, they confessed that their hearts burned within them:

> *And they said one to another,* ***Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us*** *by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?*
>
> (Luke 24:32 KJV)

Peter also preached with unction on the Day of Pentecost, pricking the hearts of his listeners with the double-edged sword[5]:

> *Now when they heard this,* ***they were pricked in their heart****, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?*
>
> (Acts 2:37 KJV)

Apostle Paul would not feign to speak a word unless it was imbibed with divine forces and energy:

> *And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. And* ***my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:***
>
> (1 Corinthians 2:1, 4 KJV)

Paul wrote many letters, from which we preach today, but he knew more than we do, that “the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life”:

> *[God] also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for* ***the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life****.*
>
> (2 Corinthians 3:6 KJV)

How did Apostle Paul get these divine forces to impregnate his speech? Was it not through prayer, the very price of preaching unction? In fact, he did not only pray for himself, but he also solicited for prayer from others, that his preaching may not be unctionless!

> ***[Pray] for me****, that* ***utterance*** *may be given unto me,* ***that I may open my mouth boldly****, to make known the mystery of the gospel.*
>
> (Ephesians 6:19 KJV)

Ah! God help us! For we have killed many souls by our multiplied preaching and decreased praying.

How do we know that praying men are scarce? Because of the increasing level of sin in both pulpit and pews. Sin’s real venom is to keep a man away from God. Sin hides His face from us, so that we cannot pray, as long as our sin remains:

> *And* ***there is none that calleth upon thy name****, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: for* ***thou hast hid thy face from us****, and hast consumed us,* ***because of our iniquities.***
>
> (Isaiah 64:7 KJV)

Prayerlessness is the mother of all sin because prayer is what keeps a man from the temptation to sin:

> *And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter,* ***Simon, sleepest thou?*** *Couldest not thou watch one hour?* ***Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.*** *The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak.*
>
> (Mark 14:37-38 KJV)

Jesus, when He found the disciples sleeping, took a special interest in the case of Simon Peter, because Satan had desired to sift him as wheat[6], and if any of the disciples should be sleeping, it ought not to be Peter. Oh, if only he knew that his

prayerlessness would cost him a regretful denial of his Lord!

That sin is on the rise in our churches is testimony to the truth that praying men are few. We hear of sins in the pulpit that are even shameful to associate with the pews. We have sins in our pews that even sinful unbelievers marvel at. And it is so because the men and women who are supposed to be praying are sleeping, and while they sleep, the enemy comes to sow his tares in the hearts of the unwatchful:

> *But **while men slept, his enemy came** and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.*
>
> (Matthew 13:25 KJV)

How do we know that praying men are scarce? Because of the decreasing number of conversions we see in our churches today! Oswald J. Smith writes thus in his classic book, The Revival We Need:

> It is reported that there were 7,000 churches that did not win a single soul for Jesus Christ in an entire year. That means that 7,000 ministers preached the Gospel for a whole year without reaching even one lost soul. Supposing that they preached, putting it at a low average, on 40 Sundays, not including extra meetings, that would mean that these 7,000 ministers preached 560,000 sermons in a single year. Think of the work, the labor, the money expended in salaries, etc., to make this possible. And yet 560,000 sermons preached by 7,000 ministers in 7,000 churches to tens of thousands of hearers during a period of twelve months, failed to bring a single soul to Christ. Now, my brethren, there is something radically wrong somewhere. There is either something the matter with these 7,000 ministers or else with their 560,000 sermons, or with both.[7]

Once upon a time, conversion used to be a radical Christian experience. You could point to a sinner who has been at the feet of the Cross and confidently say, “He is born-again!” But not anymore. Now, true conversions are very few and far between in our decked cathedrals. And why is it so? Is it not because praying men are scarce?

To be sure, the born-again experience is like the birth of a newborn into the world. Someone has to travail for the baby to be born[8]. If we did travail, then we should be sure to bring forth children in the Lord:

> *Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For **as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.***
>
> (Isaiah 66:8 KJV)

And even after they are born, we must continue to travail until Christ be

formed in them:

> *My little children, of whom* ***I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you****,*
>
> (Galatians 4:19 KJV)

The increasing number of spiritual miscarriages we see in our churches is proof to us that not many men are travailing in prayer until Christ is formed in the hearts of new converts.

Now you see why I say that praying men are scarce. It is sad, but it is yet true. The Father is still seeking for one. Will He find you?

> *I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.*
>
> (Ezekiel 22:30 KJV)

Chapter 2: The Legalities of Divine Intervention

> *Thus saith the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me.*
>
> (Isaiah 45:11 KJV)

The Omnipotent seems to be limited in what He is able to do for humanity. God Almighty is not always able to do what He wants to do on Earth. As much as this may sound very unconventional, it is yet not unscriptural.

The bible tells us that God wants all men to be saved:

> *The Lord is ...not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*
>
> (2 Peter 3:9 KJV)

God's will is that all men will be saved. He wants this. He wills it. But why are all men not saved? Why doesn't God just save all men if that is what He really wants?

In 1st Timothy, we are told that God wants all men to come to the knowledge of the truth:

> *For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.*
>
> (1 Timothy 2:3-4 KJV)

If God wants all men to come to the knowledge of the truth, then why doesn't He just go ahead and do it? Is He not all-powerful? If that is what He really wants, then what is stopping Him from doing just that?

What is it that "limits" God? Or perhaps we should ask, who is it that "limits" God? Surely, Satan is not the one who limits God. Satan could not do anything if God forbids him. We see that in the story of Job[1]. God forbade Satan to touch Job's life. And Satan could not go against the limit God set for him. So Satan cannot be the one who limits God.

Then what is it that "limits" God that He is not able to do everything He wants to do on earth? The answer does not lie very far from us, once we understand the truth about dominion on Earth. Come with me to the book of beginnings, and I

will show you a mystery.

In the Book of Genesis, we learn that when God made man, He handed over the earth's title deed completely to him. The authority to exercise dominion on earth was leased out to Adam.

> *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and* ***replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion*** *over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and* ***over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.***
>
> (Genesis 1:27-28 KJV)

Adam did not own the Earth. It is God who legally owns this Earth. The Bible tells us that the Earth is the Lord's:

> ***The earth is the LORD'S****, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.*
>
> (Psalms 24:1 KJV)

However, the Earth was leased out to Adam, so to speak. God did not tell Adam, "I will dominate the Earth through you". No. He commanded him to dominate the Earth himself. He had created man for dominion, and had given the earth to man, according to the Scriptures:

> *The heaven, even the heavens, are the LORD'S: but* ***the earth hath he given to the children of men.***
>
> (Psalms 115:16 KJV)

God so much respected this authority He had given to man that Adam was the one who named everything God made. And whatever name Adam decided to give to anything, God had no objection!

> *And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and* ***whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.***
>
> (Genesis 2:19 KJV)

The significance of Adam's lease on the Earth demanded that God and Satan alike must go through man for permission to do anything for, or against,

humanity[2].

Just as God respected the authority He gave to Adam, He also respects the authority He has given to His people, who belong to the seed of the last Adam[3]. God will not bypass His people to do anything on Earth. He has chosen to bind Himself by the "lease" he handed to Adam for dominating the Earth. If Adam and his seed do not permit Him, it would not be legal for Him, so to speak, to intervene in their affairs.

Prayer is the only means by which man grants God permission to intervene in any situation. Regardless of what God *wants* to do, or *wills* to do, He cannot do anything for man unless He is invited, by prayer, to do so. God is always waiting for somebody to pray:

> ***And therefore will the LORD wait, that he may be gracious unto you...****he will be very gracious unto thee* ***at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee.***
>
> (Isaiah 30:18-19 KJV)

A full realization and appreciation of the legal realities of divine intervention teaches us that anytime we fail to pray, we limit God in what He can do for us. John Wesley has said: "God does nothing but in answer to prayer." In another place, he is quoted as saying: "It seems God is limited by our prayer life—that He can do nothing for humanity unless someone asks Him."

An illustrative story is told of Jesus, when He got to heaven, that the angels asked Him, "Now that You are here, who will continue the great work You started on earth?" Jesus replied: "I have entrusted it into the hands of eleven men; that they will carry on the work to the whole world." The angels asked, "What if they fail?" Jesus answered: "If they fail, it means I have failed!"

The Almighty God has chosen to "limit" Himself by the prayer lives of men. Whenever we fail to pray, we deny God of the permission He needs from man to bring divine intervention into the affairs of men.

Satan can also do nothing but in response to man's prayerlessness. Satan can really do nothing against humanity unless praying men sleep. Prayerlessness empowers the devil to do as he pleases on earth.

> *But* ***while men slept, his enemy came*** *and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.*
>
> (Matthew 13:25 KJV)

The enemy can only come when praying men fall asleep. So prayerlessness is actually an invitation for satanic invasion into man's domain.

> *Watch ye and **pray, lest ye enter into temptation**. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak.*
>
> (Mark 14:38 KJV)

Our avowed enemy is always looking out for prayerless holes in our lives that he can prey on. Without watchfulness and prayerfulness, the temptation to sin is inevitable and insurmountable.

In summary, we have seen that God put Adam in charge of the Earth. No one was legally permitted to do anything on Earth, not even God, nor Satan, if Adam, and for that matter, man, was bypassed.

Sadly though, Adam did not hold on to the Earth's title deed for long.

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Chapter 3: Paradise Lost, Paradise Gained

> *A shrewd servant will gain authority over a master's worthless son and receive a part of the inheritance.*
>
> (Proverbs 17:2 GNB)

Who is shrewder than the devil? Who is more cunning than that old serpent?[1] Though he was created as a servant to man, yet by his shrewdness and craftiness, he received that which was intended for man.

For verily God had created man for dominion, and had made him a little lower than only the Creator, that is God Himself.

> *What is man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him? For* ***thou hast made him but little lower than God , And crownest him with glory and honor. Thou makest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; Thou hast put all things under his feet:***
>
> (Psalms 8:4-6 ASV)

Man was created to have dominion over the works of God's hands. All created beings, including the devil, were made subject to man. But the serpent by his craftiness robbed man of his crown and glory.

When Adam and Eve disobeyed God and ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they "sold" their lease on the Earth to the devil. How do we know this? In the temptation of Jesus, Satan boldly declared to our Master that the power and wealth of the kingdoms of the world were all handed over to him.

> *Then the Devil took [Jesus] up and showed him in a second all the kingdoms of the world. "I will give you* ***all this power and all this wealth****," the Devil told him. "****It has all been handed over to me, and I can give it to anyone I choose.***
>
> (Luke 4:5-6 GNB)

Adam handed the Earth's lease over to the devil by his disobedience to God. Because this lease was not yet expired when Satan got it, he became "the god of this world".

> *But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom* ***the god of this world*** *hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God,*

should shine unto them.

(2 Corinthians 4:3-4 KJV)

Satan was now "in charge" on Earth. In fact, Jesus called him the "prince of this world":

> *Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for* ***the prince of this world cometh...***
>
> (John 14:30 KJV)

If he was the prince, then the world was his domain, and so he was the one in charge. Adam had given the lease on the Earth to him, thus making all of Adam's seed subject to the devil's manipulation.

It became necessary therefore, that Jesus be manifested in the flesh, born of a woman, but not of the seed of Adam[2], that He should not be subject to the dominion of the prince of this world. Jesus tells us, even before His death, that the prince of this world has nothing in Him.

> *...**the prince of this world** cometh, and **hath nothing in me**.*
>
> (John 14:30 KJV)

This shows us that He was above the dominion of the prince of this world even before He made a public spectacle of him on the cross[3]! But God's intent was not just to have Jesus as the only Man who overrides Satan's dominion on Earth. Rather, through Jesus' redemptive work on the cross, God would restore fallen man, Adam's race, to their lost estate.

By His obedience to death on the Cross, Jesus took back from the Devil that which Adam handed over to him through his disobedience.

> *For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more* ***they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.)*** *For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so* ***by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.***
>
> (Romans 5:17, 19 KJV)

After His resurrection, Jesus boldly declared that all power in heaven and in earth had been given to Him.

> *And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying,* ***All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth****.*

(Matthew 28:18 KJV)

That He says this now reveals to us that He did not have all power in heaven and earth *before* His death and resurrection. In fact, He says it was "given" to Him, suggesting that someone else had it. By His death and resurrection, Jesus Christ reclaimed the Earth's title deed from Satan and restored it back to man.

He entrusted it into the hands of those who are redeemed from the dominion of darkness into the Kingdom of Light, when He said, "Go ye therefore..."

> ***Go ye therefore**, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:*
>
> (Matthew 28:19 KJV)

Encapsulated in that commission, "Go ye therefore...," is the truth that all who identify with Him in his death and resurrection now come to share in this power that has been given unto Him. Such are the ones who are no longer under the control of the god of this world. God calls them His people. He put His name on them, and was not ashamed to be called their God.[4]

> *For **both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one**: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren...And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; **that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.***
>
> (Hebrews 2:11-15 KJV)

Thus Jesus Christ stripped Satan completely of all his power and authority[5]. Now, the people who really have the dominion on Earth are God's people. However, Satan continues to prey on the ignorance of those who still remain bound by him in his kingdom[6]. But if God's people will arise to enforce their authority, Satan has no choice but to obey!

If God's people will arise...!

****

Chapter 4: If My People, Then Will I

> ***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.*
>
> (2 Chronicles 7:14 KJV)

God cannot do anything for His people, even if He *wants* to, even if He *wills* it, unless His people first do something. “If My people” must always precede “then will I”.

The responsibility is on His people, not on God. Whatever God will do for His people in the latter portions of 2 Chronicles 7:14 is dependent on what His people do according to the earlier portions of that verse.

When the heavens are shut up, and there is no rain, and locusts devour the harvest of the field, and pestilences prevail in the land, what God really wants to do is to bring healing to the land.

> *If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people...**I ...will heal their land.***
>
> (2 Chronicles 7:13-14 KJV)

But one thing limits Him from healing the land, and He does not hide it from us. *If My people...!*

When the wickedness of Sodom and Gomorrah reached His holy heaven, and He came down to see it for Himself, what He was really hoping for was that He would not have to destroy the people for their wickedness. His will was that Sodom would be spared; that it would not be destroyed.

> *And the LORD said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then **I will spare** all the place for their sakes... And he said, If I find there forty and five**, I will not destroy it.***
>
> (Genesis 18:26, 28 KJV)

But why was Sodom not spared? Because He could not find there ten of His people[1]. *If My people...!*

When the nation of Israel did evil in His sight, and His wrath waxed hot

against them, what He wanted to do, being the just and holy God that He is, was to destroy them.

> *And the LORD said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people: Now therefore* ***let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them****: and I will make of thee a great nation.*
>
> (Exodus 32:9-10 KJV)

Let me alone? Could a man prevent God from doing what He wanted to do? A mere mortal impotent man preventing the Immortal Omnipotent God? It seems so, for we find Moses preventing God from carrying out what He wanted to do.

> *Therefore he said that* ***he would destroy them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy them.***
>
> (Psalms 106:23 KJV)

Moses His chosen stood in His way! And because of that, God could not carry through with what He really thought of doing. One of His own people had prevented Him. *If My people...!*

The truth of the matter is profound, and cannot be denied. God is waiting for His people to act, and by so doing, give Him the permission to intervene.

But why are His people also sitting down, waiting for God to act? Have we forgotten, or do we not know, that God cannot do what He wants to do, or wills to do, for humanity unless His people first do something?

We ought to have learnt from the exodus of the nation of Israel from Egypt to the Promised Land. When God by His mighty and outstretched arm brought His people out of Egypt, from slavery and bondage, His will and intention was to carry them to the Promised Land.

> *And* ***he brought us out from thence, that he might bring us in****, to give us the land which he sware unto our fathers.*
>
> (Deuteronomy 6:23 KJV)

He did not bring them out to leave them stranded in the wilderness. “He brought them out that He might bring them in”.

But why do we find them stationed at Horeb, as though that was their final destination? Had God failed to carry through His promise? Certainly not! So

who was to blame? His people! They were the problem! They were waiting for God to move them, when in fact, all that time, it seems, God was waiting for them to move.

> *The LORD our God spake unto us in Horeb, saying,* ***Ye have dwelt long enough in this mount: Turn you, and take your journey****... Behold, I have set the land before you:* ***go in and possess the land*** *which the LORD sware unto your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give unto them and to their seed after them.*
>
> (Deuteronomy 1:6-8 KJV)

God is waiting on us, my brethren. God is waiting on His Church to take responsibility and move this generation into the Land of Promise! I am convinced that this is not the final destination of the Church of Jesus Christ! Powerless pulpits, unctionless preaching, pews laden with sin and iniquity, a new generation who do not know God nor the works that He did for our fathers[2] – certainly, this is not our final destination!

No! He is coming for a glorious Church! He is coming for a spotless Bride[3]! "He brought us out that He might bring us in..." He did not intend to leave us stranded in this wilderness. Why do we keep on camping around this mountain of reproach? Ah! We are to blame! God is looking down on us from His holy heaven, and all He can say is: If My people...! If only my people will arise and do something!

Enough is enough! We have dwelt long enough on this mountain of reproach. We have dwelt long enough without the true demonstration of the Spirit and of Power[4]. We have dwelt long enough without true Holy Ghost revival!

Things will not change if we continue to sit down in our religious piety, Sunday after Sunday, hypocritically claiming to be "waiting on God" to send revival. Until we take responsibility for our present state and enforce a change, change will not happen!

Newton's First Law of Motion states that every object continues in its state of rest, or of uniform motion in a straight line, unless compelled to change that state by external forces acting upon it. Ah! Even science knows something that His people do not know! The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light[5].

Would to God that He also had men who are not destitute of this kind of

wisdom; who would not sit down waiting for change, but will take up the responsibility to enforce a change!

****

Chapter 5: Waiting and Wasting

> *They have the opportunity to live again, but* ***they are not smart enough*** *to take it*[1]. ***He is not a wise son, for he [should not] stand still in the time of the breaking forth of sons*****[2]****.**
>
> (Hosea 13:13 GW, LITV)

It is sad when we, by our hypocritical waiting, put the blame on God for our sad spiritual state. When we, who must take responsibility to make things happen, while away the time in the name of waiting upon God, we seldom consider that we are actually doing ourselves a great disservice. In pretending to wait upon God, we are actually wasting away precious lives and destinies!

The impotent man lying at the pool of Bethesda was waiting for someone to do for him what he was responsible to do for himself. For thirty-eight years he waited, blaming everybody else but himself. And for as long as he waited, he wasted his life away!

> *The impotent man answered him, Sir,* ***I have no man****, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but* ***while I am coming, another steppeth down before me****.*
>
> (John 5:7 KJV)

He had his excuses for his present infirmity, just as much as we also do for the backslidden state of the Church now. How long will we wait, or better, pretend to wait, for revival?

God intended for the nation of Israel to stay in captivity for no more than four hundred years:

> *And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them* ***four hundred years****; And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and* ***afterward shall they come out*** *with great substance.*
>
> (Genesis 15:13-14 KJV)

Their time in slavery was to expire after four hundred years. But why were they still in bondage after four hundred years? Why were they wasting their lives in slavery, waiting for a deliverer? Was there none among them who had faith enough to hold God to His Word? Surely there was!

God had raised up a deliverer for them at least ten years before the time clock hit the four hundred years! A deliverer, whom they rejected, much to their own loss. This deliverer was none other than Moses, who was born at least eighty years before the Israelites finally came out of Egypt.

> *Moses was 80 years old and Aaron was 83 when they talked to Pharaoh.*
>
> (Exodus 7:7 GW)

The Scripture lets us know that the Israelites came out of Egypt after four hundred and thirty years in slavery:

> *The Israelites had been living in Egypt for 430 years. After exactly 430 years all the LORD'S people left Egypt in organized family groups.*
>
> (Exodus 12:40-41 GW)

That means that Moses was born at least fifty years before the 400 year deadline. When Moses was almost forty years old, the Bible says "it came into his heart" to visit his own people. This was about the 390th year of Israel's slavery in Egypt.

> *But when he was almost forty years old,* ***it came into his heart*** *to go and see his brothers, the children of Israel.*
>
> (Acts 7:23 BBE)

How did it come into Moses' heart to visit his brethren? Who put it into his heart? Was it coincidence? Maybe, but not likely! You see, God was already at work in his heart, busily raising up a deliverer for His people before the 400 year deadline. But His people were so steeped into their enslaved routine, that they did not grasp what God was doing. The Bible says, "they didn't understand"!

> ***Moses thought his own people would understand*** *that God was going to use him to give them freedom.* ***But they didn't understand.***
>
> (Acts 7:25 GW)

Though it was something as simple as not understanding what God was doing at the present moment, yet it would prove to be as complicated as an extra thirty years in bondage. Thirty wasted years! That was almost a whole generation!

And for all the time that they were groaning in their bondage, they did not know that they had missed their day of visitation[3]! They wasted away a whole

generation in bondage, who could have also made it to the Promised Land!

The lesson is this: when we wait for change, we waste our lives away. Change will not happen because we wish for it. Wishers only prove to be wasters of destiny. Don't wait for change. Make it happen!

Daniel knew the truth of this so well. When he read the prophecy of Jeremiah concerning the time appointed for their deliverance from captivity, he knew that if anything would happen as God intended, someone must rise up to the challenge.

Daniel was not prepared to waste his life "waiting" for deliverance. He took matters into his own hands:

> *In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes...* ***I Daniel understood by books the number of the years****, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem. And* ***I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes: And I prayed unto the LORD my God...***
>
> (Daniel 9:1-4 KJV)

Darius, also known as Cyaxares II, ascended the throne of Media, according to the common chronology, around 561 BC. Around 538 BC, Babylon was taken by Cyrus, acting under the authority of Darius. It was at this time that Darius was made ruler of the kingdom of Babylon, becoming the immediate successor of King Belshazzar.

Cyrus was not yet the king when Daniel began praying about 538 BC. But Prophet Isaiah had prophesied about 150 years before this time that the king who would order the return of the captives would be Cyrus, not Darius.

> *I prepared Cyrus for my righteous purpose. I will make all his roads straight. He will build my city and let my exiles go free without any payment or any reward, says the LORD of Armies.*
>
> (Isaiah 45:13 GW)

The prophesy was already given, and the time appointed for their release was approaching. Yet Cyrus was not the king at the time. Why was Daniel bothering himself to pray, when he knew of Isaiah's and Jeremiah's prophecies? Should not God be diligent enough to bring His own word into fulfilment, once He has

given out His word? Why didn't he just "wait" to see what will happen?

Daniel knew something that this generation ought to learn. He knew that nothing would change if nothing was done. He was convinced that if he were to merely wait for the fulfillment of prophecy, he would be wasting away his life! Therefore, he took up the challenge, and began to pray!

Two years after Daniel began praying, Darius died (in the year 536 BC). Cyrus therefore ascended the throne! And in his first year of reign, Cyrus issued a decree for the unconditional release of the captive Jews in Babylon!

> *In the first year that Cyrus of Persia was emperor,* ***the LORD made what he had said through the prophet Jeremiah come true.*** *He prompted Cyrus to issue the following command and send it out in writing to be read aloud everywhere in his empire: "This is the command of Cyrus, Emperor of Persia. The LORD, the God of Heaven, has made me ruler over the whole world and has given me the responsibility of building a temple for him in Jerusalem in Judah. May God be with* ***all of you who are his people. You are to go to Jerusalem and rebuild the Temple of the LORD****, the God of Israel, the God who is worshiped in Jerusalem. If any of his people in exile need help to return, their neighbors are to give them this help. They are to provide them with silver and gold, supplies and pack animals, as well as offerings to present in the Temple of God in Jerusalem."*
>
> (Ezra 1:1-4 GNB)

Would you call this one too coincidence? The truth is, there is no such word as "coincidence" in spiritual dynamics! But there is such a thing as an enforced divine intervention. Daniel enforced God's intervention by his prayer.

Albert Barnes' Notes on the Bible[4] captures the whole event in attractive parlance:

> When [Daniel] ...engaged in this solemn act of prayer, it would have been impossible to have conjectured in what way this could be brought about. The reigning monarch was Cyaxares II, or, as he is here called, Darius, and there was nothing in "his" character, or in anything that he had done, that could have been a basis of calculation that he would favor the return of the Jews and the rebuilding of the city, and there was then no probability that Cyrus would so soon come to the throne, and nothing in his character, as known, that could be a ground of hope that he would voluntarily interpose, and accomplish the Divine purposes and promises in regard to the holy city. It was probably such circumstances as these which produced the anxiety in the mind of Daniel, and which led him to offer this fervent prayer; and his fervent supplications should lead us to trust in God that he will accomplish his purposes,

> and should induce us to pray with fervour and with faith when we see no way in which he will do it. In all cases he can as easily devise a way in answer to prayer, as he could remove Cyaxares from the throne, and incline the heart of Cyrus to undertake the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the temple.

O! That we can still find men in our generation who, like Daniel, are prepared to take up the responsibility for the return of our captives!

Does God still have such men in our generation?

****

Chapter 6: Has God No Sons?

> *This is what the LORD said about Ammon:* ***"Where are the men of Israel? Is there no one to defend their land?*** *Why have they let the people who worship Molech take the territory of the tribe of Gad and settle there?*
>
> Jeremiah 49:1 GNB

People did not "wait" on God to send revival. No, not in the Bible nor in the pages of history. Rather, they took up the challenge to make God's hand known to their generation! But where are the sons of God in this generation who will arise in defense of His Holy Name? Has God no sons?

Where are the Daniels who are wise enough not to sit down unconcerned, merely waiting for something to happen? Are there no Elijahs who are very jealous for the Lord God of hosts?[1] Is no one disturbed at all that this generation is boldly walking away from the only true God?[2]

See how the heathen reproach us, and mock us because we have lost the Glory[3]. Are there no men among us who are tired of waiting for things to happen? Who will arise and take charge to make revival happen? For how long must the whole of creation wait for the manifestation of the sons of God?[4]

Elijah made God known to backslidden Israel till they confessed, "The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God."[5] Daniel and his three Hebrew friends proved to Nebuchadnezzar that there is no other God like Jehovah, who can reveal the deep and hidden things[6], and deliver from the power of vehement flames[7].

Even so, the sons of God that rose up for His defense were not only confined to the pages of the Bible. The pages of history are also replete with these great souls. A good account of this is seen in the story about the revival on the Island of Lewis. This occurred around 1949.

Following the trauma of World War II, spiritual life was at a low ebb in the Scottish Hebrides. The spiritual state of this island prior to the revival was so bad that the presbytery of Lewis met to consider the terrible drift away from the ordinances of the Church, especially the drift away from the Church by the young people of the island. From their meeting, the presbytery issued a declaration that was to be read in all the congregations, and published in the

local press:

> "The presbytery affectionate plead with their people, especially with the youth of the church, to take these matters to heart and to make serious inquiry as to what must be the end should there be no repentance. And they call upon every individual as before God to examine his or her life in the light of that responsibility which pertains to us all that haply, in the divine mercy, we may be visited with the spirit of repentance and may turn again unto the Lord whom we have so grieved with our iniquities and waywardness. Especially would they warn their young people of the devil's man-traps – the cinema and the public house."

But if anything would happen, God must have some praying men working with Him. Was it any surprise, then, that two sisters, Peggy and Christine Smith, 84 and 82 years in age, respectively, had been praying constantly for revival in their cottage near Barvas village on the Isle of Lewis?

One evening, Peggy had a vision. In the vision, this dear old lady saw the church of her fathers crowded with young people. And she saw a strange minister in the pulpit. She was so impressed by this revelation that she sent for her parish minister, James Murray Mackay, and told her story.

Mr. Mackay was a God-fearing man, a man that longed to see God working. He had tried so many things to get the youth of the parish interested, but not one single teenager attended the church.

This was what Peggy said to him: "I am sure, Mr. McKay, that you are longing to see God working. What about calling your office bearers together and suggest to them that you spend two nights a week waiting upon God. You have tried missions. You've tried special evangelists. Mr. McKay, have you tried God?"

Mr. Mackay meekly obeyed and said, "Yes, I will call the session together and I will suggest that we meet on Tuesday night and Friday night and we will spend the whole night in prayer." You see, here were men that meant business. They wanted a change, and they wanted it so badly that they were willing to pay the price for it. But will God find such men in our generation?

The dear old lady said, "Well, if you do that, my sister and I will get on our knees at 10 o'clock on Tuesday, 10 o'clock on Friday and we will wait on our knees until four o'clock in the morning." O, how this puts us to shame! Two old ladies in their eighties, praying all night long for revival!

So they went to prayer, holding on to one promise from God, and pleading for the fulfillment of that promise: "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground".

> *For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring:*
>
> (Isaiah 44:3 KJV)

That is God's promise. And in their prayers, according to the minister, they would say again and again, "God, you are a covenant keeping God and you must be true to your covenant engagements."

The praying and the meetings continued for several nights until one night, having begun to pray at 10 p.m., a young deacon from the Free Church read Psalm 24:

> *Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.*
>
> (Psalms 24:3-4 KJV)

He then closed his Bible, and said, "Brethren, it seems to me just so much humbug to be praying as we are praying, to be waiting as we are waiting, if we ourselves are not rightly related to God." Then he began to pray: "God, are my hands clean? Is my heart pure?" He fell on his knees, and then on his face among the straw, and within a matter of minutes three of the elders fell into a trance.

The moment that happened in the barn, a Power was let lose in Barvas that shook the whole of Lewis. God stepped down! The Holy Spirit began to move among the people. And the minister writing about what happened on the following morning said this, "You met God on meadow and moorland. You met Him in the homes of the people. God seemed to be everywhere."[8]

What would have happened if Peggy and her sister were not praying? What if Mr. Mackay had not joined in with his elders? Do you think you would be reading their story now? Where are the sons and daughters of God, like Peggy and Christine Smith, and Mr. Mackay and his church elders, who will arise in our days to take the land for God? Are there no praying men in this generation? Has God no sons?

O Sleeping Church! What evident proofs do we have to show to this generation that our God is not dead? Do we care at all? If we do not care, then we ought to beware, for there is a danger if we hold back from taking responsibility for our land.

****

Chapter 7: The Danger of Holding Back

> *Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria... but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.*
>
> (Amos 6:1, 6 KJV)

To dwell at ease in Zion, not caring for the affliction of Joseph, is a woe and a curse indeed! If we really cared, then we would take responsibility for change. But we prove that we are only pretending worshippers because we hold back our sword from fighting at such a time as this.

Hypocrites we are, who will not put down our swords, lest we be charged with treason. Instead, we carry our weapons and put on our armor – but it is all a farce and a delusion. Let the battle cry be sounded, and you will see armed men turning their backs in the day of battle, like the children of Ephraim:

> *The children of Ephraim, being armed, and carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle.*
>
> (Psalms 78:9 KJV)

Ah! Sinful people! No wonder God places a curse on all who hold back their sword from blood:

> *Cursed be he that doeth the work of the LORD deceitfully, and* ***cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood.***
>
> (Jeremiah 48:10 KJV)

There is great danger in being cursed by God. For if God curses a man, who will plead for him? There is yet another danger in holding back from fighting, and it is that we endanger the lives of sincere soldiers who care for the glory of God.

The story of Uriah provides us a vivid illustration of this truth. When King David committed adultery with Bathsheba, Uriah's wife, in hypocrisy he planned to cover his sin. So he sent for Uriah from the battleground, and instructed him to go home to his wife, supposing that all Israel would think that Bathsheba conceived at the time when her husband came home from the battlefield.

But Uriah was so concerned about the ark of God, and the people of God, that he cared not for his own pleasures. He refused to go home and lie with his wife:

> *And Uriah said unto David, The ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in*

> *tents; and my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord, are encamped in the open fields; shall I then go into mine house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? as thou livest, and as thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing.*
>
> (2 Samuel 11:11 KJV)

How scarce such men are, who like Uriah, will not so much as care for their own lives[1], but will jeopardize it in the high places of the field[2] for the glory of God!

When David saw that Uriah refused to go home to his wife, he sent a letter by the hands of Uriah to Joab, the captain of the army:

> *And it came to pass in the morning, that David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah. And he wrote in the letter, saying,* ***Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die****. And it came to pass, when Joab observed the city, that* ***he assigned Uriah unto a place where he knew that valiant men were.*** *And the men of the city went out, and fought with Joab: and there fell some of the people of the servants of David; and Uriah the Hittite died also.*
>
> (2 Samuel 11:14-17 KJV)

David did not instruct Joab to kill Uriah. Rather, he told him to put Uriah in the hottest place of the battle, where the valiant Philistine soldiers were. In the heat of the battle, right at the time when every soldier needed support from their fellow soldiers, David instructed Joab and his men to retreat from Uriah – that is, to hold back their swords from fighting!

Uriah was killed not because he was not a good fighter. He was killed not because he did not follow the rules of engagement. Instead, he was killed because the men who were supposed to stand with him, when he needed them the most, retreated from him!

Indeed the history pages of the earth record that Uriah was slain by the sword of the Philistine warriors. But the sacred records of heaven will reveal that he was killed by the sword of David, and by the sword of Joab, and by the swords of his fellow Israelite soldiers who did not care enough to stand with him and fight the valiant men of the Philistines in the forefront of the hottest battle.

O what great danger we put sincere soldiers in by our apathy and lack of

concern! Only heaven's arithmetic can compute the number of brave soldiers who have fallen in the high places of the field because no one cared enough to stand with them in taking responsibility for the land!

God has engineered and positioned His Uriah's strategically into His Army for the Last Battle. But will you stand with them, and fight together until every foe is vanquished? Or will you hold back your sword from blood?

If we will ever see revival in this generation, then *"If My people"* must always *precede "then will I"*! God is still waiting for His people to arise...

May we wake up before it is too late!

THE END

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Chapter 1 Endnotes:

1. De-extinction to save a species: Stewart Brand at TED2013
2. 2 Chronicles 16:9
3. Genesis 32:26
4. Source: <pastor4pastors.com/statistics/> (The statistics cross all denominational lines and have been gleaned from various sources, such as Pastor to Pastor, Focus on the Family, Ministries Today, Charisma Magazine, TNT Ministries, and a few other respected ministries.). Date Accessed: March 22nd, 2013.
5. Hebrews 4:12
6. Luke 22:31
7. The Revival We Need by Oswald J. Smith (1925)
8. John 16:21

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Chapter 2 Endnotes:

1. Job 1:8-12; 2:4-6
2. Genesis 6:13; Genesis 18:17; 1Kings 22:19-22
3. 1 Corinthians 15:45

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Chapter 3 Endnotes:

1. (Genesis 3:1 GNB) ...the snake was the most cunning animal that the LORD God had made...(Matthew 10:16 KJV) ... wise as serpents....
2. Genesis 3:15
3. Colossians 2:15
4. Hebrews 11:16
5. Colossians 2:15
6. 2Timothy 2:26

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Chapter 4 Endnotes:

1. Genesis 18:23-32
2. Judges 2:10
3. Ephesians 5:26-27
4. 1Corinthians 2:4

5. Luke 16:8

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Chapter 5 Endnotes:

1. God's Word Translation of the Holy Bible
2. Literal Translation of the Holy Bible, paraphrased
3. Luke 19:42-44
4. Albert Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Albert Barnes (1798-1870)

****

Chapter 6 Endnotes:

1. 1 Kings 19:10, 14
2. John 17:3
3. 1 Samuel 4:21
4. Romans 8:19
5. 1 Kings 18:36-39
6. Daniel 2:13, 16-19, 27-28
7. Daniel 3:28-29
8. Adapted from Rev. Duncan Campbell's preaching, Revival on the Isle of Lewis

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Chapter 7 Endnotes:

1. Acts 20:24
2. Judges 5:18

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About the Author

Cyril Opoku is the founder of Quest for God, a web-based organization that is committed to promoting a quest for an unprecedented fiery revival of all times in this generation.

As a Bible Teacher and a Prayer Warrior Leader for more than a decade now, Cyril proves to be a man with an uncompromising message on the Holy Spirit and Prayer. He combines sound biblical teaching on Prayer with practical demonstrations of the same. Cyril has a passionate burden for revival, and has organized and led several Prayer Meetings in West Africa and North America.

Cyril currently serves on the Church Board of a local assembly, affiliated with the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, located in Toronto. He lives in Mississauga with his lovely wife, Freda, and their son, Avery-Elijah.

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Table of Contents

Introduction
Chapter 1: The Endangered Breed
Chapter 2: The Legalities of Divine Intervention
Chapter 3: Paradise Lost, Paradise Gained
Chapter 4: If My People, Then Will I
Chapter 5: Waiting and Wasting
Chapter 6: Has God No Sons?
Chapter 7: The Danger of Holding Back
About the Author