

FIRESTARTERS 5

PRAYER TOOL

Igniting Prayer for Revival in our City • 5 Minutes to Read • 5 Minutes in Prayer

FOR THE WEEK OF Sept 5th - 11th, 2021 - Vol 72

THEME VERSE:

*If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves,
and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways,
then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.*

2 Chronicles 7:14

THE GOD OF REVIVAL:

The 1996 Houston Revival

When a powerful revival swept through the city of Houston, Texas, in the 1990's, it came through a small but growing church called the Christian Tabernacle. This church could trace its roots back to simple home meetings that faithfully gathered on the east side of Houston back in the year 1950. Of all the things it did right, it was its emphasis on prayer that caught the Lord's attention.

In 1988, after many trials and transitions, the church called the veteran evangelist R. A. Heard to be its associate pastor. He eventually became its senior pastor, and he worked hard to build into this small congregation of just barely 70 members. His greatest passion was to invest into and equip other leaders to serve in God's Kingdom. Yet, even as he labored vigorously for the Lord, he fell into the common dilemma of many ministers: he allowed the busyness of church to drain him of his intimacy with Christ.

In 1994, Pastor Heard had had enough. He purposefully set his heart and mind to wait upon God's presence, prioritizing his times of devotion above all else. Through that year and 1995, he taught and preached on knowing God intimately. For him and his church, it was a year of intensifying hunger for more of the Lord and a season of crying out for a fresh revival.

Pastor Heard invited guests throughout 1996 to share their stories with his church and to stir up a deeper thirst for a greater move of God. One Sunday morning, on October 6th, the traveling evangelist Tommy Tenney was preaching at Pastor Heard's church. The presence of God seemed to alight upon that place, and people's longing for God rose to new levels. Pastor Heard eagerly invited Tommy to come back and preach the following week, on October 13th. Once again, people in attendance sensed the mighty presence of God in their midst. The following Monday, the church redoubled their prayers for revival to break out. Pastor Heard invited Tommy to preach a 3rd time on October 20th, and during the week leading up to it, he personally led his entire pastoral staff to visit together the Brownsville revival in Pensacola, Florida. It was there they received an impartation of revival fire to bring back to Texas with them.

That Sunday morning in Houston, the very air in the sanctuary was thick with the glory of God. People commented that it was almost hard to breathe. The faint sounds of sobbing ebbed through the crowd. Pastor Heard stepped up to the pulpit to welcome Tommy once again and to share a few thoughts. He read the familiar passage from 2 Chronicles 7:14: "If my people who are called by my name will humble themselves, and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from Heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land." Pastor Heard then exhorted the people to seek the face the Lord instead of merely seeking His hand. More of God's presence and not merely power. It was at that precise moment that supernatural lightning struck the pulpit, splitting it in two, and propelling the minister backwards to the floor.

As the pastor lay on the floor, others began to fall prostrate to the ground. People saw visions or angels or flashes of light. Cries of repentance swept through the sanctuary. Folks of all ages and professions ran to the altar to seek the Lord. As people fell under the conviction of sin, the church started to baptize those wanting to get right with God. It went on like this all day Sunday and into the early morning hours. The church, recognizing the revival God was bringing, continued to meet every Sunday but also held gatherings every Wednesday through Saturday. During these times, God's presence would often overwhelm the worshippers and cause the manifestation of miraculous healings and numerous salvations for the lost. Over the next several years, many believers would visit from other states and even other countries to seek after God's face and to catch an impartation of powerful revival fire.

THE GOD WHO ANSWERS PRAYERS:

- Praise God for how He has answered our recent prayers, in that the local police have captured a man who had been on a killing spree in Charlotte this year. Thank God this violent criminal is now imprisoned and unable to hurt anyone else.

PRAYER REQUESTS THIS WEEK:

FOR THE NEEDS OF THE CITY:

- **NAVIGATING THE DANGERS OF THE PANDEMIC.** Please keep praying that God would help us overcome the dangers of COVID-19. Pray for increased faith in God's intervention and for new breakthroughs scientifically. Pray for more truthful and fair reporting on current treatments and vaccines and less politically-charged pronouncements. Pray for our hospitals and medical workers to be safe and well-resourced. At the same time, pray for the many medical staff who may lose their jobs soon because of the new federal vaccine mandates. Pray for peaceful yet potent responses from Americans as we grapple with federal vaccine protocols and demands.
- **REDUCING VIOLENCE IN THE CITY.** Pray to God for a reduction of violence in our neighborhoods. Pray that our city leaders would have Godly wisdom to address the root issues and to courageously make the changes that will foster peace, reconciliation, and healing.

FOR THE WORLD AND MISSIONS:

- **THOSE IN AFGHANISTAN.** Pray for any missionaries still in Afghanistan that they would either find passage out of the country if they are seeking it or have opportunities to continue doing their work. Pray for God's hand of divine protection over them and for supernatural favor to share the Gospel with Taliban and other followers of Islam.
- **REFUGEES FROM AFGHANISTAN.** Pray for the mission work which is going on with newly arrived Afghani refugees here in the US. Pray for volunteers and resources to help them get settled and find healthy communities for their families.

FOR OTHER MINISTRIES AND REVIVAL:

- **REVIVAL.** Ask that God would give the Church a renewed vision for fervent prayer and utter dependence upon Him. Pray for an increased burning desire among all Christians to seek after God's face, even more than His miraculous power. Pray for a supernatural breakthrough to fully shatter any complacency, for historic revival to be finally loosed upon our nation once again.

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