

# Genuine Revival

By David E. Thiele

Certainly, those of us who are Christians pray for genuine revival in our towns, cities, states, country and the world. But what does genuine revival look like? There have been revivals in the past so we could examine them to get some insight. However the best source is scripture itself.

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## **2 Chronicles 7:14 (KJV)**

<sup>14</sup> 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.

This was a message from God to Israel. It was not given to Christians. But it does contain principles we may learn from. The first is humility, second is prayer, third is seeking God, and forth is repentance.

**Humility-** Man's ego is an obstacle to his trusting in God. Men (and women) like to feel they are in control. If you are busy entertaining the illusion of your own control, you will not turn control of your life over to God. So, one of the first things that must happen is a willingness to give up the deception that you are in control, that you are the Captain of your fate.

**Prayer-** Prayer is conversing with God. Now we don't converse audibly with God in two-way conversations. Adam and Eve did that, but we don't. We may speak audibly with God, and His normal method of response is through His Word – the Bible. Now, I'm not talking about closing your eyes, opening your Bible and letting your finger land randomly on some verse. I'm talking about reading and studying God's Word to find out God's will. When you pray, God's Holy Spirit will recall passages of scripture you've read and studied that will help you deal with the particular situation you are praying about. It is very hard to recall something to mind, that never entered your mind in the first place. The Bible is the answer book.

**Seeking God-** When it talks about seeking God's face, it is talking about looking to see how God is working, and making an effort to discover God's will. What does God want? What does God want for me? What does God want me to do? It involves a willingness to trust and turn control of your life over to God.

**Repentance-** Repentance is more than just turning away from sin. It is turning from going your own way to going God's way. How do you find out which way is God's way? You find that out by reading and studying His Word – the Bible.

So here we have the basic elements needed for revival, humility, prayer, seeking God, and repentance.

The next question is what will God do as a result? “Then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” **2 Chronicles 7:14b (NKJV)**

God says He will hear – He will respond. He will not ignore those who humble themselves, pray, seek His will, and turn from going their own way to going His way.

He will forgive their sin. In fact **Psalms 103:12 (NKJV)** tells us:

<sup>12</sup> As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.

How is He able to do this? Speaking of Jesus John says in **1 John 3:5 (NKJV)**

<sup>5</sup> and you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin.

**Hebrews 9:28 (NKJV)** tells us:

<sup>28</sup> so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.

Because of Christ’s sacrifice on our behalf God offers us forgiveness.

He will heal their land. What does this mean? Does it mean physical healing of the people? As some might ask, “Is there healing in the atonement?” Before we discuss that let’s take what God says at face value.

He will heal their land. The Israelites were an agrarian society. They grew crops for food. They also raised sheep and other livestock that needed lush green fields for grazing. This was God’s promise to restore their land to an abundantly productive level. This was God’s promise of provision.

Can God heal people physically? Yes, He can. Does God heal people physically? Yes, He does. Is God obligated to heal people physically? No, He is not.

God is omnipotent – all powerful. That means He can, or in other words, has the ability to heal people physically. Jesus made the lame to walk, the deaf to hear and the blind to see. Not only that, but He even raised the dead! Talk about physical healing! So we see that God does heal. Here is the question many have today. Is God obligated to heal people physically? What some have done is tried to come up with a formula that forces God’s hand. They say if you do this, and that, and then this, God has to heal you. If that were the case, then they would be God, because now they are in control and manipulating God like a puppet. That is wrong!

One of the verses often quoted out of context to support this idea of physical healing is:

### **Isaiah 53:5 (NKJV)**

<sup>5</sup> But He *was* wounded for our transgressions, *He* was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace *was* upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.

This is not a promise of physical healing for believers. If you read the whole passage it has to do with Christ's sacrifice taking away our sin, healing us spiritually. Jesus was dealing with our greatest need – our need of forgiveness, our need to be made right with God.

Another favorite thing of these false teachers is the “casting out of demons”. One time Jesus sent out seventy people. When they returned, this is what was said:

### **Luke 10:17-20 (NKJV)**

<sup>17</sup> Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name."

<sup>18</sup> And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.

<sup>19</sup> Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

<sup>20</sup> nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven."



Jesus gave authority to these men to perform signs to confirm the message and the messengers. However, while they were thrilled with what they were able to do in His name, Jesus said in effect, “Don’t focus so much on the temporal, but focus on the eternal” The important thing was that their names were written in heaven.

If you see something that focuses on the temporal – physical healing, casting out of demons, rather than the eternal, it is not genuine revival.

### Jesus said in **John 16:33 (NKJV)**

<sup>33</sup> These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

The important thing is having peace with God through Jesus Christ. In the world we will experience trials and difficulties including, sickness, suffering and death. But, rejoice for Jesus has overcome the world.

So, Let us go back to an earlier question. Is there healing in the atonement?

### **1 Corinthians 15:51-57 (NKJV)**

<sup>51</sup> Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed--  
<sup>52</sup> in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.  
<sup>53</sup> For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality.  
<sup>54</sup> So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "*Death is swallowed up in victory.*"  
<sup>55</sup> "*O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?*"  
<sup>56</sup> the sting of death *is* sin, and the strength of sin *is* the law.  
<sup>57</sup> But thanks *be* to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Yes, there is healing in the atonement – far beyond what we can imagine. It is so much more than what is offered by those false teachers today who try to keep our focus on the temporal with the promise of physical healing, rather than the eternal. Should we pray for physical healing? Yes, God may choose to heal us. But, be willing to accept God's answer even if He chooses not to heal our temporal bodies.

### **Remember what the Apostle Paul said in 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 (NKJV)**

<sup>7</sup> And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure.  
<sup>8</sup> Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me.  
<sup>9</sup> And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.  
<sup>10</sup> Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Pray for revival. Let it start with you. Humble yourself and turn control over to God. Pray and ask God for guidance. Read and study His Word, the Bible, regularly. Make an effort to discern God's will for your life. Turn away from sinful things and turn instead toward God.

I pray that God will bless you richly!

