

## **PRAYING THE PSALMS**

### **PRAYER FOR REVIVAL**

Friday, January 19

Reading: Psalm 80

**Psalm 80:19** *Restore us, LORD God Almighty; make Your face shine on us, that we may be saved.*

The story is told of a Lutheran bishop who visited a parish church in California. He found a stirring red and orange banner on the wall with a picture of burning flames and the words, “Come Holy Spirit. Hallelujah.” Unfortunately, directly under the banner was another sign which read, “Fire extinguisher.”<sup>1</sup>

For Israel the fire had gone out. Though the psalmist refers to God as the “Shepherd of Israel”, instead of green pastures and still waters (Psalm 23:1-2) this flock had been fed “the bread of tears” and drank “tears by the bowlful” (80:1, 5). While once they were a strong vine that God had planted from Egypt to the Promised Land, they were now cut down and perishing (80:8-16). What caused this sad turn of events? They had turned away from God!

The first need for revival to take place is prayer. Three times the psalmist calls out to the Lord in prayer (80:3, 7, 19). These pleas at the beginning, middle, and end of his psalm bind it together and remind us of the vital role of prayer in every work of God.

In each of these three verses, the psalmist cries for God to restore. This word means to return, to bring back, to change. It is a cry of repentance. He wants the light that only comes from God to shine on them once again. Revival cannot take place apart from God’s people seeking His face in confession and repentance of sin.

Another crucial element of revival is the presence of God. To “make Your face shine on us” is more than just knowing about God. It is to have a personal relationship with Him. It is living in His presence. This requires constant work.

Did you notice that each time God is called upon His name is fuller. In 80:3, He is addressed as “God” (elōhim). In verse 7, another Hebrew word is added to elōhim making the appeal to the “God of Hosts” or “God Almighty.” At the closing of the psalm, the name LORD (Yahweh/Jehovah) is added to the name to give the fullest expression of His character - “LORD God Almighty” (80:19). This implies a constant growing relationship. Each day we should know the Lord more intimately, understand His will more deeply, and serve Him more faithfully.

Finally, all true revival must be focused on Jesus Christ. The rabbis interpreted “the man at Your right hand, the son of man You have raised up for Yourself” (80:17) as a reference to Messiah. Only through His power could the people “not turn away” but instead call on the name of the Lord (80:18). Revival must focus on the Person and work of Christ. He is the Good Shepherd (John 10). He is the True Vine (John 15). He is the Son of Man who came to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10). We must desire to live for Him who died for us.

**PRAYER THOUGHT:** How can you better pray for revival in your life? In your church? What “fire extinguishers” do you need to remove in order for revival to begin?

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.sermonillustrations.com/a-z/r/revival.htm>