

God's End-Time Prayer Movement

1. Introduction

- a. God is doing something remarkable in our generation. The global prayer movement that is currently exploding is nothing short of a miracle. You can now go to every continent, and almost every country, on the earth and find an expression of corporate prayer and worship.
- b. Peoples, churches, cities and regions are gathering together to worship Christ together and cry out for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.
- c. While this is a remarkable thing it is nothing new. We have seen (session 1) how God has created man in His image to minister to Him as priests. Humans, unlike any other created thing, have the ability to give love to God.
- d. Secondly we have discovered (session 2) that the church was given a specific name and identity by Christ Himself; a *"house of prayer for all nations"*.
- e. Whenever God's people gather together to worship and pray we step into both our individual role as priests and our corporate identity as a house of prayer. This is how the New Testament church was always meant to operate.
 - i. Acts 13 is the clearest example of this when we see the church at Antioch ministering to the Lord together leading to the commissioning of Paul and Barnabas.
- f. Our goal tonight is to look at the current prayer movement in its biblical and historical context. What we will discover is that what the Holy Spirit is orchestrating in our day and time is actually prophesied about in Scripture.
 - i. I make that statement very carefully and very soberly as I know it is a weighty thing to say.
- g. By placing the current prayer movement within its biblical and historical context it should result in:
 - i. A holy trembling concerning what God has called us to
 - ii. Boldness to give ourselves to prayer individually and corporately
 - iii. Endurance to continue in the call

2. The End-Time Drama of Light and Darkness

- a. The second coming of Christ is an interesting subject in the church today. While many people are fascinated by the return of the Lord others stay clear of it out of fear while others yet are completely confused by the subject.
- b. While there are numerous theological stances regarding when and how Christ will return there are a few truths that seem obviously and easily understood regarding Christ's second coming.
- c. One of these areas is the global context into which Christ will be returning. The bible describes a great rage (Ps. 2) among the nations against God and Christ. However

and whenever Christ returns almost all are in agreement that the earth will be in unprecedented evil and wickedness when He comes.

- d. While the darkness gets darker the light will get lighter. Matthew 13 tells us that the wheat and the tares will mature together at the end of the age.

*“He put another parable before them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field, but while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also. And the servants of the master of the house came and said to him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have weeds?’ He said to them, ‘An enemy has done this.’ So the servants said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ But he said, ‘No, lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them. **Let both grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.**” - Matthew 13:24-30*

*“Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples came to him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.” He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, and the good seed is the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil. **The harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels.** Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, **so will it be at the end of the age.** The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all law-breakers, and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.” - Matthew 13:36-42*

- e. When Christ returns there will be unprecedented darkness and wickedness in the world. At the same time there will be unprecedented light and glory in the church. The two realities of light and darkness will mature together.
- f. How will this light come to be? How will God bring about maturity in His church? How will God produce a people that will not only be able to stand in the evil day but actually overcome it?
- g. God’s furnace for producing such a church is the secret place of corporate prayer and fasting and the bible describes a massive movement of night and day prayer in the generation the Lord returns for this very reason.

3. Night and Day Prayer Before the Lord Returns

- a. Possibly the most vivid of all Old Testament prophecies regarding a global night and day prayer movement before the Lord returns is found in the book of Malachi.

“For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name will be great among the nations, and in every place incense will be offered to my name, and a pure offering. For my name will be great among the nations, says the LORD of hosts.” - Malachi 1:11

- b. Malachi speaks of a day when in every tribe, tongue and nation incense (worship and prayer) will be offered to the Lord. Taken in its Old Testament context this prophecy is striking for a few reasons:
 - i. At that point God was only dealing with Israel
 - ii. Night and day prayer was something started by David, a Jewish king, and had no place among the nations of the earth
- c. I believe the current prayer movement is the direct answer to this prophecy. God has declared that from every tribe and tongue His name will be praised. While darkness and sin spreads across the earth through globalization so will the singing of the church through night and day worship and prayer.
- d. In the generation of the Lord's return Sunday only Christianity will not exist. There will be such pressure that the church will either give itself to prayer, walk in massive deception and compromise or it will close its doors altogether.
- e. Isaiah gives some of the clearest descriptions of the darkness that will cover the earth immediately preceding the Lord's return.

“The earth mourns and withers; the world languishes and withers; the highest people of the earth languish. The earth lies defiled under its inhabitants; for they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore a curse devours the earth, and its inhabitants suffer for their guilt; therefore the inhabitants of the earth are scorched, and few men are left.” - Isaiah 24:4-6

- f. In the midst of such wickedness, pain, suffering and darkness Isaiah prophesies that there will be a song that will arise from all over the globe.

“They lift up their voices, they sing for joy; over the majesty of the LORD they shout from the west. Therefore in the east give glory to the LORD; in the coastlands of the sea, give glory to the name of the LORD, the God of Israel. From the ends of the earth we hear songs of praise of glory to the Righteous One.” - Isaiah 24:14-16

- g. Simultaneously there will be the sounds of unparalleled pain and suffering, and sounds of joy and worship arising from the people of the earth.
- h. Later in his prophecies Isaiah gives another window into the generation that the Lord returns. The first 8 verses of Isaiah 42 speak of Jesus' first coming, how He will heal, save, and deliver all who are oppressed by giving them His righteousness.
- i. Then in verse 9 Isaiah identifies a shift so that in verse 10 he is clearly speaking about Christ's second coming.

*“Sing to the LORD a new song, **his praise from the end of the earth, you who go down to the sea, and all that fills it, the coastlands and their inhabitants. Let the desert and its cities lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar inhabits; let the habitants of Sela sing for joy, let them shout from the top of the mountains. Let them give glory to the LORD, and declare his praise in the coastlands. **The LORD goes out like a mighty man, like a man of war he stirs up his zeal; he cries out, he shouts aloud, he shows himself mighty against his foes. For a long time I have held my peace; I have kept still and restrained myself; now I will cry out like a woman in labor; I will gasp and pant.**” - Isaiah 42:10-14***

- j. Isaiah speaks of a day when God will no longer hold His peace with the wickedness in the earth but will come back to judge all flesh. In that day He will stir Himself up like a man of war who comes to conquer His foes. And when He does Isaiah says it will be to the singing of the coastlands and every nation.
- k. The next time Isaiah speaks about God no longer holding His peace he again speaks about it in the context to night and day prayer and worship, this time specifically in the city of Jerusalem.

*“For Zion’s sake I will not keep silent, and **for Jerusalem’s sake I will not be quiet, until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a burning torch. The nations shall see your righteousness, and all the kings your glory, and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will give. You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God. You shall no more be termed Forsaken, and your land shall no more be termed Desolate, but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her, and your land Married; for the LORD delights in you, and your land shall be married. For as a young man marries a young woman, so shall your sons marry you, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you. **On your walls, O Jerusalem, I have set watchmen; all the day and all the night they shall never be silent. You who put the LORD in remembrance, take no rest, and give him no rest until he establishes Jerusalem and makes it a praise in the earth.**” - Isaiah 62:1-7***

- l. One of the clearest signs of the end of the age and the soon coming return of Christ is found here in Isaiah 62 when God promises to establish night and day prayer in and for Jerusalem.
 - i. Today there is night and day prayer taking place in the old city of Jerusalem thus fulfilling this prophecy. Never before in history has anyone been able to say that this prophetic word has come to pass.
- m. This prayer will result in Christ returning to Jerusalem to establish His rule and make it the praise of the earth.
- n. We also see one of the most vivid descriptions of Christ’s second coming found in the very next chapters which are all part of the same prophetic word. Christ will come back to Jerusalem in answer to prayers of the church.

4. Jesus Describes His Coming

- a. The clearest description of night and day prayer preceding the second coming of Christ in the New Testament is spoken of by Jesus Himself in Luke 18.

*“And he told them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart. He said, “In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor respected man. And there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, ‘Give me justice against my adversary.’ For a while he refused, but afterward he said to himself, ‘Though I neither fear God nor respect man, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will give her justice, so that she will not beat me down by her continual coming.’” And the Lord said, “Hear what the unrighteous judge says. **And will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily. **Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?****” - Luke 18:1-8*

- b. It will be the church crying for God to release justice that will cause Christ to split the sky and come again. It will not be in a vacuum or a random event but an answer to a global church lifting their voice as injustice sweeps across the earth.
- c. Jesus’ point in this parable is to contrast the unjust judge and His heavenly Father who is perfectly just and good. And when He does return it will be to a church full of faith believing that He is good, that He is just, and that He is righteous in all of His ways.
- d. And finally, the very last scene of Scripture is that of the church on earth and the Spirit crying out in unison for the Lord to come back to earth and establish His rule and reign from Jerusalem.

“The Spirit and the Bride say, ‘Come.’” - Revelation 22:17

- e. What does all of this mean for us?
 - i. That I believe we are living in the generation of the Lord’s return. The global prayer movement is God’s prophetic remedy to the rise of darkness in the earth. He will have a bride for His Son that is mature in love and devotion to Him.
 - ii. That what God is speaking here in this region to us is part of something much larger. It is both global and biblical in its scope and eschatological in its nature.
 - iii. That our city and region, and our families and churches are part of God’s grand storyline to bring about righteousness and justice in the earth.
 - iv. That God does and will hear our prayers and answer in the most grand way possible, the return of our Lord.