

# **PREPARING FOR A DIVINE VISITATION**

***GET READY FOR THE GREATEST  
OUTPOURING IN HISTORY***

***(Intimacy with God, Reading Outpouring, Brazil, Awakening  
Europe)***

by

**Derrick Burns**

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## About the author

Derrick Burns is an author and speaker. He graduated from London School of Theology with a theology degree and also from Oxford University with a physics degree. He has a passion to see revival and to prepare God's people for the times ahead. He has participated in three revivals in three different continents.

## Other books by the author:

["GRACE OUTPOURINGS: 21 Days Revival Devotional"](#)

["Preparing for the Economic Storm"](#)



'Preparing for the Economic Storm' reached #10,307 on the Amazon bestseller rank earlier in 2015. Published by New Wine Press.

*I have no hesitation in commending this as an illuminating challenge to get ready and to prepare for an incredibly difficult future - one that is vastly different to the past."*

Brian Mills

Author, speaker and international prayer leader

*“What this book has to say is raw, urgent, wide-ranging and clear being full of conviction without one half-hearted sentence”*

Viv Thomas

Associate International Director O.M. International and Hon Teaching Pastor, St Paul's Hammersmith

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## THE DIVINE VISITATION TO COME

Get ready for a divine visitation!

In 2017 God gave me a picture. I saw a fresh wave of the Spirit coming but it didn't touch all the people of God, only those who were prepared and practising their gifts. God drew me to a verse from the Parable of the Talents where Jesus says that whoever has, will be given more and whoever doesn't use their talents, even what they have will be taken away <sup>1</sup>. My understanding is that many Christians will be touched and transformed by this new way of the Spirit but also many will be unaffected because they are unprepared.

Isa 40-66 was a word to *all* the exiles to return to the Lord and prepare the way for Him:

*“A voice in the desert prepare the way for the Lord” (Isa 40:3)*

They were to prepare the way for the first coming of Jesus.

Today, I believe that God is doing something similar. We are seeing the *beginning* of a movement that is going to prepare for a worldwide harvest and eventually the return of Jesus. Where I am living I am seeing the beginnings of a youth movement that is hungry for God and wanting to see God manifest on the streets.

Before his conversion, Howell Harris spent his time gambling, drinking, gossiping, sleeping around and socialising. The day of his conversion marked a new beginning. He immediately adopted a daily routine of prayer, Bible study, restricted socialising, confession of sins, doing good to others and going to church. But there was more to come. Three weeks later when he was praying inside his village church tower, he received a divine visitation. About this experience, he said,

*“I felt suddenly my heart melting within me, like wax before the fire, with love to God my Saviour; and also felt, not only love and peace, but a longing to be dissolved and be with Christ”*

After this his heart was drawn away from all worldly passions and he began to passionately pursue the riches of Christ. He was filled with a missionary zeal and began to visit his neighbours and his former companions to tell them about Christ, later going house to house in the neighbouring villages. He visited the sick. Then he began preaching at local fairs, festivals and public places, compelled by the love of Jesus. Many came to the Lord. Thus began the Methodist revival of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century.

Divine visitation transforms our Christian experience and our Christian lives. We can never be the same. Divine visitation starts with us!

*So it's time to get ready for a divine visitation!*

[What is God's perspective on this worldwide harvest?](#)

In 2016 I was praying with a friend about the harvest and God showed me what the harvest looked like. I was full of joy and tears at what I saw:



1. It was massive. I saw *like* a wheat harvest ready to be reaped except I didn't recognise the crop. It was as far as the eye could see without end. It was a huge inheritance waiting to be harvested.
2. The crop was thin, tall and many times higher than a person. It towered over us. It was impressive, a rich crop to harvest.
3. The crop was packed close together so that every space was covered. It was impossible to miss or bypass. It blocked your way. You either watched it from the side lines or got engaged in reaping. There was no middle ground.
4. The crop was very beautiful, multi-coloured and shone in the sunlight. It was stunning. Who would want to invest time in doing anything else or in the things of the world?
5. I understood that I needed to start reaping now and that I could do so in any direction. There would be opportunities every day.

So this revelation of the harvest changed my perspective and made me aware of the harvest all around, in everyday life.

Jesus did something similar for the disciples. He showed them that "*the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few*" (Mt 9:38). We need to open our eyes to the End Times Harvest. The exciting thing is that the harvest is so massive it needs us all and we can gain a great inheritance for His great glory.

I am not alone in these pictures of the End Times Harvest, for example the article on the Christian Broadcasting Network <sup>2</sup>. Also see the Awakening Europe Events <sup>3</sup>. These events aim to impact a nation through saving the lost and empowering Christians. They have preaching and workshops during the day and evangelistic events in the evening with an altar call. The third in 2017 in Prague, saw more than a 1000 come to faith in Christ. Europe is the supposed continent of church decline!

[You can harvest big](#)

It's like a huge lottery that is free to enter and where *everyone* wins a part of the prize money but it depends on us entering the 'lottery' in the first place. Most seem to be looking to invest their time elsewhere! However, for those that enter this spiritual lottery they can win as much as they have faith for! *The amount of inheritance we gain is dependent just on faith!*

For example, the parable of the sower says that when the soil is good, there is a great harvest and we can reap 30, 60 or 100-fold (Mk 4:20). 100-fold is a massive harvest. Imagine you plant just one potato and you gain 100 potatoes! How much we harvest is dependent on our faith. What would happen if we decided that we want to be big reapers and sought Jesus for this? What would happen if we asked Jesus to reveal the harvest close to us? And we began to pick and reap?

So it's time to get ready for a divine visitation and to reap a great harvest.

### [What you will receive from this book?](#)

This book will help you prepare for the greatest divine visitation in the history of the Christianity as well as for personal divine visitations now. It will concentrate on 9 essential areas of preparation:

#### HOW TO ATTRACT A DIVINE VISITATION

1. Prioritise and grow intimacy with God now
2. Humbling, repentance, and obedience
3. Prioritising prayer for an awakening in your local area, city and nation

#### HOW TO PREPARE FOR A DIVINE VISITATION

4. Ignore fake, distracting messages
5. Position yourself job-wise and church-wise
6. Practise and use the supernatural gifts now
7. Pay the price of a Divine visitation
8. Adopt a new wineskin to contain the Divine visitation
9. Get ready to disciple

This is also a very practical book. It is especially designed to prepare you for what God is doing now and for what is to come. So:

1. It is full of stories which illustrate the teaching
2. It has many examples of practical steps that you can implement immediately. So the first chapter on growing intimacy with God has 6 practical steps to doing just this.
3. Each chapter ends with some further questions to think about and some activations to put into practice in everyday life.
4. I have incorporated some of my blog writings but expanded the material and added more illustrations to make things clearer and better.
5. I don't speak from theory but from experiencing and participating in three genuine divine visitations in my lifetime, in the UK, in the USA and in Brazil. All of these visitations were recent ones since 1998. So they are relevant to what God is doing today.
6. This book is up-to-date. I include accounts from the Reading outpouring, Awakening Europe, Brazil, France and other nations of what God is doing now.

### [Jeremiah on getting ready for a divine visitation](#)

God gave a message to the exiles in Babylon through the prophet Jeremiah. It began with:

*“When 70 years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you” (literally “I will visit you” in the Hebrew)*

This was the promise of a divine visitation that came in Neh 8. There are two parts: vs 4-9 about how to prepare for a visitation and vs 10-14 about the nature of the promised visitation.

God always speaks to us to prepare us for His future plans. In Jer 29 this is for His people to return to Jerusalem and to prepare for the Messiah.

Those that didn't get ready missed the visitation!! The same for the next wave of the Spirit that will usher in Jesus' return. I will refer to Jer 29 many times in this book because of the parallel with what God is doing now, and expand on it.

#### Revelation of the harvest

When the exiles returned to Jerusalem life was tough. But they were like men who dreamed (Ps 126:1) and they were filled with joy at the *promise* of restored fortunes (4). They had begun to see the harvest.

When they began to put God`s House first only then did God reveal the harvest and glory to come (Hag 2:7-9). So there is a big connection between pursuing intimacy and revelation of the harvest. This is one reason why the first chapter is on how to prioritise intimacy with God.

#### The Welsh Revival and divine visitation

The famous Welsh Church leader, Bryn Jones, told this story from the Welsh Revival. There was a Welsh prayer group that regularly prayed for revival in the nation. Then in 1904 it broke out in Wales. They heard about churches full of people. So they decided to see it for themselves. When they arrived at one of the churches packed with people, they saw many miners inside weeping and crying out at the services. They had never seen such outpouring of emotion in a church service before and were offended. So they decided to return to their own more traditional services and no longer interacted with the 'revival' movement.

Only much later did they realise that the move of God was genuine and that many lives had been genuinely transformed. However, by that time the Holy Spirit had finished his work and they had missed out on the divine visitation they had always longed and prayed for.

So let's journey together and put into practice all that's in this book so that we will be fully prepared *now* and for God's gracious visitation to come.

#### Endnotes

1. Mt 25:29

2. [http://www.cbn.com/spirituallife/churchandministry/evangelism/a\\_vision\\_of\\_the\\_harvest.aspx?](http://www.cbn.com/spirituallife/churchandministry/evangelism/a_vision_of_the_harvest.aspx?)

3. <https://www.awakeningeurope.com/prague-czechrepublic/>



# PART 1: HOW TO ATTRACT A DIVINE VISITATION

## WHAT IS DIVINE VISITATION?

### Definition

In this book I will use two words to mean the same thing: divine visitation and revival. I will use interchangeably. So when I talk about divine visitation, it is in the context of revival.

Sometimes Christians organise a ‘revival’ meeting or testify to a ‘revival’ at their church. These are great meetings where believers come to seek the presence of the Lord. However, this is ‘renewal’, that is when the Holy Spirit touches the people of God. So what is revival?

There are many definitions of revival. The famous revivalist Duncan Campbell called it, “*A sudden awareness of God that grips a community*”. Ultimately the pattern for revival is embedded in the events of Acts 2 at Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit was poured out on the 120 believers in the upper room at Jerusalem. There we see four characteristics of genuine revival:

**1. An outpouring of the Spirit on a community:** The outpouring of The Holy Spirit started with the 120 believers (Acts 2:2-4) in the upper room but also impacted the community, after Peter preached and urged the people gathered in the city to repent and be baptised. They too received the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38).

**2. Reviving the people of God with new passion for Jesus and the power of the Spirit:** we see this in Acts 2:42-47

*“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.”*

**3. Conviction of sin and repentance:** After Peter preached, the people were cut to the heart and began to repent of what they had done to Jesus (2:37-38).

**4. The community is affected and not just believers:** Many Jews from all over the known world had travelled to Jerusalem for the feast of Pentecost. So the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the preaching of Peter deeply transformed their lives, starting a church of 3000 new believers in just one day!

Every revival is different, but it will have these four characteristics. So the key difference between revival and renewal is that the atmosphere of heaven invades a community and profoundly impacts the unchurched as well. Renewal is great but

God wants to bring heaven to earth and His desire is always that this goes beyond the Church.

When revival comes, more is achieved in a few weeks for the Kingdom of God than many years of ministry. I would rather live one year of revival than a lifetime without it.

Of course a person or a church can receive a divine visitation but that doesn't mean it's a revival, as I have defined. However, normally a powerful divine visitation of a believer or a church spills over into the community, starting a local revival. We see this in the life of Evan Roberts, who received almost four months of divine visitation, every night, before God used him as the instrument to start the Welsh Revival of 1904. In this case God used him to ignite a divine visitation on a national scale.

The best way to understand revival is to look at some examples. First, we will look at an example of a local Divine visitation on an island of Fiji. Then we will examine the characteristics of a national Divine visitation. Finally, we will analyse the importance of social transformation to national transformation.

#### [A local Divine visitation: Nuku, Fiji 2003](#)

This is a village on the island of Nairai. Despite moisture-laden winds they suffered from the same fate as Rukua. It used to be an abundant island paradise, full of fruit, fish and crabs but now the land was unproductive and the coral reef dead. In addition, in the 1960s the village streams, fed by a sweet spring, became poisonous, killing their crops and causing blindness or madness in those who drank it. People said that this change coincided with Nuku's chief declaring war against the neighbouring tribes, whom he killed or drove away.

In 2003 the villagers in desperation asked a church leader to help them. He visited and called a Solemn Assembly as in Joel 2 for the village and neighbouring villages. He told them that their problems resided with their sins and those of their ancestors and that they needed to repent of these sins. The people prayed from 9am to midnight for many days, crying out to the Lord and repenting of their sins, until everything was dealt with.

They also took samples of their soil, coral and seawater and offered it up to the Lord to bless once again.

God miraculously answered their prayers. The fish returned to the rivers, the land produced crops again and the coral reef became alive again. It was teeming with fish they had not seen for 50 years! They caught huge crabs, larger than any seen before.

In April 2003 the people of Nuku met for a week of prayer, reconsecrating their land to God. They also reconciled with a neighbouring village. As they did, the spring changed colour and began to sparkle. Someone tasted it and confirmed that it was sweet again!

## Characteristics of a national Divine visitation

In 1904 revival came to Wales. This was a national divine visitation that transformed the nation. It was called the Welsh Revival. Here are some of the amazing characteristics <sup>1</sup>:

### **1.Many conversions**

In the first few weeks 100s were converted. Notorious drunks stayed indoors, afraid to come out, and then got saved when they did! People came from other districts to experience the revival. Many got saved. One older man got saved and asked people why they hadn't told him it was this good! Every morning he went to work and you could hear him praising God! In two years of the revival, 100,000 were converted.

### **2.Society was changed**

The fear of the Lord fell on the community, such that drinkers feared to leave their homes and owners of public houses feared to open them, so many were closed. The local football club in one town was closed because there were no more spectators. Instead, the street was full of people praising God and singing. A local band, all got saved and started playing hymns instead! There was no crime and so the police had nothing to do!

### **3.Churches were full**

All the chapels were just left open and so people got up early *every day* and went straight to their local chapel to worship and pray and enjoy God. Even on Sundays, people got up early to get to the chapels at 6am! All the churches were full regardless of denomination. People just wanted to worship and pray. Mothers took their children and just returned to their houses to prepare a meal for their husband returning from work.

### **4.The presence of God was felt everywhere**

A story is told of a father who came with his two daughters on the overnight train from Lancashire, England to visit the revival. When they caught the train to Wrexam, they asked how they would know they had arrived near there. The porter told them that they would feel it! They then had to walk 2 miles to the revival. Again they asked how they would know they had arrived and were told that they would feel it! The presence of God was so evident that people could actually feel it!

In the Welsh Revival people enjoyed life, not because they had things but because they were enjoying the presence of God. They enjoyed God anywhere, the pit, at home and in the chapel.

### **5.The Welsh Revival was ignited by personal Divine visitation**

Evan Roberts was a miner, who had started seminary but was told by God to return to his local church and start some meetings. After a while the church was packed with people repenting and experiencing God's presence. The key was that he had been praying constantly for revival and then had experienced some personal visitations in



spring 1904. The Holy Spirit woke him up daily at 1am every morning to commune with the Lord and he went back to sleep at 5am. In his own words during an interview with W.T.Stead (famous journalist):

*For a long, long time I was much troubled in my soul and my heart by thinking over the failure of Christianity. Oh! it seemed such a failure—such a failure—and I prayed and prayed, but nothing seemed to give me any relief. But one night, after I had been in great distress praying about this, I went to sleep, and at one o'clock in the morning suddenly I was woken up out of my sleep, and I found myself with unspeakable joy and awe in the very presence of the Almighty God. And for the space of four hours I was privileged to speak face to face with Him as a man speaks face to face with a friend. At five o'clock it seemed to me as if I again returned to earth."*

Later that year God used Evan to start the Welsh year. He was a prepared instrument by the personal Divine visitations he received.

#### How revival must impact the community

This account comes from the research of Dr Martin Robinson.

Often the Spirit of God moves in the Church but there is little transformation of society. This happens because there is only vision to enjoy what God is doing in the Church or for evangelisation that brings more people into the Church. So the move of the Spirit eventually comes to an end because the Holy Spirit wants us to give everything away and not keep all His favour solely for the benefit of the Church.

Robinson cites the story of the First Great Awakening, which started under Howell Harris in Wales in 1735 and under Whitefield in 1737 in England, followed by Wesley in 1739. Most of the converts entered the Methodist Church, founded by Wesley, since Whitefield did not want to build his own Church. They trained many lay preachers many of whom preached the Gospel in the open air to those outside the Church.

By 1790, the year before Wesley's death, there were 71,568 members of the societies of the Methodist Church<sup>2</sup>. This was about 1% of the population, so just a minority really but a passionate minority. However, by 1875 there were 800,000 Methodists!! So what happened between 1790 and 1875?

The answer was the activity of the Clapham Sect, led by William Wilberforce. He and his friends campaigned for around 69 different things to transform society for the better, including the abolishment of slavery. They used very modern techniques to influence the masses. Firstly, they had researchers to examine all the facts and then to make an intellectual case in parliament and in the newspapers. Secondly, in the days without emails and social media, they mobilised the masses through writing letters to 600 ministers, each of whom could mobilise another 1000 people. That is 600,000 people total. Thirdly, they used the services of well-known people to support their campaigns. Finally, they had a group of strategic thinkers to map out long-term strategies and to envision what a Christian Britain would look like. Through the campaigning, many people who had heard the Gospel through the



Methodist preaching but not responded, now committed their lives to Christ. Christianity now seemed relevant to them and to the nation.

The Clapham Sect started in 1780 and by 1820, forty years later, they had succeeded. The Early Church acted in a similar way. They sold their possessions to help provide for the needs of the poor (Acts 2:45). Not just preaching. So to convert a revival into widespread societal transformation requires incredible perseverance, but it pays off. It's essential that any Divine visitation is channelled into persistent preaching of the Gospel *and* social action to transform society.

### **Questions to go deeper**

1. Do you think we can experience revival today?
2. What revivals have you read about and how have they impacted you?
3. In what ways has the Church become comfortable today?
4. What can we learn from the Fiji revival?

### **Activations to try out**

1. Pray for personal revival
2. Ask God for faith for revival. Real faith also means the persistence in prayer to see it come to pass.
3. Get together a group in your church. Read 2 Chron 7:14 together and humble yourselves and repent before God. Cry out for revival in your local city and nation.

### **Endnotes**

1. This article is based on "*Welsh Revival eyewitness account*" an interview with an eyewitness of the Welsh Revival.
2. "*Wesley and Men who followed*" Iain Murray, P.83

## PRIORITISE INTIMACY WITH GOD: 6 WAYS TO DO THIS

Brother Lawrence, the author of the bestseller classic *Practising the Presence of God*, was known for his profound intimacy with God. In his book he tells how it all started for him.

One day, he saw leaves falling off a tree in winter and understood that all would be renewed in spring and the fruit would come. This sounds like such a simple observation. However he said it gave him such a revelation of God's power and providence that it "*set me completely loose from the world and kindled in me such a love for God*".

For 14 years I never understood this testimony. Only now has God made it clear to me: Brother Lawrence had a revelation of the grace of God so profound that he was able to thereafter live in a radical way. He then gave up the world (leaves falling from the tree) and instead gave his all for the love of God (a pursuit of the One behind the leaves renewal). So naturally there was no inhibition now to an experience of the fullness of God.

Now I want to share six ways on how to prioritise intimacy with God, of which the first three build on the revelation Brother Lawrence received and of course Scripture:

### 1. Making the love of God your main pursuit

Brother Lawrence made it his only pursuit and said that he did everything *for the love of God*. This may appear to be obvious. However, our motives for pursuing God are often not as pure as we would think. Many of us actually pursue first God's blessings. It is like making a best friend and thereafter spending the whole time just asking him for things and to do things for you. This does not make for a good friendship. But we often treat God like this. It is easy to fall into this trap.

### **The real lesson of the book of Job**

In the Job Bible story, God asks of Job three questions that are fundamental to Him:

Firstly, would he still love His Heavenly Father without his material possessions, family and his health (Job loses all these things in Job 1)?

Secondly, would he still love the Father without any ongoing experience of intimacy with the Father (Job loses this also, Job 29:4-5)?

Thirdly, would he still love the Father when all turned against him (30:1,9-10)? Even his wife told him to curse God and die!

They are tests that show that the Father wants to know the real love of his people above all else and that He will *at times* remove things we depend on to reveal this.

Why? Because showing *true* love for Him is THE most important choice we can make for eternity. The heart can be so deceitful. What we think is friendship with God, can be more because of what He provides than because we truly love Him for his own sake and independent of circumstances.

## **Some indicators**

How do we know if we truly love God? One indicator is how we react when something goes wrong in our lives. Do we blame God or become more distant from him or spend all our time asking him to change our circumstances? Or do we continue to spend time with him just out of love?

Another indicator is how much quality time we really spend with God just because we love Him and not out of concern for our needs or out of religious duty?

## **Earthly choices are eternal**

Why is this so important? I do believe that the choices that we make on earth will affect how we relate to God in heaven. Although our friendship with God in heaven will be so much more glorious than on earth, the degree of our friendship with God in heaven will be determined by what it was on earth. That is one of the reasons why some will sit closer to Jesus than others (Mk 10:40).

So let's make God our great reward and only Him.

### **2. Overcoming all competition**

We are often weighed down by too much 'excess baggage' in the race of faith and put up with worldliness and sin in many areas due to lack of faith. What keeps Christians from experiencing closer intimacy with God is sin, worldliness, wrong thinking and strongholds of the Enemy in our hearts <sup>1</sup>. No more! It is necessary to make a decision to exercise our faith to improve in all areas.

*"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live. The life I live I live by faith in the Son of God."* (Gal 2:20).

If we put up with worldliness in just *one* area it will act as a barrier to pursuing intimacy with God.

## **Importance of separation**

Pursuing intimacy with God presumes separation from the world. Not in the sense of separating from real life, but from the sinful lusts and pleasures that draw us away from God. We cannot have both the world and intimacy with God because the world is contrary to God (Jam 4:4-5, 1 Jn 2:15-17). Have you made this commitment to be separate from the world?

Num 6 gives a good illustration of this. The Nazirite' commitment was a double separation: first to God (long hair being the sign of this) and secondly from the world (e.g. had to abstain from alcohol).

## **Losing lust**

Lust for the opposite sex is actually a perversion of true love and intimacy. Lust takes and exploits for our own personal pleasure. Love gives for the sole benefit of the other, without thought of self. Lust gives rise to a false intimacy, that doesn't last.

Love gives rise to intimacy. This is why we must separate ourselves from lust, as it will hinder our intimacy for God.

### **Living in the heavenly realm**

Another reason that we don't experience more of God is because we live too much in the earthly realm. We have our minds fixed on earthly things. Instead we must have our minds fixed on things above, on walking constantly in the heavenly realm:

*“Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.” (Col 3:2)*

This is how to develop intimacy with God. Howell Harris' encounter with the love of God enabled him to separate from the world and pursue these heavenly things.

Heaven is faith, love, hope, joy, peace and righteousness. This is where God dwells and if we want to dwell with Him then we must live there also. Too much our thoughts and motives are worldly. This is not living in the clouds because we then bring the heavenly to earth. This is why loving others is the second greatest commandment.

Hence, being a friend with God means allowing the Spirit to renew our minds (Rom 12:2)

For those that choose to live with God in the heavenly realms, they walk on earth with lives that are full of the presence and grace of God because they are living in this atmosphere of love and faith daily!

### 3. Revelation of the grace of God

When Brother Lawrence saw the leaves falling in winter and anticipated spring, he had a revelation of God's provision for his life.

And us? Do we really act on God's words in Phil 4:13

*“I can do everything through him who gives me strength”*

Often we know this in our heads but it has not really impacted our hearts. It needs revelation. If we don't have this revelation we need to pursue God for it until we receive it. Then the first two things above become possible.

### 4. Cultivating thirst

God said to me once about why his people don't experience the intimacy they should with Him:

*“A lot of it is due to lack of desire on the part of My people and boredom. They are like a child playing with a new toy. It's exciting for a while and then they want something more stimulating. My people do this with Me. They don't know how to explore Me and go deeper. It's like they are satisfied with the walk around the massive mountain but aren't interested in climbing and exploring the mountain and seeing all the wonderful views from different places.*

*I am after those that truly seek Me. There needs to be a constant seeking in relationship with Me. Those that don't seek Me, at the end of the day are there primarily for my benefits and not for My friendship. So when I don't seem to satisfy them, they go onto something else! My true friends want to spend time with Me whatever."*

Are you hungry for a divine visitation? When blind Bartimaeus heard that Jesus was passing by, he cried out loudly until he got Jesus' attention. "*Jesus stopped and said, 'Call him'".*

Bartimaeus wasn't going to miss the opportunity and he was willing to persist until he gained an audience. There were surely many beggars begging outside the entrance of Jericho. But Jesus stopped for blind Bartimaeus. Why? Because he was thirsty for a visitation.

Many times we fill our hearts with the things of the world like TV, series, the internet, Whatsapp, making money, or entertainment. These kill our thirst for the divine. We fill our hearts with 'junk food' and leave no space for the extraordinary presence of God.

Bartimaeus was thirsty for a divine encounter that would change his life and he got it!!

So we are to cultivate thirst for God. How are we to do this? Firstly, ask for it daily. Secondly, by reading Psalms or Scriptures that talk about hunger and thirst for God (e.g. Ps 63, Ps 84, Mt 5:6). Thirdly, by reading about the history of revival or biographies about those who had intimacy with God. Fourthly, by spending more time with God even when we are tired. Fifthly, by not giving up. Bartimaeus cried out for Jesus until he got what he wanted.

#### 5. [Learning to live outside your comfort zone](#)

Maybe we want to live a normal Christian life. But God is not normal and neither should we be! As His children we are called to be like Him. He is a God who is always going ahead of us. He is a God who wants us to pursue Him there, to live in His realm of the supernatural and love beyond measure. This is rarely a place where we feel comfortable but it is the most exciting place to live.

What happens if we make mistakes when we go outside our comfort zone? Peter pushed the boundaries when he walked on water and Jesus encouraged it. When he fell Jesus was there to catch him. We will make mistakes going beyond the borders but Jesus is there to protect us and keep us from falling. We are always safe beyond the borders, although the ride might be difficult at times.

The really exciting thing about living beyond the borders is that God reveals Himself more here. So the best rewards of discovering more about Him are when we choose to go beyond the borders. In fact the Greek suggests that when Jesus passed by the boat, walking on the water, He was revealing Himself to the disciples but only Peter stepped out to embrace this revelation!

It's not that He is not in the normal mundane things of life, He is. But God wants us to constantly grow in faith, as this glorifies Him, so He rewards us with more of Himself when we step out in daily life.

Also it is in God's nature to live in such places. He is God after all! He comes down to where we are, because of His humility, but He wants to take us to where He is! So we should not expect Him to live as we do. We are called to live as He does as a lifestyle, experiencing heaven on earth beyond the borders.

So don't be satisfied with living within the normal borders of your life.

## 6. Practical ways to make space for God

We must patiently ask Him to give us more experience of intimacy with Him.

Then it's necessary to back this up with making extra space and time for this to happen, so that God knows we are serious.

The revivalist Evan Roberts did this as a young man and was rewarded with almost four months of visitations of the Lord every night!

So here are some practical ways of making more time for intimacy:

Firstly, go over your weekly timetable and see if there is possibility to set aside extra time to pray. Ask a trusted friend to look over your weekly timetable too and make some suggestions.

Secondly, I heard that John Stott, the famous Anglican writer and speaker, diaried longer prayer times in, one evening a week, one day a month, one week a year consistently, and he maintained this with the demands of a worldwide ministry.

Thirdly, for those of you with young children, one parent can look after them for one evening while the other has space to pray and study, and vice versa.

Fourthly, for those of us with day jobs, most allow us to take up to an hour for lunch. What do you do with this hour? Spend time with colleagues? Browse the internet? Play sports? All of these are good things but what about separating the whole time to pray instead?! This would give you 5 hours per week, 20 hours per month and a staggering 250 hours per annum!

### **Questions to go deeper**

1. Is the love of God your main motive for seeking God?
2. How can you set your mind more on things above and not earthly things?
3. In what ways are you not yet separated from the world?

### **Activations to try out**

1. Go over your weekly, monthly and yearly diary with a trusted friend or spouse and put in more space for prayer.

2. Read some books about past revivals or outstanding Christians to stir your thirst.
3. Think of some ways that you can live outside your comfort zone for Jesus.

### **Endnotes**

1. This is why the battle is spiritual!

## THREE KEYS TO ATTRACTING A DIVINE VISITATION

God sent a message to the exiles in Babylon through the prophet Jeremiah to prepare them for the times ahead. It began with:

*“When 70 years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you” (literally “I will visit you” in the Hebrew)*

It was the promise of a divine visitation after the 70 years in exile in Babylon.

In Dan 9 we learn that Daniel knew about this word. This was his amazing response (Dan 9:2-4):

*“In the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of the LORD given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years. So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes. I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed.”*

So Daniel humbled himself, in prayer and fasting, and began to confess his sins and those of his people (Dan 9:8,15). Why didn't he just wait for the promise to be fulfilled? Because when God gives us a word, we are to pray the word into being. It's part of the preparation. Daniel did just this. In doing this Daniel gives us some of the keys to attracting a Divine visitation.

### Key 1: Humbling

George Otis, the Director of Sentinel, who researched revival all over the world wrote on why he thought the Western World was not seeing many revivals. His answer was *complacency*. Churches and believers were happy with what they were already experiencing and there was no desperation for a divine visitation.

Humbling is when we are desperate for change. We realise that there is no other answer than to turn urgently to the Lord. It is the humbling of our pride, when we no longer turn to our own strength. The famous revival verse 2 Chron 7:14 has this context. It summarises Solomon's prayer at the Temple inauguration. Solomon lists different events like drought, famine, or plague or when Israel is defeated by its enemies, which require urgent attention and prayer. God replies with:

*“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 I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”*

God affirms that his people must first humble themselves.

Why are we called to humble ourselves to prepare for a divine visitation? Because God can't use proud people. Proud people only get in the way of God's purposes. So we must humble ourselves first.

How do we humble ourselves?



Firstly, in the Bible this is strongly linked to prayer *and fasting* e.g Ezra 8:21, Joel 1:13-14. Why? Because in fasting we empty ourselves. We declare in a physical way that we are weak and that we need God more.

Secondly, humbling is also associated with kneeling or lying prostrate on the ground. For example, in Ezra 9:5 when Ezra was reacting to the news of the intermarriage of Israelites with the Canaanite peoples.

Thirdly, “*Rend your heart and not your garments*” (Joel 2:13) , that is it must not be just an outward thing but a real brokenness of heart, as David offered in Ps 51:17 “*My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart you, God, will not despise*”

Fourthly, we stop depending on other things. This is one reason we fast. Sometimes we depend on food for comfort and to feel better, Or movies to make us feel happy. So when we humble ourselves we deny these things and we stop depending on them.

### Key 2: Repentance

Repentance is the second thing which attracts Divine visitation. Why? Because holiness is essential if we are to grow our intimacy with God and see Him use us powerfully. This means allowing the Holy Spirit to deal with our sins, even the smallest ones! Sin impedes the work of God and must be dealt with.

Duncan Campbell, who was greatly used in the Hebrides Revival of 1949 said:

*“A God-sent revival must ever be related to holiness.”*

It often comes out of times when God is allowed to deal with our personal sins. In 1951 Edwin Orr, the world renowned expert on the history of revival, was used by God to help spark a fresh movement of revival in Brazil. This is how it happened. He arrived at a Seminary in São Paulo and preached to the students on revival. At the last meeting he had an experience of victory over sins, which until that moment he had been unable to overcome. So he was not just preaching on revival, he was desiring it for himself first. As a result, the students were also touched spiritually and started regular prayer meetings for revival in Brazil. This spread to 80 churches in the city praying weekly for revival!

So Edwin Orr was invited back to Brazil the next year to lead some more meetings. The impact was amazing. A Divine visitation began and Orr spent 11 weeks in São Paulo alone. He then travelled to all 25 states of Brazil. The blessing continued. Thousands came to faith in the Lord. Churches were packed for prayer meetings early in the morning. Evening meetings had to be transferred to football stadiums to make room for all the people that were coming. This increase continued over the next decade! This is revival and it started with individual repentance.

At the time of writing I am asking for the Lord to lead me into a deeper level of repentance that will see greater transformation.

### Key 3: Obedience to the call

In Jeremiah's letter to the exiles to prepare them to return to Jerusalem and for a divine visitation, he gives them a number of instructions to obey (Jer 29:5-7).

So after humbling ourselves, repenting of our sins and confessing those of others, we must then seek God's face and will for what is to come. Then obey the call. This prepares us for and attracts a Divine visitation.

This sounds obvious but many of the exiles *didn't obey* the Lord and so weren't ready to return to Jerusalem. They had the chance to make history but instead missed out on God's purposes for their generation.

So to make sure we don't miss out in our generation, we need to be alert to what God is saying about our times (Mt 16:2-3) and then obey Him. To obey is more important than going to church every week or just reading our Bibles (1 Sam 15:22). Daniel did this in Dan 9. After hearing from God about the future of Jerusalem (9:24-27), he helped prepare the Jews to return home.

### A mini revival in the calling of Peter

In Lk 5 we see a beautiful illustration of this process with Peter. It's a powerful story of individual revival:

Firstly, the humbling:

Peter and his fellow fishermen had been fishing all night and caught nothing. They arrived home in the morning very disappointed. However, after Jesus had taught from Peter's boat, he told Peter to go back out again to fish. Peter is still exhausted and he knew that it was not a good time to fish. But instead he *humbled* himself and agreed to Jesus' proposal.

On letting down the nets he caught so many fish that the nets were almost breaking and they needed the help of another boat to contain all the fish. When we humble ourselves, we open a door for the huge resources of heaven.

We need to get to the end of ourselves. This is how revival starts. When we stop doing it in our own strength and let God do it.

Secondly, repentance:

Up to this point, Peter was a fisherman not Jesus' disciple. Peter had heard Jesus many times but not received the call yet. Now the kingdom of heaven had invaded *his* life in a tangible way. He saw the incredible abundance of heaven and the best fishing day in his life.

At this Peter fell down and confessed, "*Go away from, I am a sinful man*" (Lk 5:8) because of the kindness of Jesus. Paul says that it's "*God's kindness leads you towards repentance*" (Rom 2:4).

Peter had a profound revelation of Jesus, that he was not worthy of this enormous blessing and this incredible Jesus on his boat. For this abundance to continue he needed to repent.

Our sins are a barrier to the Holy Spirit owning our lives and using us in revival. So we need to repent. This is how revival starts. But this often comes when we encounter Jesus afresh and his kindness like Peter.

Thirdly, obedience to the call:

After demonstrating that he had control over all natural resources and then revealing who he is, Jesus then took Peter and the fishermen a step further.

Jesus called them all, Peter, Andrew, James and John to follow him and they obeyed!

It was a call not just to follow him but to become revivalists, to 'catch men' instead (Lk 5:11).

[How individual and corporate revivals connect](#)

So this is a mini revival. Peter begins by humbling himself, then he repents, experiencing a divine encounter, and finally he follows Jesus. In so doing he eventually leads a revival in Acts 2 that transforms the world. Revival starts with Peter, and then spreads. Individual revival leads to corporate revival.

We see this in the life of Howell Harris, the Welsh revivalist. At 21 years of age, before he knew Jesus, he sought to live a better life, but the more he tried the more he failed and realised that he couldn't succeed. There was a long process of humbling, conviction and repentance until finally he encountered Jesus and forgiveness through the cross.

Harris was so filled with divine love that he immediately began to share his new-found faith with everyone. It started with his friends, then neighbours and then to anyone he passed by. He began to preach at public places, calling people to the Lord. By three years he had organised all the new believers into 30 societies and by the end of five years he had organised 60 societies! Harris was recognised as the one who God used to start the Methodist Awakening in the UK.

We see the same pattern. Humbling, repentance and the call to revival.

This is exactly what we need today.

### **Questions to go deeper**

1. How is God humbling you today?
2. What things are you dependent on instead of the Lord?
3. In what ways is God calling you to be obedient?

### **Activations to try out**

1. Do a weeks fast (e.g. one meal a day, or a meat fast etc.) and use this time to hunger more for God.
2. Research the Bible on 'holiness' and why we are called to be holy.
3. Ask God to bring about a mini revival in your life, like that of Peter in Lk 5.