

JULY 10, 2018

*The Land is in Need of*  
**REVIVAL**  
**- FAST FOCUS -**

CHRIST MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH  
EAST (8AM) | ESPLANADE MEMPHIS - 901 CORDOVA STATION - CORDOVA, TN 38018  
SOUTH (10AM) | MAIN CAMPUS - 480 S. PARKWAY EAST - MEMPHIS, TN 38106  
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DR. GINA M. STEWART, SENIOR PASTOR

## “Mercy Lord” | Ezra 9:9 (NIV)

*“Though we are slaves, our God has not forsaken us in our bondage; He has shown us kindness in the sight of the kings of Persia, He has granted us new life to rebuild the house of our God and repair its ruins, and He has given us a wall of protection in Judah and Jerusalem.”*

What a merciful and gracious God we serve! Time and time again, the Israelites disobeyed the commands and laws of God. Time and time again, He would punish them in various ways: exile and captivity into foreign land, allowing their enemies to defeat them in battle, plagues, famine, venomous snakes, wandering in the wilderness, and perhaps the most devastating, destruction by the flood. Again and again, God would have mercy on the people, they would repent, obey for a while, and the cycle would repeat itself.

Many times in the Psalter, David asks the question, “How long?” How long, he wondered, would God allow the troubling circumstances to continue? How long would God allow his enemies to mock, taunt, and cause him grief and anguish? How long would God seemingly hide His face, not intervene or act on his behalf? How long would he not vindicate his servant? How long does an earthly parent, (who loves their children) tolerate misbehavior after warning and threatening discipline?

Ezra was appalled, ashamed, and disgraced at the unfaithfulness of the exiled Israelites, especially that the leaders had led the way. Being overcome in guilt, He tore his clothes and repented in sackcloth. In the midst of his prayer, he acknowledged that the Lord had been gracious and kind.

The longer Jesus delays His coming, it seems the worse things get. It seems that we have gotten to the point of taking God’s grace, mercy, and faithfulness for granted. It appears that we have lost the fear and awe of God’s holiness. Yes, He is a God of grace, mercy, goodness, faithfulness and love, but He is also a holy God, and a God of judgment, who chastens and disciplines those He loves. If any of us feared the discipline and/or punishment of our parents, how much more should we fear the discipline of a holy God? In His mercy, He has not removed His hand from us. In His mercy, He has not forsaken us. In grace and mercy, He continues to bless us, and we just keep right on sinning. Are we not appalled, disgraced, and ashamed? After ALL that God has done and continues to do for us, does He not deserve our faithfulness to His commands that are only for our good?

In the midst of seeking and crying out for revival, we cry out with the psalmist: God, be merciful to us!

## **Action Plan**

1. Read Ezra 9
2. Consider how God has been merciful to you, even in your own disobedience and/or unfaithfulness.

## **Prayer**

Dear God, we come to you acknowledging and confessing our sin. Help us not to continue taking your grace and mercy for granted. Father, return us to the fear and awe of your holiness. God, we don't want your mercy to run out on us. Help us to get serious about our relationship with you. We know that our sin stinks in Your nostrils. Help us to not tempt you as the Israelites did in the wilderness. God, we need revival in the land. Father, forgive us of being prideful and wise in our own eyes, for you hold our very lives in your hands. It is in You that we live and move and have our being. Father, send revival and help us to return to you in obedience, faithfulness, and love. Thank you for preserving our lives even in our iniquity. Receive this sincere prayer of our hearts, we pray, in Jesus' name. Amen.

## **Reference Scriptures**

Romans 6:1-2a; Psalm 30:5a; Psalm 103:9-14; Matthew 5:45;  
Acts 17:30

**Submitted by: Pastor Deborah Carter**

**FAST FOCUS | We will fast on Tuesday, July 10, 2018 from 6am-5pm. We will abstain from all foods except water, juice, fruit and vegetables.**