

# FAITH IS ACTION

A group of diverse people, including men and women of various ethnicities, are shown from the chest up, holding hands in a circle. They are all looking upwards with expressions of hope and faith. The background is bright and slightly blurred, suggesting an outdoor setting. The overall mood is one of unity and spiritual connection.

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## 7 STEPS TO REVIVAL

When God had given Israel and King David rest from all of their enemies round about, David then desired to build the House of God wherein the Ark of the Covenant might dwell. At this time, the Ark dwelt in a tent while David abode in a house of cedar. When David had voiced his plans to build such a house, the word of the Lord came to him through the prophet Nathan saying that although David would not be permitted to build God's House, God would raise

As earthly fathers chastise their sons, so God too chastises His. In fact, God said in Hebrews 12:5-7, "*And you have forgotten the exhortation that speaks unto you as unto children, My son, despise you not the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when you are rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loves, he chastens, and scourges every son whom he receives... If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the*

# 7 STEPS TO REVIVAL

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up his *seed* and allow him to build the temple.

David had been a man of war, shedding much blood, but his son *Solomon*, would be the one to build God's House. Promising to establish the throne of his kingdom forever, God said:

*"...I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men."*

*Lord chastens not?"*

These verses are a direct quote from Solomon himself (Proverbs 3:11-12), and we see that God uses chastening to *correct us*. Otherwise, we would continue in our error and in our rebellion and might be lost in Hell before we wake up. Because God *loves us*, and is not willing that we should perish, then He will get out the rod of correction to bring us back to a place of favor and blessing.

*“But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before you”* (2Samuel 7:14-15).

We understand from this that God chastises men, people, and nations for sin and iniquity. Did you know that *chastisement is a part of God’s mercy*? In this promise, God called Solomon His *son*, and declared that He would be His *father*.

### HUMBLE YOURSELF

The Word of God instructs us that when God is judging (and remember, *“judgment must begin at God’s House”*), and is chastening, the thing to do is to *humble oneself* and *pray!* Because *“God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble”* (1Peter 5:5). One of the best Bible illustrations of this truth is that of King Ahab. God sent the prophet Elijah to Ahab and said,

*“You are the most wicked king Israel ever had! I am going to cut you off and wipe your name out of Israel! Not only that, but I am going to wipe your whole line out!”*

*“...But there was none like unto Ahab which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord...*

*“And it came to pass, when Ahab heard those words, that he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly”* (1Kings 21:21-25).

God was so angry with Ahab’s wickedness He was cutting him off! That’s just how angry God was. There were only a few that God cut off. He has to really be angry to go

that far. But what did Ahab do when he heard these words? He immediately *humbled himself*. He fell on his knees and rent his clothes. He put on sackcloth and fasted and prayed, and went about *softly*. If he had bucked and rebuked the prophet; if he had stiffened his neck, God would have killed him right then and there. But ole Ahab fell on his face and prayed! And when God saw that he humbled himself, He spoke to Elijah saying:

*“See you how Ahab humbles himself before me? Because he humbled himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days: but in his son’s days will I bring the evil upon his house”* (vs.29).

God had to keep His Word, but He delayed His judgment because Ahab humbled himself before Him. Likewise, when God has promised to do certain things without conditions, we cannot *change it*, but we can *delay it*. If God said that He is going to send judgment, we cannot disannul it, but we can hold it back to give us a chance to work. I believe that God is trying to stir us up to seek Him for a revival and a visitation from Him. God is trying to get our attention so we will get in our prayer closets and intercede while there is yet space to reach the lost.

Unfortunately, there are some people God cannot reach with words of exhortation and love. He has to rebuke them. If God must rebuke one, the thing to do is as Ahab did: *humble oneself*. The thing that caused God to kill the Israelites in the desert, was they continually provoked God



with their haughtiness, backbiting, and rebellion against His servant, Moses. When they insisted that he ask God for quail to eat, and would not humble themselves, God gave them quail. He also killed them on the spot with the quail still in their teeth.

It was this continual rebellion of God's people that prompted the Holy Spirit to warn us in Hebrews 3:7: *"Today if you will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness."*

On the other hand, there is something about humbling yourself before God that just does something to God. Even when He is fiercely angry, as in Ahab's case, God's bowels of mercy and grace are stirred up when we are humble before Him.

### IF MY PEOPLE...

One of the greatest admonitions with promise is found in 2 Chronicles 7:14. It outlines the seven steps that bring revival. Interestingly, it was spoken to Solomon when he had completed the House of God, at which time God repeated that He would chastise His people when necessary:

*"If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people..."* (v.13).

We see here that God uses the elements and the natural devourers to chastise peoples and nations for sin and disobedience. Whenever Israel became backslidden and idolatrous,

God sent invaders and mighty enemies to bring them into war or bondage. This was to turn their hearts back to Him. Likewise, God told Solomon, *"If I must do these things... If I must send destruction upon the land..."*

*"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."* (2Chron. 7:14).

Following are **Seven steps to revival**: The first **four steps** are *our* part and the last **three** are *God's* part.

**1 Humility:** If we want God to hold back His judgments upon this nation and generation, the first thing that we—*His people*—must do is **humble ourselves!**

Peter said, *"God resists the proud, but He gives grace to the humble—Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God:* (1 Peter 5:5-6). We saw this illustrated in the life of Ahab. If God heard the prayer of that wicked king, He will hear your prayer and my prayer for our nation!

If ever a land was sick, America is sick. She is rotten with sin. Her cities are polluted with murder, dope, pornography, homosexuality, and violence. One is not even safe in his own home. Our kids are not safe in school. The *only remedy* is for God's people to band together in prayer and fasting and consecration.

**2 Prayer:** When we have hum-

bled ourselves, we are in the right attitude to pray and travail for deliverance. Nothing is accomplished without prayer!

Whenever God wants to bring deliverance to His people and revival in the land, He sets His people to praying. God is a righteous God who must judge righteously. In order for Him to show mercy, He looks and listens for an intercessor to stand in the gap in prayer and ask God to do what He wants to do!

### STAND IN THE GAP

*“And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none. Therefore, have I poured out my indignation upon them; I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath: their own way have I recompensed upon their heads, saith the Lord God” (Ezek.22:30-31).*

God is looking for an **intercessor!** He’s looking for *one man!*—a Moses who would stand between Him and the people who were provoking Him to anger, that He might hold it back. God had said, “I will smite them with pestilence! I will disinherit them!”

But Moses beseeched God on their behalf, praying: *“Pardon, I beseech you, the iniquity of this people according unto the greatness of your mercy, and as you have forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now. And the Lord said, I have pardoned according to your word:”* (Numbers 14:19-20).

Do you see the power—the influence of intercessory prayer? *“I have pardoned according to **your word**”!*

God is looking for a *Daniel*, a righteous man, *“greatly beloved of God”* (Dan. 10:11), who will repent on behalf of the nation. Daniel knew the prophecy of Jeremiah that the nation would be in captivity to Babylon 70 years, and he realized that the 70 years were up. God had already set the time, but in order to bring the promised deliverance, He moved on Daniel to pray—**God does nothing without prayer:**

*“And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes:... We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from your precepts and from your judgments: Neither have we hearkened unto your servants the prophets, which spoke in your name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land...*

*“Yea, all Israel have transgressed your law, even by departing, that they might not obey your voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses, the servant of God, because we have sinned against him”* (Daniel 9:3, 5, 6, 11). (Read Daniel 9:3-19 for his entire prayer.)

Daniel prayed, “WE have sinned”! He included himself in his prayer of intercession although he

had not personally sinned in the sin of Israel. This is a prayer of humility.

God answered Daniel's prayer, and shortly thereafter the children of Israel began their return to their homeland. This return was gradual, and after some had returned, they began to slip back into their old ways. Against God's commandments not to mingle with the idolatrous people around them, they intermarried with the unbelievers. When Ezra the priest heard this, he was "astonished." After all God had done to bring them out of captivity, they rebelled again against God's Word. He rent his garments, shaved his head and beard (a sign of great shame and mourning), fell on his knees, raised his hands to God:

*"And said, O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to you, my God: for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens"* (Ezra 9:6). (Read Ezra 9:6-15 for his entire prayer).

Again we see a righteous man who was not guilty of the sins of his nation, but in his intercessory prayer he included himself saying, "our iniquities." This shows humility which moves the heart of God. The question has been posed to God's people: "Are you a bystander or a gapstander?"

### SEEK GOD'S FACE

3 God's heart is moved when we seek **His face**. So much of our prayers are focused on our needs only. Jesus told us: "*Seek you first the kingdom of God and his righteous-*

*ness, and all these things shall be added unto you"* (Matt.6:33).

When the disciples asked Jesus, "Lord teach us how to pray," Jesus said, "Your kingdom come..." We are to pray for righteousness to come, because Paul said in Romans 14:17, "For the kingdom of God... is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." We cannot have peace in our land without righteousness!

The Scripture declares, "The wicked shall be turned into hell and all nations that forget God" (Ps.9:17). Right now we have a golden opportunity to exalt righteousness in our nation, and we must not stop praying for godly government leaders that will stand for righteousness. This can bring blessing and healing to our land! Solomon, whose name means "peace" wrote:

*"When it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices. By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted"* (Prov.11:10-11).

*"It is an abomination for kings to commit wickedness: for the throne is established by righteousness"* (Prov.16:12).

*"Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness"* (Prov.25:5).

*"When the righteous are in authority the people rejoice, but when the wicked bears rule, the people mourn."* (Prov.29:2).

### PRAY FOR LEADERSHIP

Paul wrote to Timothy, exhorting that "supplications, prayers, inter-

cessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty” (1Tim.2:1-2).

It is clear that God has called His people to pray, intercede, and supplicate on behalf of our government leaders in order that righteousness may be established in our nation, and that peace may be the result.

Major cities (such as Baltimore where we are) have experienced riots and attacks on police. Some have been murdered in retaliation for claims of police brutality. Police have pulled back, allowing crime to escalate. Lawlessness is rampant, and people are fearful.

This is not God’s will for us, but His will cannot be *“done on earth as it is in heaven”* unless we pray! It is not automatic—if it were, then Jesus would not have told us to pray *“Your will be done on earth—Your kingdom come on earth...”*

To seek God’s face means to seek His will for us, our families, and our nation. It means to persevere in prayer, not fainting, not giving up to fatigue, discouragement, or carnality: *“To seek the Lord until He comes and rains righteousness upon you!”* (Hosea 10:12).

#### **4 Turn from your wicked ways.**

Consider now, God is not talking to sinners and unbelievers! He’s talking to *“My people”!*

Whenever we are doing our own thing, we are not doing God’s will, and in God’s eyes *“disobedience is as*

*the sin of witchcraft and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry”* (1Samuel 15:22). The Hebrew term for *iniquity* means “a bent towards something.” It refers to the inward nature that has a propensity toward evil. This is why we must make active choices to turn from our own ways.

One of the saddest commentaries in the Bible is the conclusion of the *Book of Judges* which covers a period of 350 years of such gross sin, perversion, and judgment, that it is hard to believe these were God’s people! The final verse: *“In those days there was no king (no godly authority) in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes”* (Judges 21:25).

If we want God to rain righteousness in our nation, we must not only humble our hearts, pray, and seek God’s face, we must turn from our proud, self-righteous ways, and God will perform His part. His promise through the prophet declares:

*“Seek you the Lord while he may be found, call you upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, says the Lord”* (Isaiah 55:6-8).

This brings us to the final three steps which are God’s part when we have done our part:

**5 I will hear from heaven.** God said, *“My eyes are over the righ-*

teous, and my ear are open unto their prayers.” (1Pet. 3:12), because “*The prayer of the upright is His delight*” (Prov.15:8). “*The Lord is far from the wicked, but He hears the prayer of the righteous*” (vs.29).

When it seems like God is not hearing our prayers, we should check to see if there is disobedience hindering the answer to our prayers. David said, “*If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me*” (Ps. 66:18).

During the reign of David, Israel experienced a three-year drought, and David prayed year after year inquiring of the Lord. Finally, God answered him that the famine was His judgment on Israel for the sins of the house of Saul against the Gibeonites (2Sam. 21:1). God cannot hear our prayers as long as there are unrepented sins in our lives — and the lives of the nation. That is why we must repent for the sins of our nation. God spoke through His prophet:

“*Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear*” (Isaiah 59:1-2).

God will hear our prayer when we are humble in repentance and He will turn His face upon us in mercy and redemption.

### **DON’T GIVE UP!**

God hears the prayers of His saints, but the enemy tries to discourage us when we don’t see an immedi-

ate answer to our prayers. Sometimes God does answer right away, but often we must persevere in prayer against the rulers of wickedness in the heavenlies (Ephesians 6:12). We saw this is the case of Daniel who fasted and prayed 21 days before the answer came. When the angel Gabriel was finally released to come, he told Daniel: “*From the **first day** that you set your heart to pray, **your words were heard**, and I am come for your words. But the prince (angel) of the kingdom of Persia withstood me until Michael, an archangel, came to help me*” (Daniel 10: 12-13).

Jesus told us in Luke 18:1: “*Men ought always to pray and not to faint—not to give up or lose heart.*” God said that He would hear, and “*If we know that He hears us, then we know that we have the petition we desired of Him*” (1John 5:15).

If the ones you are praying for to be saved seem to get worse, don’t stop praying! I prayed for six long years before my wife got saved, and she did everything in her power to try to get me to backslide. Now we’ve been in the ministry together 60 years!

“*...The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much*” (James 5:16). Tell the devil this next time he tells you your prayers aren’t doing anything! And if the prayers of *one man* can do this, how much more when *all God’s people* begin to pray in unity and purpose? God said, “*I will hear!*”

**6 And will forgive their sins:** I want to remind you that God is addressing *His people!* Refer back to



Isaiah 55:7, God said “*He would have mercy upon us and abundantly pardon.*” When we turn to the Lord, He will turn to us with forgiveness and favor. The Book of Hosea is the story of the backslider portrayed by the prophet’s adulterous wife. It is a parallel of God and His people. In chapter 14, God called to them:

*“Return unto the Lord your God; for you have fallen by thine iniquity. I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely; for my anger is turned away...”* (vv.1, 4).

Can God heal America of her backsliding? Yes, if she will turn from her wickedness and forsake her sins, and turn to Him with all our hearts. Then, God said:

**7 I will heal your land.** This is a promise repeated often in the O.T. God had brought Israel into the land flowing with milk and honey, but they polluted it with the blood of the murdered and sacrifices to idols. As we saw in the first part of this promise, it was prefaced with the warning that disobedience would bring famine, pestilence, and judgment.

America too has polluted “the land of the free and the home of the brave” with the blood of her citizens. Murder is so common that it is not even newsworthy unless it is extremely heinous. Abortion has stained this nation with the blood of over 60 million innocent babies, and our gangs are slaughtering each other like soldiers in a war zone. There is no fear of God before their eyes, so that their hands and feet are swift to shed innocent blood. Paul said,

*“There is none that understands, there is none that seeks God”* (Romans 3:11-18).

But God is saying that if His people will seek Him—He will bring healing to our land. Although America is the most prospered nation on earth, we are seeing a down turn in her blessings. We believe the thing that is restraining God’s cup of wrath from spilling over are the prayers of the saints and their sending the Gospel around the world.

America’s rottenness runs deep, and the stench of her wounds are in God’s nostrils like the stench of Sodom and Gomorrah. When their sins had pervaded their land until there was no remedy, God destroyed them.

While God’s not willing that any should perish, (2Peter 3:9), but that all should come to the knowledge of the truth, (1Tim. 2:4), He can’t bless where there is unrighteousness. When there are more unrighteous people than righteous, then God has to destroy. When Abraham tried to intercede for Sodom and Gomorrah, there were not even 10 righteous in those twin cities, and God had to destroy them.

Jesus said, “*As it was in the days of Lot, so shall it be in the days of the coming of the Son of Man.*” It is hard to find a good Holy-Ghost filled, righteous Saint anymore! It’s hard to find intercessors who will stand in the hedges and make up the gap.

God spoke through the prophet Jeremiah that if His people would

*“Call unto Me, I will answer... Behold, I will bring it health and cure, and I will cure them, and will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth” (Jer.33:3&6).*

God is calling for His people to pray and seek His face that He might hold back His judgments and give another mighty witness of His power and mercy. In Joel God called His people to prayer and fasting:

*“Therefore also now, says the Lord, turn you even to me with all your heart, and with fasting and with weeping, and with mourning:*

*And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness and repents him of the evil” (Joel 2:12-13).*

God is saying that if His people will turn unto Him in humility, prayer and fasting, He will respond with grace and mercy and “repent” or *hold back* the judgment!

If we will do the first four things outlined in 2 Chronicles 7:14, God will do the last three. These steps can birth revival and a fresh visitation from God. He promised to hear from heaven, forgive our sins, and heal our land, and in verse 15 He further declared:

*“Now my eyes shall be open, and my ears attend to the prayer that is made in this place.”*