

A Manifestation of God

By Tony Marshall Anderson

CLASSICS
Time-tested Truths



When they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness” (Acts 4: 31, KJV).

This remarkable manifestation of God reveals the effectiveness of prevailing prayer. It vividly discloses the fact that prayer can accomplish much. It is apparent that neither the apostles, nor the assembled company of devout believers were astonished at the marvelous visitation of God. They had assembled together in one place for the express purpose of achieving victory over the opposition of wicked men, and they fully expected the Lord to answer their united prayers in His own way.

Perhaps the shaking of the place where they were assembled together was an extraordinary occurrence, but receiving a direct answer to their importunate praying was neither unusual nor unexpected. The believers had assembled for the specific purpose of producing a miracle in the spiritual world, and not for the purpose of producing a phenomenon in the natural world.

We do not need a manifestation of the supernatural to arrest the attention of a pleasure-seeking world. God does not often shake the shackles off His imprisoned saints, and open the

doors of the jail with an earthquake. [But] He can do the unusual and the unexpected when necessary. We do not need the Lord to do something to astonish us, but we do need Him to do something to alert us to our dangers.

Shaken Out of Lethargy

We cannot ignore the fact that we desperately need a startling manifestation of God to shake us out of our spiritual lethargy and selfish complacency. We cannot substitute a program for power and have the least semblance of hope that the unsaved will be attracted by it.

The believers were praying in a desperate crisis when they said, "Lord, behold their threatenings" (Acts 4:29). We are aware that some of the most enduring results recorded in sacred history were obtained when some devout person prayed in an hour of crisis. Abraham prevailed with God in prayer when the angelic messengers told him about the destruction of Sodom. . . . Moses prayed importunately for the people when they incurred the fierce anger of God by worshipping the golden calf. It was a critical time in Israel when Elijah prayed earnestly on Mount Carmel. Jesus was praying in an hour of crisis when He said, "Father, the hour is come" (John 17:1).

The believers were confronted by a desperate situation when they said, "Lord, behold their threatenings." With them, it was a case of life or death, victory or defeat. The odds against them were tremendous, but the God [who] was for them was Almighty.

There is nothing in the sacred records to show that they had the slightest intention of compromising the truth in order to have favor with men. They did not call a meeting of the official board to discuss ways and means of evading the fundamental issues involved. They did not take refuge in a stupefying pessimism, saying that nothing could be done to

remedy the situation confronting them. Neither did they deceive themselves by saying that things would work out satisfactorily to all parties concerned.

They were willing to accept the conflict that challenged their faith and hope in God. They did the most natural thing in the sight of the Lord when they assembled together with one accord in prayer, and lifted up their voice in one concerted petition to Him for help.

Strength Renewed

The believers in this day of grace should be impressed by the victory achieved by this praying company of saints. There are many things which threaten us today. We are confronted with serious situations that cannot be overcome unless we keep our strength renewed through prevailing prayer.

Unless the believers in the church today have their spiritual strength replenished repeatedly by the Spirit, they will not be able to overcome the increasing power of spiritual wickedness threatening them today. The church cannot cope with the menacing threat of worldliness except the company of believers pray for power to meet the insidious threat.

God did not answer their impassioned prayer in the hour of crisis by miraculously changing the attitude of the determined opposition. He did not remove the threat which endangered them. The company of believers accepted the fact that such persecution had been foreseen and foretold.

The Lord would have us understand that suffering persecution for His sake is the price to be paid in blood and tears for the unspeakable pleasure of serving Him in the holy way of life.

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the people of God have not explored the boundless possibilities of prayer. Excerpted from his book *Prayer Availeth Much*.