# THE Watchword

*"Oh that Thou would rend the heavens, that Thou would come down, that the mountains might flow down at Thy presence. As when the melting fire burns, the fire causes the waters to boil, to make known Thy name to thine adversaries, that the nations may tremble at Thy presence!"* Isaiah 64:1,2

No. 40


*The purpose of this newsletter is to encourage prayer and passion for a true revival of Apostolic Christianity. The following material is offered in the hopes of provoking zeal and providing a vision of what the Church could be if we would fervently pray.*

## PRAYER MAKES HISTORY

The memory of Charles Haddon Spurgeon has been cherished among evangelical Christians for over the past 100 years. Many Christian leaders consider him to be the greatest preacher England ever produced. He is commonly hailed as the *"Prince of Preachers"*. Over 63 volumes of published sermons still bear witness to the richness and success of C. H. Spurgeon's ministry. Though known as a great preacher, it was not preaching that made Spurgeon great. Mr. Spurgeon repeatedly acknowledged his success as the direct result of his congregation's faithful prayers. *"It has often been remarked that the whole church helped produce Spurgeon."* When visitors would come to Spurgeon's church he would take them to the basement prayer-room where people were always on their knees interceding. Then Spurgeon would declare, *"Here is the powerhouse of this church."* As an illustration of the power of prayer, Spurgeon once described one of his church's intercessors. *"We used to have an old member of this church who used to pray in extraordinary places. Once, two women were fighting and he knelt down between them to pray and they gave up fighting directly." "When there was a disturbance in the house he began to pray. He was better than a policeman, for his prayers awed the most obstinate."*

Spurgeon in his autobiography described his gratefulness for being blessed with such a praying church. *"I always give all the glory to God, but I do not forget that He gave me the privilege of ministering from the first to a praying people. We had prayer meetings that moved our very souls, each one appeared determined to storm the Celestial City by the might of intercession."*

*C. H. Spurgeon*

Spurgeon regarded the prayer-meeting as the spiritual thermometer of a church. His church's Monday night prayer meeting had a worldwide testimony for many years. Every Monday night a large portion of Spurgeon's sanctuary was filled with earnest and fervent intercessors.

*"In Spurgeon's eyes the prayer-meeting was the most important meeting of the week."* It is here many of us find ourselves in conflict with dear Mr. Spurgeon. We love our meetings for preaching and praising and yet sadly neglect those set aside for praying. One of Spurgeon's greatest concerns was that his people learn to truly pray. *"He taught his people to pray, doing so far more by his example than by any preaching. People heard him pray with such reality that they became ashamed of their own mere repetition of words."* Throughout his entire ministry many hearers remarked that they were moved by his preaching, but yet still more affected by his praying. D. L. Moody after his first visit to England, being asked upon his return to America, *"Did you hear Spurgeon preach?"* He replied, *"Yes, but better still I heard him pray."* A close friend of Spurgeon's, commented on his prayer life, *"His public prayers were an inspiration, but his prayers with the family were to me more wonderful still. Mr. Spurgeon, when bowed before God in family prayer, appeared a grander man even than when holding thousands spell-bound by his oratory."*

Spurgeon fully recognized that the Church's greatest need was not to have another, *"Prince of Preachers"*, but to have more princes of prayer. One of his many published sermons expressed his feelings on this. He wrote, *"Shall I give you yet another reason why you should pray? I have preached my very heart out. I could not say any more than I have said. Will not your prayers accomplish that which my preaching fails to do? Is it not likely that the Church has been putting forth its preaching hand but not its praying hand? Oh dear friends! Let us agonize in prayer . . ."*

There has been much talk lately about pockets of revival spring up in our nation. Many are saying they desire such revivals in our own local churches, and cities. Yet, is it not the prayer-meeting which is still most neglected? If Christ Jesus were to visit us today with revival power, how could such a blessing be maintained where there is no ground work laid in prayer? To merely exercise our mouths about revival and not our knees is hypocrisy! It is time to make the prayer-meeting as crowded as our favorite praise meeting. It is then and only then that a true and lasting revival will come! May we, like Mr. Spurgeon count the prayer-meeting as our most important meeting!

*References Used -*


*"C H. Spurgeon's Autobiography" compiled by Susannah Spurgeon and Joseph Harrald*

*"Spurgeon" by Arnold Dallimore*

# "PRAYER SIGHS"

**by A. W. Pink**

The exercises of soul and pangs of heart find expression in sighs and sobs, in moans and groans, yet such as mere nature never produced. The word *"sigh"* has a much stronger force in its Scriptural usage than in our ordinary conversation, or we should say, in more modern speech, for three hundred years ago it signified a lament rather than a mark of peevishness. *"And the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage" (Ex. 2:23),* the meaning of which is explained in the next verse: *"And God heard their groaning."* Their *"sighing"* expressed their suffering and sorrow under the oppression of their Egyptian taskmasters. So again, we read that the sorely afflicted Job declared *"For my sighing cometh before my meat, and my roarings are poured out like the waters" (Job 3:24).* So by prayer sighs we intend those agitations and breathings of soul which are virtually synonymous with groans.

A ***"sigh"* is an inarticulate declaration, and indistinct cry for deliverance.** The saints are sometimes so opposed and troubled that they cannot find language suited to their emotions: where words fail them, the thoughts and feelings of their hearts find expression in sighs and cries. The workings of a Christian's heart under the pressure of indwelling sin, the temptations of Satan, the opposition of the ungodly, the burden of uncongenial society, the wickedness of the world, the low state of the Cause of Christ on earth, are variously described in Scripture. Sometimes he is said to be *"in heaviness" (1 Pet. 1:6),* to *"cry out of the depths" (Psa. 130:1),* to *"roar" (Psa. 38:8),* to be *"overwhelmed" (Psa. 61:2),* to be *"distracted" (Psa. 88:13).* The tossings and anguish of his soul are depicted as *"groanings" (Rom. 8:23).* **The groanings of the believer are not only expressive of sorrow, but also of hope, of the intensity of his spiritual desires, of his panting after God, and his yearning for the bliss which awaits him on high *(2 Cor. 5:2,4).*** Such exercises of soul are peculiar to the regenerate, and by them the Christian may identify himself. If the reader now be the subject of sorrows and sighs to which he was a total stranger while in a state of nature, then he may be assured he is no longer dead in sins. If he finds himself groaning over the infection of his heart and those workings of inward corruption which prevent his perfectly loving and uninterruptedly serving God as he longs to do, that is proof that a principle of holiness has been communicated to his soul. If he mourns over the lustings of his flesh against that principle of holiness, then he must be alive unto God.

> *"Groans or sighs are the evidences of spiritual life, the pantings of holiness, hungering and thirsting after righteousness."*

The worldling will groan over the common troubles of life, such as financial loss, pain of body, the death of a loved one, but that is only the voice of nature. **But the worldling never weeps in secret over the coldness of his heart or the workings of unbelief.** *"Groans"* or *"sighs"* are the evidences of spiritual life, the pantings of holiness, hungering and thirsting after righteousness. They are, as Mr. Winslow expressed it, *"The ruled chimings of Heaven."* They are the sure pledges of deliverance *(2 Cor. 5:4).* They are the marks of the Christian's union with Him who was *"The Man of Sorrows."* Before Christ healed the deaf man, we read that *"He sighed" (Mark 7:34),* which expressed His deep sympathy with the sufferer, as one *"touched with the feeling of our infirmities."* And again, when the Pharisees came to Him, *"tempting Him"* by asking a sign from heaven, we are told that Christ *"sighed deeply in His spirit" (Mark 8:11,12),* which denoted His holy indignation at their sin, godly sorrow for their persons, and grief within His own soul, for He *"suffered"* when He was *"tempted" (Heb. 2:18).* His holiness felt contact with evil. ***"The nearer anyone is to heaven, the more he desires to be there. Because Christ is there.*** *For the more frequent and steady are our views of Him by faith, the more do we long and groan for the removal of all obstructions and hindrances. Groaning is a vehement desire, mixed with sorrow, for the present want of what is desired'' (John Owen).*

Now the spiritual sighs and groanings of the Christian are interpreted by God as prayers! Those sacrifices which are acceptable to Him are *"a broken and a contrite heart" (Psa. 51:7).* Sobbings of soul are of great price in His sight *(Psa. 61:8).* The believer's moans are intelligible language to heaven: *"the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping" (Psa. 6:8):* that *"weeping"* possesses an appeal unto Him which the eloquence of professional praying does not. *"Lord, all my desire is before Thee, and my groaning is not hid from Thee" (Psa. 38:9).*

Our tears speak to Him of godly sorrow, our moans as the breathings of a contrite spirit. *"From heaven did the Lord behold the earth: to hear the groaning of the prisoner" (Psa. 102:20).* **Here then is consolation: God is privy to our secret sighs, Christ is touched with them *(Heb. 4:15),* they ascend as petitions to heaven, and are the sure pledges of deliverance.**


***Reference Used -***

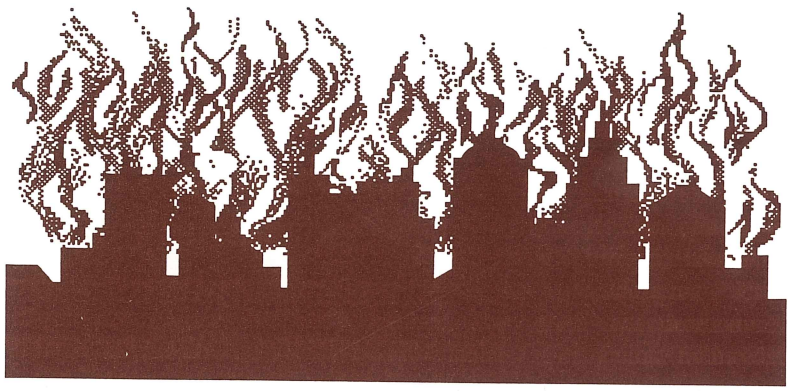
***Studies in the Scriptures 1947***
***by A. W. Pink***

# WHY DID THE FIRE FALL IN 1857?

## Two Thousand Miles of Prayer

The climax of the awakening came in 1857. Noonday prayer meetings were started in New York, Philadelphia and other cities. Then the movement spread with lightning-like speed throughout the land. In Philadelphia it is said that three thousand people attended the noonday prayer meetings, and in Chicago some two thousand were in attendance day by day. In one of Mr. Finney's meetings in Boston a man arose and said: *I am from Omaha, in Nebraska. On my journey East I have found a continuous prayer meeting all the way. We call it two thousand miles from Omaha to Boston; and here was a prayer meeting about two thousand miles in extent."* The entire country was stirred by these noonday prayer meetings.

Rev. John Shearer in his book on *"Old Time Revivals"* said: *"In answer to the Church's united cry, ascending from all parts of the land, the Spirit of God in a very quiet way, and suddenly, throughout the whole extent of the United States, renewed the Church's life, and awakened in the community around it a great thirst for God. When the Church awoke to the full consciousness of the miracle, it found that from east and west, and from north and south, the whole land was alive with daily prayer meetings. And it was in these daily united prayer meetings that the great majority of these conversions, of all ages and classes, took place. The divine fire appeared in the most unlikely quarters. A large number of the aged were gathered in. White-haired penitents knelt with little children at the Throne of Grace. Whole families of Jews were brought to their Messiah. Deaf mutes were reached by the glad tidings, and though their tongues were still, their faces so shone that they became effective messengers of the gospel. The most hardened infidels were melted, some being led to Christ by the hand of a little child."*



## Continuous Prayer

C. H. Spurgeon commenting on this great move of the Spirit said: *"In the City of New York at this present moment, there is not, I believe one single hour of the day where Christians are not gathered together for prayer. One church opens its doors from 5 o'clock till six for prayer; another church opens from six to seven and summons its praying men to offer the sacrifice of supplication. Six o'clock is past, and men are gone to their labor. Another class find it then convenient - such as those, perhaps, who go to business at eight or nine - and from seven to eight there is another prayer meeting. From eight to nine there is another, in another part of the city, and what is most marvelous, at high noon, from twelve to one, in the midst of the city of New York, there is held a prayer meeting in a large room, which is crammed to the doors every day, with hundreds standing outside. This prayer meeting is made up of merchants of the city, who can spare a quarter of an hour to go in and say word of prayer and then leave again; and then a fresh company come in to fill up the ranks, so that it is supposed that many hundreds assemble in that one place for prayer during the appointed hour.* ***This is the explanation of the revival!"***

## Prayer: A Divine Attraction

Samuel Prime in his book *"The Power of Prayer"* described the effects the revival had upon New York City, *"The prayer-meeting became one of the institutions of the city. Christians in distant parts of the country heard of them. They prayed for the prayer-meetings. When they visited the city, the prayer-meeting was the place to which they resorted. The museum or theatre had no such attractions. Returning, they set up similar meetings at home. The Spirit followed, and the same displays of grace were seen in other cities, and in the country, that were so marvellous in New York. So the work spread, until the year has become remarkable in the history of the Church. This revival is to be remembered through all coming ages as simply an answer to prayer."*

## Prayer At Sea

*"Nor was the blessing confined to the land. The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the water, and a multitude of seamen saw a great light. It was as if a vast cloud of blessing hovered over the land and sea. And ships, as they drew near the American ports, came within the zone of heavenly influence. Ship after ship arrived with the same tale of sudden conviction and conversion. It was wonderful beyond words! In one ship a captain and the entire crew of thirty men found Christ out at sea and entered the harbor rejoicing.*

*The North Carolina - a battleship of the United States Navy - lay in the harbor of New York. Her complement was about a thousand men. Amongst these were four Christians who discovered their*

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*spiritual kinship and agreed to meet for prayer. They were permitted to use a very retired part of the ship, on a deck far below the water line. Here, then, they gathered one evening. They were only four men, but they were a united band. They represented three denominations, one being an Episcopalian, another a Presbyterian, while two were Baptists. As they knelt in the dim light of a tiny lamp, the Spirit of God suddenly filled their hearts with such joy of salvation that they burst into song. The strange sweet strain rose to the decks above, and there created great astonishment. Their ungodly shipmates came running down. They came to mock, but the mighty power of God had been liberated by rejoicing faith. It gripped them, and in one moment their derisive laugh was changed into the cry of penitent sinners! Great fellows, giants in stature, and many of them giants in sin, were literally smitten down, and knelt humbly beside the four, like little children.*

*A most gracious work straightway began in the depths of the great ship. Night after night the prayer meeting was held, and conversions took place daily. Soon they had to send ashore for help, and ministers joyfully came out to assist. A large number were added to the various churches, and the battleship became a veritable House of God! The North Carolina was a receiving ship, from which men were constantly drafted to other ships. The converts of the revival were scattered throughout the navy. A revival convert is a burning brand. The holy fire spread rapidly from ship to ship. Wherever the converts went they started a prayer meeting and became a soul-winning band. Thus ship after ship left the harbor of New York for foreign seas, each carrying its band of rejoicing converts, and the fire of God was borne to the ends of the earth."*

**"The Place of Prayer Was The Place to Get The Help We Needed."**

## Why Did They Pray?

Again we quote from Samuel Prime's book *"The Power of Prayer"*, he explains to some extent the motivation behind such a miraculous move of prayer. He wrote, *"As a nation, we were becoming rapidly demoralized by our worldliness, our ambition, our vanity, and our vices. The true, the great end for which, we believe, this nation was raised up, was being lost sight of . The very foundations were moving. We needed this 'great awakening' to bring us to our senses, to rouse up the national conscience, to arrest the national decay, and bring us back to a high tone of moral health. Nothing but the influence of a deep and all-pervading earnest piety can save this nation from the fate of all past republics. The tide of corruption must be rolled backward. This was felt; everywhere felt. The place of prayer was the place to get the help we needed. Men rushed to the place of prayer with high resolves, and with weighty demands to ask great things of God. And men rejoiced with unbounded joy when they saw what God was doing. Why should not a holy enthusiasm be enkindled? It was kindled, and God be praised."*

## The Challenge

*"Brethren, we must pray as we have never yet prayed. Our want of success is due to our coldness of desire and slothfulness of request. We are not straitened in God, but in our own low, slender conceptions and hopes. We have not, because we ask not. If we were under a deep and solemn impression of the divine power, bounty, and faithfulness, 'how should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight'! The lesson which the revival should teach us is the duty of being instant in supplication for the larger and more glorious effusion of the Holy Spirit. Acting on this, we shall behold new marvels of love in the place of prayer."*

***References Used -***


***"When The Fire Fell"***
***by George T. B. Davis***

***"The Power of Prayer"***
***by Samuel I. Prime***

***"How To Promote Revival"***
***by R. A. Torrey***


*The* ***Watchword*** *is a free monthly publication designed to awaken the Church to her need for humility, repentance and revival. We gratefully welcome your prayers and financial support as the Holy Spirit leads. Please feel free to make copies of the* ***Watchword*** *for your family, friends and ministry use.*

***Prayer Times***
***Friday; 6 to 7am (auditorium) · Saturday; 8-11am (prayer room)***

## ALWAYS REMEMBER

*A truly prayerful and consecrated life unto God can only be established by faith. It is by trusting in the finished work of Christ that we are empowered to produce the fruit of love and righteousness.*

***"For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world; our faith."*** *(I John 5:4)*