

A Measure of Revival in Our Bondage

by Shane Idleman

The sermon emphasizes the need for humility, intercession, and desperation for God in order to experience revival amidst our societal bondage.

Duration: 32:45

Scripture: Ezra 9:5

Topics: "Revival", "Humility and Brokenness"

Description

Shane Idleman emphasizes the need for revival amidst the bondage many are experiencing in today's society, drawing parallels from Ezra's call to rebuild Jerusalem during turbulent times. He highlights the seriousness of sin and the importance of humility and desperation in seeking God's presence, urging the congregation to intercede for the nation and recognize the grace available to them. Idleman reminds listeners that God does not forsake His people, even in their struggles, and that true revival often begins with a remnant willing to cry out for change. He encourages a posture of brokenness and repentance, asserting that desperate people do desperate things in their pursuit of God.

Transcript

God breaks open the floodgates and reminds us that it's His sovereignty, He can draw, it's His will, it's His word, it's His power. A lot of us feel that we are in bondage. There's challenges at work, challenges with mandates and where we see things going, and it can be a little alarming, and sometimes we can get upset and not focused on the right things.

Many people are in bondage right now. I don't know if you've been following a lot of the news, but the addiction recovery centers and the opiate increase of actually overdosing on opioids and alcoholism and everything, there's a bondage that's taking place and really grabbing hold of God's people. So I'm going to just read briefly out of Ezra.

I believe we have Ezra chapter 9 up there on the screen. It's interesting because Ezra was called of God to rebuild the city of Jerusalem in turbulent times. He was called to rebuild that city, that really the temple.

And then Nehemiah came to rebuild the wall around the temple, to rebuild a place that was in rubbish, to rebuild in the midst of bondage and being, they're really slaves, they were taken away captive. And God called Cyrus by name early on before he's even born that said, you will begin to rebuild these ruins. And this is the cry of Ezra that we find that the sermon title is a measure of revival in our bondage.

Ezra 9, 5 to 6, at the evening sacrifice, this is interesting, it's almost reminded me of tonight, at the evening sacrifice. Their sacrifice was their time of worship, it would be where their sins would be atoned for, and it was a time of meeting God. And he said, I rose from my fasting, so there was some mourning taking place and having torn my garment and my robe, I fell on my knees and I spread out my hands to the Lord God.

What a beautiful picture of what God is already doing. And I said, oh my God, I am too ashamed and I am humiliated to lift up my face to you. I think he read our mail tonight.

Our iniquities have risen higher than our heads, and our guilt has grown up to the heavens. This is a man in deep turmoil. This is a man desperate that God, desperate to have God honored again and desperate to see God's temple, because you see to them, the temple represented God's presence, God's power, it was their image, Israel's image.

God was there, the God of all kings, the God who governs Jehovah, Jireh, Jehovah, Nesih, all the names of God, that temple represented that, and then they were taken over by their enemies. They were destroyed and wiped out, and so he's in that place of turmoil. And we can grab from this a few things, the seriousness of sin.

He was ashamed, he was guilt-ridden. And there's a big movement out there for 20, 30 years now that it's not good to be guilty, they say. And I know what they're saying, but they're way off because it's okay to fill the condemnation that the sin is putting on us, to fill that so we give it to the person who takes away the shame and the guilt, and filling the consequences of this, and the seriousness of sin.

There was no fear of the Lord in that place. I'm actually going to talk about that in Genesis 20, I believe it was Abraham, he comes in, and Abraham, and he comes in, and he realizes there's no fear of God in this place, the seriousness of this issue. And we see that he tore his clothes.

Now, tearing was costly. You can't just go to TJ Maxx, and you can't just walk into Target, and they ripped off their clothes to show utter disgust. It was like what the Pharisees would do, they would rip their garments.

And that's why Jesus said, do not rip your garments. I want to see your heart ripped, not your clothing, not this outward expression. And so he tore his robe, he tore his garments, and just said, God, we cry out to you.

I realize there is a cost to experiencing God. There is a cost to experiencing God. When we come to church, when we persevere, when we press in, when we remove things, there is that cost.

But that cost far outweighs the pain of regret that we experience later. And there's an interesting word here, he was ashamed. And then my mind instantly went to Jeremiah when he said, they are not ashamed of their detestable conduct.

They have no shame at all. They do not even know how to blush. That's a true sign of a society that is depraved and declining.

They've lost that ability to blush, to have shame over sin. And we just keep getting more perverted and more perverted. And there's a school district now, I don't know if you saw the news, where they had lap dances at a pep rally with the principal and teachers.

And it's just, people can't believe it. I can't. It's called a depraved society on the road to judgment and moral depravity.

And that's why we have to be more vocal than ever before with a voice of love and understanding, but that boldness to warn people, like 2 Timothy 3, but know this, that in the last days, perilous times will come. Look at this list. Men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud.

Have we never seen more of that? The boasting, the pomp, the proud, the blasphemies, they're disobedient to parents. I often tell kids and even our kids, boy, if I tried that with my dad, he would have me go out to the tree and pick the twig. A switch, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanders, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.

Now here's the key, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. So even the people that are depraved have a form of godliness. They shape God into what they want God to be.

God, and that's, you'll see it, God just loves me for who I am. I was born this way. Who are you to judge? I hold God dear in my heart.

God is everything to me, and really what they're saying is there is no one true and living God. They are conforming God to their image and their likeness and what they want God to be. And this really hit me this morning, the wearing of sackcloth and ashes.

You'll hear that. Have you ever, have you ever, back when there was almond orchards in Quartz Hill, anybody remember that? My job was to have this big piece of wood with a big thing, a big rubber head on it, and you would just hit that tree. It was a big, looked like a, I don't know, like a huge hammer, and you just hit those branches, and you just knock down all the almonds, and you would put them in bags like sackcloth.

And if you, it even rubbed your arm wrong. It was, oh, what is that? It's the most uncomfortable feeling you've ever had. And they would actually put this on.

They would, and they would throw the, the sackcloth and ashes, they would take ashes and dirt and throw it, just the, just the, the utter remorse, and just, there's no way to dig deeper than throw the dust on your head and, and wear the sackcloth and show God that they are in a season of mourning. Now, of course, we don't do that, and I don't necessarily would encourage that. There's no biblical mandate other than fasting and, and being desperate for more of God and, and sorrow over our sin.

But what's interesting is often the actions match the desperation. How you act shows us how desperate you are. And that's why I've been saying since COVID really is, America is mad, but she's not broken.

She's angry, but she's not humble. See, if there was a, if there was a true desperation for more of God, we could not sit enough people on a Monday or a Friday. We just couldn't.

The amount of people who call this their home church, if everyone came, we would have to put speakers out in the front area. Why? Because there's a desperation. That's why we love leading this church, because there's a desperation for more of God.

And people are calling me, I've talked to a friend in Tennessee. I just did an interview with Christian Broadcasting News. And, you know, they're hearing about like, what, what is going on in California? And you're in LA County? What, what is, what is this? We can't get churches to do where, what it's, it's God.

People are desperate. And that's the, the, the, the good thing about California is it will drive you to your knees if you don't move. It will drive you to your knees.

And we have to remember that that can be a blessing because in the most broken, desperate spot, that's where God is at. That's where he's not up in the Northern, well, I better not say it, but friends up there. I was going to say North, Northern Idaho by Canadian, you know, quarter lane.

Yeah. And Montana and all, I mean, it's great. Good go for it.

But the really, God's going to say, I'm going to take a desperate, broken people. So we get upset, look what's happening. And yes, it's something to get upset about, but also in that bondage, in that desperation, God will give us a measure of revival because desperate people do desperate things.

They might actually come to church every night. Can you believe that? Desperate people do desperate things and I can hear it. And I know it's difficult and I know it's challenging.

And I've mentioned that we might keep doing this next week. I don't know yet. We're praying.

We're just kind of seeing what God wants to do. But, and I knew it was coming and I don't blame people, but I can tell them some people like, are we really doing that? And I say, Hey, listen, you don't have to be here. Stay home.

I mean, and I mean, I'm not being, but just enjoy your evening, go have dinner. I don't, please don't feel compelled. But for some of us, we have got to grab the hem of his garment and not let go.

For some of us, we are so hungry that we need to meet God in account. I tell you what, I've never felt this good in the course of an entire week than I have this week. As God is my witness, I've never felt this good.

Now, sometimes the mornings are difficult. The afternoons, I mean, it's, there's difficult days, but when you get into the presence of God and you begin to worship him and you see desperate people do desperate things. And so our actions always match the desperation.

So that's what Ezra did. He just didn't say, Oh, this kind of stinks, but let's go eat. He said that he, he, he ripped, he ripped off it.

He just tore it off and cried out in desperation. He said, Oh God, I'm so ashamed. Look, look at what they're feeding our children in the schools and the perversion on Facebook and Instagram.

And there should be a blushing and a good saying, God help us that we are desperate to hear from you. So thank God for where we are in California right now, because it presses us down and we get on our knees and says, that's a humble people. I can use out of California out of Los Angeles County.

I'm going to bring a sense of revival. Just think about that for a minute of all the places. There's no church right now that I know of that is meeting every single night in the whole of United States.

I'm sure there are, of course, but you just don't see that desperation and that's encouraging and to have dozens and dozens come to the office. I don't even know what that was. I don't even have a definition for that.

I don't know how that happened. I'm still perplexed, but God is showing up and we see here the beauty of brokenness, the beauty of brokenness and humility crushes pride. And I struggled this morning.

I really did saying, God, we talk about this a lot. What's going on here? And I was just reminded that why does an accountant talk about money? Why is a fireman talk about fire? That's what this is, what the church does. We remind ourselves of the importance of humility and brokenness and, and that being emptied for more of God.

And the reason God isn't using many people is they're too full of themselves. So there has to be a period of, there has to be a brokenness that takes place because the bottom line, unless we get our heart right, we will not experience God. How can he pour into you if you're already full? And then verse seven, we see that he's saying here since the days of our fathers, remember there was a plea.

He said, oh my God, I'm too ashamed. I'm humiliated. Our sins have risen higher than our heads and our guilt has grown to the heavens.

And do you ever feel that way? You look at the actually people supporting murdering a child right before birth or right after birth or in the womb. It's like, and then the sex trafficking and the perversion and the mockery and the it's like the stench of sin must be reaching up to the nostrils of God. And there is a, just a, just a, something that overcomes you and you say, oh God help us.

And so then he goes into that since the days of our fathers to this day, we have been very guilty. And for our iniquities, in other words, for our Kings, meaning for our leaders, for our priests, like our pastors, and we have delivered, you have delivered us into the hands of our enemy to the sword, to captivity, to plunder and to humiliation as it is this day. Humiliation is interesting because when God humiliates a nation, it looks like it's almost looking now with, with our work, the view of America in the world.

We were feared. We were respected. We were revered because God was doing amazing things a hundred years ago or even 50 years ago.

And, and now the humiliation and I guarantee Russia and China are not real worried about our current administration. They're strategically doing things. I'm sure.

I don't know, but, but, but that's my concern is with judgment. There's always humiliation. And he said the sword there's danger, there's warfare, captivity, there's bondage, and then plundering that the God has allowed, allows plundering to go on and on and on death, bondage, loss, and humiliation is a sign of judgment.

And at this point people say, well, this is heavy. Why did I even come tonight? Well, guess what? Here's why we came. We see here the power of intercession and confession, the power of intercession and confession that turns the tide of God will often say, is that, is that the cries of my people that I talked about a few nights ago? Is that, I wanted to do this.

And Jeremiah, I believe he says, I relented from doing this because I heard your cries. And Ezra now is talking about, oh God, would you stay your hand of judgment? And so the power of intercession and

confession, can you imagine if the church tonight even here would come forward and just intercede on behalf of our nation, on behalf of our state and saying, God, we intercede. And you might say, well, that doesn't make a lot of sense.

Trust me, Hollywood's not going to repent. Washington's not going to repent. Sacramento's not going to repent because God says, if my people humble themselves and pray and seek my face, if we come and we intercede on behalf of the land, intercession is so important that God told Ezekiel, Ezekiel, I sought for a man from among my people who would stand in the gap and build a wall before me and my judgment, but I found no one to intercede before you.

Intercession. Because it's people crying out for others. Moses interceded.

David interceded. The greatest act of intercession ever bestowed upon mankind was the cross on Calvary that God interceded on behalf of our sin. And he said, God, he said, father, I will take that wrath.

I will take that judgment. I will intercede on behalf of the people. And so God gives us the ministry of reconciliation and intercession.

You want your kids and grandkids to come to know the Lord, then you might want to find yourself on this altar and cry out and say, devil, you don't have my children. You don't have my marriage. You don't have these kids.

Listen, I'm not just saying this to pump us up. This is not time for motivation. This is a time for humiliation and find ourselves on that broken altar and say, God, we intercede on behalf of our children and our nation.

We have the blood of innocent children on our hands. We have redefined marriage. We are a stench in the nostrils of a righteous, holy God.

But God, we intercede. We recognize our sin and we ask for repentance. Would you stay your hand of judgment on us? There's a desperation.

Verse eight, and now for a little while. Oh, now for a little while, grace has been shown us from the Lord. This minister to me, let me just tell you how it impacted me.

It's almost as if God's saying, guys, there's a window here. There's a window for a little while. Grace is being shown.

Are we not tremendously gift giving, seeing God's grace right now? My goodness. I think it was Billy Graham who said, if God doesn't judge America, he's going to have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah. And that, you know, that has stuck with me ever since.

And so God, thank you for your grace. Don't find me lazy. Don't find me complacent.

Don't find me like the, like Luke talks about and, and being drunk with the cares of this life and not being ready and, and being distant from God and being that evil and wicked servant. God, find me on my knees right now and find me on the altar. Find me broken.

Find me humble. God, thank you for showing us a little bit of grace right now. And then he says, and I left you a remnant and I, and he leaves us a remnant to escape and to give us a peg in his holy place that our

God may enlighten our eyes.

And here we go. Here we go. Give us a measure of revival in our bondage.

I just did an interview today with Remnant News. It'll be released Monday, I believe. And he asked, what do you, what are you sensing Shane? And, you know, I said, and I said, well, with judgment, I said, I don't know.

I'm not, I don't know God's wills, God's ways of sovereignty, other than what the word says. And, but America, I believe in the 1950s and 60s is obviously over. We're not going to have a utopia again, but I see as the evil presses in the light of the gospel can penetrate and fight back to give us a measure of revival in our bondage.

So you, you'll see this perversion, but wonderful purity, wonderful holiness, churches coming on, being on fire for God and fighting against the darkness. So I think you'll see this massive upheaval of light and darkness fighting. And, you know, people say, well, Shane, it doesn't really matter.

America's going down. Well, I don't know if that's true. We're called to fight and do business until he returns.

We are called to not give up and to begin to contend for our nation. Thank God Ezra didn't give up. Thank God Nehemiah didn't give up.

Thank God Jeremiah didn't give up. Thank God Ezekiel didn't give up. Thank God Isaiah didn't give up.

Daniel didn't give up. Amos didn't give up. Joel didn't give up.

They called that nation back to the God Almighty because they understood, Oh God, your mercy. See, that's what we don't understand his mercy. And he wants revival more than we do.

He wants his mercy and his grace reached down. And he wants to blanket us and show and shower us with his mercy and his grace on behalf of a people who are living for him. And so he says here, give us a measure of revival in our bondage.

And for those unaware, when he says a little while there's grace, grace is unmerited favor, unmerited favor. Do you know I don't deserve to be up here? Do you deserve everything that God has given you? That's called self-righteousness. It's unmerited and unearned favor that God gives us.

And now for a little while grace has been shown from the Lord. And it's interesting this, you'd have to research this a little bit, but this peg to give us a peg in his holy place. Well, they didn't have closets back then, or these big custom homes and all that.

You know how they hung up things and did is just that, that driven, that firmly driven nail. And even in the, even in the tabernacle, and there would, there would be these, these, these areas where there would be pegs that would hold things up. And we have a firmly driven nail to hang our hopes on.

So he gives us a peg in his holy place might sound, we don't know what it means, but to them, it may complete sense his holy place. You know what his holy place was? The holies of holies into the sanctuary into where only God dwell. And he said, God will even he will, he will, he will divinely peg put a nail of something firmly in place for us for the remnant.

We can rest in that hope that God has our back. And it's a very encouraging promise. But this word remnant is very interesting.

God leaves a remnant. And I want to build you up right now for a minute. Did you know that you are most of you were as far as I'm concerned, our remnant, a remnant is something that comes out from among them in a separate and God says, because of this, because of this, I'm going to move, I'm going to answer prayer, I'm going to bring healing and restoration, I'm going to move behind the scene because of this remnant, without the remnant.

Don't even go there. Because the only remnant and we're going to read in Genesis shortly is when Noah entered the ark, that remnant God wiped out the entire earth. And so a remnant is a reminder of God's faithfulness.

And I was so encouraged thinking about this, this group other churches out there, the remnant meaning on fire for God filled the spirit want to honor his word, love the truth, the inerrancy of Scripture, Christ is the only way you know, the remnant, we come together from China, Bulgaria, Indonesia, Christians everywhere, it's a remnant group. It's in that remnant is a reminder of who God is and what God can do. We are to be a reminder of people to people what God is a remnant remind Hey, this is what God's standard is.

This is where we come and we worship. This is how we conduct church. We are a remnant, a remnant doesn't play games.

A remnant doesn't look like the world. And when you get rid of most people in Christendom, you are left with the remnant. And as a reminder of who God is.

And a remnant is pivotal in revival. Every revival I've ever studied Old Testament throughout church history, always begins with a remnant. I've yet to see where God just says, Hey, I'm going to start a revival.

Just I guess here, down in Hollywood, let me choose Ozzy Osbourne's house. That'd be great. Right there on Sunset Strip.

No, the remnant, it's a magnet to revival. That remnant is a pivotal, it's pivotal and crucial in revival. So what God is doing here, folks, don't to get to get this many people, almost 2000 people here in the last five days with Sunday to get that many people here wanting more of God hungry for more of God.

That's powerful. That attracts revival. That's why you'll see people automatically come to the altar without any prompting whatsoever, except the prompting of the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit directs his remnant, when to meet, how to meet, how to focus on him.

And when God revises people, it's because that remnant was pivotal. They were seeking God with all their hearts. And then finally, it's always the remnant that fights corruption.

Who is making them, who makes the most, who is the most vocal right now in our culture against ungodliness? The true church. The lukewarm church is on the wrong side often. They're on the wrong side of agendas.

They're on the wrong side of policy. They're on the wrong side of everything. They are not a remnant.

So remnant exposes the unfruitful works of darkness. So in a nutshell, they are the representation of God on the earth. They are pivotal in revival, and they are called to fight against darkness.

Basically, God works through the remnant. Think about that for me. He doesn't work through all of Christendom.

He doesn't work through all these people claiming to be Christians. He says, where's my people? Where's the remnant? Let me work through them. And that's why he said here, he said, God has left us a remnant.

Verse nine, for we were slaves, we were slaves, and God forsook us forever. For we were slaves, yet our God, our God did not forsake us in our bondage. God will never forsake his remnant.

God will never forsake you. But you might go through difficulties. You might go through challenges.

You might go in jail, Paul, and write majority of the New Testament in jail, Paul. One of the best books out there, Pilgrim's Progress, was written 12 years in jail by John Bunyan. God is with his people.

He did not forsake us. I will never leave you. I will never forsake you.

But he extended mercy to us in the sight of the King of Persia to revive us. These words are interesting. Listen, he said, to revive us, to repair the house of our God, and to rebuild its ruins, and to give us a wall in Judah and Jerusalem.

In other words, the enemy tore it down, and God says, I'm bringing the remnant in to do three things, to revive, to repair, to rebuild. And so how does that parallel us this evening? Do you need reviving? What that means is to be restored to spiritual life. If you need that tonight, cry out to God.

God can restore that spiritual life. What about, how is repaired different than rebuilt? Well, it's a big difference. Think of Twin Towers.

That had to be completely rebuilt, whereas the building next to it had to be repaired. And so God not only will repair things, fix what is broken, but he will rebuild and build again and make as new. When we do baptisms, they can attest to that fact.

I was lost, but now I'm found. I was blind, but now I see. I was this old creation, the old man, but now I'm a new creation in Christ.

I have been completely rebuilt and transformed because of the mercy and grace of God. And so God does not forsake those who do not forsake him. We talked about grace, and I'll end with this, mercy, mercy.

You know what the difference is? Grace is unmerited favor. I have unmerited favor, God says. I'll just give you something.

I'll bless you. I'll save you, even though you don't deserve it. Mercy is that he will help you instead of harm you.

In other words, if you're due a spanking, five-year-old, you ever been spanked by God? It's not funny. It's not pretty as an adult, but instead of what you deserve, he gives us grace. He gives us mercy.

It's actually to release you instead of imprison you. It's to heal you instead of harm you. It's to forgive you instead of giving us judgment.

That's why we talk about the grace of God and the mercy of God. I don't know if we're going to sing it tonight. I think it's Sunday.

Maybe I think I heard them practicing. I don't know. Don't quote me on it.

But that wonderful song, that hymn, how deep the Father's love for us, how wide beyond all measure, that he would give his only son to make a wretch his treasure. Let that sink in. Mercy and grace meet.

And so never forget this as we go into worship here in just a minute. God will never forsake us. Even in our bondage, your most difficult situation, some of you have great jobs.

It's no big deal. Some of you could be losing your jobs. Some of you have wonderful marriages.

Others came in with broken marriages. But God promises this. He says, I will revive the humble.

I will restore the broken. I will repair the heart of the barren one. I will renew those who are spiritually dead.

For we were once enslaved, enslaved to sin, and God has set us free. And there's an amazing amount of rejoicing that can take place. So what we're going to do, we're the worship team come up, and we're just going to go right into baptism.

So you guys can come up. I'm going to meet Peter right next door in the men's area once the worship team comes up. And we're going to celebrate what God has done in his heart.

And if you would like to get baptized, men on this side, women on that side. We also have communion available. And I'm actually not going to pressure or to call to the altar.

I'm going to let God do whatever he wants to do. But I will tell you this, there has to be a desperation. Once you get so desperate that I ever been sick and tired of being sick and tired? Sick and tired of the way things are.

Sick and tired of the media. There's a frustration. There's an anger.

There's a desperation. And desperate people do desperate things. And we cry out to God.

And we say, oh God, have mercy on our And let's intercede tonight just as we're worshiping in your own heart and say, God, we intercede on behalf of the millions of little children who were slaughtered and thrown in the trash can. God, we repent for the perversion that is being promoted and the outright lunacy and the depravity. Oh God, not only do we have blood on our hands, we have sin on our hands.

We have mocked your word. We have despised your messengers. We have scoffed at your prophetic voices.

And we are shaking our fists in your face, God, most of our nation. And we intercede on behalf of our people. God, give us a measure of revival in our bondage.

Even if you were baptized as an infant or younger and it didn't really mean anything. And God's been kind of pulling on your heart. You know, he does that sometimes.

I was baptized at 12. I still remember the pool, but I was like, okay, whatever. I want to go swimming.

And I come back to the Lord at 30 and he's convicting me. I'm like, Lord, I've already been baptized. That's humiliating.

And it took like six months. I'm just reading the Bible. Baptized, baptized, baptized.

Okay. But ignoring that prompting from God. Ignoring that prompting from God.

It can be in little things. If there's a prompting, if he wants you to humble yourself tonight, be baptized, come to the altar, confess, pray with your spouse, whatever. If we're faithful, that's why I love what Madeline said.

If we're faithful in the little things, sometimes there's big sins out there. God often looks often at the heart issues as well. If you think angry thoughts or bitter or lustful thoughts and why I didn't act upon it, but if you're dwelling and focusing, and that's why Jesus said, not if you murder someone, but if you even have that anger in your heart and that bitterness, bring it to the foot of the cross.

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