With Every Great Revival –

Someone Tarried, Waited, Wrestled And Travailed –
Until They Prevailed With God –
And The Heavens Poured Forth Floods Of Grace Into The Hearts Of Seeking People

By Oswald J. Smith

God considers the anointing of the Holy Spirit to be of paramount importance. In Luke 24:49, Jesus commanded His disciples to *"tarry...until...endued with power from on high."*

But how are such enduements to be received? What is the secret? Those who have been endued with divine power, and whose work reads like a page out of the Acts of the Apostles, did not just happen to stumble onto the blessing.

They met God! And when we too, after having counted the cost, are willing to pay the price, God will grant us the same enduement of power from on high.

Now, of course, I am taking it for granted that we are right with God. I mean that there is no known sin in our lives. To seek the anointing of the Spirit until all sin has been confessed and put out of our lives is simply to pound with our fists against a stone wall. God will neither hear nor answer.

Intense Desire and Thirst

And first of all I am persuaded that without an intense desire and thirst there will be no real blessing. *"I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground"* (Isa. 44:3).

There must be a genuine thirst! (John 7:37-39). The ground must realize that it is parched and dry. As long as we are satisfied with our present condition – God will not give us more. But, *"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled"* (Matt. 5:6). *"Ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart"* (Jer. 29:13).

As long as I feel that I can somehow or other get on without this power from on high, just so long will God allow me to continue as I am. But as soon as I refuse to be denied (Gen. 32:24-28; Matt. 11:12; Luke 11:1-13) – just so soon will He satisfy the hunger and thirst of my heart. Self-sufficiency is the great obstacle! Men have been known to shut themselves in their rooms and refuse to come out or to eat until God met them, so intense has been the desire.

Am I hungry? Do I want the power of the Spirit more than anything else in the world? Am I earnest about it? Is there a real thirst? Would I be willing to part with all I possess – if only I might be a Spirit-anointed worker? How great is my hunger? How strong my desire?

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"And when they had prayed...they were all filled with the Holy Spirit"(Acts 4:31).

Earnest Prayer

The second great prerequisite is earnest prayer. So far as I have read the biographies of God's anointed men, they have come from their knees with the power of God resting upon them, and the fire of the Holy Spirit burning in their souls. I am perfectly confident that the man who does not spend hours alone with God, will never know the anointing of the Holy Spirit. The world must be left outside until God alone fills the vision!

"These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication...and suddenly...they were all filled with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 1:14; 2:2, 4). *"And when they had prayed...they were all filled with the Holy Ghost"* (Acts 4:31). *"Peter and John...prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost...and they received the Holy Ghost"* (Acts 8:14-17).

Tarry in prayer, earnest, expectant, persevering, united. As someone has well said: "Tarry at the promise till God meets you there!" God has promised to answer prayer! It is not that He is unwilling; for the fact is He is more willing to give than we are to receive, more anxious to fill us with the Holy Spirit than we are to be filled. But the trouble is, we are not ready! And only as we wait before Him in prayer can He talk to us, prepare our hearts, and get us ready to receive His glorious power.

Expectant Faith

Then, in the last place, there will of course be an expectant faith. Everything we receive comes in response to faith. Now there are those who teach that we are simply to "claim" from God, and rise, believing we have received. Such can be presumptuous faith, which in reality is not faith at all.

Receiving by faith means getting an answer! "Taking" by faith does not mean "going without" by faith. Real faith always brings a real experience! It is our privilege to tarry before the Lord – until the deepest longings and desires of our hearts are satisfied.

In Colossians 4:12 we read: *"Epaphras ...always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God."* He did not pray once, and then "claim" by faith, perfection and completeness in God's will for them and leave it at that. He laboured fervently in prayers. Note the intensity of his intercessions.

Jesus said: *"Tarry...until."* And so they did not stop praying on the second day and simply "claim" the promised gift of the Holy Ghost by faith; but they continued (Acts 1:14; Acts 2:1-7) in prayer "until" they got the answer. To tarry "until" is very different from "claiming" or "taking" by faith, so called.

An Example for Us

Elijah did not pray and then "claim" the promised showers. He bowed once, twice, thrice. Yea, he wrestled. He travailed. Seven times he pled, pled, "until" the cloud appeared. He tarried

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UNTIL his faith prevailed – and then the rain came! (See James 5:17-18; 1 Kings 18:42-45).

When the early church prayed for Peter's release from prison – they never thought of asking, claiming, taking, rising and going! But they tarried through the night – determined to get an answer. Yes, they tarried until Peter knocked at the door! (See Acts 12:5-14).

And so with every great revival. Someone tarried, waited, wrestled, travailed "until" he prevailed with God, and the Spirit was poured out as floods on the dry ground! (See Isaiah 44:3). And so with the Holy Spirit. The men who have worked in the anointing and power of the Holy Spirit, at some time or other in their lives – waited alone with God UNTIL they were endued with power from on high.

– From an earlier *Herald of His Coming*.

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