

# **Welcoming Travailing Prayer**

*The Burden Leads to Travail*

## **I. Why the Need**

### **1. A true expression of a church for the end times must facilitate golden altar prayer that includes travailing prayer.**

- I received a word from a man a few weeks ago saying that he felt the Lord was saying to me to dream again. At first, I thought he had missed it; but, later through some circumstances, I realized the word was correct. The Lord was calling me to refresh some dreams from the past.
- I won't go into detail now because it doesn't fit into the theme of this message, but a part of the dream is to create end-time mission bases here at RLC, at key Lifeschool mentor areas (either cities or local churches), and wherever else the Lord opens up opportunities.
- The reason I mention this here is that I sense that these mission bases must include at least the following dimensions: 1) training of end-time messengers, 2) the fulfilling of the Great Commission of Matthew 22, 3) the multiplication of master builders who will build similar type of mission bases, 4) fervent prayer that will ascend to the golden altar, and 5) a deep sense of community around these objectives.
- As you notice, fervent golden altar prayer is an essential ingredient to any expression of an end-time church. Therefore, if we are to build a church for the end times which we are to do, we must facilitate golden altar prayer—and along with doing this, we must facilitate prayer that welcomes and administers travailing prayer.
- Therefore, this session and the next are intended to help us understand, welcome, and administer travailing prayer that will ascend to the golden altar. Let me be clear. Not all prayer ascends to the golden altar and not all travailing prayer ascends to the golden altar. While we understand that travail can be for many purposes, what we are focused on currently at RLC is travailing prayer that will ascend to the golden altar.

### **2. Travail is a crucial element of prayer in the end times.**

- We see travail clearly in Revelation 12:1-2. It reads, "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: and she being with child cried, *travailing in birth*, and pained to be delivered (Rev 12:1-2, KJV). The woman representative of the end-time church must travail in prayer to birth the man-child described in verse 5 who will be used to activate the casting down of the dragon from the second heaven.
- We see this same event in picture form through the life of Hannah. Hannah who is a picture of the church who is barren but desperate for change to come to the

church and the land travails and through her travail births Samuel who is referred to in the King James Version as a "man-child". Let's read it in the New American Standard Version, "She, greatly distressed, prayed to the LORD and wept bitterly. She made a vow and said, "O LORD of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a son, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and a razor shall never come on his head."

- When Terry Bennett was helping us understand travail, he said that the reason God is restoring travail on a wider scale right now is that it is a tool that the church will really need in the end times. In other words, it is a sign that we are living in the end times.
- We reached the conclusion as we describe in the following section that it is a needed ingredient for our prayer ministry.

### **3. Over the last year, we have reached the conclusion that it is essential that RLC welcome and learn to move in travailing prayer.**

- About two years ago, over the Christmas holidays, I did a study to really learn for myself about the man-child. My basic question was, "Who is the man-child, Jesus or the overcoming church. I did not want to believe that the overcoming church is the man-child because Noel taught it or as I later found out because Terry believes it. After studying it for about two weeks, I reached my personal conclusion that the overcoming church is the man-child of Revelation 12.
- As I did my study, another conclusion I reached was that the man-child will not emerge apart from prayer for it to come forth. Because of this, I sensed that Donna was to start a ladies prayer group focused on the topic of birthing the man-child. They did this meeting every other week and had some powerful times of intercession for the man-child to come forth.
- Then in July of 2015, Terry Bennett visited our church and relayed an encounter in which the same angel who had come to Hannah was relaying a summons from the Lord for us to come before the golden altar as recorded in Revelation 8:1-5 in our intercession.
- Even with this call, we were not yet moving in travail. However, shortly after this, Donna and others in her group were beginning to experience travail as part of their prayers.
- After the angelic summons to the golden altar, I wrote a prayer guide called summoned to the golden altar. We will study this later this year as part of our discipleship groups. One of the sessions in this study guide is "Travailing to Birth Overcomers".
- Then in Kenya in 2016 at our Lifeschool leaders meeting, I experienced travail for the first time and through that experience saw how important it is as a dimension of golden altar prayer and, more specifically, prayer to birth the man-child.
- Then, in May 2016 when Terry and Donna Bennett were at RLC, in a discussion with leadership, Terry and Donna explained travailing prayer to us in a much more detailed way and also shared with us how it came to their church about 3 or

4 years ago. Terry said based on the experience at their church that it started as an “ugly duckling but over time was transformed into a beautiful swan”.

#### **4. If we will understand it and welcome it, God will release it.**

- Because of this journey the Lord has had us on for about 3 years now, we know for certain that we too are called to travailing prayer as one of the tools of our Golden Altar Prayer ministry and that as a church we must grow in understanding of it and welcome it.
- The Lord spoke to us about this even just recently through an encounter Trice had during one of our golden altar prayer times. Here is her account of the encounter,

On May 18, 2016, during the middle of prayer time I saw a hand holding a basket drop down from the ceiling to the front of the church. I couldn't tell if it was just a hand or the hand of an angel. I feel that it was an angel holding the basket. It was reaching down from heaven. As the basket was being placed on the alter I heard the words Birthing Basket. But when I looked closer to see a baby there wasn't a baby in the basket. During the prayer time I was experiencing a lot of lower back pain very similar to that of back labor. I feel that the Lord is preparing us for the birth and the birthing basket is a symbol and in the basket the Lord has given us the tools to birth the baby. I feel that the basket is not complete yet and more tools are to come.

- Thus, this is the purpose of this and the next teaching—to help us understand it, welcome it, grow in it, and properly administer it.

## **II. Understanding Travail**

### **1. Jesus travailed.**

- True travail is so rare in the western church that many of us think of it as a fleshly manifestation of someone seeking attention rather than something called for and even encouraged in the scriptures.
- In the garden of Gethsemene, Jesus travailed in fervent prayer. It is recorded as follows, “And He came out and proceeded as was His custom to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples also followed Him. When He arrived at the place, He said to them, ‘Pray that you may not enter into temptation. And He withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and began to pray, saying, ‘Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Yours be done.’ Now an angel from heaven appeared to Him, strengthening Him. And being in agony He was praying very fervently; and His sweat became like drops of blood, falling down upon the ground” (Luke 22:39-44, NKJV).
- Jesus was also in travail as he raised Lazarus from the dead, “Then, when Mary came where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying to Him, ‘Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.’ Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. And He said, ‘Where have you laid him?’

They said to Him, 'Lord, come and see.' Jesus wept...Then Jesus, again groaning in Himself, came to the tomb (John 11:32-38, NKJV).

- Jesus travailed on the cross, the result of his travail being the justification offered to the world, "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities (Isa. 53:11, KJV).

## **2. The Bible presents many instances of the people of God travailing in fervent prayer.**

- Daniel travailed in prayer. Daniel 7:15 reads, "I, Daniel, was grieved in my spirit within my body, and the visions of my head troubled me." He was in prayer when he had these visions that grieved him greatly. It is also written of him, "In those days, I, Daniel, had been mourning for three entire weeks" (Dan. 10:2). The Hebrew word translated is used of lamenting or mourning. The English word lament carries the meaning of a passionate expression of grief or sorrow. The Hebrew word was a common word in the Old Testament scriptures and used of mourning over someone who died but also mourning over sin (Ezra 10:6; Isa. 3:26 and 24:4).
- As we noted earlier, Hannah travailed to birth Samuel. The scriptures record allegorically of Rachael travailing because of Judah going into captivity and later in the New Testament of Herod killing the young ones, "Thus says the LORD, 'A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping. Rachel is weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are no more' (Jer 31:15; also referenced in Matt. 2:18).
- Paul wrote about how he travailed for the church, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you" (Gal. 4:19).

## **3. Jesus called the church to travailing prayer.**

- Jesus called His church to travail. As He was preparing His disciples for His going to the cross, He told them that they would travail. He said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; you will grieve, but your grief will be turned into joy. Whenever a woman is in labor she has pain, because her hour has come; but when she gives birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy that a child has been born into the world. Therefore you too have grief now; but I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice, and no one will take your joy away from you (John 16:20-22).
- Therefore, even though it is little understood in the majority of today's church, it was a common practice in the scriptures and is something that God is re-introducing to those who want to be used in the end times as part of the end-time church as they offer prayer which will ascend to the golden altar.

## **4. Let's now attempt to define travail.**

- Travail is a spiritual response to a deep prayer burden initiated by the Holy Spirit that manifests in uncontrollable weeping, wailing, pain like in childbirth, moaning, groaning, expressions of grief and sorrow, or similar types of manifestations.

- Travail is a manifestation orchestrated by the Holy Spirit to express and release the Lord's burden over a situation. Travail begins with a burden given to us by the Lord that grows and builds up so that it can be contained within us no longer and must be released. In essence, travailing prayer is when we weep and cry over something the Holy Spirit is grieved about. It takes place when we experience the burden and grief of the Lord over a situation and allow the Holy Spirit to express His burden through us in prayer. Travail is yielding to the sorrow of God's heart over a situation so as to partner with Him to see the solution come.
- Jim Goll defines travail this way. As it is in the natural, so it is in the spiritual. Travail is a form of intense intercession given by the Holy Spirit whereby an individual or group is gripped by something that grips God's heart. The individual or group labors with Him for an opening (in a spiritual way like during labor the birth canal is opened so that the baby can be born) to be created so that the new life can come forth.<sup>1</sup>

Romans 8 describes this very precisely, "In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God" (Rom. 8:26-27).

- Summarizing, travail is what often emerges from a true burden of the Lord and can manifest in several ways ranging from a sense of depression over an issue to uncontrollable weeping to manifestations similar to a woman giving birth to a child.

### **III. Birthing and Breaking Through Barrenness**

#### **1. Travail is prayer that births something new or births a break through in a situation or burden the Lord has about something.**

- Like Paul said, he was in labor travailing until Christ was formed in the lives of believers. Paul connects travail to birthing something in the spirit realm. We observe a similar thought in Isaiah, "As soon as Zion travailed, she also brought forth her sons" (Isa. 66:8).
- God is a God of new things, and new things must be conceived, carried unto labor, and birthed through labor. The church spends a lot of time trying to re-create old things and going back to old things. God wants to birth a new solution to the problems we face.
- When the Hebrew children had been in slavery for 400 years, God's solution was a baby. In the days of a corrupt priesthood, God birthed Samuel as His solution. When the fullness of time came, God's solution was the baby Jesus. God's solution to the great need of a generation is to birth something.

#### **2. Travail is the final step in the birthing process.**

- Putting spiritual travail in the context of overall prayer, there seems to be four aspects to prayer that ultimately results in travail.
  - First, there is a realization of barrenness or a deep desire for a solution to a problem.
  - Second, there is the conception of the solution that comes from an intimate relationship with Jesus. In this phase, God gives the promise of the solution to which you are called.
  - Third, there is a nurturing of the promise as we carry the baby deep within our heart.
  - Fourth, there is the labor or travail that births God's solution to a problem or barrenness in the land.
- How does travail fit into this process? Travail takes place after you have carried something in your heart for a period of time, but it comes on you suddenly. It is preceded by nurturing the promise; later the strategic time comes to push that promise forth through the prayer canal. The prayer of travail is God desiring to create an "opening" to bring forth a measure of life or growth. If the "opening" was already in place, there would not be the need for travail. Just as the "opening" of the natural womb is enlarged to bring forth the baby, so travail creates an "opening" or "way," whereas before the opening or way was closed. With travail, there is always a way opened for life, newness, change, or growth.
- We observe this process clearly in the life of Elijah. He received the call to bring breakthrough from the Lord in a time of drought and barrenness in the land. He carried the promise for three and a half years separated unto God in the wilderness. He then confronted the evil in the land in the great confrontation with the prophets of Baal and Asherah. But even though he had a dramatic victory, he still had to travail for the breakthrough. The story reads as follows,
 

Now Elijah said to Ahab, "Go up, eat and drink; for there is the sound of the roar of a heavy shower." So Ahab went up to eat and drink. But Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he crouched down on the earth and put his face between his knees. 43 He said to his servant, "Go up now, look toward the sea." So he went up and looked and said, "There is nothing." And he said, "Go back" seven times (1 Kings 18:41-43).
- Elijah had to get in the birthing position of that day and labor, travailing seven times in this case until he had sufficiently labored for the baby (the solution) to be birthed. With his travail, the final answer came and the rain came once again on the land.
- God uses travail to breakthrough barrenness and He wants us to welcome and grow in the ministry of travail.

#### **IV. Receiving the Burden of the Lord**

## **1. God is saying to us to welcome, nurture, and move in true Spirit empowered travail.**

- There is no doubt in my mind that the Lord is calling us to embrace travail like never before. But before travail will come upon us in a widespread measure we must have a burden for what God wants for His people in our day.
- God is in a mood of confrontation toward His church. The church is a real mess right now. Most of the church is way off track from its eternal purpose and the call God has for it. The world is in chaos drifting far, far from God.
- The church is in great compromise. In our class, Building a church for the end times, we list five approaches to church life and five end time approaches that are keeping the church from being what it needs to be. Briefly, the approaches to church life are: 1) the traditional church, 2) the seeker sensitive church, 3) the hyper-grace church, 4) the health-wealth church, and 5) the messianic movement.
- The common approaches to the end time eschatology which are hindering the church from being made ready are: 1) replacement theology so that all of the end time references to israel are allegorical, 2) preterism, 3) amillennialism, 4) postmillennialism, and 5) pretribulation rapture.

## **2. God's solution is a people made ready who will partner with God in the end times.**

- There are not multiple solutions—not a whatever you feel to do solution. There are not whatever makes you happy solutions. There is one solution. A church who becomes an exact representation of Christ in the earth by being conformed in fullness to His image.
- It is not about healing, prosperity, comprising grace for sin, or seeker sensitivity. It is about being made ready as a bride for Jesus.

## **3. Until we get the burden of this, we will not move in any significant way in true travail.**

- Therefore, we must ask God for and be ready to receive the true burden that the Lord has for His church right now—to become and desire for others to become those people who will exactly represent Christ in the earth.
- As we take on this burden, we will much more greatly see the barrenness in the land and we will pray and we will travail with a burden so overwhelming that the only relief will be to birth God's solution.
- Let it come, Lord. Give us Your overwhelming burden for the state of the church.

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.elijahlist.com/words/display\\_word/2791](http://www.elijahlist.com/words/display_word/2791)