

# FIRESTARTERS 5

## PRAYER TOOL

Igniting Prayer for Revival in our City • 5 Minutes to Read • 5 Minutes in Prayer

**FOR THE WEEK OF Sept 13th - 19th, 2020 - Vol 20**

### THEME VERSE:

*The end of all things is near.  
Therefore be alert and of sober mind so that you may pray.*

**1 Peter 4:7**

### THE GOD OF REVIVAL:

#### Revival at Nineveh in 759 B.C. (Jonah 1-4)

There have been many dominant empires in history that have wielded control over the region of today's Middle East. One such empire was the Assyrian empire that was infamous for its extreme violence and cruelty in war. Its kings were arrogant, and its cities were full of idolatry. During the 8th century B.C., one of Assyria's grandest cities was Nineveh, known as a great city with tremendous walls and boasting a population of at least 120,000 people.

In 759 B.C., the northern kingdom of Israel was all too familiar with this rogue nation. Israel's king Jereboam II was able to expand his nation's territory for a time, but many Jews still despised Assyria for its violent and pagan ways. One day, a prophet of the Lord, named Jonah, heard God's command to go from Israel to Nineveh to preach God's judgment over them. God had seen the great evil in that city and was planning to overturn it. Strangely, Jonah decided to disobey God. Nineveh was located 500 miles east from where Jonah was. He opted to board a ship destined for Tarshish, a port that lay more than 2000 miles west. Jonah was doing all he could to get as far away from Nineveh as possible.

While traveling to Tarshish, the Lord sent a furious storm to assail the ship. The ship's captain and its sailors were desperate and they cried out to their gods. The storm stopped only after the sailors reluctantly did as Jonah instructed them and tossed him overboard, since Jonah knew that he was the reason for the storm. God then sent a large fish to swallow Jonah and rescue him from drowning. After Jonah repented of his disobedience, God had the fish spit up Jonah on the shores of Israel. Jonah then made the month-long journey to Nineveh as God commanded.

When he arrived at Nineveh, Jonah preached to a potentially very hostile crowd that in 40 days God would completely destroy this city. Uncharacteristically, the city's residents put on sackcloth and began to fast and to humble themselves. The King of Nineveh himself issued a call for everyone to grieve over their sins, to urgently call out to God, and to stop doing evil. God responded with compassion by withholding His judgment on the city. The city of Nineveh was spared.

In a very short span of time, all the Ninevites from the king all the way down to the least of its citizens repented and ended up humbly calling on God to show them mercy. Looking back, what caused this unusual revival to take place? What caused this cruel and evil population to repent of their sins and to call upon the one true God? It turns out God had already been giving them warnings. In the 5 or 6 years before Jonah's arrival, God had allowed 2 significant plagues to hit the population. And there had been a total eclipse of the sun. Before Jonah ever set foot in the city, Nineveh was already paying close attention. Jonah likely shared with them how God used a mighty storm and a huge fish to miraculously send him to proclaim this message. God, in His compassion and love for all people, was giving this evil city an opportunity to turn to Him. He was also hoping that Israel would learn a pointed lesson: that they should also have compassion on their enemies and desire to see them saved. In the end, God turned around and sent out a reluctant selfish prophet to revive the hearts of an entire generation of lost people.

### THE GOD WHO ANSWERS PRAYERS:

- Thank God for advances this week in the battle against COVID-19: for new clinical studies showing the effectiveness of vitamin D and other available medicines in significantly improving recovery rates and avoiding serious complications.

## **PRAYER REQUESTS THIS WEEK:**

### FOR THE NEEDS OF THE CITY:

- **CMS TEACHERS AND SCHOOLS.** Let's pray for endurance and encouragement for all teaching staffs and administration. As the adrenaline of the first few weeks begins to fade, may God push back the fatigue that both teachers and students alike feel as they wrestle with making this all work during the pandemic.
- **HEALTHY MARRIAGES.** Pray for God's protection over marriages in our city, as statistics point to a 30% spike in separations and divorces over the past 6 months. Pray that husbands and wives would find new ways to humbly submit to one another in Christ and to lovingly care for each other during this tough season.
- **DAY OF PRAYER ON SEPTEMBER 16th.** Join with CBMC (Christian Business Men Connections) and business leaders across the country on Wednesday, September 16th, 2020, at noon in every time zone as we come together to pray for the nation's businesses and business people. (<https://www.cbmc.com/dayofprayer>)
- **TRUST IN GOD FOR OUR ECONOMY.** Pray the safety and strength of all who are interfacing with co-workers, customers, and suppliers to provide products and services needed by our community – that they would not be anxious for anything, but that they would look to God for protection and peace in the face of COVID-19 concerns. Thank God for those businesses that have reopened and are providing for their employees.
- **HEALTH.** Pray for restoration of good health to our city: for COVID-19's devastation to end. For more vaccines and effective treatments. For God's healing power to touch our cities.

### FOR THE NEEDS OF THE WORLD AND FOR MISSIONS:

- **MINISTRY IN THE PHILIPPINES.** Pray for a missionary couple in the Philippines that runs a Bible School for pastors. Pray against spiritual attack as they just start up again on zoom. Please pray for healing for Linda, who has a bad ear infection and cannot hear. Pray for their computer which has stopped working and their car which is having problems. Pray for wisdom, strength and health as they move forward with the Bible school.
- **MINISTRY IN INDIA.** Pray for our brothers and sisters in India! Persecution against Christians in India rose by over 40 percent in the first half of 2020, despite a three month, nationwide lockdown. Pray for strength and protection against violent mobs who attack Christians, especially pastors and their families.

### FOR LOCAL MINISTRIES AND REVIVAL:

- **LOVE LIFE.** Pray for the powerful long-term impact of the Love Life youth march this past Saturday, as they worshiped and prayed on the streets to support life. Pray also for Ms. Ash, who is a leading proponent of the pro-abortion movement, to encounter Jesus Christ and be transformed in her heart and mind.
- **REVIVAL.** Pray for God to powerfully demonstrate His presence and reality to our city. That there would be a surge of love within our churches: for each other, for our leaders, for the lost around us. May our hearts be inflamed with compassion and boldness to bless those furthest from God.

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