

## **A Revival Prayer (Come Down, O Lord)**

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*Music: Josh Sparkman*

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***"Oh, that You would rend the heavens and come down,  
That the mountains might quake at Your presence—" (Isaiah 64:1)***

In my itinerant preaching ministry, I quickly discovered that our hymnody noticeably lacks songs of revival. Though some exist ("Come, Thou Fount" is my favorite revival hymn), most of us do not readily know many songs of revival. Therefore I desired to contribute to the need for authentic, scriptural songs of renewal and revival.

Isaiah 64 has long fascinated me. It is Isaiah's prayer for the revival of God's people. In his lament, he lays before God the promise to be with His people and then pleads for God to be true to that very promise. Perhaps nothing in the prayer is more gripping than the desperate cry for God to rend the heavens and come down. It is a prayer for God to reveal Himself and unleash His power on behalf of His own. It is also a prayer of repentance for the sin that has long kept God's blessing away.

For nearly a dozen years I tried to write a song from Isaiah 64. I wrestled with numerous and frustrating attempts, but nothing ever seemed to work, and I have several self-rejected lyrics as proof! But one night in November 2018 as I was preparing for bed, a wonderful lyric rushed across my mind. I had not worked on "Isaiah 64 hymn" for such a long time, but suddenly I knew I had something! Bedtime was forgotten as I opened to Isaiah and started crafting lines. Oh! How things flowed that night! I recast Isaiah's prayer for revival while remaining as close as I could to his imagery and cries. Then I added to the chorus the element of Christ as the ultimate answer to revival praying. A couple of hours later I finally had my revival hymn. My text went through some revisions, but the core remains intact from that special night. I wish all my writing went as easily as that!

I had met Josh Sparkman in a church in which I was preaching, and we found our church music philosophies were decidedly similar! And we made plans to write music together. This was our first collaboration. The first time Bryn and I heard his tune, we knew we had something special! Josh's tune spotlights the emotional nature of desperate prayer while making the song readily singable. Good for individual or congregational singing, let us all cry out for God to come down and show us Christ!