



REVIVAL, THE NEED OF THE TIMES

CHAPTER 7

THE ALTERNATIVE TO REVIVAL

“Will You not return and revive us that Your people may rejoice in You? Show us Your lovingkindness, O YHWH, and grant us Your salvation.”
(Psalm 85:6)

THIS IS the heart cry of God’s people who yearn for God to revive and restore true spiritual life to the church. The psalmist here places the onus for revival on the LORD, for ultimately it is only God who can revive. But at the same time, YHWH puts the onus on His people, as we have seen in these articles.

“If I shut up the heavens and there is no rain, or if I command the locust to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among My people, and **My people** who are called by My Name **humble themselves** and **pray**, and **seek My Face** and **turn from their wicked ways**, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and heal their land.” (2 Chronicles 7:13-14)

If we are not willing to fulfil these conditions, then we will not see genuine revival and healing in our lands. We will continue to struggle with our pathetic efforts to win souls and to keep the church together. That is an unacceptable alternative, but we will accept it regardless!

Tell me though; are these conditions so terribly difficult? Are they impossible?

Yes, true, it is very difficult for some of us to humble ourselves; true, it is very difficult for some Christians to pray; true it takes time to seek the Face of the LORD, and some of us just don’t have that type of spare time; and, of course, some of us just don’t want to give up our wicked ways!

We seem to think that because there is an “if” in front of the above conditions, they are all optional. But you know, these are not just Old Covenant commands. They are very much New Covenant:

“... all of you, be submissive to one another, and **clothe yourselves with humility**, for GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE. [Proverbs 3:34]. **HUMBLE yourselves**, then, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your anxiety upon Him, because He cares, *and* is concerned about you.”
(1 Peter 5:5-7)

“**PRAYING** in the Spirit **at all times**, with every prayer and supplication. To this end, keep alert *and watch with all perseverance, interceding for all the set-apart people of God.*” (Ephesians 6:18)

We are to pray with a sense of urgency.

We are to pray believing that it is effectual.

We are to pray persistently.

“**DRAW NEAR to God** and He will draw near to you. **Cleanse your hands, you sinners;** and purify *your* hearts, you double-minded! *Express your* grief *and* distress, mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and *your* joy to heaviness. **Humble yourselves in the Presence of the Master** and He will lift you up.” (James 4:8-10)

“‘The Master knows those who are His,’ and, ‘**Let everyone who names the Name of the Messiah TURN AWAY FROM WICKEDNESS.**’”
(2 Timothy 2:19)

God does not hold out revival as a type of special offer which we are free to accept or refuse as we desire! And it is not offered as a “spiritual spectacular,” or as a boost for the churches’ ailing finances and falling attendance. Revival is not a bonus or a bonanza. It is an essential work of conviction and restoration wherever there is spiritual decline. The purpose of revival is to bring God’s people back to the spiritual state that Yahweh intended for them – to the praise of His glorious Name!

If we have grown cold, lukewarm or carnal in our individual, personal lives, there is no acceptable alternative to revival. The unacceptable alternative for a person, or a church which refuses to be revived, is barrenness, stagnation, and judgment.

When personal revival is refused, the possibility of wider revival is hindered. To refuse revival in one’s life or assembly, is to grieve and quench the Spirit, and this must provoke the discipline or judgment of the LORD.

“**The Lord shall judge His people.**” (Hebrews 10:30)

“**My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of YHWH, the LORD, nor lose heart when you are rebuked and corrected by Him; for YHWH disciplines those He loves.**” (Proverbs 3:11-12. Hebrews 12:5-6)

We do not like to accept the possibility of judgment for believers. Unbelievers, we know, will all stand at the Great White Throne. But for believers we read, “There is no condemnation for those who are in the Messiah, Y’shua.” And yet the Scripture clearly says ...

“It is time for judgment to begin with the household of God.”

(1 Peter 4:17)

There is a discipline here and now; and there’s the *Bema* - the Judgment Seat of Christ - ahead, for believers! Certainly there is a vast difference between the **Judgment Seat**, and the fearful **Great White Throne**.

The Bema - the Judgment Seat, is an evaluation time when every believer will give account of himself. The works believers have done as believers, will be tested as to

what sort they are – spiritual or carnal. It is the time when the believer will receive his rewards for faithfulness, but he will also suffer loss because of the carnality of his life; it will be burned up. Obedience and faithfulness will be standards used for this evaluation.

“If any man’s work abides which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.”

(Romans 14:12. See also 2 Cor. 5:10, I Cor. 3:13, 15)

This is the coming accounting day for every one of us who are saved.

The unbeliever, however, has no rewards, and he will be judged and sentenced because of his rejection of the pardon offered to Him which has been provided through the Messiah’s sacrifice. And so he will reap the wages of his sin - death.

THE MINISTRY OF DISCIPLINE

The Lord Jesus disciplines His people constantly.

In Revelation 1 to 3 we see the Saviour walking in the midst of the seven churches of Asia Minor. He is presented there as the One whose eyes are like a flame of fire, and His feet are like fine brass – this symbolises His searching and penetrating judgment, and the divine firmness with which He judges evil in His church.

In the seventh message, the Master declares, **“As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten.”** (Rev. 3:19). Here is the reason for the disciplinary judgment of believers. God’s love! God did not plan for us, and provide redemption at the cost of the life of His Beloved, so that we might spend our crucial training years playing with sin, compromising with the world, pleasing self, and feeding a carnal life.

If redemption and being born into God’s family were the end goal, we might expect to escape chastening. But God’s intention is that we go deeper into His life, that we should rise higher in His grace and faith, and that we should reach out to other souls who also need salvation. We are to grow, to become strong in the Lord, and mature in His ways and work.

No wonder then that our complacency (lukewarmness) is sickening to the Saviour! No wonder that God allows trials to shake us! No wonder the spiritual conflict within us is strong. And it’s no wonder Y’shua the Messiah says;

“If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.” (Luke 9:23)

We are not on a picnic, brethren; we are on a pilgrim pathway, and that pathway involves warfare, as well as training in righteousness and Godliness.

It is the Father’s purpose that all His children should grow to maturity, to be conformed to the image of His only begotten Son, and to participate ever more fully in His life, His character, and His authority, and His joy.

When spiritual decline sets in, however, grieving the spirit, hindering God’s purpose, and dishonoring His Name, the Father’s love and purpose compels Him to minister to that soul or church - to minister in rebuke and in comfort, in chastisement and discipline, in breaking and in building up. He will use the means He knows is best in each life and circumstance. He may use joy; He may use sorrow and sickness, trials or tragedy. He may use ecstasy, but He may use emptiness. He may even use

depression and despair to bring a believer to the end of himself, and then revive and rectify his life.

It may be possible, however, that even after such a divine ministry, the believer continues to resist and grieve the Spirit of God. The result will be barrenness, stagnation and constant carnality. It could then come to a state where the Lord fulfils His warning;

“I will remove your candlestick out of its place.” (Revelation. 2:5)

The believer’s witness will dry up, and he will become like a dead man. Instead of being a vessel of usefulness and honour, he will become a vessel of dishonour.

“Now in a large house there are not only gold and silver vessels, but also *vessels* of wood and of earthenware, and some *are* for honour and some *are* for dishonour. Therefore, if a man cleanses himself from these *things*, he will be a vessel for honour, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work.” (2 Timothy 2:20-21)

In these crucial endtimes, may the Master find amongst us many whose lives He can touch and revive. May He graciously minister to our needs, and make us vessels of honour; vessels into which He may pour torrents of Living Water that will overflow to the many perishing souls around us.

“Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Master, Y’shua Messiah. Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass.” (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24). Amen!!

END OF PRESENT SERIES

