

Series: The Revival God Gives

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Series: The Revival God Gives:

I. The Revival We Need

The Principle of the Revival Israel Had to Have

First reading-Habakkuk 3:1-2, 16-19. A study of the book of Habakkuk shows that Israel was under judgement of God and needed awakening. The awakening would have to come through judgement. At first the prophet protests and then he not only welcomes the judgement, but demands it. He will have no peace until it happens and God revives Israel.

What is Revival?

The Hebrew verb *chayya* means 'to have life', 'to remain alive', 'to sustain life', and as the uses shown here 'to make live', 'to awaken from a death state, or a state of inertia'.

I kill and I *make alive*. Deuteronomy 32:39.

The Lord kills and *brings to life*. I Samuel 2:6.

But when they had told him [Jacob] all the words of Joseph . . . the spirit of their father Jacob *revived*. Genesis 45:27 .

. . . shall I now die of thirst? . . . and when he drank the spirit returned and *he revived*. Judges 15:18-19.

the soul of the child came into him again and he *revived* . . . and Elijah said, 'See, your son *lives*.' I Kings 17:22-23.

and as soon as the man touched the bones of Elijah, he *revived*, and stood on his feet. II Kings 13:21.

Will they *revive* the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish, and burned ones at that? Nehemiah 4:2.

Revival, then, is making life afresh. First there is life, and then there is reenlifying, a bringing back to the norm of living. We can say there *is vival*, i.e. life given by God; then there *is devival*, a dying away from that life, and-as God acts-revival which is awakening afresh to true life.

The Revival We Don't Need

When it is seen that there is inertia in church, and moral decline in the land we do not need human ways of trying to revive the church, ourselves, and our society. We should not seek to induce revival, effect a sort of life by 'hype', or by panic methods of promotion, or use of entrepreneurial methods. Such human stimulation will not succeed and will further complicate our situation.

The Revival We Do Need

in history we have had various 'awakenings'. The church had often gone into 'dark tunnels'. Whilst there has always been a faithful remnant, many influences had dimmed the proclamation of the gospel, and true practice of biblical faith. This was always in danger of happening in the early church. See Jude 3, 'I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints'; Titus 1:5 'This is why I left you in Crete, that you might amend what was defective.'

There have been the awakenings of the Reformation of the 15th. and 16th. centuries, the Puritan revivals of the 17th. century, the great Evangelical Awakening of the 18th. century, the mid-19th century revivals in Britain and North America, and the following modern missionary movement which began in that century and spilled over into the 20th century, from which also have resulted revivals in third-world countries. Today revivals are being felt in lands formerly under Communist rule.

The Revival Needed in the First Century

A study of Revelation chapters two and three show us the state of the church at the end of the first century. Only two of the seven churches to which Christ wrote received commendation. Other churches were rebuked. These are the rebukes,

Ephesus. 2:4, But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. 2:5 Remember then from what you have fallen, repent and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.

Pergemum. 2:14 But I have a few things against you: you have some there who hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, that they might eat food sacrificed to idols and practice immorality. 2:15 So you also have some who hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans. 2:16 Repent then. If not, I will come to you soon and war against them with the sword of my mouth.

Thyatira. 2:20 But I have this against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess and is teaching and beguiling my servants to practice immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols. 2:21 I gave her time to repent, but she refuses to repent of her immorality. 2:22 Behold, I will throw her on a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her I will throw into **great tribulation**, unless they repent of her doings; 2:23 and I will strike her children dead. And all the churches shall know that I am he who searches mind and heart, and I will give to each of you as your works deserve.

Sardis. "I know your works; you have the name of being alive, and you are dead. 3:2 Awake, and strengthen what remains and is on the point of death, for I have not found your works perfect in the sight of my God. 3:3 Remember then what you received and heard; keep that, and repent. If you will not awake, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come upon you.

Laodicea. 3:15 "I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were cold or hot! 3:16 So, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth. 3:17 For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing; not knowing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. 3:18 Therefore I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, that you may be rich, and white garments to clothe you and to keep the shame of your nakedness from being seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, that you may see. 3:19 Those whom I love, I reprove and chasten; so be zealous and repent. 3:20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.

When we look at the condition of the church-the churches of today-we see we are no better, and perhaps even worse off, than the church at the end of the 2nd century. *We need revival!*

Series: The Revival God Gives:

2. Is Revival Biblical?

Is Revival a Doctrine of Scripture?

As we have seen, the word `revival' in the Scriptures is a valid one. It means bringing out of a death state, or awakening out of a state of sleep. What we want to examine now is whether we can talk, as such, of a doctrine of revival being in the bible, in the sense that we can talk of conversion, regeneration, the Trinity-and so on-as being doctrines. Probably we cannot, but to say `No!' outrightly is to miss the fact that God constantly attends to His people, saves them from death, awakens them out of sloth and slumber, and generally keeps them alive to the issues which concern Him and them. In this study we will look at a wider issue, namely living Man dying and then God moving to bring him to life in a remarkable way.

Revival Is Bringing Back to Life that which was Dead

(i) Man created as a living being.

See Genesis 2:7. cf. Genesis 1:26; Genesis 2:18-24; Proverbs 4:23, cf. Jeremiah 2:13. Man's state of life in love, joy, peace, vocation (Gen. 1:28, cf. Psa 8:3ff.).

(ii) Man dies in accordance with the warning of Genesis 2:17.

See Genesis 3:1-24. It is a relational death. See contra. II Corinthians 5:14-15 (iii) Elements of fallen Man's state of death.

See Genesis 6:5, 11; 8:21; Mark 7:20f.; Romans 1:18-32; 3:9-17; Ephesians 2:1-3.

Also I Timothy 1:8-11; 5:6. Man is without true life.

Note: I John 3:10-11 and Hebrews 11:4ff. show us that by grace there were (a) the children and family of God, and (b) the people of faith, the people of God, virtually the same as the children of God.

God Brings His Elect Into Life Through Covenant

(i) The Abrahamic covenant with the patriarchs and Israel was to give them life.

So Leviticus 18:5, 'You shall therefore keep my statutes and my ordinances, by doing which a man shall live; I am the Lord.' See Deuteronomy 30:6. Israel was taken out of the death of Egypt into the life of Canaan.

(ii) The new covenant the Abrahamic covenant fulfilled-was even more to bring life.

See Luke 1:68ff.; John 1:1-4, 14; Luke 2:29-32; John 10:10, 5:24; 11:25, 20:30-31.

Having Been Brought to Life Through Christ and the Spirit the Principle of Revival is Still Necessary

Note: We will deal in our next study with the revival of fallen Man from death.

From the Epistles and the Revelation we see that death was constantly happening in the churches in the forms of heresy, departure from the central truth, wrong practices. So see Galatians 1:6-9; 3:1-6; 5:4; Titus 1:5; Jude 1:3. Especially see Revelation chapters 2-3.

Conclusion: Those under the New Covenant Act Much the Same as Those under the Mosaic Covenant and so Need Revival

Passages such as I Corinthians 10 and Hebrews 3 -4 show us that warnings given to Israel obtain for the church. The warnings against failing to enter the Kingdom of heaven show us that some believers came under a death state: they needed revival.

We conclude, then, that in the sense that we are using the word `revival' it is indeed a clear teaching of the whole bible.

Series: The Revival God Gives:

3. The Greatest Revival in History

THE PROMISE OF SPECIAL REVIVAL TO ISRAEL

The decline of Israel from its full covenantal state could have meant the covenant would have gone on for ever in this deteriorated state, or that there would be ebbs and flows in its history, but God judged Israel's disobedience by the exile, yet promised it something beyond even its immediate restoration to the land. In effects God promised four things.

- (i) the total forgiveness of sins (cf. Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 36:24-28; Jer. 33:8),
- (ii) the restoration of the kingdom to Israel (Ezek. 36:24-28; Ezek. 37:1-14; etc.),
- (iii) the outpouring of the Spirit on Israel, and on `all flesh' (Isa. 41:17-18; 43:20-21; 44:3; Ezek. 36:24-28; 37:1-14; Joel 2: 28f., and
- (iv) the accomplishment of the new covenant (Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek16:59-63). All of these were extraordinary promises. They meant the renewal of mankind.

The New Testament Promises of the Outpouring of the Spirit

- (i) John the Baptist's promises `baptism in the Spirit' (Matt. 3:11; John 1:29-31).
- (ii) Jesus' promises of the outpouring and gift of the Spirit (Luke 11:13; John 3:3-6; 7:37-39; John chs. 14-16; cf. 20:19 21. Acts 1:8).

Pentecost-the Greatest Revival in History

In one sense we can say it was the only revival, in terms we mention below, namely that the Spirit the Third Person of the Trinity--came in as clear an event as .Christ the Second Person of the Trinity--came in his incarnation. The *significance* of that coming can be seen in all the prophecies, e.g. the four elements linked with his coming in our first paragraph (above). Two prophecies especially are significant,

- (i) Ezekiel 37:1-14 which speak of `the breath' or `the wind' which are the Spirit, and `the sound of a rushing mighty wind' as in Acts 2, and
- (ii) the prophecy of Joel 2:28f. which is quoted by Peter in Acts 2:14-21.

The Power and Outcome of Pentecost

The Spirit came in order to reveal the work of the Father and the Son (John 16:12-15). The work was

- (a) to show Christ as Lord and so the Saviour from Man's enemies,
- (b) to bring salvation achieved on the Cross and to offer it to the people, and
- (c) to take the message to all nations. So see Acts 1:8; 2:4ff; 8:14-15; 10:34ff. All this meant
- (d) the opening of the Kingdom of God to all nations-whether Israel, Samaria, or the Gentiles.

The Revival of Humanity in Death From Death

We have seen that revival means 'bringing to life out of death', or 'awakening out of sleep'. Seeing the whole of humanity as dead through original sin and dead in trespasses and sins, and unable to restore itself to life, or make authentic life, but as only capable of 'dead works' we see that something extraordinary is needed to bring it to life.

The Holy Spirit, of himself, could not bring humanity to life. Only the work of the Cross can kill fallen sinful humanity, and take it out of death into life by bearing the penal death, purifying the pollution of Man and setting it free from guilt and its judgement. Yet the work of Christ's Cross and Resurrection cannot of itself bring this to Man. The Holy Spirit's work is to do this. We see,

- (i) The power of the gospel is 'unto salvation'. The word of the Cross is the power of God. This is because through Christ's atoning work forgiveness and justification come to Man. See Acts 2:38, I John 1:29; 20: 19-23; Acts 10:44; Galatians 3:1-3, 13, 14; Colossians 1:13-14. (ii) This message is communicated by the Holy Spirit, I Corinthians 2:5; I Thessalonians 1:5; I Peter 1:12; Hebrews 2:1 2.
- (iii) So the work of the Cross and Resurrection is applied by the Holy Spirit. Romans 8:2; 8:9-11; II Corinthians 3:17; Titus 3:4-7.

Thus we conclude that the greatest revival in history took place at Pentecost. Calvary was not with a view to Pentecost but Pentecost was with a view to Calvary. Together they constitute the true revival of the human race.

That is why we should always 'live by the Spirit' 'be filled with the Spirit'. 'be aglow with the Spirit' and 'walk in the Spirit'. This Pentecost keeps 'vival' alive and continually present.

Series: The Revival God Gives:

4. The Revival of Love

PENTECOST WAS THE REVIVAL OF LOVE

The key verse to our study is Romans 5:5 because the Spirit floods our heart with love. Therefore Pentecost was the full-tide of love for the human race. See also Romans 15:30; Colossians 1:8 (cf. Eph. 1:15), Galatians 5:22-23-the fruit of the Spirit-all of which is love. We see the actual love poured out at Pentecost in the revelation of the Father and the Son as Christ foretold in John 16:12-15. This would have been a time-wide revelation of the mystery of God (I Cor. 2:6ff.) and so of all God's intention and goal for creation. Whilst the apostolic proclaimers knew 'the wonderful works of God' it was not just a revelation to the mind. Acts 2:42-47, and 4:31-37 show the practical reality of their love, i.e. in the sale of their goods and the 'daily distribution' (6:1). This later manifested itself in the daughter churches as they helped the poor Christians at Jerusalem (cf. Acts 11:27-30; II Cor., chs. 8-9).

The Creational and Covenantal Principle of Love

- (i) Man, created in the image of God.(Gen. 1:26f.), was-and is-a love creature. He must love: he requires love. See I John 3:10-11; Heb. 11Aff.)
- (ii) God loved the patriarchs in covenant and evoked their love. Abraham was 'the friend of God'.
- (iii) Each Israelite in covenant was to (a) love God (Deut. 6:"; 30:6; Psa. 116:1) and (b) to love his neighbour and even the stranger (cf. Lev. 19:17-18).
- (iv) In the new covenant God so loved the world that He gave His only Son up to death for sinful humanity. This love is seen in the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus. It is clearly stated in Romans 5:5-11; 8:32; I John 4:9-10.
- (v) As we saw above the Holy Spirit brought that revelation to the human race, having been present in the work of the Son, and so was able to reveal it to us. See also Romans 8:2; II Corinthians 3:17; Titus 3:4-7. His application of regenerating salvation in our heart has brought love.
- (vii) Now all in the covenant must love God and their fellow creatures-I Corinthians 13:1-4; 16:22; 16:14; I John 2:7ff.; 3:10ff.; 4:19-52.
- (viii) The most powerful thing about love is that the believer dwells in God and God in Him: this is how Divine love is present and active. See John 17:20f.; 14:15-23; I John 4:12, 16; cf. I John 3:24; 4:13.

Our Love Can Die and so We Need Revival

(i) Our love can die-(a) I John 2:14ff.; II Timothy 4:10; Matthew 24:12; cf. II Peter 1:9. See also Christ's letter to the church at Ephesus, Revelation 2:1 7.

(ii) God promises a revival of His love-'I will renew you in my love' (Zeph. 3:17). We are to `stir one another to love (Heb. 10:24) and keep ourselves in the love of God (Jude 20).

When revival comes it is in the outpouring of the Spirit who is powerfully present. Because hearers are especially sensitive to the word of God, they come to know afresh-or for the first time-God as love. The reality of forgiveness and cleansing overwhelms them. They are gripped by love. They are flooded with love. Hence they love in a new way. What is their human love-which is really self-centred, i.e. eros-gives way to Divine love (agape) which now possesses them. Thus the community of Christ becomes deeply loving.

Whilst persons and the community are revived in love it is the Spirit dwelling in them. This makes for a rich and wonderful community.

Note. See the stories in my book *Twice Conquering Love* entitled `Love Fest I', `Love Fest II' and `Love Fest III'. These tell of the rich love that prevails in revival. For other reading see *Liberating Love, Where I Love I Live and Constraining Love*.

Series: The Revival God Gives:

5. God's Judgements and Revival

The Principle of God's Judgements in the Old Testament

We need to look at II Chronicles 7:14 and context to see the way in which God promises to revival His people. This with what we saw in Habakkuk-especially in 1:1-2; 2:2-4; 3:1-17.-of God's judging and punish the nation so that He might utterly revive it, will help to go about (a) praying for revival in the church, and so in our society and (b) praying for God to move in judgement in our own lives so that we will have revival.

II Chronicles 7:14 et al says in essence, 'This temple you have dedicated as the place of My Presence. I will always be here to be your covenant God, but if you go against my covenant I will cause havoc in the land. When this havoc comes and you (i) humble yourselves, (ii) pray, (iii) seek my face, (iv) turn from you wicked ways then I will (i) hear from heaven, and (ii) forgive your sin, and (iii) heal your land. So I will always be in this house of prayer, I will always hear your prayers and 'my eyes and my heart will be here forever'.

The Practical Matter of Judgements and Revival in the Old Testament

The following Scriptures will then be helpful in tracing the matter of judgement and revival: Isaiah 1:2ff; 1:24ff.; 24:1-13; 30:18; Jeremiah 3:11-18; 8:4-7; Isaiah 54: 5-8; Hosea 11:3-9. All of this shows

(i) the state of Israel under the covenant as covenant-breakers, (ii) the prophetic warnings And pronouncements of God regarding judgement and punishment, (iii) the promises of revival of the nation, of the land and of persons, and (iv) the assurance that those who have been God's instruments of judgement to Israel, will receive judgement themselves according to the justice of God.

We draw the conclusion that judgements are healing when received in humility and repentance, and bring angry reaction and on repentance when they are rejected. In this case the blessing they would have received is lost to the impenitent.

The Principles of Judgement and Revival in the New Testament

- (i) All believers are free from condemnation are under continuing grace (Rom. 5:1-2; 8:1-3; Gal. 2:20-21; etc.) but are warned against being deceived into living in an ungodly way (I Cor 6:9; Gal. 5:19-21; 6:7-8; Eph. 5:5).
- (ii) Ananias and Sapphira received judgement (Acts 5:1ff.)

- (iii) None must defile *the new temple of God* under pain of judgement (I Cor. 3:16; cf. I Cor. 6:19f). See also I Peter 2:4-10; Isaiah 56:6-8.
- (iii) Not observing the Lord's Supper-not discerning the body-is visited with sickness and death (I Cor. 11:27-32).
- (iv) Warnings are given against disobedience (I Cor 10:1-13; Hebrews 3:7-4:3).
- (v) Only two of the seven churches in Revelation chapters 2-3 received commendation. The others are rebuked, and we will see later what their sins were. We note that when these churches repent of their wrong-doing and wrong belief that they will be revived.

Conclusion: Judgement and Revival

We must always remember that our judgement has already taken place in the death of Christ Romans 3:24; 8:1-3; Galatians 2:19-20-but *if* we neglect to live obediently under the new covenant the same principle of judgement will take place, the intention of which is that we should be cleansed, know God's forgiveness afresh and so be revived. Such actions of God take place nationally covenantally-with His elect people-and personally, especially with His saints.

Series: The Revival God Gives:

6.Revive Us Lord!

Exhortations and Asking for Revival

We have talked much about revival, and today's Study will seek to see the need for revival at the national, local, church and personal levels. To pray for revival must mean we recognise the need for such an action of God's part. There are two special prayers for revival in the Old Testament, (i) Habakkuk 3:2, (ii) Daniel 9:3-19. Note that these prayers conform with the principles of II Chronicles 7:14. This word to Solomon is based upon the whole matter of covenant.

Prayers for revival are often answered by exhortation to revive, that is, for us to awake and revive, ourselves. If we wait for God to do something we make His sovereignty an excuse for doing nothing but waiting! But see-here-Ezekiel 18:30-32. See the exhortations of Isaiah 52:1-2; Isaiah 60:1-3. There are many such exhortations.

In the New Testament we find different kinds of exhortation such as in Ephesians 5:14 which links with Isaiah 60:1. There are many passages in the Epistles which deplore the states into which people have come in the church. Paul sees obedience to Christ and the power of the Spirit enabling members of the churches to come out of their various states. II Timothy 1:7 is really an exhortation to revival. **I Peter 4:17-19** is also something of an exhortation. Later, we will see more direct exhortations.

Our Nation Needs Reviving

We are on many scores a godless nation-gambling, pornography, inordinate lovers of sport and pleasure, heavy on alcohol and drugs, heavy into immorality of many forms, sexual deviancy, with little regard for the Sabbath, and a people of heavy materialism. 'Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people'. 'Where there is no vision [prophecy] the people cast off restraint [perish]'. (Prov. 14:34; 29:18).

Note: Revivals often come when nations are in great moral and social trouble.

Our Church Needs Reviving

The Scriptures are often subjected to critical examination and assessed according to current psychological and social values and mores. People look to the church to give them something and under pressure managerial, promotional and entertainment skills are developed. The church has a 'product' which people will 'buy' when it helps them. The nature of the gospel is largely not understood. Many churches lack the courage to discipline or preach with confronting exhortations. The simple but profound things of forgiveness and justification are lost. Psychological skills and therapies are used instead of the gospel itself. The materialism of society and the consumerist mind are prevalent in the churches.

1 Need Reviving

That is, persons need reviving. We can get into 'the drift', lose our fire, turn to love for the world, be influenced by surrounding immorality and materialism. Sin has its own inbuilt deceit (Heb. 3:13£). We can be seduced from the truth (I Cor. 11:1£). We need reviving.

- (i) Galatians 3:1-4. Having begun in the Spirit we can go on in the flesh.
- (ii) I Corinthians 3:1-3; Hebrews 5:14f. Failure to mature; dullness, spiritual stuntedness. Cf. Samson and Elijah.
- (iii) Ephesians 4:11-14. Spiritual sloth and torpor. See Romans 13:11-14; 1 Peter 1:13-17; Ephesians 6:10-18. (iv) I Timothy 1:7. Let us fan up the flame.

Elements of the First Century Church that Called Reviving of the Churches

- (i) Revelation 2:4. The church at Ephesus had abandoned its first love'.
- (ii) 2:14-15. The church at Pergamum was into immorality and the heresy and practice of Nicolaitinism
- (iii) 2:20-23. The church was into immorality, idolatry and false prophecy.
- (iv) 3:1-3. The church had a name that it was love, but it was dead. It needed to awaken (be revived). (v) 3:15-21. The church was lukewarm, wretched, pitiable, poor, blind and naked.

We Need to Pray as Did Habakkuk and Daniel-and Others

We know the power of prayer, of intercession, but we must first be clear in heart and obedient in grace and love. We must awake so far as it is in our power, in response to the commands to awaken, to fan up the fire.

Let us share the need for revival with others, seeking their sharing in prayer and burden for our nation, church and selves.