

S. N. NOV 8, 18 AM

GETTING READY FOR REVIVAL

Habakkuk 3:2

There is an interesting sight that one might have as he stands on the shore and watches the onward march of the ebb and flow of the waves. Each wave is a revival. It rushes forward with haste and with joy and it carries everything before it. Having spent its strength, it recedes only to go back and be brought in by another wave. Now to me that is a picture of revival. A picture of Christianity. The growth of Christianity is (not) always a continuous uniform growth - but it has been in waves. There have been periods of prosperity and periods of decline. And a period at which Christianity seems to be at a great height.

And every movement sometimes may become static and so it is with Christianity. Now this is what Habakkuk prays for - religion was at a low ebb in Israel. The nation had departed from God. Violence was on every hand. The righteous were ridiculed and spurned. The law of the land was ignored. The courts were corrupted. There were social and economic injustice. The poor were depressed. The passions of the people were exploited for gain. And the worship of Jehovah was neglected.

These are the great national sins of all ages. The prophet cried out against them. The prophet today must not over look them. They were the cause of God's (judgements) upon Israel. And they will be the cause of his judgements upon this nation of ours.

In the midst of this materialistic and Godless age, the prophet cried out to God to know if he cared. He wanted to know if God was going to let this state of social, economic, and religious corruption become permanent, And he wanted

to know if God could not do something about it.

Jehovah's answer was quick and terrible. He said, I will work a work in your days which you will not believe though it be told you. And then he followed God's declaration concerning the Chaldeans. That bitter nation which Jehovah had raised up to punish Israel for her sins.

Terrified by the awful judgements which God had pronounced against Israel, the prophet cried, "Oh Lord, my God", "Mine holy one, we shall not die". "Oh Lord, Thou hast ordained them for judgement, oh mighty God thou hast established them for correction".

Now Jehovah's answer was this, ^{2:20} the Lord is in His holy temple. Let all the earth keep silent before him. The prophet then lifted up his voice in prayer, Oh Lord, revive thy works in the midst of the years. In the midst of the years make known the wrath, remember mercy.

The old prophet said, we must have revival and that is literally true. Everything in the American life that is dear to us, all our freedoms so dear to the American heart, the real democracy that is ours, the wonderful blessing that have come to these people -- are the results of the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ. We have those things because our forefathers settled this country looking for a place of worship.

They wrote it on the currency of our nation. They wrote it in the Constitution. It is on the pages of history -- "In God We Trust".

Unless we can have a great awakening, a great tidal wave of revival, and sweep this old country back to God, we are going to live to see the day, and it is not

is dear to our hearts.

We need the kind of revival that will restore to our people the old fashioned fear of God in the human heart. And reverence for the name of God. From the White House on down to the sidewalks of this town we hear God's name used in vain.

We need a revival to stop the tides of sin, lawlessness and ungodliness that is literally swamping our nation and the world.

We need a revival that would change and restore the love of chasity and purity that will put an end to formalism in our churches and make them stations where men are soul winners for God.

2- We need to restore a sin conscienceness to our people. We need a revival that will cause those who call themselves Christians to walk again with God, to separate themselves from the world, and will walk in the old paths and will know the difference between right and wrong.

3- The next thing we need is a vision of God. We need a clear understanding of his world. And this must come from the altar of Heaven. The prophet heard God speak, his soul was a tune to the Heavenly message. And because of the character of the message, which came to him from Jehovah, he was afraid. Now this is a starting place in all revivals. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

Men of all ages have been afraid when they heard God speak. They have responded to his call. When that call has come to them - Noah heard God speak. Abraham heard God speak, and left his Father's house. Moses heard God speak and went out to lead God's people.

God has spoken to us. We have in the Scriptures a revelation of His will. He has told us in his word what the ultimate result of unbelief will be. He told us about the awful judgement - those who refused to repent. The trouble with the world is that it does not want to hear God's word.

Men today do not want to see God or hear him speak. They are set in their hearts to do as they will. They want the world for themselves. They give expressions of their own passions and desires.

The prayer of the prophet should be the prayer of every prophet of God today. God is going to thunder his judgements against wrong doings.

✓ In the second place, the world (needs more) than anything else - REVIVAL. Men today think they have found a remedy for individual, social, national, and world ills. New laws are passed. New forms of government. New constitutions are voted in. All of these contain human error and human nature.

Social conditions will never be right, until the people are right. President Taft put it this way -- "There will never be an honest horse race until there is an honest human race." Moody expressed it in this phrase -- "If you want clear water, it is not enough to paint the pump, you must clean out the well."

The greatest error and terror in the world today is spiritual error. The supreme need of the world at this hour is revival.

This need is evident in the conditions of the present world. It is filled with hatred, bloodshed, violence, plunder, nations are looking at each other

over gun barrels. We have a bewildered world. Men everywhere cry, is there no hope.

To this cry of despair, we must say, there is hope. Henry Watterson, the editor of the Louisville Journal said the future looks dark enough, yet it holds a single hope - one power, and only one power can arrest the decay that has set in toward paganism and that is the Christian religion. The religion that carries you to Calvary. If the world is to be saved, it must be saved by the Christian religion. Not only so, but our land is a Godless land. That needs a religion - a revival of religion. Many evils are working in our midst to destroy the foundation of our peace. There is materialism - the destroyer of spiritual values. There is atheism - the destroyer of faith. There is racialism - the destroyer of brotherhood. There is fear - the destroyer of peace. There is liberalism - the destroyer of sacred conditions. There is lawlessness - the destroyer of civic order. And paganism - the destroyer of Christianity.

We need revival to kill off these giants of evil in our midst. Woodrow Wilson said our land cannot survive materially unless it is redeemed spiritually. It can be saved only by the spirit of Christ and by being made free by that spirit. We need revival to revitalize our church. And to put into it the power and the influence that will bless this land.

Now whether we like to admit it or not, our churches do not hold today the high positions of power and influence that they should hold in the world. This is no criticism of the church, as an institution, the church is divine in its origin. And has a message and a mission for the redemption of the world. Now she must take on the armour of God. We have our church services, our Sunday School, but we must remember that the saving of this world cannot be left to a

few paid workers. And the Lord's minority to win the world to Christ. If the church will accept, this fact, the hungry hearts of men are waiting for bread. Everyone who is acquainted with world conditions knows that the church must serve as an agent of Christ, if they would help a sin-sick world. The means of having a spiritual awakening that will give our church contact with Christ and power with men.

✓ In the third place, there must be prayer. Whatsoever God has wrought in the past through his people and by his mighty power, and in answer to the heart cry of his people - it will be through prayer. My Bible says he can do it again. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

If we are to pray for a revival - we need to begin with ourselves. The preachers, deacons and elders, officers, Sunday School teachers, in fact - the entire church, the rank and file must make an honest confession of sin. Get down on our knees and do some heart searching and pray as the prophet prayed.

Every one of us who names the name of Christ needs the church to face our lives on our knees while God hangs his search light upon us.

By the river in Babylon, we ready in the 9th and 10th chapters, I set my face unto the Lord God. To seek by prayer and supplications with fastings, sackcloth, and ashes. V. 3. Then I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh or wine in my mouth, til three whole weeks were fulfilled. As he prayed unto God. Oh Lord, hear, oh Lord, forgive. Oh Lord, harken and do. Defer not for thine own sack. For thy city and thy people are called by thy name. V. 18. There you can hear the sob and the cry of a broken heart. At a cry like that, God sent down his angel Gabriel. By the side of that man at the river.

We need the kind of praying that Hezekiah did when the host of Sennacherib had surrounded the walls of Jerusalem. And he sent that letter to Hezekiah. You need not trust in your God., these were the people who thought their gods would deliver them. And what has happened to them. The best thing you can do is surrender now and save what you can.

The man of God took that letter and went to the house of God and spread that letter out before the Lord, and said, oh Lord incline thine ear, open thine eyes, and see. Save us from his hand. Isaiah 37:17-20.

And that night in answer to that heart cry an angel of God from Heaven came to a camp of Assyrians and the next morning 185,000 lay dead in the valley.

We need the kind of praying that took place when the church was down on its knees, and prayed until the place was shaken where they were assembled together. They were filled with the holy ghost and they spake the word of God with boldness.

We need the kind of praying when Peter was in prison. Herod had beheaded James and he planned after the feast to bring in Peter and cut off his head. "But prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him." Acts. 12:5. He was loose from his bonds at the midnight hour. The church was still in that prayer meeting.

We need the kind of praying John Knox did when he landed on the shores of his beloved Scotland. In answer to his prayer after being a slave for those years, on a ship, he fell on his face and cried out - Give me Scotland or I die. Scotland from that day to this has been one of the greatest strong holds of

Presbyterians. Why? Because there is still a God in Heaven. It is said that Queen Mary of Scotland, bloody Mary, said that she feared the prayers of John Knox more than all the armies of Scotland.

✓ History records the miracle of the battle of Bannockburn when the armies of England had invaded the Scottish highlands. And their liberties were about to be blotted out. In full view of England's army - those Godly Christians went down on their knees and cried on God for help. And in that day, one of the greatest defeats that ever came to the army of England was administered by a handful of ill-trained, poorly equipped, mountaineers. God answers prayer.

✓ We need prayer like the time 100 years ago.

A young brilliant man from Texas had just graduated from Yale, landed on the shores of Texas where Galveston now is. That man was Rufus Burleson, a giant for God. Highly intellectual man, and a giant spiritually. The young man disappeared from the crowd. There were great sand dunes on the beach of Galveston. And he disappeared behind one of those. From over on the other side of that sand dune a young man cried, Oh God, give me Texas. Give me Texas for Christ. Oh Lord, give me Texas for Christ. We need that kind of praying today. If there was ever a condition, ever a time, or task that was a challenge to God's people to be heart broken in prayer - it is today. If it is not done today it will never be done. What in the world will it take to send us to our knees.

✓ People are saying, we need revival. And this kind of praying is wonderful.

✓ Ann Haseltine Judson when the tribal king in Burma put her husband in a little one room prison down in the valley in an infested place and tied him up by his thumbs so that his feet could barely touch the ground. They left him there for days in agony. That beautiful, cultural, sweet little woman had never dreamed

that life would have anything like that for her. Day by day she knelt outside by that little one room jail while her husband nearly rotted and starved. She would pray and get up from her knees and look through the bars and encourage him by saying Adoniron hold on to God - don't let go.

As the results of these prayers, God interceded. And where the palace of that heathen king stood, in that country it is now dotted with churches of Jesus Christ. There are more than 300,000 Christians in that land. This is the kind of revival that we need. We need to pray.

In the fourth place, our revival will not come by accident or by chance. The old prophet prayed for this revival and it was the result of obedience to the laws of grace. The laws of God.

If there has ever been any question in your mind about the lostness of men or the doom of a sinner, what an awful thing it is for souls to perish, just go back in your mind to the city of Jerusalem and see those three crosses and the one in the middle on which the son of God died.

Revival is the outreach of the church and we can help the world with the Gospel and attempt to lead people. We must be committed to this if we are going to have it.

~~And~~ Christians who do not become a part of the outreach and fellowship, is a short circuit of Christian life. You remember the great space capsule that was completely off course because of the miss function of one tiny part. A few miss directed Christians may ground the spiritual power of the redeemed fellowship. Christian, you are either one who conducts the power of God - or you are one that short circuits it. You open the road - or you are either

The scripture promises he that goeth forth and weeps, bearing precious seed shall doubtless come again, with rejoicing bringing his sheaves with him.

The church must get right with God. Many churches desire revival but they are not willing to pay the price. They want to reach up to Heaven and pull down a spiritual harvest. They want the showers of the Lord to come down upon them. The unsaved men and women to be saved. But so many are short circuiting the whole program.

I read the story of a man once who was riding on the streetcar. It used to run out here in front of our church. And one day a fuse blew out. There was a flash and an explosion. The passengers in the car was excited and crowded toward the door. But the conductor calmed them down, with the assurance that there was no danger that only a fuse had blown out. Which he would fix in a few minutes. When the fuse was being replaced, the man sat in darkness thinking. In the cable above, there was power. Because of the burnt out fuse, the streetcar was dark and still.

What a picture of many a church. Right by the door of the church runs a live wire from Heaven, bringing the power of God. But the church is dark and still. The fuse is burnt out. The power is not getting through some members of the church. Or some group in the church. You must make contact with God and bring in this power.

Every Christian must be a part of making disciples. This should be a burning passion, for you as a Christian. And if we are to save our American way of life, as we call it, we must have this passion.

Revivals in history have accomplished much. And they should tell us of what can be done even today.

In 1795 when Thomas Dwight came to be president of Yale University, almost every student was an atheist or a free thinker.

Limon Beecher, a student there, said the university was in a most ungodly state.

Princeton College, 1792, had only two students who were professed Christians.

Every educational institution was characterized by the same tendencies and attitudes that plagued Yale and Princeton. That which was true of the colleges was also true of the uneducated people. Unbelief and infidelity among the cultured is always accompanied by religious alienation among the uneducated group.

The process of education has been inadequate to meet the spiritual conditions. Evil out ran the forces of good. There came a time when the formal Christianity could not cope with human need. Nothing but a surging tide of revival could cleanse that frontier of human corruption.

Such a revival came to the campus of Yale. Under the leadership of Timothy Dwight, when 75 students out of 230 were converted.

In Logan County, Ky., it was noted for thieves, murderers, there were pitch battles fought between the leaders of the regulators and the lost. But the conditions there as elsewhere grew steadily worse. Then in the summer of (1799) a revival swept over Logan County like a cleansing flood

camp meeting in Burbon County under the revival efforts of Barton W. Stone.
And many hundreds were converted.

Now since those days revivals have been (refined) and under God - we must never denounce them as instruments of good. Religion loses its romance and effectiveness. The people have just a (form) of godliness and devoid of all spiritual races. The only answer is that we must pray down a power packed revival.

We should be able to realize that (no) shallow or superficial thing is going to be the answer. When you think about the power that the Apostle Paul, and the power that Peter had, and the other (unlearned fishermen), you marvel at the wonders. But here is a world that is lost, ruined, undone, and doomed. And we need the holy spirit.

Now I am (not) talking about fanaticism and do not tell me that the Holy Spirit has gone out of business. Or that God has retired. We need to quit alibing and start to think about the kind of revival that we need.

We need to (kindle) the fires for revival. When somebody asked Charles Spurgeon what is the explanation of your success. He said we work.

On (two) ocassions (David Livingston) preached sermons of wonderful power. 500 persons were converted. But both sermons were preceeded by a whole night in prayer.

I read of a revival meeting held in a (warehouse). Everything imaginable interferred with the meeting. They had a county fair on and there was general indifference in the town. But a (few) faithful people, the Lord's minority came.

They spent much time in prayer and searching of hearts. And that little band decided they would get right with God and surrender to the leadership of the Holy Spirit. Because God had promised to come in great power.

They volunteered themselves and band together, for one solid week they prayed without ceasing. Every hour of the day and night some band of devoted Christians prayed. On Sunday the break came. Men and women cried and shouted for joy. Sinners long stooped in unbelief begged for mercy. For many hours the meeting went on in the warehouse. Men got out of their beds at midnight and came to the meeting seeking the Lord. The whole town was transformed. Prayer brought the revival and the blessing.

Many times pastors and churches, when they want a revival invite some outstanding minister to hold the meeting. Some distinguished man. And they think that he will reach the unreached. Now it is important to have a good minister of the Gospel to preach. But it is much more important to have the church members filled with the Holy Spirit. I have never known the masses to be drawn into a revival meeting over the spiritually dead body of the church.

Let the members of the church humble themselves in prayer, and seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and go out into the highways after the lost. And if they want the multitudes to follow the church - this will happen.

I remember reading about another little group that gathered together for prayer. And the Spirit of the Lord came in such mighty power that at 2 in the morning, the church was packed with people after the congregation had been dismissed three times. The spirit had led every unsaved person in the congregation to make a profession of faith in Christ. That's the kind of revival we need. And it will not come by accident.

We do not need just a few meetings and a few services. This should not be just an effort to get a few people to join the church. Vastly more important is the great cause -- bringing men to Christ and then sending men out for Christ.

I began talking about that tidal wave - the waves of the ocean coming in. And so this is what we need that will sweep away the habits and customs and will revitalize the members of our church. And create in the hearts of our people the passion for lost souls.

We must kindle the revival fires that will put the Bible into its divine place as the inspired word of God and use it as a trusted guide and daily companion. We need a revival that will make Christ so real to the members of our church, and to His command, that they will go abroad in the task of witnessing.

The prophet said revive thy work in the midst of the years. Will you not join in this same concern.

They tell the story of an old colored preacher who began to long for that in filling of God's power. Being a Methodist he naturally loved the story and in his memory he went back to think about the work of John Wesley. He made a journey across to England. He went to the place where it is said that John Wesley stood. They say there is a bronze tablet marking the spot where John Wesley received that thrilling revolutionizing, God honoring mighty power of God that set him on fire. That made him the giant for God that he was and turned the tide that saved old England, from the thing that drenched France in the blood of the French Revolution. The old negro preacher stood there on that bronze tablet, lifted his black face

up towards heaven, raised his hands, with palms outstretched and with the tears streaming down his cheeks as he thought of the crying need of the people whom he was trying to serve. He cried, "Do it again, Lord, do it again."

I wonder if I could make that the cry of my heart during these days. Oh God, do it again for Jesus Sake, and for the lost city's sake and the lost world. Will you not make this your concern.