

School of Revival Orientation

What is Revival?

Throughout the years of ministries and journeys from valleys to plateaus to mountains, I have embarked on many discourses on revivals, both on its disputes and its contributes. Some would shrug off the idea of revival while some idolize it above everything else thus bringing an imbalanced understanding of scriptures and creating a *rocking* foundation where one tends to slip off either toward one or both extremes.

Now, the Bible holds every stage of our journey from creation onwards and tells every story from Genesis to Revelation that is necessary for our model of living and to make *His story* our stories hence let us examine what the Word says about revivals before we jump into oblivious conclusions or premature ignitions.

There were three stages of reviving or restoring the broken and desolated temple when the exiles returned to Jerusalem; Zerubbabel was instrumental in rebuilding (reviving) the temple (*worship*), Ezra was assigned with reviving the people's character and attitude (*word*) and Nehemiah was commissioned to rebuild (revive) the walls and gates (*work*) hence the Worship, the Word, and the Works were revived and all these are the fundamental blocks of our Christian foundation today, and in revivals.

Ezra revived the people by turning them from idolatrous compromises back to the Word - *And now for a little while grace has been shown from the LORD our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a peg in His holy place, that our God may enlighten our eyes and give us a measure of revival in our bondage. For we were slaves. Yet our God did not forsake us in our bondage; but He extended mercy to us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to revive us, to repair the house of our God, to rebuild its ruins, and to give us a wall in Judah and Jerusalem – Ezra 9:8-9.*

A few underlining principles could be derived from this passage: the Lord poured out His grace and chose a remnant set apart for Himself, the Lord strengthened their pegs (deep-rooted foundations) in His holy Presence, the Lord enlightened their eyes with revelations, the Lord gave them a *measure of revival*. The word 'revival' here in Hebrew is *michyah* which denotes the quickening of the spirit, and the fresh sustenance of living. The purpose of it was *to repair the house of our God, to rebuild its ruins, and to give us a wall in Judah and Jerusalem*. To repair the house of God and rebuild its ruins is to raise up a generation of worshippers who are rooted in sound biblical doctrines and righteousness; to *give us a wall* is to raise up a praise and prayer lifestyle of intercessory *firewalls* and watchtowers to both trade in the courts of God and to keep the enemy out. The rebuilt *firewall* will preserve the ground within the temple courtyard as *fire-grounds*, as fertile and holy ground for God's habitation. Revival or *michyah* is the essence of these possibilities and capabilities!

Besides the passage from Ezra, eighteen more times the word 'revive' is mentioned in the Bible and some of the relevant primary ones are:

You, who have shown me great and severe troubles, shall revive me again, and bring me up again from the depths of the earth - Ps 71:20

Then we will not turn back from You; revive us, and we will call upon Your name - Ps 80:18

Will You not revive us again, that Your people may rejoice in You? - Ps 85:6

For thus says the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: "I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" – Isaiah 57:15

The word 'revive' in all these passages is *chayah* in Hebrew, where *michyah* was derived. *Chayah* simply means to be quickened or stirred up, to be made alive, or to be filled with life. The word *chayah* is associated with the *chay* which first appeared when God breathed His breath into Adam and he became a living being, a *chay nephesh* (Genesis 2:7).

Chayah or *chay* is the essence of a wholesome Spirit-induced and Spirit-filled living hence to be revived is to be both induced and infilled by the Holy Spirit to live a wholesome, complete, and abundant life in the Spirit. No wonder Jesus says He came to give us life, and life more abundantly (John 10:10). In Hebrew, *chay* is also the toast for the good (fruitful) life, and it also means grace. Jesus came to give us *chayah*... gracious abundant good lives and revivals!

In English, the word 'revive' comes from the old French word, 'revivre' to *live again*, which was originally derived from the Latin 'revivere' which means *to be made alive again*. The synonyms for the word *revive* stretch from to activate, set in motion, or take up again; renew; to return to life, consciousness, vigor, strength, or a flourishing condition; resuscitate, rejuvenate; to restore from a depressed, inactive, or unused state; and the inexhaustible list goes on. Taking all these into consideration, not only is revival a biblical doctrine but it is a vital reality that necessitates a spiritually healthy and naturally wholesome life.

Revivals are both the essence and expression of the Isaiah 60 mandate of the Arise and Shine Commission - *Arise, shine; for your light has come! and the glory of the LORD is risen upon you* – Isaiah 60:1. It says that we are to shine when the glory of the Lord is risen over us which in reality is from within us hence it is the life of God in us that releases the light of God through us. John reinstated that in the Gospel - *In Him was life, and the life was the light of men* – John 1:4.

A revival happens when a believer is fully infused with the life of Christ and living the abundant life of that infusion while manifesting that life as a light (diffusion) that shines ever brighter. Revival is about being made alive in Christ and shining as the light of the world as Christ shines - *in Him we live and move and have our being* – Acts 17:28.

Personal revivals begin with brokenness and humility; God needs to *break into* us before He *breakthrough* us for our breakthroughs; God only shapes what He first breaks. Since our basis of life will determine our spiritual, moral, mental, emotional, and physical well-being, a personal revival will reactivate, rejuvenate, renew, refresh, and restore all these aspects of life to us again. All these happen when our hardened hearts and stiff-necked stubborn heads are broken into, that is righteous brokenness.

The peace within us will become the peace without, meaning that what is internal will be manifested externally, hence a personal revival will transcend into an environmental revival that will both affect and impact our immediate surroundings. In other words, a revival in us will be a revival to our family, our workplace, businesses or school, our community, our city, our nation, and our region or spheres of influence.

Revivals begin with the individual, but it does not end there; just as fire couldn't be contained but spread, a well-sustained and stewarded revival will culminate and transcend to our surroundings, awakening cultures and people groups to harken to the voice of God, transforming values and morals, and conforming an entire nation to the administration and establishment of God's kingdom. A total revival is meant to bring the totality of God's kingdom on earth, it changes the spiritual and natural landscapes of cities and nations and transforms the spiritual climate and atmosphere.

A revival will generate and perpetuate reformation and transformation until the full restoration of all things - *Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began* – Acts 3:19-21.

The first admonition in the passage is repentance which simply means to turn from our ways to His ways and it says *times of refreshing* will come. The word for 'refreshing' in Greek is *anapsuxis* which literally means the recovery of breath or to be able to breathe again; figuratively, it means to be revived or be made alive...revival! Therefore, a revival ignites and initiates a reformation process until the restoration of all things takes place.

There have been a few reformations in past church history, but the Final Reformation is the reformation of all the offices/mantles of the Five-fold ministry - *And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ* - Ephesians 4:11-13; and the kingdom apostolic mandate on the shoulder of the Church in making disciples of nations and governments, and the fulness of the manifestation of Christ's glory through the Church in the merging of generations (Malachi 4:6).

For some who do not believe in the Five-fold office, we would suggest you read the text carefully and prayerfully; for the offices are for the equipping and edifying of the Body of Christ until we all come to the unity of faith and the fullness of Christ. These offices as well as the gifts of the Spirit have not ceased as some cessation teachers taught because it is a continuation until we attain unity and fullness in the Body of Christ which we haven't yet. Hopefully, we are not just stagnant *work in progress* but are *progressing in the work* toward unity and fullness. In a related passage, the Bible clearly says that God is the one who has appointed these offices in His church - *And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues* – 1 Corinthians 12:28. If these offices and gifts have ceased to exist then the church should in the relative context, also cease to exist since the offices and gifts are appointed and integrated into the Body of Christ, for the biblical and normal functions of the church. This is part of the reformation, to reform the Church back to its foundational biblical doctrines and principles and conformity to the image of the King (Romans 8:29) and into the kingdom.

Parallel to that, you have the Final Restoration which is God's restoration of all prophetic alignments and promises and His dealings for the nations and the awakening and

revival of national Israel in becoming a messianic nation who will be reconciled to their Messiah. There will be a complete restoration of God's given purpose to fulfill His blueprint for the Church and the nations, a restoration of God-given identities, and the roles/destinies of Christians, individually and corporately. Then, we shall witness a culmination of all past *dispensational* movements of the Holy Spirit into a final outpouring and manifestations, and there will be a complete restoration of gifts and callings being activated in the worldwide Body of Christ. Before the Lord returns, there will be the most unprecedented global awakening of nations and cultures to the reality of God where unprecedented worldwide revivals will sweep the nations. This sets as an invitation for heaven to *invade* earth.

A revival is the movement of the Holy Spirit that has gained momentum from the *sparkling* moments of encounters with God whether through an individual or a corporate assembly. Their moments with God sparked a fire that was continuously fanned into a burning flame as it gained momentum and escalated into movements that became our missions.

The Church will be empowered though some may fall away, to bring and establish the gospel of Christ with power and mighty acts – Psalms 145:11-13; another prominent aspect of this is the rebuilding of the Tabernacle of David where houses of worship and prayer networks will saturate the nations with glory worship and intercession leading to kingdom's interaction and intervention that stirs all men to seek the face of God - *After this I will return and will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will set it up; so that the rest of mankind may seek the LORD* – Acts 15:16-17. A synergy of energy, an emergence, and convergence of global kingdom ministries and global worship aligning to the mandate of the King of Glory! Prayer networks and a kingdom alliance of churches and ministries will arise in unity and power to demonstrate the oneness of the Body of Christ to the world. I saw a vision of a global entwining of the Highway of Holiness (Isaiah 35:8) like intersecting highways and connecting points that connect and ally all kingdom ministries and convert these ministries into apostolic hubs or outposts.

A global kingdom family united in vision and virtues, will arise and become *storehouses* for the end-time harvest, where they no longer serve their own agendas, but they serve the King and His agendas, His kingdom business. These are the full expressions of what revival will be like in its fullness.

Some other aspects of an authentic revival are listed below:

- Revival restores something or someone back to its intended state of creation, its origin of God's blueprint. It nullifies and eradicates the dullness and depravity of life and resurrects the fullness of life again in an individual or situation.
- Revival is a recovery from a state of neglect, oblivion, obscurity, deception, and complacency; it restores truth and passion to the spiritual things of God. It shocks us back to life and repents from apathy and careless living toward God.
- Revival counters spiritual regression and activates spiritual awakening of desires toward God and creates spiritual momentum with potent escalation.
- Revival initiates and intensifies spiritual wars that require daily consecrated living in the battles as the enemies' camp strives to oppose and quench the revival.

- Revival manifests the dynamics and power of the Holy Spirit in unrestrained and unlimited proportions.
- Revival opens portals of heaven and invites a multitude of souls into the kingdom harvest.
- Revival always reveals the reality of God and reveals Christ and the exaltation of Christ and His kingdom.

With all the above, God's ways are still higher than our ways (Isaiah 55:9) so revivals are expandable beyond what we could even dare to imagine - *Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us* – Ephesians 3:20. The Bible says the glory of the latter days are greater than the former – “*The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former,*” says the LORD of hosts – Haggai 2:9.

This means the revivals in these last days will be much greater than previous revivals. All the past revivals since the Day of Pentecost will culminate into the most unprecedented revival or outpouring of all times before the Lord comes. In fact, the Bible says - *And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams. And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; and they shall prophesy. I will show wonders in heaven above and signs in the earth beneath: Blood and fire and vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD* – Acts 2:17-20.

Though this was quoted on the Day of Pentecost and had its partial fulfillment in the early Church but notice it says in the last days that God will *pour out His Spirit on all flesh* (not just the Jews in the early church but believers of every nation). Then, it continues to say that everyone will prophesy and there will be great signs on earth that will make the world wonder and ponder.

Aside from decreeing that the last days' glory is greater than the early temple, Haggai made a prophetic statement - *Is the seed still in the barn? As yet the vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate, and the olive tree have not yielded fruit. But from this day I will bless you* – Haggai 2:19. There is much expository to this passage, in summary, the four different seeds of the vine, figs, pomegranates, and olives which had been kept are now ripe, it is the now time for God to bless it.

These fruits are prophetic; the vine speaks of new wine that is the joy and strength of the Spirit in us, the figs symbolize maturity in and out of seasons, the pomegranates are the fruits or characteristic of the Spirit, and the olive is the anointing. These are all essentials in revivals and the season is now that they will blossom and mature. These are some of the elements of revival that are coming, and we are to prepare ourselves for it. To prepare the way for the Lord is to prepare our hearts, to spiritually enlarge it - *I will run the course of Your commandments, for You shall enlarge my heart* – Psalm 119:32. So, revive us Lord to become Your revivalist!