

THE MINOR PROPHETS

Message Twelve

The Revival Revealed in the Minor Prophets

Scripture Reading: Hab. 3:2a; Hosea 6:2; Joel 2:28-29;
Hag. 1:14a; 2:7a; Mal. 3:1b; 4:2

I. Habakkuk 3:2a speaks of revival—“O Jehovah, revive Your work / In the midst of the years”:

- A. We may say that this matter of revival is the “kernel” within the “shell” of the books of the Minor Prophets.
- B. Among God’s elect there has always been an aspiration to be revived; although we may not realize it, such an aspiration has been within us through all the years of our Christian life—cf. Psa. 80:17-19.
- C. In the eyes of God, one person among His elect represents the whole; God always considers His elect as a corporate Body.
- D. This means that Habakkuk and we are one in the unit of God’s elect; thus, when Habakkuk prayed for revival, we also prayed; such a prayer is an everlasting prayer.
- E. In order to practice the God-ordained and scriptural way to meet and to serve, we need to be revived; this is why the Lord leads us to practice morning revival:
 1. We believers should follow the sunrising to be revived and to have a new beginning every morning; every day we need a “sunrising,” and this sunrising is a revival—Mal. 4:2; Prov. 4:18; Judg. 5:31; Matt. 13:43.
 2. If we experience a daily revival, then we will be living and qualified to practice the God-ordained way and to help the church to take this way.

II. On the one hand, Habakkuk prayed for revival; on the other hand, Hosea spoke of the desolation of the “two days” and the resurrection on the third day—“He will enliven us after two days; / On the third day He will raise us up, / And we will live in His presence”—Hosea 6:2:

- A. With the Lord one day is like a thousand years (2 Pet. 3:8); according to this principle, the two days in Hosea 6:2 may signify the first two periods of a thousand years each, counting from A.D. 70, when the Roman prince Titus destroyed Jerusalem and the temple, cruelly killed thousands of Jews, and scattered the Jews among the nations.

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- B. From that time Israel, our representative, has been desolate; from that time the Jews have been without king, without prince, without sacrifice, and without the temple, fulfilling Hosea's prophecy in 3:4.
- C. For two thousand years God has left Israel in a dead condition, but after this two-thousand-year period the third thousand years will come.
- D. The third day may signify a third period of a thousand years, that is, the millennium, the age of restoration, which will be in the reality of Christ's resurrection (Rev. 20:6); at that time Israel will be raised up, that is, restored.
- E. This principle is the same in our Christian life:
 - 1. After the two days of desolation there is the third day; Christ was resurrected on the third day, and as the pneumatic Christ, the life-giving Spirit, in resurrection, He is the reality of the third day—1 Cor. 15:4, 45; John 11:25.
 - 2. Today we may receive the pneumatic Christ in resurrection and thus enjoy the reality of His resurrection; if we have the resurrected Christ, we are in the morning, the sunrising, and this is a real revival to us.
 - 3. Whenever we contact such a Christ, we are brought from the desolation of the two days to the resurrection of the third day.
- F. The revival revealed in the Minor Prophets can be applied to the family, to the church, to the nations, to the entire human race, and even to the whole universe; in principle, everything and everyone on earth are in the desolation of the two days spoken of in Hosea 6:2:
 - 1. Since the fall of man, there has been in all of creation an aspiration for revival; concerning this, Romans 8:20-22 says, "The creation was made subject to vanity, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will also be freed from the slavery of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans together and travails in pain together until now."
 - 2. As a result of Adam's fall, corruption, slavery, and death have come into the whole creation; today everything is

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decaying and is under the slavery of corruption; all the things that are under this slavery aspire to be revived—cf. 2 Cor. 4:16.

- G. The universal need for revival, for restoration, can be met only by Christ and in Christ; only Christ, who was resurrected on the third day, is the renewing power:
 - 1. For the whole universe and for all mankind, Christ is the resurrection, the reality of the third day; the reality of the third day is the person of the resurrected Christ with the reality of revival.
 - 2. Christ, therefore, is the element of the revival for which all creation aspires; the corruption and desolation can be swallowed up only by the resurrected Christ.
- H. The way to experience revival is to contact Christ by repenting and confessing our sins, failures, and darkness, thereby entering into Him as the resurrection; by doing this, we are brought from the desolation of the two days to Christ as the reality of the third day; the third day is nothing other than the person of the resurrected Christ with the reality of revival.

III. Joel 2:28 and 29 speak of the outpouring of the Spirit:

- A. Every day we need the outpouring of the all-inclusive, consummated, compound, life-giving Spirit as the processed and consummated Triune God.
- B. This Spirit includes Christ's divinity and humanity, the effectiveness of His death, and the power of His resurrection; this Spirit is our portion, our inheritance.

IV. The response of God's elect is to be stirred up in their spirit by the Lord: "Jehovah stirred up the spirit of Zerubabel the son of Shealtiel, the governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people"—Hag. 1:14a:

- A. For the recovery of the building of God's house, God's elect were stirred up by the Lord in their spirit in the order of God's authority, beginning with Zerubbabel the governor—cf. Ezra 1:5.
- B. In the Minor Prophets both the divine Spirit and the stirred-up human spirit of God's elect are mentioned.

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- C. In the New Testament the divine Spirit has been consummated and poured out (Acts 2:17-21; Joel 2:28-32), and our human spirit responds to such a Spirit by being stirred up (2 Tim. 1:6-7; cf. Acts 17:16; Rom. 8:16; 2 Cor. 2:13).

V. The Minor Prophets also reveal that Christ is our enjoyment; the enjoyment of God's Christ is actually the enjoyment of God Himself—Psa. 43:4:

- A. "I will shake all the nations, and the Desire of all the nations will come"—Hag. 2:7a; cf. Mal. 3:1b:
 - 1. We may enjoy Christ as the Desire of God's elect and the One desired by mankind; whether we are hot or cold toward the Lord, we desire Christ; every day we desire Christ.
 - 2. Even though the nations do not know Christ, they still desire Christ; all people desire to have peace and a good life with virtues such as light, love, patience, humility, meekness, endurance, joy, and righteousness; since Christ is the reality of these things, for the nations to desire these things means that, unconsciously, they desire Christ.
 - 3. Christ is mankind's unique need; everyone, the believers and the unbelievers alike, desires Christ.
- B. We may enjoy Christ as the Angel of the covenant—v. 1b:
 - 1. For Him to be the Angel means that He is a serving one—cf. Heb. 1:14.
 - 2. As the Angel of the covenant, He enacted the new covenant at His table (Luke 22:20), and as its surety (Heb. 7:22), He makes everything in it a reality to us (Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:8-12).
- C. Malachi 4:2 tells us that we may enjoy Christ as the Sun of righteousness with healing in His wings:
 - 1. As the Sun of righteousness, Christ is our enjoyment for our growing in life, in the dispelling of the darkness.
 - 2. As the Sun of righteousness, Christ is our enjoyment for our healing in life, in the effacing of unrighteousness.

VI. When we have Christ, we not only have revival—we have restoration:

- A. The millennial kingdom will be a time of restoration (Matt. 19:28; Acts 3:21); this restoration will consummate in the

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new heaven and new earth with the New Jerusalem as the center.

- B. That will be the ultimate, the consummate, restoration accomplished by the resurrected Christ.

VII. The Lord desires to bring the churches into a new revival to end this age:

- A. We can enter into a new revival by arriving at the highest peak of the divine revelation through the ministry of the age—the revelation of the eternal economy of God: “I hope that the saints in all the churches throughout the earth, especially the co-workers and the elders, will see this revelation and then rise up to pray that God would give us a new revival—a revival which has never been recorded in history”—*Life-study of First and Second Chronicles*, p. 15.
- B. We can enter into a new revival by living the life of a God-man: “We should all declare that we want to live the life of a God-man. Eventually, the God-men will be the victors, the overcomers, the Zion within Jerusalem. This will bring in a new revival which has never been seen in history, and this will end this age”—*Life-study of First and Second Chronicles*, p. 28.
- C. We can enter into a new revival by shepherding people according to God: “I hope that there will be a genuine revival among us by our receiving this burden of shepherding. If all the churches receive this teaching to participate in Christ’s wonderful shepherding, there will be a big revival in the recovery”—*The Vital Groups*, p. 40.