

## We Need the Revival 5

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Gotthold Beck

リバイバルの必要性 5

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ゴットホルド・ベック

### Psalms

26:2 Examine me, Lord, and inspect me! Test my heart and mind.

[International Standard Version]

139:23 Examine me, God, and know my mind, test me, and know my thoughts.

139:24 See if there is any offensive tendency in me, and lead me in the eternal way.

These verses we just read are the prayers of David. I always recommend to people in distress and anguish to pray reading the Psalms and read the Psalms with prayers.

David, of course was far from perfect. Then, how was he referred to as the one who pleased God? It was because he prayed. These verses we read above were his heartfelt scream. "Examine me, not someone else, Lord, but examine me and inspect me! Test my heart and mind." After all, he did not know what to think, what to do. So, he entrusted everything to the Lord's hand.

Psalms 139 is also a wonderful prayer. These are the words we should pray with every day, aren't they? "Examine me, God, and know my mind, test me, and know my thoughts. See if there is any offensive tendency in me, and lead me in the eternal way." It is those who have such desires, "know my thoughts" and "lead me", who are blessed. After all, it was because he had this desire that David could understand the Lord better.

I would like to continue the discussion about the need for the revival with you. As I mentioned last week, this word 'revival' is certainly not from the Japanese language. In fact, it was taken from English. It is translated as 'the spiritual awakening', or 'the reconstruction of faith', 'the resurrection of our faith.' It is dormant believers, not non-believers, who need the revival, the resurrection of faith.

That is to say, through lively fellowship with the Lord, we need to be renewed and newly reborn. Those who pray like David will never regret it. The Lord has ears

to hear and he will never fail to bless us the way we pray to.

Believers are saved people. But that is not all. They are also referred to as sanctuaries of the Holy Spirit, the dwellings of the Holy Spirit. However, our mind which is supposed to be the sanctuary of the Holy Spirit often becomes a hideout for bandits, doesn't it? Actually, very few people realize this. It might be because they misinterpret this verse 17 from chapter 5 of Second Epistle to the Corinthians that many saved brothers and sisters fall into such a state;

### 2 Corinthians

5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in the Messiah, he is a new creation. Old things have disappeared, and—look!—all things have become new!

It says, "he is a new creation." This is actually a sort of mistranslation. In the original language, it is written, "there is a new creation", instead of "he is". Many people believe that although their hearts used to be stained with arrogance, impurity and sins which made them preoccupied with worldly things until they were newly reborn, once they obtain a new life, all of these things are automatically swept away.

However, this is wrong. Although this verse goes, "If anyone is in the Messiah, he is a new creation," in the original Bible, it is not meant that the person is renewed, but that Jesus, who is new begins to dwell inside them.

The innate nature of men lingers their whole lives. However, in the living Spirit of the newly reborn people lives Jesus. We can't help but admit every day that our former self still lives inside of us. However, it will be dreadful if we give up the presence of our old nature believing that there is nothing we can do but to leave it as it is.

We were saved to serve the Lord. However, very often we were controlled and guided by the old man living inside of us, that is to say, our innate nature. Do we have desire in our hearts that matches the purpose of Jesus?

We need to look up to Jesus and ask him to form his image in us. Is our thought purified? Paul could confess, "we are the ones to work with God by the Holy Spirit." This is such a wonderful confession.

However, do we truly deserve to serve the Lord? Can Jesus use us the way he needs to? Or, do we just live the life we want? Brothers and sisters in Corinth were spiritually too weak to serve the Lord.

## 1 Corinthians

6:13 Food is for the stomach, and the stomach is for food, but God will make them both unnecessary. The body is not meant for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.

6:14 God raised the Lord, and by his power he will also raise us.

6:15 You know that your bodies belong to the Messiah, don't you? Should I take what belongs to the Messiah and unite them with a prostitute? Certainly not!

6:16 You know that the person who unites himself with a prostitute becomes one body with her, don't you? For it is said, "The two will become one flesh."

6:17 But the person who unites himself with the Lord becomes one spirit with him.

6:18 Keep on running away from sexual immorality. Any other sin that a person commits is outside his body, but the person who sins sexually sins against his own body.

6:19 You know that your body is a sanctuary of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have received from God, don't you? You do not belong to yourselves,

6:20 because you were bought for a price. Therefore, glorify God with your bodies.

Jesus paid the price to redeem us. So, we could join as a part of the Lord's body. The body has to obey its head. How disobedient we are to Jesus! How arrogant we are! We have become one body with a prostitute instead of a vessel to serve as parts of Jesus' body, haven't we? Those who admit their wickedness in the presence of the Lord, would be compelled to exclaim that they are thieves, adulterers and absolutely worthless for the Lord, just like the tax collector did.

How can we make the revival occur? How can we receive an abundant blessing of the Lord? We need to begin by realizing how impure we are, then admit our worthlessness and feel hunger and thirst. Many people feel disgruntled about others instead of reflecting on themselves.

Not only do we lack love for others, in actuality, we constantly criticize and judge them. No matter how much we complain about other people, it will never lead us to the revival. It only makes the devil happy. To see the revival occur, instead of feeling unhappy about others, we need to begin by realizing our own powerlessness, don't we?

We are the sanctuaries of the Holy Spirit that belong to the Lord. However, as was written in some letters of the disciples, we are all in danger of becoming a hideout of thieves. When we admit this danger deep in our hearts, we will begin to desire to be purified.

About some 2005 years ago, in the era of the King Hezekiah, the revival occurred. Let us look at this revival.

## 2 Chronicles

29:1 Hezekiah began his reign at the age of 25. He reigned for 29 years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Abijah, Zechariah's daughter.

29:2 He practiced what the Lord considered to be right, following all of the examples set by his ancestor David.

29:3 In the first month of the first year of his reign he repaired and reopened the doors of the Lord's Temple.

29:4 Then he brought in the priests and descendants of Levi, gathered them into the square in the eastern part of the Temple,

29:5 and told them, "Pay attention to me, you descendants of Levi! Consecrate yourselves and the Temple of the Lord God of your ancestors by taking out from the Holy Place whatever is unclean.

29:6 Our ancestors have been unfaithful. They practiced what the Lord considers to be evil, abandoned him, turned their faces away from the place where the Lord resides, and turned their backs to him.

29:7 They shut the doors to the vestibule of the Temple, extinguished its lamps, and have not burned incense or offered burnt offerings to the God of Israel in the Holy Place.

29:8 That's why the Lord was angry with Judah and Jerusalem and made them an object of terror, horror, and derision, as you've seen with your own eyes.

29:9 Now look! Our ancestors have been killed with swords and our sons, daughters, and wives are being held captive because of all of this.

29:10 I'm intending to make a covenant with the Lord God of Israel so his burning anger may turn away from us.

29:11 Please don't be careless, you descendants of Aaron, because the Lord has chosen you to minister in his presence, to serve him, to be his ministers, and to burn incense."

29:12 Here are the names of the descendants of Levi who made themselves available to God: Amasai's son Mahath and Azariah's son Joel from the descendants of Kohath; Abdi's son Kish and Jehallelel's son Azariah from the descendants of Merari; Zimmah's son Joah and Joah's son Eden from the descendants of Gershon;

29:13 Elizaphan's sons Shimri and Jeiel; Asaph's sons Zechariah and Mattaniah;

29:14 Heman's sons Jehiel and Shimei; and Jeduthun's sons Shemaiah and Uzziel.

29:15 They also brought together their brothers, consecrated themselves, and proceeded to cleanse the Lord's Temple, just as the king had ordered in accordance with what the Lord had told him.

29:16 The priests entered the inner courts of the Lord's Temple to cleanse it, and they brought out everything unclean that they found there to the outer court of the Lord's Temple. Then the descendants of Levi carried everything from there out to the Kidron Valley.

29:17 They began their consecration duties on the first day of the first month and finished at the Lord's outer vestibule on the eighth day of the month. Another eight days was used to consecrate the Lord's Temple, so they completed the work on the sixteenth day of the first month.

29:22 So they slaughtered the bulls and the priests sprinkled the blood on the altar. They also slaughtered the rams and sprinkled the blood on the altar, and they also slaughtered the lambs and sprinkled the blood on the altar.

29:23 They brought the male goats for the sin offering to the king within the assembled gathering, laid their hands on them,

29:24 and then the priests slaughtered them and purged the altar with their blood as a sin offering to atone for all Israel, because the king ordered that the burnt offering and the sin offering be made for all Israel.

29:28 Everybody in the assembly worshiped, the singers sang, and the trumpets sounded. They continued doing this until the burnt offering sacrifice was completed.

29:31 After this, Hezekiah announced, "Now that you've consecrated yourselves to the Lord, come near and bring your sacrifices and thanksgiving offerings to the Lord's Temple. So the assembly brought sacrifices and thanksgiving offerings, and everyone who was willing to do so brought burnt offerings.

29:36 Hezekiah and all of the people were ecstatic with joy because of what God had done for the people, since everything had come about so suddenly.

Let us quickly look at three points. Firstly, the need for the revival, in other words, how the people were in those days. Secondly, the purification required for the revival. Thirdly, the consequences of the revival.

To begin with, the spiritual condition of the people in those days was unimaginably ruined. The spiritual condition of people can be judged from the condition of

the temples of God of their times, that is to say, whether they were desolate or well-maintained. The same is true for churches today, isn't it? Because of many believers who are not consciously aware that they are in the body of the Lord, churches are filled with weak, troubled and even dormant people.

1 Corinthians

11:29 because whoever eats and drinks without recognizing the body, eats and drinks judgment on himself.

11:30 That's why so many of you are weak and sick and a considerable number are dying.

Just like the temples of God in the era of the Old Testament, churches of today, which represent the body of Jesus, the Lord God in the era of the New Testament, are the places where the presence of the Lord can be experienced. They are the places through which the Lord intends to govern this whole world. Admitting and accepting the total governance of the Lord is the source of all blessings.

In those days, temples and people of the Lord God were in a dreadful situation. We can see from the Second Chronicles, chapter 29, verse 5, that the holy places were occupied with evil and impurity. According to verse 6, they abandoned the Lord and turned their faces away from the place of his residence. From verse 7, which explains that they have not burned incense for the Lord God, we can see that people have ceased to live a life of prayers.

No one is blessed when people are like this. As we can see from verse 9, some people were killed with swords and some were held captive, which are all the product of compromise with this world. They were very much like flocks of believers living today, weren't they? The temple of the Lord was stained. This was the primary reason which made the people feel so miserable.

Temples, which were the place of the presence of the Lord God, were still under the governance of the Lord when they were allowed to be stained. Brothers and sisters who once gathered to praise the Lord and shared the sense of his presence are now separated from the Lord and are held captive by the devil rather than being used to serve the Lord; this was what Israel had to go through in those days.

Just like the people of Israel when they were held captive, some people in here may have lost their joy and spirit of worship, which makes them so miserable.

So far, we have been looking at the necessity of the revival. Now, I would like to discuss with you the

purification required for the revival. In those days, in order to admit their sins and confess them to God, Levites, the priests for the people of Israel, placed the sacrificial animals on the altar, slaughtered them and repented to the Lord with their running blood.

Levites were consciously aware that they bore the responsibility for the people. I believe that each one of the brothers and sisters who serve the Lord bears this same responsibility today. The temples of the Lord were the place to reveal the presence and governance of the Lord.

If the temple is filled with stains, it needs to be purified thoroughly. In the time of Hezekiah, it took 16 days for the stained temple to be purified. We too, will be truly blessed when we have our hearts examined by confessing every small sin in the presence of the Lord to be purified. What is the mission given to us from the Lord? It is to live as the sanctuary of the Lord God.

#### 1 Corinthians

6:19 You know that your body is a sanctuary of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have received from God, don't you? You do not belong to yourselves,

When we clearly perceive ourselves as the sanctuary of God, the revival, the spiritual awakening will come into reality. Then, we will receive in our hands the abundant blessing that the Lord has prepared for us. Those who were saved by the grace of the Lord will no longer belong to themselves but to the Lord.

Suppose, for instance, when you buy a house, clean up all rooms and move in there for the first time, you discover that somebody already lives in the house. How would you feel? This might actually be how we look like. To the church in Laodicea, which was his body, the Lord had to speak these words;

#### Revelation

3:20 Look! I am standing at the door and knocking. If anyone listens to my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he will eat with me.

Jesus could not remain the head of the church of Laodicea, even as a by-stander or invited guest, but was thrown out of the door. Saved ones are redeemed by the blood the Lord shed and they are the houses of the Lord. Can we close the door of the Lord's house and shut Jesus out? When this sin is brought to the light, the revival will occur and we will receive the wonderful blessings.

Deep in the hearts of the saved ones, malice, insincerity, hypocrisy and arrogance are hidden. When these things are exposed to the light of the Lord and are confessed, he will forgive all things and begin to dwell within us as the sanctuary of himself.

We have been discussing the need for the revival referring to how the people in those days lived. Then, we considered the purification of the people for the revival. Finally, as the third point of today, I would like to talk about the consequences of the revival quickly.

When sacrificial animals were slaughtered and their blood was sprinkled to pardon their sins, joy welled up in the hearts of the people. The revival is like one big celebration. It is the moment of joy, at which the joy of the Lord exceeds everything and begins to govern their lives. In the time of Hezekiah, celebration for the revival continued for a week because they were moved so much by the joy of being renewed. People began to offer everything like never before and all kinds of idolatry were eradicated. It is recorded that their prayers were heard all the way to heaven.

#### 2 Chronicles

30:27 After this, the priests arose, blessed the people, and their voices were heard in prayer all the way to heaven, where God resides in holiness.

This exactly is the revival. Are we ready to pay the price and prepare for the revival? Are we prepared to expose our hidden sins to the light and reveal them to people?

#### 2 Chronicles

7:14 when my people humble themselves—the ones who are called by my name—and pray, seek me, and turn away from their evil practices, I myself will listen from heaven, I will pardon their sins, and I will restore their land.

This exactly is the revival and the secret to obtain the new blessings, isn't it? There will be no revival without confession of sins. Our sins stop the flow from heaven. Our sins tie down the hands of Jesus. James wrote to believers of his days in chapter 5;

#### James

5:16 Therefore, make it your habit to confess your sins to one another and to pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

These words were intended to encourage the saved brothers and sisters, not non-believers. The so-called revival would never occur as a result of our own effort. When the saved brothers and sisters make human

efforts to convert non-believers, the devil won't get in their way. However, when we pray wholeheartedly for the revival, for the spiritual awakening and to obtain new blessings, the devil will begin to confront us.

Zachalea

4:6 'Not by valor nor by strength, but only by my Spirit,' says the Lord of the Heavenly Armies.

This is how we accomplish the work of the Lord God; "Not by man's strength, but by my Spirit." By the way, the weapon of the Spirit is prayer. It was why James had to write these harsh words;

James

4:2 You do not get things because you do not ask for them!

Once, there was a missionary called David Brainerd and it was reported that his whole life itself was a prayer. His prayers inspired a number of American Indians seek a path to be saved and they were led to the salvation.

Paul knelt down in prison and prayed for the glory of the Lord to be revealed inside all believers. The Holy Spirit, who once cried through Paul, is still sending us these messages;

Romans

13:11 it's already time for you to wake up from sleep, because our salvation is nearer now than when we became believers.

13:12 The night is almost over, and the day is near. Let's therefore put aside the actions of darkness and put on the armor of light.

13:13 Let's behave decently, as people who live in the light of day. No wild parties, drunkenness, sexual immorality, promiscuity, quarreling, or jealousy!

13:14 Instead, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus, the Messiah, and do not obey your flesh and its desires.

12:1 I therefore urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercies, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices that are holy and pleasing to God, for this is the reasonable way for you to worship.

I would like to conclude this sermon with these verses.

1 Corinthians

6:19 You know that your body is a sanctuary of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have received from God, don't you? You do not belong to yourselves,

6:20 because you were bought for a price. Therefore, glorify God with your bodies.

End