

SPIRITUAL REVIVAL IN THE WORLD

GOLDEN TEXT

“He measured off another thousand, but now it was a river that I could not cross, because the water had risen and was deep enough to swim in a river that no one could cross. (Ezekiel 47:5)

USEFUL PRACTICE

Only through the movement of the Holy Spirit can the world experience true spiritual revival.

SCRIPTURE READING **Ezekiel 37:7; 47:1-5, 9**

Ezekiel 37

7 So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I was prophesying, there was a noise, a rattling sound, and the bones came together, bone to bone.

8 I looked, and tendons and flesh appeared on them and skin covered them, but there was no breath in them.

9 Then he said to me, “Prophecy to the breath; prophecy, son of man, and say to it, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Come, breath, from the four winds and breathe into these slain, that they may live.’”

10 So I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet—a vast army.

Ezekiel 47

1- The man brought me back to the entrance to the temple, and I saw water coming out from under the threshold of the temple toward the east (for the temple faced east). The water was coming down from under the south side of the temple, south of the altar.

2 He then brought me out through the north gate and led me around the outside to the outer gate facing east, and the water was trickling from the south side.

3 As the man went eastward with a measuring line in his hand, he measured off a thousand cubits and then led me through water that was ankle-deep.

4 He measured off another thousand cubits and led me through water that was knee-deep. He measured off another thousand and led me through water that was up to the waist.

5 He measured off another thousand, but now it was a river that I could not cross, because the water had risen and was deep enough to swim in a river that no one could cross.

9- Swarms of living creatures will live wherever the river flows. There will be large numbers of fish, because this water flows there and makes the salt water fresh; so where the river flows everything will live.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

I – To explain revival in the time of Ezekiel.

II – To identify the great revivals in the world.

III – To show that revivals change the course of history.

INTRODUCTION

What God did in the time of Ezekiel, he can still do today. He produced revivals in many parts of the world, notably in the 18th and 19th centuries. In the 20th century, we also saw a great revival through the Pentecostal

Movement. We believe that before the coming of Jesus to rapture his Church God can awaken a great worldwide revival. In this lesson, starting from Ezekiel 37 and 47, we will study the spiritual revivals that occurred in the world.

I - REVIVAL IN THE TIME OF EZEKIEL

1. Israel's calamity and restoration. The prophet Ezekiel warned the people about the harsh judgments of God against Israel's disobedience and apostasy (Ez. 6:3-5; 8:1; 9:4). In the face of such a great spiritual calamity, the Lord merciful, spared the people from total destruction and restored the chosen nation: "I had concern for my holy name, which the people of Israel profaned among the nations where they had gone." (Ez. 36:21)

2. A valley of dry bones. The prophet Ezekiel had a vision of the valley of dry bones. This vision was a representation of the spiritual state of the people of Israel. About this people, God commanded Ezekiel to prophesy to the dry bones (Ez. 37:4, 5). There was a promise there of a great nationwide revival (Ezekiel 37:3). After prophesying, Ezekiel saw a great miracle in a vision: "So I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet—a vast army" (Ezekiel 37:10). It was the coming of a great spiritual revival upon the nation of Israel.

3. The river of purifying water. In chapter 47, the prophet Ezekiel saw a man who had a measuring line in his hand with which he measured off a thousand cubits (or 450m) and led the prophet through water that was ankle-deep (Ez. 47:3). At each step of a thousand cubits, the prophet Ezekiel was led through the water of the river "knee-deep", "up to the waist", and finally "deep enough to swim in" (Ez. 47:4, 5). He was already feeling too far off the ground. It was a river that brought forth productivity for agriculture, fish breeding and would bring life to everything it passed through. It was the great revival that Israel was to experience by God's mercy.

II - THE GREAT REVIVALS IN THE WORLD

1. In Europe. There were periods when the European continent was in an identical situation to the people of Israel in the context of the prophecies of Ezekiel 37 and 47. By divine mercy, it did not take long for God to use people filled with the Holy Spirit to cry out and persevere for a spiritual revival. The Lord wanted to revive the Old Continent.

a) In Germany. Around 1722, Count Zinzendorf led the Moravians into a missionary fervor that spread across the European continent and into

America; with its emphasis on the "religion of the heart", there was a great awakening in the pursuit of God's power, especially in world missions.

b) In England. Around 1740, John and Charles Wesley, and George Whitefield acted with great missionary fervor, sought the power of God, the anointing of the Spirit, and preached against the powerless formalism of the churches back then. A great revival descended upon the English nation.

c) In Wales. Evan Roberts, a 13-year-old teenager, gathered his classmates and told them of the vision he had had from God one Sunday, saying that He would send a revival, but everyone needed to abandon the practice of sin. So great was the impact of that vision of God that around 1904 and 1905 the revival began to spread throughout the city, across the country and reached many countries of the world.

2. In the United States. God also wanted to revive the United States of America. Therefore, there were several revivals in the great American nation. Charles Grandison Finney was used by God for a great spiritual awakening. He was greatly influenced by G. Campbell Morgan of the Deeper Life Movement, who preached a life full of God's presence in opposition to the lukewarm life that dominated many evangelical churches at the time.

3. Roots of the Pentecostal revival. In the year 1900, Charles Fox Parham, lay church worker and itinerant preacher, decided to found the so-called "Apostolic Faith Movement". With the purpose of preparing lay church workers to evangelize, he founded the Bethel Bible College, in the city of Topeka, Kansas, USA. The students studied Acts 2, and from that study, they were baptized in the Holy Spirit. The promise of Acts reached the lives of those students.

In 1901, in Houston, Texas, the Black pastor, son of Louisiana slaves, William Joseph Seymour, belonging to a holiness group, was attracted to the Apostolic Faith Movement, started by Parham. There he was baptized in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of tongues. That year, 1901, is considered the starting year of the Modern Pentecostal Movement.

In 1906, Seymour moved to California. There he began to preach the Pentecostal message in his own home at 216 Bonnie Brae Street. The meetings attracted so many people that the building could not hold them all. Looking for a new building, Seymour discovered an abandoned rectangular hall, at 312 Azusa Street, in Los Angeles, where he founded the Apostolic Faith Gospel Mission.

III – REVIVALS CHANGE HISTORY

1. Impact on the world. Scholars agree that the greatest revivals in the world had profound impact on politics, economics and culture. We could cite countless examples, but let's stick with one that occurred among Pentecostals in the USA. In a context of the tragedy of racism in that nation, even among historic churches, it was possible to see victims of centuries of racial conflicts, worshiping the Lord, speaking in tongues and rejoicing in the Holy Spirit (cf. Eph. 2:14). Only true spiritual revival removes every kind sin of division.

2. The generation after revivals. It is also a consensus that, in various parts of the world, revivals caused changes in churches, but unfortunately, they did not continue for a long time. In many places, the flame went out. Those used by God that set nations on fire are gone; and their successors did not have the same impetus to keep the fire burning (Prov. 26:20a). Now the God of John Wesley, Charles Finney, and William Seymour is the same; He has not changed. More than ever, we need to feel the same need that these men of God felt in their days to seek true spiritual revival in today's churches. The Holy Spirit desires to revive his people

CONCLUSION

God desires to work in the churches of the world and promote a powerful spiritual revival that will shake ecclesiastical and denominational structures. However, we must seek the baptism in the Holy Spirit with persevering fervor. Let there be signs, miracles, and wonders in Jesus' name!

May the Holy Spirit blow the winds of spiritual revival, and may the abundant use of spiritual gifts be real and abundant in our worship services!