

O LORD, REVIVE YOUR WORK

GOLDEN TEXT

“O Lord, I have heard Your speech and was afraid; O Lord, revive Your work in the midst of the years! In the midst of the years make it known; in wrath remember mercy.” (Hab. 3:2).

USEFUL PRACTICE

It is God's will to revive his work in these last days until the Lord Jesus returns.

SCRIPTURE READING

Habakkuk 3:1-2, 16-19 /NKJV

³ A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet, on Shigionoth.

² O LORD, I have heard your speech *and* was afraid; O LORD, revive your work in the midst of the years! In the midst of the years make *it* known; in wrath remember mercy.

¹⁶ When I heard, my body trembled; my lips quivered at *the* voice; rottenness entered my bones; and I trembled in myself, that I might rest in the day of trouble. When he comes up to the people, He will invade them with his troops.

¹⁷ Though the fig tree may not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines; though the labor of the olive may fail, and the fields yield no food; though the flock may be cut off from the fold, and there be no herd in the stalls—

¹⁸ Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.

¹⁹ The LORD God is my strength; He will make my feet like deer's *feet*, and He will make me walk on my high hills.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

I – To present the cry for revival of the prophet Habakkuk

II – To emphasize the Word of God as a fundamental element of revival

III – To raise awareness about the need for a true revival.

INTRODUCTION

We will end this quarter with the classic text of the prophet Habakkuk. In it, the indispensable revival of the Church of the Lord Jesus is revealed. The prophet's cry for revival for his people must be the cry of the Church in these last days. Never has there been a more pressing need for the visible Church to be mightily revived by God. The forces of evil will try to stop it, but they will not prevail because Jesus owns the Church.

I – THE CRY FOR REVIVAL

1. The prophet's anguished intercession. Habakkuk suffered in the face of overwhelming iniquity in Judah. As a messenger of God, all he could do was cry out to the Lord with all his heart. Besides, what distressed the prophet the most was the fact that he realized that God apparently had not acted promptly against the spiritual and moral corruption of His people. The prophet cried out to God, asking Him why there was no answer to his cry in the face of violence, iniquity, destruction, strife and contention that he saw before him (Hab. 1:2-4).

2. God's apparent indifference* There is no indifference of God to man's wickedness. Indeed, because of his mercy and longsuffering toward transgressors, he does not judge immediately. Therefore, God sent Jesus with the message of love to save man, but unfortunately most of them turn their backs on God. However, there will be a day when He will answer all who despise His Word, as it is written: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God" (Psalm 9:17).

3. God's quick answer. God's answer came quite differently from what the prophet had expected. He, the Almighty, decided to summon the Chaldeans, or the Babylonians, to oppose the sins and iniquities of Judah (Hab. 1:5-8). The Chaldeans would be the sword of God, the whip of

heaven, to make Judah rethink its evil ways and convert from its wickedness that already exceeded the limits of divine tolerance (Hab. 1:8-11,13). Although He seemed to be passive, in fact, God sent the prophet to write the vision in so legible a way that it could be seen even by those who ran by (Hab. 2:2, 3).

II – REVIVAL BY THE WORD

1. Hearing the Word of God. In his prayer, Habakkuk said, “I have heard your speech..., Lord” (3:2a). He heard the Word of God, that is, His answer as to the object of his prayer. God spoke and Habakkuk paid close attention. It is necessary to listen carefully to the voice of God to live a period of spiritual revival. When God speaks, we need to listen.

2. Fearing God. Upon hearing the Word of God, Habakkuk feared the Lord (3:2). One must listen to God and fear him. There can be no revival without the fear of the Lord: “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding. To him belongs eternal praise” (Psalm 111:10). We need to emphasize, however, that the fear of the Lord has nothing to do with scare, dread or terror. The expression refers to reverence for God in all spheres of life, a feeling of deep respect before the Creator. Therefore, having a lifestyle that reveres the Lord is “the beginning of wisdom” of the believer.

3. The cry for revival. Habakkuk begs God to revive his work: “O Lord, I have heard your speech and was afraid; O Lord, revive your work in the midst of the years! In the midst of the years make it known; in wrath remember mercy” (Hab. 3:2). After the prophet understood that God's judgment would be inevitable for the disobedient people, he heard His Word with fear and cried out to God for the spiritual revival of his people: 1) he asked God for the revival of His work; 2) he asked God to make His work known; 3) he asked God to, in wrath, remember mercy. Finally, the prophet Habakkuk demonstrates a feeling of great hope, faith and optimism (Habakkuk 3:17-19).

III – REVIVAL: A MATTER OF LIFE OR DEATH

1. The cry for mercy. In addition to crying out for revival, Habakkuk cried out for the Lord's mercy in the face of the terrible consequences of divine judgment on the unrepentant nation. It was a matter of life and death. Hence, he pleaded, “in wrath remember mercy” (Hab. 3:2). The prophet knew that, given the spiritual and moral decay of the people, if God had no mercy, all those people would perish before the weight of the Lord's hand on their evils.

2. God is merciful. The prophet Habakkuk knew that God hears the prayers of people who sin, but who sincerely repent of their sins and seek the face of the Lord. God is merciful! The Bible tells the episode of David, who preferred to fall into the hand of God because of His mercies: “Let me fall into the hand of the Lord, for His mercies are very great; but do not let me fall into the hand of man” (1 Chronicles 21:13). Greater perception of the merciful character of God had the prophet Jeremiah, when he declared, “Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail” (Lam. 3:22/NIV).

3. Cry out to God. Today, we can say that moral depravity in the world has become endemic. For the most part, there is no longer the slightest feeling of shame and modesty. Inequity is not only practiced individually or by groups, but is institutionalized, with legal support. A few years ago, culturally authoritarian governments included the institutionalization of abortion, false “gay marriage” and gender ideology on their agendas. Even more, there are “churches” that, claiming to be Christian, approve of these abominations. On the pretext of being “inclusive churches”, they accept moral depravity as a norm and a given reality, claiming that God is love and, therefore, does not exclude anyone.

The Bible, however, says, “Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord” (Heb. 12:14). Surely, God's judgment will not delay. Therefore, we must pray the same prayer as the prophet Habakkuk: “in wrath remember mercy” (Habakkuk 3:2).

CONCLUSION

Just as Habakkuk prayed to God, crying out for a revival to His work, we must also cry out to the Lord for a genuine and powerful revival in the local churches. The spiritual and moral situation of the world is similar or even worse than in the prophet's time. We must cry out for the mercy of God to those who are falling away from the faith and, in many churches, approving of all abominations against God. Let us solemnly cry out, “Revive, Lord, your work!”