

The New Testament Church
 Revival #9: *Revival of Returns: Revival, Awakening and Reformation*
 Pastor Paul Jehle – March 6, 2022
 Jeremiah 29:7; Matthew 5:43-48; Romans 12:17-21

I What is Revival and when does it Come?

- A. Revival means to come alive again – meaning we have grown cold and withered
- B. God uses dry hearts and a dark culture to produce desperation of hunger such as...
 1. **Enos calling on the name of the Lord; Jacob calling on God from a place of brokenness**
 2. **Joseph prepared by God to preserve life and impact Egypt; Samuel bringing hope**
 3. **Asa and Jehoshaphat bringing awakening and reformation; Elijah and Elisha passing the torch in humility; Jonah embracing a heart of mercy for the lost; and Josiah renewing a seeking of God and His Word!**

II The Returns – Zerubbabel, Ezra, Nehemiah – 539 to 400 B.C.

- A. What does it mean to “return”? (Joel 2:12-13) – *rend your hearts and not your garments*
 1. Returning to God means that we return **repent** of our sin – attitudes and actions
 2. Return is another way of saying we need a **new heart attitude toward God**
- B. How does the Kingdom Come? – Matthew 6:10; Mark 4:26-29
 1. **Thy Kingdom Come on earth** – by measure, in spheres (family, church, culture)
 2. **From seed to shade** – the **blade (revival), ear (awakening), corn (reformation)**
 3. Increased growth occurs with **increased brokenness – increased shade for the world**
- C. The purpose of captivity is to rend our hearts – change our attitudes – avoid bitterness (Heb. 12:5)
 1. Loving our enemies means we recognize the battle is primarily spiritual (Eph. 6:11-18)
 2. Loving our enemies is our primary motive – even in war and self-defense (D Cole, p. 40)
 3. Loving enemies is a balance between forgiveness (attitude) and justice (as God’s agent)
 - a. Embrace an attitude of love and forgiveness (Matthew 5) – willing to go the extra mile
 - b. Seek peace, avoid vengeance, for love brings conviction on the soul of an enemy (Ro. 12)
- D. The pattern of Zerubbabel, Ezra and Nehemiah (Haggai, Zechariah, Esther and Malachi)
 1. First “return” under Zerubbabel - 538 B.C. - Ezra 1-6 - *restoring the foundations – revival*
 - a. The decree of Cyrus – Zerubbabel (civil) and Jerusha (priest) – 1.7% (of 2.5 m) return
 - b. Ezra 6:19-22 – *separated themselves from the filth of the nations... to seek the Lord*
 - c. **Restore the foundations of the Temple and the altar – celebrating our forgiveness!**
 2. Second “return” under Ezra - 457 B.C. - Ezra 7-10 - *restoring the covenant - awakening*
 - a. Haggai, Zechariah, and Ezra lead another .3% to return – now 2% had returned! (50k)
 - b. Ezra 8:21-23 – *proclaimed a fast... ashamed to ask the King (government) for help....*
 - c. **Renew our covenant with our marriages, families, church (practice forgiveness)**
 3. Third “return” under Nehemiah - 444 B.C. - Nehemiah - *rebuilding the walls - reformation*
 - a. Neh. 2:11-20 – the city is broken down and without walls (culture) – enemies laugh
 - b. Neh. 8:8-17 -enemy tries to come into our midst – build by your home – pick and weapon!
 - c. **Prepare to defend your faith, protect conscience with forgiveness and rebuilding trust**
- D. But what about those who remained in Babylon?
 1. Some may have heard a call from God to stay – (like Richard and Sabina Wurmbrand)
 2. Many were awakened later, in a captive nation – God reaches everyone everywhere
 3. God refines His remnant – love without vengeance, but rebuilding trust over time (defense)
 4. But a true *remnant* is those who stay close to God, embracing His attitude toward others
 5. We are being trained to *discern* between mindless obedience to a tyrant and loving obedience to God which includes a supernatural forgiveness toward our enemies
 6. A radical example is Richard and Sabina Wurmbrand – *Tortured for Christ* (p. 14-17)