

Why Revival?

Harmony M.B.C., January 4, 2009 (Morning)

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Habakkuk 3:1 A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet upon Shigionoth (Heb. “A rambling poem”).
Habakkuk 3:2 O LORD, I have heard thy speech, *and* was afraid: O LORD, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy.

I. This Is A Personal Prayer

- It could be an individual prayer
 - It could be a prayer of a church
 - Genuine prayer always marks a drawing near to God
- > So, Habakkuk was in a state in which he was truly drawing near to God

II. I believe the construction of these verses shows us the reason for Habakkuk’s genuine, sincere, personal prayer. It was because:

Habakkuk Heard The Report (Heb. “Shema” - a hearing, report, proclamation) of the Lord

- It is important to know what that report or proclamation of the Lord was:
 - > The political powers of the day had become crooked and ignored righteousness and lawfulness:
 - Hab 2:4 Behold, his soul *which* is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.
 - > The political powers of the day were given over to pride and excess:
 - Hab 2:5 Yea also, because he transgresseth by wine, *he is* a proud man, neither keepeth at home, who enlargeth his desire as hell, and *is* as death, and cannot be satisfied, but gathereth unto him all nations, and heapeth unto him all people:
 - > The people of the period had been consumed by covetousness to gain the kind of power that insulated them from the schemes of any forces or persons who might do evil to them.
 - Hab 2:9 Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil!
 - > The house of Israel, as well as other races had made merchandise of their people, wrecking peoples lives by policy and action, destroying lives, killing people:

- Hab 2:10 Thou hast consulted shame to thy house by cutting off many people, and hast sinned *against* thy soul.

> Social pollution and its promotion abounded:

- Hab 2:15 Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that putteth thy bottle to *him*, and makest *him* drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness!

> God's announcement was that judgment was coming for all of this perversion:

- Hab. 2:16-20

These are the background facts about God's announcement that stirs Habakkuk to pray.

III. Hearing What God Said Gave Him an Interest In Seeing Revival

- We need to distinguish hearing from HEARING

> (we lately looked at Jesus' famous statement "he that hath ears to hear, let him hear.")

> We often use the quote from Rom 10:17 (So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.) to convey the idea of people being saved through hearing of the word of God. This is a true understanding of it.

> But carry this idea further by associating it with the scripture (Rom 1:17) For therein is the righteousness of God revealed **from faith to faith**: as it is written. The **just shall live by faith**. Now we see that faith comes by hearing of the word of God, and levels of faith-growth reveals more and more about the righteousness of God. Conclusion: we need to truly HEAR the word of God to get spiritual growth and its benefits. This is what Habakkuk did. He HEARD what God said and it stirred him to know that revival of God's people was going to be essential to avoiding judgment and chastening.

IV. His Motive For Finding Revival Was The Realization of the Alternative

v.2: "...in wrath..."

- He did not deny that the wrath was coming. Neither should we.

- Without revival of an interest in knowing and practicing fundamental spiritual principles, the Lord's people will suffer the backlash of God's judgments against the evils of the day (Mat. 5:45 "...for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."). (We had a torrential rain a few weeks ago. It fell like a flood around the Palmer Road area. There are some people in that neighborhood who do not claim to

serve the Lord. That rain may have messed up some of their yards and maybe caused them some other damage. But, it may have raised the water table in that area enough that this spring they can get a good crop growing in their fields. At my house down there, the rain was so heavy that a fairly flat roof on my utility room sprung a leak and almost ruined a section of drywall in my closet. It soaked one spot on the closet floor below. It also ran in my lower room and soaked the concrete floor. It did some damage to my house.)

- > This backlash from God dealing with evil will not be simply incidental, but rather the way God chastens His people when they are practicing disobedience. See two bible statements:
 - 2Co 6:16-17 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 2Co 6:17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and **I will receive you.**
 - Christ is warning His people to separate themselves from apostate religion, from hypocrisy and spiritual wickedness in Rev 18:4 “And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and **that ye receive not of her plagues.**”
- Without revival of the “work” of God, the Lord’s people will fail to identify themselves and fail to take a stand for Christ.
- Mercy is viewed by Habakkuk as that sending of revival
- > If God revives His people, He will bless them with grace to endure
- > If God revives His people, He will bless them with prevenient grace to escape certain things.
- > If God does not revive His people, their spiritual distance from Him during times of national judgment will alienate them from spiritual blessings and sense of comfort and protection felt when He is consciously present in our lives.