

REVIVE US O LORD!

Part 1: Nehemiah 8:1-12

Biblical revival is a sovereign and supernatural work of God through His Word which causes God's people to experience a renewed sense of His holy presence and mighty power in such a way that believers are purified and empowered for a more vibrant walk with God and effective ministry (Psalm 85:6; Isaiah 57:15; Ephesians 1:18-19). Nehemiah 8 records Israel's historic experience of a genuine God-sent spiritual revival through the ministry of Ezra and Nehemiah. As we consider the essential marks and manifestations of biblical revival, may the Spirit of the living God rekindle our affection for the Lord and our reverence for His Word.

1. When God revives His people, there is renewed _____.

The account of revival in Jerusalem begins by showing the people's renewed enthusiasm for God's Word as manifested in their unified and passionate demand to Ezra to bring out the Book of the Law and their attentiveness to the reading and proclamation of the Scriptures (Nehemiah 8:1-3). God has graciously prepared the heart of His servant Ezra and the hearts of His people to experience a Spirit-led, convicting, authoritative and enthusiastic preaching and receiving of the Word of God (Ezra 7:9-10). Every season of God-sent revival is marked by the sovereign initiative of God in giving men and women intense longing and craving for God's Word. When God begins the work of revival in our hearts, we begin to yearn and hunger for God's Word, and nothing else matters to us than delighting in the presence of God and feasting on the richness and restoring power of His Word (Jeremiah 15:16; Psalm 19:7-8; 119:154,156,159; Ephesians 6:10-11,16-17; Matthew 4:4).

2. When God revives His people, there is reverent _____.

The second manifestation of God-produced revival in Jerusalem is the people's response of humble adoration and exaltation of the Lord. The people of God lifted up their hands and bowed their heads with their faces to the ground, demonstrating their reverence and submission to God (Nehemiah 8:4-6). Ezra blessed the Lord together with the people because they recaptured a glorious vision of God, who is ready to forgive, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love (Nehemiah 9:16-17). When God revives His people, we are reawakened to the beauty, majesty and glory of who God is. This reviving work of the Spirit of God then produces in us a renewed heart of worship, a heart that burns with a tremendous sense of awe, amazement and gratitude to God for His great love, mercy and grace in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 1:3,7; 2:4-5).

Prayer Response:

Let us then, humbly plead with God and earnestly pray the words of Psalm 85:6-7 "*Will You not revive us again, that Your people may rejoice in You? Show us Your steadfast love, O LORD, and grant us Your salvation!*"