

## UNTIL REVIVAL COMES

### PSALM 126

#### **Introduction:**

The Psalm was written by someone in that generation that faced the realities of rebuilding Jerusalem. It proved to be much more difficult than they had expected. What do you do when the work of the Lord seems to be going nowhere? What do you do when the favor of the Lord does not seem to be upon your work? What do you do when revival tarries?

This prayer-psalm points the way for us until revival comes. It provides guidance for every congregation that is going through a “dry” season, and every pastor that is discouraged with the work the Lord has given to him to do.

#### I. ENCOURAGE YOUR HEART BY REMEMBERING GOD’S SAVING WORK IN THE PAST. (V. 1-3)

##### 1. Remember the times of unbelievable joy.

“When the Lord brought back the captivity of Zion, we were like those who dream. Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongues with singing.”

The psalmist had been a participant in the return from the Exile under the leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah. What he remembered encouraged him. He

especially remembered the joy and praise that filled the people. But there was not much joy and praise now! Remembering what had once been there kindled expectancy in his heart.

2. Remember the times of convincing demonstrations of the power of God.

“Then they said among the nations, ‘The Lord has done great for them.’ The Lord has done great things for us, whereof we are glad.” The record of this movement of God is found in the books of Nehemiah and Ezra. God did a fresh work in that day that they could not forget.

Such memories have always encouraged my heart. I have read of the great movements of God in the history of our nation and they always stir something in me. I have read of the Great Awakening in the early days under Jonathan Edwards and others. I have read of the Second Great Awakening that swept into the frontiers of the country—into Kentucky, Tennessee and North Carolina. Those movements kept the nation from moral ruin while it was still weak.

I have my own personal memories. I remember some great revivals from the days of my childhood. I remember seeing many men and women drawn to the Savior in repentance while the church was being renewed. Some of you

have such memories, especially those of you who have been on the path for a while.

Until revival comes, encourage your heart by remembering what God has done. Who knows—He might do it again.

## II. PRAY EARNESTLY FOR THE RESTORATION OF THE FAVOR OF THE LORD. (V. 4)

### 1. Restoration and revival are works of God.

“Bring back our captivity, O Lord.” “Captivity” is translated by most newer translations as favor or fortunes. It is a prayer for God to restore the fortunes of His people, to turn things around from defeat to victory.

### 2. Pray for a mighty flood of spiritual power.

“As the streams in the South.” The terrain in the South of Judah was much like sections of West Texas where I live—quite arid. Yet there would come times of heavy rain and suddenly the dry rivers beds would begin to overflow with water. This is what the Psalmist was asking for. He wants the presence of God to be poured out in such fullness upon His people that the lives of His people will overflow with the Spirit of God.

I have heard about such an outpouring of God in the church in which I grew up all of my life. It happened in 1933 and yet people like my mother still remember it. According to the testimony of one participant who is now with

the Lord, it came after a time intense prayer on the part of one godly lady in the church, Mrs. Noah Watson. She sought the Lord with all faith and earnestness and God heard her. He sent a spiritual flood through that community that swept a whole generation into the kingdom of God. Until revival comes, you and I must keep praying for such a movement of God. We must not allow anything to discourage us in our prayers.

### III. CONTINUE FAITHFULLY AT THE TASK GOD HAS GIVEN TO YOU. (V. 5-6)

These familiar words have been used in association with witnessing and soul winning through the years and appropriately so, but we must understand their context.

The psalmist is declaring that until revival comes, there is still work to be done. He uses language familiar to the people—most of them were farmers and lived off of the land.

#### 1. Continue to sow when everything is discouraging.

“Those who sow in tears shall reap in joy. He who continually goes forth weeping bearing precious seed shall doubtless come again with rejoicing.”

The “tears” reveals the discouragement of the farmer. The land had been lying fertile for more than seventy years, and raising a crop was not easy. It would be easy to despair of accomplishing anything.

The fields are hard in our day—I am referring to the spiritual fields. What do we do? We must continue to sow.

We sow into the lives of each other words of love, faith, and hope.

We sow into the lives of the lost the saving words of the gospel. Even when they don't want to hear, we keep telling the story—with our tears of concern.

## 2. Continue to sow with confidence in the Lord.

Did you catch the note of confidence in the statement? They “shall reap in joy.” They shall “come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.”

This is a lesson I try to teach to every young minister who will listen. I tell them when things are discouraging, and there are no signs of revival, keep upon sowing the seed with expectancy. The Lord will honor such faith in a little while. He is the only one that can prosper the work. Revival is His work, but He will do it.