



**REVIVING
THE
HUMBLE**

by Geoffrey Bingham

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Reviving the Humble

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The psalmist cried out of the midst of misery,

*Wilt thou not revive us again,
that thy people may rejoice in thee?*

God's answer lies in the same Psalm—85—in verses 10-11:

*Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet;
righteousness and peace will kiss each other.
Faithfulness will spring up from the ground,
and righteousness will look down from the sky.*

What do we mean by the verb 'to revive'? Generally speaking in the Old Testament it means 'to live', ie. 'to live again', 'to make or keep alive', and has the present sense of revive, ie. 'to freshen', 'to enliven'. Revival is that action of God whereby He brings again to life that which has become dead, and keeps it in the state of life. Examples of this are in Genesis 45:27, where Jacob's spirit revived when he heard the news that his son Joseph was still alive; in Judges 15: 18-19, when Samson, exhausted from slaying one thousand Philistines, was dying of thirst, but as water came to him

his spirit returned and he revived'; and in Nehemiah 4:2, where Nehemiah was to 'revive the stones out of the heaps of rubbish, and burned ones at that'. A corpse was revived when it was hurriedly thrown into Elisha's grave and touched his bones.

For Israel to be revived was for the nation to repent of its sin and return to God. Virtually dead in its relationship to God, God would touch it with His enlivening steadfast love and it would become His nation again, fresh with worship and life.

One of the rich passages speaking of God's steadfast love, and His intention to revive his sinful people is Isaiah 57:14-21:

And it shall be said,
 'Build up, build up, prepare the way,
 remove every obstruction from my people's way.'
 For thus says the high and lofty One
 who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy:
 'I dwell in the high and holy place,
 and also with him who is of a contrite and humble spirit,
 to revive the spirit of the humble,
 and to revive the heart of the contrite.
 For I will not contend for ever,
 nor will I always be angry;
 for from me proceeds the spirit,
 and I have made the breath of life.
 Because of the iniquity of his covetousness I was angry,
 I smote him, I hid my face and was angry;
 but he went on backsliding in the way of his own heart.
 I have seen his ways, but I will heal him;
 I will lead him and requite him with comfort,
 I will lead him and requite him with comfort,
 creating for his mourners the fruit of the lips.
 Peace, peace, to the far and to the near, says the Lord;

and I will heal him.
 But the wicked are like the tossing sea;
 for it cannot rest,
 and its waters toss up mire and dirt
 There is no peace, says my God,
 the wicked.'

This passage commences with a statement which reminds us of Isaiah 40:1-5, where the prophet tells Israel that 'her warfare is ended' and 'her iniquity is pardoned'. Then a voice cries for the great road to be built straight, the levels of the road to be easy for travel, for One is coming Who will travel to them. So here in Isaiah 57:14 is the injunction:

'Build up, build up, prepare the way,
 remove every obstruction from my people's way.'

This means that God is to come directly to His people and do something. They must build a highway for His coming. What, then, is He going to do but revive them? God—their God—takes the initiative—not them! God purposes to revive them: they do not ask for it. The next question is 'Why is He going to revive them?' and the answer must be that they are His covenant people. How is He going to revive them? By His loving, healing presence in their midst:

For thus says the high and lofty One
 who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy:
 'I dwell in the high and holy place,
 and also with him who is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive
 the spirit of the humble,
 and to revive the heart of the contrite.'

The first thing God does is reveal Himself by His word. He tells them, 'I am the high and lofty one who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy.' They have been worshipping idols, as we read in previous passages of this chapter.

Indeed their idolatry has been no less than evil. He had told them (57:10), ‘You were wearied with the length of your way, but you did not say, “It is hopeless”; you found new life for your strength, and so you were not faint.’ Now He is contrasting Himself with the empty and evil idols. He is the high and lofty One. In Himself He is exalted above all things. Beside Him the gods and idols diminish to nothing. They are seen as insignificant, insubstantial, futile and piffling. They are at the lowest level. He is ‘the eternally dwelling one’. It is in Him to dwell for ever. His place is not *in* eternity—as though eternity were His local ion—but He is eternity itself. If we can speak of His place, then it is ‘the high and holy place’. Indeed He is pure habitation. His name is *qadosh*, the Holy One separated from all that is unclean and impure. He is purity Himself. ‘Whose name is Holy’ has a history in Israel. First of all there is the Name, ie. the *I Am*, the *I AM WHOM I AM*. This was the name Israel began to call on in the days of Seth—Yahweh—, and was the name by which Israel lived. Then the term ‘whose name is Holy’ came to be something recognised amongst the covenant-people. In Psalm 33 it is written,

Our soul waits for the Lord;
he is our help and shield.
Yea, our heart is glad in him,
because *we trust in his holy name*.
Let thy steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us,
even as we hope in thee.

Again there is the well-loved Psalm 103, which opens with

Bless the Lord, O my soul;
and all that is within me, bless his holy name

Psalm 145 closes with the beautiful benediction,

*My mouth will speak the praise of the Lord,
and let all flesh bless his holy name for ever and ever.*

When Israel hears these words of God’s loftiness, His holy name, and His ‘dwelling for ever’, then their eyes will open widely to His true character and nature, and there will be dread and fear and true trembling. There will be an unmasking of the evil of these degrading idols. Later in Isaiah, God says, ‘This is the man to whom I will look, he that... trembles at my word.’

They have not trembled at His word, but have persisted in their idols. That is why it is amazing to hear God say, ‘I dwell also with him who is of a contrite and humble spirit.’ Is He saying that there are such, or is He saying He is making some persons to be this way? It would seem to be the latter. He is doing something which will bring them to humility and contrition of heart. When He has brought them to this state, then He will revive them. How, then, does He bring them to this condition?

The truth is He has been dealing with them all the time to change their hearts from worshipping the idols. They are His covenant-people, and for that reason He has been dealing with them. He says,

I will not contend for ever,
nor will I always be angry;
for from me proceeds the spirit,
and I have made the breath of life.
Because of the iniquity of his covetousness I was angry,
I smote him, I hid my face and was angry;
but he went on backsliding in the way of his own heart.

He means, ‘I have been angry with this one “because of

the iniquity of his covetousness.” ‘He adds, ‘I smote him.’ This ought to have brought the idolater to his senses, but it did not. He hid His face from him. This ought to have brought dread and anguish to the heart of the idolater, but it did not. ‘I was angry’ must mean that God continually revealed His wrath upon the defaulter. This ought to have brought the person to brokenness and repentance, but it did not. Indeed this one ‘went on backsliding in the way of his own heart’.

We are faced with somewhat of a dilemma. God punishes in order to break the spirit of the sinful idolater, but it makes no difference. Does it, then, harden the heart of the sinner? We do not know. What we do know is that God says,

I will not contend for ever,
nor will I always be angry;
for from me proceeds the spirit,
and I have made the breath of life.

By this we are led to the very wonderful understanding that God will only punish to a certain point, then He will release the person from the punishment, and *it is the release which will bring that person to humility, brokenness and contrition*. That God is not angry for ever is echoed in many places. The first is the great covenant-revelation of Exodus 34:6-7, ‘The Lord, the Lord... merciful and gracious, *slow to anger*, and abounding in steadfast love’. Psalm 103:8-10 says,

The Lord is merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
He will not always chide,
nor will he keep his anger for ever.
He does not deal with us according to our sins,
nor requite us according to our iniquities.

Again, Psalm 78:37-39 speaks of the rebellion of Israel, and His compassion upon them:

Their heart was not steadfast toward him;
they were not true to his covenant.
Yet he, being compassionate,
forgave their iniquity,
and did not destroy them;
he restrained his anger often,
and did not stir up all his wrath.
He remembered that they were but flesh,
a wind that passes and comes not again.

These psalms remind us of God’s conversation with Israel in Isaiah 54:7-10:

For a brief moment I forsook you,
but with great compassion I will gather you.
In overflowing wrath for a moment
I hid my face from you,
but with everlasting love I will have compassion on you,
says the Lord, your Redeemer...
For the mountains may depart
and the hills be removed,
but my steadfast love shall not depart from you,
and my covenant of peace shall not be removed,
says the Lord, who has compassion on you.

What amazes us is that the Lord Who has been angry with Israel and has smitten it, should not go on smiting when Israel goes on ‘backsliding in the way of his own heart’. Is it—as in Isaiah 40:1-2—that she has been punished enough?

Comfort, comfort my people,
says your God.
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her

that her warfare is ended,
 that her iniquity is pardoned,
 that she has received from the Lord's hand
 double for all her sins.

It would seem that this was the case, though she was still in her backsliding, but God has His reason for relinquishing His chastisement, for He says (57:16),

I will not contend for ever,
 nor will I always be angry;
 for from me proceeds the spirit,
 and I have made the breath of life.

He means that if He contends for ever, then—in the words of George Adam Smith—'their spirit before Me would fail, and the souls I Myself have made.'^{*} Keil and Delitzsch, in their commentary on Isaiah, translate, 'I am not angry for ever, for the spirit would pine away before me, and the souls of men which I have created.' The *New International Version* has, 'the spirit of man would grow faint before me—the breath of man that I have created'.

Now it is evident that this was what was happening with Israel. It was growing faint in spirit, and so God gave it this beautiful promise:

I dwell in the high and holy place,
 and also with him who is of a contrite and humble spirit,
 to revive the spirit of the humble,
 and to revive the heart of the contrite (57:15).

What, then, did the promise mean? It meant that God would come and dwell with the person who—through the mercy and grace of God—had come to repentance. This person would be one who was brought to the end of his

tether, faint from his sin and continuous rebellion and the appropriate chastisement of God. This one would have contrition—sorrow for his sin. He would be in the same situation as was David when he cried,

The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit;
 a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou will not despise.

David had been brought down to the depths of anguish when he realised the enormity of his own sin. If, then, we seek God's revival of our hearts and of His people, it will come when we accept His judgements as just, and believe in His long-suffering and His steadfast love. The incredible, glorious thing is that the Holy One comes to these poor human hearts and makes His dwelling in them. It may well be that Isaiah was Speaking of all Israel, and was saying that the Lord had long ago taken up His dwelling in Mount Zion, above the mercy seat of the Ark of the Covenant, overshadowed by the glorious cherubim—that He was dwelling amongst His people. Even so, when God dwelt in the temple of the covenant, He also dwelt in the temple of every heart—of those who were 'sons of the covenant'.

Likewise in the New Testament the Father dwells in the new temple, the church. Paul asked the Corinthians, 'Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?' (I Cor. 3: 16). They were 'a holy temple in the Lord', and they were 'built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit' (Eph. 2:21-22). That there is a personal indwelling of God, Paul also made clear to the Corinthian believers when he asked, 'Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God?' (I Cor. 6:19).

^{*} *The Book of Isaiah*, ad. lot., 2 vols, Harper and Brothers, n.d.

'Faintness of spirit' is across our world, today. It is obviously from our sin—as the human race—but it is also from 'the wrath of God which is being revealed from heaven upon all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress [hold down] the truth in [acts of] unrighteousness'. The same 'faintness' is across much of the church. Just as the world outside the covenant-people is given to the elements of the apocalyptic 'dragon', 'beasts' and 'Babylon the mother of harlots', so inside the covenant-people—the church—there is also a faintness. The Scriptures are largely discounted by some. Others are caught in various idolatries, and yet others are seeking by human intelligence to stimulate the churches. Methods for reviving the church are many, either by trying to go back to periods of church history when certain doctrines seemed to reform and renew the church of the day, or trying to go forward by using the insights of psychology and sociology as they—in their turn—are generally used to keep humanity in sensibility of purpose and action.

What is apparent in the passage of Isaiah 57:14-21 is that it is God Who moves to effect revival. As we have seen, He does this by revealing Himself as the True, High and Holy One, by relinquishing His judgements and displaying His effective grace, and by His personal indwelling of those who respond to His call to make a straight highway for Him—a direct road into their hearts. Of the person who receives His acts of grace and love, God says,

*I have seen his ways, but I will heal him;
I will lead him and requite him with comfort,
creating for his mourners the fruit of the lips.
Peace, peace to the far and to the near, says the Lord;
and I will heal him.*

This surely means that that fainting one has been renewed in life. He is healed of his wounds that come from rebellion and its judgements. He has been walking a wrong path which is no true path, but now he is restored to the way of God and guided. Security returns to him. So he is comforted, encouraged to live afresh. Those about him who have mourned for his condition, and who, perhaps, themselves have been in the same suffering, now see the hand of God evidently upon him, and they cease their mourning and turn to praise. The beautiful statement of 'Peace, peace, to the far and the near. I will heal them' is spoken by God, and reminds us of Paul's statement in Ephesians 2:17, 'He [Christ] came and preached peace to you who were far off, and peace to those who were near.' This was the peace wrought by the blood of the Cross, ie. reconciliation between God and man. Jeremiah often spoke of people crying 'Peace! Peace!' where there was no peace. God's healing balm would truly heal the wounds of His stricken people.

At the same time, there are the deliberately unrepentant ones. Of them—and to them—He speaks,

*But the wicked are like the tossing sea;
for it cannot rest,
and its waters toss up mire and dirt.
There is no peace, says my God, for the wicked.*

We see, then, as in Exodus 34:6-7, that whilst God forgives the 'iniquity and transgression and sin' of His people, He 'will by no means clear the guilty', ie. the guilty who persist in their sin and will not repent. Revival comes only to those who recognise God's mercy and grace, and advert to it. If we look at the lot of the impenitent, it is a sad one, but in some sense a natural one. All that has ever gone into the mind and memory has been acts of iniquity and moral

pollution. Restlessness is the lot of the wicked. They are ever driven on, and from time to time ‘the mire and dirt’ of past experiences dredges up under the storms of life, and is cast upon the shores of the wicked person. We are reminded of Jude’s terrible words, ‘wild waves of the sea, casting up the foam of their own shame’ (v. 13). There is no known method that man has devised which can bring perpetual peace to the sinner. His sin is always finding him out.

ISRAEL PLEADS FOR REVIVAL

There were times in Israel when there were those who cried to God for revival. They recognised the need of the land. They recognised the signs of God’s wrath and His chastisement, but they also knew the nature of God as their Covenant-Father, and so they sought His face and prayed to Him.

Psalm 85 is an excellent statement of Israel before God, its prayer for revival, and its assurance that He would renew His people:

Lord, thou wast favourable to thy land;
 thou didst restore the fortunes of Jacob.
 Thou didst forgive the iniquity of thy people;
 thou didst pardon all their sin.
 Thou didst withdraw all thy wrath;
 thou didst turn from thy hot anger.
 Restore us again, O God of our salvation,
 and put away thy indignation toward us!
 Wilt thou be angry with us for ever?
 Wilt thou prolong thy anger to all generations?
 Wilt thou not revive us again,
 that thy people may rejoice in thee?
 Show us thy steadfast love, O Lord,

and grant us thy salvation.

Let me hear what God the Lord will speak,
 for he will speak peace to his people,
 to his saints, to those who turn to him in their hearts.

Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him,
 that glory may dwell in our land.

Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet;
 righteousness and peace will kiss each other.

Faithfulness will spring up from the ground,
 and righteousness will look down from the sky.

Yea, the Lord will give what is good,
 and our land will yield its increase.

Righteousness will go before him,
 and make his footsteps a way.

This psalm beautifully fits the pattern of what we have seen in Isaiah 57:14-21. In the first stanza the psalmist acknowledges the goodness of God toward Israel, for He had restored the fortunes of Israel, had seen to it that the people were pardoned for their waywardness, and had turned back His ‘hot anger’. In the second stanza he really acknowledges the fact that God has been justified in being angry with the nation but pleads for God to cease from His wrath *so that they will be revived*. Only then will the people rejoice in their God—the God of their salvation.

In the third stanza he wishes to be quiet and hear what God is saying to him, being assured that ‘he will speak peace to the people’. Stanza four is rich in its anticipation that all the loving character of the Covenant-God will restore Israel from its fallen condition.

In this psalm, the character of God, as He had promised in His revelation to Moses that it would always be (Exod. 34:6-7), is certainly understood. In fact the psalmist *insists* that God be as He promised He would be. Also one can hear

the principle in the whole psalm of what God had told Solomon would be the case with Himself and His dwelling place—the temple which had just been built:

Then the Lord appeared to Solomon in the night, and said to him: 'I have heard your prayer, and have chosen this place for myself as a house of sacrifice. When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command the locust to devour the land, or send pestilence among my people, if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sins and heal their land. Now my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the prayer that is made in this place. For now I have chosen and consecrated this house that my name may be there for ever; my eyes and my heart will be there for all time' (II Chron. 7:12-16).

Notice the elements we have seen in Isaiah 57:14-21 and Psalm 85. (i) there is the mention of 'my name', that is, 'his holy name'; (ii) there is the mention of humbling oneself—it is the humble one who is revived; (iii) there is the mention of the anger which brings drought, plague and famine to Israel. Repentance, turning to God and praying are the elements which will move God to revive His people and their land.

* * *

Further to this is the classic passage on revival which we find in the prophecy of Habakkuk. God told the prophet that He would send the Chaldeans—'a bitter and hasty nation'—to ravage the land of Israel. The prophet then prayed to God for the people. He accepted the fact—though he dreaded it—that Israel must suffer God's anger for its sins, and what sins they had been! He recognises that the suffering will be terrible, but He realises God will also judge

the very people who are the instrument of His anger: the Chaldeans. Look, then, at his prayer for Israel (3:2):

O Lord, I have heard the report of thee,
and thy work, O Lord, do I fear.
In the midst of the years renew [revive] it;
in the midst of the years make it known;
in wrath remember mercy.

He was really saying that judgement must come, but would God please do what He had once done in relation to the oppression of the Egyptians, ie. do a new work, and liberate His oppressed people—reviving firstly through purifying judgement and then through His marvellous mercy.

Again, in Hosea 5: 13 to 6:2 there is another instance of this judgement-revival operation of God. Ephraim and Judah are addressed as the whole people of God who have sinned. Their sin has been added to by their asking help of a foreign power. God will carry out His anger until they repent and turn to Him. Then He will revive them.

When Ephraim saw his sickness,
Judah his wound,
then Ephraim went to Assyria,
and sent to the great king.
But he is not able to cure you
or heal your wound.
For I will be like a lion to Ephraim,
and like a young lion to the house of Judah.
I, even I, will rend and go away,
I will carry off, and none shall rescue.
I will return again in my place,
until they acknowledge their guilt and seek my face,

and in their distress they seek me, saying,
 ‘Come, let us return to the Lord;
 for he has torn, that he may heal us;
 he has stricken, and he will bind us up.
 After two days he will revive us;
 on the third day he will raise us up,
 that we may live before him.’

The prophet then urges them to believe God for this revival and pursue Him in His mercy and grace.

‘Let us know, let us press on to know the Lord;
 his going forth is as sure as the dawn;
 he will come to us as the showers,
 as the spring rains that water the earth.’

In this remarkable passage we see what we have seen before—that when Israel sins and receives God’s anger there is an unalterable law which comes into operation, ie. when the nation repents it is revived. This principle is as immutable as the law of dawns and the annual spring rains! Revival will come!

* * *

All that we have set out above is found expressed in great detail in Nehemiah chapter 9 and in Daniel chapter 9. In the first passage Ezra stood before God and confessed the wonder of God’s grace in choosing Abraham, in liberating Israel from Egypt, and bringing the people to the promised land. Ezra then confessed the sins of the fathers of Israel, stating that God *had* to abandon them to the hands of their enemies. He acknowledged,

‘Many years thou didst bear with them, and didst warn them by thy Spirit, through thy prophets; yet they would not give ear... Never-

theless in thy great mercies thou didst not make an end of them or forsake them; for thou art a gracious and merciful God.’

Ezra further pleaded,

‘Now therefore, our God, the great and mighty and terrible God, who keepest covenant and steadfast love, let not all the hardship seem little to thee that has come upon us...’

He was asking God to make an end to His anger upon the nation, and liberate them from the oppression which was still with them, even as returned exiles. The basis for his plea was the covenant steadfast love of God.

Daniel’s ninth chapter makes an even more extended statement. He opened his address to God by saying,

‘O Lord, the great and terrible God, who keepest covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, we have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly and rebelled, turning aside from thy commandments and ordinances; we have not listened to thy servants the prophets, who spoke in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land.’

In the midst of his address he said,

‘To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness; because we have rebelled against him, and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God by following his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets.’

The chapter then proceeds to acknowledge the righteousness of God in judging and punishing Israel, but Daniel believed his intercession should be heard by God, and answered in accordance with God’s covenant nature, and the promise of II Chronicles 7: 14:

‘Now, therefore, O our God, hearken to the prayer of thy servant and to his supplications, and for thy own sake, O Lord, cause thy face to

shine upon thy sanctuary, which is desolate. O my God, incline thy ear and hear; open thy eyes and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name; for we do not present our supplications before thee on the ground of our righteousness, but on the ground of thy great mercy. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, give heed and act; delay not, for thy own sake, O my God, because thy city and thy people are called by thy name.'

The prayer was heard, for Gabriel the archangel came to give Daniel the answer to his prayer. The answer was detailed. Many things would have to happen before the prophet's prayer could be answered in full, yet its answer would be a process of history, an action of God amongst the nations, from which He was not absent, but present as 'the living God'.

* * *

From all these Scriptures we see the solution to our present situation in the world. God has commanded all men everywhere to repent. The obligation is upon all men to come to God in repentance. God's wrath is presently being revealed upon all who persist in their sin and rebellion. The human race will only be brought to life when it acknowledges Messiah and seeks God's forgiveness from sins through the Cross of His Son. The Spirit of God has come to bring the Gospel of God to the nations, and to each person in the world.

Even so, it is the church which feels most keenly the need for revival. The church, too, knows the same principles in the New Covenant as Israel knew in the former covenant. If the church follows modern idolatry, then God's anger will be upon it. If the time is ripe for judgement, then it will begin in the house of God. If in that household the high and

lofty nature of God is acknowledged, and if men and women become humbled and contrite, then He will visit them to 'revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite'.

The way of repentance and self-humbling is known to us. God is waiting to revive us. If prior to that reviving we need the purifying judgement, then let it be. Let our prayer be,

O Lord, I have heard the report of thee,
and thy work, O Lord, do I fear.
In the midst of the years renew [revive] it;
in the midst of the years make it known;

and let us also pray,

Come, let us return to the Lord;
for he has torn, that he may heal us;
he has stricken, and he will bind us up.
After two days he will revive us;
on the third day he will raise us up,
that we may live before him.
Let us know, let us press on to know the Lord;
his going forth is as sure as the dawn;
he will come to us as the showers,
as the spring rains that water the earth.

Yes, with Israel let us pray,

Restore us again, O God of our salvation,
and put away thy indignation toward us!
Wilt thou be angry with us for ever?
Wilt thou prolong thy anger to all generations?
Wilt thou not revive us again,
that thy people may rejoice in thee?
Show us thy steadfast love, O Lord,
and grant us thy salvation.

Having seen the principles by which God revives His people we can come before Him accordingly. The New

Testament tells us that the Father, the Son, and the Spirit come to dwell in us. God dwells with the one who is humble and contrite to revive that one. 'He who loves; John tells us, 'abides in God, and God in Him.' As Paul put it, 'For me to live is Christ!' This is, of course, true revival. The ears and the heart of the Lord are in His true temple, the living church.

* * *

What do we say in conclusion? Simply this: that Scripture teaches us that God always works consistently with His own nature. Naturally, it is not easy for our minds to grasp the whole of His Being. We tend to think of Him in regard to His different works as Creator, Father, King, Redeemer and Restorer of all things. We do not see His character as One. Hence, when we do a study as we have just done, regarding the way He works in revival, we tend to make it to be one of His many modes of operating. We also think that whilst He worked with Israel this way, and has even worked with the church this way, that His principle of judgement, release of judgement followed by an action of great grace and love, is a 'one-off' or a 'one-on' thing. No, for He worked time and again on this principle with Israel; works time and again with His church and Christian nations in the same way, and works with each of His children in the same way.

The value of our conclusion will be that we see that He constantly works this way in the life of each believer. We are constantly tempted to idolatry, to drifting from Him, to acts which are wholly inconsistent with our union with Him. So He contends with us, is angry, smites us, chastises

us, and then ceases chiding, and gives us His grace and love, so that we become humble and contrite and seek His reviving—the reviving which comes from His indwelling our hearts. If we see this is what happens, then it may help us to understand the storms which often assault us in our lives. It may also help to keep us away from things harmful, and establish us in the things of true life. We learn to refuse things that bring death, and cling to the things which are of life.