

AFTER SHAKINGS - AWAKENINGS

Paul and Nuala O'Higgins www.reconciliationoutreach.net (Jan. 2021)

Many Christians in America are confused and disappointed over the outcome of the election. The presidency of Donald Trump, whose policies favored the church and the interests of Israel more than any other US president, have been replaced by a regime that is far less supportive of Christian values and of Israel. Many had hoped, and believed that Trump's reelection would help promote Christianity in the land and be part of the new revival we all pray for.

The prayers for revival and spiritual awaking in the land will NOT go unanswered. Christianity often flourishes more in times of persecution than in times of political favor. It is good when governments reflect the values of Christianity and sad when they do not. However, even when our governments become hostile to Christianity we should never be dismayed. God's hand is not shortened, and He can move powerfully even when the church has no political support or covering. In the first century, Christianity flourished under the rule of a hostile and corrupt political order. In China, Christianity actually exploded in great revival when the government embraced Marxist atheism and turned hostile to the church. In Europe and the USA, the favor which Christianity enjoyed for centuries has diminished. In spite of this we need not be disheartened, discouraged, or weakened in our faith. We can still look for the Lord to move by His Spirit directly from His throne in a power that only He can display that is not dependent on any man or political administration.

BEFORE AWAKENINGS COME SHAKINGS.

The absolute precondition for revival and spiritual awakening is conviction of sin - i.e. when we begin to recognize that there is something desperately missing in our lives when we ignore God and His ways. Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to convict the world (those who are paying no attention to God) of sin, righteousness and of judgment. Conviction is not an negative, but, when responded to results in freedom from hurtful behavior and restores us to the joy of the Lord

"But in fact, it is best for you that I go away, because if I don't, the Advocate won't come. If I do go away, then I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will convict the world of its sin, and of God's righteousness, and of the coming judgment. The world's sin is that it refuses to believe in me." (John 16.7-9)

Because of the dedication of the pilgrims and many of the early pioneer settlers America became a great nation. The pilgrims dedicated themselves and the land to the advance of gospel leaving Americans with a unique godly heritage. However, the nation is also ravaged by sin and its effects, as many either ignore God or refuse to allow Him transform them with His life and love. The sins of addiction, self-centeredness, sexual immorality, pornography violence, devastate the nation.

We believe the shakings of the last year are part of the conviction process. The turmoil created by the Covid plague and the hatred manifested by left- and right-wing extremists have exposed the coarseness of our society and the selfishness of many people. Our complacency has been shaken, our faults have been exposed, and our need has been revealed. The Holy Spirit is exposing this, not to condemn us, but to show us the way out and to remind us that we were made for better things. God is calling us out of the house of slavery to sin and selfishness to a realm of true freedom under His care, where we live by the rule of love for one another and even love for our enemies.

A Higher Calling

In the noise created by political strife it is easy to get caught up in the emotion and in argument.

Throughout history many people have been called in to exercise influence in the realm of politics and in social commentary and reform. Their work is important. However, Yeshua never commissioned us to put the fallen world under laws that were designed for New Creation people. He did not tell us to take dominion over our society but simply to influence it. Our task is to let His light shine through us into the darkness and to influence our societies like leaven with our actions. Above all He sent us out to invite people to enter His Kingdom - a new realm - through faith, repentance, and the work of the Cross and Resurrection.

Through the influence of dominion theology and other similar teachings, we have become burdened with a task the Lord never gave us of 'fixing' the world through prayer and activism. He taught us to pray and work for His Kingdom to advance, for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the advance of the word of God.

When we drift away from the message and commission of the Kingdom of God as given by Jesus, we also drift away from the anointing and blessing that propelled the gospel in the first century and later in times of great awakening and missionary advance. We become weighed down with heavy burdens that He never gave us and can miss bearing the special burden He gives us.

"Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." (Matthew 11.29-30)

Our task is to invite people from the surrounding immoral world to join us in the Kingdom where they are forgiven and empowered by the New Life of the Spirit to know God and live by His ways. In this way we become an influence in the secular world. Jesus never anticipated a world ruled over by the church until His return. When He returns, He will take David's throne in Jerusalem and will rule over all nations.

In recent years, however, there has been a decline of Christianity in the nation. America, like all other nations, is weighed down with the chaos created by its own sinfulness. No government or political movement can stop this. Only the gospel of grace and transformations, through the gift of the Holy Spirit can reverse this. Righteousness cannot come to any nation through government but only through the gospel - the message of the Kingdom of God that connects every believer to the throne and providence of Heaven through Messiah Yeshua.

As we stand at the threshold of a new season of revival, the Holy Spirit yearns to bring our focus back to our commission to advance the gospel of the Kingdom through prayer, preaching, and through the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Revivals and awakenings will come when our prayer is re-focused on seeking the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all flesh and when we stand in a posture of love towards all. We will then harness our energy to go to the lost with the message of reconciliation through the Cross, teaching them to walk in the ways of Jesus. This is, where we will recover the anointing of the Holy Spirit, the call of God and the harvest of the nations.

We trust you will find this teaching helpful and will give you a greater awareness of the freedom we already have in HIS Kingdom, regardless of the sinfulness, corruption and immorality that may exist within our governments. His truth will make - and keep - us free.