



COME, and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. ² After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight. ³ Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth. ⁴ O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee? for your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away. ⁵ Therefore have I hewed them by the prophets; I have slain them by the words of my mouth: and thy judgments are as the light that goeth forth. ⁶ For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings. ⁷ But they like men have transgressed the covenant: there have they dealt treacherously against me. ⁸ Gilead is a city of them that work iniquity, and is polluted with blood. ⁹ And as troops of robbers wait for a man, so the company of priests murder in the way by consent: for they commit lewdness. ¹⁰ I have seen an horrible thing in the house of Israel: there is the whoredom of Ephraim, Israel is defiled. ¹¹ Also, O Judah, he hath set an harvest for thee, when I returned the captivity of my people. (Hosea 6:1-11)

We attribute the beauty of a rosebud solely to the work of the Lord, but what of the wilted rose? Is it not also conforming to God's plan of natural law and renewal? The Lord will harshly rebuke and bring sorrows upon His people who wander from Him; but He is also the only One who can heal their land and restore their souls. Hosea is a prophet called of God. He stands very near to the Lord in His pronouncements. It is for

this reason that he counsels Israel to *Come and return to the Lord*. Just as God raised up our Redeemer on the Third Day, so shall He raise up His people who are securely abiding in the Ark of Christ. *For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:* (1 Corinthians 15:3-4)

The Prodigal was never forgotten by his father, even though he went from his father's sight. It was only when he reappeared on the horizon over which he had left did his father embrace him and offer shoes of liberty for his feet, a ring of authority for his finger, and a robe of righteousness to cover his nakedness of sin. *After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight.* We cannot be the 'apple of the Lord's Eye' if we remove ourselves from His sight. We must remain near the Lord in every way if we will enjoy His love and Providential protection – just as the chicks remain near the mother hen so to withdraw under her wings for protection from the predator.

Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth. When we '*draw near by faith*' to the Lord, we will fall under His counsel and teaching. In our following after Christ, we come to know the beauty of the morning light of His countenance. The Lord's coming is as the dawning of that morning Light. Even though we have gone into darkness, our return to Him will be as light dawning on dark fields. So the rain which He sends before planting season to prepare the earth to receive seed, and the latter rain to make a fullness of harvest; so, the heart is prepared by the soft coaxing of the Holy Spirit to receive that great love and truth imparted by our Lord. After such hard chastisement, our scarred souls need healing. The coming sunrise will provide that healing in abundance once we have returned: *But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.* (Malachi 4:2)

The Lord responds to our pious resolutions, just as He responds to those of Israel, as if they were of a permanent change of heart. But too often the resolve of the heart is not communicated to the dedication of spirit. Our resolve is too temporary. We are capricious to follow up our expressed repentance. *O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee? for your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away.* Civilizations as well as individuals undergo revivals that are often dated. Western civilization was touched by the brightness of the Gospel of Christ and all her advancements and enlightenments were embellished by faith and trust in God. But she has fallen far below her former standing in the eyes of the Lord. The Great Awakening's in America reset our spiritual compasses upon the Sovereign Lord of our liberties; but we fell from the lofty plain of our rebirth of faith in short order.

It seems to me that society has the trait of becoming bored with righteousness and develops itching ears to *hear a new thing*. An example: Due to persistent wars and unrest, South Korea was, a few decades ago, a land of deprivation and poverty; however, with the broad acceptance of the Christian faith, the prosperity of Korea has accelerated to amazing levels. Today, Korea seems to be forgetting from whence she came and has begun to feel she **DESERVES** the blessings of God instead of those blessings being granted by His grace to His people.

God never brings judgment on His own except He warns them first. He sent Hosea to warn Israel and, to a lesser degree, Judah. The judgment was surely coming. He warns America today – at first with subtle tact, but finally the judgment will be full

and hard to bear. The warnings of Hosea to Israel and Judah are just as valid for our own beloved land. We have rejected moral teaching in public schools, banned prayer and the Bible. We have sinned egregiously in the legalization of the murder of innocent babies – up to sixty million since Roe v. Wade. We have granted the dignity of marriage to perversions of sex. Now we are suffering the consequences of sin uncontrolled. Our children have no moral compass. Home training has failed in that regard, and the schools are proponents of wickedness and not morality. There is division of every sort within our borders.

There is no longer the common standard of God's Word to govern our actions. *Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.* (2 Thessalonians 2:3-12)

Therefore have I hewed them by the prophets; I have slain them by the words of my mouth: and thy judgments are as the light that goeth forth. For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings. Just as in the case of false churches of our day, Israel could not fathom the source of their calamity. There is only one SOURCE – God Almighty! What church in America does not preach more of prosperity and tithing than on the solid ground of God's mercy, grace, and love? They have become temples of commerce rather than houses of prayer. Our sacrifices mean nothing apart from the truth and knowledge of God's Word. *Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.* (1 Corinthians 13:1-3)

Conclusion

And as troops of robbers wait for a man, so the company of priests murder in the way by consent: for they commit lewdness. I have seen an horrible thing in the house of Israel: there is the whoredom of Ephraim, Israel is defiled. Also, O Judah, he hath set an harvest for thee, when I returned the captivity of my people. Our observance is returned to the fact that sin begins with a failure of the ministers to stand up to defend against evil and apostasy. America will become captive in their own lands without a soon awakening.