

Revivals And Church History :: Where is your God? by Mamdouh Riad

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When Israel was right with the Lord, the glory of God (His manifest presence) was upon them. Not only were they acutely aware of it, but even unbelievers around them recognized that God was in their midst: Rahab, a heathen, told Joshua and Caleb: "For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt" 11 And as soon as we heard these things, our hearts melted for the Lord your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath. (Joshua 2: 10, 11)

Similarly, in the New Testament, when the glory of God was present among the early church in the book of Acts, the fear (awe) of the Lord fell upon all.
(Believers and unbelievers)

"So great fear came upon all the church and upon all who heard these things" (Acts 5:11).

In contrast, when Israel departed from the Lord in sin and compromise, the glory of God lifted off them and they lost their acute awareness of Him. Their enemies overcame them and, rather than recognizing that God was in their midst, they mocked and taunted them, saying, "Where is your God?" Hence, we find that the cry for revival among Israel in the Old Testament throughout the psalms and the prophets is coupled by the repeated prayer, Why should the nations say, where is your God? "Spare Your people, O LORD, and do not give Your heritage to reproach, That the nations should rule over them. Why should they say among the peoples, "Where is their God?" (Joel 2:17)

Similarly, Jesus said in the New Testament, "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men" (Matthew 5:13).

Why are we pursuing the glory of God in our midst? For the sake of the glory of God! As Martyn-Lloyd Jones put it:

"I am calling you to pray for revival. Yes, but why should you pray for revival? Why should anybody pray for revival? And the answer that is first given here is this: a concern for the glory of God."

We pursue unity, consecration, and united prayer to prepare ourselves for the manifest presence of God among us, so that unbelievers would encounter the Lord in our midst and their testimony would be "Truly God is in your midst" as they come to know Jesus, rather than the body of Christ be weakened by division/polarization, sin and compromise, and unbelievers say to us "Where is your God?"

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