

*Revive Us Again! Psalm 85*

PSALMS OF THE SONS OF KORAH

REVIVE US AGAIN!  
PSALM 85

*Be Still*

**And Know That I Am God**

I will be exalted among the nations  
I will be exalted in the earth!

Psalm 46:10

[Knowing-Jesus.com](http://Knowing-Jesus.com)

T. M. and Susie Moore

*A Scriptorium Study*

**The Fellowship of Ailbe**

Psalms of the Sons of Korah: Revive Us Again!

Psalm 85

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## Introduction to Psalm 85

The Christian vantage point on life has us looking in four directions at once. Each of these is glimpsed in Psalm 85.

Looking around, the sons of Korah were acutely aware of Israel's need for revival. As they looked back on Israel's history, they were able to recall instances when God had restored His people to their proper relationship with Him. They looked up to Him, and cried out for Him to revive them again. And they looked ahead to the day when revival would come by the mercy, truth, righteousness, and grace of God.

Here is a psalm to pray for ourselves and our churches, that God might do again what He has done before, leading His people through repentance to intense seeking of restoration, and bringing revival, renewal, and awakening to the world.

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May the Lord bless your work in this study, that you may grow to know Him better, love Him more, and serve Him more joyfully.

T. M. and Susie Moore

## 1 Look Up, Look Back

### *Opening Prayer: Psalm 85.1-3*

LORD, You have been favorable to Your land;  
You have brought back the captivity of Jacob.  
You have forgiven the iniquity of Your people;  
You have covered all their sin.

### *Selab*

You have taken away all Your wrath;  
You have turned from the fierceness of Your anger.

### *Sing Psalm 85.1-3*

(Lyons: [\*O Worship the King\*](#))

O Lord, You Your favor showed to Your land;  
Your people You saved by Your mighty hand.  
Their sins You forgave, all Your wrath You withdrew;  
You turned back the anger which to them was due.

*Read Psalm 85, meditate on verses 1-3*

### *Preparation*

1. To what are the psalmists looking back in this psalm?
2. What are they remembering about what God has done?

### *Meditation*

Everyone lives from within a certain vantage point on life. Some folks are oriented to futures constructed out of little more than wishful thinking. Others are stuck in the past, and live lives of resentment, insecurity, and spite. Still others think only about the present; they've learned nothing from the past and they don't care about tomorrow. Live for the day!

All these vantage points find expression in Psalm 85, but the first word of the psalm (not counting the superscription) points to the most important vantage point of all: "LORD"

As Christians we should be constantly looking up, looking to Jesus, seated in glory (Col. 3.1-3), looking beyond the veil of time and space into the unseen/hoped-for things that are the essence of faith (Heb. 11.1), and looking into the face of Jesus for the glory of God that radiates there (2 Cor. 4.6).

The psalmists, at the same time they're looking up, are also looking back, remembering the good work God has done for His underserving and unreliable people in the past. He has shown them His favor (v. 1), though they were often unbelieving and disobedient. He delivered them from Egypt, for they had not strength to do so themselves. He forgave their sins (v. 2) and established a system of worship to enable them to deal with their sins regularly. And He set His love upon them (v. 3) and blessed them as a people in the land which He promised to give their forebears.

Looking up to God naturally leads us to look back to all the many ways He has been good to us in the past. Look up and look back, and you'll be ready to look ahead and look around as you journey with the Lord each day.

*Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162*

Imagine for a moment, that you have greatly angered someone. And that hot displeasure toward you is

deserved. There is an overwhelming and seemingly unrepairable rift between you. Hope for resolution is fading.

And then suddenly, your heartfelt and sincere apology is accepted, and peace is restored.

The people written about in Psalm 85 experienced an even better forgiveness from the LORD.

Let's rehearse God's part in this stunning and comforting transaction. The psalmists pray:

You have been favorable to Your land.

You have brought back the captivity.

You have forgiven the iniquity of Your people.

You have covered all their sin.

You have taken away all Your wrath.

You have turned from the fierceness of Your anger. (Ps. 85.1-3)

Keep in mind that they are writing about the LORD, our God. The supreme Ruler of the Cosmos. The Creator of everything seen and unseen. The Mighty God. The Everlasting Father. King of kings. LORD of lords. "Let the heavens declare His righteousness, for God Himself is Judge" (Ps. 50.6).

And this psalm of forgiveness, hope, and restoration is not just about people of long ago, it is also about us. The LORD: is favorable toward us, brings us out of captivity to sin, forgives us, covers over our sins, takes away His wrath from us, and turns away from His fierce anger toward us. All because of Jesus (Ps. 85.1-3).

Paul captures the essence of a correct vantage point in Galatians 2.20:

"I have been crucified with Christ;  
it is no longer I who live,  
but Christ lives in me; and  
the life which I now live in the flesh  
I live by faith in the Son of God,  
Who loved me and gave Himself for me."

Look at that love, forgiveness, and restoration!

Then "press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3.14).

#### *Reflection*

1. What do we mean by the Christian's "vantage point" on life? Why are all these different "looks" important?
2. How can you see that what the psalmists wrote in verses 1-3 applies to us as well as to Israel?
3. What should be our response as we reflect on all God's work for us?

*With this psalm, the people prayed for a revival of their spirits and a renewal in their land. The ultimate fulfillment of their prayer would be in the coming glorious kingdom of the Savior Jesus. Earl Radmacher (1931-2014), NKJV Study Bible Notes on Psalm 85*

#### *Closing Prayer: Psalm 85.10-13*

Pray today, and pray every day, that God will reach down to us from heaven to forgive our sins, revive and restore us, and awaken the world to the Good News of Jesus.

#### *Sing Psalm 85.10-13*

(Lyons: [\*O Worship the King\*](#))

In Jesus God's grace and truth are combined;

*Revive Us Again! Psalm 85*

both goodness and peace in Him do we find.  
Truth springs from the earth as He walks in our midst,  
and righteousness flows from the heav'ns as a gift.

The Lord by His grace will give what is good;  
our land will produce abundance of food.  
And righteousness will go before the Lord's face,  
and make of His footsteps a way in this place.

## 2 Look Around

*Opening Prayer: Psalm 85.4, 5*

Restore us, O God of our salvation,  
And cause Your anger toward us to cease.  
Will You be angry with us forever?  
Will You prolong Your anger to all generations?

*Sing Psalm 85.4-9*

(Lyons: [O Worship the King](#))

Restore us, O God, renew us in peace,  
and cause all Your wrath against us to cease.  
Will You evermore all Your wrath to us show?  
Revive us that we may Your joy again know.

Lord, show us Your love; restore us, we pray!  
And help us to hear the words that You say.  
Speak peace to Your people; in truth let us stand.  
We fear You; let glory and grace fill our land.

*Read Psalm 85.4, 5*

*Preparation*

1. What seems to have been the state of Israel's relationship with God?
2. What did the psalmists seek from the Lord?

*Meditation*

The first word in this section is "Restore us", which is one word in the Hebrew language. Obviously, this word suggests some looking around as seen against the backdrop of the grandeur of God and the greatness of His works (vv. 1-3). As the psalmists looked around at the state of things in Israel, they knew the people needed to be revived.

In 1 Kings 11.1-13, the anger of the Lord became focused on Solomon because of his turning away from the Lord to gratify his own lusts (read about this in Ecclesiastes 2, or [listen here](#)). God richly blessed Israel in Solomon's day, when the sons of Korah served in the temple. But he turned away, and much of Israel with him. The sons of Korah – like Asaph, their contemporary (cf. Pss. 73-80) – could see that the people had lost sight of God and His mighty works in the past, and they were coming under His anger (note the threefold mention of this in these two verses). The result would be the rending of the nation and the departure of ten tribes to the north.

The Christian vantage point on life requires that we pay careful attention to our daily walk and how we use our time (Eph. 5.15-17). We need to submit continuously to the Spirit of God as He searches our thoughts, affections, and ways (Ps. 139.23, 24). Whenever, looking around in our lives, we find that we are out of line with God and His will, we need to repent of our sin and call on Him to restore us to His favor and promises. Look up, look back, and look around – all at the same time, and continuously. Only thus can we avoid coming under God's anger and discipline (Heb. 12.3-11).

*Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162*

*Unhappiness is the difference between what we expect and what we experience.*  
(A bit of wisdom gleaned from a secular magazine years ago.)

Jesus was hungry, and in the distance He spied a leafy fig tree; but when He arrived at the tree, He found no figs on it. In fact, only the leaves were found because it was not even the season for figs. To the tree He said, "Let no one eat fruit from you ever again." By the next day the fig tree was dried up from the roots. A goner. Now this might seem harsh, given that it was not the season for figs, but when Jesus expects something from a tree, or from us, He had better experience it. (Mark 11:12-22)

God was angry because He expected obedience and faith from His children, yet what He experienced from them was the opposite. And they asked: "Will You be angry with us forever? Will You prolong Your anger to all generations?" (Ps. 85: 5) How can we be restored? How can we prove that we are sorry?

The apostle Paul brings God's vantage point to these questions in a letter to Timothy:

"I charge *you* therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word! Be ready in season *and* out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching." "But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry" (2 Tim. 4:1, 2, 5).

In today's vernacular: Work your Personal Mission Field.

God expects this from us. Let's make sure He experiences it!

#### *Reflection*

1. Does God still get angry with His people? Why? How can we know when He is angry?
2. What can we do to keep from coming under the anger of God?
3. What's one thing you can do to become more consistent in working your Personal Mission Field?

*The first section of this psalm already says God's anger has turned away from the people (v. 3). Yet until the restoration is complete, the people still feel the effects of God's wrath. This suggests an understanding that the people's troubles were due to their own sin disciplined by God. Earl Radmacher (1931-2014), NKJV Study Bible Note on Psalm 85:4-7*

#### *Closing Prayer: Psalm 84:10-13*

Thank God that in Jesus our sins are forgiven. Pray that He will restore us to faithfulness and obedience, so that He may bless us with every good gift and use us for His glory.

#### *Sing Psalm 85:10-13*

(Lyons: [\*O Worship the King\*](#))

In Jesus God's grace and truth are combined;  
both goodness and peace in Him do we find.  
Truth springs from the earth as He walks in our midst,  
and righteousness flows from the heav'ns as a gift.

The Lord by His grace will give what is good;  
our land will produce abundance of food.  
And righteousness will go before the Lord's face,  
and make of His footsteps a way in this place.



### 3 Look Ahead

*Opening Prayer: Psalm 85.6, 7*

Will You not revive us again,  
That Your people may rejoice in You?  
Show us Your mercy, LORD,  
And grant us Your salvation.

*Sing Psalm 85.4-9*

(Lyons: [\*O Worship the King\*](#))

Restore us, O God, renew us in peace,  
and cause all Your wrath against us to cease.  
Will You evermore all Your wrath to us show?  
Revive us that we may Your joy again know.

Lord, show us Your love; restore us, we pray!  
And help us to hear the words that You say.  
Speak peace to Your people; in truth let us stand.  
We fear You; let glory and grace fill our land.

*Read Psalm 85.6, 7*

*Preparation*

1. What are the psalmists seeking from the Lord?
2. What does that entail?

*Meditation*

The psalmists get to the point of their psalm: Revive us! God alone can revive His people. He has done so in the past, and He can do it again, whenever He chooses.

And the sons of Korah, looking around at what was happening in Israel in their day, believed the time was right for God to revive His people again; and we find them looking ahead to a coming revival and renewal in the salvation of the Lord.

Revival comes by the mercy of God (v. 7). Revival brings us a fuller and richer measure of our great salvation (v. 7). Consequently, revival leaves all who experience it rejoicing and giving thanks to the Lord (v. 6).

We cannot revive ourselves. We're neither clever nor strong enough. Only God can revive us, and He promises to do so when His people seek Him in prayer (2 Chron. 7.14; Jer. 33.3). By looking ahead to the coming of revival, and all the blessings that entails, we can begin to know the joy of the Lord in anticipation. And that anticipation of joy should move us to seek the Lord in prayer, that He might revive us again.

*Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162*

It is true. "We cannot revive ourselves." But what we *can* do is humble ourselves and turn from our wicked way (2 Chron. 7.14).

Revival will never happen until we are repentant. Exceedingly so. A dear friend of mine used to pray, "Lord, help me to see myself (and my sin), and then help me to see Jesus!" We must have hearts that are able to recognize our own shortcomings and then look to Jesus "the author and finisher of our faith" (Heb. 12.2).

*Revive Us Again! Psalm 85*

The sons of Korah used the word “again” which tells us they had been through this before. They had experienced the faithfulness of God, and they longed to be a part of that again. “Will You not revive us again?” (Ps. 85.6)

And because they had known His reviving Spirit before, they can anticipate their own rejoicing (v. 6).

These people were in touch with their own neediness, therefore they cried out to Him: “Show us Your mercy, LORD, and grant us Your salvation” (Ps. 85.7).

“Out of the depths I have cried to You, O LORD;  
Lord hear my voice!  
Let Your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.  
If You, LORD, should mark iniquities,  
O Lord, who could stand?  
But *there is* forgiveness with You,  
that You may be feared” (Ps. 130.1-4).

“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 Jn. 1.8, 9).

Now we can look ahead, and plead with the LORD, to revive us. Again!

*Reflection*

1. What is revival? What would revival look like?
2. Only God can bring revival. Does this mean we have no role in this matter? Explain.
3. How should seeking the Lord for revival feature in your prayer life?

*Let us therefore learn, that although God may not immediately grant us manifest tokens of his returning favor, yet we must not cease to persevere in earnest prayer. If it is objected, that then God has promised in vain that his anger would be of short duration, I answer, that if we entertain suitable views of our own sins, his anger will assuredly appear to be always of short continuance; and if we call to remembrance the everlasting course of his mercy, we will confess that his anger endures but for a moment.* John Calvin (1509-1564), *Commentary on the Psalm 85.5-8*

*Closing Prayer: Psalm 85.10-13*

How do you need to know the goodness of the Lord in the day ahead? Pray about each activity before you today. Commit it to the Lord, and ask Him to give you grace to help in your time of need.

*Sing Psalm 85.10-13*

(Lyons: [\*O Worship the King\*](#))

In Jesus God’s grace and truth are combined;  
both goodness and peace in Him do we find.  
Truth springs from the earth as He walks in our midst,  
and righteousness flows from the heav’ns as a gift.

The Lord by His grace will give what is good;  
our land will produce abundance of food.  
And righteousness will go before the Lord’s face,  
and make of His footsteps a way in this place.

## 4 Look Up

*Opening Prayer: Psalm 85.9, 10*

Surely His salvation is near to those who fear Him,  
That glory may dwell in our land.  
Mercy and truth have met together;  
Righteousness and peace have kissed.

*Sing Psalm 85.4-9*

(Lyons: [\*O Worship the King\*](#))

Restore us, O God, renew us in peace,  
and cause all Your wrath against us to cease.  
Will You evermore all Your wrath to us show?  
Revive us that we may Your joy again know.

Lord, show us Your love; restore us, we pray!  
And help us to hear the words that You say.  
Speak peace to Your people; in truth let us stand.  
We fear You; let glory and grace fill our land.

*Read Psalm 85.9, 10*

*Preparation*

1. For what purpose does God grant His salvation?
2. What things have been united in the coming of salvation?

*Meditation*

We recall from verse 1 that the sons of Korah are looking up to God, seeking salvation and restoration from Him (v. 4).

Note the condition on which God grants His salvation: Salvation is for those who fear Him (v. 9). That's true when we first believe, and it's true for gaining greater measures of the Lord's salvation as we walk with Him (cf. Deut. 10.12, 13).

And why does God save or restore us? For His glory, only and always. God is glorified when we are saved, and as we grow in our salvation, because salvation generally results in praise, thanks, and obedient service to God. When we live this way, others see the hope that is within us and are drawn to learn more about this salvation (1 Pet. 3.15; cf. Mic. 4.1-8).

Thus, as we are saved and introduce others to salvation, joy abounds (v. 6), and God is glorified.

But from where does this salvation come? It comes from the fusion of mercy, truth, righteousness, and peace, all bundled and bestowed on those who fear the Lord (v. 10). Only God can bring such virtues together, and He has done so only in our Lord Jesus. He is God's truth. God's mercy is poured out on us by His pouring His wrath out on Jesus. He has fulfilled all righteousness for us, and He is the Prince of peace.

As you pray for revival, look up to Jesus, seated in glory. Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh (Rom. 13.14). Then go forth, clothed in Him and rejoicing all along your way.

*Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162*

Mercy and truth come face-to-face for a common purpose.

Then righteousness and peace touch with the lips as a mark of affection or greeting.

There is a progression of events in the course of our salvation.

“But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in *His* kindness toward us in Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2.4-7).

“Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me’” (Jn. 14. 6). They met.

“For He made Him who knew no sin to *be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Cor. 5.21).

“Great peace have those who love Your law, and nothing causes them to stumble” (Ps. 119.165).

“You will keep *him* in perfect peace, *whose* mind is stayed *on You*, because he trusts in You” (Is. 26.3).

“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you...” (Jn. 14. 27)

“For He Himself is our peace...” (Eph. 2.14). They kissed.

And the meeting and kissing are “for His glory, only and always”.

#### *Reflection*

1. How do mercy and truth come together in Jesus?
2. How do righteousness and peace “kiss” in Jesus?
3. Looking to Jesus is the key to revival. Explain.

*Through Christ, the pardoned sinner becomes fruitful in good works, and by looking to and trusting in the Saviour's righteousness, finds his feet set in the way of his steps. Righteousness is a sure guide, both in meeting God, and in following him.*  
Matthew Henry (1662-1714), *Commentary on the Psalm 85.9, 10*

#### *Closing Prayer: Psalm 84.5-7*

Seek the Lord for revival – for you, for your church, and for the Christian Church all over the world.

#### *Sing Psalm 85.10-13*

(Lyons: [O Worship the King](#))

In Jesus God's grace and truth are combined;

both goodness and peace in Him do we find.

Truth springs from the earth as He walks in our midst,

and righteousness flows from the heav'ns as a gift.

The Lord by His grace will give what is good;

our land will produce abundance of food.

And righteousness will go before the Lord's face,

and make of His footsteps a way in this place.

## 5 Looking Good

*Opening Prayer: Psalm 85.11, 12*

Truth shall spring out of the earth,  
And righteousness shall look down from heaven.  
Yes, the LORD will give *what is* good;  
And our land will yield its increase.

*Sing Psalm 85.10-13*

(Lyons: [\*O Worship the King\*](#))

In Jesus God's grace and truth are combined;  
both goodness and peace in Him do we find.  
Truth springs from the earth as He walks in our midst,  
and righteousness flows from the heav'ns as a gift.

The Lord by His grace will give what is good;  
our land will produce abundance of food.  
And righteousness will go before the Lord's face,  
and make of His footsteps a way in this place.

*Read Psalm 85.11, 12*

*Preparation*

1. To what are the psalmists looking forward?
2. What appear to be the main "ingredients" for this to happen?

*Meditation*

These two verses continue the look-up-look-ahead vantage point of this psalm. Salvation and goodness will come to the world when truth and righteousness fuse in revival, renewal, and awakening (v. 11). Truth springs up from the earth as He Who is the truth (Jn. 14.6) enlarges His Presence and power within His people (Acts 1.8). The people of truth meet the gaze of righteousness from the Righteous One at the Father's right hand, and they drink in that gaze with revival and rejoicing (v. 6).

But again, all this is the work of God's grace. He must "give what is good" or no good will come (v. 12). Our duty is to wait on the Lord in prayer, believing that He will cause His goodness to be made known in the land of the living (Ps. 27.13, 14).

That word "increase" in verse 12 derives from the Hebrew word from which comes "Jubilee." The year of Jubilee in ancient Israel was part of the every-seven-year Sabbath, a time of goodness, rest, bounty, provision, peace, and rejoicing in the Lord (Lev. 25.8-16). Israel never kept those required years of celebration. For 490 years they ignored that aspect of the Law of God, with the result that God sent them into captivity in Babylon for 70 years – one year for each of the neglected Sabbath years, including the years of Jubilee..

But the sons of Korah longed for that day to come. And it has come in our Lord Jesus Christ (Lk. 4.16-21). The Jubilee is upon us! Are we living as jubilant people, eagerly seeking and anticipating the goodness, truth, mercy, righteousness, and grace of God to abound throughout the earth?

*Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162*

"Truth shall spring out of the earth..." (Ps. 85.11)

“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork” (Ps. 19.1).  
“Let the heavens declare His righteousness...” (Ps. 50.6).

Truth should also spring out from His people:

“We give thanks to You, O God, we give thanks! For Your wondrous works declare that Your name is near” (Ps. 75.1).

“Praise the LORD! Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD!” (Ps. 150.1, 6)

“Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of *our* lips, giving thanks to His name” (Heb. 13.15).

“Then a voice came from the throne, saying, ‘Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!’” (Rev. 19.5)

Luke 19.37-40 records truth springing forth out of His people, and if necessary, out of the earth: “Then, as He was now drawing near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen, saying:

‘ “*Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the LORD!*”

Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!’

And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd,

‘Teacher, rebuke Your disciples.’

But He answered and said to them,

‘I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out.’”

Let the truth of Jesus spring from your life!

“Oh, bless our God, you peoples!

And make the voice of His praise to be heard,

Who keeps our soul among the living, and

does not allow our feet to be moved” (Ps. 66.8, 9).

#### *Reflection*

1. What is the Gospel? How would you explain the Gospel to an unbelieving friend?
2. What are some things that keep believers from being a source of truth in the world? How can we overcome these obstacles?
3. How can believers encourage one another to let truth spring from them throughout their Personal Mission Fields?

*The union of God’s mercy and truth and His righteousness and peace describes the way things ought to be, or the state of peace spoken of in v. 8. The blending of the ideals of truth and righteousness in v. 11 suggests a vision of the kingdom of God (see Is. 11). Earl Radmacher (1931-2014), NKJV Study Bible Note on Psalm 85.10, 11*

#### *Closing Prayer: Psalm 85.4-9*

Pray for revival. Pray for the goodness of the Lord to come in the land of the living. Pray that God will use you to show and declare the mercy, truth, righteousness, peace, and grace of Jesus today.

#### *Sing Psalm 85.4-9*

(Lyons: [\*O Worship the King\*](#))

Restore us, O God, renew us in peace,

and cause all Your wrath against us to cease.

Will You evermore all Your wrath to us show?

Revive us that we may Your joy again know.

*Revive Us Again! Psalm 85*

Lord, show us Your love; restore us, we pray!  
And help us to hear the words that You say.  
Speak peace to Your people; in truth let us stand.  
We fear You; let glory and grace fill our land.

## 6 Revival Path

*Opening Prayer: Psalm 85.13*

Righteousness will go before Him,  
And shall make His footsteps *our* pathway.

*Sing Psalm 85.10-13*

(Lyons: [\*O Worship the King\*](#))

In Jesus God's grace and truth are combined;  
both goodness and peace in Him do we find.  
Truth springs from the earth as He walks in our midst,  
and righteousness flows from the heav'ns as a gift.

The Lord by His grace will give what is good;  
our land will produce abundance of food.  
And righteousness will go before the Lord's face,  
and make of His footsteps a way in this place.

*Read Psalm 85, meditate on verse 13*

*Preparation*

1. What goes before the Lord when He comes in revival?
2. Where do the revived people walk?

*Meditation*

This final verse of Psalm 85 is meant as a summary. It tells us what leads to revival (vv. 1-7), and it shows us where revival leads (vv. 8-12).

God will not revive His people until they confess their sins, repent, and return to the path of His Law (2 Chron. 7.14; Ps. 119.59, 60). Indeed, He will not even hear our prayers for revival – or any of our prayers – if we harbor sin in our lives (Ps. 66.18; Is. 59.1, 2). We cannot make ourselves righteous; only God can do that. Our duty is to get rid of any obstacles to righteousness that may have taken hold in our soul.

God has declared us to be righteous by setting us apart as His people and giving us His Spirit. When we confess our sins and turn away from them, we allow the light of God's indwelling righteousness to shine in the form of love for God and our neighbors. Thus we prepare the way of righteousness for God to come and revive us more completely.

And when He does, the path we walk will be the path He walks – the path Jesus walked when He was among us, the path of God's Law (1 Jn. 2.1-6). We may expect God to revive us when He sees in us that earnest desire to return to the path of righteousness (Heb. 12.3-11). And we'll know revival has begun as the followers of Jesus walk His footsteps in holiness, righteousness, peace, joy, and love.

Pray earnestly for revival. But pray intelligently and obediently as well, that revival may begin in you.

*Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162*

Merry Christmas! "The LORD will give what is good..." (Ps. 85.12). Yes, He did!

"Righteousness will go before Him, and shall make His footsteps *our* pathway" (Ps. 85.13).



First, Jesus always goes before us to show us the way: “But go, tell His disciples—and Peter—that He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him, as He said to you” (Mk. 16.7). (How kind for us all that Jesus issued that special invitation to Peter, who had just denied Him three times). Jesus had just gone through suffering and death and life for us. He did it perfectly and before us, so that we can learn from Him.

Then He tells us how to do it: “Follow Me” (Matt. 9.9).

“Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it” (Mk. 8.34, 35).

“If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serve Me, him My Father will honor” (Jn. 12.26).

“For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: ‘*Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth*’, who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed *Himself* to Him who judges righteously; who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed” (1 Pet. 2.21-24).

Then He tells us what to look forward to: “They sang as it were a new song before the throne...who were redeemed from the earth...These are the ones who followed the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from *among* men, *being* firstfruits to God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God” (Rev. 14.3, 4, 5).

Thus we have confidence in what He will do: “You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore” (Ps. 16.11).

Because all this is true, then we must gladly and obediently follow our dear Savior.

Looking back, looking ahead, looking up, looking around, looking good, onto the Revival Path!

He is the only way to go (Jn. 14.6).

#### *Reflection*

1. Why do you suppose God insists that we confess and repent of sin before He will revive us?
2. What does it mean to follow Jesus in the pathway of revival?
3. How can believers encourage one another to prepare for and seek revival day by day?

*Through Christ, the pardoned sinner becomes fruitful in good works, and by looking to and trusting in the Saviour’s righteousness, finds his feet set in the way of his steps. Righteousness is a sure guide, both in meeting God, and in following him.*

Matthew Henry (1662-1714, *Commentary on the Psalm 85.13*)

#### *Closing Prayer: Psalm 85.4-9*

Pray for revival in yourself and your church, for renewal throughout the Lord’s churches, and for a great awakening to faith to begin over all the earth. Seek the Kingdom and righteousness of Jesus for your walk with Him today.

#### *Sing Psalm 85.4-9*

(Lyons: [\*O Worship the King\*](#))

Restore us, O God, renew us in peace,  
and cause all Your wrath against us to cease.  
Will You evermore all Your wrath to us show?  
Revive us that we may Your joy again know.

*Revive Us Again! Psalm 85*

Lord, show us Your love; restore us, we pray!  
And help us to hear the words that You say.  
Speak peace to Your people; in truth let us stand.  
We fear You; let glory and grace fill our land.

## 7 Looking for Revival

### *Opening Prayer: Psalm 85.4-9*

Restore us, O God of our salvation,  
And cause Your anger toward us to cease.  
Will You be angry with us forever?  
Will You prolong Your anger to all generations?  
Will You not revive us again,  
That Your people may rejoice in You?  
Show us Your mercy, LORD,  
And grant us Your salvation.  
I will hear what God the LORD will speak,  
For He will speak peace  
To His people and to His saints;  
But let them not turn back to folly.  
Surely His salvation *is* near to those who fear Him,  
That glory may dwell in our land.

### *Sing Psalm 85.4-9*

(Lyons: [O Worship the King](#))

Restore us, O God, renew us in peace,  
and cause all Your wrath against us to cease.  
Will You evermore all Your wrath to us show?  
Revive us that we may Your joy again know.

Lord, show us Your love; restore us, we pray!  
And help us to hear the words that You say.  
Speak peace to Your people; in truth let us stand.  
We fear You; let glory and grace fill our land.

*Read Psalm 85; meditate on verses 8 and 9.*

### *Preparation*

1. To what were the psalmists resolved to be attentive?
2. What were they hoping for from the Lord?

### *Meditation*

Look around – at the state of the world, our culture and society, and our churches (Ps. 85.1-3). We need revival!

Look back – to times in the past when God has powerfully moved and graciously revived His Church and awakened the lost world (vv. 1, 2). We need such revival again today!

Look up – repenting of your sins and pleading with God to restore and revive you and all His people (vv. 1.4-7). Call on the Lord to revive you today!

Look ahead – to the promised coming of the Kingdom of God and the goodness of God that comes with it (vv. 9, 10-13). Only God can revive us like this. Pray that He will!

Looking good – that is, if you're seeking the Lord for revival, repenting of all known sin, following in the

footsteps of Jesus, and seeking more God's of salvation and glory in everything you do (vv. 6, 7, 9-13). Believe that God can send revival, and seek it earnestly day by day!

This much is certain: If we're not looking for revival, and seeking it diligently before the Lord in prayer, revival will not occur. Few things could be more important today than for every believer to be looking for revival.

*Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162*  
"...but let them not turn back to folly" (Ps. 85.8).

God's people were sincere, it seemed, when they declared that they would serve the LORD. Joshua reminded them to "put away the foreign gods which are among you, and incline your heart to the LORD God of Israel." And the people replied, "The LORD our God we will serve, and His voice we will obey!" (Josh. 24.23, 24).

But then comes the book of Judges, and by chapter 2 God had to send His Angel to say to them, "But you have not obeyed My voice. Why have you done this?" (Jdgs. 2.2) Things were already falling apart.

As Yeats wrote in his poem, *The Second Coming*,  
Turning and turning in the widening gyre  
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;  
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;  
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,  
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere  
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;  
The best lack all conviction, while the worst  
Are full of passionate intensity.

Such an apt description of the children of Israel.

But does it also describe us?  
Do we, too, lack conviction to follow God's laws?  
Have we turned back to folly?  
Are we silent in the face of our enemies' passionate intensity to destroy us and anything that has to do with Jesus?  
Are we seeking revival for ourselves and for the Church?

We must pray for revival.  
But first we must revive our own love for God's Law and all His Word.  
And we must have passionate intensity to love and follow Jesus to the end. (Ps. 119.112)

"If we're not looking for revival, and seeking it diligently before the Lord in prayer, revival will not occur. Few things could be more important today than for every believer to be looking for revival."

#### *Reflection*

1. Will you pray for revival? Daily?
2. Why do we as Christians need to look up, back, ahead, and around, all at the same time?
3. Whom will you encourage to see the Lord for revival this week?

*He encourages both himself and other servants of God in the hope, that although to outward appearance God was far off from his*

*Revive Us Again! Psalm 85*

*people, yet deliverance was near at hand; because it is certain, that God secretly regards those whom he seems openly to neglect.*  
John Calvin (1509-1564), *Commentary on Psalm 85.9*

*Closing Prayer: Psalm 85.10-13*

Thank God for Jesus, for the Gospel, and for your calling to be a witness for Christ. Ask Him to guide you along the path of righteousness this day, that you might be revived and know more of the Lord's goodness.

*Sing Psalm 85.10-13*

(Lyons: [\*O Worship the King\*](#))

In Jesus God's grace and truth are combined;  
both goodness and peace in Him do we find.  
Truth springs from the earth as He walks in our midst,  
and righteousness flows from the heav'ns as a gift.

The Lord by His grace will give what is good;  
our land will produce abundance of food.  
And righteousness will go before the Lord's face,  
and make of His footsteps a way in this place.

*Questions for Reflection or Discussion*

1. How is it evident that the Church today is in need for revival?
2. What do we learn about revival from looking back to Scripture and Church history? How should this encourage us in looking up to God for revival?
3. What are we praying for when we seek the Lord for revival? What happens when revival comes?
4. What can keep us from realizing revival in our lifetime?
5. What's the most important lesson you have learned from our study of Psalm 85? How are you putting that lesson to work in your walk with and work for the Lord?

*For prayer:*

## The Fellowship of Ailbe

The Fellowship of Ailbe is a spiritual fellowship in the Celtic Christian tradition. Our goal is to promote revival, renewal, and awakening, following the teaching of Scripture and the example and heritage of our forebears in the faith.

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Thank you.