

"He Hath Torn Us"

By Michael Clark

A few years ago in '96, I visited Bobby Conners' church in Bullard, Texas, where a brother named Larry Randolph from California was the guest speaker. The Holy Spirit was really ringing my bell as Larry spoke. I don't remember all that he said, but I felt a strong spirit of repentance and contrition come over me. I kept saying, "Lord rend me, tear me, expose my heart." Then I heard Him say, "I have torn you, but now I am healing you." That was when I leaned over and asked a brother named Hollis Vaughn, "Where in the Bible does it say, 'He has torn us'?" He told me to look up Hosea 6:1.

Come, and let us return to the LORD; For He has torn, but He will heal us; He has stricken, but 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 in His sight. Let us know, Let us pursue the knowledge of the LORD. His going forth is established as the morning; He will come to us like the rain, Like the latter and former rain to the earth. "O Ephraim, what shall I do to you? O Judah, what shall I do to you? For your faithfulness is like a morning cloud, And like the early dew it goes away. Therefore I have hewn them by the prophets, I have slain them by the words of My mouth; And your judgments are like light that goes forth. For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, And the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings. But like men they transgressed the covenant; There they dealt treacherously with Me. Gilead is a city of evildoers, And defiled with blood. As bands of robbers lie in wait for a man, So the company of priests murder on the way to Shechem; Surely they commit lewdness. (Hosea 6:1-9, NKJV).

I believe that the Lord was saying to me through these scriptures that before true revival can come to the Church, we must be torn and stricken and truly "rend our hearts not just our garments..." (Joel 2:13). Until we truly see just how wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked we really are, we won't ever rend our hearts, and we will not call out to Him to heal us. I believe the Lord has prepared and is preparing prophets to hew the Church. These men and women will be those who themselves have been carved out by God, and have rend their hearts, purging themselves of all the dross of self-righteousness, and self elevating pride. These will be those who weep for the lost state of the Church and identify with her shallowness and sin.

I also believe that this season, the third millennium since the birth of Christ, is the acceptable year of the Lord. Two-thousand years ago our Jesus was born to suffer and die. We know that a thousand years is as a day to the Lord (2 Peter 3:8). He says in verse two above, "After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight. (Hosea 6:2, KJV). I believe we are in that third day. This is a type of the death and resurrection of Christ, but it is also the path of all who would follow Him.

Colossians 3:4 says, "When Christ [who is] our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory." I believe that the fruit of this final revival is going to be a bride that the Bridegroom is worthy of. She will consist of those wise virgins who those who heed the warning in Revelation 3:18. "I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see." The Church for which Christ returns will be a glorious Church, without spot or wrinkle, but there must be a tearing and rending, gold tried in the fire, first. Jesus is not coming back for a bride that is a self-indulgent, spoiled brat.

Most of today's church in the west is enamored with the gold of this world instead of the gold of His righteousness which comes only by allowing Him to refine us in His fire. Many of her leaders are parading around in "the Kings new clothes" sewn from threads of pride and arrogance by a satanic tailor instead of the required wedding garment of a broken and contrite spirit. And because they say they see, they are truly blind (John 9:41).

I can't help but be reminded of Isaiah 4:1 when I look about Christendom today. "And in that day seven women (the church [Revelation 1:20]) shall take hold of one man [Jesus], saying, 'O We will eat our own food [wealth] and wear our own apparel [self-righteousness]; Only let us be called by your name, To take away our reproach. [We will allow Him to be our Savior, but not our Lord]." He is calling out to us to intimately "know" [Hebrew *yada*] Him (Hosea 6:3 and 6). See also Matthew 1:25, Matthew 7:23, Luke 1:34, Luke 10:22, and Luke 16:15 (Greek - *ginosko*). Both of these words, *yada* and *ginosko* translated "know, knowledge or knew" in the scriptures imply not only a head knowledge but an intimate relationship with that which is known (See W.E. Vine's exposition on *ginosko*).

We hear about the Holy Spirit being poured out like the rain on all flesh, but it appears that there must first be a heart rending and an intimate knowing on the part of those who seek this rain. Those in the upper room before Pentecost had more than a Sunday meeting level of commitment. A cross-less Christianity will not prepare us for what God wants to manifest in His Church, which is His Son and nothing less! Jesus said:

"The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day." Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost?" (Luke 9:22-25, NKJV).

It seems that all we have left of the former revival rains is the early morning fog that burns off with the heat of the day (Hosea 6:4). "Oh God, send us a true heart rending revival that prepares us for the blast of satanic heat that is coming upon us. Hew us once again with the words of your prophets, men and women of integrity, who will not be turned away from their mission by those who threaten to withhold official approval and financial support, men and women of integrity who's kingdom is not of this world. Send us those who speak your words and who look to you only for their approval and support."

In God's timing the evening is always before the morning. The darkness always comes before that Light that Shines from the east even to the west. Joel prophesied,

Blow the trumpet in Zion, Consecrate a fast, Call a sacred assembly; Gather the people, Sanctify the congregation, Assemble the elders, Gather the children and nursing babes; Let the bridegroom go out from his chamber, And the bride from her dressing room. Let the priests, who minister to the LORD, Weep between the porch and the altar; Let them say, "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?'" Then the lord will be zealous for his land, and pity his people. The LORD will answer and say to His people, "Behold, I will send you grain and new wine and oil, And you will be satisfied by them; I will no longer make you a reproach among the nations. (Joel 2:15-19, NKJV).

And I will restore to you the years which the swarming locust has eaten, the locust larvae, and the stripping locust, and the cutting locust, My great army which I sent among you. And you shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, who has dealt with you wonderfully ([literally "who has fashioned you"] by the hewing of the prophets, by plagues, by pestilence, and by invading armies) and My people shall never be ashamed. And you shall know that I [am] in the midst of Israel, and that I [am] the LORD your God, and no one else; and My people shall never be ashamed. And it shall be AFTERWARDS, I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh. And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy; your old men shall dream dreams; your young men shall see visions. And also I will pour out My Spirit on the slaves and on the slave women in those days. (Joel 2:25-29 MKJV).

The word "afterwards" in verse 28 above has been the most overlooked word by modern revivalists. After what? Doesn't the context of both of these passages in Joel and Hosea support the fact that first we must be hewn and brought to a place where we see the sin sick state of today's church and our part in its decadence? God first calls out to us to fall on our faces in true repentance and torn hearts, and only then does He pours out the promise of His Spirit. Doesn't it also appear that this final outpouring is accompanied by great natural disasters and a promise that everything that can be shaken will be shaken? Is it not just a remnant that answer His call to true repentance? Joel continues:

And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days. And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: Blood and fire and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD. And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, As the LORD has said, Among the remnant whom the LORD calls. (Joel 2:29-32, NKJV).

We cannot continue to read these verses about the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in our selective self-deluding way. If we do, it will cost us dearly because we will not prepare our hearts for the coming Bridegroom. We have been so many foolish virgins who have been singing our version of "The World Owes Me a Livin'," when we should be seeking from Him that precious oil for our inward lamps. The night that precedes the Bridegroom's appearance is coming upon us all. (Matthew 25:1-13).

I can't help but see today's western church when I read Jeremiah's words regarding the fallen state of Israel.

To whom shall I speak and give warning, That they may hear? Indeed their ear is uncircumcised, And they cannot give heed. Behold, the word of the LORD is a reproach to them; They have no delight in it. Therefore I am full of the fury of the LORD. I am weary of holding it in. "I will pour it out on the children outside, And on the assembly of young men together; For even the husband shall be taken with the wife, The aged with him who is full of days. And their houses shall be turned over to others, Fields and wives together; For I will stretch out My hand Against the inhabitants of the land," says the LORD.

Because from the least of them even to the greatest of them, Everyone is given to covetousness; and from the prophet and the priest, everyone deals falsely. They have also healed the hurt of My people slightly, Saying, "Peace, peace!" When there is no peace. Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? No! They were not at all ashamed; Nor did they know how to blush. Therefore they shall fall among those who fall; At the time I punish them, They shall be cast down," says the LORD.

Thus says the LORD: "Stand in the ways and see, And ask for the old paths, where the good way is, And walk in it; Then you will find rest for your souls. But they said, 'We will not walk in it.' Also, I set watchmen over you, saying, 'Listen to the sound of the trumpet!' But they said, 'We will not listen.'" (Jeremiah 6:9-17, NKJV).

Yes, I expect a glorious fulfillment of these precious promises in Hosea 6 and Joel 2 of a Holy Spirit revival in our day. This is the chosen hour, but first we must rend our hearts and call out to God to heal us and purify His bride in the furnace of affliction before the return of the Son.