

# Personal Meditations on Powerful Texts-Spring

by Byron Paulus

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*The sermon emphasizes the need for revival among God's people, highlighting the importance of obedience to God's Word and breaking up the fallow ground of their spiritual existence.*

**Scripture:** 2 Chronicles 7:14, Psalm 85:6, Hosea 10:12, Joel 2:23, Matthew 13:23

**Topics:** "Revival And Renewal", "Spiritual Obedience"

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## Description

Byron Paulus delivers a powerful sermon based on Hosea 10:12, urging believers to sow in righteousness, break up their fallow ground, and seek the Lord urgently to experience revival. He emphasizes that revival starts with believers taking responsibility for their spiritual condition and obedience to God's Word. Paulus highlights the importance of not just knowing the truth, but obeying it, and warns against spiritual complacency that hardens hearts. Urgency in seeking the Lord is crucial, as indicated by Hosea's declaration that it is time to seek God. The promise of revival brings blessings likened to a rain of righteousness, signifying a refreshing outpouring of God's grace and mercy.

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## Transcript

"Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord, till he come and rain righteousness upon you." Hosea 10:12

Hosea was assigned the burdensome task of preaching to a people who were familiar with the ways of God but who no longer walked in them. His plea culminated in this verse where we sense the agonizing cry of his heart. He knew both the need to be recognized and the solution to be embraced if God's people were to avert catastrophic judgment.

First, Hosea made it clear who he was addressing by using personal pronouns: "Sow to yourselves . . . break up your fallow ground . . . it is time to(understood you)seek the Lord . . . till he come and rain righteousness upon you" (emphasis added). This passionate prophet knew something about the ways of God that his culture had either forgotten or refused to embrace--revival begins with believers.

The Scriptures are abundantly clear on this point: "If my people which are called by my name . . ." (2 Chron. 7:14); "Revive us again: that thy people might rejoice in Thee" (Ps.85:6). The church will not be prepared adequately for a genuine move of God in revival as long as we see the needs of others as

greater than our own. Gypsy Smith was correct when he took his eyes off everyone around him, drew a circle on the floor, stepped inside of it, and prayed, "Lord, send revival to this circle." How quick we are to draw circles around everyone else. The participants in revival are those who draw the circle of responsibility around themselves.

Second, Hosea exhorted God's people to "sow . . . in righteousness" by obeying the truth of God's Word (Hos. 10:12). This burdened prophet knew that the need of the hour was not for God's people to learn more truth but for them to obey the truth they already had. A. W. Tozer was correct when he contended, "The curse of the 20th century is that we think because we know something, we have something." If revival is to come, we must take the message of obedience seriously.

Third, Hosea exhorted the people to "break up the fallow ground" of their spiritual existence. Fallow ground is soil that was once plowed but has been left dormant, untilled, and unplanted. Thus, Hosea was addressing those individuals who had experienced the power of God but who had failed to continue in their walk with Him. As a result, their hearts had become hard and crusty. If we do not plow up the hard places of our hearts--all of them--we will miss out on the fullness of what the Lord has for us in revival.

Fourth, Hosea emphasized the urgency of the hour. He didn't mince words. He just cried, "It is time to seek the Lord." If we have too much going on at the moment to pray and to give serious attention to our spiritual condition--even if what's going on are good things like strategic programs, building projects, holiday events, and administrative necessities--we have yet to grasp the critical nature of our spiritual need.

Finally, Hosea described the incredible blessings that come to the people of God when revival occurs as a "rain of righteousness." What a glorious image! Can you imagine riches from heaven falling like a cloudburst? My prayer is that as we prepare for revival according to the prophet's instructions--by sowing in righteousness, breaking up the fallow ground, and urgently seeking the Lord--we will soon have the thrill of experiencing a heaven-sent revival in our time.

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Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/byron-paulus/personal-meditations-on-powerful-texts-spring/>

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