Title: Spiritual revival—a Mizoram (India) Seventh-day Adventist perspective

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Date completed: May 1992

Granting Institution: Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies (AIIAS)

Description: Unpublished Thesis (DPTh): 237 pages

Abstract:

The study deals with spiritual revival from the Mizoram Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) perspective. The dissertation consists of four parts: presentation, analysis, interpretation, and pastoral action. The approach to research used in this study is the descriptive case study method.

Part I: Presentation

In the case, Pastor John has doubts regarding what people experienced at a revival camp. The question was raised in Pastor John’s mind by Liana’s experience in a revival camp. The main theological problem is: What is true and false revival from the Mizoram SDA perspective? The main purpose of the dissertation is: To help SDA people to be able to distinguish between the true and false revival based on Scripture and SDA tradition.

Part II: Analysis

The analysis part contains a critical investigation of the case, consisting of the socio-cultural dynamics and the religio-historical dynamics. The history of Mizoram indicates that the civilization of the tribe is a recent development. The Mizos are a Mongoloid race and their speech belongs to the Tibeto-Burmese family of languages. Mizoram became a part of India to be under British rule in 1895. The Welsh Presbyterian missionaries arrived in 1897 and the Baptist Missionaries in 1903. Traces of primitive customs and cultures still survive in the modern society. The community live is bound together by the moral code Tlawmngaihna.
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(willingness to help others). The spirit of the pre-Christian festivities, as well as the ecstatic emotional feelings and love for the dance, have influenced the Mizo life and mode of Christian worship. The main agency for the conversion of the tribe from animism to Christianity was revival in its varied phenomena.

Part III: Interpretation

The interpretation part investigates the biblical and Ellen G. White’s understanding of revivals. This study forms the basis for understanding genuine revival and differentiating between the genuine and false revival.

The word for revival as such is not found in the Bible, but the idea presented in the Bible is “renewal” or “bringing back to life.” As an individual experiences revival, a change in worldview and reformation in life will follow. Revival is the work of God. Preparing for and waiting upon the Lord to bring revival at his own time is an individual responsibility. God may use individuals or circumstances to bring about revival.

Revival is a great blessing to the church. But Satan often brings confusion by introducing fanaticism and counterfeit revival. A genuine conversion may take place in a counterfeit revival, and a spurious experience may also be found in a genuine revival movement. God’s people need to have a close relationship with Jesus and depend on the Bible and the Bible alone as the basis of their experience.

Part IV: Pastoral Action

Revival is God’s work. In order to experience revival, a Christian needs to prepare himself. Revival is not guaranteed by plans and preparation, yet preparation cannot be neglected in anticipation for revival. There is no one formulae to bring about a revival, as God works and
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deals with each individual differently. After making plans and preparation, Christians are to wait on the Lord.

The strategy for pastoral action includes mobilization of the church, witnessing through evangelism, visitation, devotional activities, small groups, and camp meetings. Leaders also need to be prepared in advance to nurture people when a revival comes. A genuine revival will lead to:

1. Conviction of sin, confession, repentance, followed by change in worldview and reformation in lifestyle.
2. Becoming humble and obedience to God’s will as revealed in the law,
3. Love and unity, and sweet fellowship among the brethren.
4. Thirst for the word of God and joyful service in the Lord.