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Will There Be an End-Time Revival?

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Now, the question begs itself, what does one mean by 'end-time'? Is that now? Is it just before the Lord returns (assuming you believe He has not yet returned)? Is it precisely when the Lord returns?

Revivals at Any Time May Occur: The End-Time Is No Exception

If one means, will there be a revival involving individuals or churches between now and when the Lord returns the answer is 'it may be.' Revival is a work of God the Holy Spirit and like the new birth where one can hear the sound of the wind and not know from where it comes or where it is going, so sovereignly, revivals appear and end. One cannot be so bold as to say that the Lord would not grant revival between now and His return. If He is so pleased, that He will do, and we would rejoice in it! So, that is my simple answer - 'it may be.'

Will There Be a Revival Coinciding with the Final Judgments on the Earth?

Does the Bible give any indication of revival just before or coinciding with the Lord's return? Some passages in Scripture may lead one to think that. 'And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters' (Revelation 14:6-7).

Is this symbolic language? Who is the angel? Is it representing gospel messengers? Is it to be coupled with the words of our Lord? 'And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come' (Matthew 24:14).

Benjamin Wills Newton in 'Thoughts on the Apocalypse' had this to say about the Revelation passage: 'It evidently sets forth an act of peculiar long-suffering ... the merciful intervention of God, when men (throughout the prophetic earth at least) are either denying, or about to deny the creative power of God: when the heaven, and the earth, and the things therein, will cease to be regarded as the work of His hands. But being gracious, and merciful, slow to anger, and not desiring that any should perish, but rather that they should come to repentance, He sends this warning - and not only this warning, but the message of the everlasting Gospel too, even into the midst of His enemies. It is called 'everlasting,' because throughout every age, and in the midst of this age's darkest evil, it continues unshaken and unchanged; still opening, in all the freedom of exhaustless grace, the door of mercy to him who shall repent and believe ... The time when this message will be peculiarly



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sent will be the period which immediately precedes the full development of Antichristian blasphemy; and the means, though symbolized in the vision by an angel, will be living men, whose mouths will be open to make known throughout the appointed sphere, this final declaration of mercy.' I am inclined to think the messenger is in fact an angel, for, verses 8 and 9 speak of another and another angel with messages of judgment.

Could it be that at the Lord's return will be the time when He ultimately fulfils Joel's prophecy? 'And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out My Spirit. And I will shew 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 great and the terrible day of the LORD come. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the Name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call' (Joel 2:28-32).

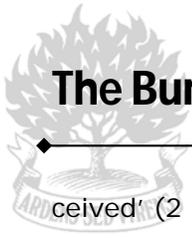
To gather that these passages speak of a worldwide revival just preceding our Lord's return presupposes some things about the passages: (1) That a proclamation of the gospel to all tribes of the earth will result in an acceptance of it by the masses. Nowhere is that said. (2) That the Joel passage applies universally. Its partial fulfilment (Acts 2:16-21) was restricted to Jews who comprised the first members of the Jerusalem church. In its context in the book of Joel it is Jewish, and if the partial fulfilment was in reference to the Jews why would the actual fulfilment be any different?

What Will Be the State of Man upon the Lord's Return?

Would not one be right in saying that if an outbreak of worldwide revival was to occur that mankind would be better off? What saith the Scripture in regard to the state of man when our Lord returns? 'And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed' (Luke 17:26-30)

The similarities between these similes include a repudiation of God's way by His creatures, 'all flesh had corrupted His way upon the earth.' In Noah's day angels left their proper habitation and co-habited with the daughters of men. In Lot's day men with men were committing unseemly acts, an abomination in the sight of God. It also includes a preoccupation with the base desires of the flesh that in themselves are not sinful, but can become so.

Other passages speak of a downgrade of mankind's behaviour. 'This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away' (2 Timothy 3:1-5). 'But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being de-



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ceived' (2 Timothy 3:13).

The Depth of Depravity Culminates in a Worldwide Falling Away

What is certain is that between now and when the Lord returns (for it has not yet happened) there will be the opposite of revival. The Bible refers to it as 'THE falling way' (*apostasy*) that precedes the manifestation of the man of sin. This event will be worldwide and will encompass all the unregenerate. 'Christianity-in-name-only (CINO)' will shed its facade and, under the strong delusion that the Lord will send, men believe the lie and submit to the beast and worship him. Good religious but not saved Presbyterians, Methodists, Congregationalists, Baptists, etc. will not be immune. Wholesale rejection of all that is a rival to the Man of Sin will occur.

'Now we beseech you (*literally, on the behalf of*), brethren, by the coming (*parousia - bodily presence*) of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto Him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand (*has commenced, is set in; beginning in heaven when judgment of the Ancient of Days occurs after the wickedness of the Antichrist is full - see Daniel 7:9-14*). Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come (*not set in*), except there come a falling away (*apostasy*) first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work (*was at work then and is at work now*): only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way (*nowhere is it said the hindrance would be removed from the earth*). And then shall that Wicked (*Lawless One*) be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming: even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness' (2 Thessalonians 2:1-12).

B.W. Newton (1807-1899), an influential man among the Plymouth Brethren, had this to say in his book, 'Prospects of the Ten Kingdoms of the Roman Empire' regarding 'THE Apostasy': 'Men may apostatise, that is, depart and remove themselves away from certain truth and positions which God has commanded them to maintain, and yet may not reach that culminating point of rebellion which is termed in Scripture THE Apostasy. THE Apostasy will be marked by the rejection and abandonment of everything that God has ever revealed respecting Himself, whether through Christ, or previously. He will be rejected both as the Jehovah of Israel, and as God the Creator.'

THE Apostasy encompasses all men of all religious persuasions. Even the Jew has those who are deluded into this state and depart from what they know of God. In Daniel 11:28-32 word is provided about the attitude of the Beast (Anti-Christ) that is changed toward the Jewish people with whom he had formed an alliance. As he marches toward worldwide worship an obstacle must be removed, that is the worship of Jehovah by the Jew. He will find a deluded group of them who will renounce what they know of God to follow him:



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'Then shall he return into his land with great riches; and his heart shall be against the holy covenant; and he shall do exploits, and return to his own land. At the time appointed he shall return, and come toward the south; but it shall not be as the former, or as the latter. For the ships of Chittim shall come against him: therefore he shall be grieved, and return, and have indignation against the holy covenant: so shall he do; he shall even return, and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant. And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate. And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.'

Is the 'abomination that maketh desolate' the image of the Beast referred to in Revelation 13? I think so. Worldwide worship of that image is a must. Statistics indicate that much of the world's population already has the 'image worship' mindset. But, what of the populations who detest image worship (e.g. Muslims)? How shall they be convinced? The Bible seems to indicate that the third member of the unholy trinity will play a vital role in this. In Revelation parlance the Beast is a man, the Antichrist who is also the Man of Sin of 2 Thessalonians; the Dragon is Satan himself; and the second beast of Revelation 13:11 is the False Prophet, another man, the Beast's Minister of Religion. This False Prophet will have the power to deceive and to give life to the image of The Beast 'and cause that as many as would not worship the image of The Beast should be killed' (see Revelation 13:15). By compulsion and fear men will worship the image.

The Beast, or Man of Sin, will have succumbed to the promises of the Dragon to provide the kingdoms of this world upon worship of him - exactly unlike our Lord! 'And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; ... and, he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed' (Revelation 13:11-15).

Will There Be a Revival Precisely When the Lord Returns?

If one means will be there be a revival when the Lord returns then the answer is 'yes' without hesitancy. However, here we must look to the Scriptures to see who is revived and when.

Israel as a nation is to be raised to a prominent place in the economy of God. Their place 'until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in' is one of spiritual dearth. The future, though, is so dramatically different for them and for those that dwell upon the earth when the event occurs that Paul presents a contrast of extremes. 'For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?' (Romans 11:15).

When will this marvellous transition occur? It shall occur rapidly and nationally after travail. 'Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion tra-



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veiled, she brought forth her children' (Isaiah 66:8).

When Christ comes those remaining Jews shall see Him coming in the clouds and in great glory just as He promised, and a great transformation and revival will occur. 'And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon Me Whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn' (Zechariah 12:10).

The nations of the millennial age that commences upon our Lord's return shall have an interest in the True God - that is only a dream today - and will look to the Jew to guide them to proper worship of Him. 'Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you' (Zechariah 8:23).

Should We Be Looking for a Revival or Waiting and Watching for The Son?

In conclusion, is revival to be longed for between now and the Lord's return? I think the answer is 'yes.' While revival may be sought and its granting would be of great help to us, yet the Lord makes it abundantly clear that the great expectation for the saints is none other than the literal, personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ in glory. 'And to wait for His Son from heaven, Whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, Which delivered us from the wrath to come' (1 Thessalonians 1:10). 'Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ' (Titus 2:13). 'And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch' (Mark 13:37).

So, pray for revival and watch and wait for His Son!