

The background features a soft-focus bokeh of light green and yellow-green circles, overlaid with the silhouettes of palm fronds in shades of green and brown. The text is centered in the middle of the image.

TITLE

“TIMES OF REFRESHING”

Scripture Reading: Acts 3:19

'Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the LORD.'

Will there be at least one great revival before Jesus comes again? I believe so.

Because the bible prophesized about that Great Day.

It is the Holy Spirit who is the author of this holy hunger that brings us at times to tears before our Lord, as we long to see His church revived.

Jesus wants a beautiful bride, holy and without spot or wrinkle.

I believe the greatest longing for revival in the church is in the heart of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

2 Chronicles 7:14 is God's call for Revival: 'If My people, which are called by My name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from Heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.'

Matthew 3:11 says, 'He shall baptize you, with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.'

1. Why is there a need for Revival?

Because of sin and the coming Judgment of God.

Revival is the only answer to the present crisis in the Church and in the world today.

Psalms 85:4-6 says, 'Restore us again, O God of our salvation, and put away Thy indignation toward us! Wilt Thou be angry with us for ever? Wilt Thou prolong Thy anger to all generations? Wilt Thou not revival us again, that Thy people may rejoice in Thee.'

Psalms 85:2 mentions the 'iniquity of Thy people.'

Iniquity denotes wickedness

When we are living in an unrevived state, ruled by the old nature, then wickedness will find expression in subtle forms of iniquity.

Jeremiah 17:9 says, 'The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?'

Iniquity is that evil in our hearts which tries to explain away God's demands upon our lives in order that we may continue to sin.

Psalms 66:18 says, 'If I regard iniquity in my heart, the LORD will not hear me'

1 John 3:4: *"sin is the transgression of the law,"* or, as the Revised Standard Version puts it, ***"Sin is lawlessness."***

Wickedness always leads to lawlessness, or the arrogant violation of the will of God.

God 'will speak peace unto His people, and to His saints, but let them not turn again to folly.'

God's anger is revealed not only against an unrevived people, but also against an unrepentant people.

Read the book of Revelation, which is preparing for the coming back of Christ.

Rev 2:5 'I will remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.'

Rev 2:16, 'Repent then, If not, I will come to you soon and war with the sword of my mouth.'

Rev 3:3 'Remember what you received and heard; keep that and repent.'

Rev 3:9 'Be zealous and repent.'

Putting it on a personal level, when do you need revival? We need revival when:

- We do not love Him as we once did.
- Earthly interests and occupations are so important that we forgot we are first called Christians, above all else.
- We have little or no desire for prayer.
- Our Christian faith is joyless and passionless.
- We do not tremble at the Word of God.

- We seldom think thoughts of eternity
- Believers are at odds with each other and do not make effort to reconcile.
- Our children are growing up to adopt worldly values, secular philosophies, and ungodly lifestyles.
- Our hearts are cold and our eyes are dry.

2. The carriers of Revival

An individual as well as a local church.

Charles G. Finney seemed to be a carrier of revival.

Jonathan Goforth

But in the New Testament God leads us in another way. The LORD brings revival (and most everything else) in and through the local congregation.

Leviticus 6:13 says, 'The fire must be kept burning on the altar continuously; it must not go out.'

3. What is the condition for Revival?

Acts 3:19 says, 'Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the LORD.'

The NASB translated this verse as, 'therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the LORD.'

The Greek term 'repent' means 'a change of mind.'

The Hebrew term for repentance means 'change of action.'

The term for 'return' is 'shub', which means 'turn'.

In the Septuagint, repentance is a necessary covenant item in salvation along with faith.

It is both a human volitional act and a gift of God.

'Times of refreshing' in the Greek term, 'anapsucho' basically means 'breathing space, relaxation, relief'.

In the Greek English Lexicon is 'refresh by air' or 'treat a wound with air'.

'Times of refreshing' is a metaphorical extension of the physical and spiritual refreshment or restoration. In the Septuagint it is used of regaining physical strength after a battle or emotional refreshment.

It means God is going to bring a widening, refreshing period of spiritual activity.

4. The tools to bring about Revival

We must understand that Revival is brought through the divine will of God. But then we can be tools or channel by which the Revival comes about. God's method has always been a man.

- a. The tool is prayer.

Saint John Chrysostom wrote, 'Prayer is the root, the fountain, the mother of a thousand blessings. The potency of prayer has subdued the strength of fire, it has bridled the rage of lions, extinguished wars, appeased the elements, expelled demons, burst the chains of death, expanded the gates of heaven, assuaged diseases, rescued cities from destruction and arrested the progress of the thunderbolt.'

Psalms 74-17-20: 'Don't forget us. Remember your promises.'

b. Be enlightened by the Word of God.

St. Gregory the Great said that Scripture 'grows with its readers'. As Cardinal Raniero explains, 'It reveals new meanings according to the questions people have in their hearts as they read it.' The Bible is full of inexhaustible treasures 'for you to read and digest and through which you can encounter God. Daily reading of the Word will convince you of the coming Great Revival.

God is not focused on the world economy, on the rise of world religions, on the roaring of the heathen. His Word already warns that the heathen will rage, secular powers will try to outlaw Israel and Christianity.

Isaiah 54:2-3 says, 'Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.'

Act 2:17 says, 'It shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams'.

