

Are We Headed Toward Revival or Retribution?

Within the last three days I've received two very different YouTube messages from two senior charismatic prophetic leaders. The first leader, Rick Joyner, was citing a very vivid and frightening dream he recently had of terrorists coming across our southern border and carrying out unimaginable acts of brutality. So horrendous were these acts that Joyner stated he was not even going to describe them due to their violent and barbaric nature. (Only today we learned of the beheading of an Oklahoma woman by a recent convert to Islam.)

The other video centered around the "Appeal To Heaven" movement. Dutch Sheets, a well-known teacher and prophetic minister, was relating how our nation's first flag was that of a green pine tree on a white background bearing the words "Appeal to Heaven."

America during its first fledgling years knew the people's only hope for existence as a nation was sole dependency upon God. The point of the message was that several people through dreams, etc., believed that God was once again bringing us back to this place of absolute dependency upon Him; and that as we sought Him, He would bring about a Third Great Awakening in our nation.

My first reaction to these very different prophetic words was one of confusion. On one hand was the possibility of retribution while on the other, that of revival.

What was I to believe? As I pondered over these words I came to the realization that both were correct and that one was not necessarily in opposition to the other.

Let me see if I can explain myself. I believe it's all a

matter of timing or order.

Imagine if you were one of the many hundreds of missionaries who had given their lives to serve God in China prior to the Cultural Revolution under Chairman Mao Zedong. Once the revolution had begun, you were forced to leave—no doubt wondering in your mind what on earth was going to happen now that all the missionaries had been forced out. Fast-forward to the present, and we are now witnessing one of the greatest moves of God in recent history. What at first appeared to be a major disaster turned into mighty testimony to the power and grace of God.

The prophet Isaiah declared, “When the earth experiences Thy judgments the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness.” He went on to say, “Though the wicked is shown favor he does not learn righteousness” (Is. 26:9-10). It is my personal belief that America is in for a time of judgment and that to be shown favor now would only delay God’s ultimate purpose.

That said, I believe we are going to see an increase in violence, terrorism and natural calamities. God will use this to separate the carnal from the consecrated and in turn, produce a church that is truly Christ-centered. It would not surprise me in the least to see an underground church in America in the not-too-distant future—a church where every member functions in their God-given gifting and where everyone depends not only on each other but also holds fast to Christ their Lord and Head.

I truly believe that God wants to send revival to our nation, but revival now would simply cause the vast majority of believers to go on with business as usual.

I well recall during the first year of our ministry working with Brother David Wilkerson in Teen Challenge in Brooklyn, New York. One cold winter’s day two drug addicts came in seeking shelter. Bro. David talked to them for a while and

then I saw them leave. Bro. David said to me after they had left that he couldn't help them because they were not desperate enough to give up their drugs. He went on to say that all they really wanted was a bed for the night and a good hot meal. I somehow think that is what the church is looking for in revival—a good sermon, some great music, followed by some carpet time.

But I believe God's plans are radically different. He's looking for a pure, passionate, powerful people whose only desire is to extend His kingdom. A people who will love not their lives unto death, and whose first love is not the NFL, NBA, MLB or NHL, but Christ Himself.

We are nowhere near to having Christ as our first love. God must first produce a real CRY in His people. We cry when we are in pain and not until. King David said, "Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now I have kept Thy word" (Ps. 119:67, KJV). Or to put it another way, "Spare the rod and spoil the child."

The shakings have begun. Watch out for more. But remember, that while "no chastening seems to be joyful for the *present* ... afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness" (Heb. 12:11, NKJV, emphasis added).

I see Joyner's dream coming to pass first, and then followed by a great awakening.

That's my opinion, and time will prove me right or wrong.

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