

Revival? I'm Not Holding My Breath

Don't be surprised if a worldwide revival doesn't happen before the return of Christ. I see no biblical basis for this expectation unless you are referring to the revival that happens after His return. This is the only one that seems to have a lot of biblical backing. If things don't appear to be going in the direction of a present-day worldwide revival, it may be that there are a lot of incorrect interpretations of prophecy. There are always pockets of revival, but the idea that the church is going to prepare the earth for the return of Christ with some great revival is not an end-times view I share. The theology that says the church is going to perfect the earth before Christ's return is probably behind the thinking that we are poised for a worldwide revival.

The likely scenario is that Christ will return so that humanity does not totally destroy itself (see Matt. 24:22 and Mark 13:20). This is the only preparation that I see for the return of Christ. Christ will ensure that this does not happen. It will not be prevented by the church. The state of the church will probably be like the church of Laodicea, which was lukewarm and carnal. Christ is going to have to do a lot of cleaning up to do after He returns. The most likely scenario is that Christianity will be in such a mess prior to His return that it will be part of the problem that He will have to fix.

John, in Revelation 19:11-16, tells us this: "I saw heaven opened. And there was a white horse. He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on His head are many crowns. He has a name written, that no one knows but He Himself. He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood. His name is called The Word of God. The armies in heaven, clothed

in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. Out of His mouth proceeds a sharp sword, with which He may strike the nations. 'He shall rule them with an iron scepter.' He treads the winepress of the fury and wrath of God the Almighty. On His robe and on His thigh He has a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS" (see also Psalm 2).

This tells me that the world is not going to welcome the return of Christ with open arms. Notice that He will not return alone, but will be accompanied by the armies from heaven clothed in fine linen, white and clean. This sounds like angels and saints. Revelation 2:26-28 says: "To him who overcomes and keeps My works to the end, I will give authority over the nations—He 'shall rule them with a rod of iron; like the vessels of a potter they shall be broken in pieces'—even as I myself have received authority from My Father. And I will give him the morning star." When Christ reigns over the earth, He will have many helpers.

When Matthew 24:14 says, "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come," I believe that this will be fulfilled after Christ returns. The gospel of the kingdom will be just that. Most of the time, this is interpreted as the present-day gospel. It can also be interpreted as the gospel or Good News of the kingdom reign of Christ during the millennium, which occurs before the end of the world. This gospel will probably have elements of both Christianity and Judaism, but will not be Christianity or Judaism as we know them today.

This will be the time when the world gets filled with the knowledge of the Lord (see Isaiah 11:9). I believe that this is the restoration of all things that is spoken of in Acts 3:20-21: "And that He may send the One who previously was preached to you, Jesus Christ, whom the heavens must receive until the time of restoring what God spoke through all His holy prophets since the world began."

I believe that the order of end-times events is found in the book of Revelation. First, there is the wrath of God. After that there is God's millennial reign over the earth. It is only in the book of Revelation that the reign of Christ is specifically mentioned as a 1,000-year period (see Rev. 20:4). Then Satan is loosed for a season. Finally, there is the new heaven and new earth after the end of the world.

The resurrection of the just appears to happen before the millennium because they will probably be part of Christ's army that will return with Him to reign over the earth.

The important thing is that we occupy until He comes to take us; and that He finds us faithful and ready.

You can download Peter Aiello's book, Hidden Treasure by visiting his web site: .

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