Introduction

How many here have seen a powerful creative miracle or dead persona raised? How many of you have even seen a miracle happen before your eyes? How many of your have seen a demon cast out of someone?

God is one pent-up revival. Revival is the manifestation of God. Revival is the fire of God falling because God is a consuming fire. Revival sets things right---into God’s order---in the church. Revival means restoration. The church in America is not in order.

When people have never seen a miracle, their reaction is skepticism. Some may have a few questions about the miracle but that is completely different than denying its possibility. You could become hard and not believe. Hardened unbelief leads to rationalistic doctrine. People begin to think that miracles don’t happen anymore. This is where false doctrines are made. Then their faith becomes a religious form, and they can become an enemy to the Holy Spirit and Biblical Christianity.

Some people have had just a tiny, tiny touch of God, but they really feel like it’s a total revival. So they slip into a cheapened level thinking that’s all they can have, or that is all that exists. But, it’s so much more than that. They are drinking milk but think they are eating meat. Revival will come suddenly and uncontrollably and will be uncontainable.

The third point is when the acts of God become a memory, it will cause a lack of the fear of God. We need to get back to setting our standards on Biblical book of Acts Christianity, and if we are not seeing it, don’t make excuses, press into it. God has not changed!
Biblical look at Revival

The closest Biblical word we have for revival is CHAYAH (khaw-yah) Hebrew word meaning to live, make alive, nourish up, preserve alive, quicken, recover, repair, restore, or be whole (strongs concordance 2421). It can also be translated keep alive, preserve (nine times); to save or save alive (16 times); to restore or make whole (5 times); to recover (5 times) to repair or quicken (12 times).

The first four times this word is translated revived in the KJV, all deal with increasing levels of death: 1. Jacob as an old man with a lost dream. Gen 45:27 “they told Jacob of Joseph and the spirit of Jacob their father revived.” 2. Samson as a young man with a near death vision. Judges 15:19 Samson was almost dead from thirst and God revived him with water. 3. Elijah: restoration of a woman’s newly-dead child (2 Kings 17:22). 4. Elisha’s bones as a group of men through a dead man on his bones and the dead man revived.

Habakkuk 3:2 “Lord, I have heard the report about you and I fear. O Lord, revive your work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make it known; in wrath remember mercy.”

Charles Finney felt revival was not happenchance or a difficult thing. He said if you plant wheat in a field you simply wait on it to grow. That is like revival. We pray and believe, and it will come. He also stated revival is nothing more or less than a returning to obedience to God’s holy word.

In every major revival of the Old Testament they confessed their sins and the sins of the ancestors and vicariously repented of the sins of their nation.

Dr Wilbur Smith notes seven outstanding revivals in the Old Testament in addition to the one under Jonah. They are: Jacob’s household (Gen 35:1-15), Under Asa (2 Chron 15:1-15), Jehoash (2 Kings 11, 12; 2 Chron 23, 24); Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:4-7; 2 Chron 29:31), and Josiah (2 Kings 22, 23; 2 Chron 34, 35). There are two revivals after the Exile under Zerubbabel (Ezra 5-6) in which Haggai and Zechariah play a prominent part and finally a revival in Nehemiah’s time in which Ezra was the outstanding figure (Nehemiah 9:9, 12:44-47).

Smith summarized 9 characteristics of these major revivals:

1. They occurred in a day of deep moral darkness and national depression

2. They began in the heart of one consecrated servant of God who became the energizing power behind it, the agent used of God to help quicken and lead the nation back to God.

3. Each revival rested on the word of God, and most were the result of preaching and proclaiming God’s word with power.
4. All resulted in a return to the worship of the Lord

5. Each witnessed the destruction of their idols where they existed.

6. In each revival there was a recorded separation from SIN. REPENTANCE

7. In each revival blood sacrifices were offered and returned to……the blood of Christ preached.

8. Almost all recorded revivals show a restoration of great joy and gladness.

9. Each revival was followed by a period of great national prosperity. God’s blessings were poured out as people got right with him.

The Greek equivalent of the old testament word for revive is only used five times in the NT. Why is it not more in the NT? For the simple reason that NT Christianity is already revived and should never need to be raised from the dead as the Holy Spirit should be at work continually. This Greek word ANAZAO is used for the restoration of the prodigal son (Luke 15:24-32), the resurrection of Christ (Rom 14:9), and the physical resurrection of the dead in the last days (Rev 20:5) but also for the deadly effect of sin (Rom 7:9). Evil as well as righteousness can have a revival; there can be an unholy uprising as well as a holy outpouring.

Bottom line true revival is a raising back to life and a restoration of what was lost.

What brings revival?

Jonathan’s Edwards son in law David Brainerd was dying and he prayed in the snow until it melted around him and was stained by his own blood. He was in deep intercession for the Indians. Before he died he described the revival that broke out:

“The power of God seemed to descend on the assembly like a rushing mighty wind and with an astonishing energy bore all down before it. I stood amazed at the influence that seized the audience almost universally and could compare it to nothing more aptly than irresistible force of a mighty torrent…almost all persons of all ages were bowed down with concern together and scarce one was able to withstand the shock of the astonishing operation.” God came down in great power because of intercession.

True revival should result in a refreshed love for Christ, repentance of sin, and an emphasis on winning souls for Christ.

The revival before Jesus comes will be like John the Baptist

1. The Spirit of Elijah (conviction, call to repentance, prophetic, sevenfold Spirit of God)

2. The strong conviction of the Holy Spirit drawing in the masses
3. The strong convicting preaching of the word of God
4. Pointing people to Christ and getting their eyes off of the leader used of God
5. Repentance and consecration: preparing a bride for Christ’s coming
6. Persecution and possibly martyrdom for standing for the truth
7. Preparing the way for Christ’s second coming

An Open Heaven

1. Jacob

Genesis 28:10 “And Jacob left Beersheba and went toward Haran. And he came to a certain place and stayed there overnight, because the sun was set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down there to sleep. And he dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it! And behold, the Lord stood over and beside him and said, I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father [forefather] and the God of Isaac; I will give to you and to your descendants the land on which you are lying. And your offspring shall be as [countless as] the dust or sand of the ground, and you shall spread abroad to the west and the east and the north and the south; and by you and your Offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed and bless themselves. And behold, I am with you and will keep (watch over you with care, take notice of) you wherever you may go, and I will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done all of which I have told you. And Jacob awoke from his sleep and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place and I did not know it. He was afraid and said, How to be feared and reverenced is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gateway to heaven!”

2. Nathaniel

John 1:51 “Very truly I tell you, you will see ‘heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on’ the Son of Man.”

3. God’s blessing for obedience to his word

Deuteronomy 28:12 “The Lord shall open to you His good treasury, the heavens, to give the rain of your land in its season and to bless all the work of your hands; and you shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow.” 23 “The heaven which is over your head shall be bronze, and the earth which is under you, iron. The LORD will make the rain of your land powder and dust.”

Major Characteristics of Revival:

- Revival causes humility. It causes man to feel totally convicted of sin, causes man to surrender himself to Christ in humility,
• It is absolutely supernatural and God glorifying. Isaiah 2:9 Mankind will be brought down. The Lord alone will be exalted. There is so much pride in the hearts of man. With revival man cannot be lifted up.

• There is spontaneity in a revival. When men start to organize and control, the revival ends. Revival is sudden and spontaneous. It's uncontrollable and uncontainable. (There is so much flesh in our churches today which hinders revival.)

• Finney said that a key thing about revival is that man needs to get out of the way. Let God promote it.

• During revivals there are always religious stumbling blocks. People want God to pour out His Spirit, but then they don’t like some manifestation in particular and this hinders them.

• Another characteristic of revival is it’s overwhelming revelation of the Holiness of God and the sinfulness of man. God rips the veil off of the hardness that is in us. And we are stricken by the our sinfulness. And you will feel awe in the presence of God.

• In revival there will be a life transforming effect on those who come to the revival. It is a supernatural work of God. God sets people free! People get a real dose of the real thing. People will get their breakthrough even though they have been praying for 15 years about something. Suddenly, they will get their breakthrough in revival.

• Another characteristic is its life-giving effect on society as a whole: people get saved, the crime rate goes down, the fear of God will return to society.

When true revival comes, people will get back to book of Acts Christianity, and quit perverting true Biblical Christianity.