

The Old Testament Concept of Revival within the New Testament

Ervin Budiselić
Biblijski institut, Zagreb, Croatia
ebudiselic@bizg.hr

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Abstract

Christians often speak about revival; believers are encouraged to pray for and seek revival; books and articles are written on this subject. However, the New Testament does not use the expression “revival” on a semantic level. Therefore, the question is raised about the origins of the wording and the idea of revival in the New Testament church. To what extent is it justifiable to talk about revival? Since the concept of revival comes from the Old Testament, this paper analyzes key terms and verses in the Old Testament, and then analyzes in which ways and to what extent the New Testament speaks about it. The discussion argues that the New Testament connects revival, restoration or renewal primarily with Christ and his salvific work. Furthermore, the coming of the kingdom anticipated within Jesus’ ministry demands a harmonization of the Old Testament concept of revival with the new reality. Moreover, it could be said that the concept of revival in some segments represents an obstacle for Christians to adopt Jesus’ model of the manifestation of God’s kingdom.

Key words: *revival, renewal, awakening, kingdom, context.*

Introduction

Thinking and talking about revival happens normally and comes naturally to one branch of Christianity. We talk about the need for revival, call believers to pray for revival, and we even talk about the old days when revival happened in one or

another part of a country or a whole state. Moreover, God's people are called to experience revival. Without denying the positive effects of God's action in history, it is necessary to expose the concept of revival to healthy biblical criticism in order to see what is or is not correct about it. In the words of Jim Elliff (2006, 1), evangelism must not be deprived of truth, healthy doctrine has to be within the very core of revival, and an experience of faith awakening (revival) has to be rooted in sound theology. Otherwise,

We should not seek to experience revival without anticipating true reformation. Hence, the term *revival* is not adequately used in our time, unless it's marked as *Reformation* and *Guided by the Word*. It is not wrong to seek for revival if that implies awakening of true faith along with revivification of our experience of God which stems out (is not disconnected) from a sound doctrine. It means that majority of long-lasting changes would not occur only by having warm, intense, or even dramatic experiences with God. Some large organizations and churches need to harmonize their vision of Gospel and Bible (Elliff, 2006, 1).

Although the concept of revival basically anticipates something good and positive, it is necessary for us to reflect on a few problematic trends in today's Christianity in light of the New Testament. By use of Old Testament wording, the New Testament concept of "revival" is practically wiped out. First of all, there is a certain difficulty about defining the term "revival". If not carefully defined, it can cause confusion. Secondly, since the concept of revival is mainly based on the Old Testament, it is necessary to consider in what way the Old Testament conceives of the concept of revival, and then to compare it with the New Testament concept. The thesis of this article is that the Old Testament concept of revival as defined and presented within the context of the Old Testament is not entirely applicable to the New Testament church for two reasons: a) if observed more closely, wording about "revival", "awakening", and "reconstruction" on a semantic level in the New Testament is closely connected to salvation accomplished "in Christ"; and b) the concept of God's kingdom brought out by Jesus within the framework of his service requires an alignment between the Old Testament concept and the New Testament reality. For example, instead of the Old Testament prayer for renewal and revival, Christians in the New Testament are called to pray for laborers in the harvest (Matthew 9:37-38) and for the arrival of the kingdom and his righteousness (Matthew 6:10,33), as well as to follow Jesus' example of service: receiving the anointing of the Spirit in order to proclaim the Gospel which is accompanied by signs and wonders. For this purpose, this article analyzes the problem of the contemporary use of the term "revival" and provides an overview of different understandings of the term in Christianity today. After that, the article provides examples of how Christianity today perceives the Old Testament and understands

the concept of revival. Also, an analysis of how this term is displayed within the Old and New Testaments is provided here. Finally, based on this comparison, the article offers some observations and reflections as a guide for today's Christianity.

It is also necessary to point out the limitations of this article. Although representing a sort of reflection on some events in the church today and taking into consideration some contemporary thinking about revival, the focus is to analyze the Old Testament concept of revival and to compare it with the New Testament. Though acknowledging God's supernatural visitations in some countries and places – what is often called an “awakening”, “renewal” or “revival” in church history – this article does not focus on the criticism of such events, but proposes a different interpretation of such experiences as a manifestation of God's kingdom instead of revival events. Although it is, in some way, irrelevant how it is named, on the other hand, if the term “revival” is unclear, it can very easily adopt all other pertinent theological concepts and ideas associated with this Old Testament term, and fail to recognize the concept of God's kingdom and Jesus' salvific act as a specifically New Testament concept.

The Problems of Terminology and Definition: Revival – Awakening

In relation to the English terms, within the Croatian-speaking sphere, there is confusion about the term “revival”. What is called “revival” in English, Croatians often translate as “awakening”, while the English language makes a clear distinction between the terms “revival” and “awakening”. The two terms are not always synonymous.¹ Bill Johnson (compare to Brodeur & Liebscher 2012, 230), for example, claims that the terms “revival”, “reformation”, “renewal” and “awakening”

1 It is not easy to define the exact reference of a particular term. The following example of one Norwegian missionary provides an illustration: “Some of us, those who are coming from the German language background, do not use the Latin expression ‘revival’. We say *erweckung* or awakening. It is interesting that the German expression refers to sleeping Christians, while the Latin refers to nonbelievers who are spiritually dead because of their transgressions and sins (Eph. 2:1). If revival is for non-believers, renewal might be for believers. Hopefully the picture is clear: there is no way that dead and sleeping people can prepare for their own awakening, or is there? But those of us who might be alive and awake should be on the alert, fighting the spiritual battle day after day! The revival message is not meant for those of us who are alive and on the alert. God is pleased with such people! Possibly some of us could be used as messengers for revival.” (Froyland, 1997, 6).

indicate “different levels of maturity within the same experience,”² and Gerald L. Priest (1996, 225-226) defines the term “revival” as follows:

Revival is the noun form of the verb “revive,” a derivation of the Latin *revivere*, meaning “to live again” or “to return or to restore to consciousness or life.” Revival can also be “the restoration of something to its true nature and purpose.” Additionally, the term may mean “reform,” as in the profound change of social morals or doctrine. It is in this sense we may understand the Protestant Reformation, for example. As we will see, the implication of the term scripturally and historically is that, while revival will result in moral reform, it is essentially a powerful work of the Holy Spirit in saving the lost and sanctifying the saved.

Although Priest offers a more appropriate definition of revival than Johnson, he goes even further by connecting “revival” with a reform of social morality and doctrine, where saved and unsaved become equal. But if “revival” means to revive again and is mainly applied to the revival of something that was once alive, then this term should only apply to the revival of believers, not to unbelievers or society in general. Therefore, Tom Hill rightly points to God’s children/people as the exclusive object of awakening because worldly people do not need “revival,” they need regeneration, new birth, new life. They do not only need a renewal of their existing God-given life. Once these people are born from above, they can experience an outpouring of God’s glorious presence (Hill, 11).

If this is true, we need to make a distinction between “revival” and “awakening.” What is the difference? You can only *revive* something that was previously alive, and *awaken* those who sleep or are spiritually dead.³ Accordingly, the term

2 Bill Johnson says, “To me renewal, reformation, awakening, and revival are all essentially the same thing, but they reflect different levels of maturity within the same experience. I consider the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in renewal to be an infant form of revival. Revival allowed to grow from adolescence into maturity will eventually become reformation.” (Revival Culture: Prepare for the Next Great Awakening. Michael Brodeur & Banning Liebscher. Ventura, Regal Books, 2012, 231).

3 The concept of sleeping in the New Testament (as well as in Greek and Hebrew literature) denotes the idea of death (compare to Ladd, 1993, 599; Keener, 1999, 305); hence the term *awakening* is more appropriate for unbelievers rather than believers. The only place in the New Testament that seems to digress from the idea of death as sleep is in Matthew 9:24 (see Mark 5:39, Luke 8:52) where Jesus declares that a dead girl “is not dead, she’s sleeping.” It is obvious in this case that sleep cannot mean death because it would turn out that Jesus was saying, “she’s not dead, but she’s dead.” While different interpretations are possible, according to my personal opinion, the best interpretation is offered by R.T. France (2007, 364): “Rather than using a standard metaphor, Jesus is drawing a thought provoking parallel between death and literal sleep: if death is ‘sleep,’ then it allows the possibility of waking up. Death is not the end, and in this case of this girl it will prove to be only a temporary experience. Her death is real, but it is

“revival” can be applied only to believers who are spiritually alive, but maybe unconscious, and “awakening” refers only to those who are spiritually dead. A clear definition is important here because these two categories of people require different approaches. However, in colloquial speech, it is often said that revival should include unbelievers, but that is not true.⁴ The vagueness of the modern way of expressing “revival” lies exactly here because the inclusion of “people and country” (read as: the unsaved and unfaithful) often seems dependent on a revival that may or may not occur. It is true that the “revival” of believers affects the whole church and consequently society and the world, but it is not correct to expect a “revival” of unsaved people. This distinction will be important for our consideration of the New Testament understanding of the terms “revival” and “awakening”.

The terminological problem is also related to the issue of understanding the scope of revival. According to Thomas S. Kidd (2011, 447), “revivalism refers to the desire for spiritual renewal in the Church, often including conversion, repentance, and commitment to holiness.... Ordinarily, the concept of revival assumes a Church that was once thriving but has fallen into spiritual decline.” For Andrew Murray, revival means “making alive again those who have been alive but have fallen into what is called a cold, or dead, state. They are Christians and have life, but they need reviving to bring them back to their first love and the healthy growth of the spiritual life to which conversion was meant to be the entrance” (Wolfe, 1991, 288). For Paul Wolfe, revival is “a work of God whereby the church and individual Christians experience a fresh sense of the reality and presence of God and respond accordingly so as not to quench the Spirit of God and thus extinguish his work of accomplishing his will” (Wolfe, 1991, 297). Charles Finney (2006, 18), one of the greatest authorities on revival, defines revival as follows:

It’s a restoration of Christian’s first love which results in awakening and con-

not final ... in a much deeper sense Jesus’ resurrection has overcome the finality of death itself, and given a new force to the metaphor of ‘sleep’ which can apply to all those who die, not just to the very few whom Jesus resuscitated during his earthly ministry.”

- 4 “So, national revival will only come when we fulfill the conditions for God’s blessing given in His Word. ... One vital condition is repentance for our sins. For national revival, we will need national repentance. ‘If My people...humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land’ [2 Chro 7:14]. But there seems to be little sign of that in the nation at the moment. As a nation, we just do not realize how God defines sin. We are ignorant of what sin really is. Sin is the contradiction of God. We are totally unaware that God is deeply offended by our sinful way of life. We need to be made aware that God hates sin. If there was national mourning over our sins on the scale that there was over Princess Diana’s death, I have no doubt there would be revival round the corner. God is more willing to send revival than we are to repent.” *Is Revival Conditional?* The APC News No 113, September/October 2005, pg. 2.

version of sinner to God. In a popular sense, revival of faith in one community means raise, revival and renewal of more or less sleeping church, and more or less general revival of all layers of society and ensuring attention on God's claims. It presupposes that the Church is sunk down in a backslidden state, and a revival consists in the return of the Church from her backslidings, and in the conversion of sinners.

Thus, revival is primarily for Christians, not unbelievers, and implies Christians' need for some sort of visitation by God. But Wolfe (1991, 299) thinks that when Christians today talk about the need for revival (mixing evangelism and revival), their affirmative attitude toward revival is often based on the bad condition of society. In other words, revival is needed when society around us is "sick". Accordingly, Gerald L. Priest (1996, 226-227) states that many people consider revival an event which does not represent spiritual revivification of believers only, but also the awakening and granting of life to those who are not yet born again. Thus revival is defined as "turning sinners to Christ for salvation."

All this shows that it is not always clear what is meant by "revival", and sometimes there is a difference between talk about revival in academic circles and in the church. For example, 20th century church historian J. Edwin Orr, who has perhaps studied this subject on an academic level more than other historians, recognizes a distinction between the term "revival" which he connects to the sovereign God's activity through the Holy Spirit in the lives of Christians, and the term "awakening" describing God's activity in the lives of non-Christians reflected in certain personal convictions and conversion (compare to Davies, 2001, 1026). But as these previous examples show, academic precision often does not find a way to a theology which shapes Christianity in everyday life. Donald F. Murray (2000, 82-83) claims that revival in North America is often considered a massive response to preaching about awakening which is reflected in the conversions of existing church members, but also unsaved people. In England, revival has "a more narrow sense" and often refers to the awakening of faith and commitment within the community of believers reflected in reaching unsaved people with the Gospel message.

The Old Testament as the Origin of the Modern Expression of Revival

When we talk about the theological origins of the term "revival" in the context of modern Christianity, it is necessary to emphasize its primal roots within the Old Testament. Eui Hang Shin (2002, 131) considers the contemporary move-

ment of revival to be based on examples derived from the Old Testament, examples of large groups of people who turn from their sinful ways to God. Some of these Old Testament examples include Exodus 32, 1 Samuel 7:2-13, 2 Samuel 6, 2 Chronicles 20, 2 Chronicles 29-31, 2 Chronicles 34-35, Ezra 9-10 and Nehemiah 8-10. Kidd (2011, 447) stresses that the term “revival” does not appear within the KJV translation of the Bible, but prayer to God to “revive” his people or his work appears in Psalm 85:6 and Habakkuk 3:2. Kidd concludes that these verses were meant to help Christians develop a sense of expectation for the arrival of periodic revivals within the church. Similar to Kidd, Murray asserts that the English term “revival”, commonly attributed to a religious phenomenon which belongs to the sphere of modern Christianity and practice, has its origins in the Old Testament, particularly Isaiah 57:15, Hosea 6:2, and Habakkuk 3:2: “From such texts arose the application of the corresponding noun ‘revival’ to Christian experience of spiritual reawakening and religious renewal understood to be analogous to that described in these and other texts” (Murray, 2000, 81). Therefore, when speaking about revival, it can be expected that the Old Testament concept logically appears as a starting point, a dominant starting point.

While talking about a moment or time of revival, Charles Finney (2006, 27) quotes Psalm 85:7: “Show us your unfailing love LORD, AND GRANT US YOUR SALVATION.” Finney stresses that this psalm was written after the Israelites returned from Babylonian captivity, and since God succeeded in returning his people to their country, the psalmist prays now for a revival of faith among the people that would actually represent God crowning his work. When he speaks about the promotion of revival, Finney quotes Hosea 10:12: “Sow righteousness for yourselves, reap the fruit of unfailing love, and break up your unplowed ground; for it is time to seek the LORD, UNTIL HE COMES AND SHOWERS HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS ON YOU.” Finney uses this quote as a basis to articulate the priority that Christians should have to clear the ground of their hearts and bring their minds closer to accepting God’s word, and bear fruit for God. He concludes, “Sometimes our hearts are rough and dry, and everything we do is in vain. Our hearts cannot bear fruit and receive God’s word unless they are broken and loose. *That’s what the prophet thinks* [author’s emphasis] when he says ‘plow your ground’” (Finney, 2006, 41). While talking about revival, Ron McIntosh (2000, 48) begins the third chapter of his book by quoting Psalm 85:7 and stating that revival means rediscovering eternal truths which should be interpreted in new ways and transferred to new generations. Furthermore, McIntosh (2000, 50) says, “*Revival is for Church, not for sinners*. The word *revival* literally means *renewal* or *awakening*. It is impossible to restore something that never existed. In contemporary church, we mix the concept of revival with a four-day evangelistic seminar.” Among other issues, he defines the concept of *awakening* as a recovery from pain or loss, returning

from a state of apathy or lethargy, developing obedience in relation to the values of God's heart, self-fulfilling with life, and renewal of an awareness of God's power and truth.

Unlike Finney who considers Christians responsible for revival,⁵ McIntosh (2000, 52-53) emphasizes the necessity to understand the times we live in in order to be able to recognize God's activity, to receive the flow of the Holy Spirit and to carry out his will. With reference to Hosea's speech about early and late rains, as well as his references to three days (6:1-3), McIntosh argues that Hosea's speech about "three days" reveals a spiritual principle upon which God works in the lives of his people. He concludes:

I believe today we live in transitional period between first 'day' and entrance to awakening that brings true renewal. Hosea announced revival coming as combination of 'early' and 'late' rain ... The prophet also spoke about wave of God's activity preparing the way and making crops ripe for harvest. We want to see this wave in present time... If we truly experience combination of early and late rain, it will represent revival which will affect whole nations (McIntosh, 2000, 52-53).

Finally, while speaking of the Old Testament origins of the concept of revival, I use Herbert Lockyer's example who states that the church has a scriptural promise for revival. According to this author, the church seems powerless in relation to national and international crises, but there was a time when the church possessed power to turn the world upside down. But God has promised a revival of his church, and for that purpose, among others, he quotes Habakkuk 3:2; Psalm 85:6, and Hosea 6:3. Commenting on Habakkuk, Lockyer (1962, 116) emphasizes that the terrible things happening in the world do not nullify the possibility of revival.

Revival can save the world from destruction. Psalm 85:6 encourages us to pray for revival because God is willing to forgive our mistakes. Revival, of course, refers to Christians as sinners; dead non-believers cannot be revived again. Life must be present to some extent in order to make revival possible. Therefore, Lockyer concludes, "For those who are regenerated, but who have allowed the sinister influences of the world to rob them of spiritual power and progress, the reviving grace of the Lord constitutes the paramount need" (Lockyer, 1962, 116). And finally, while

5 "Revival is not a miracle, or dependent on the miraculous in any sense. It is a purely logical result of correct use of existing resources - as well as any other effect of appropriate use of resources" (Finney, 2006, 16). "Wrong ideas about God's sovereignty have hampered revivals. Many people thought that God's sovereignty is something very different from what it actually is. They thought about it as an arbitrary determination of events, especially in the case of spiritual gifts. This prevented a reasonable use of resources in stimulating revival of faith" (Finney, 2006, 23).

speaking about Hosea, Lockyer emphasizes the need for both collective and individual revival. He concludes with the thought: what a change it would be if every Christian would cry out for revival (compare to Lockyer, 1962, 116).

Old Testament and New Testament Concepts of Revival: Similarities and Differences

In the previous section, we indicated that speech about revival is primarily based on the Old Testament. Now it is time to look in more detail at what exactly the Old Testament speaks of revival and then to compare it with the New Testament. As an introduction to this analysis, it is necessary to point out that the modern Christian concept of revival assumes that the church fell into spiritual lethargy and Christians live in sin. For that reason (among others), the church/Christians is/are not able to reach unbelievers with the Gospel message and turn them to conversion. Or, as Finney says (2006, 29), revival can only clean the shame of the church. If this kind of understanding of revival is compared with the New Testament concept, then the question is raised: is it possible to properly compare this concept in both Testaments since, according to one version, the word “revival” cannot be found in the New Testament for the following reason:

The word ‘revival’ is not found in the New Testament. Neither Jesus, nor Paul, nor any other Biblical writer encouraged prayer for revival. ‘Revival’ is a word that developed in the Church’s history, not in the Church’s origin. For example, ‘revival’ would be out of place in the Book of Acts because there we see the Church that has just come forth in the life and power of the Holy Spirit. Only later, when the Church had institutionalized and lost the life and power of the Holy Spirit, was it appropriate to speak of the need for ‘revival’ or ‘life again’ (Hyatt, 2009, 36)?

I think Hyatt is right when he argues that the term “revival” is a word which originates in the history of the church, not in the New Testament. However, two questions remain. The first is in regards to the *argument of silence* (when the biblical text does not address the subject), and can be developed in two directions. We can say that because the New Testament does not speak of revival on a semantic level, we have no right to talk about it. Or, we could find the reason as to why the New Testament does not talk about it, and after finding it, we can talk about revival today. The second question is whether the New Testament speaks only about the first generation of Christians, or as Hyatt says, about the “very beginning of the Church,” or are the New Testament texts written for second and even third generation Christians? This is an important question because it is not clear

whether the New Testament anticipates enough time to display a *cyclic pattern of ups and downs*, the same pattern which is obvious, for example, within the Book of Judges, a so called “generation gap” (compare to Lovelace, 1979, 72), which in turn leaves enough time within the Old Testament to follow the whole story about the fall and restoration of God’s people. Answers to these and other questions determine our approach and understanding of the New Testament concept of revival.

Specifics of the Old Testament Concept of Revival

Meaning of the Word

Within a few texts speaking about awakening, the Old Testament uses several words that we have to consider. The first word is the verb *chayah* (Strong H2421) which in qal (indicative active) means “to live” (Habakkuk 2:4), in piel (intensive active) means “to preserve life, to initiate” (Habakkuk 3:2), and in hifil (causal active) means “to restore life, to preserve life.” According to Robert H. Lescelius, speech about “revival” occurs in church history only after the KJV translation of the Bible emerged which takes this verb twelve times and translates it as “revival”: four times in qal (Genesis 45:27, Judges 15:19; 1 Kings 17:22, and 2 Kings 13:21); six times in piel (Nehemiah 4:2, Psalm 85:6 and 138:7; Hosea 6:2 and 14:7; Habakkuk 3:2); and twice in hifil (Isaiah 57:15). The KJV also translates the feminine noun of the same root *muchyah* two times with “reviving” (Ezra 9:8-9) (compare to Lescelius, 2002, 127-128, 142). James Douglas John Porter (1991, 18-19) further explains the word *chayah*, pointing out that this word appears 167 times in the Old Testament, and in different contexts could have meanings of: a) revival in terms of encouragement (Genesis 45, 26, 27; Judges 15:19; Psalm 138:7); b) revival in terms of the physical reconstruction of life in those who were dead (1 Kings 17:22; 2 Kings 13:21); c) revival in terms of building a physical structure (Nehemiah 4:2); d) revival in terms of making God’s work alive (Habakkuk 3:2); and e) revival in terms of returning to a right relationship with God. In close connection to *chayah*, the Old Testament uses *muchyah* to denote something vivid. The word is used twice for a leper’s skin swelling (Leviticus 13:10, 24), for revivification (Ezra 9:8-9), for the preservation of life (Genesis 45:5), reconstruction (2 Chronicles 14:3), and maintaining life (Judges 6:4; 17:10) (compare to Porter, 1991, 18-19). The third word is *chadash* (Strong H2318), which occurs ten times in the Old Testament (1 Samuel 11:14; 2 Chronicles 15:8, 24:4, 24:12; Job 10:17; Ps 51:12, 103:5, 104:30; Isaiah 61:4; Lamentations 5:21), and means “to renew”,

“to fix”, “to restore something.” The fourth word is *chalaph* (Strong H2498) which occurs 28 times in the Old Testament. It implies different meanings. Among other implications, it means “to pass by/over”, “to pass through/to stab,” “to come/stand against something”, “to come again/climb, revive, flourish”, “to be changed.” Also, this verb can have the meaning “to change”, “to share”, “to revive”, “to rebuild” (compare to Gaines & Merrill, 2007, 46-47; Gesenius, 1857, CCLXXXII, CCLXIII; Lescelius, 2002, 127-28).

Characteristics of Revival

Three issues characterize the Old Testament concept of revival: a) revival must be viewed in the context of the covenant which the Lord established with Israel at Sinai; b) revival means a revival of Israel; c) the saving dimension of revival often involves earthly and material blessings. While talking about revival within the Old Testament, Priest (1996, 227) thinks that revival must be viewed in the following context: it involves the Israelites’ re-dedication to the covenant with the consequence of renewing God’s favor toward Israel. In other words, revival appears to be the result of returning to the covenant. As confirmation of this assertion, Priest turns to the examples of 2 Chronicles 15 when the Israelites promised to seek the Lord with their whole hearts and souls, 2 Kings 11-12 when the people destroyed Baal’s house and restored the house of God, 2 Kings 18 when Hezekiah removed idolatry and dedicated himself to Yahweh, and 2 Kings 22-23 when King Josiah and his people renewed their covenant with Yahweh. Finally, Priest concludes, “No doubt during these times of renewal many Israelites individually repented and were truly saved” (Priest, 1996, 227). This pattern which connects obedience to God’s law with revival has its foundation in a *theology of retribution* which we define as a pattern according to which everyone gets what they deserve, either by taking into account human standards or God’s terms. By accepting the covenant with God, the Israelites agreed to obey the Law which also contained provisions describing what would happen to them in case of disobedience (i.e. Deuteronomy 28 and Leviticus 26). So it can be said that the history of Israel represents an unbroken circle of retribution experience (compare to Jolley, 2000, 1122). Revolt and rebellion toward God, either in the form of idolatry or social injustice, will result in many forms of penalties, including oppression by other nations. God’s blessings of peace, security, prosperity and liberation from enemies come as a result of obedience to God (compare to Hill & Walton, 2009, 237). Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that the concept of revival finds its natural place within the Sinai covenantal theology of retribution which defines obedience to God’s voice as the fulfilling of the law which brings blessings, just as disobedience brings various curses.

Since Israel, and only Israel, in the Old Testament is bound to God by covenant, only Israel can experience God's visitation in the form of revival. An example of this premise is found in Psalm 85. The Psalm has a simple structure: verses 1-3 speak of God's past visitation; verses 4-7 express a request to God to revive his people again; waiting on God's answer is articulated through verses 8-9; and verses 10-13 speak of a promised future reconstruction. Some people think it is not possible to determine the exact background circumstances of these verses (compare to MacDonald, 1995, 679), while others relate the circumstances described in this psalm with the Israelites' return from Babylonian captivity (compare to Waltner, 2006, 413; Weiser, 1962, 571). We can assume that the Israelites returned to their country, and that event represented a sign of God's forgiveness. But the conditions they encountered (ruined cities, desolate fields, drought, etc.) were far from the old prophecies. Aware of the fact that the promised salvation was not completely fulfilled, the psalm expresses hope in God who restored his people in the past, and will do it again (compare to Waltner, 2006, 413; Weiser, 1962, 571). William MacDonald (1995, 679-680) believes that the salvation mentioned in the psalm does not refer to the salvation of the soul, but liberation from the consequences of disobedience to God (persecution, slavery, distress, helplessness, unhappiness). But what is important for us here is that the whole psalm focuses on Israel as God's people, and on what God will do for them. Other nations are not mentioned, nor does the promised resurrection and salvation (85:7-8) apply to other nations. Moreover, expressions such as *šub* ("return" v. 1, 3, 4, 6, 8), *yeša* ("salvation" v. 4, 7, 9), *shalom* ("peace" v. 8, 10), and especially expressions closely linked to covenant, such as *hesed* ("steadfast love"), *emet* ("truth") or *sedeq* ("righteousness") in verses 7, 10, 11, and 13 solidly reinforce this claim.

Another example and verification that the covenant exclusively applies to Israel, and consequently revival only applies to Israel, is found in 2 Chronicles 7:14. This verse mentions the people "called by God's name." The question is whether this "people" refers only to the people of Israel, or does it include believers today? Walter C. Kaiser (1998, 130) claims that this text is not limited only to the people of Israel. The text relates to people called by God by his name, or people called by God's name.⁶ An invocation or exaltation of God's name means that God becomes the owner of what was named by his name. In this sense, Kaiser argues that the text of 2 Chronicles 7:14 applies also to believers today. In his article "Revival on God's Terms", Kaiser asserts, "Note that 'my people' are identified by the appositional clause 'who are called by my name.' Since this clause is used in both the Old Testament and the New Testament for all believers, the scope of this promise goes far beyond Israel to include any and all believers in all times"

6 "...over whom I've called my name - 'my people, who are called by my name.'"

(2012). Although Kaiser's argument seems meaningful, I believe that the context of this particular prayer reveals an exclusive relationship between Yahweh and Israel that cannot simply be transferred to believers today. The full text focuses on the Old Testament fragments of salvation history. Mention of covenant (2 Chronicles 6:14), David (2 Chronicles 6:15, 7:17), House (2 Chronicles 6:18-20, 7:12) and addressing Yahweh as the God of Israel (2 Chronicles 6:16; 7:22) support the thesis that this is only about the relationship between Yahweh and Israel. Solomon admits that even an alien may invoke God's name, but it happens in the context of prayer "in this Home" (6:32). Therefore, along with Paul D. Wegner (2009, 72-73), I think this text cannot be directly applied to Christians today. A careful literary analysis of biblical texts is a necessity in order to avoid incorrect implications derived without taking into account the full textual context.

Old Testament examples of revivals, without any doubt, imply the people's return to covenant as a prerequisite for renewal and gaining God's favor. Often such a saving dimension of revival results in plain earthly-material effects (as we have already seen in Psalm 85). This is also confirmed by Paul Arthur Vallee (2001, 75) who declares that from the Old Testament perspective, revival implies a return to God and the fulfillment of covenant duties, and God's promises in this context are specifically related to the promised land. Promises found in the Old Testament were focused on material blessings, while God's promises in the New Testament focus more on spiritual blessings that belong to believers because of Christ's sacrifice (compare to Vallee, 2001, 75). In other words, revival does not refer to the revival of a person, but to the revival and restoration of some material things and circumstances. The most obvious example is Solomon's prayer in 2 Chronicles 7:14. God says here that if the Israelites fulfill certain conditions, God will "save" (Šarić) or "heal" (KS) their country. While some interpreters consider it a pattern of revival that comes, the text actually describes a specific kind of salvation/healing. In this text, God does not provide a promise to the church that he will save/heal the country/countries from injustice, corruption, immorality, bad government, poor education systems, etc., but this promise of salvation refers specifically to rain, the disappearance of plague and the removal of locusts (2 Chronicles 7:13).

Another text supporting this claim refers to Habakkuk 3:2 where the prophet prays to God for renewal and a disclosure of his work in their time. But is that related to prayer for revival in the New Testament church? No, unless we consider "God's work" as the "work of revival", but that is not the case here. If we accept the assumption that the prophet speaks here against foreign nations oppressing Judah, whether Assyrians, Egyptians, Chaldeans, or Greeks (compare to Lujčić, 2004, 192), the whole book actually deals with the issue of "how a truly righteous God could allow evil and injustice everywhere in Jerusalem, and how the evil force of Babylon could represent a means of punishment in God's hands" (Lujčić, 2004, 194). In

this context, when the prophet begins his prayer in the third chapter, Marvin A. Sweeney (2000, 481) rightly points out that by referencing God's reputation in past activity (3:2a), Habakkuk creates a foundation on which he can build his expectation that God will respond to his request – God acted in the past and it is expected that God will act again. Mention of “God's work” (also in 1:5) and the request for him to repeat his work “in our time” (literally “in the midst of the years”) refers to:

... manifestation of YHWH's action in the temporal framework of human history. Such an appeal would call upon the Deity, the infinite master of all creation whose heavenly dwelling exists outside of the finite bounds of time, to enter into the finite human realm in order to intervene on behalf of the oppressed people of Israel (Sweeney, 2000, 481).

Thus, the prophet does not pray for revival, but for the deliverance of the Judeans from an onslaught of godless people. And what is most important, the imperative “revive” or literally “make alive” (*hayyehu*) does not apply to the revival of individuals or nations, but to a revival of God's work – God works in favor of his people by eliminating enemies around them.

A third text which is interesting in this context is found in Hosea 6:1-3. Although the speaker is controversial, and whether the expression “two days... on the third day” refers literally to three days or is just an expression of a short period of time within which God will act (compare to Dearman, 2010, 192), it is important for us to understand what the prophet means by “healing”, “restoring”, “reviving”, and “early and latter rain.” Hosea deals with the following problems: on one side, Israel turned to idolatry and ignored Yahweh, and on the other side, Israel sought help from the neighboring nations of Assyria and Egypt without relying on Yahweh. Also, lawlessness, personal fights, conspiracy, bloodshed, etc. were happening in Israel. All this nullifies the covenant with Yahweh, so Israel is no longer God's people, and Yahweh turns against Israel like he turns against “moth”, “woodworm” and “lion”. Israel is “sick” and in need of “healing” (compare to Lujic, 2004, 93-97). Within this context, part of the text of 6:1-3 talks about people's return to Yahweh, about healing and recovering, about Yahweh being as beneficial for Israel (Judah and Ephraim) as the dawn, like early and late rains. But what exactly does Hosea mean by saying that?

John Day (2001, 575) believes that this refers to resurrection from death. On the contrary, M. L. Barre (1978, 140) believes that this means recovery from illness because two/three days cannot refer to an individual who is dead since such action would be beyond expectation and could not be foretold. In contrast, “the terms ‘within/after two days’ and ‘on the third day’ find their proper setting-in-life precisely in the context of medical prognosis... Hence, on its ‘primary’ level of meaning, *Hos vi 2* clearly envisages the recovery of the sick; it has nothing to do

with the resurrection of the dead” (Barre, 1978, 140). Another possible point of view is to look at these concepts in the context of covenant. So Dearman (2010, 192) says that when Hosea mentions the “dawn” and “early and latter rain”, he implies an important aspect of Israel’s existence as an agrarian society. Therefore, the life concept implies care for health and fertility. But all this is rooted in an exclusive faithfulness to Yahweh within the framework of the covenant. Dearman concludes, “The repentance language of 6:1-2 holds forth the hope that Israel will be raised, i.e., made alive through restoration of the covenant blessings under the aegis of YHWH. Some support for this understanding occurs in 6:3b, where YHWH’s approach is like that of life-giving rain” (Dearman, 2010, 195).

The third viewpoint makes the most sense because the fifth chapter describes a “disease” from which Judah and Israel (Ephraim) shall be healed. The recovery, revival and rising mentioned by Hosea in 6:1-3 probably refer to the disease and wounds mentioned in 5:13. If this is correct, then it surely excludes physical resurrection from death. It is possible that Hosea refers to a physical illness, but primarily, disease means separation from Yahweh resulting in punishment which takes the form of destruction caused by an external enemy (5:9). Accordingly, healing, rising and Yahweh’s arrival like the dawn and rain describe a reconstruction which follows should the Israelites return to Yahweh. Thus, there is no question that Hosea is referring to a revival in the time of the church (compare to McIntosh, 2000, 52-53), nor to revival done by the Holy Spirit. Of course, a return to Yahweh implies a spiritual dimension reflected in devotion to God and obedience, but it is limited only to Israel (hence, the people are bound to Yahweh through covenant) and most likely involves the reconstruction of the earthly-material blessings of the covenant such as fertile soil and safety from the enemy.

Specifics of the Concept of Revival in the New Testament

The New Testament recognizes the idea of awakening and revival, but the semantic similarity or equivalence with the Hebrew words does not necessarily mean that these words always refer to the same things or realities, nor mediate the same theological concepts. These differences are not easy to reconcile, as is obvious in the following examples. Nigel Scotland (2013, 121-122) claims that the term “revival” is not strictly biblical because the Greek language of the New Testament does not contain an equivalent of that Old Testament concept. But this does not mean that Scripture (he means the New Testament, I presume) says nothing about it. The New Testament uses the word *anakainoo* which means renewal. The same word indicates a renewal of the inner person in 2 Corinthians 4:16, a renewal of the mind in Romans 12:2, and in Titus 3:5, it is used for a renewal of

the Holy Spirit. Also, there is the word *anapsychsis* used in Acts 3:19 which means “refreshment”. He concludes, “There is nevertheless a gap between these New Testament words and our use of the word ‘revival’ which at its most basic level implies the bringing back to life of something which had previously been dead. It is therefore not surprising that the term ‘revival’ has been, and is, a contested term among biblical scholars and historians of the Christian Church” (Scotland, 2013, 121-122). Stella Paterson (2012) asserts that the word “revival” does not exist in the New Testament, and the closest would be the word *anapsuxis* (Strong G403) which means “cooling”, “comfort”, or “refreshment”, and occurs only in Acts 3:20. Robert E. Coleman points out, in turn, that the Old Testament word for “awakening” has a comparative New Testament word “to live again” occurring in Revelation 20:5, and in Romans 14:9 and 7:9. In Jesus’ parable of the prodigal son, this New Testament word means a change in the life of the repentant son in a sense that one who was dead lives again (Luke 15:24, 32). He also mentions some other words (without specifying exactly which Greek words he refers to) connecting revival with the stoking of a slowly dying fire (2 Timothy 1:6), or a plant that has blossomed and flourished again (Philippians 4:10) (compare to Coleman, 2005, 3). David L. Larsen (1992, 165), as an equivalent of the Hebrew word *chayah* (“to make alive”, “to cause life”), points to the Greek word *anazao* (Strong G326) which implies revival, occurring twice in the New Testament in Luke 15:24 and Romans 7:9. Alvin Reid (2009, 104) points to the Greek word *anakainosis* (Strong G342) which implies “to make new again” (Romans 12:2; 2 Corinthians 4:16; Colossians 3:10; and Titus 3:5), *eknepho* (Strong G1594) meaning “to get sober” (1 Corinthians 15:34) and *egeiro* (Strong G1453) meaning “to wake up”, “to rise” (Romans 13:11; Ephesians 5:14). Finally, J. Edwin Orr (1981, ii) says that a term synonymous to Old Testament revival must be looked for within the phrase “times of refreshment coming from the presence of the Lord” (Acts 3:19) because this phrase speaks of God’s source, but also God’s people as an object of promise, people who know the hope of the revival to which this text refers.

Finally, New Testament words worth mentioning in this context of revival are the words *anakainizo* (Strong G340), which means “renewal” or “to do something new” (Hebrews 6:4), *anakainoo* (Strong G341) meaning “to make new” (for example 2 Corinthians 4:16 where it is used for daily renewal and strengthening by the Spirit in the midst of external pressures, and Colossians 3:10 where it is used as a moral renewal to God’s image), *anakainosis* (Strong G342) which means “restoration” (Romans 12:2; Titus 3:5) (compare to Behm, 1985, 388), *su-zoopoieo* (Strong G4860) meaning “to live again with” (Ephesians 2:5; Colossians 2:13), *zoopoieo* (Strong G2227) which means “to make alive”, “to give life”, *anazao* (Strong G326) “to revive”, “to come back to life” (Luke 15:24; Rom 7:9), and the verb *zao* (Strong G2198) which means “to live”.

Revival is in Christ

We have shown that the New Testament does not recognize the idea of awakening/revival as it is defined in the Old Testament. Therefore, Wolfe rightly raises the following question: "... What is the relationship between experiences of renewal in the dispensation of the old covenant and today with the Holy Spirit permanently indwelling the true believer?" (Wolfe, 1991, 290). He also warns, "... Surely we must wrestle with whether or not there are any implications for revival of a people who are continually indwelt by the Spirit of God (the Church) as opposed to those who are not (OT saints)" (Wolfe, 1991, 293).

Although aware of the fact that the origin of revival comes from the Old Testament and that the issue of revival in the Old and New Testaments is a very delicate one, Wolfe (1991, 299) confirms the accuracy and validity of seeking revival. But he connects seeking revival with the spiritual condition of the church, and not so much with the condition of society. According to him, revival is needed if the church does not manifest the fruits of the Spirit and internal unity, and if the church does not work for the purpose of fulfilling the Great Commission given in Matthew 28:19-20 (compare to Wolfe, 1991, 299). Although this sounds reasonable, and although the New Testament knows much about topics such as a lack of the fruits of the Spirit, disunity and the danger of closing the church (for some reason) within itself, the Old Testament concept of "revival" is not prescribed as a solution. For example, Paul, in Galatians and Philippians, faces the problem of disunity among Christians, but he does not mention revival as a solution to the problem. But it is even more important to note that the New Testament terms "revival", "salvation", "renovation", "healing", etc. associated with the doctrine of revival are not associated with revival,⁷ but with Christ and his salvific work. This is the news that made a difference in the lives of New Testament believers in contrast to those who had lived before Christ. So John, in 20:30, states that through faith in Jesus as the Christ and Son of God, believers already have eternal life. By repentance and baptism in water, believers receive forgiveness of sins and baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38), and faith in Jesus brings healing to those who are sick (Acts 3:16). Paul, in Romans, talks about the death of the old self and walking in new life (6:2-4), freedom from the power of sin (6:18), receiving the Spirit of being adopted as a child (8:12-16), and justification and salvation by faith (1:16-17; 4:25). Furthermore, in Christ, we are all redeemed and sanctified (1 Corinthians 1:30; 6:11, 20) by the Spirit, we increasingly reflect God's glory and transform into the image of God (2 Corinthians 3:18); we are alive with Christ,

7 New Testament expressions which may be closest to the Old Testament concept of revival can be found in Ephesians 5:14 and Revelation 3:1-2.

resurrected and saved (Ephesians 2:5-8; Colossians 2:13), and we are transferred to the kingdom of Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:13). Finally, in Christ, we are healed by his wounds (1 Pet 2:24), and we have experienced being renewed by the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5). It is worth noting that, for example, Titus 3:5 locates the “reconstruction of the Spirit” within the context of the salvation we have received in Christ, not within the context of reconstruction and revival after salvation.

Once revived, restored, saved and healed, Christians are encouraged to live the life of the Spirit (Galatians 5), to be filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18), to question themselves about whether they are faithful (2 Corinthians 13:5), to sanctify themselves (1 Pet 1:15), to persevere in carrying out God’s will (Hebrews 10:36), to encourage improvement and spiritual growth (1 Pet 2:4-5, 2 Pet 1:3-11), to perform good works (Titus 2-3), etc. The New Testament writers take as a final fact that Christians are saved and restored. While correcting their disadvantages, mistakes, failures, or disobedience, they use the following approaches in their documents: a) Paul, especially in his epistles to Romans, Ephesians and Colossians: in first part of these epistles, he displays a theology that would later serve him as a foundation for moral and practical incentives that follow (indicative – imperative); b) Peter, in 1 Peter, unlike Paul, often (but not exclusively) first displays a moral and practical stimulus which he then supports by some theological setting (imperative – indicative); c) the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews, throughout the whole epistle, alternately uses a sequence of theological statements, incentives and warnings/reprimands; d) in the case of incorrect understandings of some Christian truths, further clarification follows (for example, the issue of Christ’s second coming in 1 and 2 Thessalonians, or the issue of spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 12-14); e) in the case of disobedience and open opposition, the New Testament writers are committed to discipline and eventually to the exclusion of rebellious members from the community of believers (1 Corinthians 5:1-13; Titus 3:10). From this brief review of the New Testament, it is evident that the New Testament connects “awakening”, “renewal”, “salvation”, and “revival” with the salvific work of Jesus Christ. Once alive in Christ, believers are encouraged to practice responsibility, loyalty, obedience and surrender to God. Should an individual believer or an ecclesial community fall into eventual sin, the New Testament does not solve this problem with “prayer for revival,” but with correcting the mistakes as previously stated.

God’s Kingdom and Revival

Another novelty that goes with Christ’s saving work and which points to the discrepancy between the concepts of revival as defined in the Old and New Testaments, is the fact that with the coming of Christ, the kingdom of God also came.

This concept is well known in the Old Testament, but it became a reality with Christ, a reality in which believers now live. Furthermore, instead of praying for a revival sent from God by His Spirit, the New Testament implies a link between the activity of the Spirit and the spreading of the kingdom of God.⁸ Accordingly, the *modus operandi* of God's activity in both Testaments is not the same. It is the same in the sense that the reality of the kingdom was announced in the Old Testament, but its reality and related consequences became true only with the coming of Jesus. It certainly changes everything, and thus affects the concept of revival.

While speaking about the kingdom of God as a new era of salvation, George Ladd (1993, 68-78) emphasizes the present aspect of the kingdom in which believers live. According to him, the kingdom of God is a *present realm of blessing* (Matthew 23:13; Luke 11:52; Matthew 21:31), but also represents a gift which any person can receive in the present time – it is like a treasure (Mt 13:44-46) that must be received with the attitude of a child (Mark 10:15, Luke 18:16-17, Matthew 19:14). The beatitudes from the Sermon on the Mount also speak of the kingdom as a present blessing. The kingdom is connected with the *gift of salvation* which is especially evident in Mark 10:17-30 where Jesus interchangeably uses the terms “eternal life”, “salvation”, “kingdom of God,” and “future time”. All this suggests that the actuality of salvation and eternal life speaks of the presence of the kingdom of God and vice versa. But the kingdom of God is also associated with *forgiveness*. Since the Old Testament anticipates the forgiveness of sins as a Messianic blessing (Isaiah 33:24; Micah 7:18-20; Jeremiah 31:31-34; compare to Ezekiel 18:31; 36:22-28; Zechariah 13:1), Jesus' forgiveness of sins which he offers through his ministry (Mk 2:10; Lk 7:48) as the Son of Man⁹ shows that the doctrine of the kingdom in Jesus' ministry is a familiar concept, but also the work of God in the person of Jesus Christ which allows people to experience the promises foretold by the prophets. Finally, the king-

- 8 It is interesting to read how Jesus was called the “ultimate revival of a man” (compare to McDow & Reid, 2012, 8), but at the same time a defining paradigm of revival completely bypasses Jesus and the gospel. For example, Walter Kaiser in his book *Revive Us Again*, as an example of revival in the New Testament, points to revival under John the Baptist (Matthew 3:1-14), but then skips to Acts 2:1-47 and so on. For further sources discussing revival in the New Testament which skip over Jesus and the Gospels, see Evans and Griffin. The question is raised: Why have a discussion about revival bypassing Jesus and his ministry, taking Acts as a model of New Testament revival? Obviously, it is easier to take the notion of revival and add it to certain parts of the New Testament. To find it in Jesus who is the culmination of God's revelation and the foundation of the church, and to find it in his ministry in order to confirm the concept of revival is a much more difficult task.
- 9 The term Son of Man is a possible allusion to Daniel 7:13 where the Son of Man introduces the kingdom and judgment. Jesus is the Son of Man, and he, as a judge, has the right to forgive sins.

dom is associated with *righteousness*. While speaking about this topic, Ladd points out that righteousness does not represent a primal ethical quality, but standing in a right relationship that has been achieved by the forgiveness of sins. Those who seek the kingdom also seek his righteousness (Matthew 6:33). Receiving the kingdom means that a person receives justification too. But in order to receive the kingdom, a person should not rely on personal righteousness, but should receive it as a gift from God (Luke 18:14).

In the end, Ladd concludes this subject with the following words speaking about the kingdom as a present reality:

Jesus did not promise the forgiveness of sins; he bestowed it. He did not simply assure people of the future fellowship of the Kingdom; he invited them into fellowship with himself as the bearer of the Kingdom. He did not merely promise them vindication in the day of judgment; he bestowed upon them the status of a present righteousness. He not only taught an eschatological deliverance from physical evil; he went about demonstrating the redeeming power of the Kingdom, delivering people from sickness and even death (Ladd, 1993, 78).

The Kingdom and the Holy Spirit

While it is rather popular to talk about the work of the Spirit as one who brings “revival”, it is interesting to find out that nowhere in the New Testament is the work of the Spirit associated with “revival” unless in connection with Christ, but we can find a connection between the Spirit and the kingdom in that the Spirit is active in spreading the kingdom. Consequently, based on the New Testament text, we cannot say that the Spirit brings revival, but the kingdom. Another question is raised: Are we able to speak, and how can we speak, about revival within the concept of the kingdom of God? If the answer is yes, then it means that the definition and characteristics of the concept of God’s kingdom should guide our understanding of revival, not the Old Testament or popular culture (especially American).

From the example of Jesus, we are able to see a link between the kingdom and the Spirit because Jesus was first anointed by the Spirit, and then he started his ministry of proclaiming and establishing the kingdom of God (Matthew 3:16-4:17; Mark 1:9-15; Luke 3:21-4:21). A particularly important quote from Luke 4:18-19 is where Jesus says that he was anointed by the Spirit to bring good news, and then in 4:43 we see that Jesus considers the kingdom of God to be that good news. Furthermore, in Matthew 12:28, a connection between the Spirit and the kingdom is also clearly apparent because Jesus identifies the expulsion of evil spirits with the coming of the kingdom, and everything is done with the help

of the Spirit. However, it is not just exorcisms that are associated with the kingdom and the Spirit, but also miraculous healings. Luke writes that Jesus spoke about the kingdom and healed everyone who was in need of healing (Luke 6:11, compare to Acts 10:38). Hence, Jesus proclaimed the kingdom, people came to hear him and to be cured of their diseases (Luke 5:15; 6:17). Just like Jesus, the apostles act in the same way since Jesus sends them to proclaim the coming of the kingdom and to heal sicknesses (Luke 9:6; Matthew 10:7-8). We can see that Jesus' ministry is a model for their service. It is also significant that Jesus, in order to reach unsaved people, asked his disciples to pray to the Lord of the Harvest to send laborers into the harvest (Matthew 9:37-38). If the harvest implies rescued souls, then the main prerequisite (or obstacle) for Jesus is the number of workers who would be willing to go into the harvest. In the next few lines (Matthew 10:1-15), Jesus describes the action of the workers in the harvest, and although the text does not mention the Spirit, it speaks about receiving "power" to heal sick people and cast out demons, and to proclaim the kingdom of God as the message of salvation. With this levy of Jesus to pray for workers, it should be emphasized that Jesus explicitly requires two more times that the "kingdom of God" should be asked and prayed for (Matthew 6:10, 33).

Since the gospels imply a clear link between the Spirit and the kingdom, a question arises about the link between the Spirit and the kingdom during the period of the church after Jesus' ascension. Do we have links between the Spirit and the kingdom in this period, especially within the Book of Acts? It is significant that the Book of Acts begins with a report about Jesus who speaks for 40 days to his disciples on the subject of the kingdom (1:1-3). But immediately after, following the theological theme introduced by Luke, is the Father's promise – the Spirit comes on the church. Here we see that Jesus rejects the idea of the arrival of a visible physical realm limited to Israel because it is not yet time for it, and he turns their attention to the coming of the Spirit and their forthcoming witness. Even if not said directly, it is noticeable that Luke creates and develops a connection between the spreading of the kingdom and the apostolic testimony anointed by the Spirit. Thus, the disciples do not testify only to what Jesus has done in the past (3:12-15), but also to what this same resurrected Jesus does here and now (see 3:16). This close link between the Spirit and the kingdom is also found in Acts 8:4-25 where we can see Philip proclaiming the good news of Christ and of the kingdom of God (8:12), people being rescued (8:12, 15), and miracles and exorcisms happening (8:6-8). While such events and their consequences would be attributed to revival today, the text of Acts tells us about one person who moves in the power of God, preaches Christ and the kingdom, and this brings visible results and is accompanied by certain manifestations. Moreover, the text in 8:8 tells us about the joy that sprang up in the city (so it is obviously related to a

wider social impact). Furthermore, while talking about his work in Ephesus, Paul points out that he was preaching the kingdom among them (Acts 20:25, compare to Acts 19:8). Since we know that God performed miracles in Ephesus through Paul and accompanied Paul's ministry with the activity of the Spirit (Acts 19:1-13), the examples of Philip and Paul suggest that the Spirit expands the kingdom and is sometimes manifested through miracles and exorcisms.

When we talk about a link between the Spirit and the kingdom, it is especially important to study the text of Acts 2 where an outpouring of the Spirit based on Joel's prophecy is mentioned. This particular event itself, as well as the theological concept of the "outpouring of the Spirit" deriving from it, often serves as a pattern for defining revival. For example, Nigel Scotland (2013, 131) mentions "revivals from the day of Pentecost to the present" characterized by mass conversions. As a precedent for such an event, he points to the outpouring of the Spirit in Acts 2. Martyn Lloyd-Jones asserts that the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost happened again in the house of Cornelius. That means that the Pentecost event represents a repeating pattern. He concludes, "The Holy Ghost fell upon them, as he had fallen upon these people in the upper room, there in Jerusalem. And, of course, that is exactly what happens in every revival" (Porter, 1991, 27). In the end, I will include a quote following Orr's statement saying that awakening represents the activity of the Holy Spirit who brings revival in New Testament Christianity and the church as a community: "The outpouring of the spirit effects the reviving of the church, the awakening of the masses, and the movement of uninstructed peoples towards the Christian faith; the revived church, by many or by few, is moved to engage in evangelism, in teaching, and in social action" (Porter, 1991, 38). A common feature of all these statements is that an outpouring of the Spirit brings revival, and Acts 2 and the Pentecost event serve as a model text.

Leaving a more detailed text analysis aside, we should emphasize a few important issues: first, the event of the outpouring of the Spirit in Acts tells about the coming of the "end days" or "eschaton", and it is a sign of the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham about blessing all nations (Acts 3:24-26, 10:43; 13:23; 26-27; 32; 15:15-17, etc.). It talks about salvation and a certain kind of restoration of creation. The outpouring of the Spirit is associated with the fact that Jesus was resurrected and he is exalted at the right hand of God which means that Jesus' ministry and accomplished salvation represent the exact context of the outpouring of the Spirit. Or, as Thomas Schreiner says, "The enthronement of Jesus of Nazareth as Lord and Christ fulfilled the Davidic covenant, indicating that he reigns as the Davidic king (cf. 2 Sam. 7; 1 Chron. 17; Ps. 89; 132). As the messianic king, he confers the Spirit on his people, and the gift of the Spirit indicates that God's promises are now being fulfilled" (Schreiner, 2008, 103, compare to 28-29). Second, the purpose of receiving the Spirit in Acts 2, Luke defines in 1:8. It is de-

scribed as receiving the power of the Spirit in order to be able to bring testimony, or as Schreiner says, “receiving the gift of the Spirit in order to be enabled for ministry.” Carefully stepping between the two opposing positions presented by Max Turner and Robert P. Menzies, for example, they assert that Luke’s concept of the Spirit does not propose a rigid separation between the receiving of the Spirit for ministry and its regenerative soteriological service, but also includes an aspect of equipping for ministry and an aspect of belonging to the people of God – receiving the Spirit means belonging to God’s people (compare to Schreiner, 2008, 453-454). Third, Acts 2:36 closely connects the receiving of the promised Spirit and salvation. This is an important statement because Peter says that receiving the Spirit as the apostles experienced is the exact same thing that God promises to anyone who converts: “The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off – for all whom the Lord our God will call.” Without entering here into *ordo salutis*, it is enough to point out that Peter connects the receipt of the Spirit with those who are “called to God.” In this context, it clearly implies the soteriological aspect.

A Critical Overview of the New Testament Concept of Revival

In the previous parts of this paper, I have tried to show that the concept of revival as defined in the Old Testament is hardly compatible with a New Testament concept. If we want to talk about the New Testament concept of revival, it must be done within the context of Jesus’ ministry and his salvific work, and within the context of the arrival of the kingdom of God. In other words, I suggest these two contexts as “canon” which the interpreter has to have in mind when accessing Old Testament texts which tackle revival in order to seek a normative model and a revival pattern in the contemporary church. Our problem is the theological inconsistency which focuses exclusively on words, and thus neglects the theological context of these words. Although words presuppose certain meanings, those meanings are primarily determined by sentence flow and context. When we deal with a word found within the Old Testament which anticipates the same or similar meaning as another corresponding Greek word in the New Testament, it does not mean that *all* meanings and *all* characteristics associated with this word in one context are always fully relevant in other contexts, or that some other word with the same or similar meaning always mediates the exact same or similar set of meanings, characteristics or theological concepts. While tracking this path, I would like to point out a few problems and challenges.

First, the concept of revival in the Old Testament was based on performing

ordinances of the Law by the Israelites. The viability of the covenant depended on the quality of their performance as well as on the consequences, either positive or negative (theology of retribution). Prayers for revival and renewal always occurred in the context of the negative consequences of Israel's disobedience. These prayers express a hope that God will forgive their sins and restore them to their previous condition and circumstances. This pattern is not found in the New Testament because our covenant with God is not based on the quality of our performance according to the Law, but on our relationship with Christ. Furthermore, we have seen that when the New Testament uses terms like "renewal" or "revival", they are always related to Christ. In this sense, the activity of the Spirit is connected to Christ's salvific act, and to the activity and arrival of God's kingdom (Colossians 1:13). It mediates blessings such as salvation, life, redemption, forgiveness, etc. Some of these, the Old Testament sometimes connects to revival, while miracles and exorcisms confirm the activity of Spirit clearly manifesting the presence of the kingdom. Therefore, I propose that speech about revival based on the New Testament makes sense only if we talk within the framework of the two previously discussed concepts. Thus, Eifion Evans is doing exactly the opposite when he defines revival as a sovereign and extraordinary work of God's Spirit, bringing about in a short time an enlargement of Christ's kingdom (Evans, 2002, 11). So instead of a situation where the kingdom of God defines the concept of revival in the New Testament context, revival becomes the concept which dominates over that of the kingdom.

Secondly, there is doubt within Christianity about the appropriate definition of revival, whether it refers only to the revival of believers, or to an awakening (salvation) of unbelievers. This ambiguity ultimately leads to "revival's inflation". Specifically, the Old Testament connects revival only to Israel which is additionally confirmed by Orr, who claims that Hebrew terms for revival are used only for those people who are already in a relationship with God (compare to Orr, 1981, ii), while an event like Jonah's preaching in Nineveh represents an awakening. If we accept this definition as true, then it turns out that the concept of revival is appropriately applied only to believers, and it does not involve outreach to unbelievers. If we approach the New Testament with this definition, then it would be correct to say that the cases described in Acts 8, 10 and 19 do not represent revivals because they are conversions of unsaved people. The same applies to Acts 1-2. If we accept the definition distinguishing between the terms of "revival" and "awakening," then we can say that Acts 1 represents a kind of "revival" and Acts 2 represents an "awakening". But since those who advocate revival claim that revival is needed when the church falls into spiritual dullness, Acts 1-2 does not comply with this claim because the text does not describe any kind of fall from "life" to "spiritual death". On the contrary, early church believers strove upwards.

Thus, it is disturbing when Walter Kaiser (2001, Introduction), in giving a definition of revival, takes a quote from 2 Chronicles 7:14 and says that it represents a “biblical definition of revival” because such a definition cannot include Acts 2. So, one cannot build a theology based on Acts 2 that applies to other parts of the New Testament. The ultimate consequence of this kind of imprecision is a “flood of awakening events” where certain parts of the New Testament become interpreted and proclaimed as “revivals”, but based on the Old Testament definition. Within his doctoral dissertation, Paul Arthur Vallee (2001, 140), beside a traditional attribution of revival to Acts 8 and 10, proclaims the ministry of John the Baptist in Matthew 3:1-14 as a “preparation for revival,” referring to Jesus who came and brought revival.

The third and final point is that the New Testament, especially the gospels and Acts, does not connect outreach to unbelievers with a prayer for revival, but with individual harvesters going into the harvest filled with God’s power and Spirit. We have already met this pattern in the gospels. It is the same in Acts because Peter proclaims the Gospel message after being filled with the Spirit. In Acts 8, Philip is the one who goes around in God’s power and witnesses of Christ and his kingdom. Peter, in Acts 10, also goes to the house of a Gentile and preaches the gospel, etc. The point is that evangelism, reaching unbelievers and the harvest do not depend on revival, but on workers who are available (Matthew 9:37-38). If we assume that Jesus’ ministry of spreading the kingdom (a person is anointed by the Spirit to preach, teach, heal, and cast out demons) is a model for ministry and activity in the New Testament church, then the concept of revival implies the serious potential to prevent Christians from stretching themselves toward the activity of spreading the kingdom because they are encouraged to pray and wait for some future time of the Spirit’s outpouring, perhaps because talking about revival is often accompanied by talk about a disobedient church in need of repentance and the cleansing of sins. Consequently, believers who focus on purging their sins (a job that never ends) are distracted from stretching themselves toward spreading the kingdom and imitating the example of Jesus. But unlike the Old Testament concept of “revival” which comes in moments of renewal from disobedience, God’s kingdom is already present here and now, looking for people who are willing to declare and manifest it within the sphere of this world. Following, a statement by Rich Murphy reflects this problem:

Revival really isn’t for the lost, but for the saved. We tend to think of revival as getting the lost into the church. But, that’s not what it’s all about. When revival is happening, the lost will come into the church. However, the reason they will come is because of the changed hearts of God’s people. That will draw them. That will show them their need for salvation. Once the Holy Spirit cleans up the Body of Christ, then He will start drawing the unsaved in. But,

that can't be the start of it. *If we start off trying to get the unsaved coming into our churches, they'll just see how messed up we are* [my emphasis]. That won't draw them to Jesus.

If this is how we define the concept of revival, does it mean that believers must not bring unbelievers to church until they are “on the right track”? And how are we to interpret his statement that when revival comes, the Holy Spirit will start to bring unsaved people to church? And until revival comes, what is to be done in the meantime?

Conclusion

The concept of revival appeared for the first time in 1702 when a powerful spiritual awakening gained serious attention from the general public and society (compare to Orr, 1981, iii). Thus, the concept originated in a particular place and time. Over time, it became more and more defined in accordance with the Old Testament. This particular discussion is not concerned about the historical development of the concept of revival, nor does it study the revival experiences within church history, or bring judgment on them. It is limited to a process of indicating to what extent the Old Testament concept of revival is compatible with the New Testament. The solution proposed affirms that from the standpoint of the biblical text, it is necessary to recognize that the same or similar terms in both Testaments do not necessarily always reflect the same meanings or realities. Therefore, it is required to recognize and accept similarities, but also differences. The key idea is that the Old Testament concept of revival needs to be anticipated within the New Testament context of Christ's salvific act and the arrival of God's kingdom because renewal and revitalization, the activity of God's Spirit and others, are related to both concepts. If my claim is right, then it means that the church today should not wait for some perfect time called “revival” in order to reach the unsaved because the kingdom of God is already here among us. But at the same time, the New Testament clearly points to a kind of awakening and fulfilling of believers with the Spirit and power of God which are necessary to act in that manner.

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Translated from Croatian by Dalia Matijević

Ervin Budiselić

Starozavjetni koncept probuđenja u Novome zavjetu

Sažetak

Među kršćanima često se govori o probuđenju, vjernike se potiče da mole i traže probuđenje, pišu se knjige i članci na tu temu. Međutim Novi zavjet na semantičkoj razini ne koristi pojam „probuđenje“. Stoga se postavlja pitanje odakle u novozavjetnoj Crkvi proizlazi govor i ideje probuđenja te koliko su one opravdane? Budući da koncept probuđenja proizlazi iz Staroga zavjeta, članak se prvo bavi analizom ključnih starozavjetnih pojmova i redaka na ovu temu, a onda analizira kako i na koji način Novi zavjet govori o toj temi. Rasprava ustvrđuje da Novi zavjet probuđenje, obnovu ili oživljavanje povezuje primarno s Kristom i njegovim spasonosnim djelom. Također, ustvrđuje se da dolazak kraljevstva Božjeg u Isusovoj službi zahtijeva da se starozavjetni koncept i ideja probuđenja uskladi s tom novom realnošću. Štoviše, može se reći da koncept probuđenja u nekim segmentima predstavlja zapreku kršćanima u nasljedovanju Isusovog primjera očitovanja kraljevstva Božjeg.