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1. THE WELSH REVIVAL OF 1904-05 - Oliver W. Price

During the spring of 1904 a young Welshman named Evan Roberts was repeatedly awakened at 1:00 a.m. He met with God until 5:00 a.m. The Welsh revival followed. Churches were packed for prayer meetings. In a prayer meeting for young people, Pastor Joseph Jenkins asked for testimonies. A young girl named Florrie Evans, who had only been a believer a few days, rose and with a trembling voice said simply, "I love Jesus with all my heart." The other young people's hearts were melted. A powerful spiritual awakening that brought 100,000 people to Christ was under way.

On November 7th, 1904 Moraih Chapel was filled to capacity for a prayer meeting that lasted until 3:00 a.m. Soul winning spread through the coalmines. Profane swearing stopped. Even the miners' horses were puzzled when their masters stopped cursing. Orders to the Bible Society "for Scriptures from Wales during November and December, were over three times the amount for the corresponding months of 1903..." The Times said this resulted from the Welsh revival, adding that this demand showed no sign of falling off.

"The mighty and unseen breath of the Spirit was doing in a month more than centuries of legislation could accomplish" the pastor of Saint John's-Wood Presbyterian Church declared on Sunday, January 1st, 1905 according to the London Times. The Welsh revival "had a great effect" in healing spiritual carelessness among Christians and "the growing bitterness which has accentuated our unhappy divisions", the Bishop of Bangor declared on January 2nd, 1905. He called "congregations to meet together often for united prayer."

The Times added that "the religious revival in Wales continues...with unabated zeal." Huge crowds were attending the meetings. Bible verses covered the doors down in the coalmines. "At Swansea the Poor Law guardians...dealt with revival cases in which people...have taken their parents from the workhouse. The Welsh revival movement has shown no sign of flagging...", The Times pointed out on January 10th. Entire congregations were on their knees in fervent prayer and "for the first time there was not a single case of drunkenness at the Swansea Petty Sessions."

On January 11th The Times noted that David Lloyd-George, who later became the British Prime Minister, said the Welsh revival gave hope "that at the next election Wales would declare with no uncertain sound against the corruption in high places which handed over the destiny of the people to the horrible brewing interest..." Lloyd-George even saw one of his political rallies taken over by the

Welsh revival. He was impressed as a young girl prayed in the presence of 2,000 people. He said in one town the tavern sold only 9 cents worth of liquor drinks on Saturday night!

The Times observed that "The whole population had been suddenly stirred by a common impulse. Religion had become the absorbing interest of their lives. They had gathered at crowded services for six and eight hours at a time. Political meetings and even football matches were postponed...quarrels between trade-union workmen and non-unionists had been made up... At Glyn-Neath a feud had existed for the past 10 or 12 years between the two Independent chapels, but during the past week united services have been held in both chapels, and the ministers have shaken hands before the congregations."

The Salvation Army set apart January 19th, 1905 for a day of confession, humiliation, and prayer throughout England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. All day prayer meetings were held in many of the principal cities of the British Isles, according to the London Times. The meeting was marked by "fervent prayer and any one who felt called upon to pray." Fires of spiritual revival and moral recovery were spreading.

Coal miners crowded into prayer meetings that lasted till 3:00 a.m. and then washed, ate breakfast and returned to work. Many drunkards confessed their sins and received Christ. According to the London Times of February 2nd, 1905 due to the Welsh revival many men abandoned dens of iniquity. Employers noticed a great improvement in the work produced by their employees. A judge named Sir Marchant Williams said that his work was much lighter especially regarding drunkenness and related offenses.

The revival fires burning in Wales in 1904-05 spread through England, Ireland and Scotland. Prayer meetings multiplied. As many as 2,000 attended a prayer meeting in the city of Bradford. In the City of Leeds, Samuel Chadwick reported that his church was never empty all day. An amazing work of grace transformed life in a factory.

In 1905 a week of united prayer meetings in an English town called Nuneaton led to a "glorious revival". The Prince's Theatre was packed each Sunday night after church with 1500 praying believers and many unsaved seekers. In Bulwell, many of the most degraded drunkards were converted. In the Bedfordshire villages, whole nights devoted to prayer prepared for powerful evangelism.

Joseph Kemp, pastor of Charlotte Chapel in Edinburgh, visited God's mighty work of revival in Wales in 1904. Back in his home church on New Year's Eve, 1905, an unusually fervent prayer meeting led to conviction of sin. A powerful revival that continued for over two years was under way. A strong work of evangelism began. 1,000 inquirers received counseling.

The Irish Presbyterians issued a Call to Prayer. Noonday and evening prayer meetings multiplied. The Irish Methodists and other denominations experienced an unusual spirit of grace and supplications. In Lurgan, revival meetings packed both the First Presbyterian and the Methodist churches. The taverns were emptied while people who had not attended church before come in record numbers and received Christ.

Revival fires spread through Bangor University resulting in "only a third or fourth of the students attending some of the classes... Beginning with a spontaneous outburst of praise and prayer among the men students, the movement spread...at a united prayer meeting...some...broke down sobbing."

In 1905 when Fred C. Gibson became pastor of 1st Presbyterian Church in Tobormore, County Londonderry, Ireland the little town was morally and spiritually dead. So he signed a covenant with God to seek revival by his preaching and his prayers. In spite of strong resistance, God moved in special meetings that changed the Christians and resulted in remarkable conversions of hardened sinners.

God can do it again. Join with others all over the world in praying for spiritual awakening. Gather a group to pray on the first Monday of each month.

2. TRUE REVIVAL (Wales) - P. Fredrick Fogle

When a true revival, initiated by God occurs in the hearts of Christians, the Holy Spirit will help them to understand that it is real. For many people, the word "true" is hard to define. What is true, and what is not true is thought of as debatable. The proper understanding of what REVIVAL really is has become illusive for many. One of the best ways to define TRUE REVIVAL is to cite a positive and powerful example. The example chosen for our purposes is a brief account the story of the revival in Wales in 1904-05:

EVAN ROBERTS: SPARK OF GOD

Wales has periodically been a land of revivals. It experienced spiritual renewal in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The Welsh revival of 1904-05 was a divine intervention that drastically changed life in churches, homes, mines, factories, schools and even places of leisure and entertainment.

God used young Evan Roberts to spark the new fires of revival. He was not the human leader of the revival, however. In fact, no one human leader directed it. Evan was extremely conscious of divine leadership during the momentous events of the Welsh revival. He said, "This movement is not of me, it is of God. I would not dare direct it...It is the Spirit alone which is leading us" (Ellis, Living

Echoes, Delyn Press).

Some have said that God chose Roberts because he lacked all the usual characteristics often found in human leaders. God secured the victory through Evan's simplicity and spiritual power. After the early phases of the revival, six men became major overseers along with less- active people, including men and women. Mrs. Jessie Penn-Lewis, a noted Christian author, strongly supported the endeavor, along with her husband.

Evan Roberts was one of fourteen children born to Henry and Hannah Roberts. He spent his childhood in an atmosphere in which the chapel and home were one. Intellectual and spiritual development in children were carried on simultaneously in many homes in Wales during the early 20th century. Roberts responded well to the spiritual atmosphere of his home background. As he matured, he grew in spirituality and gained a broad knowledge of literature and music. He enjoyed the interaction of intelligent conversation. One of his motives as he grew to manhood was to bring each of his endeavors in life into subservience to Christ. In Evan, "prayer and poetry became a beautiful blend, communion with God and music became practically synonymous" (Ellis)

As a young minister, Roberts brought to his pulpit a disciplined knowledge of the Scriptures as well as an unusual level of spiritual dedication. These attributes, coupled with literature, enabled him to deliver powerful and polished sermons that greatly amazed his hearers.

The year 1904 proved to be crucial. Prayer meetings for world revival were being held in many places throughout Great Britain. Young Roberts already had prayed for thirteen years for the Holy Spirit to control him. He determined to read and speak often about revival. His personal prayer effort culminated early that year when he felt the need to spend seven hours with God in prayer and Bible study each day. By October 1904 the Lord's Spirit had communicated to Roberts that he was the preacher of revival. Seth Joshua, a leading Bible teacher, had prayed for four years, asking God to select some able person to present revival truths. The Lord answered by calling Evan Roberts. After the Word of God had accomplished its work in his own life, Roberts intensified his praying in travail of soul for a great spiritual awakening in his beloved Wales. His spiritual thirst to see people saved was evident. He was not interested in mere intellectual renaissance.

Roberts went to his hometown of Loughor with the desire to share his burden with his Christian friends. A service was announced, and many young people attended. With great liberty, Roberts spoke of the deep things of God. Because of the clear manifestation of the conviction of sin and the need for cleansing by the Saviour, that first meeting was continued until midnight. The next day many comments were made in the village about the event. The people were agog. With the special work of God clearly visible, it was decided to keep the chapel open

day and night so that worshipers could go there to pray and to praise God.

"Everything sprang into new life. Former blasphemers were the most eloquent, both in prayer and praise...Drunkards forgot the way to saloons...they were busy worshipping... It was the young people who responded with the greatest alacrity to the challenge of absolute surrender and consecrated to the service of the Lord...With ever increasing momentum, the movement advanced, creating unprecedented excitement among the churches and the secular institutions outside" (Matthews, I Saw the Welsh Revival, Moody).

What happened in South Wales was heard around the world. From many nations went people of all ranks of life to the country to personally witness the phenomenon. Some criticized and others scoffed, but such voices were answered by the throngs of people who filled the church sanctuaries to capacity for months on end.

The Welsh revival was not an orgy of emotion but a "mighty outpouring of religious fervor, bringing a whole nation to its knees at the foot of the cross in adoration and praise" (Matthews). In the midst of the events at Loughor, Roberts was asked to share his message with neighboring churches in South Wales and eventually in North Wales as well. Marvelous results were very apparent wherever he taught the Word of God.

During Robert's work in North Wales, he suffered a serious physical collapse. Though very strong of body, having been a miner, the spiritual burden and intensity of the work had a telling effect. Evan Roberts spent much of the rest of his life in seclusion under the care of the Penn-Lewises. He went to his eternal reward in 1951. After Roberts withdrew from revival work, other people of God carried on with great success. Many joined local churches; industrial production spiraled, and criminal court activity was reduced to a minimum.

What God did in Wales through Evan Roberts should be an object lesson to the world. We desperately need revival today in order to see God glorified and to stem the tide of godlessness. A heaven-sent burden is needed concerning the sins of our world and of our churches. Sustained prayer must be the norm if we are to experience the birth pangs of a new spiritual era.

by P. Fredrick Fogle, Ph.D. Published by Union Gospel Press
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3. THE POWER OF EVANGELISM IN THE WELSH REVIVAL, by Dr. Alvin L. Reid

I believe the world is upon the threshold of a great religious revival, and I pray that I may be allowed to help bring this about. I beseech all those who confess Christ to ask Him today, upon their knees, if He has not some work for them to do now. He will lead them all as He has led us. He will make them pillars of smoke by day and pillars of fire by night to guide all men to Him." -Evan Roberts(1)

One of the first revival movements I ever heard of was the Welsh Revival of 1904-05. Wales has duly been called the "Land of Revival" and the "Land of Song." Griffith Jones, Howell Harris, Daniel Rowlands, William Williams, and Christmas Evans led earlier awakenings. The 1859 awakening was reported around the world. The land was set ablaze by the Moody-Sankey meetings in the late 19th Century.

In 1904 God again visited this small but significant locale. One of the earliest signs of a growing awakening came in the ministry of pastor Joseph Jenkins at New Quay, Cardiganshire. In November, 1903, he began a Young People's Meeting to battle their growing worldliness. Jenkins was visited by a shy young girl following an evening service in January, 1904. The following week, the first Sunday in February, Jenkins asked for testimonies during the Young People's Meeting following the morning service. Then, he asked for responses to the question, "What does Jesus mean to you?"

Her sincere, earnest confession had the effect of a lightning strike of the Spirit in the congregation. Person after person arose and made full surrender to Christ. An early eyewitness of the revival said: "It was the beginning of the visible manifestation of the Spirit breaking out in life-streams which afterwards would touch thousands of souls."(2) The news of the service spread throughout the area as young people testified in other churches.

Evan Roberts (1878-1951) was the person most recognized in the Welsh Revival. He came from a humble, religious family. As a child, the devout lad took a Bible with him everywhere. Early in his life, he dreamed of revival. While a young coal miner, a page of the Bible was scorched, the page at II Chronicles 6 where Solomon prayed for revival. Perhaps Evan saw this as prophetic, for when he became world-known, the Bible was displayed in photographs around the world.

Roberts heard an evangelist named Seth Joshua speak at Blaednnannerch. The Thursday morning service closed with Joshua praying, "Lord...Bend us." Roberts went to the front, knelt, and with great anguish cried, "Lord, bend me." Reflecting on that prayer, he later said that the impact of his commitment had this effect: "I felt ablaze with a desire to go through the length and breadth of Wales to tell of my Savior; and had that been possible, I was willing to pay God for doing so."(3)

Roberts began to go to various towns to speak of his changed life. "Oh, Syd," he

said to his best friend, Sydney Evans, in late 1904, "We are going to see the mightiest revival that Wales has ever known - the Holy Spirit is coming just now." In great anticipation, he added, "We must get ready. We must get a little band and go all over the country preaching." Suddenly Roberts stopped, looked at Sydney, and said, "Do you believe that God can give us 100,000 now?"(4)

Within six months, 100,000 souls were converted in Wales.

Social impact was similarly reported. Judges were presented with white gloves signifying no cases to be tried. Alcoholism was halved. At times hundreds of people would stand to declare their surrender to Christ as Lord. Restitution was made, gamblers and others normally untouched by the ministry of the church came to Christ. In fact, esteemed G. Campbell Morgan recalled a conversation with a mine manager about profanity. The manager told him, "The haulers are some of the very lowest. They have driven their horses by obscenity and kicks. Now they can hardly persuade their horses to start working, because they have no obscenity and kicks."(5)

Do you long to see God move like that in our day? What if, one hundred years later, God so moved in our nation that hundreds of thousands of people, even millions, flooded the churches? If so, remember there is never great, widespread revival without personal revival. Do you seek a personal, deep, Spirit-led movement of God in your life? Then consider these aspects of personal revival taught by Evan Roberts, known as the Four Points:

- You must put away any unconfessed sin.
- You must put away any doubtful habit.
- You must obey the Holy Spirit promptly.
- You must confess Christ publicly.
- May God raise up a generation of people with this passion.

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1. Evan Roberts, in W. T. Stead, ed., The Story of the Welsh Revival (London: Fleming H. Revell, 1905), 2. Jessie Penn-Lewis, The Awakening in Wales and Some of the Hidden Springs (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1905), 37. 3. J. Edwin Orr, The Flaming Tongue (Chicago: Moody, 1973), 5. 4. James A. Stewart, Invasion of Wales by the Spirit through Evan Roberts (Ft. Washington, PA: Christian Literature Crusade, 1970), 28-29. 5. Cited by Arthur Goodrich and

others, eds. The Story of the Welsh Revival (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1905)