

The Corona Chronicle.

Being Church in Partial lockdown.

Sunday June 6th

West Worthing Evangelical Church.

Rugby Road



Evan Roberts, a man in the Hand of God

In 1904 the man used by God to usher in revival was a former coal miner known as Evan Roberts. It is said that at the beginning of the twentieth century there was a small explosion in a South Wales coal mine. One of the results of that explosion was that the pages of a Bible were scorched. The owner of the Bible was Evan Roberts and he was destined by God to light the flames of revival in the country of Wales. The pages that were scorched were 2 Chronicles 6, the very chapter in which the prayer of Solomon is found regarding recovery from departure and the answer of God in promising revival. It is said that pictures of that scorched Bible went around the world following the amazing events of 1904.

Evan Roberts was one of fourteen children and was born on the 8th June 1878 in a town to the west of Swansea known as Loughor. He was twenty-six years old when he was used by God to bring revival to Wales. Initially he worked as a coal miner and then as a blacksmith. At the age of thirteen or fourteen he had been warned by a deacon of Moriah Chapel named William Davies, never to miss a prayer meeting. He was also told that the reason he should never be absent was in case the Holy Spirit came and he would be like the apostle Thomas who was missing when the newly-risen Christ first appeared to His disciples! Evan heeded the advice and never missed a prayer meeting or any other meeting for that matter.

The turning point in his dealings with God

Evan started to attend school in the Cardiganshire town of Newcastle Emlyn and on Thursday, 29th September 1904 he travelled over to Blaenannerch to listen to preaching. At the close of the service a preacher, Seth Joshua, offered a prayer and in the course of it said, 'Bend us, O Lord!' The idea behind such a sentiment is that we should be bent or moulded to the will of God. This simple request had a powerful impact upon Evan Roberts and it gripped his heart and mind. He is said to have fallen to his knees in prayer and leaning forward over the back of the pew in front began praying, 'Bend me! Bend me! Bend me!' The perspiration stood out on his face and joined the tears that flowed from his eyes.

It was a mighty experience and a turning point in his life.

It would seem that he stayed in that condition for a long time, with people coming to comfort him and to wipe his face. Three things essentially overwhelmed him. Firstly, the love of God seemed forcibly impinged upon his mind. Secondly, his own unworthiness humbled him, powerfully affecting him. Thirdly, he was overwhelmed with a great burden for the salvation of lost souls. Deeply moved and radically changed by the experience he referred to that time as, 'Blaenannerch's great meeting'.

That meeting was the essential turning point but for many years Evan had been reading, talking and thinking about revival. It was constantly on his mind and in his prayers and he talked incessantly on the subject, especially with his great friend Sydney Evans. One night in particular, he had spent time in prayer with God in the garden and his face shone to the point of glowing. Evan rushed up to Evans and said, 'I have got wonderful news for you. I have had a vision of all Wales being lifted up to heaven. We are going to see the mightiest revival that Wales has ever known - the Holy Spirit is coming just now. We must be ready. We must have a little band and go all over the country preaching'. The words sounded almost breathlessly hysterical but they proved to be prophetic and true. There was a deep passion in the heart of Evan Roberts for revival. He had very deep times of communion and fellowship with God and was sometimes overwhelmed with the presence of the Almighty.

The Diary of a Revival

31st October 1904: Evan Roberts felt a strong leading from the Lord to return to his home town of Loughor.

When he arrived he told his mother, 'There will be a great change in Loughor in less than a fortnight. We are going to have the greatest revival that Wales has ever seen'.

1st November 1904: Evan Roberts spoke to the young people in the Chapel about the importance of being filled with the Spirit.

2nd November 1904: Evan Roberts spoke on the four great principles which all must follow who desire the outpouring of the Spirit:

1. Confess all known sin - those past sins must be put away and cleansed. This is the deep pursuit of holiness.
2. Remove everything that is doubtful from your life and forgive everybody - no one must be excluded.
3. Obey the prompting of the Holy Spirit - obedience must be instant, total and unquestioning.
4. Make public confession of Christ as your Saviour - be open in your allegiance to Christ.

Meetings continued throughout the week and the following Sunday, 6th November 1904 sixty young people responded in faith and repentance to the call of the gospel.

7th November 1904: the Chapel was packed and people were moved to tears, while others cried out in agony of soul over their sins. For the first time the 'Revival Love Song' was sung. The first line in Welsh says, '*Dyma gariad fel y moroedd*' and as we sing in English, 'Here is love, vast as the ocean'. The meeting did not finish until 3.00 a.m.

9th November 1904: the people of Loughor woke up to hear the footsteps of crowds flocking in to the 6 a.m. early morning prayer meeting.

10th November 1904: the *Western Mail* carried reports of crowds flocking to the Chapel in Loughor.

11th November 1904: the service at Moriah Chapel was overflowing with over eight hundred people attending.

12th November 1904: from all the surrounding countryside people flocked into Loughor and filled Moriah Chapel where Evan Roberts was preaching and also Pisgah Chapel where Sydney Evans was the preacher.



Cartoon of EVAN ROBERTS preaching at a Revival Meeting

14th November 1904: Evan Roberts is found in Aberdare and one thousand people attend Ebenezer Congregational Chapel to hear him preach.

15th November 1904: the whole of Aberdare was stirred and the early morning prayer meeting lasted for four hours. There were immense crowds in the evening and during the service Evan Roberts gave out the hymn, 'Heavenly Jesus ride victorious, Gird Thy sword upon Thy thigh'. It is reported that instantly prayer and praise broke out and that Evan Roberts walked amongst the congregation in what was described as 'holy ecstasy'.

The movement throughout Wales

This was the beginning of what JAMES ALEXANDER STEWART called, 'the Invasion of Wales by the Spirit through Evan Roberts'. Evan then travelled up and down the South Wales' industrialized valleys preaching everywhere and a great spiritual anointing was experienced. There were many manifestations of the presence of the Holy Spirit in God, glorifying power.

WHITAKER in his book *Great Revivals* says, 'The presence of God was felt everywhere. The atmosphere was divinely charged. People seemed to be convicted of sin and become aware of the need of salvation, even without the presence of a preacher or evangelist'. In my own home town of Maesteg it is reported that two coal miners had just come off the afternoon shift and were walking down Victoria Street at about 10.30 p.m. They carried flagons of drink and were on their way home but they were suddenly aware of the presence of God, right there in the street. They knelt down on the road and cried to God for mercy. When they got up they ran down the steps to the nearest Chapel, where people inside were praying. Those men openly confessed with deep contrition and not a little anxiety that they wanted to be saved. Apparently such awareness of the awesomeness of God's presence was not unusual in these times of revival in Wales. Sadly, the Chapel to which they ran that night has now closed, the building was demolished and a residential unit stands in its place!

Revive us again O Lord

We may not be living in times of revival today, but nonetheless we can live in personal and daily fellowship with God no matter what goes on around us. We can spend time reading God's word and quality time in prayer with the Saviour. Thus our souls can be daily enriched through genuine communion with God awaiting a day when He will be pleased once more to revive us again.

Excerpt from 'The 1904 Welsh revival.' Paul Young



Hymns ,Prayers and Bible Readings

Especially for those unable to get to Church.

Hymn

1 Here is love vast as the ocean,
Loving kindness as the flood,
When the Prince of life, our ransom,
Shed for us His precious blood.
Who His love will not remember?
Who can cease to sing His praise?
He can never be forgotten
Throughout heaven's eternal days.

2 On the mount of crucifixion
Fountains opened deep and wide;
Through the floodgates of God's mercy
Flowed a vast and gracious tide.
Grace and love, like mighty rivers,
Poured incessant from above;
And heaven's peace and perfect justice
Kissed a guilty world in love.

3 Through the years of human darkness,
Shone the lamp the prophets trimmed,
Making known redemption's story,
Of the love of God undimmed.
Christ for every tongue and nation!
All must come beneath His sway;
His the everlasting kingdom
That shall never pass away.

4 When the stars shall fall from heaven,
And the sun turn black as night,
When the skies recede and vanish,
And the elements ignite.
Then the Son of Man in glory,
Coming as the Morning Star,
Shall return to claim His loved ones,
Gathered in from near and far.

Dyma gariad fel y moroedd William Rees (1802 - 1883)
Verses 1 and 2 translated by William Edwards (1848 - 1929)
Verses 3 and 4 Richard Bewes (born 1934)
© Richard Bewes/Jubilate Hymns Ltd.

Bible Reading

2 Chronicles 7

God's Second Appearance to Solomon

¹² Then the LORD appeared to Solomon by night, and said to him: "I have heard your prayer, and have chosen this place for Myself as a house of sacrifice. ¹³ When I shut up heaven and there is no rain, or command the locusts to devour the land, or send pestilence among My people, ¹⁴ if My people who are called by My name will 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. ¹⁵ Now My eyes will be open and My ears attentive to prayer made in this place.

¹⁶ For now I have chosen and sanctified this house, that My name may be there forever; and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually. ¹⁷ As for you, if you walk before Me as your father David walked, and do according to all that I have commanded you, and if you keep My statutes and My judgments, ¹⁸ then I will establish the throne of your kingdom, as I covenanted with David your father, saying, 'You shall not fail to have a man as ruler in Israel.'

¹⁹ "But if you turn away and forsake My statutes and My commandments which I have set before you, and go and serve other gods, and worship them, ²⁰ then I will uproot them from My land which I have given them; and this house which I have sanctified for My name I will cast out of My sight, and will make it a proverb and a byword among all peoples.

²¹ "And as for this house, which is exalted, everyone who passes by it will be astonished and say, 'Why has the LORD done thus to this land and this house?' ²² Then they will answer, 'Because they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, who brought them out of the land of Egypt, and embraced other gods, and worshiped them and served them; therefore He has brought all this calamity on them.' "Heavenly Father, we beg you to pour out your spirit in these days, waken the unconverted and revive those who love you. Grant your people a true vision of your glory. A renewed faithfulness to your word and a deeper consecration of your service so that through their witness, your Kingdom may advance and peoples be brought to fear your holy name. Through Jesus Christ our Lord .Amen

Prayer

Heavenly Father, we beg you to pour out your spirit in these days waken the unconverted and revive those who love you. Grant your people a true vision of your glory. A renewed faithfulness to your word and a deeper consecration of your service so that through their witness, your Kingdom may advance and peoples be brought to fear your holy name. Through Jesus Christ our Lord Amen.

An English Prayer Book. Church Society

My dearest Lord,
Be Thou a bright flame before me.
Be Thou a guiding star above me.
Be Thou a smooth path beneath me.
Be though a kindly Shepherd behind me today and forever more.
St Columba

Night Prayer

For every night there comes a morning
No matter how dark or cold I feel.
So I will rest here in your blessing
Safe in your arms, free from all fear.

For every sorrow there is a healing
No matter how empty or broken I feel.
So I will hide within your shelter
Cherished and loved, warm and still.

www.living-prayers.com

