

Beyond human control

Welsh revival shows the limits of programs and the limitless Spirit

THE STRANGE DOINGS OF CANARIES and coalmines are not to be compared to those of tram-harnessed, blind horses in those ore-veined hills of Wales from 1904 to 1906. It was a scene like Babel, but between man and equus rather than man and man. To put it delicately, miners suddenly stopped talking like miners. And their horses, no longer able to understand the colliers' commands, lowered their ears and dug in their hooves. Coal production fell off around the country.

That's not all. Businesses went into foreclosure—pubs and taverns, to be precise. Emergency meetings of local councils were called to discuss what was to be done with the police force since the police had so little to do. Nightly prayer meetings multiplied like spores from Amlwch to Llanerchymedd to Disgwylfa.

They say you should watch what you pray for. As the century turned a page, churches around the world were praying for revival—from Moody Bible Institute, to the Keswick Convention in England, to Wansan in Korea, to 10,000-strong prayer circles in Melbourne. The Methodists in the United States raised \$20 million for programs to win 2 million souls. Historian J. Edwin Orr relates with amusement one Methodist's later confession: "God waited till we got our project out of the way before He sent revival."

Wales is the land of silver-tongued orators. But it was none of these, nor committee programs, that lit the fuse. That came in February 1904 in a weekly youth group meeting in New Quay, Cardigan, when pastor Joseph Jenkins asked: "What does Jesus mean to you?" Silence. Then young Florrie Evans declared simply, "I love Jesus with all my heart." The youth group ignited. A visiting evangelist named Seth Joshua tried to close worship services, but they "went on beyond human control." He would close with the benediction, and in a moment, somebody would start praying again.

A 26-year-old coal miner named Evan Roberts, enrolled in ministerial studies at the Presbyterian Newcastle Emlyn, got wind of this and was electrified; he had been praying for

revival for 11 years. Roberts and other students asked the principal to suspend classes for a week so they could attend Seth Joshua's week of meetings in Blaenannerch. Principal Phillips wisely consented. When the week was up, Roberts couldn't concentrate on his studies; he kept hearing a voice calling him home to preach to his hometown youth. He asked Phillips what he should do. Said the school head, "The devil never gives orders like that."

Roberts' parents were surprised to see their son on the doorstep, and more surprised when he said he had come back to preach to the youth of Loughor. "We were in church on Sunday and the pastor didn't announce it," they said. "The pastor doesn't know yet," young Evan said.

Pastor gave him the subprime slot, Monday night. But after Monday folks asked for more, and he ended up staying the week.

His message was simple: Confess any known sin to God; put away any doubtful habit; obey the Spirit promptly; confess Christ publicly.

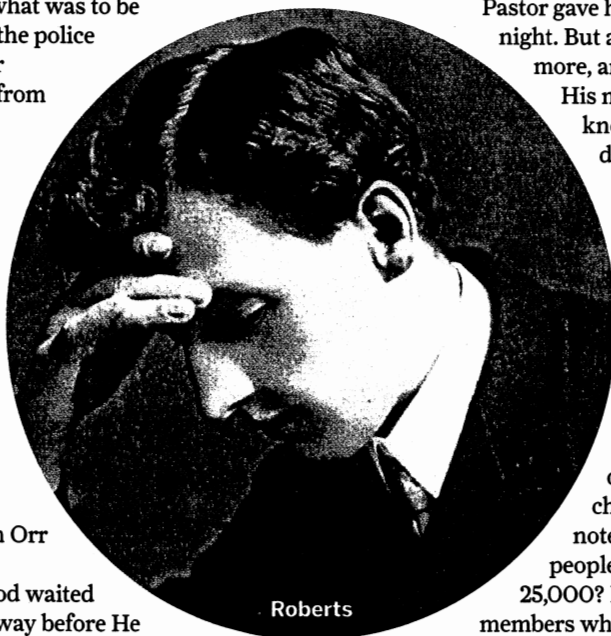
Grocery stores emptied, shopkeepers hung their "closed" signs early, miners and steelworkers, emerging from darkened shafts, scrubbed and donned their Sunday finest for church. What they found was some preaching but mostly prayer and testimony. One hundred thousand were added to the church rolls. (A revival cynic later noted that after five years, 25,000 people had left the church. But which 25,000? Revival converts, or original members who couldn't stand the light?)

The revival never became a cult of Evan Roberts.

He wouldn't let it, refusing even to announce where he would show up next. Nor must you imagine thousands assembled in packed auditoriums; it was, rather, a thousand points of light at local churches.

If you had been in Wales before Florrie Evans stood up in youth group in February 1904, you would have said this was a country, if ever there was one, that didn't need revival. The churches were orthodox, pulpit oration was never better, and the youth groups were full of decent, God-fearing Welsh kids. Makes you wonder what it is God wants from us. ☺

—Read fresh thoughts by Andrée Seu every day at worldmag.com



Roberts

● If you have a question or comment for Andrée Seu, send it to aseu@worldmag.com



LENTEN PRAYER VIGIL MARCH 1 - APRIL 9

★ AUSTIN, TX - Seek God for the City prayer guides for "Forty Days to Palm Sunday" are available at www.waymakers.org or by calling 512-419-7729 or 1-800-264-5214.

CORD BLOOD BILL SIGNED

★ WASHINGTON, DC - Delayed and resisted for seven months, the Stem Cell Therapeutic and Research Act was passed by Congress and signed by President Bush on December 20, 2005. The measure establishes a national umbilical and placental blood bank. The bill's chief sponsor, Rep. Christopher Smith (R-NJ), called umbilical cord blood, which is rich with versatile stem cells and easily collected and stored with no harm to the donor, a "special gift from God." (NRL Jan/06)

NEW HOUSE LEADER PRO-LIFE

★ WASHINGTON, DC - Elected in a secret ballot vote of 122-109 to replace Rep. Tom DeLay as GOP House Majority Leader, Rep. John Boehner of Ohio is a lifelong Roman Catholic, one of 12 children, and a public official who passionately articulates his belief that "life begins at conception." Elected to help enact "reforms," Boehner said that he is dedicated to "dealing with the big issues the American people expect us to deal with." (A 2/6/06)

BROADCAST INDECENCY LAW NEEDED

★ WASHINGTON, DC - Another Super Bowl has come and gone since millions of viewers expressed outrage at Janet Jackson's raunchy 2004 half-time performance and Congress promised to enact indecency legislation. Last year a bill sponsored by Sen. Sam Brownback (R-KS) passed the Senate 99-1 but did not become law. This year the bill, S. 193, is bottled up in the Senate Commerce Committee, chaired by Sen. Ted Stevens (R-AK). Prayer and calls to Senators, asking them to pass the "Broadcast Decency Act of 2005," are being requested. (CC 2/3/06)

COMMUNITIES PROTECT MARRIAGE

★ WASHINGTON, DC - The Family Research Council and Marriage Savers partnered to host special panel discussions in early February to explore what communities are doing to protect traditional marriage. Various states are in intense battles to see marriage protection referendums placed on their fall ballots. A federal Marriage Protection Amendment is pending in Congress. As with other legally complicated and controversial issues, there is not a clear consensus in the evangelical Christian community concerning the need to amend the U.S. Constitution. For Marriage Protection Amendment materials visit www.frc.org and www.allianceformarriage.org. To attend Marriage Savers seminars see www.marriagesavers.org

SECOND NARNIA FILM IN 2007

★ HOLLYWOOD, CA - Walden Media and Walt Disney announced that Director Andrew Adamson will film "Prince Caspian" as a second C.S. Lewis Narnia series film for Christmas 2007 release. (CT 2/6/06)

FIRST LADY LAUDS ABSTINENCE

★ WASHINGTON, DC - First Lady Laura Bush, in an interview with BBC after returning from Africa, defended the U.S. government's emphasis on abstinence in battling the HIV-AIDS epidemic, saying it had proven to be very effective as part of programs in Uganda and other regions. "It sort of irritates me when I hear people act like abstinence is not a real choice, because it is, and it's 100 percent effective," the First Lady stated. (WH/BBC/AFP 1/20/06)

In America Today...



AZUSA REVIVAL 1906-2006

★ LOS ANGELES, CA - Afternoon adult and evening youth Coliseum Meetings on Saturday, April 29, 2006 will formally mark the 100-Year Anniversary of the Revival on Azusa Street in Los Angeles, CA. In 1905, a small group of African American believers, hungry for revival, were expelled

from the Second Baptist Church in L.A. They began meeting under the leadership of a humble uneducated son of former slaves in a home. And then, as the Holy Spirit was poured out and crowds gathered, the revival meetings moved to a vacant, rundown building on Azusa Street. By the end of 1906 a new "Pentecost" had spread across America, and via visitors to Azusa Street to China, India, Africa, Europe and Jerusalem! Frank Bartleman's moving eyewitness account is available for purchase. (See Page 2) For info visit www.azusastreet100.net

YOUTH WANT ABSTINENCE EDUCATION

★ ROCHESTER, NY - A new Harris poll shows that 56 percent of young people age 18-24 think abstinence programs are effective in reducing sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancies. Of those 25-29, 60 percent agreed that teaching abstinence is an effective way to prevent the same. The poll found that older adults viewed abstinence education less favorably. (CL 1/23/06)

NBC CANCELS SHOWS

★ NEW YORK, NY - Reacting to pressure from Christian groups, NBC canceled a "Will & Grace" episode with Britney Spears playing a conservative hosting a "Crucifixin'" cooking segment on a Christian TV network. NBC also pulled its new show "The Book of Daniel" because of charges that its portrayal of Jesus was blasphemous. (WND 2/3/06)

CLIMATE INITIATIVE LAUNCHED

★ WASHINGTON, DC - A diverse group of more than 85 evangelical leaders launched an Evangelical Climate Initiative in early February. Not issued as a "consensus" of any one evangelical organization, the Initiative asks that prayerful study and responsible action be given to a mounting body of scientific findings documenting global warming, and how millions of the planet's poorest people could die in this century from the severe weather induced by it. In a 2004 report, and at the 2005 G8 summit, the Bush Administration acknowledged the reality of climate change and the likelihood that human activity is the cause of at least some of it. Information and Christian scientific testimony can be found at www.christiansandclimate.org. A recent Ellison Research (www.ellisonresearch.com) poll found that overall, three out of four evangelical Christians tend to support "Creation Care" issues. (See "Science" page at www.ifapray.org) Seven out of every ten evangelical Protestant Christians interviewed believe global climate change will pose a serious threat to future generations.

GATES PRESENT ANTI-MALARIA GRANT

★ SEATTLE, WA - The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation announced a donation of an additional \$258 million to help with research on anti-malaria vaccines, treatments and mosquito control. The Foundation has donated \$230 million since 1999. Malaria is a blood-parasite disease which kills 2,000 children a day in Africa alone.

"AWAKENING" IN NEW ENGLAND

★ BOSTON, MA - Jeff Marks, of New England Concerts of Prayer, reports that spiritual awakening and revival stirrings are being reported in more New England states. Statistics show that evangelical church growth over the past 30 years in the Boston area has dramatically outpaced population growth. Fueled by university evangelical groups, migrants and poor workers, many new "immigrant" churches have emerged. They are young, theologically conservative and aggressively evangelistic. Their worldview has them concerned about how the Church should act in the public square, and are engaged in social and urban issues. Not confined to Boston, there are 40 Spanish-speaking churches in nearby Lawrence, MA. Pastor Brian Simmons of Gateway Christian Fellowship in Connecticut reports that 100 new people are coming to church each month, many of them new converts. The so-called "Quiet Revival" in New England is getting louder. For information on New England Concerts of Prayer visit www.necp.org (C/NECP 1/31/06)

NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER MAY 4

★ COLORADO SPRINGS, CO - "America, Honor God" is the theme for this year's National Day of Prayer. (1 Sam 2:30 NIV) Information and materials for participating in or mobilizing prayer events in your state are available from the NDP Task Force at www.ndprf.org or by calling 1-800-444-8828.

★ = An answer or development to an IFA First Friday Church Prayer or mid-week Washington Alert prayer focus. Publication Index: A=Agape Press; AFP=Agape France Presse; C=Charisma magazine; CC=Christian Coalition of America; CT=Christianity Today; CL=CitizenLink BBC=British Broadcasting Corporation; NECP=NECP Prayer Link; WH=The White House; WND=World Net Daily

"Let justice roll on like a river and righteousness like a never-failing stream!" — Amos 5:24

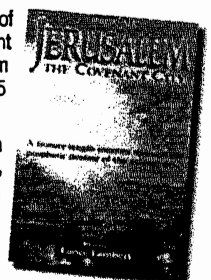
JERUSALEM: THE COVENANT CITY by Lance Lambert / Hugh Kitson - Why do world leaders wage war for the Temple Mount and rage over "the final status" of Jerusalem? Part 1 of Jerusalem, the Covenant City traces past prophetic history of the Holy City. Part 2 explores what the Bible has to say about Jerusalem's present and future destiny. We discover that, as we move into the third millennium of the Christian Era, the destiny of the whole world hinges upon the destiny of Jerusalem and the nation of Israel. This 108-minute documentary will bring you a message of challenge and hope that you will not easily forget. Order IFA Item #DVO46, \$15.95 + \$3.50 shipping. Credit card orders toll-free 1-800-872-7729 or via IFA's secure eBookstore www.ifabooks.com

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THE AZUSA REVIVAL

Frank Bartleman

In the early "Azusa" days, both Heaven and hell seemed to have come to town. Men were at the breaking point. Conviction was mightily on the people. A very "dead line" seemed to be drawn around "Azusa Mission" by the Holy Spirit. When men came within two or three blocks, they were seized with conviction.

God was working mightily. Missionaries were gathered there from Africa, India and the islands of the sea. Preachers and workers had crossed the continent with an irresistible drawing to Los Angeles. It was God's call.

There was much persecution, especially from the press. They wrote us up shamefully, but this only drew the crowds.

Some gave the work six months to live. Soon the meetings were running day and night. The place was packed out nightly. The whole building, upstairs and down, had now been cleared and put into use. There were far more white people than colored coming. The "color line" was washed away in the blood. A.S. Worrell, translator of the New Testament, declared the "Azusa" work had rediscovered the blood of Christ to the Church at that time.

Great emphasis was placed on the "blood" for cleansing, etc. A high standard was held up for a clean life. Divine love was wonderfully manifest in the meetings. They would not even allow an unkind word said against their opposers or the churches. The message was the love of God. It was a sort of "first love" of the early church returned. (Rev. 2:4) The Spirit was very sensitive, tender as a dove... [and] did not allow us to think, speak, or hear evil of any man. The Holy Spirit is symbolized as a dove. A dove has no gall bladder.

We knew the moment we had grieved the Spirit by an unkind thought or word. We seemed to live in a sea of pure divine love. The Lord fought our battles for us in those days. We committed ourselves to His judgment fully in all matters, never seeking to even defend the work or ourselves. We lived in His wonderful, immediate presence. And nothing contrary to His pure Spirit was allowed there.

The hearts of the people, both in act and motive, were searched to the very bottom. The false was sifted out from the real by the Spirit of God. The Word of God decided absolutely all issues.

AZUSA STREET
Frank Bartleman



AZUSA Revival Centennial
April 25 - 29, 2006 - By the end of 1906, the visitation and outpouring of the Holy Spirit which began in house prayer meetings had spread around the world to China, India, Africa and Jerusalem! There is much to glean from Frank Bartleman's moving eyewitness account. Softcover, 205 pages, Order IFA Item #B555, \$10.95 + \$3.50 shipping. Credit card orders toll free 1-800-872-7729 or www.ifabooks.com.

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Wayne Millender in the
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