

October 21, 2014

In reading Graham Cooke's book *A Divine Confrontation*, I was struck by the phrase "visitation or habitation". Since we had already studied Rick Joyner's book *World Aflame* (a history of the ten-month Welsh Revival in 1904), I focused on God's intent with that revival, as well as the ones that followed. I couldn't help wondering why all these resurgences seemed to have such a short shelf life. Were these manifestations just "visitations" of God or was the Divine intent something more permanent, a "habitation"?

Two years after the Welsh Revival there was little evidence of its existence; pubs were full, crime increased, chapels and prayer meetings were empty. Why was there so little *apparent* fruit remaining? There was fruit but it wasn't obvious if you looked only at what remained on the tree. Much of what was produced during the revival had fallen to the ground. Jesus said that unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain (John 12:24). Even though a lot of the fruit fell to the ground, some of it did die and produced several of the Pentecostal movements in the UK. Both The Assemblies of God and the Elim Church were founded by two brothers (Stephen and George Jeffries) who were saved in that revival. The Apostolic Church also has its roots in the same experience with the restoration of the five fold ministries of Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor and Teacher.

While studying the revival, we examined its strengths and reviewed its weaknesses, and though we can glean a lot from studying strengths, we can sometimes learn even more from weaknesses. The principle figure Evan Roberts, was subject to physical burn out which sadly led to his spiritual seduction. It appears that Jessie Penn Lewis managed to control Evan by suggesting he was taking too much of the glory. That was the last thing Evan wanted. Tragically, he believed the charge and withdrew from the revival. Some years later he co-authored a book with Jessie Penn Lewis particularly condemning manifestations and speaking in tongues.

The Welsh Revival became only a visitation of God's Presence, not a habitation and Jacob's stumbling into the "House of God" at Bethel was no different; both were only visitations; but God is not in the hotel business, He is a "home maker." If we won't go to Him, He will come to us as "Emmanuel, God with us". Jesus came and lived with us for thirty three years. He drank water and wine, he ate bread and meat, his visit was a habitation. God is here to stay!

Jesus promised that there were "many rooms in heaven" a place of eternal habitation, but what about now? Solomon states "We have built a house for habitation for you". Paul reveals that Christians are "being built together to become a dwelling place [habitation] in which God lives by his Spirit". The climax of the ages in Revelation is that "Now the dwelling place of God is with men, and He will live with them".

The promise now is that God will dwell in us as individuals ("Christ in you") and corporately (the "body of Christ"); "And you now have become living stones for God's use in building his house". With the manifest presence of God comes the glory of God. His glory was so immensely displayed at the completion of the tabernacle and temple that the priests were unable to minister. At Pentecost the manifestation of God's presence was more personal; He was, "Emmanuel, God with us".

My prayer is to see us live, inhabit, dwell in the manifest presence of God in our individual and congregational lives habitually. Let us turn every visitation into a habitation for God's presence.... that's his will and purpose, to dwell (tabernacle) with man." More to come... Shalom.

Ron Harris

