

FIRESTARTERS 5

PRAYER TOOL

Igniting Prayer for Revival in our City • 5 Minutes to Read • 5 Minutes in Prayer

FOR THE WEEK OF May 29th -June 4th, 2021 - Vol 57

THEME VERSE:

The just shall live by faith.

Hebrews 10:38

THE GOD OF REVIVAL:

The 1915 Gazaland Revival

In the early part of the 20th century, Gazaland was an area that included parts of modern-day Zimbabwe and Mozambique, located in the southeastern region of Africa. Rees Howells was a native of Wales and former coal miner who had come to know Christ while working in America and then returned home to participate in the famous 1904 Welsh Revival. This man, who had once labored intensively in the dark corners of caves and mines, now found himself travelling in prayer during the Welsh Revival and seeing God magnificently break the darkness in people's lives. His experience in this nation's spiritual awakening powerfully shaped his faith and prayer life.

In December 1910, Rees married Elizabeth Hannah Jones. Together, they sensed God's calling to share the Gospel as missionaries in southern Africa. As they prepared to go to the field, God gave them a child whom they loved dearly. They felt God told them to name this boy Samuel. Later, as they realized that God was directing them to a difficult rural area in Gazaland, it also became clear that they could not bring Samuel with them. The decision was agonizing for the young parents. They knew they had to trust God and obey Him. After a time of protracted prayer, God gave them this promise: "For everything you give up for Me, there is the hundredfold (return), and on this you can claim 10,000 souls in Africa."

After carefully placing young Samuel in the care of loving relatives, Rees and Elizabeth chose to follow God's leading into Africa. They arrived in Rusitu, Gazaland, in the summer of 1915. They anticipated a few years of language learning and cultural adaptation, as was customary for most missionaries. However, it turns out that the existing missionaries at the Rusitu station had been praying earnestly that God would bring revival soon. Upon hearing about Rees and Elizabeth's ministry in the Welsh Revival, they asked them to forego the usual training and instead to teach and preach about revival. Within 6 weeks, the Spirit started to stir something in the hearts of the believers there. They sang songs about revival, and the presence of God lingered with those present. On one Thursday evening, several of the Christian leaders were on their knees in anguished prayer. Suddenly Rees felt the Spirit tell him in confirmation that indeed revival was coming! The next few days saw people's hearts afire with anticipation of the Holy Spirit's outpouring. Then, on Sunday October 10th, which happened to be Rees' birthday, Rees preached the Word of God, and it seemed like the Spirit began to gently and resolutely move in that place. It was in the evening, though, when a Christian girl named Kufase - who had been fasting for 3 days - started to pray. She broke down crying. Soon, everyone was on their faces calling out to God. In that moment, it was like Heaven opened up fully, and the blessing of God rained down upon them. The power of God was unprecedented in that place, like lightning and thunder it descended upon them. For six days, it continued. Tears of repentance, confessions of sins, compelling stories of God's power to transform. Every home soon was immersed in unceasing prayer.

The revival meetings would continue at Rusitu for another 15 months, resulting in hundreds putting their trust in Christ. Rees continued to pray that this revival to spread even further. Soon, another

mission station to the north ignited with revival as Rees shared what God was doing. As the Howells faithfully shared the story and carried forward the revival fire, all the stations in Africa from down south in Cape Town all the way up to Nyasaland experienced the Holy Spirit's outpouring. By the time they returned home in 1920 for furlough, the Howells had crossed over 11,000 miles and spoken at 26 stations and seen over 10,000 Africans surrender afresh to the Lordship of Jesus in their lives. God had kept His promise and more!

THE GOD WHO ANSWERS PRAYERS:

- Praise God for His use of law enforcement to protect the common good, specifically for how police recently apprehended a man responsible for two murders in South Carolina and two in St. Louis. Thank God this person was stopped before he could hurt anyone else.

PRAYER REQUESTS THIS WEEK:

FOR THE NEEDS OF THE CITY:

- **SPIRITUAL WARFARE.** Pray against the spiritual forces of wickedness in high places over our city that are instigating incidents of shootings, chaos, and mayhem. Pray that God will break their power of our city and that His Shalom peace would fill our neighborhoods.
- **REVIVAL AMONG STUDENTS.** Even as the semester wraps up for many younger students, let's pray that they experience the powerful hand of God in their lives. As we enter into summertime, pray for an increased hunger for God and a boldness for the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

FOR JOBS AND BUSINESSES:

- **EMPLOYMENT.** As businesses reopen and demand for services and products pick up, many business owners are struggling with the ability to satisfy that demand due to a shortage of labor. These businesses suffered during the restrictions of the pandemic, and now as they are seeking to recover losses from that extended period they are falling short. Pray for many workers to re-enter the marketplace and find good jobs that will spur the local economy.
- **KINGDOM VIEW.** Pray that Christian business leaders would unite around a Kingdom view of addressing community issues such as homelessness, fatherlessness, mobility, education, job training, etc. Pray they will effectively partner with government, church, and non-profits to serve our city in a powerful way and bring glory to God.

FOR LOCAL MINISTRIES AND REVIVAL:

- **LOVE LIFE.** Pray specifically for Andre Gonzalez (one of Love Life's leaders): for the healing of his wife, who being put on new medication for a significant health issue. Also pray fervently for God to grant favor with the Charlotte police and mayor so that Love Life can continue its prayer walks to end abortion and promote God's love for families and all children.
- **REVIVAL HEARTS.** In this time of great national division and uncertainty, pray that the clear message of the Cross and the gospel to be central to the life and preaching of the church. Also as church congregations regather after COVID gathering restrictions, pray for those who have drifted away from fellowship, and in some cases, from faith. Finally, pray for the next generation of church leaders: that they would be passionately in love with Jesus, hungry for His Word, and emboldened by His Spirit. May God set hearts on fire that will ignite into full-blown revival.

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