

IN THE DAY OF THY POWER

Books by Arthur Wallis

- In the Day of Thy Power* (1956)
Jesus of Nazareth (1959)
Jesus Prayed (1966)
God's Chosen Fast (1968)
Pray in the Spirit (1970)
Into Battle (1973)
Revival: The Rain from Heaven (1979)
The Radical Christian (1981)
Living God's Way (1984)
China Miracle (1985)
On to Maturity (1987)

In the Day of Thy Power

*The Scriptural Principles
of Revival*

by
Arthur Wallis

Foreword by
Duncan Campbell

*Thy people offer themselves willingly
in the day of thy power.*
Psalm 110:3

In the Day of Thy Power

ISBN-13: 978-1-936143-02-3

ISBN-10: 1-936143-02-X

This edition © 2010 by Jonathan Wallis for the Arthur Wallis Estate
First published by Christian Literature Crusade, London, © 1956 Arthur Wallis
First American edition 1990 by Cityhill Publishing

Published by CLC Publications

U.S.A.

P.O. Box 1449, Fort Washington, PA 19034

GREAT BRITAIN

51 The Dean, Alresford, Hants. SO24 9BJ

AUSTRALIA

P.O. Box 469, Kippa-Ring, QLD 4021

NEW ZEALAND

10 MacArthur Street, Feilding

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English Revised Version, 1881.

Scriptures marked *KJV* are from the Holy Bible, King James Version.

Scriptures marked *Darby* are from the Holy Bible, A New Translation by
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Printed in the United States of America

To the memory of my father
REGINALD WALLIS

through whose life and ministry I was drawn to
Christ, and through whose early death I was called
to the work of an evangelist, this, my first book, is
affectionately dedicated.

“He, being dead, yet speaketh.”

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FOREWORD
to the
First American Edition

FROM his many writings Arthur Wallis, the Christian statesman, will be remembered supremely for his book *In the Day of Thy Power*. When he died unexpectedly in September 1988, almost all who paid tribute to him both in writing and at a thanksgiving service made mention of the book.

I recall its publication in 1956: it was the most talked about evangelical book and possibly one of the most influential. It made us hunger and thirst for a fresh outpouring of the Spirit. It marked the beginning of all-nights of prayer for revival in scores of towns and cities. Arthur Wallis was a forerunner, “the voice of one that crieth,” “The King is coming! Prepare for the King.”

Some saw the worldwide growth of renewal as a partial answer to those prayers; others pointed to the restoration movement; but in the hearts of God’s people there remains a conviction that there is something more, something greater than we have so far experienced, a divine visitation. I am happy to call it revival.

This new edition of *In the Day of Thy Power* is welcome not only because it is a spiritual classic but because the publication coincides with a fresh expectancy. In the author’s words, “Above the incessant noise of human activity we have ‘heard the sound of marching’ that tells us God is on the move.”

Since the book’s first launch, some 20,000 new Christian books have been published in Britain. Few, perhaps less than fifty, have made the impact this book has. To read it is to share a burden, an

experience, a vision; to discover something of the heart of the author and, more significantly, the heart of God.

That its ministry continues after more than thirty years is no surprise. In a day of instant books, written in weeks to meet a commercial publishing deadline and forgotten almost as quickly, it is a glorious example of a literary work which was not hastily written but allowed to grow to maturity before publication, and on which there has since rested a heavenly anointing.

I have said elsewhere that if in heaven, as on earth, I live in a small cul-de-sac of twelve houses, I would like Arthur Wallis to be my neighbor. Meanwhile, on this earth, I pray that his book will help us to realize afresh that revival is the product of prevailing prayer prompted by the Holy Spirit.

EDWARD ENGLAND

Co-author, *The Guiding Hand:
Captivity and Answered Prayer in China*

FOREWORD

*to the
First Edition*

IT is with very real pleasure that I accede to the request of my friend, Arthur Wallis, to write a foreword to his book *In the Day of Thy Power*. I first met the author on the island of Lewis in the autumn of 1951. The fellowship of that hour and the impression made linger with me as a most fragrant memory.

Mr. Wallis's book is a powerful plea for the recognition of the supernatural in the realm of revival. While recognizing man's responsibility as the human agent, attention has been called again and again to the utter futility of human effort apart from the mighty manifestation of divine power.

How many today are really prepared to face the stark fact that we have been outmaneuvered by the strategy of hell because we have tried to meet the Enemy on human levels by human strategy? In this we may have succeeded in making people church conscious, mission conscious or even crusade conscious without making them God conscious. This book will, I trust, act as a corrective to help to bring the church back to a true recognition of the basic fact that revival must ever be related to righteousness, and that the way to a revived church is still the way of repentance and true holiness. What I saw of the movings of God in the Hebrides during the past few years is in keeping with the revival called for in this book, and that is why I consider its publication now to be most timely.

Readers will do well to ponder the contents of chapter 2, "A Sign Spoken Against." Here Mr. Wallis cuts right across the popular ap-

proach and appeal. How arresting are his words: “If we find a revival that is not spoken against, we had better look again to ensure that it is a revival.”

The effect upon the world of the divine operation in the regeneration of the soul is still the same: “to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness.” But the divine appeal does not change: “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.” There is no other way, and that is the truth this book proclaims; and my prayer is that God may use it to speed the day for which we long, when “the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.”

DUNCAN CAMPBELL
Revivalist, Lewis Awakening of 1949–53

PREFACE

THE church has been blessed with many volumes on the subject of revival. Most of these are historical accounts of the revivals of the past. They rehearse the righteous acts of the Lord and are precious documents to all who long to see a movement in our day. Those that unfold the spiritual principles are few by comparison and are mostly written from the historical standpoint: that is, they expound the laws of revival from the histories and illustrate from Scripture. The design of this book has been to expound the principles of revival from Scripture and illustrate from the histories. For the sake of accuracy, the numerous Scripture quotations are taken from the English Revised Version. I readily acknowledge the debt I owe to those other works on the subject, and I have quoted freely from them.

That four chapters in a work of this nature should be devoted to the subject of prevailing prayer will be no surprise to those who have learned from Scripture and history what is the road to every true revival. The Ulster awakening of 1859 may be traced back, so far as such things can be traced on the human side, to the reading by a young man of George Müller's *Narrative*. Faith was quickened in his heart, and when news reached him of the great American awakening in 1858, he said to himself, "Why may we not have such a blessed work here, seeing God did such things for Mr. Müller simply in answer to prayer?" Thus began the revival prayer meeting at Kells, where the movement commenced. Similarly, one of the springs of the 1904 awakening in Wales may be traced to the reading of Andrew Murray's book *With Christ in the School of Prayer* by a hungry minister, and the subsequent transformation of his spiritual life. It would be

impossible to estimate the influence exerted on revival movements all over the world during the past hundred years by Charles Finney's lectures on prayer in his *Revivals of Religion*. At the heart of every revival is the spirit of prayer.

I am most grateful to Mr. Duncan Campbell, whose name will always be associated with the recent Lewis awakening, for consenting to write the foreword. He is one of the very few in these islands who has labored in the midst of a general outpouring of the Spirit. I must also record my thanks to Miss L. Rutty and Mrs. G. Roberts for their labor of love in the typing of the manuscript, to Mr. Geoffrey Williams of the Evangelical Library, London, for every facility and encouragement in the work of research, and to those friends who read the manuscript and offered valuable suggestions. Conscious of its limitations, I commend the book to God, who has ever chosen the weak things to be the instruments of His power. If, according to His abundant mercy, He should deign to use its message in any measure to awaken the church to the need and possibilities of this hour, to Him shall be all the glory forever and ever. Amen.

ARTHUR WALLIS
Talatou, Devon
April 1956

If you would make the greatest success of your life, try to discover what God is doing in your time, and fling yourself into the accomplishment of His purpose and will.

SELECTED

INTRODUCTION

*And it shall be in the last days, saith God, I will pour forth
of my Spirit . . . : And your young men shall see visions.*
Acts 2:17

*Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables,
that he may run that readeth it.*
Habakkuk 2:2

I

IT was springtime in the year 1938. A boy in middle teens stood in the little schoolroom adjoining Moriah Chapel in the small Welsh mining town of Loughor, Glamorganshire. A strange feeling of awe and wonder filled his heart, for this was the very room that witnessed the beginnings of that great outpouring of the Spirit, the Welsh revival of 1904. He listened to his host and guide, himself a convert of the revival, speak of those memorable days when the hardest hearts were melted by the presence of the Lord, and when the hills and valleys rang again with the songs of Zion. It was almost too wonderful to be true, but it created questions deep down in his heart for which he could find no answer. If God can achieve such mighty things in times of revival, and if the spiritual labors of fifty years can be surpassed in so many days when the Spirit is poured out, why, he wondered, is the church today so satisfied with the results of normal evangelism? Why are we not more concerned that there should be another great revival? Why do we not pray for it day and night?

The boy returned to his home in England. The questions that

had puzzled him were temporarily forgotten, crowded out by many other youthful interests, but an indelible impression had been made upon his soul. The fires of that 1904 awakening, burning still in many a Welsh breast, had lit a flame in his young heart. In that corner of South Wales which had been the heart of the Welsh revival, a strange longing had filled his soul: "O God, wilt Thou not do it again?"

II

It was autumn in the year 1951. In the largest island of the Outer Hebrides, Lewis and Harris, a young man was traveling along the narrow, winding road leading to the village of Barvas. The surrounding countryside was bare and bleak, strewn with rocks and boulders, and marked here and there with the familiar peat banks. At length the village itself came into view, with its irregular clusters of crofters' cottages and bungalows. With intense interest he gazed at the plain, stone-built kirk standing alone just beyond the edge of the village. He felt again something of the awe and wonder he had experienced as a boy in the little schoolroom at Loughor. It was here that God had come down in power in December 1949. This parish church had witnessed the beginning of the Lewis awakening. True, there had not been the widespread, sweeping movement of the Welsh revival. In scope it had been a local movement, confined to scattered villages of Lewis and Harris and some of the adjoining islands. But the marks of heaven-sent, Spirit-wrought revival were all there. God *had* done it again.

Thoughts flooded into the visitor's mind. If God had sent revival to Lewis, was He unwilling to do it elsewhere? Was God using these favored isles as a sort of spiritual arena in which to demonstrate in miniature that He could and would "do it again"? Was this awakening, away in the Western Isles, the harbinger of a modern era of spiritual revival? The visitor seemed to find an answer in his heart to these questions as quickly as they came to him, nor had he to wait long for some confirmation of his inner convictions.

Later he enjoyed the warmth of true Scottish hospitality in the homely manse at Barvas. The following morning, while alone upon his knees, the Lord spoke to him. It was as though he was looking across a vast, open prairie to where, on the far horizon, a small fire was burning. It seemed to be coming slowly, very slowly, nearer. The scene faded from view. Again he saw the prairie, but now the fire was very much nearer, and stretching like a continuous wall right across the prairie as far as the eye could see. Slowly, inexorably, the wall of flame and smoke moved forward till again the picture faded from view.

Then it seemed as though a vast and endless desert stretched away to the horizon. There, in the far distance, some small dazzling object lay on the sand, shining like a star. As he watched, it grew larger and larger, filling out with blue as it did so, till even the shining framework was eclipsed by the blue; and there in the midst of the desert was a lake of water. Almost at once there came back to his mind a rendering of Isaiah 35:7 which he had heard quoted only the previous day: "And the mirage shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water" (marg.).

When he rose from his knees, he opened his Bible and commenced to read Isaiah 43. The Word of the Lord seemed to fall upon him with greater authority and power than anything God had said to him before. Like a great rain from heaven, the Word seemed to descend upon his thirsty soul: "I, even I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no saviour. . . . I will work, and who shall let it? . . . Thus saith the LORD, which maketh a way in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters . . . : Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing; now shall it spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert."

III

Perhaps the reader will forgive the recounting of these personal

reminiscences, since they present the background for the writing of the book and provide some explanation for its appearance. The message of the following pages has flowed out of God's personal dealings with the writer in regard to revival. The vision and the burden have been the mainspring of the book. Throughout its preparation there has been a sense of the quiet compelling of the Spirit, and it is this that has brought it through many hindrances and delays to see the light of day.

Behind the message that follows is the solemn conviction that grows ever clearer with the passing of the days that we are surely moving toward a day of God's power. "His going forth is as certain as the dawn; and He shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter rain that watereth the earth" (Hos. 6:3).¹ How soon this may be we cannot say, "for the vision is yet for the appointed time, and it hasteth toward the end, and shall not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not delay" (Hab. 2:3). Our concern is to see that we are a people willing in the day of His power.

God hath had it much on his heart, from all eternity, to glorify his dear and only-begotten Son; and there are some special seasons that he appoints to that end, wherein he comes forth with omnipotent power to fulfil his promise and oath to him. Now these are times of remarkable pouring out of his Spirit, to advance his kingdom; such is a day of his power.

JONATHAN EDWARDS

I

WHAT IS REVIVAL?

God came. . . . His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. . . . He stood, and measured the earth; he beheld, and drove asunder the nations: and the eternal mountains were scattered, the everlasting hills did bow; his goings were as of old.

Habakkuk 3:3, 6

THERE was never a day in which the term “revival” needed to be more carefully defined. It has come to be used in relation to spiritual things so widely and so loosely that many are perplexed to know what it does mean. To some prejudiced or misinformed people, the term is synonymous with excessive emotionalism and mass hysteria. It is to be hoped that the following pages will be a sufficient answer to such a slander on the work of the Holy Spirit. Others use the word to describe a successful evangelistic mission. When they tell us that their church is “having a revival,” we understand them to mean that a gospel campaign is being conducted there. This use is possibly a relic of days when the Spirit was working widely, and one had only to arrange such a mission to witness a quickening among the believers and an ingathering of the lost. Today it is otherwise; but in any case, to use the term thus is misleading.

Some, adhering closely to the etymology of the word, use it to describe a personal reviving of the believer by the Holy Spirit. If an individual or group is quickened in holiness and brought into a place of blessing, that is what they call “revival,” even if there is little extension of the work. Similarly, others, whose emphasis is more on a definite experience of the Spirit, will claim that when an individual

or group has been filled with the Spirit, they have “got revival,” regardless of whether there are any repercussions outside their circle. In so far as revival always involves the reviving of individual believers, these views are true, but as definitions of revival, they are inadequate.

We cannot go to the Bible to see how the word “revival” is used, for it is not found there, although it contains many examples and types of revival and unfolds all its principles. The nearest scriptural equivalents are “revive” (or “quicken”) and “reviving,” but these may be applied to individual quickening and are not always synonymous with what has come to be called, by common consent down through the centuries, “religious revival.” It might be well if those who wish to describe what is simply a quickening work among believers would use those scriptural expressions “revive” and “reviving” and distinguish them from “revival,” which includes and yet exceeds them. Revival is more than big meetings. It is more than religious excitement. It is more than the quickening of the saints or their being filled with the Holy Spirit. It is more than a great ingathering of souls. One may have any one of these without revival—and yet revival includes them all.

There is a wealth of difference between missions or campaigns at their best and genuine revival. In the former man takes the initiative, it may be with the prompting of the Spirit; in the latter the initiative is God’s. With the one the organization is human; with the other it is divine. There is no intention here of disparaging the work of campaigns, or of denying that God has used them for the conversion of multitudes, but it must be made clear that they do not constitute revival. Campaigns may be a part of the continuous program of evangelism, which is the task of the church, but revival is a thing of special times and seasons. Revival may of course break out during a campaign, but when it does so, certain features will appear which are peculiar to revival, and certain features will disappear which are characteristic of campaigns. However, while revival tarries, the normal evangelism of the church must continue; but let us keep the distinction clear.

The meaning of any word is determined by its usage. For a

definition of revival, we must therefore appeal to the people of God of bygone years, who used the word with consistency of meaning down through the centuries until it began to be used in a lesser and more limited sense in modern times. Numerous writings on the subject that have been preserved to us will confirm that revival is divine intervention in the normal course of spiritual things. It is God revealing Himself to man in awful holiness and irresistible power. It is such a manifest working of God that human personalities are overshadowed and human programs abandoned. It is man retiring into the background because God has taken the field. It is the Lord making bare His holy arm and working in extraordinary power on saint and sinner.

The God of the Old Testament saints and prophets was the God of revival. In his prophecy Isaiah, recalling how God's people had rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit, longs for a manifestation of His zeal and mighty acts (Isa. 63:10, 15). He looks upon the downtrodden sanctuary and cries out, "Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence . . . to make thy name known to thine adversaries, that the nations may tremble at thy presence! When thou didst terrible things which we looked not for, thou camest down . . ." (64:1-3).

Habakkuk also, living in a day when God's judgments were already being poured out upon His people for their sin, pleads for revival: "O LORD, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make it known; in wrath remember mercy" (Hab. 3:2). Then in vision he perceives the answer to his prayer; he sees God on the move (3:3), manifesting His power and glory (3:3-6). He sees the tents of Cushan in affliction, and even nature itself moved at the divine presence (3:7, 10-11) as the Lord marches through the land in indignation, going forth for the salvation of His people (3:12-13).

At the end of the Old Testament story, we find God still pleading with the remnant through His servant Malachi and promising revival at this eleventh hour, if His people would pay the price: "Bring ye the whole tithe into the storehouse . . . and prove me now herewith,

saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Mal. 3:10). One might refer to Zechariah, to Joel and to many another prophet who brought to dark days a ray of hope in the promise of revival. How many saints in that bygone age could have testified to the value of this great expectation that filled their lives, in the words of David: "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living" (Ps. 27:13).

In the New Testament the true motive force of revival is seen in clearer light as we find it associated with the pouring out of the Spirit. In its historic setting as the birthday of the church, Pentecost was unique, and there were factors in that remarkable event that have never been repeated. But as a specimen outpouring of the Spirit, Pentecost was unique only in being the first.

Peter declared on that memorable day, "This is that which hath been spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall be *in the last days*, saith God, I will pour forth of my Spirit upon all flesh" (Acts 2:16–17). It is to be noted that Peter, speaking under inspiration, was led to alter the Joel prophecy (Joel 2:28) from "it shall come to pass afterward" to "it shall be in the last days." This wonderful promise relates then to a *period* of time—"in the last days"—not just to a moment of time, such as the Day of Pentecost. It is equally clear from the words that Peter quotes that the prophecy had but a partial fulfillment on that day. There was evidently more to come. All the years of the church's history have been "in the last days," and thus it has pleased the Lord down through those years at special seasons to fulfill this prophecy.

There is further evidence in the New Testament that God never intended to confine the outpouring of the Spirit to one historic day. In Acts 10:45 the remarkable event at Caesarea is described by Luke as an outpouring of the gift of the Holy Spirit. Paul, writing to Titus, uses the same word as did Peter when quoting Joel: ". . . the Holy Ghost, which He *poured out* upon us richly" (Titus 3:5–6).

True revivals have ever been marked by powerful and often widespread outpourings of the Spirit. Many, many times the preaching

had to cease because the hearers were prostrate or because the voice of the preacher was drowned by cries for mercy. Who will deny that these were outpourings of the Spirit? Who could find a more appropriate description of such scenes than the words of Luke: "The Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word" (Acts 10:44)? David Brainerd recorded the beginning of the wonderful movement among the American Indians in 1745 thus:

The power of God seemed to descend upon the assembly "*like a mighty rushing wind,*" and with an astonishing energy bore down all before it. I stood amazed at the influence, which seized the audience almost universally; and could compare it to nothing more aptly, than the irresistible force of a mighty torrent. . . . Almost all persons of all ages were bowed down with concern together, and scarcely one was able to withstand the shock of this surprising operation.¹

Revival can never be explained in terms of activity, organization, meetings, personalities, preachings. These may or may not be involved in the work, but they do not and cannot account for the effects produced. Revival is essentially a manifestation of God; it has the stamp of Deity upon it which even the unregenerate and uninitiated are quick to recognize. Revival must of necessity make an impact upon the community, and this is one means by which we may distinguish it from the more usual operations of the Holy Spirit. The marks of revival will be considered more fully in a later chapter.

Persons are very ready to be suspicious of what they have not felt themselves. It is to be feared many good men have been guilty of this error. . . . These persons who thus make their own experience their rule of judgment, instead of bowing to the wisdom of God, and yielding to his word as an infallible rule, are guilty of casting a great reflection upon the understanding of the Most High.

JONATHAN EDWARDS

Can you find in your hearts to be like the Jews, who prayed and longed for the coming of the Messiah, and when he came, rejected and crucified him, because He came not in the way their prejudices led them to look for him?

JAMES ROBE