

The Revival At Kilsyth, Part III

By William Chalmers Burns

Master Ministries International, Inc.

2700 Marfitt Road, #315
East Lansing, MI 48823-6338

Website: <http://www.masterministries.org/>

Online Sermons: <http://masterministries.sermonaudio.com>

"It is astonishing to see how the awakenings under McCullough and Whitefield at Cambuslang and James Robe at Kilsyth and that under John Livingstone at Shotts are all linked with the mighty days which were to follow once again in Kilsyth and later in Dundee and Perth. Revival fires spread; the relating of what God has done in the past or what God is doing now in other places encourages others.

"Thus, in order to understand what followed at Kilsyth, we need to recall with William Burns something of the scene at Shotts on that memorial day, June 21, 1630.

"It was Communion Season in Shotts, also, and thousands of believers had come from all parts to meet with their Lord. Among those who had been asked to speak was a relatively unknown young preacher named John Livingstone. He was astonished and pleaded with his elders that he was not capable enough to do so.

"At last, however, he consented. The night before he was to speak he could not sleep, and so he spent the whole intervening hours in mighty intercession, with an overwhelming sense of his utter weakness. When the time came for him to address the huge gathering, his courage failed him and he tried to escape his duty by fleeing away, like Jonah.

"When he had crossed the fields and had almost lost sight of the church building, which stood on an elevated position, suddenly there came a voice from heaven saying, "Have I been a wilderness unto Israel? - a land of darkness?" (Jeremiah 2:31).

"Rebuked by God, like the Old Testament prophet, he returned to face the large crowd. He preached from Ezekiel 33:25,26:

"Wherefore say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Ye eat with the blood, and lift up your eyes toward your idols, and shed blood: and shall ye possess the land? Ye stand upon your sword, ye work abomination, and ye defile every one of his neighbor's wife: and shall ye possess the land?"

"He then took his listeners to the 36th chapter for those precious promises in verses 25 and 26:

"Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh."

"Towards the close of the message, rain began to fall, and as the people began to take cover, he cried, "IF A FEW DROPS OF RAIN SO EASILY UPSET YOU, THEN WHAT WILL YOU DO IN THE DAY OF JUDGMENT WHEN GOD RAINS DOWN FIRE AND BRIMSTONE UPON THE CHRIST-REJECTORS?"

"He then pleaded with them to flee to Christ, "the City of Refuge." John Livingstone never finished his sermon! The power of God came down upon the multitude. They were literally slain as in the field of battle. Hundreds cried out in great soul agony, as if the very Day of Judgment had come. FIVE HUNDRED WERE CONVERTED ON THE SPOT.

"The moving story of the Kirk of Shotts is to this day one of the solemn and glorious memories in The Land of the Heather - a land teeming with precious records of divine visitation.

"When, therefore, William Burns recounted the happenings on this historic day at the close of his message, the emotions of the great crowd at Kilsyth were deeply stirred. And no wonder! For John Livingstone was a native of their own town. Furthermore, the parallel was peculiar. The youth who stood before them now was himself a stripling and not yet an ordained preacher."

Stewart, James Alexander, D. D. William Chalmers Burns, A Man With A Passion For Souls (Lamplighter Publications: Alexandria, LA) p. 24-26.