

1886-7 -- Algona

by Martin Knapp

Brother Weber's revival work in 1886-1887 was marked by powerful preaching, prayer, and a deep commitment to leading people to salvation and spiritual growth.

Scripture: Psalm 23:4, Romans 8:31, 1 Corinthians 10:13, Ephesians 6:12, James 1:12

Topics: "Revival Movement", "Faith Triumphs"

Description

Martin Knapp preaches about the powerful revivals led by Brother Weber in various towns, where many souls were saved and lives transformed. Despite facing opposition and threats, Brother Weber remained steadfast in prayer and unwavering in his faith, leading to remarkable conversions and stability among the new believers. The revival tornado power of God moved through these western states, touching people from all walks of life and inspiring many to become active workers in the church. Through prayer, praise, and unwavering faith, Brother Weber continued to lead souls to salvation, facing temptations and challenges with grace and triumph.

Transcript

During the closing months of 1886, Brother Weber labored at Algona, Eagle Grove, and Correctionville, Ia. In each of these places many professed conversion, and

"Heaven came down his soul to greet,

While glory crowned the mercy-seat."

"Living holier than in any other time" in his life, no wonder that he was able to speak to threatening waves of revival opposition, "Peace, be still," and command their quick obedience. "Living in the light of Beulah land" and "with soul overflowing at times," no marvel that God delighted anew to use him as a center of revival tornado power in the towns of this western State.

At Algona he writes, "It seems as if many more sinners are moved by fear than hope." A statement ever true of most impenitents, but which many seem slow to comprehend.

Here, referring to his own experience, he further writes: "Time devil comes, but finds nothing in me," and gives God the glory for such an uttermost salvation. Concerning the revival at Eagle Grove, Rev. C. B. Yinter, who was pastor of the Eagle Grove church at the time of the revival there, writes as follows, --

"It gives me great pleasure to write of the series of meetings held by Rev. J. H. Weber at Eagle Grove, Ia., during my pastorate of the Methodist Church of that place. For five weeks Brother Weber preached nightly and held afternoon meetings; while there were considerable opposition at first, the spirit of God finally prevailed, and the entire town was moved. The meetings grew in interest and spiritual power until there were over one hundred and fifty reclaimed or converted. During these meetings it was impossible to accommodate all the people who came to attend them, and often, after the main audience-room and lecture-room were filled, scores of people were compelled to return to their homes because the building was crowded to its utmost capacity.

"The character of those who professed conversion, and the remarkable stability manifested by the majority of them after the meetings were over, was a subject of great interest to me, and proved to be different from the general impression in regard to the after effect of great revivals.

"All classes of people, old and young, learned and illiterate, some of those holding positions in the best of society and nearly all the professions of life, were reached on this occasion. During the year quite a number of the probationers moved West, but nearly all called for letters. And the great majority of those who remained were received into full relation at the close of their probationary period. Many of them today are among the most active workers of the church, and two of the young men, we learn, are making preparation for the ministry."

God's people never get beyond their Master, where they cannot be tempted; Mr. Weber was no exception. In the midst of a great revival victory he writes, "What temptations I had today! It seemed that Satan was bound I should yield. God gave me grace." Tempted, but triumphant. Praise God, all through Christ thus may conquer.

Amid "regular cyclones of glory" the days of the old year swept by, and its closing days found the Evangelist in the midst of a blessed revival at Correctionville, Ia. At its closing hour, as usual, he was upon his knees, in praise for mercies past and prayed for those to come. During these meetings Mr. Weber "met a man who cursed and swore" at him. He knelt down and prayed for him.

His attack of the doctrine of purgatory "stirred up" the Romanists greatly, until some feared they would use violence, but God took care of His servant.

When he asked one woman to be saved, she shook her head. "So God will shake His head at you," he said, and left her "pricked to the heart" by the message God had sent.

At Eagle Grove he finished the hymn, "Go work in my vineyard."

One woman said, "How he does swear," because he used the words hell and damnation as they are written in the Bible. She was afterwards at the altar.

If others would warn more, Evangelists would not need to so much.

He says, "I talked to a banker, and then I asked him to pray to his God. Then I knelt down and he said, 'I will pray Quaker fashion.' Then I prayed Methodist fashion."

Mr. Weber was told that a man was coming to a service to whip him. The next night the man came, but, instead of trying to whip him, gave him a dollar, and said, "I believe you are a good man."

At Correctionville he heard a man swearing in a blacksmith shop, and "got down and prayed for him."

Amid such scenes the work of rescuing the lost went on. Sometimes it seemed as if souls were suspended by a single strand over a bottomless abyss, and that the powers of heaven and hell, with all their might, contended for their possession. Within the man whose destiny was being determined, appetites and passions, prejudices and propensities, joined with the hosts of hell to accomplish his final ruin, while reason, judgment, and conscience all were on the side of God and his salvation. The Evangelist led the hosts of God to victory; and many were the songs and shouts of triumph that here arose and found an echo in courts above, during the closing weeks of 1886. To God be all the praise.

Prayer and praise go hand in hand in revival work, and should all through life. Joshua praised until the walls of Jericho fell, and Elijah prayed until rain fell. Mr. Weber does both, continually, in darkness or in light. They seem to be the wings with which he soars from one great victory to another.

Concerning the tornado at Correctionville, where he closed the year of 1886, and began that of 1887, the pastor, Rev. Bennett Mitchel, formerly Presiding Elder of the district, writes as follows:--

"The meeting was a remarkable one. The entire community was greatly stirred. The house was packed from the first to the last service. The devil raged. Men got mad. Some wanted to whip him, others to tar and feather him. Others stood aghast with mute astonishment, while many came to the Lord and were saved.

"For the first week his preaching was directed to the church, and he scored Christian people almost unmercifully. This was fun for the irreligious. They greatly rejoiced while he exposed hypocrisy and denounced the sins in the church. They thought they never had heard such a preacher. But he suddenly turned his attention to them, and routed them with canister and grape. Some of them were maddened, some slunk away in shame, while many were subdued and brought penitently to the foot of the Cross.

"In the congregation, men would threaten to strike him, when he would calmly look them in the face, and say, 'You dare not do it, I am in God's hands,' and then put his arms around them and pray for them. Women would threaten to spit in his face, but he heeded it not, and persisted in pleading with and praying for them.

"In dealing with the perversely wicked, he was awfully severe, but to the penitent he was as tender as the mother to her infant child.

"We visited every family in the town, and he prayed in nearly every home.

"In some of these visitations very ludicrous things occurred. In one the father raged, gesticulated, and threatened, but Brother Weber held his ground, and said to him, 'Sit down, and be calm; the devil is in you, that's what's the matter.' But the man became still more wild and threatening, until Brother Weber knelt down to pray, then he fled from the room, saying, 'You shan't pray with me.' But he prayed. Presently the man came back and said to him, 'I did not want to hear you pray, but I was going to ask Elder Mitchel to pray.' Then we knelt down again, and I prayed, and Brother Weber responded in hearty amens. The man was partially subdued, and, as we left him, Brother Weber shook him heartily by the hand, and urged him to become a Christian, assuring him that he loved him, and would continue to pray for him ... Brother Weber had a wonderful influence over the boys and girls. They were strangely and strongly drawn to him.

"The following June he was with me at a camp meeting, and preached a most remarkable sermon on the parable of the prodigal son, full of tenderness and pathetic appeals to the wanderers. The congregation

was greatly moved, and prodigals returned to their Father's house.

"The visits of this eccentric but earnest and devout man will long be remembered, with pleasure and profit, by the people of Correctionville. The grace of God was certainly upon and with him.

"Mr. Weber is a wonderful man ... He makes the people laugh, cry, mourn, shout and rage, but the mad ones all get in good humor before he leaves them."

At Correctionville, as in many other places, the revival continued with power after the Evangelist had gone to his next appointment, which was

FORT DODGE, IA.

The fifth night of the meeting, the altar invitation was given, and fifty came, -- twenty of whom professed to find salvation ... The minions of darkness, as usual, concentrated their opposition; but God came in power, and the place never before was so "shaken up." Tidings kept coming of the work still moving on with might at Correctionville and Eagle Grove, and this discouraged the agents of the devil and inspired the church. The usual means were here used, and the cyclone continued to sweep on in sin-killing, soul-saving currents, until over three hundred had professed conversion. The following are extracts from Mr. Weber's journal, when at Fort Dodge:--

"Went out and was met by two men, who were very mad, and they began their talk, and I looked at them and told them they were what I told them the night before in a sermon. They got madder, so I fell on my knees in the snow, and began to pray, and they sneaked off.

"The people are very enthusiastic Methodists here.

"I asked the Father in Jesus' name to change the cold weather to warmer, and it is.

"Over fifty came to the altar. I asked God for fifty.

"The devil tries me, but I cling to the Lord all the same.

"Gave F. E., who was converted yesterday, \$2.50, to help pay his board.

"A man was swearing in the barber shop, while I was in the chair, so when I was through I knelt before him and prayed, and said, 'That is the way I pray to my God.' It moved him very much.

"The Holy Ghost must move them or they cannot be moved.

"A man slipped up to me and gave me a five-dollar gold piece. No matter if I give, I'm always rewarded by God. Amen.

"Stayed up till nearly half-past eleven with three young men, talking to them about their souls.

"Jesus, keep me holy and pure and like Thee.

"Preached to a full house on 'Full Salvation.' Very many said, 'I want it.' Holy Ghost, give it to them. Amen.

"The town is wonderfully excited about this revival, and many are very mad about it, but we trust in God's power, and move on and on and on.

"Having a grand time hunting out here to S's. The father, mother, and five children have been converted at my meetings. I always have some one converted when unconverted persons go with me out hunting.

"Monday, January 31. There has been no decline in the interest, but it has kept up to the very last. There were about forty forward this eve."

Closing at this date here, he next opened up at

CLARION, IA.,

where he at once was greeted by a "packed house, and many under deep conviction." In regard to the particulars of this, we will let the Evangelist continue to speak for himself.

"February 3. Went out visiting the business men, who were all glad to see us, and I feel we made a favorable impression.

"February 5. A most wonderful time, sixty came forward, and among the number were several married men and women.

"February 9. Sinners are terribly mad all over town; they were saying everything, and even chalked 'Fifty dollars a week' all over the sidewalk. The harder sinners fight, the harder will we pray.

"February 9. Time bears us all nearer to the judgment. Oh, when it comes, what scenes and what sights by some. Others, a day of eternal joy and blessedness.

"February 11. Many are very mad, and swear they will not come again. Yet they do come, and will come. The great trouble is, the truth fits them too close.

"February 20. There must have been thirty forward this eve. I get invitations to come and help at other places very often.

"February 24. Had a great meeting in the afternoon and evening.

; "March 1. There is a dance here this evening. They have tried everything in their power to get the converts to go. God will send something on the propagators of this dance. Had a most wonderful closing service. Many at the altar."

Shortly after the house of one of the main projectors of the dance burned down. Surely God speaks by judgments as well as by mercies.

This revival continued to increase in interest and power, until one hundred and fifty professed conversion.

Commending the converts "to God and the word of his grace," he bade farewell to Clarion, and on March 6 began at

SPENCER, IA.,

where with Pastor Brown for over three weeks he labored faithfully, and, as usual, the preaching of the Word was not in vain.

While here he composed the beautiful song, "I Long for the Fullness of Blessing," and also "By and By."

SIOUX CITY

The place of Haddock's brutal murder was the next scene of the Evangelist's intense activities. His work there was during the trial of the reputed murderers. Pastor Glass labored earnestly with the Evangelist, and despite all contending influences much good was done.

While here, Brother Weber completed and sent off a lot of music for his song-book, "The Evangelist," which he was preparing as an additional aid in his great work.

A COUNTRY TENTMEETING -- ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY SAVED

From May 24 to June 24, Mr. Weber was engaged in aiding Pastor F. E. Drake in a summer tent meeting at Piero. Though in the country, and in "too busy a time," it proved a revival of great power. At this place he writes: "I have given over three hundred dollars since I've been here."

Thus the Evangelist labors on, opposed by Satan and his subjects, misunderstood by those who otherwise would aid him, but everywhere leading souls to the Saviour, and forming friendships which are to be eternal. Like a war-horse anxious for the fray, he rushes from one battle quickly into another, counting almost as host those days in which he sees no souls redeemed.

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