

MEMOIR OF ELIZABETH, WIFE OF JOHN JACKSON,
Itinerant P. M. Minister —By her Husband.

Elizabeth Jackson was the daughter of William and Elizabeth Hall, farmers, of Sykehouse, near Thorne, Yorkshire. Her early days were spent in the practice of good morals, and she attended the established church. In 1824, being about nineteen, she attended the P. M. ministry at Thorne, and received deep and serious impressions,

“But sensual joys, with flattering light,
Soon drew her heart aside.”

Early in the summer of 1826, her parents, invited by a friend, heard the writer preach, and were much affected by the word; soon joined the society, and were ornaments to their profession; they opened their house for preaching, and for class meetings; and it became a home for the preachers.

Elizabeth, on hearing the gospel in her father’s house, became deeply concerned for the salvation of her soul, so that for many nights she watered her couch with her tears. She forsook her gay companions, and “Glad bid adieu to the world’s fancied pleasure.” She begun to meet in class, and persevered in all the duties of the christian life.

In the year 1827, we were united for life; and shortly after quitted her native place for Sunderland circuit. It was a great trial to leave her affectionate parents, and take so long a journey at the first. But having counted the cost, she performed the duty by the help of the Lord; and we were kindly received by the friends. She joined Brother Hesman’s class, and grew fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.

In the distribution of her time, and the formation of her plans, she took counsel from the word of God. When health would admit, she sustained the office of prayer and class leader, Sabbath-school teacher, and occasionally took the pulpit; being always ready to supply any vacancy in her power.

Her labours in prayer meetings were extensive. She was an excellent singer; and a Divine unction attended her exertions. At a Camp meeting in Scotland, when she was praying, the Spirit came down in power; the meeting was moved, many were affected, and one cried for sorrow of heart, and was soon enabled to rejoice, And when she has been exercising, I have frequently seen the congregation in tears. And many who read this will think of the happy seasons in days that are past.

Her family visiting was of great service. The love of Christ constrained her to be active for his glory; and a part of the time she could spare from her domestic concerns, was employed with diligence and zeal in this labour of love. And, being strong in the Lord, and having a general knowledge of scripture, she was able to give suitable advice to all; and, through the blessing of God, in answer to prayer, the lukewarm have been quickened, the wanderers brought back, the fallen raised, and the weak strengthened to run the race.

Her love to the P.M. Connexion was strong; she considered it a powerful instrument in the hand of God in turning many to righteousness; and every increase to the Connexion caused an increase to her happiness.

Her christian experience was deep; she rested on the atonement made by Christ; and often said in lovefeasts, “I am a witness for Jesus—I have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins. The Lamb of God has taken them away—and the enjoyment of this keeps me steadfast amidst all the storms of life. I live by faith in Christ.

“Fixt on this ground will I remain,
Though my heart fail, and flesh decay;
This anchor shall my soul sustain,
When earth’s foundations melt away;
Mercy’s full power I then shall prove,
Lov’d with an everlasting love.”

Her conduct was upright in the highest degree. "The law of truth was in her mouth, and she walked with God in peace and equity." She regularly read the bible through once in twelve months; besides portions which she consulted on various occasions.

The following are extracts from her diary:—

"Shields, 1830.—I believe in Jesus Christ; and through believing I am made happy. I feel that I am a sinner saved by grace.— None but Jesus could effect this change. And when I consider that my eternal life depends upon my present life, it awakens me to do the work. required of me. I feel a desire for prayer always, and the Lord is present. To his name be endless praises given for such a clear sky:

"How bright now the sunbeams of glory are shining,
Around my sweet path as to heaven I go."

"Newcastle, 1832.,—I am a subject of mercy striving for the kingdom of heaven. The Lord has restored me from a long affliction. I have not been able to attend my class for fourteen weeks. I feel the want.—O my soul, do not fall asleep now when it is thy harvest day, for the seeds of mortality are thickly sown in this vile body, and I shall not be long in this world.

"Newcastle, 1833.—I have been visiting two poor dying women, but rich in faith. And while conversing and praying with them, I felt very happy. I know it is my duty to visit more. Lord, stir me up to this profitable work.

"I believe the grace of God is sufficient to keep me at all times. I feel my besetment; I am naturally warm and irritable; but this temper is much subdued by the grace of God. Lord, keep me to the end.

"When scrutinizing myself, I find the spirit wants to do all the will of God, but the flesh wants ease; so I find in my poor vile body there is war, but Christ is king in my heart.

"I felt much to-day, in having to bid the dear friends farewell. I have spent two very comfortable years in this powerful circuit; and as long as memory holds its seat, I shall not forget to pray for their prosperity, and for the Connexion, which has been an instrument in the hand of God in the conversion of my soul, and in bringing me so far on the way to heaven.

"Barnardcastle, 1834.—I visited a female much afflicted for the last two months, but happy in the Lord; and to-day she has entered into rest, And, through grace, I am determined to meet my Father's children there:

"Not a cloud doth arise to darken the skies;
Or hide for a moment the Lord from my eyes."

I have received a letter from Mrs. Hebbon, Newcastle, which I am now about to answer. Lord help me to send something that will be a blessing to her soul.— We have often spent all the time we could spare in seeking the good of souls:

"What peaceful hours we once enjoyed!
How sweet their memory still."

"Barnardcastle, 1835, — Many have died since I came to this town: some whom I have prayed with are now in heaven. What good have I done the last year! I am but an unprofitable servant; but I rely upon Christ my Saviour to enjoy holiness of heart. To walk with God without a cloud of darkness over my head, is,

"The life of my delights,
The glory of my brightest days,
And comforts of my nights."

On Sunday night I had to speak in our large chapel at Alstone, being disappointed of the preacher planned, the friends requested me to take the pulpit. it was through much trembling I acceded to their request; although many local preachers were present. The Lord was with us. I did the same last night at Millhouse, the preacher planned not being there.

“Having taken cold by attending a prayer meeting at Skelgill, I have been much afflicted in body for thirteen weeks; but I am resigned to bear the chastenings of my Father, believing the result will be good.

“August 18, 1836. —At the last Conference, my husband requested a district exchange, for the benefit of my health. After a journey of about 170 miles, I arrived at Hatfield, near Doncaster. I expected my native air would be of great benefit to my health; but my affliction is increasing; I am not able to attend the chapel. But the Lord is good; I enjoy his presence in all my affliction. I have his word; it is my daily comfort:

“When quiet in my house I sit,
Thy book be my companion still;
My joy thy sayings to repeat,
Talk o’er the records of thy will—
And search the oracles divine,
Till every heartielt word be mine.”

Here her diary ends.

Her disease could not be controled by medicine. To Mr. Matthews, the physician, I offer my warmest acknowledgments, for his gratuitous attendance; and to Mr. Goodworth, the doctor, for his strict attendance, sympathy, and care, and moderate bill for near the space of two years. Her sufferings were very great, and her pains excruciating. But she often said, “Thank God, these pains are not everlasting. The day of deliverance will come. I believe it s not far distant. And there (will be) many looking out for my arrival, who will hail me welcome in the land, where the inhabitants never say, I am sick.”

One night, about twelve o'clock, she had a great manifestation. After this she often said, “I long to be going. O what a deliverance when it does come! My heart now so diseased, and that beats so high, will then be still. I have fought a good fight—I have finished my course. To die will be gain.....You must be faithful; live to God, and follow me to heaven. You and Jane will soon be coming.”

The day previous to her death, her pain was suspended; and she said to her niece, “Jane, I shall have a good day; take the bible and magazines, and read a little.” After this she mostly slumbered, sitting in a chair.

Monday, June 4, 1838, about two o'clock in the afternoon, she wanted to lie down; four females assisted her; and immediately, without a sigh or groan, she departed this life, in full assurance of a better....aged thirty-two years and eleven months.

On the Wednesday following, her mortal remains were interred in Hatfield church-yard, when four of my itinerant brethren were present, with many of the friends. We sung hymn 533;

“The scene how solemn ! yet how sweet
When Jesus calls his saints away, &c.

And in going up the street was sung hymn 487,

“Farewell,. dear friend, a long fare well,” &c.

Brother Tyas improved her death at Sykehouse, among her friends, and at Stainforth and Hatfield. Many wept, and I trust good was done.

May her long affliction, great sufferings, and happy death, induce the writer and all the readers to follow her as she followed Christ; that our end may be peace.

References

Primitive Methodist Magazine 1839/175