

## Rev. David Lewis

### Transcription of obituary published in the Primitive Methodist Magazine by Robert Tuffin

Mr. DAVID LEWIS, late an itinerant minister in the Primitive Methodist Connexion, was born at Welshpool, in the county of Montgomery; January 1826. His father and mother had a large family, of which he was their third child, and their first son, His parents paid considerable attention to the moral training of their children, who, in early life, were taught to read the Holy Scriptures; the importance of which, and the consequence of refusing to obey the divine law, were, while he was yet young, impressed on the mind of the subject of this memoir.

At a Sabbath-school in the neighbourhood of his residence, he was taught God's Word, many portions of which he committed to memory. His mind was impressed with the reality and importance of scriptural religion. These impressions continued till he was about fourteen years of age, at which time he left home to go into a situation. Being removed from the watchful care of his parents and Sabbath-school teachers, and associating with ungodly persons, he gradually lost his serious religious impressions, except at times, when his conscience, under a measure of Divine influence, smote him for sinning against God. Subsequently he became very wicked; his besetting sins were swearing and card playing. On these, the sins of his youth, he, in after life, reflected with deep regret, while the long suffering of his Maker was remembered with gratitude.

When he was eighteen years of age his father died. A few days before this event took place, being in company with his afflicted parent, he received from him many affectionate and faithful admonitions, the last of which was, "take the Bible for your guide." These circumstances made deep impressions on his mind; but they were soon erased, and he resumed his former wicked course of life.

At twenty-one years of age he went to a situation at Bagley, in Shropshire, where he was persuaded by a pious man to attend a revival meeting in the Primitive Methodist chapel. This was the first time he had attended a service in our connexion; he received some good, and afterward occasionally attended the chapel. He began to reflect seriously on his state as a sinner before God, and turned to the Bible in search of instruction to guide him in the right way. About this time a campmeeting was held in the neighbourhood; he was among those who heard the Word of life preached, and it was made a blessing to his soul. The light of heaven shone on his conscience, his sins appeared terrible, and he was bowed down with condemnation before his Maker. His sorrow of heart continued until one Sunday evening in September 1847, when he went to Bagley chapel, determined to give himself to the Lord, and to obtain deliverance from the anguish of soul which he felt. The preacher, that evening, was Mr. J. Morton, who preached from "Ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." This service encouraged him to express the desire of his penitent heart. A love-feast followed, and then a prayer-meeting, in which he cried aloud for mercy. Before the service closed, he obtained forgiveness through the atonement of Christ, and rejoiced in God's pardoning love. He henceforth confessed Christ before men, and in all things endeavoured to please God by doing that which was right in His sight. At the March Quarterly Meeting of Oswestry Circuit, 1848, his name was put on the circuit's plan, and he fulfilled the duties of the office assigned him with diligence, acceptability, and usefulness.

In September 1852, he was called into the itinerancy by the Cwm Circuit. His earnestness in preaching Christ to the people, and his diligent attention to the duties of the ministry, were appreciated by those among whom he laboured. He remained in the circuit till the conference of 1854, when the Pontypool Circuit received the Abergavenny branch, and brother Lewis with it. He was re-stationed to that branch by the

conference of 1855, but during a part of the following year he laboured in the home branch of Pontypool Circuit. He was useful among the people, and was esteemed "highly in love for his work's sake."

At the conference of 1856, he was stationed to be my colleague in Redruth Circuit. He, with brother White and myself, entered on our labours at the same time. We covenanted together to do our best to help each other on in our work among the people, and to strive together to promote the prosperity of the cause of God. We soon had an in-gathering to our societies, accompanied with the conversion of several souls. This was followed by a copious out-pouring of the Holy Spirit, which caused a gracious revival of religion in several parts of the circuit, in which many souls were converted to God. In this revival brother Lewis, in conjunction with his colleagues and others, laboured hard. At the Conference of 1857, he was taken into the annual list, and on September the third of the same year, he was united in marriage to her who now laments the loss of an affectionate husband.

In January 1858, he was taken ill. His affliction was supposed to be a violent cold, but in reality it was an affection of the throat and lungs, which led to consumption, of which he died. Superior medical advice respecting his state was obtained, and in June last, he seemed to improve a little; but this was followed by increased weakness and the gradual decline of his physical strength. He remained at Redruth till the latter part of last September, when, to try a change of air, and to be with Mrs. Lewis's relations, he removed to Eaton Bishop, in the Cwm Circuit. Medical aid was again tried, but in vain; his days were numbered, and the time of his departure was approaching. He continued to decline in strength till the silver cord was loosed and the golden bowl was broken, and his happy spirit took its flight to a brighter and happier clime. During his affliction he sometimes expressed a desire to recover, that he might preach Christ to a fallen world; but he passed through the furnace patiently, knowing that to him to live was Christ, but to die was gain. He frequently said "glory be to God,"

"I soon shall see His face,  
And never, never sin,  
But from the fountain of His grace  
Drink endless pleasures in."

On one occasion being asked the state of his mind, he said, "I love Jesus and have peace with God, and shall change earth for heaven." And to another friend he said, "the Lord deals gently with me; mine is a gentle passage, a heavenly breeze. What can I covet more under these circumstances? God has given me every thing I want." On the morning of the day before that on which he died, he appeared to have a severe conflict with the enemy of his soul; but in a short time he overcame, and exclaimed, "glory be to God, I have gained the victory." As death drew nearer, and the finish of his course was at hand, he expressed with ecstasy,

"I shall see the Lamb in His own light."

and,

"'Tis there with the lambs of Thy flock," &c.

About an hour before he died, in broken accents he said, "the blood, the precious blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin," and turning to his weeping and sorrowing wife, he said, "I shall not go just now; presently, presently." He now revived a little, and being unable to give utterance to his feeling, he raised and clapped his hands in token of victory. After this he faintly uttered "Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Jesus has always been with me, He will not forsake me now, and glory, glory, glory; victory, victory, through the blood of the Lamb; come Lord Jesus, come, come; I long to be with Thee." Shortly after this he died in the full triumph of faith, about four o'clock in the afternoon of February 15th, 1859, in the thirty-third year of his age, and the sixth of his ministry as an itinerant preacher.

Brother Best with whom he travelled in the Pontypool Circuit, in a letter to the writer, says, "As a preacher he thoroughly understood the duties of his office, and strove prayerfully to discharge them. He was a great reader, a deep thinker, and careful in his choice of subjects. As a family visitor he excelled, and as a colleague he was friendly, faithful, and industrious," Brother Lewis possessed a strong mind, warm zeal, and an earnest disposition to glorify God in doing good to man. His preaching abilities were superior; he strove to cultivate his mind by much reading and studying, choosing for his reading the best books of the day on theology and other subjects. He had acquired a considerable amount of useful knowledge, which was manifest to those who heard him preach, while he brought out of his treasury things new and old. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

His sorrowing wife has lost an affectionate husband, the Church a faithful minister, and the world a burning and shining light. But our loss is his gain.

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#### References

*Primitive Methodist Magazine* 1859/391