

Thomas Roberts

Transcription of obituary published in the Primitive Methodist Magazine by Wm. Taylor

MEMOIR OF THOMAS ROBERTS, PRIMITIVE METHODIST ITINERANT PREACHER.

(Preston Brook circuit.)

THOMAS ROBERTS was, I understand, born at Eaton, in Cheshire, in 1805. The Spirit of the Lord strove with him when young; and at the age of fifteen, he obtained the favour of God, cast in his lot among the Primitive Methodists, and continued for some time in a good way: but being young and inexperienced, the enemy of souls overcame him, and he lost his confidence in the Lord. But after a time, the Lord arrested him again by conviction. He then remembered from whence he had fallen, repented and did his first works; and the Lord again graciously manifested himself, healed Brother Roberts's backsliding, and loved him freely: and from that time he gave proof of his sincerity by devotedness to God and zeal for his cause; he was respected among his brethren, and loved of God.

The Lord opened his way for extending usefulness; he was, at the September Qr. day in 1826, put on the preachers' plan in Burland circuit, and continued till March, 1829, when he was taken out to travel in Preston Brook circuit, where he travelled three months with success.

At the Conference held at Scotter, in 1829, Brother Roberts was stationed for Oldham circuit, where he laboured twelve months, and was much esteemed. Here he was rendered a great blessing: he went through the circuit like a living fire; and under his ministry sinners were convinced, mourners comforted, and believers revived and established in the grace of God.

At the Conference held at Hull, in 1830, he was stationed for Preston Brook circuit, and in due time he commenced his labours; but, on account of the weakness of his body, he could not labour with that zeal he formerly did; yet at the same time, he laboured with all his heart to persuade sinners to turn to God; and he manifested an anxious desire to be useful in the cause of Christ. But he continued to grow weaker till he was obliged in October the same year, to relinquish travelling. Medical aid was resorted to, and there was some appearance of his recovery. But his complaint returned with greater force, and in about three weeks he fell a victim to the cold hand of death. In the time of his affliction he was much devoted to God, and bore his affliction with patience and Christian fortitude. He sometimes expressed a hope that he should recover, he likewise cherished in his mind a desire to have been raised up again; but was resigned to the will of God.

A few weeks before his death, I had the privilege of conversing with Brother Roberts at a friend's house in Warrington; and he at that time exclaimed, "What a blessing it is to have an assurance of heaven." He appeared to be on the borders of the heavenly country, with his confidence centered on the Rock of Ages: and while Jordan's waves were swelling high, he viewed, with a pleasing prospect, the heavenly Cannan.

Our Brother Roberts had his conflicts with the enemy of souls, and was tempted much about the last struggle he should have with death, whether death or Roberts would have the victory. The day before he died, his brother from Liverpool, came to see him; and after a little discourse, he said, "I can die in peace"? The same day, at night, I called to see him, and found him very ill in body, but looking to the Lord; and after a little conversation, he raised his voice, and said, "Jesus is the foundation of our hopes, and the source of all happiness."

Several of the friends had called to see him that day, and he stated what blessings he had received. I then prayed with him for the last time, and he still manifested that lively principle within by repeated Amens. I then left him with the Lord, and about five o'clock the next morning, he had his last conflict with death, and calmly fell asleep in the arms of Jesus, on 26th day of December, 1830, in the twenty-fifth year of his age. December 28th was the day of his interment. Many of the friends in the circuit attended his funeral. He is interred in Warrington Old Church Yard. I preached his funeral sermon through the greatest part of the circuit, to crowded congregations, and good was done.

Wm. TAYLOR.

(Approved by the Qr. day Board,)

References

Primitive Methodist Magazine 1831/352