

MEMOIR OF ELIZABETH RUSSELL,

(Continued from page 99.)

The following are some of her letters.

To SARAH EVANS.—*Dec. 26, 1826,*

Dear Sister—I feel I have at this time to pass through the fire. But, thanks be to God, I feel resigned to his will, My strength has been equal to my day; but I feel this frail tenement sinks beneath the load. I do feel the body is fast sinking towards the grave. But this gives me comfort, because I know I have a building that will stand for ever; it is on a sure foundation. I do not expect any thing but tribulation here— My prayer is still the same, ‘Grant me for each trial, grace.’

In some places on the branch, and new mission, I have seen the arm of the Lord made bare.

The Lord bless thee, my dear sister, with grace, and make thee and me perfect in holiness.—Pray for this.

I am thy loving sister in Jesus,

ELIZABETH SMITH.

To SARAH EVANS,—*Jan. 4, 1827.*

My dear Sister in Jesus,—May the Shepherd of Israel still keep and preserve you. I am yet in search of a better country. I am still hungering after that fulness that is laid up in Jesus, for all them that believe.—I do expect to receive the same. Pray for me that I may go on, still looking for it. I know it is for me.—I feel it is—What else means that love I experience, which daily makes me long to be dissolved? It is not because I am not willing to suffer, but I long to be where I shall see Jesus. O Sarah, I think I could endure any thing for that sight.

I should have been glad to have seen you when I was at Ludlow; but I was rather indisposed in body, and also cast down in mind, But HE whose word is sure, has borne all my sorrows. He has been better than all my fears. He caused me to rejoice in reviving his work. Precious souls have been brought out of darkness into light, and brought to praise redeeming grace. Glory to God, I believe his work will go on. —My love to all the friends. Believe me, yours in the bonds of a peaceful gospel. E. SMITH.

To SARAH EVANS.

My dear Sarah, —By a wise Providence I am yet at Sand Pitts, Ludlow. The second of this month my grandmother was taken with a stroke, and I am constrained to stop with her. I think she is now seeking pardon through the merits of Jesus, and I hope my prayers are now answered. The Lord is able to save the hoary-headed.

When I am permitted to enter into the work of the Lord again, I trust I shall have received a deeper baptism of the Spirit of God. I hope, my sister, I shall be swallowed up of God,—prove all his fulness, and only live for him, and to him, speak for him, and by him, and at ‘last,

“Preach him to all, and cry in death,
Behold, behold the Lamb.”

My dear Sarah, since I have begun to write, I feel such a moving, of the Spirit, that it is as if I could, “Clap my glad wings, and tower away.” Were I present with thee, I think I could carry thy thoughts with mine, to that place where God my Saviour sits, and reigns, and scatters night away.

Last Sunday night the members came to ask me to speak. I was but poorly, but I went, and felt it good to be there,—so did the people. It was a blessed time. I felt myself refreshed both in body and soul.

Coming home in haste, I was in a high fever before I went to bed. Next morning I could not stand. But thanks to the Restorer of soul and body, I am getting well almost as fast as I was taken ill.— My dear grandmother is fast approaching the world of spirits.

I like to converse with thee (in writing,) though I dare say thou art comfortably asleep in thy bed at Clunbury Hills, for it is now just twelve o'clock.

I have written this letter very badly; but, dear Sarah, never mind, for though these characters be blotted, the truth of Jesus is unspotted.

Clear as the light the promise stands,
Which we shall prove when safe in Canaan's land.
Oh then may faith lend us its eagle wings,
'Tis faith and love the foretaste of the blessings bring.
May we in fruits of holiness abound,
And ever in the work of prayer and hope be found;
How blest! how holy! and how happy shall we be!
Clothed with light and immortality.

O, that God may bless thee, and make thee and me perfect in himself.

I feel at this time quite resigned to his will. Thanks be to his name, I do feel such a joy at the thought that I am counted worthy to suffer with him. When I consider his promises, his power, his love, oh! how can I for a moment doubt or fear!

God bless thee.—Adieu.

E. SMITH.

To SARAH EVANS.

Sand Pitts, March 26, 1827.

Beloved Sister, — Praying that thou mayst be filled with love, joy, and peace in believing in Christ, I write to let thee know that next Monday morning, if spared, I go into the (Presteyn) branch. I feel a little tried, but I wish the will of the Lord to be done; because I know he is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind. I have resigned myself into his hands. I have but two desires, 1. To be perfect in holiness. 2. To be useful in bringing sinners out of darkness into light. My dear sister, (pray) that this may be the case, that we may be useful in destroying the works of satan, and in spreading the glorious kingdom of the Redeemer.

Give my love to the people, and, ask them never to cease praying for me.—I must now say, Farewell.— Believe me thine in the strongest bonds. E. SMITH.

To S. EVAMS.

Gravel Hill, April 29, 1827.

My beloved: Sister, —I am truly thankful for the present opportunity of sitting down to write of the goodness of God—His matchless name—His glorious power— His forgiving love.—Oh, Sarah! when we view these things, we can say with the apostle, "God is love." I feel that he is love. But what can I say of myself? A brand plucked out of the burning! A creature of vanity! What can I say when I look at the Saviour? Why, I have nothing, and am nothing! Oh Jesus, let thy blood speak

for me! And thou, Eternal Spirit, let my soul be thy abiding residence! O thou great and glorious ONE in THREE, let me feel that peace and joy which proceeds from a union with thee.

I was very sorry to hear you was unwell; but you know in whose hands you are, and also the promise, "all things work together for good to them that love God."

Sister Welsh came to Ludlow on her way to Hopton Bank. I am thankful that she is able to take her appointments again. I went with her to the first appointment and came back; and I thought, How different Ludlow appears to me now, to what it did a few months ago: there are not (now) those who were wont to encourage:—there is no grandmother to smile at my approach; I am left a stranger and a pilgrim. But I hope to be made perfect here below, and prepared for heaven.

I have lately had my mind tried. What a comfort that our eternal friend is (able to help.) Let us live as they who are not looking at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen, which are eternal. This is not our resting place, our home is above. O, let us work the work of Him that sent us while it is called to-day. Let us look to Him as our Guide, taking his word for our staff while we travel through this howling wilderness. We shall soon arrive at home. Then let us still press forward, still wrestle, still watch and pray. I have many invitations, and have engaged for three weeks to come. I desire our good Lord to go with me, and bless Sarah.

I am, though unworthily, thy sister in the hope of the gospel,
E. SMITH.

To S. EVANS.

Hill Gates,—June 12, 1827.

Dearly beloved Sister,—It is with heartfelt pleasure that I embrace this opportunity of writing to let you know that I am a stranger in this vale of wo. I have not yet ceased to converse with mortals, neither have I bid adieu to pain, but, thanks be to God, I feel willing to suffer; yea, I am willing to suffer all his righteous will, if he will but count me meet to reign with him above. I know that there is my house and home

"For me my elder brethren stay
And sweetly whisper,
Sister spirit, come away."

Glory to God, it will not be long; and then my infirmities and frailties will not hinder my immediate communion with HIM, whose love now fills my heart. Yes, I have this confidence, that I shall see him as he is, without a dimming veil between. I shall soon have done with all things here. Yet I want to persuade others to come along with me; and I do rejoice that the Lord is making me useful in this circuit. I have had some powerful times; and have seen the tears run down the cheeks of those in keen distress on account of sin.

The first Sunday I came on Pillawell circuit, I spoke at Little Birch, and at night held a lovefeast. It was a moving time; the presence of the Lord was felt; and a number found peace with God. The work is going on well here; the wanderers are coming in; and my soul is happy in the possession of solid peace. I do feel it my privilege to be holy, to enjoy (entire) sanctification.

You will ask, "What is implied in sanctification?" It implies, the renewal of the mind after the image of God, feeling an entire resignation to the will of God, a sinking into nothing, so that Christ be all and in all. He is then made of God unto us, "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption," 1 Cor. i,30. I speak from my own experience; as I have never conversed much about it with any one. But I feel I do enjoy it; and have for the last month; though I had felt a death unto sin for some time before, yet I never enjoyed what I have since a Camp meeting and lovefeast at Cowen. There I lay under the power above two hours, as though I had been dead.

I can address my dear Sarah with freedom; and I believe she will receive the exhortation. I would then say, "Strive for a clean heart; never rest short of holiness." I have never told any one my state

so fully as I have done in this letter. It is not because I have no one to talk to; but through timidity, lest they should think I say more than I know. And indeed I feel that those with whom I could speak, are so much better than myself, that I can say nothing. But I can write to Sarah; and I do hope that (this letter) will find you pressing towards the mark. I hope when you write, you will have to tell me of a revival in my native circuit. I must say, Farewell, until we meet in time, or as we rise above the fiery void.

Pray for your weak, but loving,
E. SMITH.

To S. E.—*Blyney, Nov. 23, 1827.*

My dearly beloved Sister—May you be filled with the consolations of God's Spirit. I assure you that I do endeavour to divide my hours, yet I have time little enough; but he that searches the heart, knows the secrets of mine. I am quite contented with this branch, and believe my way is open in every place. But it will not satisfy my soul to be loved only by the people, I want to see a revival of the work, and I believe I shall see it. O Lord, pour out thy Spirit. Two of the preachers are ill, but I am well. The snow falls fast, and I have to climb the hill, so that this day's labour will try me.

I am your loving sister in Christ:—in haste, E. SMITH.

To S. E.—*Darfold, Feb. 5, 1828.*

Dear Sister, —May HE that neither slumbers nor sleeps, still keep and preserve you. I received your letter last night, and was pleased with the account of your prosperity.

You desire to know how we are getting on in the branch; upon the whole we are doing well. I have lately joined a good number of members; and we are building a new chapel. Our societies are growing in grace. We long for a greater work. The congregations daily increase. We have some glorious times, and we expect better days. Our cry is, "O Lord, pour out thy Spirit." The desire of our heart is to see Zion arrayed in her strength. Lord, hasten thy coming.

These three last weeks I have suffered from a pain in the chest, so that I have hardly been able to preach. At first I thought it was the messenger sent to call me home. The thought was very welcome. Glory seemed to beam in my soul. But when I considered how little I had done and suffered for Jesus, I seemed willing to forego the joy a little longer, and to endure the cross. I prayed that I might live a little longer, (O, it was a solemn hour,) if it were his will that I might be useful in bringing precious souls to his fold. The Lord answered prayer. I felt my strength increase, which continued until yesterday, when the pain returned; but it is something better this morning.

On Sunday I was at Presteign and Evenjob. It was a good day to me and the people: four back-sliders were aroused, and stopped class; and also four others. I believe good will be done. Give my love to all who are looking for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Yours, E. SMITH.

(To be continued.)

References

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