

Norton, June 26<sup>th</sup>, 1830

My very dearly beloved Sister,

It is indeed a long time since I have written to you, but the reason has not been that I loved you less, or think less of you, for I can assure, you are never absent from my thoughts. Nay, I love you most tenderly, and if it were not that my feelings were so acute & painful, I should write oftener, but, when ever I attempt to write, I feel the separation most keenly. A thousand recollections rush on my mind.

If you had been in this country, how happy should I have been in living with you, but the seas divide. I am at present with my Bro<sup>r</sup> John & may stay some time. They are very kind, but I feel the want of those means of grace & that Christian fellowship, which I have long enjoyed.

Bro<sup>r</sup> Samuel is married. This will surprise you. He was united on the 27<sup>th</sup> of August 1829 to Miss Maria Waller, a young lady about twenty, who we had known for some years, an orphan, adopted by a lady of the name of Rogers, who has no family and resides with them. I have lived with them for the last nine months, but thought it as well to leave them a little. There is no prospect of a family at present. I trust I shall be directed. I

desire to give myself up to the Lord, to be placed where I may be most useful & comfortable. I am anxious to know what to do for the best. Having a very scanty income, in all, owing to the decrease of value of money, not more than £40 per annum, which as things are, you know, is little enough. But I feel thankful for that little, as the feeling of dependance is not pleasing to nature. We shall each lose considerably by the works, as you will hear, which is indeed very grievous, as we are all totally unable to bear the burden. But I hope it will be better than our fears, & that ultimately we shall not lose so much, but the present debt must be paid off, as will be explained to you.

We were much concerned to hear so distressing an account of your health, but hope this will find you much better. May the Lord support and comfort you. For when all human comfort fails, ~~He~~ can & does sustain the soul that trusts in him above. Yes, my dearest sister, ~~He~~ will uphold you by the right hand of his righteousness! He is a sure refuge in the day of trouble. A little more suffering and trial, and all will be over. Then you shall join the Blood sought throng. Let us think much of that happy period, when time & all its concerns shall have passed away.

Oh! let us labour to enter into that rest. May we be ready, when the Master shall call. Oh! that our hearts may be emptied of all evil, & filled with pure love to God and man. This is my

constant aim and desire, to live in the enjoyment of his favour & love.

I have great reason to be thankful for what I enjoy. But I press forward, that I may know more & more daily, till I am conformed to his will.

Let me have your prayers, tho' absent in body, yet present in spirit. Let us mingle our praises and prayers. What encouragement to trust in God. How great are his promises. Let us hang upon them, & feed on them day by day.

What need have we, under all the changes of this mortal life, of a lively & vigorous faith to bear us up, or we must sink. But, while our eye of faith is directed to Jesus, we are borne above the waves of this troublesome world.

This I have experienced under many trials. I have felt stript of every earthly dependance, & found the Lord my refuge & support. O! may we ever trust & confide fully.

As my Brother will write to you I cannot add more. We are glad to hear that your children promise to be a comfort to you & their Father. We were much pleased with their letters. Let them write often. It gives us great pleasure to hear from you. Let us know more, how you go on, in every respect. We feel often anxious about you.

Bro<sup>r</sup>. Jos<sup>s</sup>, wife, & Mary-ann, are well & going on as usual. Whytall has removed to Ishington in hopes of doing better, but it is doubtful.

Isabella and Sarah-ann are sweet children. Mrs. W. has one little girl & has lost one. She makes a very good mother, & is very kind to the dear little girls.

Poor sister Isab.<sup>a</sup>. I feel much for the children for her sake. How would she have loved them & cared for them. They are both at times much troubled with her complaint. I trust they will not suffer as she did.

I must conclude. So farewell. Give my very kind love to Mr. Mather, & all the children, & accept the same, from your ever affectionate sister,

Sarah Benson.

My dear Mrs. Mather,

I should be grieved indeed if letters were to be sent to you from Norton without one expression of love from me, as I feel conscious that I do most cordially unite with my dear Husband, as well as sister Sarah, in every expression of their love and sympathy towards you & yours, and in every prayer for your support and comfort under the manifold afflictions which it has pleased God to lay upon you. May an abundant entrance into the everlasting Kingdom etc be prepared for you thro' the merits of Lord & Saviour Jesus Christ -

Believe me, to be

your ever affectionate sister,  
Frances Benson.