

“More than Conqueror!”

A

BRIEF MEMORIAL

OF

THE LIFE AND TRIUMPHANT DEATH

OF

HANNAH MEARS.

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A true tale!*

“MORE THAN CONQUEROR!”

HANNAH MEARS was born of poor but Christian parents, in the parish of Bethnal Green, near London, July 12th, 1839. She was a healthy, active child, full of life and vigour until two years of age, when one day, playing with her aunt, she fell and struck the lower part of her back; this sad accident brought on disease of the spine, and made the after part of her life one of almost constant suffering.

Different methods, recommended by various medical men, were tried in succession, each with the san-

guine hope of speedy cure, but vain was the help of man! Leeches, inclined plane, and steel supports, served only to aggravate the dear child's sufferings.

Her parents now perceiving it to be a confirmed case, began to use their own judgment, and give her all the change of air possible, so that her general health became strengthened, and in course of time, she regained the use of her feet.

About eight years afterwards, Hannah's mother ruptured a blood vessel, and after lingering some months in great weakness, it pleased the Lord to take her to Himself, on the third of August, 1849. Hannah was now left a poor little sufferer, motherless, and in a strange place; for in the providence of God,

her father had removed only a few months from Bethnal Green to Bromley: and some persons residing in the same house took much interest in the dear child, and did all in their power to promote her comfort.

From earliest infancy, Hannah had been the subject of her parents' constant prayers; and now, in the deep concern she began to manifest for the salvation of her soul, the Lord gave a fresh proof of His faithfulness to His own promise, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it." (John xiv. 13, 14.)

One morning coming to her father, she threw her arms around him, and looking up in his face with extreme

anxiety, the tears streaming down her cheeks, said, 'Father, O father! I don't know what to do; I am afraid to die, I fear my sins are not forgiven.'

That this was no transient impression, no "morning cloud and early dew that passeth away," her after history abundantly proved. The Lord had begun that good work in her soul which He ever carries on to completion. (Phil. i. 6.)

On a minister of the Gospel, at a later period, asking her if she remembered any particular time when the work of grace commenced in her soul, she said, 'I cannot tell you when or where; it was like the good seed sown, which sprung up, first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear.' And on asking

her what was her title to heaven, she said, 'The blood of Jesus is my title.'

To any dear child who may read this little book, I would say,—Remember, Hannah was a *child* when the thought of her sinfulness made her afraid to die; and this was no groundless fear, for the Word of God declares, that "ALL have sinned," (Rom. iii. 23,) (not only grown-up persons, but "*all*," even *children*!) and that "The wages of sin is DEATH," (Rom. vi. 23,) not merely the death of the *body*, but eternal death in that place "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." (Mark ix. 44, 46, 48.) And observe, dear child, that Hannah did not get rid of her fears by trying to become a better child; she

had learned that her *heart* was “deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked,” (Jer. xvii. 9,) that therefore, *nothing* really good in the *sight of* GOD could come out of it, any more than *fresh* water could come out of a salt spring. But she learned from the same Scriptures which taught her her exceeding sinfulness in God’s sight, that “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten *Son*, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John iii. 16.) From the same Scriptures, she learned that the blessed loving Son of God became a *man*, that He might take the place of the *sinner*; that *for sinners* He might obey the Holy law of God; and, *instead of sinners*, bear the punishment which should

have been borne by them; that, because the appointed "wages," or punishment of sin, was DEATH! Jesus DIED! poured out His life-blood on the Cross! Hannah believed that because God sent Jesus thus to bear the punishment of sin, He would *not punish her*, but forgive all her sins; and, treating her as if *she* had never sinned, receive her into that holy, happy heaven where Jesus dwells, and *sin* can never enter. This is what she meant by saying that "the blood of Jesus was her *title* (or right) to heaven." And now, having experienced the change of heart mentioned in 2 Cor. v. 17, and having been forgiven through faith in the precious blood of Jesus, she began to please God, and thus practically become 'a better child.'

Now, my dear child, take your Bible and turn to Rev. v. 9, and you will see that *all* sinners, “out of *every* kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation,” that are forgiven and enter heaven say the same—the blood of Jesus is *their* title—they have no other. . . . “Thou wast *slain*, and hast redeemed us to God by *Thy blood*.” So you see, that if *you* ever enter that holy, happy place where Jesus is, this must be *your* title. Dear reader, whatever your age or condition, I beseech you, as in the sight of God, to ask yourself the question, “What is *my* title to heaven?” and bethink you, that according to these sure words of God—the blood of Jesus is your title, or you have none!

In the year 1851, Hannah was admitted as a scholar into the Old

Ford Sunday School; here it was she was taught the fundamental truths of the gospel, and her mind became well stored with scripture, which in the time of need was as the bulwark of her soul.

She greatly glorified God by her quiet spirit and consistent conduct; she was never light-minded or frivolous in her manners, but always cheerful and happy, and was greatly beloved by all who knew her. Her life of suffering was one of patience and submission to the Divine will; whenever she was informed that another abscess was forming, she would receive it with the greatest composure, and endeavour to console herself and her friends with the hope that the old one would heal up before the new one broke.

In the year 1851, Hannah's father married again, and the following particulars, chiefly supplied by her step-mother, who, for nearly eight years, tenderly cared for the suffering child, bear equally strong evidence of the power of grace over her heart and conduct.

Strict adherence to truth was one bright feature in her character; she was never known to deviate from it to screen herself from any unpleasantness.

She never expressed a wish for finer *dress* than was provided for her.

When *taunted* with her deformity by children, as they passed her in the street, she would speak of it in a cheerful spirit, and appear to feel pity for them.

Her patience under disappointment

was beautiful. When told that a visit to some kind friends, to which she had looked forward with much delight, must be put off because of an abscess that was then forming, she replied sweetly, 'Never mind, I may go another time.'

Her outward life reflected the inward peace of her soul; the school hour on the Lord's day found her always in her place, with her lessons known, all without hurry or bustle.

But it was in the closing scenes of dear Hannah's *earthly* life that the triumph of Divine grace in her soul was most apparent. At that time, when face to face with the last enemy, Death! then it was that the "exceeding greatness of God's power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power

which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead," wrought mightily in her. To quote the words of the Minister of the Gospel before referred to, "I never saw the monster Death so completely beneath the foot of a child; she appeared, indeed, as though he was not; yea, more, to have the face of an angel." And yet there was no ostentation about this child, but a sweetly meek, quiet, and subdued spirit; indeed she appeared to possess the mellowness and maturity of an aged saint.

On the 10th of March, 1859, just ten days before she died, the enemy made a desperate attack upon her; taking advantage of her weakness, and knowing that her earthly pilgrimage was drawing to a close, he

attempted to sink her soul in despair. Her father had slept in the same room the previous night, and left her in the morning to go to his work; she was very weak, but did not shew any particular symptoms of uneasiness of mind. When he returned to breakfast, the servant girl came down stairs in haste, and said that Hannah wished to see him: he went up immediately, and the sight and season, he says, he never shall forget.* When he entered the room, she had raised herself upon her knees in bed, her eyes seemed ready to start out of their sockets, her countenance, which was always mild and placid, was now distorted, she was bathed in tears, and her

* The recent revivals in Ireland have furnished very similar instances.

cries (or rather shrieks) might, had the window been open, have been heard at the end of the street. She grasped her father's hand, like a drowning person; and entreated him to pray for her. This agonizing state lasted about thirty or forty minutes. After he had prayed with her, and spoken to her of that precious blood which maketh atonement for the soul, she began to be a little more composed; and in the afternoon of the same day a minister of the Gospel called, no doubt led of the Lord to do so, who was enabled to pour the oil into the wounded spirit, and the next morning all her fears were gone, and gone for ever. It was a complete victory—she was able fully to rest on the finished work of Jesus—and from that time

forth she did nothing but rejoice in the pardoning love of God; for, though her parents had for a long time felt assured that she was resting on Jesus, she did not give full expressions of assurance till after this attack of the enemy; her tongue was then set at liberty, and she rejoiced much in anticipation of the glory of heaven. But soon she seemed to lose the glory of the place in the glory of *the person of Christ*; this appeared to be her soul's attraction, and it is quite impossible to describe her joy, when she spoke of being with Him and like Him.

It is a question whether we should have had anything like the dying testimony she gave, had she not passed through such a terrible conflict; so our God makes not only

the wrath of man, but of devils to praise Him. But such a struggle was the means, it is thought, of hastening her death; the shock was too great for her exhausted frame, and she began to sink rapidly after it.

On the Tuesday following, what a contrast presented itself; the previous Thursday it was the hour and power of darkness, but on Tuesday she seemed to have a sight into the unseen world, and her face shone like the face of an angel. She was lying quietly on her couch, when it appeared to those who were watching her, that she must have seen some heavenly vision; she suddenly raised herself up, and lifting up her hands toward heaven, with her eyes fixed on some unseen object, she said,

“Oh! the glory—the glory—the beautiful place—there they go, walking in white robes—Oh! what a glorious sight—what a lovely Jesus—and soon I shall be with them!” and her countenance shone with joy.

The following are sentences which were taken down as they escaped Hannah's lips from the period of her triumph over Satan, till the time of her departure from this earthly scene.

“Tell every body how happy I am. Soon shall I be like my Jesus, happy, happy, happy.”

“My soul it would no longer stay,
But stretch its wings and soar away.”

“When I am laid out in my coffin, I hope all who come to see me may read in my countenance that I died happy in the Lord.”

“I feel so happy that, if I were

able, I could as soon sit down and make my cap to be buried in as I could make anything else !”

She would often repeat that verse,

“ Jesus, Lord Jesus,—

Thy name is sweet, my Saviour,

When shall I see Thee face to face,

My wondrous, blessed Saviour ?”

Taking her father by the hand, she said, “ My dearest father, in the name of the God of Jacob, I bless you, and mother, and my two little brothers.”

He replied, “ My dear Hannah, in the name of Jesus, I give you back again to Him who has lent you to me for a little season.”

She said, “ I am so thankful you can willingly give me up.”

“ Soon, soon, my weary soul shall rest
On Jesus' tender loving breast.”

“Oh, what a blessed thing to feel
That angel forms around me steal,
And when I drop this form of clay,
Joyful they bear my soul away.”

Feeling drowsy, she said, “I don’t want to be drowsy, I want to wake up and sing the glories of my heavenly King; it is enough to rouse any one to think of the blessed things laid up for me.”

“‘Oh, that I had wings like a dove’”—she stopped, and then said, “*If I had I must close them, because I am sure the Lord’s time is best.*”

She would frequently say, “Come, Lord Jesus, I am waiting; why tarry thy chariot wheels so long?”

“Oh, grave, where is thy victory?
Oh, death, where is thy sting?”

One morning, at day-break, it was said to her, “The men are just going

to work ;” she replied, “ Yes, and I am just going to rest ; all my work on earth is done.”

When she was asked by a friend if she had any fear of dying, she said, “ Not the slightest ; death to me has lost its sting ; and I not only die happy but triumphant.”

She was fond of repeating that verse, “ Jesus, my all to heaven is gone,” and nearly her last words were, “ my hopes are fixed on Him alone.”

Her delight was to preach the gospel to all who came to see her, and to feast as it were in anticipation of the time of her departure to be for ever with the Lord. When she could sit up, she would arrange all her little matters with the greatest calmness ; when she had disposed

of her little money—one-third of which she wished to be put into the Missionary box—one shilling remained, and she said, “Mother, I have been thinking that father’s birthday will soon be coming; I shall not be here then, but I should like to give him one more present—will you buy something? and I will write something to be put with it.”

To many who came to see her she would give some suitable text—some are remembered;

“The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

“In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.”

“The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord make his face to shine upon thee.”

And to children,

“I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me.”

“God is love.”

“Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”

She had some earnest conversation with the charwoman when cleaning her room; what she said was not overheard, but the woman was much affected.

She said she should like Willie—her little brother—to have her Bible, and she would like, if she were able, to write his name and a text in it; while she was endeavouring to do so, the doctor came, and held the Bible while she wrote, “I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me.” She told him she was so happy—she was not

afraid to die. He said, "No, my dear girl; you have always been a good child." She said, "Oh, no; it is not because of anything good in me, but through the precious blood of Jesus that I am saved."

She said, some little time before she died, "I was just thinking what text I could leave Mr. B——; there is one that is so precious to me, and I think I could not give him a better, 'He is the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely.' "Tell him how happy I am."

At another time, when her father was going to lie down, she said, "My rest will never be broken; I shall not want to sleep when I see dear Jesus; oh no, no sleep then."

She wished to know where she should be buried. On asking her the

reason why, she said, "Perhaps you will think me foolish; I know it is of no importance where the poor body lies, but the thought just struck me, it would be nice for families to rise up together at the resurrection."

At another time, when the candle went out, she said, "My light will never go out, but will shine for ever and ever."

When she was very low and weak, she said to her step-mother, "Don't leave me, mother, for I feel I shall be choked;" then she smiled and said, "I need not fear; the worst that can come, but shortens my journey, and hastens me home."

A day or two before she died, it was said to her, "You will soon see your own dear mother in glory." She replied, "Yes, but I think I

shall see so much in *Jesus*, that I shall not be able to look at anything else."

The last evening she spent on earth, her parents were hourly expecting a dear friend from the country, one much loved by Hannah; when night came on, she said, "I shall not see her now, mother; give my dying love to her, and tell her I am so happy, but I could not wait to see her."

As she sat watching her step-mother preparing short clothes for her infant brother, she said, "Are you going to put baby in short clothes to-morrow?" and, upon her being answered in the affirmative, she said, "Much as I should like to see him, I will not wait for it."

She breathed her last a few hours

after; near the last she said to her step-mother, "I think, dear mother, it is in mercy to you I am going to be taken soon; in your weak state I should be too much care and fatigue to you!"

About this time she said, "Can this be dying? I can scarcely say dying, it is falling asleep!" Shortly before her departure she turned deathly cold, and, putting her hand in her aunt's, said, "Aunty, *you* cannot warm them!"

Two hours before she died her father felt her pulse and found it more feeble; he said, "My dear, I suppose it would be good news to tell you that your pulse was lower?" She smiled, and said, "Oh! yes, it would indeed—come, dear Jesus."

When it was said to her that it

was midnight, she said, "Yes, at midnight the Bridegroom cometh!" And soon after her disembodied spirit took its flight to the regions of the blessed.

The following are some lines composed by dear Hannah two days before she died, which she wished to be placed in her hand when in her coffin, that she, being dead, might yet speak to all who came to see her:—

"All you that look on this cold clay,
From which the soul has passed away;
I pray you now your knees to bend,
In prayer to Christ, the sinner's friend.
He died and suffered on the tree,
That you from sin might be set free.

"There's nothing you can do or say,
Will help to take your sins away;
In Jesus Christ you must believe,
Pardon and peace you'll then receive.

“You must not think of this cold clay,
But of the soul that’s passed away;
It is so happy, and so blest,
Because with Jesus it doth rest!”

“Thanks be unto God, who giveth
us the victory through our Lord
Jesus Christ.”

Hannah’s object and desire were fully granted, more than one hundred persons having come from the school, the factory, and elsewhere, heard the above lines read. It was a solemn and touching sight to see between thirty and forty factory boys standing around her silent remains while Mr. L—— read to them her dying testimony, and made them kneel down while he poured out his soul to God for them. Many were deeply affected, and there is reason

to hope that God used her testimony in death to the spiritual life of some of those who heard it.

Looking at the spiritual *results* of that heavy affliction which God in His infinite wisdom called this dear child to pass through, we are constrained to apply to her case these words, uttered by our blessed Lord in reference to His beloved Lazarus, "This sickness (was) not unto death, but for the *glory of God*, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby."

In the hope that God will be pleased to make it conducive to this the one unvarying end of all His actings, this record is now published. The eye of the spiritually-minded reader will discern in this narrative an exhibition of the glory of Jesus,

as the One who hath “made *peace* through the blood of His cross.” (Col. i. 20.)

With a conscience burdened under a sense of guilt, the subject of this Memoir fled for refuge to the hope set before her in the Gospel, and “being justified by faith found peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Again—God was glorified in her, in that, amidst her infirmities the power of Christ rested upon her, enabling her to manifest His mind in patient cheerful submission to the Father’s will.

We see also in Hannah’s case a glorious illustration of His working who took upon Him flesh and blood. “that through death He might destroy him that had the power of

death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” (Heb. ii. 14, 15.)

Anxious sinner, Jesus is the same to-day as yesterday: come unto Him! He will give you rest! Tried and afflicted saint, Jesus is the same to-day as yesterday;—“His grace is sufficient for thee”—“Be of good courage”—“No man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.” Only “hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end,” and, whether in life or by death, *thou* shalt glorify God!

APPENDIX.

THE following are selected from various hymns and pieces on scriptural subjects written by dear Hannah.

NIGHT THOUGHTS.

Oh for a robe that I may wear
Before the Lamb,
And praise His name for ever.

Oh for a crown,—I'd cast it down
Before the Lamb,
And sing His name for ever.

Oh for a palm, that I may bear
Before the Lamb,
And chant His name for ever.

Oh for a harp, that I may tune
Before the Lamb,
And praise His name for ever.

Oh for a new and cleansed heart,
 That when I'm calléd to depart,
 I, with the Church may bear my part,
 In praising Him for ever.

1852.

LINES ON THE CLOSE OF THE
 YEAR 1854.

LET me review the year that's pass'd,
 And see that time is flying fast ;
 The days have pass'd, the months, the year,
 And yet how short does it appear.

The many things that have transpired
 Should fill my soul with glowing fire,
 In thankfulness to God above
 For all His tender care and love.

Why do I live ? Oh tell me why ?
 While many thousands round me die ;
 Many that saw last new year's day,
 By death have since been called away.

But some are gone to dwell above
 With Him whose name is ever Love ;
 Before the Lamb they stand in white,
 And sing for ever with delight.

How great His goodness is to me,
 How very thankful should I be ;
 No danger yet has me befell,
 My tongue would of His goodness tell.

Through days and months for fifteen years,
 My life has been His constant care ;
 And every day He thinks of me,
 How truly grateful should I be.

He shines around my path by night,
 And keeps me safe till morning light ;
 From every danger He defends,
 And to my daily wants attends.

Oh, then, I'll ask this heavenly friend,
 To keep me to my journey's end ;
 And when at home with Him, I'll raise
 An everlasting song of praise.

TO HER COUSIN ON HER BAPTISM.

My very dear cousin, with joy I have heard,
 You have followed the precepts laid down
 in God's word ;

And you by the sign of baptism have said,
Henceforth to the world and the flesh you
are dead ;

But in Jesus the Lord you have risen again,
And with Him for ever and ever you'll
reign ;

And may He watch o'er you, and keep you
from sin,

That the prize of your calling in Christ you
may win ;

The spirit of wisdom to you may He give,
That you to the praise of His glory may
live.

And think, oh ! then, think, of that glorious
sight,

When your spirit shall mount to those re-
gions of light,

The saints, and the elders you then shall
behold,

With their robes of pure white and crowns
of pure gold ;

But brighter, far brighter, and raised on the
throne,

You will see that same Jesus, whose name
you now own ;

As you enter yon gates, you will hear the
saints sing—

All glory, and honour, and praise to their
King;

Who hath loved us, and washed us from sin
in His blood,

And hath made us as kings and priests to
our God :

To Him be all glory, dominion, and praise,
For ever and ever, through numberless days !

With much love,

I am,

Your affectionate Cousin,

H. MEARS.

May 10th, 1856.

YE saints with joy shall lift your head,

And be with honour crowned ;

Ye once were prodigals and dead—

Were lost, but now are found.

In heaven's high dwelling-place shall you

Behold the Lamb of God ;

He came on earth His work to do,

He shed His precious blood.

The angels say, Praise ye the Lamb,
 Saints join to praise Him too ;
 Worthy the Lamb that once was slain,
 To Him all honour's due.

The elders tuned their harps and cried,
 Most holy is the Lord ;
 For once He came on earth and died,
 But now He lives with God.

Give God the glory, all ye saints,
 Exalt Him great and small ;
 Soon in His temple we shall wait,
 And crown Him " Lord of all."

INVITATION.

YE empty souls, to Christ draw near,
 Nor doubt your kind reception here ;
 Draw from His fulness, find your rest
 Upon His loving, tender breast.

He loves you, and for you He died,
 For you was scourged and crucified ;
 For you He bore the oppressor's stroke,
 Yet kind was every word He spoko.

He will receive you, if you pray
To Him to take your sins away;
Then He will wash you in His blood,
That pure and ever-cleansing flood.

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