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"Glory to God in the highest, and on Earth peace, good will toward men."

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BIOGRAPHY.

Mrs. HANNAH HOUSMAN.

This amiable woman was a native of Kildermister. Brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, she appears from her diary, to have been under religious impressions at thirteen years of age, and for twenty-four years she walked humbly and closely with God. We advise our juvenile readers especially to notice the following account of her last illness and death, which was drawn up by a person who witnessed her sufferings and her comforts,—accompanied with earnest prayer to God, that like her you may be enabled to devote the flower of your age to him, and that the same patience in tribulation, and the same triumphant faith, and hope, and joy, which she possessed, in her dying moments, may be exemplified by you.

"From the time of her first seizure she was exercised with very violent pains, without any intermission till her death; such as, she would oftensay, she thought she could not have borne: 'But,' said she 'God is very good; verily he is good to me: Through life I have found him a good and gracious God.'

"When recovering from extreme pain she said, 'God is good; I have found him so; and though he slay me, yet I will trust in him. These pains made me love my Lord Jesus the better. O they put me in mind of what he suffered, to purchase salvation for my poor soul! Why for me, Lord! why for me, the greatest of sinners? Why for me, who so long refused the rich offers of thy grace, and the kind invitations of the gospel? How many helps and means have I enjoyed more than many others; yea, above most!—I had a religious father and mother, and I had access to a valuable minister, to whom I could often and freely open my mind. I have lived in a golden age. I have lived in peaceable times, and have enjoyed great advantages and helps for communion with God, and the peace of my own mind; for which I owe my gracious God and Father more praises than words can express. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all, or any of his benefits!'

"When any were weeping and mourning over her, she would say, 'Weep not for me: it is the will of God; therefore be content. If it may be for his honour and glory, he will spare me a little longer; if not, I am wholly resigned to the will of God. I am content to stay here, as long as he has any thing for me to do, or to suffer; and I am willing to go, if it be my Father's good pleasure. Therefore, be content and say 'It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth to him good.'

"To a person who came to see her, she said, 'Cousin, I think I shall die: and now, what a comfort it is, that I am not afraid of death! The blood of Christ cleanses me from all sin. But mistake me not; there must be a life and conversation agreeable to the Gospel, or else our faith in Christ is a dead faith. Secure Christ for your friend; set not your heart on things below; riches and honours, and what the world calls pleasures, are all fading, perishable things.' She then threw out her hand, and said; 'O, if I had thousands and ten thousands of gold and silver lying by me, what could they do for me, now I am dying? Take the advice of a departing friend who wishes you well. Do not set your affections on riches, or on any thing here below. Remember, death will come in a little while, whether you are ready or unready, willing or unwilling: I commend you to God. I hope, in a short time, we shall meet again, in heaven, that place of perfect rest, peace, and happiness.'

"The whole time of her sickness, she was in a cheerful, thankful frame of mind. When she was cold, and had something given her, she often said: 'Blessed be God for all his mercies; and for this comfort in my affliction.' On her attendant's warming a piece of flannel, and putting it round her cold hands, she thanked her for it, and said; 'O, how

many mercies I have! I want for nothing. Here is every thing I can wish for. I can say, I never wanted any good thing. I wish only for a tranquil passage to glory. It was free Grace that plucked me from the very brink of hell; and it is the power of divine Grace, that has supported me through the whole of my life. Hitherto I can say, the Lord is gracious. He has been very merciful to me, in sustaining me under all my trials. The Lord brings affliction, but it is not because he delights to afflict his children: it is at all times for our profit. I can say, it has been good for me to be afflicted; it has been good for me to be afflicted; it has enabled me to discern things, which, when I was in health, I could not perceive. It has made me see more of the vanity and emptiness of this world, and all its delusive pleasures; for, at best, they are but vanity. I can say, from my own experience, I have found them to be so many a time.'

"To her husband, the day before she died, she said; 'My dear, I think I am going apace; and I hope you will be satisfied, because it is the will of God. You have at all times been very loving and good to me; and I thank you for it kindly; and now I desire you freely to resign me to God. If God sees it best to prolong my stay here upon earth, I am willing to stay; or if he sees it best to take me to himself, I am willing to go. I am willing to be and bear what may be most for his glory.'

"The evening before she died, she found death stealing upon her; and, feeling her own pulchritude, said, 'Well, it will be but a little while before my work in this world will be finished. Then I shall have done with prayer. My whole employment in heaven will be praise and love. Here, I love God but faintly, yet, I hope, sincerely; but there, it will be perfectly. I shall behold his face in righteousness; for I am thy servant, Lord! bought with blood, with precious blood. Christ died to purchase the life of my soul. A little while, and then I shall be singing that sweet song,—'Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever.'

"With smiles in her face, and transports of joy, she often said, 'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly! Why tarry the wheels of thy chariot? O blessed convoy! come and fetch my soul, to dwell with God, and Christ, and perfect spirits for ever and ever. When I join that blessed society above, my pleasures will never end. O the glory, the glory that shall be set on the head of faith and love'

"A few minutes before her departure, finding herself going, she desired to be lifted up. When this was done, she cheerfully said, 'Farewell sin! farewell pains!—and so finished her course with joy.'

CHARACTER OF ABRAHAM.

From Dr. A. Clarke's Notes, on the 25th Chapter of Genesis.

The death of Abraham, recorded in this chapter, naturally calls to mind the virtues and excellencies of this extraordinary man. His obedience to the call of God, and faith in his promises, stand supereminent. No wonders, signs, or miraculous displays of the great and terrible God, as Isarel required in Egypt, were used, or were necessary to cause Abraham to believe and obey. He left his own land, not knowing where he was going, or for what purpose God had called him to remove. Exposed to various hardships, in danger of losing his life, and even of witnessing the violation of his wife, he still obeyed and went on. Courageous, humane, and disinterested, he cheerfully risked his life for the welfare of others; and contented with having rescued the captives and avenged the oppressed, he refused to accept even the spoils he had taken from the enemy, whom his skill and valour had vanquished. At the time, he considered the excellency of the power to be of God; and acknowledged this by giving to him the tenth of those spoils, of which, he would reserve nothing for his private use. His obedience to God in offering up his son Isaac, we have already seen and

admired; together with the generosity of his temper, and that respectful delicacy of conduct towards superiors and inferiors, for which he was so peculiarly remarkable; see on chap. xxiii. Without disputing with his Maker, or doubting in his heart, he credited every thing that God had spoken: hence he always walked in a plain way. The authority of God was at all times sufficient for Abraham, he did not weary himself to find reasons for any line of conduct which he knew God had prescribed; it was his duty to obey; the success and the event he left with God. His obedience was as prompt as it was complete—As soon as he heard the voice of God, he guided himself to his work! Not a moment is lost! How rare is such conduct! But should not we do likewise? The present moment and its duties are ours; every past moment was once present; every future one will be present; and, while we are thinking on the subject, the present is past, for life is made up of the past and the present. Are our past moments the cause of deep regret and humiliation! then let us use the present so as not to increase this lamentable cause of our distresses. In other words, let us now believe—love—obey. Regardless of all consequences let us, like Abraham, follow the directions of God's word, and the openings of his providence, and leave all events to Him who doth all things well.

See to what a state of moral excellence the grace of God can exalt a character, when there is simple implicit faith, and prompt obedience! Abraham walked before God, and Abraham was perfect. Perhaps no human being ever exhibited a fairer, fuller portrait of the perfect man, than Abraham. The more I consider the character of this most amiable Patriarch, the more I think the saying of Calmet justifiable. "In the life of Abraham," says he, "we find an Epitome of the whole Law of Nature, of the Written Law, and of the Gospel of Christ. He has manifested in his own person those virtues, for which reason and philosophy could scarcely find out names, when striving to sketch the character of their sophist, wise, or perfect man. St. Ambrose very properly observes, that 'Philosophy itself, could not equal in its descriptions and wishes, what was exemplified by this great man, in the whole of his conduct.' *Magnus plane vir, quem volis suis philosophia non potuit æquare; denique minus est quod illa finit, quam quod ille gessit.* The Law which God gave to Moses, and in which he has proposed the great duties of the law of nature, seems to be a copy of the life of Abraham. This Patriarch, without being under the law, has performed the most essential duties it requires; and as to the GOSPEL, its grand object was that on which he had fixed his eye; that Jesus whose day he rejoiced to see; and as to its spirit and design, they were wondrously exemplified in that faith which was imputed to him for righteousness; receiving that grace which conformed his whole heart and life to the will of his Maker, and enabled him to persevere unto death. 'Abraham,' says the writer of Ecclesiasticks, xlv. 20, &c. 'was a great father of many people: in glory was there none like unto him; who kept the Law of the Most High, and was in covenant with him: he established the covenant in his flesh, and when he was tried he was found faithful.'—See Calmet.

As a son, as a husband, as a father, as a neighbour, as a sovereign, and, above all, as a man of God, he stands unrivalled; so that under the most exalted and perfect of all dispensations, the gospel of Jesus Christ, he is proposed and recommended as the *rule and pattern*, according to which, the faith, obedience, and perseverance of the followers of the Messiah are to be formed. Reader, while you admire the man, do not forget the God that made him so great, so good, and so useful—even Abraham had nothing but what he had received: from the free and unmerited mercy of God proceeded all his excellencies; but he was a work together with God and therefore did not receive the grace of God in vain. Go thou, believe, love, obey, and persevere in like manner.