

**A JOURNAL OF THE LIFE,
TRAVELS, LABOURS, AND
RELIGIOUS EXERCISES OF ISAAC
MARTIN, LATE OF RAHWAY, IN
EAST JERSEY, DECEASED**

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A Journal of the Life, Travels, Labours, and Religious Exercises of Isaac Martin, Late of Rahway, in East Jersey, Deceased by Isaac Martin

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ISAAC MARTIN

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William Berrys book

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UNDER an apprehension of religious duty, I am induced to record some occurrences of my life, and to declare of the Lord's dealings with me from my young and tender years. Having, through Divine mercy, experienced preservation through many difficulties and trials, I have a hope that the same arm of power will sustain me through the various probations that may yet be my lot, in this vale of tears.—Being now in the thirty-fourth year of my age, I begin this work.

I was born in New York, the 16th of the 1st month, 1758; and was carefully educated in the profession of Truth, as held by the people called Quakers. My dear father, Isaac Martin, was an upright, honest Friend; one that feared God, and loved the Truth. Being much concerned on his children's account that they might have the Lord for their portion, he watched over us for our good,—often caused us to read the holy scriptures, and other good books, and took us to religious meetings. He had a dispensation of the gospel ministry committed to him, and hath left a good savour behind him. In his last illness, he expressed that death was no terror to him; and there is cause to believe that he is admitted among the

faithful followers of the Lamb, in that "city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

Having found much benefit from a religious education, I desire that parents may consider the great importance of their station, and watch over those committed to their care, as such who must give an account, in an awful season. May they endeavour to cultivate every tender sensation that may appear in their offspring, arising from a conviction of their understandings, by the power of Truth.

When I was about eight years old, I felt the reproofs of instruction, to the tendering of my heart. Being tempted to take a nut out of a barrel, at a neighbour's house, when reaching after it, I was secretly smitten with a conviction that it was wrong; so that I durst not take it. A clearer manifestation of the Divine witness, operating in my heart, I have no recollection of since! Having related the circumstance in the family, my dear father, like a tender parent, deeply concerned for my present and future welfare, informed me what it was,—even the Spirit of Truth, that had thus met with, and reproved me; and directed me always to take heed unto it.

About the ninth and tenth years of my age, the Lord was pleased to visit me frequently as I sat in meetings; sometimes immediately by his own holy spirit, and, at other times, through instruments, and my heart was broken and contrited. I used often to read Friends' books, particularly their dying sayings, from which I received much instruction; being animated, at times, with desires to follow the examples of those worthies; especially of children near my own age, whose lives were pious and their end happy. These accounts being recorded for the benefit of pos-

terity, the good remembrancer,—the holy spirit was near, to excite me to examine myself, in order that I might see whether I was not short of them in purity; and also to animate me to a watchful, circumspect walking.

Thus, the great Shepherd extends the crook of his love to his children, in their infant years, when, like Samuel, they are not yet acquainted with the voice of the Lord.

Between this and the sixteenth year of my age, I was too much prone to levity; yet was, at times, met with, by my inward Teacher, and cries begotten in me after him. Pride, and a hasty temper, would at times make some appearance in me; and once or twice, some evil expressions dropped from my lips; which were the occasion of deep sorrow. Several other instances also occurred, wherein I erred, and went astray from the law of the Lord written in my heart—But as I turned to him, and found a place of repentance, I felt a hope of his forgiveness.

About this time, the Lord Almighty, in the riches of his love to me, a poor, unworthy creature, was graciously pleased to visit my soul, and often to break in upon me, in a powerful manner; whereby my heart was greatly tendered and broken before him. Blessed be his holy name. He allured me, and brought me into the wilderness; then was I often led into solitary places, to pour out my prayers before him. Afterwards he gave me to taste of the dainties of his table, and furnished my soul from day to day with the incomes of his heavenly love. He then plainly showed me, that if I would retain those seasons of spiritual consolation, with which he favoured me, I must break off associating with my youthful companions in va-

nity; otherwise I could not enjoy those blessed times of refreshment. And I may say, with the apostle, I consulted not with flesh and blood, but gave up to the Divine requiring. Frequently since, has my soul blessed the Lord my God for pointing out this path to me, and enabling me to walk therein. For we had begun to corrupt one another, with foolish talking and jesting;—customs too much indulged in by young people, although the Holy Spirit is grieved thereby.

Divers of my companions were Friends' children; and although brought up in the form, were yet too much unacquainted with the power of godliness. Some of them afterwards giving way, little by little, and not minding the day of small things, became captivated with divers foolish and hurtful lusts; and by associating with the people of the world, became leavened into its nature. Thus, gradually departing from the plain dress and manners, in which they had been educated, they indulged themselves in following the vain fashions of a wicked world; whereby a door was opened for associating with persons of irreligious lives, which proved a snare to them.

Simplicity and plainness of dress and language, have often been as a hedge of preservation from much evil,—until the day of God's salvation hath dawned upon the understanding, and brought the mind into covenant with him.

As I yielded obedience to the discoveries of Divine Light, a holy care was felt, that I might be preserved within the bounds and limitations of the pure Truth. Thus, having tasted of the good word of life, and in measure been made partaker of the powers of the world to come, a great fear and care possessed my heart, lest I should fall away, and lose the dew of my

youth. Finding a holy warfare begun in me, I was concerned that it might be carried on; and having felt the reproofs of the Lord for transgression, I saw the necessity of watching against the first motions of sin. But I was assaulted with many temptations, and besetments; yet the Lord was gracious unto me, and I was often drawn into quiet retirement, that I might wait upon him for the renewal of my strength; and under these exercises and conflicts my tears were often strewed in solitary places.

About the eighteenth year of my age, my health gradually declined for several months, so that many thought I was going into a consumption. In which time, the Lord was very gracious to me, and took away the fear of death, so that reflections thereon were pleasant to me. Being at this time apprentice to a man who was not in profession with Friends, I found great difficulties and trials among the workmen, who were men of wicked lives, and much given to the use of strong drink; but my cries were to the Lord for preservation, who mercifully preserved me from being infected with their evil conduct.

A concern had been increasingly with me for some time, to request liberty of my master to attend week-day meetings, and I felt a willingness to serve him after the expiration of my apprenticeship, as long as would be equal to the time I should occupy in attending them. At a certain time, when under an exercise to go to a week-day meeting, there came a person to the shop on business with my master, and the time of the meeting being near at hand, I believed it my duty to request liberty to go; yet was unwilling to break in upon their conversation. But the man staying until it was meeting time, I turned my mind

inward, and besought the Lord, who strengthened me to mention my desire, which I did, and it was granted.

About this time disturbances broke out between England and America, and great numbers moved out of the city. Business of course became dull, and my health being much impaired, my master gave me liberty to go to a relation's, in the country. It being a time of great commotion, the Lord showed me, that I must take no part in setting up, or pulling down the powers of the earth,—not even to contribute thereto, by any part of my words or actions. When the minds of many appeared unstable as water, and great distress and confusion prevailed, in various places, I found it best for me to have but little to say about state affairs. But while the potsherds of the earth were dashing against one another, I felt resigned to the Lord, who preserved me through all. One instance of Divine kindness, which I witnessed, among others, was as follows: Being at my relation's, in the country, there came a party of Hessians, who, having set fire to a neighbouring house, belonging to a member of Congress,—came to ours, and appeared very violent. One of them presented a gun to one of my cousins; and it appeared as though they would have done mischief. We were in great surprise, not knowing to what lengths they might go; but in the height of our anxiety, I took up a bible, and unexpectedly opened it at a passage which was very suitable to our present condition. My fears were immediately dispelled, and a calmness came over my mind, so that I had no more fear of them, than if they had been children. Soon after this, they went away without doing any injury.