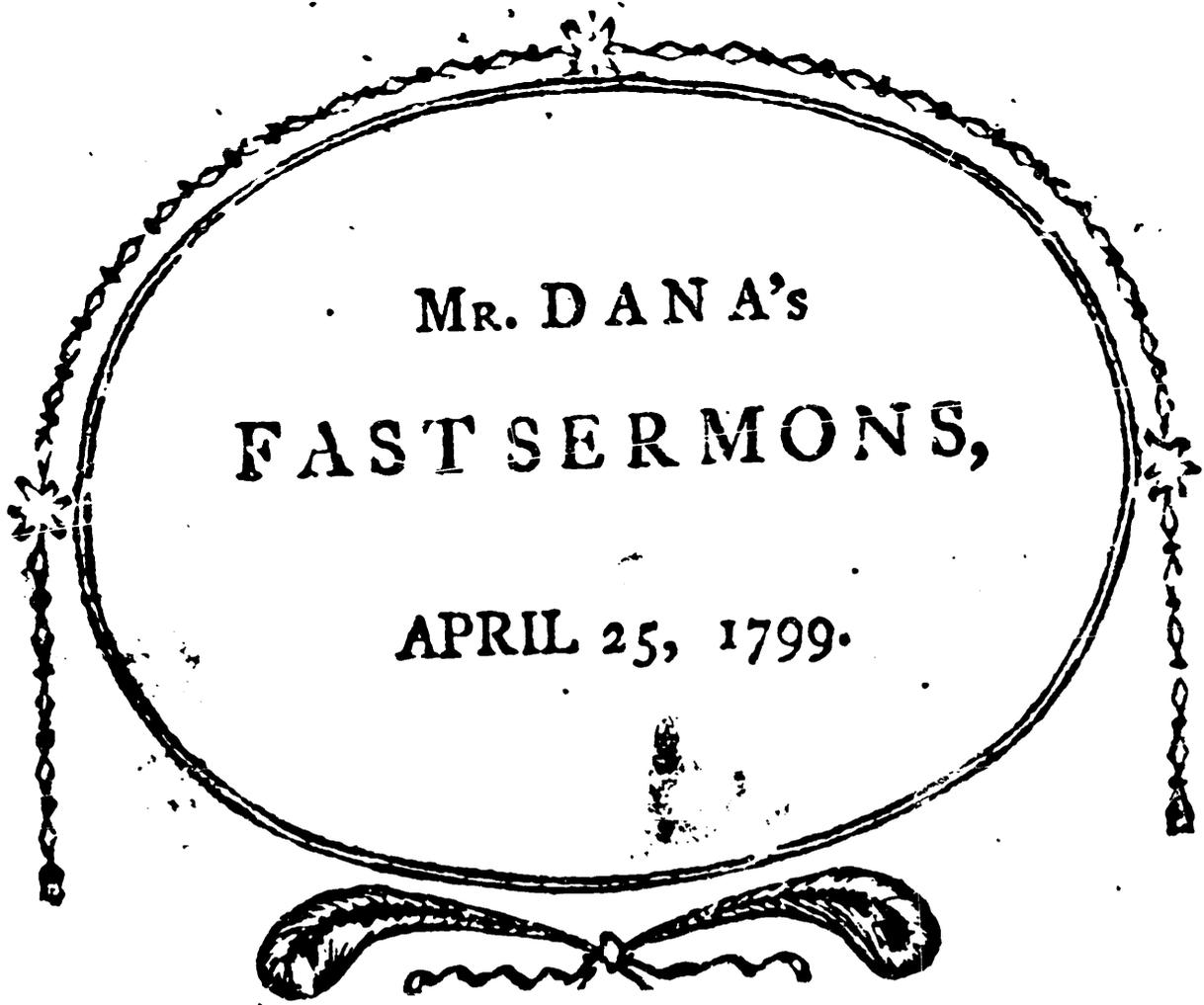


*Mr. Dana's Sermon*  
*from his collection*  
*1799*



MR. DANA'S  
FAST SERMONS,

APRIL 25, 1799.

TWO  
S E R M O N S,

DELIVERED

APRIL 25, 1799:

THE DAY RECOMMENDED BY

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

FOR NATIONAL

HUMILIATION, FASTING AND PRAYER.



By DANIEL DANA, A. M.

PASTOR OF A CHURCH IN NEWBURYPORT.



*PUBLISHED BY DESIRE.*

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## Advertisement.

TO those who heard these Discourses, and who have requested their publication, the author would suggest that, as he was necessitated by the feeble state of his eyes, to deliver them from very imperfect notes, it has been impossible to recollect, in every instance, the precise expressions originally used. The sentiments, he believes, are faithfully retained, and here presented with no material alteration, except the insertion of a few additional sentences.

The circumstance first alluded to, having much retarded his progress in transcribing, must plead his apology for the long delay of the publication.

PSALM CVI — PART OF VERSE 24.

—THEY DESPISED THE PLEASANT LAND.—

**I**F there be a truth which peculiarly claims to be considered as a first principle; a truth confirmed beyond all question, by the concurrent testimony of observation and experience, of profane history and the word of God, it is this; that mankind are, in general respects, the same in every age. The same melancholy proofs of degeneracy, the same corrupt propensities, appetites, passions, pursuits and practices, only varied by a few accidental and less important shades of difference, have marked the character of our apostate race, in every period of time, and in every nation of the earth. Hence the history of a single nation may be considered as in some sense the history of human nature. Such a history we have, in the annals which the scripture furnishes us, of the nation of the Jews. For the portrait of this people at full length, we must be indebted to the abundant materials which are scattered through various parts of the sacred volume. Their moral picture in miniature, exhibiting the masterly and inimitable touches of the pencil of Inspiration, is given in the psalm before us. One of its features, peculiarly prominent and conspicuous, and no less black and odious, is presented in the text: *their contempt of the pleasant land*, (or, as some Commentators render it, *the land of desire*) which a gracious God had promised as their possession and resting-place. The part of their history to which the description re-

cularly refers, is generally supposed to be that recorded at the beginning of the fourteenth chapter of Numbers. There we are informed that the unfavourable and insidious report of the returning spies, so disheartened, and at the same time incensed the people, that they not only uttered unfeeling complaints against their divinely constituted guides, blasphemous reflections on Jehovah himself, and impious wishes that they had died in the wilderness, or in Egypt, but were on the point of choosing a captain, and basely returning to the land of their bondage and misery. Thus, by their impatience, their discontent, their repining, their sordid preference of their former servitude, their pusillanimous refusal to encounter a few difficulties and dangers, in order to possess themselves of the good land before them, they manifested their *contempt* of it: a contempt which was peculiarly impious and inexcusable, as it involved in it a disbelief and distrust of their Almighty Guardian and Benefactor, who had given them the most ample assurances of its excellence; and not only so, but had most solemnly promised that, in despite of every obstacle and enemy, they should be put in possession of it.

THE Apostle to the Corinthians, having in his eye this very instance, in connection with others, of the criminal conduct of the Israelitish nation, together with those awful judgments and calamities by which they were punished, expressly declares, that *all these things happened unto them for ensamples*; and adds, *they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come*. This is my warrant for inviting your thoughts, on this solemn occasion, to the passage just recited, and for endeavouring to suggest from it some things applicable to the present state of our country. Bear with me then, my brethren, and indulge me a candid attention, while I attempt to set before you some considerations calculated for general instruction, warning and humiliation.

My design is

I. To mention some things which may naturally be viewed as *constituting* a land *pleasant* and *desirable*.

II. To point out some *symptoms* and *instances* of the sin reprehended in the text : the sin of *despising* or *undervaluing* a pleasant land : and

III. To offer a few remarks on the guilt and danger of a people thus chargeable.

UNDER the former head, let me remark,

IN the first place, that there are certain *physical causes* the existence and cooperation of which seem conducive, and in a degree necessary, to the happiness of a country and its inhabitants.—A *rich* and *fertile soil*, for instance ; a soil producing a supply of the conveniences and comforts of life in abundance, and without difficulty or excessive labor, is what all must acknowledge to be desirable. These things indeed are not the chief goods. Possessed and enjoyed in ever so great abundance, they cannot be considered as constituting, in the best sense, the happiness either of individuals or of nations. Nay more, they are but too apt to be misimproved to pride, sloth, sensuality and neglect of religion. But in themselves they are good. And wherever granted, they ought to be acknowledged as tokens of the kindness and indulgence of Heaven. Hence the land which God designed for his ancient people, and to which he finally introduced them, is so often described as “ a land flowing with milk and honey ;” abounding not only in the necessaries, but the delectable things of life. And this circumstance is represented as one among many instances of the peculiar favour of their divine Patron and Benefactor.

A *temperate climate* and *salubrious air*, such as are removed from the opposite extremes of heat and cold, and thus promotive of comfort and health, are likewise circumstances of favour not unworthy of notice. To be subjected neither to the dire inclemencies of the polar regions, nor to the fierce beams of a vertical sun, destroying the energies both of the body and the mind, is surely a happy exemption. And if health be

justly esteemed the first of temporal blessings, the country whose inhabitants are ordinarily secure from the visitations of the *pestilence, walking in darkness, and waisting at noon-day*, is a country highly privileged.

A GENERAL course of *external prosperity* must be acknowledged as one of those things which contribute to the happiness of a country and a people. When agriculture, that prime source of national wealth, flourishes; when the arts of life are cultivated with vigor and success; when the labouring and the poorer part of the community are supported with ease; when the spirit of industry, invention and enterprize meets its proper encouragement and reward; when commerce flows regular and unobstructed in its legitimate channels, and the winds of heaven waft to our shores the productions of every clime—these surely are circumstances of favor which demand a grateful notice and acknowledgment.

A LAND of *peace* is a highly favoured land indeed. And happy is that nation which, in its connections and intercourse with others, is led to adopt a policy so wise and pure, and to pursue a conduct so impartial and unexceptionable, so firm and independent, as are best calculated to secure, and maintain on a solid and permanent basis, the invaluable blessing. Invaluable it appears indeed, when we contemplate, but for a moment, the multiplied evils and calamities of war; what awful devastations it makes in the moral, as well as the social system, and how pestilential is its influence on the virtue and happiness of individuals, families and whole communities.

LIBERTY is one of the first and most important of temporal blessings. Although its nature has been too much misunderstood and misrepresented; although its sacred name has too often been prostituted and profaned; and, by its professed advocates and devotees, abused as an instrument to accomplish designs subversive of social order, virtue and happiness, and even of real liberty itself; still let us not be prevented from

bestowing on this precious gift of Heaven to man, its due praise. We in this land, my brethren, have perhaps been too little in the habit of realizing what a privilege it is to be free. The blessing is here so common and so cheap, that it gains but little attention. But could we take a near view of those ill-fated countries where nothing comparatively is seen or felt but the hard, oppressive, all-grasping hand of despotic power : “ where (to borrow the language of another) “ every heart is depressed by fear, where mankind “ dare not assume their natural characters, where the “ free spirit must crouch to the slave in office, where “ genius must repress her effusions, or, like the Egyptian worshippers, offer them in sacrifice to the *calves* “ *of power* ; and where the human mind, always in “ shackles, shrinks from every generous effort ;” we should be taught another lesson, and learn very differently to appreciate the blessing of liberty.

In this connection, the importance of a *good government* to the well-being of a community appears conspicuous and incontestible. The idea of those modern reformers who consider the attainment of unqualified, unrestrained *liberty*, and of absolute, universal *equality*, as either possible or desirable, is one of the wildest chimeras that ever found place in the human mind. That is true liberty, and that alone, which is exercised, without infringing the rights of others. Nay more, the simple idea of liberty, whether of action or enjoyment, as belonging to one individual, implies, as it respects all the other members of the same community, such correspondent obligations and restraints as may efficaciously prevent their obstructing the exercise of this liberty. Hence the necessity of government to the order, peace, well-being and even to the existence of society. And truly favoured is that people whose constitutions of government, resulting from the collected wisdom, deliberation and consent of the community, are calculated to promote the benefit of all its

parts; whose laws, the expression of the general will, have for their object the general good; and whose magistrates, elevated to office by the free suffrages of their fellow-citizens, subject, while in power, to the same restrictions which they impose on others, and reverting, at stated periods, to the level from which they rose, are prompted to fidelity, at once by the sympathies of humanity, the sense of personal interest, and the injunctions of duty. Such a people enjoy all the equality of which human nature, in its present state, is capable. They enjoy a *genuine and real liberty*; a liberty such as a sober man would desire; a liberty safe, because restrained and guarded, and the more precious because chastened and regulated.

THE *general diffusion of knowledge* is likewise a great blessing to a people. It is a happy country, in which the sources of instruction are multiplied, its avenues of easy and general access; its communications frequent, rapid and extensive. These things have an intimate and indissoluble connection with all the dearest interests of society and of human nature. And in a free government, they are of special importance. For should so great a blessing as this fall to the lot of an ignorant people, which is not ordinarily to be expected, its continuance among them must be short. The management of their public concerns will naturally fall into the hands of the assuming, the ambitious, the selfish, the intriguing and unprincipled. Thus their liberties and interests will of course be sacrificed in one way or other; and their government either erect itself into a despotism, or be lost in anarchy, or (what is most probable) degenerate into an awful compound of oppression, rapacity, confusion and misery. Above all is knowledge important to a people, considered in its reference to the interests of piety among them.

This naturally leads me to observe, that the *light of the gospel* and the *institutions of the Christian religion* constitute preeminently the desirableness of a land, and the happiness of a people. It was the distinguishing

privilege and chief glory of the Jewish nation, that *unto them were committed the oracles of God.\** He sheweth, says the Psalmist, *his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation. Praise ye the Lord.†* The gospel, never let it be forgotten, is the best and most invaluable gift of Heaven to man. Without this, what are all the bounties of Providence, though scattered in ever so rich profusion around us. How dismal and comfortless those regions of the globe which have never yet been blest by the cheering influences of the gospel! And what a picture of every thing horrid to the eye and sickening to the heart is exhibited where this heavenly visitant has been polluted by the hand of sacrilege, and trampled under the foot of infidel and impious philosophy! Surely the people who are blest with the light and privileges of the religion of Jesus, who enjoy the Sabbaths of their God, who may, without danger or molestation, support his ordinances, maintain his worship and attend the instructions of his sanctuary, are a people highly favoured: they have reason, whatever may be their circumstances in other respects, gratefully to acknowledge that *the lines are fallen to them in pleasant places: that they have a goodly heritage.*

LET me only add, that the land and nation toward which peculiar tokens of a *gracious divine interposition and guardianship* have been manifested, may be justly considered as distinguishingly favoured and happy. This likewise was eminently the privilege and felicity of the Jewish nation. God was their God in a peculiar sense, and they his covenanted people. He redeemed them from Egypt, he sustained, guided and protected them during their tedious journey through the wilderness to Canaan, and vouchsafed them, after their introduction to that delightful country, many signal tokens of his peculiar favour. Their very land was styled *a land which the Lord their God cared for:—his eyes were always upon it, from the beginning of the year even*

\* Rom. ix. 5.

† Ps. cxviii. 19, 20.

*unto the end of the year.\** In such a contemplation, who does not feel ready to exclaim with Moses : *Happy art thou, O Israel ; who is like unto thee, a people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency !†*—And who would not add with David, *Happy is that people that is in such a case ; yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord.‡*

HAVING thus brought up to view some principal particulars which constitute the happiness of a country, we proceed,

IN the SECOND place, to enquire in what cases such a country is undervalued or despised : or what are some of the chief instances and indications of a people's being chargeable with this sin.

AND doubtless, this is in a degree the case, when a nation situated and circumstanced as we have been describing, do not realize themselves to be highly and distinguishingly privileged. Surely such a condition is a signally favoured condition. The greatness and value of such blessings exceed all calculation. Have they been possessed long, and enjoyed with little interruption ? By these circumstances the favor, far from being diminished, is greatly enhanced. Apt as we may be, on such an account, to think these blessings common, and therefore less worthy of acknowledgment, they are not common to all. Thousands and millions of our race are strangers to them. And if, where they are bestowed, they are treated with cold inattention and indifference ; if a people thus distinguished have no hearts to feel and confess a peculiarly favoured situation, nor to cherish a tender sensibility to divine goodness ; if, through the very commonness and profusion of these blessings, the hand of the Giver is unnoticed ; or if, on the other hand, the sense of numerous, great and long continued benefits is absorbed by that of a few slight and temporary inconveniences and sufferings ; these things afford but too

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\* Deut. xi. 12.

† Deut. xxxiii. 29.

‡ Pl. cxliv. 15.

certain evidence of the criminal disposition reprobated in the text.

But the case becomes still stronger, when in addition to what has been just described, there prevails among such a people, a spirit of positive dissatisfaction and complaint. This is a most obvious and convincing proof that their privileges are grossly undervalued. That a people surrounded with every thing tending to make them happy, every thing calculated to impress a sense of obligation and awaken sentiments of gratitude, should be thus chargeable, may appear to a candid mind, which trusts rather to its own generous presumptions, than to an observation of what actually passes in the world, scarcely to be believed. But alas! to the disgrace of human nature it has been found, that in such a soil the noxious weeds of discontent, complaint and insubordination are peculiarly apt to spring. The Jewish government, though a Theocracy, could not satisfy an unreasonable people. Their whole journey to the land of promise, so replete with testimonials of the divine regard and compassion, was scarcely less replete with instances of complaint on their part against their leaders and against their God. *They murmured in their tents, says the context. They envied Moses also in the camp, and Aaron the saint of the Lord* There were ambitious and disorganizing spirits among them, who criminated the management of their concerns, and pretending an extreme tenderness and veneration for the rights of the people, clamoured against their rulers, represented them as regardless of their liberties and interests, as arrogantly assuming and tyrannically exercising powers to which they had no claim, and as wishing to convert their fellow-citizens who were as good as themselves, into slaves and beasts of burden; mere passive instruments of their own selfishness, pride and aggrandizement.\* And these arts, although they finally issued in tremendous ruin, both to the credulous multitude and their fac-

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\* Vid. Numb. xvi.

tious leaders, were for a time but too successful. With this striking example in our view, my brethren, we need not wonder to find the richest privileges a nation can enjoy opposing no effectual preventives to complaint and dissatisfaction. We need not wonder to find the wisest civil constitutions attacked, the purest public characters slandered, the most salutary laws opposed, pecuniary burdens the most indispensable, represented as superfluous and oppressive, and the restless spirit of faction attempting to persuade the most free and favoured people that they are miserable slaves. But if these things are not surprizing, they are not the less to be lamented.

MAY I not add, in the third place, that when a people are not willing to make those sacrifices and encounter those difficulties which are necessary in order to possess and maintain such privileges and blessings as we have described, this is an argument that they undervalue and comparatively despise them. It was this circumstance chiefly, as we have seen, which fixed on the Israelites the stigma of *despising the pleasant land*. They did not think it worth a bold and strenuous effort. They did not prize it highly enough to be willing to encounter the difficulty and hazard necessary in order to possess it. They gave too easy credit to the formidable and extravagant accounts of some of the spies concerning the enemies they had to oppose; while others, equally informed, possessing far superior claims to their confidence, and who, with a truly pious, noble and disinterested zeal, inculcated very different sentiments, were not only disregarded, but on the point of falling sacrifices to popular fury. At the bottom of all this, there was a secret hankering after the good living of Egypt; a base and unnatural preference in favour of that region of tyranny and heathenism, and a willingness to submit to its oppressions and miseries, rather than encounter some temporary trials and dangers, for the fair land of promise.

DOES it not appear in some measure a uniform ap-

pointment of Providence, that blessings highly important and valuable are to be acquired and maintained only through the medium of difficulty, danger and self-denial? Nor do we ordinarily reluct at these, when the value and importance of the object to which they lead, are suitably appreciated and realized. And why should nations, more than individuals, expect exemption from so wise and reasonable an appointment? As long as mankind continue to be what they are; as long as ambition, selfishness, rapacity and the spirit of lawless encroachment on the rights of others, are among the favourite and ruling passions of the human bosom, so long must nations expect to defend their dearest, their most essential interests at the expense of many temporary and less important inconveniences and trials. And when such sacrifices in such a cause are obviously called for, a people possessed of privileges worth defending, and suitably awake to their value, will not pause and ponder and hesitate whether they shall boldly defend them or not. When their all is at stake, they will not spend time in coldly calculating how much shall be employed for its security. They will not listen to the suggestions of those who, winking out of sight the importance of the object, descant on nothing but burdens and dangers, difficulties and impossibilities. Still less will they be induced to purchase a deceitful and short-lived security from the encroachments of foreign usurpation, by tamely submitting to its mercy, however imperious its demands, however specious its arts, however fair its promises.

FOURTHLY, when a people can consent to commit their national privileges and blessings to unnecessary risk and hazard, it argues that they are far from a just appreciation of them. Whatever we highly and tenderly prize, we are apt to guard with a scrupulous vigilance; and the apprehension of its loss or injury will deter us from approaching even the confines of danger. There is, at the same time, a secret propensity in the human mind, which is continually prompt-

ing men to new experiments in quest of a happiness not yet realized, and often such as Heaven has not designed for mortals. Something of this kind seems visible in the first fatal apostacy. And it is not one of the least striking traits in the character of our fallen nature. Discontented with their present state, fastidiously undervaluing the blessings they possess, flattered with the enchanting prospect of a perfection of happiness yet unattained, and in reality unattainable, seduced by some tempter to disregard the injunctions of heaven, and overleap the restraints of duty, mankind are continually plunging into crimes and calamities. Alas! why should a people blest with a rich fulness of what is calculated to make them happy, turn away in disgust from what they have, and sigh after what they have not—and cannot have, until the nature of man be altered, or the laws of Heaven reversed? Why should civil constitutions and establishments, which have resulted from the deliberations of wisdom, and stood the test of experience, be exposed and endangered by endless attempts at reformation and revolution? Why, possessed of a real and rational freedom, should men weary themselves in the fruitless, hopeless pursuit of a perfection of liberty which never had an existence, but in the prolific imagination of the enthusiast; a liberty wholly exclusive of restraint; a liberty which both reason and dreadful experiment pronounce unattainable, and which, even if it could be attained, would prove equally hostile to the improvement and the happiness of man. And surely, peace is a blessing far too precious to be sported with. Purchased indeed, at the price of national sovereignty, or essential interests, it is bought too dearly. But almost every sacrifice short of this, a truly wise and understanding people will be disposed to make. And far from thoughtlessly squandering away the blessing, far from giving it up on account of every offence or injury, they will seek its preservation with a kind of unconquerable perseverance; nor abandon the pursuit, but

in consequence of the most obvious and pressing necessity. Nor will they neglect to guard themselves against those internal and secret arts by which unoffending and peaceably disposed nations have sometimes been unwarily plunged into the calamities of war. Above all, ought the *religious* interests and blessings which a people enjoy, to be guarded with the most sacred care. Every degree of licentiousness in sentiment and practice, every approach to infidelity, every thing, in short, which tends to undermine or wrest from them their religion, should be most cautiously avoided. In the Psalm to which we are indebted for the text, it is represented as one of the principal sins of God's ancient people, that *they mingled among the heathen; that they learned their works, and served their idols; which were a snare unto them.\** Does not this circumstance naturally suggest the enquiry, whether it is in character, whether it is consistent with a due regard to their religion, for a people professing Christianity to form unnecessarily such close and intimate connections, either public or private, with infidel and atheistical nations (if such nations there be) as tend directly to the introduction and diffusion among themselves of their detestable principles?

LET me observe, in the fifth place, that the prevalence of levity and inattention to religion among a people blessed with the light of the gospel, and the sacred institutions of Christianity, is a sad, but too sure a proof that their invaluable privileges are despised. "A land of levity is a land of guilt." Such a spirit is, in every view, incompatible with a due sense of such blessings. Bestowed as they are, on creatures unworthy and ill-deserving, their proper effect is to impress a deep and humbling sense of obligation, and to excite emotions of tender and lively gratitude. And when it is recollected that for such distinguishing mercy, an awful, a tremendous account must be rea-

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\* Verses 35 and 36.

dered hereafter, what heart, not wholly insensible, will not be solemnized and penetrated to its very centre? What is the great design on which we are visited by the glorious gospel, revealing such mysteries of grace, and proposing such a fulness of blessings, but that we may cordially entertain it, credit its doctrines, comply with its proposals, imbibe and exhibit its spirit, and resign ourselves to its unerring guidance? How can we but be inexcusably regardless of JEHOVAH'S UNSPEAKABLE GIFT, and grossly insensible to its value, if we do not believingly accept and thankfully embrace it? Why are we permitted to enjoy the holy sabbaths and gracious institutions of our Redeeming God, the sacred rights of conscience and the unmolested liberty of divine worship, but that we may obediently improve these high privileges, and walk as becomes a *holy nation, a peculiar people*? And do not our inestimable civil establishments, which secure to us the free and peaceable enjoyment of these blessings; do not all the common mercies, all the distinguishing favours and all the special interpositions of Providence point us to the same object?

FINALLY, if the observations just made are true, all must see that the diffusion and triumph of positive infidelity and wickedness among such a favoured people, afford still more ample and melancholy evidence on the same subject. The nation thus chargeable bears in its very face unequivocal and awful demonstration of its guilt. If the rich bounties of Providence, instead of being obediently improved to the honor of the Giver, are made the instruments and occasions of pride, sloth, intemperance and impurity; if general prosperity excites and cherishes a spirit of general dissipation, luxury and extravagance, of selfishness and avarice, of unjust speculation and exorbitant gain; if, with the conveniences and delights of elder countries, are imported and diffused their fantastic modes of living, their destructive pleasures and detestable vices; if civil and religious freedom is abused as a cloak of

licentiousness ; if it is perverted into an engine for the propagation of principles subversive of the very foundations of all government, morality and religion ; if profane ridicule and blasphemous contempt be poured on the pure and saving truths, the holy and benign institutions of the gospel—these are black and awful symptoms of the crime reprobated in the text. These are a cloud of witnesses which incontestibly prove and loudly proclaim a nation chargeable with undervaluing and despising its rich inheritance of privileges. What remains then is,

THIRDLY, to offer a few remarks on the guilt and danger of such a people.

A MOMENTARY contemplation of their state and character must convince us that they are chargeable with a signal *ingratitude*. What more could be done for a people thus eminently distinguished?—Mercy of every kind pouring in upon them from every quarter, and, in its way, overpassing immense and numberless obstacles of guilt and ill-desert. What vast and innumerable obligations lie upon them then, to acknowledge and to prize the peculiar favor they enjoy, to *stand fast* in the precious liberties they possess, and maintain them at every hazard, to make a humble, obedient and fruitful improvement of so fair an inheritance, and above all, to *beware* (agreeably to that solemn and affecting monition of the Most High to his people\*) *lest when they have eaten and are full, and have built goodly houses, and have dwelt therein ; and when their herds and their flocks multiply, and their silver and their gold is multiplied, and all that they have is multiplied ; then their heart be lifted up, and they forget the Lord their God.*

IN such a case, ingratitude is plainly chargeable. But what if, in addition to this, there be a spirit of positive discontent with the kindest allotments of Providence ; a disposition to murmur and complain amid numberless reasons for thankfulness ; to diminish and underrate blessings of the greatest value and

importance ; to magnify every undesirable circumstance attending them ; to trifle with, and squander them away, as though they were not worth the having ; or (what is much the same in effect) grudgingly to refuse every exertion and sacrifice necessary to their defence ? What if neither judgments can awaken, nor mercies melt, nor the sweet voice of divine compassion in the gospel, allure such a people to a sense of their duty ? What if the richest blessings which Heaven itself can bestow, are contemptuously trampled on ; or, with a desperate hardness, perverted to licentiousness and vice ? Must not the coldest insensibility be theirs ? Must they not be lost, in a woful degree, to every ingenuous emotion and every grateful sentiment of the human bosom ?

NOR is the *baseness* and *servility* of such a spirit less conspicuous than its black ingratitude. Who can contemplate without a mixture of pity, contempt and detestation the conduct of the ancient Israelites, redeemed as they were, by the special interposition of Jehovah, from a distressing and ignominious servitude, blest in their journey with his peculiar presence, direction and guardianship, yet looking back with “longing, lingering” eyes on *Egypt*, and in recollection of its *fish*, its *cucumbers*, its *melons*, its *leeks*, its *onions*, and its *garlick*, loathing the bread of heaven, *despising the pleasant land* in which they were to have no master but God himself, and even wishing to return to their former slavery ? But, my brethren, the same perverse and pitiful part is but acted over again by a people who, blest with such rich privileges as we have described, have yet no heart to prize them, no spirit to defend them, no disposition thankfully to improve them—above all, if the imaginary felicity of other countries, infinitely less favoured than their own, is openly extolled and secretly coveted. Such a people are emphatically *a people of no understanding*. They are grossly unfaithful to themselves. They manifest a signal insensibility to their interests as well as to their obliga-

tions and duties: and practically *judge themselves unworthy* of the favours they enjoy—or rather, possess without enjoying. Their vitiated palate turns in disgust from the choicest bounties of Heaven, and fastens on the dregs and refuse of creation. Their abject and degenerate spirit incapacitates them for every thing but slavery and vice, wretchedness and ruin.

NAY more, such a spirit and conduct bear the stamp of *impiety*. A people of this character, like profane Esau, are guilty of *despising their birth-right*, and are prepared to barter it away. He who bestows such a liberal inheritance of blessings, most justly requires and expects, that it be highly prized, that it be tenaciously preserved and fruitfully improved. The voice of his authority unites with the voice of his mercy, in calling to this. And a contrary spirit, while it argues a base ingratitude, implies likewise disobedience, disregard and irreverence toward the Sovereign Majesty of heaven and earth. In this point of view, *contempt of the pleasant land* which God has given us, appears virtually contempt of the Giver. And if this is obviously in a degree the case, as it respects our political privileges and providential mercies, we are solemnly warned, by the highest authority, that it is emphatically so, in respect to a preached gospel. *He that despiseth you, says the Eternal Son of God, to its commissioned ministers, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth Him that sent me.\**

WHAT can be more evident than that a people thus guilty are in imminent *danger of having their privileges wrested from them*? Insensible to their value, and taking no serious pains to preserve them, they have reason to look forward to their loss, as a thing of course. On their civil and political privileges, such insensibility and supineness must ever have a most baleful influence. These must be imminently exposed to be first seized, and then either contemptuously trampled on, or wantonly sported away, by the ambitious and aspiring

among themselves—characters not rare, surely, in any community; and peculiarly apt to swarm under the sunshine of a free government. They are exposed to endless and incalculable danger from the encroachments of foreign usurpation, and the machinations of foreign influence. Such a people may be truly said to invite the attempts of every intruder at home and abroad, who may happen to think their rights and properties worth possessing. Such a people must, in the ordinary course of things, become enslaved and miserable. Nor is this observation unsupported by substantial fact. Its truth is incontestably proved and awfully illustrated by the history of the ancient republic of Rome, and by that of modern European republics not a few.

ESPECIALLY does a disesteem and abuse of the gospel lead, in the directest manner, to its deprivation. So far as its truths are disbelieved and denied, its propositions spurned, its institutions neglected and trampled on; so far as iniquity abounds and infidelity prevails among a people; they are guilty of depriving themselves of its blessings, and putting from them its great salvation. These things naturally tend to banish even the external dispensation of the gospel from among them. And have they not reason to tremble lest that just God, who sees their guilt in all its dismal aggravations, should in wrath interpose to *remove their candlestick from its place*, and thrust them out of the despised blessings of his kingdom?

CERTAIN it is, that such a people are awfully exposed to *signal providential calamities*. *Shall I not visit for these things*, says Jehovah of his covenanted, but ungrateful and provoking people of old: *and shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?*\*—Expressions which, while they speak loud warning to a guilty world, may well strike a peculiar terror to the hearts of a people whose privileges, character and guilt are nearly allied to theirs concerning whom they were originally used. Those very

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\* Jer. v. 9.

privileges of a religious kind on which, notwithstanding their impious abuse of them, they may be ready to found a hope of exemption, far from giving countenance to this hope, are calculated to render such calamitous visitations peculiarly probable, just and tremendous. This too is plainly intimated in that memorable address of the Most High to the Jewish nation : *You only have I known of all the families of the earth : therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.\** And certainly He whose understanding is infinite, who has all beings and events under his absolute control, can never want means by which to punish a provoking people. He may, by some signal interposition of his Providence, arrest the career of their guilty prosperity, dry up the sources of their perverted wealth and blast their abused comforts. He may afflict and desolate them by famine, by pestilential disease, and by war, those three chief ministers of divine vengeance. He may punish them by the instrumentality of those very nations by whom they have been seduced to sin, and whose polluting principles and practices they have adopted. A signal instance of this kind is recorded in the context ; which, after informing us that the israelites mingled among the heathen, learned their works and served their idols ; adds, *Therefore was the wrath of the Lord kindled against his people, insomuch that he abhorred his own inheritance. And he gave them into the hand of the heathen, and they that hated them ruled over them. Their enemies also oppressed them, and they were brought into subjection under their hand.†* May a gracious God save this our American Israel from similar guilt and similar punishment !

BUT a most solemn consideration is yet behind. A people guilty as we have described, are obviously in danger of being *left by the good Spirit of God*, and thus of being given over to hardness of heart, and a woful insensibility to the things of their peace. How tremendous that divine denunciation : *My people would*

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\* Amos iii. 2. † See verses 35. 36, and 40, 41, 42.

*not hearken to my voice ; and Israel would none of me : So I gave them up to their own hearts lust ; and they walked in their own counsels.\** What can tend more directly than such black ingratitude and disobedience, such contempt and abuse of the richest blessings, especially considered as implying an obstinate disregard and resistance of internal divine monitions and influences, to provoke the Holy One of Israel to withdraw the Spirit of his grace ? And woe to that people from whom, in this sense, their God is departed ! To be stripped at once of every external privilege, every temporal comfort, were not half so terrible. Alas ! what avail all these, though bestowed in the richest profusion, if they come without a blessing ? Yea, what avails the precious gospel itself, if the sweet and powerful influences of divine grace are withholden ? What though the lamp of their worldly prosperity burn ever so bright ; what though the wealth of both the Indies be flowing into their coffers, if their chief glory is gone, and the curse of God lies heavy upon their very blessings ! And what though they may be ready to cry peace to themselves, if this imaginary peace is but a prelude to real misery and ruin ; and nothing, in fact, *remains but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation ?†*

ARE there not, Fathers and Brethren, many things in the subject we have been contemplating, which have a very interesting reference to ourselves as a people, and which claim peculiarly our most solemn notice, on this day of national humiliation ?—Perhaps two nations never existed, more nearly resembling each other, and between which a parallel might properly be drawn in a greater variety of instances, than the ancient Israelites, and the people of these American States. Do not our distinguishing privileges and our national character bear a most striking similarity to

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\* Ps. lxxxvi. 12, 13.

† Heb. x. 27.

theirs? Have we not, like them, been highly exalted above the nations of the earth, by a wonderful complication of divine blessings, and a most remarkable series of providential interpositions;—and alas! have we not trodden, with them, all the dreadful mazes of ingratitude, disobedience and provocation?

HAVE we not indeed a *pleasant land*?—a country which by the general salubrity of its air, the richness of its soil, its diversity of climate, its variety and abundance of productions, its pleasing interspersion with mountains and vales, lakes and rivers, its advantages for internal and external communication, is privileged above most other countries, and eminently favourable to the health and comfort of its inhabitants? Was not the hand of Providence signally conspicuous in conducting our fathers to these shores, in sustaining their hearts amid a complication of perils and difficulties, in giving them establishment here, in guarding and nourishing this people during their infancy, in vindicating us from the tyranny of our unnatural mother, crowning our arduous struggles with victory and independence, and enabling us to take a place among the nations of the earth? And has not the same good hand been strikingly visible in leading us to devise and adopt civil constitutions so remarkably combining “liberty with order;” especially, in leading us to establish a national government under whose benign auspices our rights are guarded, our freedom secured and public credit maintained; genius is encouraged, learning diffused, commerce extended, industry rewarded, agriculture and the arts flourishing, population and wealth increasing with a rapidity almost unexampled, and our national neutrality and peace, imminently threatened and unwarrantably persecuted as they have been, in a good degree preserved. These substantial facts, while they evince the soundness and excellence of our national constitution, proclaim likewise the integrity and wisdom which have prompted

and guided its administration. Nor is it a small mercy that such a remarkable series of able and faithful men have been divinely raised up, to take the conduct of our public concerns : men who have approved themselves indeed the Fathers of their country ; whose noble zeal and unwearied exertions for its good, deserve to be had in everlasting remembrance. To crown all, we have the blessed gospel of heavenly grace, a singular plenitude and variety of the means of religious instruction, the key of divine knowledge in the hands of the poor, and the sacred rights of conscience inviolably guarded.

Does it not appear, even from this faint and imperfect sketch, that our land is a land peculiarly and pre-eminently favored ; that a gracious God has elevated us as a people to an inheritance of privileges superior, probably, to that of any nation on the face of the globe ? And now, does not every serious and tender-spirited person among us, almost shrink from the question : *what returns have been made for these privileges ?* How have they been treated, and how have they been improved by us ? Is it not alas ! too evident, that a *cold, ungrateful insensibility* to their worth, constitutes a strong and dismal feature in our national character ? Amid such a variety and multiplicity of blessings, have we not been inexcusably neglectful and regardless of the hand which has bestowed them ? Is there not among us a melancholy prevalence of a disposition to think lightly of these invaluable privileges, to reluct from the efforts and sacrifices necessary to their defence and maintenance, and even to expose them, without necessity, to the most imminent hazard ? Has not a spirit of discontent and clamour the most flagrantly unreasonable, gone forth through the land ; and have not the dangerous suggestions of hollow-hearted and self-seeking, or deluded and visionary men, been listened to, in preference to the wholesome counsels of those whose wisdom, purity and patriotism have been approved by many a severe trial ? Has not a too easy

credit been given to the misrepresentations of those who would persuade us that we are slaves while enjoying constitutions of our own framing, while subject to laws of our own making and governed by rulers of our own free election—and miserable, because called to take up a few casual burdens? Above all, are we not chargeable with a gross abuse and perversion of our inestimable *religious* privileges? Is not licentiousness in principle and practice, prevalent and increasing among us, in a most alarming degree? Is not the venerable name of Jehovah awfully profaned? Are not the truths, precepts and institutions of the gospel of Christ but too generally treated either with frigid indifference, or with gross disregard and contempt? Does not the bold, unblushing front of infidelity erect itself almost every where around us? Do not various forms of irreligion and vice, which once sought the shades of concealment, now walk abroad without fear or shame? Young as we are, as a people, have we not already bidden adieu to those plain, simple habits and manners which lately constituted our peculiar glory; and do we not bear the sad and unequivocal symptoms of premature old age and decrepitude? Has not our extensive and productive commerce, while it has brought us the wealth and improvements of other nations, been likewise the medium of introducing and naturalizing among us their luxury, their dissipation, their follies and their vices; and have not national provocation, degeneracy, ingratitude and a general deterioration of principle and practice but too closely kept pace with national prosperity and opulence? In fine, when a just God has manifested his awful displeasure at our sins by visiting us with distressing calamities and desolating judgments, have not our impenitence and insensibility too exactly coincided with that description of the Prophet: *O Lord, thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast chastened them, but they have refused to receive correction; they have made their faces harder than a rock; they have refused to return.\**

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\* Jer. v. 3.

LET me appeal to you, brethren, whether these are gloomy exaggerations, or plain, incontestible facts. Alas! they are facts, too well substantiated by every day's observation. Every attentive person notices them: every serious Christian mourns and laments them. They fix indelibly on our nation the guilt of *despising this pleasant land*; this desirable and delightful country, so signally endowed by all-gracious Heaven with every thing which rational and immortal beings ought to hold dear. And are there not the most pressing reasons to apprehend that this sin, in particular, so plainly chargeable upon us, though, by most, so little laid to heart; that this sin, so aggravated, so comprehensive, so clearly carrying in it all that is base, ungrateful and even impious, must and will, unless repented of, call down upon this people some peculiarly awful expressions of heavenly indignation? Nay more, may we not with confidence conclude that this sin has had a special influence to bring down upon us those distressing national calamities which we have already felt, and some of which we feel at this day? We may read our sin in our punishment. And if there be one particle of ingenuousness within us, we must see and confess the signal justice of Heaven in depriving us, in such a degree, of blessings so much undervalued and so greatly misimproved. And when we contemplate the present dark and threatening aspect of our public affairs, do we not find reason for apprehending that still more awful visitations await us? Is it not, then high time for all to take the alarm? Is it not indispensable that every one of us should seriously enter into his own heart, faithfully search for the *root of bitterness* there, and solemnly enquire what share he has had in swelling that enormous mass of guilt and provocation which lies so heavy on our country? And let every form of this sin, so offensive and ruinous, which we have been describing and reprobating, be sincerely lamented and, with deepest abhorrence, renounced.

THE crisis to which we are come, is solemn and momentous indeed. I cannot but think that, as a people, we are now fixing our character, and, in some important sense, our future destiny. Our rights and privileges, civil and religious, every thing, in short, which as men and Christians we should hold dear, are formidably assailed from without. But if we are only faithful to ourselves, they cannot probably be wrested from us. Determined to be free, we cannot be slaves. Determined to maintain our religion, we shall, by the help of God, maintain it. We are then making an experiment awfully interesting, in its issue and consequences, not to ourselves alone, but to posterity and to the human race. If, with all our peculiar advantages, we cannot, or will not preserve these blessings, little hope will remain, that any nation can ever possess them long. Let us then cherish a lively sense of the obligations and duties imposed on us by so peculiar a situation. Called to a glorious contest, let us *stand fast in the faith, quit ourselves like men, and be strong in the strength of Almighty God.* At his gracious throne, let us seek the pardon of our numberless offences, and that his grace may inspire us with a sacred ambition to walk worthy our high privileges. And let us pray, in the words presented in the context : *Save us, O Lord our God, and gather us from among the heathen, to give thanks unto thy holy name, and to triumph in thy praise. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting : and let all the people say, AMEN.*



## Sermon II.



NEHEMIAH iv. 9.

NEVERTHELESS, WE MADE OUR PRAYER UNTO OUR  
GOD, AND SET A WATCH AGAINST THEM DAY AND  
NIGHT, BECAUSE OF THEM.

**I**N the former part of this book, we have a description of the pious and tender concern of Nehemiah, on account of the afflicted condition of his country. The Jews had been indeed, for some time, liberated from their tedious captivity, and restored to their own country: their temple was rebuilt, and their civil as well as ecclesiastical regulations arranged and established. Still, the holy city was completely defenceless, its walls and gates in the same state of prostration and ruin, in which they had been left by the Babylonish conqueror, and its inhabitants consequently exposed to continual insult, aggression and injury from the neighbouring nations. Deeply affected with this calamitous condition of things, Nehemiah, after imploring the blessing of Heaven on his design, and making the arrangements necessary for its execution, earnestly invited his countrymen to join with him in building the walls of Jerusalem. His application met a prompt and cheerful concurrence. The undertaking was commenced with ardor, and was rapidly advancing to its completion, when suddenly its progress was interrupted by the unprovoked and malignant efforts of *Sanballat, the Horonite*. Of this man we know but

little, except that he sustained an office of some importance under the Persian monarch, that he was a heathen, an unprincipled scoffer at things sacred, a bitter enemy to the Jews, and particularly to the good work of national defence in which they were now engaged, and that he opposed its prosecution with indefatigable zeal and activity; resorting, at one time, to open violence; at another, to insidious stratagem; at a third, to indecent and profane ridicule, as seemed most subservient to his mischievous and detestable design. At the time to which the text refers, it seems that he was meditating, in conjunction with others of various nations, who were inimically disposed to the Jews, a formidable assault on Nehemiah, and his friends, in order to put, if possible, an entire period to their proceedings. It was on this occasion, that the pious, prudent and dignified conduct described in the text, was resolved on, and pursued. *Nevertheless, we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night because of them.*—A resolution which, as it was highly becoming in itself, and as it was crowned with the divine blessing, seems likewise to hold forth an example very worthy the imitation of all in similar circumstances.

IN the proclamation which has assembled us this day, the intelligent and venerable Chief Magistrate of our Union has announced that “the most precious interests of the people of the United States are still held in jeopardy, by the hostile designs and insidious arts of a foreign nation, as well as by the dissemination among them of those principles, subversive of the foundations of all religious, moral and social obligations, that have produced incalculable mischief and misery in other countries.” And, my brethren, unless I greatly misapprehend, this is a truth which, painful as it is, has now become too obvious to be disbelieved, or even to admit a rational doubt. Permit me then to hope for your attention and your candor, while I endeavour to collect from the text, and to set

before you, *an important lesson* for our direction as a people, while embarrassed, distressed and threatened as we are, by the inimical disposition and conduct of our late allies.—The lesson, in short, is this: that we should make these things matter of our *prayer to God*; and, at the same time, be *unremittingly on the watch* against their hostile designs and efforts.

LET me then attempt some brief illustration of each of these branches of duty suggested in the text; with some general view of the principal arguments which urge them upon our attention.

FIRST, it is incumbent on us, in this period of national calamity, distress and danger, to *make our prayer to God*. This is but a proper tribute of honor to the supreme Disposer of events, and the righteous Governor of the universe. It is a tribute not less becoming nations than individuals. Our social capacities, dispositions and sympathies, together with an endless variety of wants, blessings, enjoyments and obligations common to us as members of the same body politic, all unite to demand of us such a public and united acknowledgment and homage. It is a tribute, especially due from a nation, like ours, professing Christianity. And if the season cannot be named, in which such an employment is improper, every person of thought and feeling must perceive it to be “a plain  
“dictate of duty, and a strong sentiment of nature,  
“that in circumstances of great urgency and seasons  
“of imminent danger, earnest and particular suppli-  
“cations should be made to Him who is able to defend  
“or to destroy.”† Has He not likewise given us a peculiar encouragement and a positive command to *call upon Him in the day of trouble*? In short, who does not see that on Him we are entirely dependent, both as individuals and communities, for every favor and every deliverance? What are all the mightiest human means and efforts, what is all human sagacity and circumspection, if unattended with his gracious blessing?

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And surely, He can, if he please, give efficacy and success to the feeblest instruments and attempts. Proud tyrants may threaten and may rage, but He can render both their threats and their violence impotent and harmless. Imperious and haughty nations may attempt to bestride and subjugate the world, but these designs He can, in a moment, blast with the lightning of his eye, and confound with the thunder of his omnipotent arm. *The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought.\* He disappointeth the designs of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform their enterprise. He taketh the wise in their own craftiness; and the counsel of the froward is carried head-long.†* In his hands are the hearts of all, and he turneth them whithersoever he will.—Hence,

WE are bound to pray, in the first place, that the hearts of those who have attacked and distressed us with such unreasonable and inveterate hostility, may be disposed to peace: that sentiments of moderation, justice and sincerity may dispossess that spirit of insolence, aggression, rapacity and dark intrigue which has so long inhabited their bosoms, and rendered them such a scourge to our country: that dispositions to make reparation for past, and to afford security against future injuries, may be honestly and unequivocally manifested by them; and thus a way be opened for mutual, solid and lasting reconciliation. Supplications of this tenor Christianity enjoins and requires. It permits us to harbour no malignant, unforgiving, irreconcilable dispositions even toward those who have most grossly injured us. It bids us *love our enemies, do good to them that hate us, and pray for them that despitefully use and persecute us.‡* In the present case, great as our wrongs are, we must be far indeed from a right temper, if we do not feel them in a sense absorbed and lost, in the open and blasphemous contempt which has been aimed by our persecutors, at the throne of God himself, and the religion of his Son. Can we contemplate, but for a moment, the present moral character and state of the

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xiii. 10.

† Job v. 12, 13.

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French nation, the low and prostrate condition of Christianity among them, the prevalence and triumph of an infidel and atheistical philosophy, leading in its train a host of gigantic vices, and pouring forth a deluge of calamities upon that ill-fated people—and not feel emotions of the liveliest horror, mingled with those of the tenderest compassion? In such a contemplation, must not every sentiment of piety and benevolence irresistibly prompt us to pray, in their behalf, that a stop may be put to the progress of such tremendous and overwhelming evils, that their eyes may no longer be shut to the things of their salvation, that, mercifully arrested in the career of self-destruction, they may repent of their blasphemies, give glory to the God of heaven, and submit to the blessed gospel of the Prince of peace. This is, in every view, “a consummation devoutly to be wished.” This would be a *Regeneration* indeed—fruitful in blessings to themselves, and no less auspicious to us. For this would be the surest pledge of a discontinuance of their hostilities, and afford the best basis for mutual, permanent reconciliation and friendship.—But

SECONDLY, we ought to pray that, however this may be, *their hostile designs may not prosper*. Concerning the full extent of these designs, and the means by which their accomplishment is to be pursued, we are not, as yet, accurately ascertained. But surely, after what we have seen and *felt*, it must require somewhat more than a common degree of scepticism to doubt that there exists in the French government a spirit of inveterate enmity to our national and individual interests. The unprovoked war which, for many years, they have waged on our commerce—a war so fruitful in every species of insult and injury to our seamen, and in distress to every class of our citizens—affords a very lucid and intelligible comment on the declaration of one of their own professed advocates and devotees, that *they are determined to fleece us*. In addition to this, we have seen them attempting, either immediately

or by their authorized agents, to invade and to arrogate our national sovereignty, to rob us of our dear-bought independence, to decoy or force us from the ground of neutrality in the present calamitous war, to precipitate us into their destructive contests; in short, to oblige us to fraternize with them in all their wild and detestable projects.—and no one needs be told that this *fraternity* is but another term for implicit devotion and abject slavery. Attempts of this kind have been so often, and in so many forms, made and repeated; and after being temporarily frustrated or seemingly relinquished, they have been resumed and prosecuted with such a strange and unconquerable kind of persistency, as fully shews the object to be very near their hearts. That it has not yet been accomplished, let us give glory to that Being whose almighty and gracious arm has so often snatched us from the brink of ruin. And let us pay a just tribute of honor and gratitude to those patriotic Rulers who, placed in the front of an arduous and unparalleled contest, have made so noble a stand in the cause of their country. The collisions to which the peculiarity of our situation has given rise, have likewise proved the medium of eliciting from the bosoms of our citizens at large such sparks of the genuine fire of independence as we trust will never be extinguished, and such as kindle up a bright and cheering hope that Americans will never consent to be the abject slaves and tributaries of any power on earth. Still, dangers of various kinds cluster around us. Nor can we possibly determine to how solemn and tremendous a conflict we may yet be called, in defence of our most essential rights and dearest interests. Let us then, in this season of distress and gloomy apprehension, humbly appeal to the supreme Ruler of the universe, the unerring Judge of right and wrong, the almighty Guardian of the injured: beseeching him, in the language of the Psalmist, to *plead our cause against an ungodly nation.*\* While we

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\* Ps. xliii. 1.

pray that they may be arrested in their career of lawless aggression and piratical depredation, let us pray still more ardently, that we may be saved from their insidious and pestilential embraces : that our government, our freedom, our religion, may never be swallowed up in the all-destroying vortex of Gallic disorganization, tyranny and impiety.

THIRDLY, *in regard to ourselves*, we should pray, that we may be *suitably humbled under these calamitous and threatening visitations*. While we indulge a just and animating confidence that we have not merited such evils at the hands of our adversaries, we must be conscious of having deserved these, and far greater, at the hand of a just God. Nor while we contemplate the immediate instruments of our sufferings as criminal and inexcusable, are we, on this account, to turn away our eyes from his almighty hand, his holy indignation, so clearly visible in every part of them. It is his sovereign and inalienable prerogative to punish a guilty and provoking people in that way which he sees best. It is one of the transcendent glories of his wisdom and equity, that he renders not only all the elements and operations of nature, but all the principles and passions of the human bosom, subservient to the administration of his moral government in the world. *The wrath of man*, the ambition, the violence, the rapacity and cruelty of kings and of nations, are frequently made, no less than the stormy wind, the tremendous lightning and the destructive volcano, the ministers of his displeasure, and the instruments of accomplishing his purposes of correction and punishment. It is but a *purblind* philosophy which confines itself to the contemplation of secondary causes, regardless of Him who overrules, controls and limits them all, according to his wise and holy pleasure. Be it then our care, at this period of national distress and embarrassment, tenderly to regard the chastenings of our justly offended God, attentively to listen to the voice of his rod, deeply to *humble ourselves under his mighty hand*,

and submissively to *accept the punishment of our iniquity*. Let us beseech of Him, the Father of mercies, the Giver of every good gift, that He would graciously impart such a spirit to ourselves and to others. For how suitable is it, that our guilty and afflicted country should be found prostrate and broken-hearted at Jehovah's footstool, adopting such acknowledgments and resolutions as these : *We will bear the indignation of the Lord, because we have sinned against Him.† Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord.‡* And what a consoling prospect would this afford, that salvation may yet visit us !

FOURTHLY, we ought to pray that we may be *directed*, in this crisis, to *suitable methods of resistance*. That our government has so sincerely and perseveringly pursued a pacific line of conduct, that its patience under accumulated injuries, insults and provocations has been protracted to long-suffering, that it has manifested the most unequivocal dispositions and adopted every conceivable expedient, to avert the calamities of war, must afford a heart-felt satisfaction to every considerate person among us. It was genuine magnanimity. It was worthy the rulers of a people professing Christianity. It has exhibited to the world a new and striking proof of the excellence of this meek and benevolent religion, as contrasted with the ferocious and sanguinary spirit of impiety. But there is a point, all must allow, beyond which forbearance degenerates into meanness and servility : beyond which, to *submit* to injury, is to *court* it : beyond which, peace itself can be attained only through the medium of active self-defence, and vigorous opposition. In the opinion of the most judicious of our political guides, this period, in respect to us, has now arrived. And this opinion has received the solemn sanction of a man in whom his country has long placed an unbounded confidence, which has never been disappointed. The great, the dispassionate, the venerable WASHINGTON, viewing

from his distant retirement the whole course and progress of our public transactions, has declared himself *satisfied that the cup of reconciliation has been exhausted to the last drop, and that we can with pure hearts appeal to Heaven for the justice of our cause.*—Indeed, after having sustained such a long and ruinous series of depredation ; after having been indignantly spurned, in the persons of our ambassadors of peace, from the very presence of our oppressors ; after such unheard-of demands made upon us—demands in which, by a strange kind of insolence, “ the amount of their aggressions ” is made “ the measure of our tribute ”—we have obviously no alternative but abject submission and slavery, or manly resistance. While then the *latter* is, as we trust, the dictate of duty no less than of inclination, let us pray that it may be conducted under a special divine direction. Let us pray that the FATHER OF LIGHTS would mercifully “ preside over the councils “ of the nation at this critical period, enlighten them “ to a just discernment of the public interest, and save “ them from mistake, division and discord ; ” that he would continue to the illustrious Head of our union that singular sagacity and energy of mind which, joined to his unimpeachable integrity and disinterested patriotism, have rendered him such a bright example to rulers, and such an eminent blessing to his country ; that he would impart to all our magistrates the true spirit of their stations, and grant that while, unappalled by danger and unseduced by corruption, they are serving the interests and maintaining the rights of the people, they may feel themselves supported by their united confidence, affections and efforts.

FINALLY, let us pray that *the means of defence which have been, or may be employed, may be divinely blessed and prospered* : that the hearts of our seamen, embarked in their country’s cause, may be strengthened to a manful and effective resistance ; that our soldiers, if called into the field, may be inspired with courage and crowned with victory : and that by the good hand of

God, furthering our arduous enterprises and efforts; we may be enabled to maintain our national sovereignty, independence and rights, and at the same time to set an example of successful opposition to the encroachments of lawless power, confounding to tyrants, and inspiring to the lovers of liberty throughout the world.

BUT the text intimates that with our prayer we should join *watching*. Indeed, these two duties are very frequently connected together, in the sacred volume. And the reasons for it are too obvious and multiplied to require or admit a particular discussion. Let us then keep up a diligent and *unremitting watch* against the attempts of our adversaries. This, in the present crisis, is peculiarly important and indispensable. And the fact is, that in no case is prayer designed to encourage or excuse us in the neglect of natural means and endeavours to attain the blessings we implore, or to avoid the evils we deprecate. Far from this, it lays us under special and strong obligations to employ such means and efforts. To trust in God to save us, while we are at no pains to help ourselves, is but a presumptuous and ungrounded confidence. And, my brethren, in the case before us, we have already had too many convincing proofs of the necessity, the importance and the solid advantages of an active and unceasing circumspection, to be in doubt whether it is incumbent on us or not.

LET us then be on the watch, in the *first* place, against the *open attacks* of our adversaries. We should naturally presume, indeed, that these distant shores might be secure from their ravages, and that to invade our country with fleets and armies would be viewed by them as an enterprise some degrees too hardy and desperate to be ventured on. But common calculations are not to be relied on here. Let us consider the strange projects of hostility against distant and unoffending nations, which they have not only essayed, but carried into execution. Let us remember the

threat delivered while our late Envoys were at Paris, that in case of their failing to propitiate the French government (by what disgraceful means this was to be done, has been already hinted) *arrangements would be made for hwith to ravage the coasts of the United States by frigates from St. Domingo.* And let us remember that in this very place, and at the time when every art was used at Paris to seduce one of the Envoys into an unauthorized negociation, a plan was actually prepared for the invasion of the Southern part of our continent—an invasion which was to be attempted in the hope of exciting an insurrection among the negroes, and of plundering and subjugating the country by their assistance. These are facts which loudly call upon us to be armed at all points, to guard the exposed parts of our country, to assume an attitude of vigorous self-defence, and to be prepared to meet any hostile attack, however sudden, with a prompt and efficacious resistance.

SECONDLY, let us watch against their *secret influence and intrigues.* Here is the prime and most productive source of our danger. To this source is to be traced far the greater part of those countless calamities which the French nation has inflicted on other countries. Viewing that singular career of success and triumph in which they have proceeded for some years past, we have been accustomed to attribute too much to their prowess, too little to their art; too much to their *military*, too little to their *diplomatic* skill. The former, it is true, have constituted the most prominent and conspicuous part of the exhibition. But admitted behind the scene, we may witness such exploits of dark intrigue, as even furnish a new comment and illustration on human depravity. Look over the long list of republics now prest by their merciless embraces and groaning under their yoke, and where will you find one whose ruin may not be traced to this baneful cause? The fact is that their arts have been, almost

without an exception, precursors and pioneers to their arms. And there are but too many reasons to apprehend that this pernicious leaven has been long working among ourselves. Is it not an incontestible fact that there has existed for years, in the very bosom of our country, an organized and inveterate opposition to the best and happiest government on earth? Has not this opposition arrayed itself, with a strange, unaccountable kind of impartiality, against *all* its principal measures; but with peculiar virulence against those which have been most plainly necessary and conducive to the public protection and safety? Have we not been afflicted with discords among brethren, poisonous to all social enjoyment, with incessant divisions and repeated insurrections? While reconciliation with one foreign power which, after a course of aggression and injury, manifested a disposition to do us justice, has been censured and opposed, as though it were the greatest of evils; have not the far more extensive and protracted depredations of another, been received with perfect apathy and tameness? And after repeated attempts to conciliate have proved abortive, has not every form of defensive opposition still been perseveringly proscribed? Have not the enormities of this nation been palliated and even justified by many of our citizens, with a constancy and zeal which could scarcely be exceeded if they were, in the completest sense, pledged to its service?—These bitter and unwholesome weeds, it is natural to hope, are not the spontaneous production of our own soil. For the honor of our country we must presume, that an *enemy*—an enemy that walks and works in darkness—has taken advantage of our slumbers, to sow these pernicious tares.

BUT we are not left, on this subject, to mere presumptions. The fact which is rendered so highly probable by what has been just suggested, has been explicitly avowed by the French government itself. “You ought to know,” says one of its agents, addressing himself to our Envoys, “that the *diplo-*

“ *skill* of France, and the *means* she possesses in your  
 “ country, are sufficient to enable her, with the *French*  
 “ party in America, to throw the blame which will  
 “ attend the rupture of the negotiations on the Fed-  
 “ eralists.”\*

THERE is then plenary proof that that *influence* which has proved so deleterious to other nations, is existing and operating here ; and that it has already produced effects awfully threatening to our country. It is not indeed to be supposed that all whose sentiments and conduct have borne a complexion similar to what has been above described, are consciously under its control. If a spirit to criminate our own government and to apologize for our adversaries, were confined to the plainly unprincipled and corrupt, it would be less strange. What affords principal matter both of wonder and regret, is, that there should be men of honest hearts who, either through a misplaced confidence in the representations of others, or a determined adherence to former opinions of their own, or an unwarrantable inattention to offered light, should be drawn in to act a part as really hostile and injurious to their country, as though they were its decided enemies. It is truly astonishing that the arts which have with such indefatigable assiduity been practised to deceive and ruin us, have not long since become visible to every eye. There is too much reason to be confident that these arts are not even yet relinquished. They must be counteracted, or they will work our destruction. Let us keep watch against them day and night. Let us think no species of vigilance too active, too indefatigable, too persevering to be opposed to enemies so restless, so determined and so dangerous. We must be inexcusable indeed if, with so many examples before our eyes, of the destructive effects of French intrigue, we shall consent to furnish another. If we shall become the dupes and victims of arts so obvious and so

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\* See the dispatches of the three Envoys.

state, if we shall foolishly rush into a net which has been spread so full in our sight, our ruin will be signally merited: nor shall we have, amid our sufferings, so much as the sorry consolation of reflecting that they were *unavoidable*.

THIRDLY, let us watch against *their infidelity and atheism*. We have seen exhibited in France a spectacle horrid indeed, and such as the world never saw before:—the legislature of a great nation, which had long been blest with the light of the gospel, and long sustained the profession of Christianity, professedly discarding and rancorously persecuting the religion of Jesus, proclaiming the abolition of the Christian æra, expunging the sabbath from their calendar, renouncing all religious worship, transforming the temples of the living God into temples of *Reason*, and polluting them by rites the most detestably profane and impious. But even here they have not stopped. With a horrid kind of consistency, they have attacked the fundamental and most obvious principles of natural religion itself. They have given their solemn sanction to such blasphemous ideas as these: that “death is an eternal sleep”—that “reason dethrones both the kings of the earth, and the kings of heaven”—that “man when free, wants no other divinity than himself”—and that “every republic but a republic of *atheists*, is a chimera.”

It is painful to wound the ears of Christians by the recital of such enormities. But it is necessary that all should know what awful dangers surround and threaten us. There is reason to believe that the atrocities above mentioned are not the mere casual efforts, the indigested effusions of impiety, but the result of a deep-laid infernal *scheme* to hunt Christianity from the globe, to subvert and destroy all the foundations of religion and morality, and to plunge mankind into the dark abyss of absolute atheism. That it has been a favorite object to introduce this debasing and brutalizing system into our own country, and give it cur-

tency here, is now but too evident. On this subject, let me mention a fact which ought to excite universal alarm and horror. The well-known and detestable pamphlet of *Thomas Paine*, written with a professed design to revile the Christian religion, and to diffuse the poison of infidelity, was composed in *France*, was there printed in English, and an edition containing many thousands of copies, conveyed at a single time into our country, in order to be sold at a cheap rate, or given away, as might best ensure its circulation. What baneful success has attended this vile and insidious effort, you need not be told. That infidelity has had, for several years past, a rapid increase among us, seems a truth generally acknowledged. That our connection with the French, and our fond, over-weening, obstinate partiality for them, together with the peculiar advantages they have derived from these circumstances, for deceiving and corrupting us, have had a mighty influence in producing such a melancholy state of things, is as little to be doubted. Have we not been too ready, while we thought them our friends, to overlook or to palliate their enormities? Have not too many of our citizens been disposed to forgive them their impious hostility to the throne of Jehovah, and the religion of our divine Redeemer, because they were the enemies of Great-Britain? Have not many American eyes been too much dazzled by the splendor of their victories and triumphs, to see clearly the hideousness of their infidelity, their impiety and their atheism? Nay more, are there not those whose affections and good wishes, alienated from their own country, have attached themselves to the foes of God and man, because their success bodes humiliation and downfall to a government which they hate?—These are no unreal dangers. These are snares which, it is to be apprehended, have already proved fatal to many: fatal, I mean, to their eternal interests. Let those who have as yet but approached the brink of this dreadful precipice, *escape for their lives*. Let us all

awake to a sense of the dangers which threaten the religion of our God and Redeemer. Let not its friends be indifferent and supine, while its enemies are so malignant, so active and indefatigable. Let us courageously flock and zealously adhere to the standard of the divine Savior: nor shrink from any arduous contest to which the situation may expose us. Let every true Israelite, animated with a sacred attachment to the ark of God, guard it with unceasing circumspection and unshaken constancy, lest it be profaned by the unhallowed hands of profligacy and impiety. Let us not listen a moment to the seductions of that atheistical philosophy which, with all its fair pretensions and promises, is in fact the greatest scourge that ever yet afflicted the human race: which blasts with its pestilential breath all that sweetens and adorns society; which kills all the sweet sensibilities, the sympathetic charities of the human bosom; which transforms man into a savage, thirsting for blood; which at once subjugates the body, brutalizes the mind and destroys the soul; which has already filled a once humane and happy nation with legions of crimes, cruelties and miseries hitherto unparralleled;\* and which, if it spread and prevail, will doubtless change our globe into the nearest possible resemblance of the infernal regions.

LET me observe, in the *fourth* place, that if we would put ourselves effectually on our guard against the enemy, we must *unite among ourselves*. It is melancholy indeed that at such a time as this, we should be in any degree a divided people. Not a circumstance can be named, which looks with a more threatening aspect on the peace and well-being of our country. Who can doubt that on this circumstance the French

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\* It was computed, so early as the year 1795, that no less than *two millions* of persons had been massacred in France, during the Revolution. Of these, two hundred and fifty thousand were women, two hundred and thirty thousand children, and twenty-four thousand ministers of religion.

government build their principal hopes of subjugating us to their will? Who can doubt that to this, as a capital source, may be traced the long series of ruinous depredation which with such shameless audacity they have prosecuted on our commerce? And who can rationally expect that, unprincipled as they are, they will abandon this system of hostility, so long as the consciousness remains that they can do nothing too atrocious to find advocates and apologists among ourselves? The fact is, that they know full well the state of our country in this respect, and are ready enough to make their advantage of it. They have ample information respecting the strength of their party here, with all the risings and declines, the waxings and wanes of their influence; and they calculate their plans and proceedings accordingly, though not always with equal accuracy and success. The haughty and contemptuous airs displayed to our late Envoys, so respectfully soliciting an audience, and proposing terms of accommodation so obviously liberal and unexceptionable, were indeed a kind of *experiment* on the patience of our country: an experiment which, if it betrayed an ignorance of the true American character, was yet countenanced in part by our extreme tameness under past injuries and insults, and by the unbounded *charity* displayed in our construction of their former conduct. The result of this experiment all are acquainted with. You know the spirit of noble and determined opposition which it has excited in a large majority of our citizens. And you know the vigorous and efficient measures of resistance adopted by our government. As a consequence of these things, you have seen the Directory, lately so insolent and so unapproachable, condescending to assume, in their turn, the language and attitude of solicitation, and even overwhelming us with professions of friendship and of their desire to conciliate. Be not surprized at it. There is a "pride that licks the dust." We may ever expect to find insolence and meanness in close

affinity. It will not be wonderful therefore if we find these affected condescensions carried to a far greater length than they have yet been. And their design will probably be quite understood, if they are only considered as *an expedient to recover the influence which has been lost*. Hitherto, it is impossible to discover in the French government any disposition to do us substantial justice ; any sincere desire to remove the obstacles to reconciliation. Nor is it any breach of charity to apprehend that beneath their present appearing tameness, their smiles, their blandishments, are concealed designs of deeper and more dangerous art than have ever yet been tried. Their object is doubtless to lull us into a fatal security, to revive the expiring flame of faction, and to renew those divisions, so dear to them, so pernicious to ourselves, which have seemed to be drawing to a close. Let us disappoint such insidious designs. Let us, at the loud and affectionate call of our persecuted and bleeding country, forget every little alienation and prejudice, and resolutely unite in its defence. Let us convince those who have derived from our divisions the hope of accomplishing our ruin, that their hope is baseless and vain ; and that when our essential interests are in jeopardy, we have but one sentiment, one heart and one soul. In this way, and in this way alone, may we rationally hope to see an end of their hitherto unremitting efforts to corrupt and destroy us.

FIFTHLY, let us *give a firm and generous support to our Rulers*. They are emphatically our *watchmen*, in a political sense. They are raised above the level of their fellow-citizens for this important purpose, among others ; that they may descry impending dangers and approaching enemies, and give us notice and direction accordingly. The eminence of their stations, all must see, affords them peculiar advantages for acting such a part with judgment and with the best effect. And we are called upon by every consideration of propriety, duty and interest, to co-operate with them, to give

them a united and affectionate support, to confide in their discernment and integrity, until such a confidence shall be forfeited, to listen, with respectful deference, to their intimations, and promptly to execute their plans. To treat them thus, is no more than to be faithful to ourselves. To weaken their hands, is but to strengthen those of our enemies.

A DIFFERENT doctrine, it is true, has been taught. And there are those who seem to think that sullen distrust, that gloomy, ill-boding suspicion is treatment good enough for the best of our political guides. Jealousy, say they, is a *private vice*, but a *public virtue*.— Give me leave to suggest one important objection against this doctrine: namely, that in its application to such a government as ours, *it is not true*. Our rulers are selected from among ourselves, and we are faulty indeed, if our choice does not fall on those who are worthy of it. Their dearest interests are intimately interwoven with our own. They revert, at stated and short periods, to the mass of their fellow-citizens. And while in office, it is but a “painful preeminence” at best, which they enjoy—a preeminence in care, in toil, in responsibility, in danger. Are such men to be regarded with a distrustful and malignant jealousy, wounding to their feelings, and paralyzing to their exertions? Or does every consideration of humanity, of reason, and of our best interest too, call upon us to encourage their hearts and strengthen their hands, by an affectionate and generous confidence?

Is it not one of the principal sins of our nation, that men who have given the most unquestionable evidence of a pure and disinterested regard to the general good, who by a series of peculiar exertions and sacrifices, have approved themselves the Fathers and Guardians of their country, and who have been sinking at once under the burden of years, and the pressure of public cares and labors—~~have~~ yet been treated with the grossest ingratitude, and persecuted with the most envenomed shafts of calumny? Where is the true-heart-

ed American, who does not blush for his country (i had almost said, for human nature) to reflect that such, in a degree, has been the fate of a WASHINGTON and an ADAMS?

To return :

LET us, in the *last* place, endeavour to guard against the enemy by *calling into active operation the means of defence with which Heaven has blest us*. The absolute necessity of this is now too obvious to be doubted. It is to our own exertions, under the blessing of Heaven, that we must be indebted for the preservation of every thing which as men, as citizens and as Christians, we hold dear. There is doubtless connected with this object, present inconvenience, expence and hazard. But in such a cause, shall we not dare look them in the face? Shall we not meet the exigences of this great occasion by a correspondent magnitude of exertion? A parsimonious policy is no policy for the present time. The best economy now, is to make a liberal use of the ample resources within our reach. If we are faithful to ourselves, we shall do this; and if we do it, we shall probably succeed. The important effects which have already resulted from our infant experiments of this kind, justify such an animating expectation. But if, in despite of all probability, in despite of the most glaring evidence, we are determined to hope in the justice or mercy of our adversaries, and thus sit down with folded arms, spiritless and inactive, our ruin is but too certain. We shall soon see our hopes, our liberties, our every thing dear and precious, buried in one common grave.

THESE suggestions, I am conscious, may appear to some as ill-grounded as they are gloomy. And (strange to think!) there are those even now, who talk loudly of the *obligations* we are under to the French, and of the *ingratitude* with which we have treated such *generous benefactors*. Brethren, it is high time that these illusions were dispelled. If it was once a *venial* error, to impute their interference in our late Revolution, to noble and disinterested motives, it may yet be a fault

of a different complexion, to persist in this idea, when there is the clearest evidence of its falsity, and when to persist in it is, in its consequences, most obviously pernicious. There is now full proof that that interference was dictated by views of interest and ambition, not by any sentiments of real friendship for us. In a book lately written in France, written at the suggestion and under the patronage of that very minister who lately treated our Envoys with such indignity, and written with the express design of explaining the motives which have prompted the French wars and treaties for some years past—we have the following assertion: “Louis  
 “ the Sixteenth entered into a league with the Ameri-  
 “ cans, not to relieve them from the dominion of En-  
 “ gland, nor to procure for them the advantages of  
 “ liberty; but in order to deprive the British marine  
 “ of the resources of a whole continent, well furnished  
 “ with ports, whose forces were very useful to the En-  
 “ glish in their last wars against the French; and in  
 “ order to recover possession of some parts of fishery,”  
 &c. Nay more, the National Convention itself, an authority which, *in this case*, none can properly dispute, has explicitly declared that “the support afforded by  
 “ France to the United States in their struggle for in-  
 “ dependence was only the fruit of a base speculation”—  
 (mark this—*the fruit of a base speculation*)—that “our  
 “ glory offended their ambitious views”—and that  
 “their ambassadors bore the criminal orders of stop-  
 “ ping the career of our prosperity.” In addition to all this, we have now the most unquestionable evidence that the French government early manifested its enmity to our interests, and its determination to check, if possible, the growth of our national wealth, reputation and importance. They endeavoured to prevent the acknowledgment of our independence by various European powers. They attempted to exclude us from the Fishery of Newfoundland, to hinder our Western limits from extending to the Mississippi, and to deprive us of the navigation of that river—those important fruits of our revolutionary war. Finally,

they attempted to procure, in behalf of the Refugees, compensation for their confiscated estates, and admission to our country and our councils.

I WILL not spend time in exposing the absurdity of considering ourselves as under obligations to those who never intended us any kindness; or to those who, in the midst of the most arrogant pretensions, have yet declared, in effect, that we are under no obligations at all. But granting, for a moment, that there was a period when such obligations really existed, let me ask, how long are they to continue? How many new insults must be heaped on our government, how many new cruelties on our seamen, how many millions more of our property must be plundered, how many fresh attempts must be made to deprave the minds of our citizens, to trample on our liberties and destroy our religion—before we shall be exonerated and discharged? Our *debt of gratitude* must be immense indeed, if it has not long since been cancelled.

THUS, my brethren, with perfect simplicity and frankness, and in full confidence of your candor, I have endeavoured to set before you the dangers which envelop, and the embarrassments which distress, our beloved country; together with those important duties which the crisis inculcates upon us.

THAT such an attempt should be considered by any as an overstepping of the limits of propriety, is a reflection which I confess gives me a degree of pain. That politics have not been with me a favorite or frequent subject of express discussion, that they have not been officiously on every occasion obtruded on your attention, that this sacred desk has not been perverted into a vehicle for the communication of violent party prejudices and passions, you will do me the justice to acknowledge. That there are seasons, however, in which the minister is not only warranted but obligated to display the political state of the country, I have been convinced on the most serious deliberation.

THAT he is bound to call the attention of his hearers to the whole circle of their incumbent *duties*, and of

course to the obligations they are under to the civil magistrate, and to the community, all must allow.— But how can those duties which result from the peculiar situation of the country at any given time, be inculcated clearly and with effect, unless, unless such a peculiarity of situation be adverted to, and displayed?

To declare faithfully the *sins* of a people, is a very important, though painful part of ministerial duty.— And what if many of these sins shall be found intimately interwoven with their political situation and circumstances? Are they on this account to be left in undisturbed concealment? Or ought they to be drawn forth into light, and exposed in their proper colours?

You know, my brethren, that on days of solemn *Thanksgiving*, it is naturally expected of those who lead in the public services, that they state the considerations which should excite and employ your grateful sensibilities. And what is this, but to point you to those numberless and transcendent blessings, civil and political, as well as natural and religious, with which a gracious God has distinguished our nation? Must we be silent on this subject, because there are some who seem to discern more causes of discontent and complaint, than for grateful acknowledgment?

As a people, we have been invited to public humiliation and *prayer*; and this at a season which our President has announced to be a season of national jeopardy and distress. It is notorious that the same idea is generally entertained by the most informed persons in the community. On such an occasion would it not be thought extraordinary indeed, should a minister come forth to his people and gravely declare, that these were *political subjects*, with which *he* had no concern; and that as to the state of the nation, he must not run the venture of disturbing their feelings by meddling with so delicate a topic?—What can be more plain, than that if we would offer up seasonable and appropriate petitions for our country, we must have its condition, its embarrassments, its perils, its exigences pla-

ced fall in our view? And if to be prospered against our enemies is one important object of prayer, we surely need to be previously ascertained that *our cause is just*. How, otherwise, can we with a good conscience ask the blessing of God upon it?

It will not soon be forgotten, that early in our contest with Great Britain, the clergy of this State were explicitly called upon by the provincial Congress, to lend their efforts to the common cause, and assist in avoiding the slavery with which we were threatened. They zealously complied with the call. And it is generally confessed that their patriotic exertions contributed not a little to the success of our revolutionary struggle. Should we not naturally presume that those who not only witnessed, but warmly approved those exertions, would be the last to censure or discountenance a similar conduct in the present case?

BUT you will indulge me the liberty of declaring, that the present case is far plainer and more urgent than the former. Our *political* and *religious* interests had not that close and indissoluble connexion then, which they have now. England, in wishing to subdue us to her control, had no design to make us atheists or infidels. Now, a war is carried on, not only against our government and liberties, but against our morals and our souls—a war subversive of the very foundations of all virtue and order—in short, a war which (horrible to tell!) goes to exterminate the religion of our God and Redeemer from our country and from the globe. Shall those then who are *set for the defence of the gospel*, and who have solemnly sworn to vindicate it, basely desert their posts? Or shall they look silently on, and, either through indifference or cowardice, give no warning of danger?—Let me, my brethren, remind you of your duty to pray that your minister may be saved from such treachery. In the mean time, rest assured, that until his sentiments and feelings are greatly altered, his efforts, however feeble, shall not be wanting to the cause of his threatened and suffering country.

LET me then, in the close of this subject, renewedly commend to your affectionate regard the great and comprehensive interests of our nation. Let the calamities which surround our common country, and the awful dangers which menace it, call up in its behalf every pious and patriotic sensibility. Let us bear it on our hearts, fervently and without ceasing, to Him who can, in a moment, "clear the darkest skies," and whose almighty arm has been so often revealed for our national salvation. And let us be consistent. While we pray for our country, let us be excited to that incessant vigilance, that union of affection and sentiment, that cordial and prompt co-operation with our rulers and with one another, that zealous devotion of all our faculties and resources to the public good, which the occasion so imperiously demands. This is not a period for the indulgence of little prejudices and animosities. Let them be generously offered up on the altar of our country's sufferings. Let them be consumed by the noble flame of a vigorous and all-conquering patriotism.

It should be animating to us to reflect that the cause in which we are engaged is so clearly just: and that, so far as we engage in it with a right spirit, we have liberty to plead it as the cause of God himself, and to entertain the most sanguine hopes of his help and blessing. It is the cause of *human nature*, whose rights have been wantonly outraged and trampled on by our enemies. Nor is it possible to calculate how many millions of our race, now pressed down under their tyranny, might, by a single example of successful resistance, be inspired with energy to spring from their chains, and vindicate themselves into freedom.

WHAT solemn bonds lie on the professors of Christianity, to distinguish themselves in so all-interesting a contest; to be eminently faithful, courageous, active and indefatigable, in defence of their country's violated rights, and the persecuted religion of their Saviour. How loudly is every parent called upon, to be sowing the seeds of religious and moral instruction in the ten-

der minds of his offspring, to endeavour to impress them with the love and fear of God, with a sacred veneration for the gospel, with a respectful attachment to our wholesome civil institutions and our patriotic rulers—and thus to raise up a rampart against those infidel and disorganizing principles which threaten the ruin of our nation. And you, my dear youth, the hope of your country, the hope of the Church, whose province it will soon be, to stand up and support the religion of your Redeemer, suffer not your minds to be perverted from so glorious an object. Turn a deaf ear to the firen seductions of that impious *philosophy* which tramples on the gospel, and which cruelly snatches from you all which as rational and immortal beings, you should hold precious. Cherish too an ardent love for your country. Let her interests be ever dear to you, her authority ever sacred: and in the hour of her distress and peril, esteem it your high honor to fly to her relief.

FINALLY, as we would not be signally unfaithful to ourselves and to posterity; as we would not basely abandon those principles for which we have contended at every hazard; as we would not be guilty of the grossest ingratitude to those noble and patriotic ancestors who have transmitted us a rich inheritance, the price of their labours and their lives, let us solemnly resolve, in the strength of Almighty God, that we will watch over it with the most sacred care, and defend it in the face of every danger.

“ Remember, O my friends, the laws, the rights,  
 “ The generous plan of pow'r deliver'd down,  
 “ From age to age, by your renown'd forefathers,  
 “ (So dearly bought, the price of so much blood :)  
 “ Oh, let it never perish in your hands !  
 “ But piously transmit it to your children.”

MAY the Sovereign Arbiter of nations mercifully look down on our country, scatter the clouds which hang over us, and grant, that being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we may serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness, all the days of our lives. AMEN.