

A
SERMON
Preached at the
FUNERAL
OF

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in *New-Jersey.*

By Jonathan Dickinson.

Psal. CXII. 6.

Righteous shall be in everlasting Remembrance.

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Enjoyments. It is to teach us the Evil of Sin, and the Vanity of the Creature, that our righteous Sovereign is breaking in upon us by his awful Judgments, removing our *Relations and Friends far from us, and our Acquaintance into Darkness*; and even taking away the *Desire of our Eyes with a Stroke*: as was the Case of the Prophet in the Text before us.

The Occasion of which was, the abounding Impiety of Gods Covenant People; and their placing their Affections upon their Priviledges and Enjoyments, and rejoicing in them, though in an Estate of Enmity and Rebellion against their God. This sudden Detolation is therefore brought upon the Prophet, as a Type or Sign of the more amazing Destructions they were to expect, from the incensed Justice of God; as may be seen from the 21 verse forward. God had repeatedly warned them by the Mouth of the Prophet, of their Sin and Danger, of the Vanity of their Confidence and Hope: and since this was without Effect, He is now giving them a more terrible View of their approaching Wo, by the sudden and awful Death of the Prophets Wife.

But to consider the Words themselves more particularly, we may find notable,

1. The Compellation by which the Prophet is addressed. [*Son of Man,*] An Appellation very frequently given him in this Prophecy, to keep him humble, amidst his extraordinary Familiarity with God and his holy Angels:

And

And to keep him in Remembrance, that he was but a meer Man, but poor Dutt and Ashes, though ravished with such heavenly Views and Contemplations, and with such exalted Entertainments.

But by the Way we may observe, that this Compellation is frequently applied to himself, by our blessed Saviour, with another View; as a Declaration that He was the *Messiah* predicted by *Daniel*, under this Title, *the Son of Man*, Dan. vii. 13. Or that He was *the Son of Man*, of whom *Daniel* Prophesied.

2. We may observe in the Words the Note of Attention, by which the Prophet is excited to a diligent Consideration and Observation of this awful Providence. [*Behold,*] Q. D. Take good Notice of what I say, expect and prepare for this distressing Event, for it shall certainly come upon you.

3. We may note the Contents of this doleful and melancholly Address, which are

1. A Prediction of a most afflicting Bereavement. [*I will take away from thee the Desire of thine Eyes*] I will send Death into thy Family, to cut down the most desirable Branch of it. I will pluck thy delightful and dearly beloved Wife out of thy Bosome. Though she be so precious in thy Sight, so excellent in all her Qualifications; though so near and dear to thee, that thou lovest her as thine own Soul: She must fall before the Scythe of Death, and be snatched from thine Embraces.

2. The Suddenness of this Bereavement, [*with a Stroke.*] It is impertinent to enquire by what malignant Disease, or other deadly Means, this mortal Stroke was struck. God has Messengers enough at Hand, to send upon this fatal Errand when He pleases. But by whatever Method of Providence it is brought about, it was a Sudden, a Surprizing Death. The Prophet had no Time to fortify his Mind, against the Horrors of this amazing Providence, no Time to work his Heart, into due Frames of Submission and Resignation, the Calamity comes on suddenly. It's done by a *Stroke*. She died that very Night, verse 18.

The Words thus considered, among many other useful Observations, may afford us this

DOCTRINE. That a holy God is sometimes pleased to take away with a Stroke, those our dear and precious Relatives, that are *the Desire of our Eyes*.

That this may be something illustrated, I shall endeavour briefly to consider these following *Propositions*.

1. That there are *Relatives* so near and dear to us, that they may properly be called *the Desire of our Eyes*.

2. That these are liable to be taken away *with a Stroke*.

3. That such a Dispensation of Providence, is the holy Hand of God upon us.

Prop. 1. That there are *Relatives* so near and dear to us, that they may properly be called *the Desire of our Eyes*. Though we are all Branches of one original Stock, and descended from one common Parent; yet not all equally near by the Bonds of Nature, and in Degrees of Blood. There are some so nearly and intimately united to us by the Laws of Nature, as to be a Part of our Selves, our own Bowels; and therefore must have a constant Room in our Hearts, and be the Objects of our dearest Affection. And tho' it too often happens, that the Members of our Families, like gangreen'd Members of our Bodies, put us to Pain and Grief; that those who should be our Joy and Comfort, fill us with continual Agonies of Distress: And that our Crown is a Crown of Thorns; yet thro' the Goodness of God upon a wretched World, it is not always so. There are *Relations*, that by their excellent Qualifications, by their endearing and vertuous Deportment, as well as by their near Alliance to us, become *the Desire of our Eyes*.

Thus our *Children* are sometimes like *Olive Plants about our Table*; and we have sometimes (O that it were more common!) this *greatest Joy to see them walking in the Truth*. Then how pleasant and delightful, how dear and precious, are these Branches of our Selves to us. Then with what Affection can we say, as *Bathsheba* to her Son *Solomon*. *Prov. xxxi. 2. What my Son, and what the Son of my Womb, and what the Son of my Vows.*

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But this is more specially exemplified, in the *Conjugal Relation*. These nearly united Consorts, are often the *Desire* of each others *Eyes*. As they are one by the strict intimate *Relation*, so they are one in all valuable Interests; and one in the strongest Ties of Affection. They have a common Feeling of each others Joy and Grief, Comfort and Pain. As they live, so they could almost dye for each other; and if one dyes, the other feels many Deaths by the Stroke.

But we may very briefly consider whence it is so, that our *Relations* are the *Desire* of our *Eyes*.

1. Then it is so, from the Laws of natural Affection. They may be desirable to us, that have no charming Qualifications to render them so. Self-Love, forces us to love what is a Part of our selves, whatever else is wanting to make such amiable. If we can't have too much Delight in 'em, we shall have the more Heart-aking Care, and compassionate Concern for 'em. Even their Irregularities will in this Sense, animate our Love to 'em, as well as fill us with Distressing Fears and Cares about 'em. Thus was *Ishmael* desirable to *Abraham*, when his Concern for him, extorted that pathetick Prayer on his behalf, Gen. xvii. 18. *O that Ishmael might live before thee!* Thus was *Esau* dear to *Isaac* and *Rebecca*, when his Misconduct made his Mother weary of her Life, Gen. xxvii. 46. And thus was, *Abfalom* greatly

greatly beloved by *David*, tho' an open and avowed Rebel against him. Whence else proceeded that bitter Lamentation at his Death? *O my Son Absalom, my Son, my Son Absalom: would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my Son, my Son, 2 Sam. xviii. 33.*

2. There are personal Excellencies, that sometimes render *Relatives the Desire of our Eyes*. If Nature it self teaches us, to love those that are united to us by the Bonds of a near *R. lation*, how much more delightful must they be, when choice Accomplishments, prudent Conduct, and sweet Behaviour endear 'em to us. What can have more commanding Sway over our Affections, and more absolutely govern all the softer Passions of the Soul, than pleasant, towardsly, and obedient Children. Whence a Man is said to *spare*, i. e. to highly esteem, and most tenderly regard, *his only Son that serveth him. Mal. iii. 17.* And if we extend our View to the yet nearer *Relation*, a kind tender and obliging Husband, *is better to his Wife than ten Sons, 1 Sam. i. 8.* She not only confides in his Care and Conduct; but delights in his Company, and in the tender Expressions of her Regard to him. And on the other Hand, *a virtuous Woman is a Crown to her Husband, his Heart doth safely trust in her, Prov. xxxi. 11.* Whence *she is to him as the young Hind, and pleasant Roe, most dear and delightful, Prov. v. 19.* No temporal Attainment, no worldly Treasure or Pleasure, have

have equal Claim to our dearest Regards with such Relations. --- But then again,

3 Religious Excellencies do upon a yet more valuable Account, render our *Relations the Desire of our Eyes*. How many engaging Beauties may we sometimes see, in the sweet Carriage and Conduct, of the pleasant *Offspring* of our own *Bowels*. But if they don't fear God, and make Religion their Business, if they don't earnestly pursue an Interest in Christ, and a Preparation for Eternity; this damps a Christian's Joys and Satisfactions, and remains a dead Weight upon his Spirits. For how can we think of their burning forever in Hell, and being Companions to Devils and damned Spirits to all Eternity, who have proceeded from our own *Loins*, are always upon our Hearts; and whom we have with such Pleasure, dandled upon our Knees, and hugged in our Bosomes? But then, if God is pleased to add his Grace to their other attractive Qualifications; this makes them desirable indeed. This fills our Souls with unspeakable Comfort, not only in the present Fruition of our *Children*; but in the refreshing Prospect of that blessed Day, when we shall be able with exceeding Joy to say, *Here am I, and the Children which God hath given me.*

And for a like Reason, vital Piety, renders any other *Relations* most pleasant and desirable. For, he that loves Christ, will love his Image in every one: but how delightful to see it in those

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those, so near to himself. And the nearer the *Relation* that such sustain to us is, the greater will be the Elevations of our Joy and Comfort, upon the Contemplation of their Religious Excellencies. But there is no *Relation*, in which the Power of Godliness is accompanied with so many endearing Charms, as that of *Husband* and *Wife*; whose Piety especially engages them to each other, on Account of their being *fellow Helpers in the Truth*, as 3 Joh. 8. How happy is it, when *Yoke-fellows* draw together in the Yoke of Christ. When they are Assistants to one another in the Way to Heaven. When they are faithful Monitors, Counsellors, and Comforters to each other, in their highest Interests. When they can sweetly converse together, about the Affairs of the Eternal World. As such sweet Conversation has a Tendency to ravish our Souls, and place us upon the Top of *Pisgab*, so it must above all Things in the World endear those *Relations*, with whom we can thus *take sweet Counsel together*. I may add to this, that religious Qualifications in the *Conjugal Relation*, are yet of a more diffusive Influence; and extend as well to those that belong to us, as to our selves. Our *Children* have Cause to *rise up and call such Parents blessed*, Prov. xxxi. 28. on Account of their godly Pains in their Education; and of their *Tra- vailing in Birth* to see Christ formed in them. And on this Account also, the *Husband* praiseth
the

the vertuous Woman. But it's Time
I should offer a few *Reflections*, upon this
Propefsion. and

1. Hence, let us be cautioned to duly regulate our Affections, to these *Desires of our Eyes*. The more excellent and desirable our Enjoyments are, the more are we in Danger to exceed, in our Esteem of, and Value for 'em. And tho' among all our Enjoyments, our desirable *Relations* are the most worthy of our special Affection; yet the best of them don't deserve to be our *gods*, nor to take that Room in our Hearts, which belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ. Our *Relations* may be indeed valuable, and worthy of our Esteem: but we must remember, that our blessed *Redeemer* is infinitely more so. All the excellent Qualifications in them, are but small Streams and Emanations, from that infinite Fountain of all desirable Good. We must therefore take Care, that we don't place that Affection upon these, that belong to Christ; and so before we are aware of it, be guilty of Idolatry. Our Lord gives us an awful Admonition in this Case, Luk. xiv. 26. *If any Man come to me, and hate not his Father and Mother, and Wife and Children, and Brethren and Sisters; yea and his own Life also, he cannot be my Disciple.* The Meaning of which is, that our Love to Christ, must be of that superiour Kind, that our most elevated Affection to any *Relation*, must be comparatively Hatred. Or that we must
so

so love Christ, as to be willing to forsake (as if we hated) those who are nearest to us. We ought to love our *Relations*; but not take 'em for our Portion, or make 'em the Objects of our chief Desire and Delight. In a Word, let Christ keep the Throne. And that he may do so, all the Beauty and Loveliness we see in our *Relations*, should lead our Affections to this Source and Fountain of all that's Desirable.

2. Hence, how lovely will our desirable *Relations* appear in Heaven, when they come to the Perfection of all Graces and desirable Qualifications. They are so lovely now, in this their State of Imperfection, that we faint under the Stroke, when they are removed from us. Our Spirits sink, our Flesh trembles, our Eyes are filled with Tears, and our Hearts with Sighing; when they take Wing. But here's a Cordial, we shall see 'em again more gloriously. They have put off all their Imperfections. *That which is perfect is come, and that which is in Part is done away,* 1 Cor. xiii. 10. They shall never more be guilty of any Mis-conduct; nor of so much as an Inadvertency. They shall never more grieve themselves or their Friends, with their human Frailties; never meet with any *pricking Briar, or grieving Thorn* to themselves, nor occasion any Disquietment to others. Were they beautiful here, they are now glorious. Were they sweet tempered here, they are now
nothing

nothing but Love. Were they wise here, they now know as they are known. Were they gracious here, their Graces now shine as the Brightness of the Firmament. We can at best, have but a very faint and imperfect Idea of their Excellency and Happiness, who are gone to Christ before us. See 1 Joh. iii. 2. *Beloved now are we the Sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know, that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.* We have therefore much more Reason to long to be with them where they be, than to lament their Departure from us. O blessed Meeting! when we shall come to the general Assembly and Church of the first born, which are in Heaven; and to God the Judge of all, and to the Spirits of just Men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new Covenant. Heb. xii. 23, 24. When we shall jointly without Interruption, partake of eternal Joys; and join together in eternal Praises.

3. Hence we find just Matter of Reproof to those Relations, that don't live so as to be desirable one to another. We should remember that the Truth of our Religion, as well as the Comforts of our Lives, very much depends upon relative Duties: and that he cannot be a good Christian, that is a bad Relation. What a dreadful Account will such Relatives have to give, who instead of being the Desire of their Relations Eyes, are their greatest Affliction to consume their Eyes, and grieve their Hearts, as expressed 1 Sam. ii. 33.

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How unhappy a Case is it, when *Husbands* instead of that Love, Tenderness and provident Care, that is due to their *Wives*, treat them with Bitterness, Unkindness, and Disrespect, or bring them into Trouble and Distress: or when *Wives*, instead of that Complacency, Sweetness of Behaviour, and dutiful Respect, which their *Husbands* justly expect from them; are cross and quarrelsome, sower and ill-humoured. Of what dreadful Consequence is it for *Parents*, instead of that affectionate Regard to their *Children's* Welfare, and pious Care of their Education and Government, which God and Nature has made their Duty; to bring them up in Ignorance and Irreligion; or to leave the Reins of their sensual Appetites upon their Necks, that they may run headlong to Hell without Restraint. Or for *Children*, instead of that Reverence, Honour, and pious Obedience which they owe to their *Parents*; to be irreverent, stubborn, and rebellious; or to break their *Parents* Hearts by their impious Courses. How unnatural a Life do *Brethren* and *Sisters*, and other near *Relations* live, who are slighting and abusing, teasing and vexing one another; and by their Feuds and Contentions, acting more like *Bears* and *Tygers*, than such as have the same Blood running in their Veins, and that profess themselves Disciples of the Prince of Peace. In a Word for any of these to be Vexations and **Disquietments** to one another; and instead

of forwarding, to obstruct the Welfare of each others Souls, is to dishonour God and make themselves miserable, both in this World and that to come. — But I proceed to

Prop. 2. That our dearest and most desirable *Relatives*, are liable to be taken away *with a Stroke*. These like all other temporal Enjoyments, are but *Shadows which have no abiding*. When we are most elated with our present imaginary Happiness, in these dear Enjoyments; and think least of parting, then may our Hopes be suddenly cut off, *our Harp be turned into Mourning, and our Organ into the Voice of them that weep*. Tho' these are near and dear to us as our own Souls; yet they must be rent from us, or we from them. They as well as we, are always liable to be *soon cut off, and fly away*, *Psal. xc. 10.* Those that have been most pleasant and delightful to us, must have their Beauty fade as a Moth. Their sweet Countenances must be covered with a livid Ghastliness. Their Lips that fed us with so much comfort, must be sealed up in perpetual Silence. Their pious Care and Pains for us and ours, must end in a total Inactivity: And how pleasant soever their Company has been to us, we shall be no longer able to endure the Putrefaction and Rottennets, into which they must be turned; but must bury them out of our Sight. Thus do these *Desires of our Eyes* fly from us. *Their Breath goeth forth, they return to their Earth, on that same Day their*

Thoughts perish. Psal. cxlvi. 4. And this may be done *with a Stroke.* Our Flowers may fall at once before the Scythe of Death, our Delights at once be cut off, and we left desolate and distressed, like *Rachel mourning for her Children, because they are not.* --- If we enquire into the Meaning of this awful Dispensation, we may think of such Reasons as these for it.

1. One Reason may be that they may be removed to a better Place, and to better Company. That they may be with Him that can do more for 'em, and be better to 'em, than we could. *They depart that they may be with Christ.* Phil. i. 23. They leave us, that they may be *ever with the Lord.* 1. Thes. iv. 17. They are gone, that they may put off all Sin and Sorrow, that their Harps may no more be hanged upon the Willows, that their Imperfections, Tryals, or Temptations may no more grieve or disquiet their Souls. They are gone, where they'll never desire to return again, to this State of Care and Fatigue, Affliction and Trouble. They are inheriting the Reward of their *Patient Continuance in well doing*: and *rejoicing with Joy unspeakable, and full of Glory.*

2. Another Reason of this Dispensation may be to teach us the Vanity of this World, and it's most desirable Enjoyments; and to quicken us in the Pursuit of a better Portion. *Vanity and Vexation of Spirit, is the Motto of all earthly Fruitions.* But we consider too *little* when *the Secret of God is upon*

our Tabernacle, when the Almighty is yet with us, and when our Wives and Children, are round about us. Then we are ready to say with Peter at the Mount of Transfiguration, it is good for us to be here. God is therefore pleased in Mercy, as well as Sovereignty, to take down this pleasant Scene, to bring a dark Cloud upon our relative Comforts, to take from us our Strength, the Joy of our Glory, the Desire of our Eyes; and that whereupon we set our Minds, our Sons and our Daughters; that He may show us by Experience, what the World is in it's brightest Appearance, how unworthy to be depended upon, or eagerly pursued; and to teach us, what Necessity we are in of a better Relation, and of a better Portion, that cannot be taken from us. We are loudly called upon by such Bereavements, not to lay up Treasures for our selves, and not be rich towards God, Luk. xii. 21. But to lay up for our selves Treasures in Heaven, where neither Moth nor Rust doth corrupt; and where Thieves do not break through and steal. Mat. vi. 20.

3. This may also be, for the Tryal and Exercise of our Graces. Earthly Props are knockt from under us, to bring us to truit only in the Lord. In this Way, God is pleased to make a Tryal of our Faith, and see whether we can herein approve our selves the Children of Abraham, by resigning our dearest Relations to Him; and by valuing Him above them all. We read Heb. xi. 17. **By Faith, Abraham**

Abraham when he was tryed, offered up Isaac, and he that had received the Promises, offered up his only begotten Son. This is a Means also, for the Tryal of our *Patience*, whether we can quietly lye at Gods Footstool under such amazing Dispensations, and kiss the Rod that smites us, saying with *Job*, *the Lord gives, and the Lord takes away, blessed be the Name of the Lord*, *Job* i. 21. Or with *David*, *I was dumb, I opened not my Mouth, because thou didst it*. *Psal.* xxxix 9. This also is a Means, to put us upon the Exercise of *Repentance*. This Glass presents to us, a sad Prospect of the Vileness of our Sins, that make such dreadful Havock of us; that have already killed our *Husband*, our *Wife*, our *Children*, or other dear *Relation*; and will certainly destroy us also for ever, if they are indulged. O how hateful must our Sins appear to us, if viewed in this Light! I may add once more, This is a Means, to try the Sincerity of our *Love* to God. Our Lord *Jesus Christ* is saying to us, by these distressing Providences, as he once did to *Peter*: *Lovest thou me more than these?* He is hereby putting us to the tryal, whether we can look from a dead *Relation*, to a living *Saviour*; and give him those Affections, which have been placed upon Objects to be enjoyed no more. In a Word, the Furnace is heated to refine us, to quicken us in a Course of dilligent Duty; and to make us more seriously religious, spiritual, and heavenly; that we may say as *Pi.* cxix. 67.

Before

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~~Where~~ *I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy Word.*

4. These Things may also befall us, to quicken us in our Preparations to follow after: By this, Death is brought near to us; and we have most sensible Convictions of our Frailty and Mortality. *Our Fathers where are they? Our Wives or Children where are they?* They are gone to the House appointed for all living. Death has violently snatched them out of our Arms; and carried them to his dark Abode. And we are as dead as they, as to any suitable Consideration, if we don't keep up a lively Sence, that we must follow them; and must quickly encounter the same King of Terrors. *We must go to them, tho' they can't return to us.* 1 Sam. xii. 23. How infinitely then does it concern us, to be also ready, to have *our Lamps girt and our Lights burning*; and to be followers of those that by Faith and Patience, have inherited the Promises. Heb. vi. 12. — And now, let us make some brief Improvement of this awful Truth.

1. Hence, dearest *Relations* should so live together, as to expect a parting Time.

We should think much of this in our most agreeable Circumstances, that our Hearts be not too much engaged; and that we ben't too much taken with present Enjoyments. For, how near and dear soever we may be to one another now, Death will quickly come, and make a mournful Separation between the dearest

dearest of us all. Therefore, *if we live many Years together, and rejoice in them all, let us remember the Days of Darkness; for they shall be many.* Ecl. xi. 8. We should live in continued Expectation of Parting, that it ben't a Surprise to us if it comes suddenly. *This I say Brethren the Time is short, it remains, that they that have Wives, be as tho' they had none.* 1 Cor. vii. 29.

But, this also should make us especially careful and watchful, not to grieve and afflict one another, the little uncertain Time we are indulged each others Company. We must quickly be pulled asunder, never to see one another more, till we meet in Eternity. We should therefore endeavour to render our selves as pleasant and delightful as possible, that we may not have sad Occasion to lament our unkind Behaviour to our departed *Relations*, when they are taken from us.

But we should especially do what we can for each others *Souls*, while we have Opportunity. We should *exhort one another daily, while it is called to Day.* Heb. iii. 13, and take all possible Care and Pains, to quicken one another in our spiritual Progress; and to further each other in the Way to Heaven. Thus should *Husbands* and *Wives* live together, as fellow *Heirs of the Grace of Life*; and improve all suitable Opportunities, in the most endearing and affectionate Manner, to exhort, admonish, counsel and comfort one another: not
being

contented to live happily together here,
blessed Prospect of rejoicing toge-
ternity. And thus *Parents*, should
; bear their *Children* always upon their
before God, in their fervent Prayers
'em; but by a most careful Education,
religious Instruction, and pathetical Admoni-
ions, *travail in Birth, till they see Christ formed*
in them. And thus, should all near *Relations*:
manifest their Love to each other, by loving
their *Souls*; and doing what they can in their
respective Stations, to promote their eternal
Interest. And this should be our present
Concern. Now is the Opportunity, to Mor-
row may be too late. We should therefore
in this Case, attend that Advice, *Ecl. ix 10.*
Whatsoever thy Hand findeth to do, do it with thy
Might: for there is no Work, nor Device, nor
Knowledge, nor Wisdom in the Grave, whither thou
goest.

2. Hence, there is nothing but *Christ* an
enduring Portion. Every Thing else is liable
to the Blasts of Providence; and to be hurried
away from us, as Chaff before the Wind.
Riches take Wing and fly away, as an Eagle towards
Heaven. *Prov. xxiii. 5.* And in the same
Manner, may our Honour, Ease, Health,
Peace, and any other Temporal Prosperity
fly from us, when it's least expected; and
when they are most wanted. And thus,
Husband and Wife, Children and nearest Friends,
may be suddenly and unexpectedly removed,

and

and leave us in bitter and disconsolate Circumstances, mourning over their Hearse, ah my *Father*, or ah my *Mother*, ah my *Wife*, or ah my *Children*, ah my *Brother*, or ah my *Sister*, ah my *Glory*. alluding to Jer. xxii. 18. But here's our Comfort, there's no Cause for a Christian to lament a lost *Christ*; and to cry ah my *Saviour*. *For I am persuaded, that neither Death nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor Things present, nor Things to come, nor Height, nor Depth, nor any other Creature, shall be able to separate us from the Love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.* Rom. viii. 28, 39. *Christ* therefore, is the Portion that we should earnestly seek after; for tho' every Thing else be fleeting and transitory, *Christ* will stand us in stead. Tho' as for *Man*, his Days are as Grass, as the Flower of the Fields, so he flourisheth. Psal. ciii. 15. Yet an Interest in *Christ* will stand by us; and make us happy thro' all our Changes, even unto Eternity.

Prop. 3. When Relations are taken away from us, 'tis the holy Hand of God upon us. All the Wheels of Providence, are under God's immediate Eye and Direction. *The Hairs of our Heads, are all numbred.* Mat. x. 30. and not one of them can fall to the Ground, without our heavenly Father. Whatever Means, or whatever instrumental Causes there may be of our dark and mournful Circumstances; yet the Stroke is from the Hand of God. *Shall there be Evil in the City, and the*

Lord hath not done it? Amos iii. 6. Can our Families be dreadfully broken; and our Glory brought into the Dust, and *the Lord hath not done it?* No that cannot be. He has by unsearchable Methods, brought about the Desolating Calamity, both as to the Means and the Event. So that the Nature; the Time; and the Degree of our Distress, is what a just, wise, and faithful God has seen best for us. But the Time won't allow me to enlarge upon the Explication of this Proposition. I shall therefore conclude, with a Word or two of Improvement. And

1. This instructs us to seriously view, and carefully improve, the Hand of God in such Dispensations. When such Calamities come suddenly upon us, like an armed Man, they fill us with Horror and Amazement. Our distressed Souls, are ready to be continually poring upon the Objects of our Grief and Wo. Our dear departed Friends, and our Misery by their Departure, are never out of our Minds. It is the constant Language of our Hearts; *behold and see, if there be any Sorrow like unto my Sorrow.* But it concerns us to stop a little, and consider whence our Affliction comes; and *what means the Heat of that Anger,* that has brought it upon us. Were it from the Hands of Man, it would be indeed intollerable: but it is from the Hand of that God, who does all Things well, *who is a King, whose Work is perfect; and all his Ways Judgment.*

We must say to all the Murmurings,
 quietments that agitate our Breasts, as our Lord
 said to the ruffling Waves of the Sea; *Peace
 be still.* We must with humble Prostration,
 cast our Selves at the Foot of his Sovereignty,
 saying *it is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth
 Him good. Let the Possessors strive with the Possessors
 of the Earth: but let not Man contend with
 his Maker.* We are indeed by such Provi-
 dences, loudly called upon to Repentance and
 Reformation, to *search and try our Ways; and
 turn again to the Lord.* Lam. iii. 40. We are
 hereby alarmed to more Dilligence, more
 Wakefulness, and more Heavenliness. And
 we are stupid indeed, if this be not the Effect
 of our Tryals. But then we must be awfully
 careful of repining under the Smart of the
 Rod.

2. This directly leads us to consider, the
 Author of this much lamented *Bereavement*,
 which is the mournful Occasion of so many
 Sighs, Tears, and dejected Countenances in
 the Congregation. It is God has done it. It
 is the Hand of that God upon us, that can do
 us no Wrong. And since I am entred upon
 this melancholly Theme, I cannot forbear
 taking some Notice (to the Praise of our Lord
 Jesus Christ, the Author of all gracious and
 desirable Qualifications) of the truly amiable
 Character, of this excellent *Handmaid* of the
 Lord, whose Obsequies we are now attend-
 ing.

~~She~~ ascended from truly honourable and excellent *Parents*. Her *Fathers* Name, will be as Oynment poured forth, in the Churches where he dwelt, as long as superiour Parts, shining Piety, uncommon Learning and Usefulness, are esteemed among 'em, Her Proficiency under such excellent Education, early appeared; and recommended her to all that knew how to value true Merit. Her intellectual Powers were superiour to most of her Sex. She had learned of Christ, to be *meek and lowly of Spirit*; and was justly admired of all that knew her, for her uncommon and exemplary Sweetness of Temper, and courteous affable Deportment, towards all she conversed with. She was a constant and steady Friend, to all that she professed Kindness to. She was of a generous and bountiful Disposition, upon all proper Occasions. Such was her Prudence and wise Conduct in her Family, that the Heart of her Husband, might safely rest in her. Such was her Demeanour in the Character of a *Parent*, as well as of a *Wife*, that her Children have Cause to rise up, and call her blessed. Her Cheerfulness without Levity, her Gravity without Austerity or Moroseness, rendered her pleasant and amiable, to all that knew her. But the Crown of all her Attainments, was her *Piety* towards God; in Comparison of which, all other excellent Accomplishments, are but Tolls to fit of the Centre of the brightest Jewel. She maintain'd a close

close Walk with God, in all the Duties of Religion. She would not be hindred, by any Thing but inevitable Impediments, from a devout Attendance, both upon the secret and publick Worship of God, in their Season. She enjoy'd the Comfort of this whilst she lived; and triumphed over the most ghastly Approach of the King of Terrors, at her Death; breathing out her expiring Soul into the Embraces of her Saviour, with Desire and Delight; which she expressed by almost the last Words that ever she spake. Thus to her, *to live was Christ, and to dye was Gain.* And what remains for us, but to be *followers of such as she, wherein they followed Christ.* --- And now I'll conclude my Address, with one *Reflection* more upon this *Proposition.*

3. This gives us Grounds of Comfort, under our most afflicting *Bereavements.* Our precious and most lovely *Relations* are indeed gone, they are *lain down and rise not, till the Heavens be no more, they shall not awake; nor be raised out of their Sleep,* but then, they are taken away by a gracious Father, both to them and us. He that hath done this, knows how to bring Light out of this Darkneis, and Comfort out of this Heaviness; and blessed be His Name, He has promised that He will do it.

But I would more particularly apply this to *you Sir,* that are at this Time a sad Commentary upon my Text; and ~~like~~ like a Dove bereaved of his

his

his Mate, lamenting the Removal of that excellent Companion, who has so lately taken Wing to her Fathers House, and her Saviours Embraces. I know that your Loss is exceeding great; and that you must be even divested of Humanity, not to feel a most sensible and affecting Impression, from such a terrible STROKE. But God has done it; and as He has done it in Love to *her*, to bring her to the more speedy and immediate Enjoyment of Himself; so I doubt not, but you'll find by happy Experience, that it is in Love to *you* also. He will fulfil His precious Promise, in Rom. viii. 28. that *all Things shall work together for Good, to those that love God.* And you shall certainly find, when you come to enjoy her again, that this *Stroke* was best for you. He is faithful that has promised, that *our light Affliction which is but for a Moment, worketh for us, a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory.* 2 Cor. iv. 17. She is gone but a little before you, to the Possession of her Inheritance, where you may hope quickly to meet her with Raptures of exceeding joy, and joy'n with her in *Anthems* of Praise, to *Him that sits upon the Throne, and to the Lamb forever and ever.*