

Dr. WHITAKER'S

D I S C O U R S E

A G A I N S T

TORYISM.



AN ANTIDOTE AGAINST

T O R Y I S M.

O R T H E

CURSE of MEROZ,

IN A DISCOURSE ON JUDGES 5TH 23,

By NATHANIEL WHITAKER D. D.

PASTOR OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CONGREGATION IN
S A L E M, STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS-BAY.

PUBLISHED AT THE DESIRE OF MANY WHO HEARD IT.

Dedicated to his EXCELLENCY,
GENERAL WASHINGTON.

AND HE SAID, WHAT HAST THOU DONE? THE VOICE OF THY BROTHER'S BLOOD CRIETH UNTO ME FROM THE GROUND.

AND NOW THOU ART CURSED FROM THE EARTH, WHICH HATH OPENED HER MOUTH TO RECEIVE THY BROTHER'S BLOOD FROM THY HAND!
JEHOVAH.

NEW BURY - P O R T :

PRINTED BY J O H N M Y C A L L,

MDCCLXXVII

To his EXCELLENCY,
GEORGE WASHINGTON Esq;
Captain, General, and Commander in
chief of the Forces of the UNITED
STATES of AMERICA.

May it please your Excellency

WITH the frankness, and openness, of one determined to live and die free, I have, in the following discourse, divulged some of my thoughts respecting the present times: And finding by your Proclamation of January 25th, 1777, you were executing the very plan I had just drawn up for public view; I could not think of one more likely to patronize a discourse on this subject; or whose influence could make it so extensively useful. I therefore beg leave to present it to your favorable notice.

Should all your Soldiers be inspired with the sentiments of love and benevolence here recommended, they, like their General, would be Heroes indeed; and with serene bravery, wing their way through legions of opposing Tyrants, to victory and triumph, to glory and renown in this world, and eternal rest and peace in the world to come.

That your Excellency, through the whole of your martial race, may command an army of such good soldiers, and go before them from conquering to conquer those enemies of God and man, that invade our rights, 'till they shal' turn back ashamed, and leave these rising States for ever unmolested; and that you, with your band of Heroes, may long live to enjoy the blessings of that peace and liberty God shall make you the happy instruments of restoring to our bleeding land, and still to bless us with continued examples of patience, valor, and benevolence, and that in the close you may go before them, and millions more, who with you pursue the happiness of mankind, into that kingdom, where love, peace and joy, shall compose an untading crown of glory, is the fervent prayer of, May it please your Excellency, your Excellency's most obedient, humble Servant,

NATHANIEL WHITAKER.

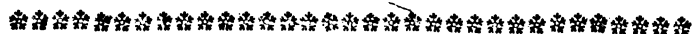


AN ANTIDOTE AGAINST

T O R Y I S M,

OR THE

C U R S E O F M E R O Z.



JUDGES, CHAP. 5, VERSE 23.

Curse ye Meroz, said the Angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord, against the mighty.

THE Sum of the law of nature, as well as of the written law, is love. Love to God and man properly exercised in tender feelings of the heart, and beneficent actions of life, constitutes perfect holiness. The Gospel breathes the same spirit, and acknowledges none as the disciples of Christ, but those who love (not their friends only) but even their enemies. Bless and curse not, is one of the laws of his kingdom. Yet the aversion of men to this good and benevolent law, prompts them to frequent violations of it, which is the source of all the evils we feel or fear: And so lost are many to all the tender feelings required in this law, as to discover their enmity to their Creator, by opposing the happiness of his creatures, and spreading misery and ruin among them.

When such characters as these present themselves to our view, if we are possessed with the spirit of love, required in the law, and gospel, we must feel a holy abhorrence of them. Love it

by God, to have the honor of conquering this potent king; for tho' other tribes mustered and were ready for the war, yet it seems *Zebulon* and *Naphtali* only, were the people that jeopardized their lives to the death, in the high places of the field. § With this little army, raised from two tribes only out of twelve, † *Deborah* and *Barak* march out and wage war against their oppressor, for the recovery of their freedom.

Jabin, it seems, had no knowledge, or thought that Israel was arming against him. The first intelligence brought him, was, that *Barak* was gone up to mount *Tabor*, that he had already marched, and was on his way to invade his country. Some traitors, who pretended friendship to Israel, carried him the news; hoping, doubtless, to ingratiate themselves with *Jabin*, by giving him the earliest notice possible of this revolt.

No doubt, both *Jabin* and *Sisera* despised this small body of undisciplined, unarmed troops; and were confident they should carry all before them, and quickly reduce those rebels (as he doubtless termed them) to their former obedience. But God, who disposes of all events, not only gave the victory to *Israel*, but utterly destroyed the whole host of *Jabin*, that not one escaped, except *Sisera* the Captain General, and him God delivered to be slain by the hand of a woman. Women have sometimes been the deliverers of their country; and can, when God inspires them with courage, face the proudest foe. O how easy is it with God to save from the greatest danger, and by the weakest instruments, conquer the most powerful enemies?

§ Context ver. 18.

† Some people, not the inhabitants of *Meroz*, fear the event of our present struggle, (1) on account of our inability, however we may exert ourselves, to oppose the power of the tyrant; and hence, tho' desirous of freedom, through want of faith in the power and grace of God, dare not act; and so weaken the cause they wish might succeed. Or (2) They despair of success because of so many in these States, who are lukewarm in the cause, and secretly or openly friends to the tyrant. And (3) some serious people despair of success because of the abounding sins of our land.

For the relief and establishment of such, I treat them to consider, that none of the twelve tribes are mentioned as entering the field, but *Zebulon* and *Naphtali*; and not another as remotely favouring the cause, but *Ephraim*, *Benjamin*, *Issachar*, and *Manasse* of the family of *Caaleb*. Their divisions then were much greater than our's. For the divisions of *Reuben* there were great searcbings of heart.---As to their power, their army was but ten thousand; and these without arms: for *Deborah* informs us, that neither shield nor spear was seen among 40 000 in Israel. As to their sins, they had greatly revolted and chosen them new Gods, which was high treason against their king. But notwithstanding all these discouragements, we find victory declaring for them on their repentance, and proper exertion of the little power they had. This surely must remove all our fears in our present struggle, unl's impotence and unbelief still rules in our hearts; by which we shall incur the censure of *Moses*.

Deborah and *Barak*, deeply impressed with a sense of God's mercy in this deliverance, sang this song as an expression of their joy and gratitude : From which, would time allow, many instructive lessons might be deduced. But the words of my text lead us more directly to consider some things most worthy our attention at this day ; and therefore I have chosen them as the theme of the following discourse. And in them we may observe :

1. THE crime for which this bitter curse is denounced on the inhabitants of *Meroz*. Probably this was some town or State in *Israel*, who being called to furnish their quota of men and money for the war, through fear of bad success, and, in that case, of a heavier burden ; or from a secret lurch to the enemy, arising from hope of Court preferment, or favors already bestowed on some of their leading men ; or from some other sinister motive, thought best to lie still, and not meddle in the quarrel. So much is certain ; they did not go with *Barak* to the war. The crime they are charged with, is not their aiding, assisting, or furnishing the enemy, or holding a secret correspondence with, or taking up arms to help them : They are not charged as laying plots to circumvent the rest, or striving to discourage their neighbours from going to the war ; or as terrifying others with descriptions of the irresistible power of *Jabin's* nine hundred chariots of iron, and the like : No, the inhabitants of *Meroz* were innocent people, compared to these ; they were only negatively wicked ; they only failed in their duty ; they did not arm to recover their liberties when wrested from them by the hand of tyranny. This is all the fault charged on them ; yet for this they incurred the fearful curse in my text. Now, if for mere negligence they deserved this curse, what must they have deserved who aided and assisted the enemy ? surely a sevenfold bitterer curse.

2. OBSERVE the curse pronounced ; *Curse ye Meroz, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof*. Their conduct, on that occasion, was such as deserved a severe punishment from the other States, who are commanded to separate them unto evil, as a just reward of their neglect.

3. WE observe by whom this curse was to be pronounced and inflicted. Not by *Deborah* and *Barak* alone, in a fit of anger ; as prophane persons in a rage curse their neighbours, and

undertake to punish them ; such often pronounce curses without cause ; but the curse causeless shall not come. This curse was to be pronounced and inflicted by all the people, who are here required to be of one heart, and engage seriously, religiously and determinately in cursing them, and as Gods ministers, to execute his wrath upon them. We may not suppose, that this work was left to the people at large, or to a mob ; but the rulers are first to proceed against them, * and all the people to support and assist them in this work ; and so all were to join, as one man, to curse them, and that bitterly, i. e. they were fully and without hesitation to condemn them to severe punishment, and inflict it on them. They were not to deal gingerly with them, nor palliate their offence. They are allowed to make no excuses for them, nor to plead “ that they were of a different opinion, that they thought it their duty not to take up arms against their king that ruled over them, but to submit to the higher powers : That liberty of conscience ought to be allowed to every one, and that it would be hard to punish them for acting their own judgments. † No such pleas might be made for them, nor one word spoken in their favour, their sin being against the great law of love and light of nature, but all, with full purpose of heart, were to curse those cowardly, selfish, cringing, lukewarm, half-way, two-faced people, and to treat them as out-casts, and unworthy the common protection or society of others.

4. OBSERVE by whose command they were required to curse *Meroz*. It was not by the command of *Deborah* and *Barak*, but of God himself ; yea by the command of Jesus Christ, the meek and compassionate Saviour of men. *Curse ye Meroz, said the Angel of the Lord*. This was the Angel of God's presence, who then fought for *Israel*, and who was so offended with the people of *Meroz* for their selfishness and indifference in this important cause, that he not only cursed them himself, but commands all the people to curse them, and inflict his wrath on them in this world.

* This is evident from the order of Government God established in *Israel*.

† Liberty of conscience is often pleaded in excuse for the worst of crimes. In matters of mere conscience, the plea is valid, but in nothing else. These are matters of mere conscience in which no one are concerned but God and the person acting ; as in matters of faith and worship. But when actions respect society, and become injurious to the civil rights of men, they are proper subjects of civil laws, and may be punished, notwithstanding the plea for liberty of conscience.

5 **OBSERVE** the circumstance which aggravated their crime, viz. the enemy that enslaved them was mighty. Had the foe been weak and contemptible, there had been less need of their help. But when a powerful tyrant oppressed them, and they were called upon to unite with their suffering brethren in shaking off his yoke, and all their strength little enough, to oppose him, then to excuse themselves, was highly criminal, and in effect to join with the tyrant to rivet slavery and misery on the whole nation. This was highly provoking to God, whose great end is to diffuse happiness, and not misery, among his creatures, and never punishes, but when his subjects oppose this design.

THIS was the crisis when their all lay at stake. They well knew that their brethren (however they themselves might be distinguished with court favours by the tyrant) were groaning under cruel bondage: But as selfishness renders people callous and unfeeling to the distresses of others, so they were easy and satisfied to see their brethren tortured by the unrelenting hand of oppression, if so be they might sleep in a whole skin. They were contented others should go forth and endure the hardships of war, but refused to engage in the work, or bear any part of the burden with them, though all was hazarded through their neglect. How base was this conduct, while they knew the strength of the enemy? This consideration was enough to have engaged every one, not lost to all the feelings of humanity, to the firmest union, and the most vigorous exertions. But these servile wretches would rather bear the yoke, and see the whole land involved in slavery, than enter the field, and share the glory of regaining their freedom from a powerful foe. They preferred their present ease, or some court favours, with chains and slavery, to the glorious freedom they were born to enjoy.

FROM this view of the text and context, we may deduce the following doctrinal observations,

- I. THAT the cause of Liberty is the cause of God and truth.
- II. That to take arms and repel force by force, when our Liberties are invaded, is well pleasing to God.
- III. THAT it is lawful to levy war against those who oppress us, even when they are not in arms against us.

IV. THAT indolence and backwardness in taking arms, and exerting ourselves in the service of our Country, when called thereto by the public voice, in order to recover and secure our freedom, is an heinous sin in the sight of God.

V. That God requires a people, struggling for their Liberties, to treat such of the community who will not join them, as open enemies, and to reject them as unworthy the privileges which others enjoy.

I. THE cause of freedom is the cause of God. To open this, I will enquire

1. WHAT we are to understand by Liberty, or freedom, And then
2. PROVE that this is the cause of God.

I. WHAT is meant by Liberty or freedom?

It is sufficient to my present purpose, to distinguish Liberty, into *Moral, Natural, and Civil*.*

MORAL Liberty lies in an ability or opportunity to act or conduct as the agent pleases.

HE that is not hindered by any external force from acting as he chuses or wills to act, is perfectly free in a Moral sense; and so far as he possesses this freedom, so far, and no farther is he a Moral, accountable creature, and his actions worthy of praise or blame.

BY Natural Liberty I mean, that freedom of action and conduct which all men have a right to, antecedent to their being

* I purposely omit what Dr. Price, in his excellent observations on civil liberty p. 2. calls Physical liberty; which I ven ore to say, with deference to this great man, is not to be found, as he defines it, in any intelligent agent in the universe. For that actions may be "properly ours" he makes them the effects of self-determination only, "without the operation of any foreign cause." This at one blow, demolishes all the power and value of motives, which are always foreign to the actions they produce, as the cause is to the effect. And thus the issue is, that we must act without any reason, motive, aim, or end of our actions, in order that they may be properly ours own. But this reduces us to mere Machines,

members of society. This Mr. *Locke* defines to be "That state or condition in which all men naturally are to order all their actions, and dispose of themselves and possessions as they think fit, within the bounds of the law of nature, without asking leave, or depending on the will of any man." In this state all men are equal, and no one hath a right to govern or controul another: And the law of nature, or the eternal reason and fitness of things, is to be the only rule of his conduct; of the meaning of which, every one is to be his own judge.

BUT since the corruption of nature by sin, the lusts and passions of men so blind their minds, and harden their hearts, that this perfect law of love is little considered, and less practised; so that a state of nature, which would have been a state of perfect freedom and happiness had man continued in his first rectitude, is a state of war, rapine and murder. Hence arises an absolute necessity that societies should form themselves into politic bodies, in order to enact laws for the public safety, and appoint some to put them in execution, that the good may be encouraged, and the vicious deterred from evil practices: And these laws should always be founded on the law of nature.

† HENCE it appears, that perfect civil Liberty differs from natural, only in this, that in a natural state our actions, persons, and possessions, are under the direction, judgment and controul of none but ourselves; but in a civil state, under the direction of others, according to the laws of that state in which we live; which, by the supposition, are perfectly agreeable to the law of nature. In the first case, private judgment; in the second, the public judgment of the sense of the law of nature is to be the rule of conduct. When this is the case, civil Liberty is perfect, and every one enjoys all that freedom which God designed for his rational creatures in a social state. All Liberty beyond this is mere licentiousness, a liberty to sin, which is the worst of slavery. But when any laws are enacted, which cross the law of nature, there civil Liberty is invaded, and God and man justly offended. Therefore when those appointed to enact and exe-

1 Civil Liberty is the freedom of bodies politic, or States. This is well defined by Dr. Price p. 2. to be "The power of a civil society or state to govern itself by its own discretion; or by laws of its own making, without being subject to any foreign discretion, or the impositions of any extraneous power."

erate laws, invade this Liberty † they violate their trust, and oppress their subjects, and their constituents may lawfully depose them by force of arms, if they refuse to reform.

Now if it be unlawful for magistrates in a State, to bind their subjects by laws contrary to the law of nature, and if in this case it is lawful for their subjects to depose them; it follows, *a fortiori*, that should the rulers of one State assume a power to bind the people of another State, who never intrusted them with a legislative power, by such unrighteous laws, those oppressed people would be under no kind of obligation to submit to them; but ought, if in their power, to oppose them and recover their Liberty. Therefore the freedom of a society or State consists in acting according to their own choice, within the bounds of the law of nature, in governing themselves, independent of all other States. This is the Liberty wherewith God hath made every State free, and which no power on earth may lawfully abridge, but by their own consent: Nor can they lawfully consent to have it abridged, but where it appears for the greater good of society in general: And when this end cannot be attained, they have a right to resume their former freedom, if in their power.

I proceed—

II. To prove that the cause of civil Liberty is the cause of God.

THIS follows from what hath been now said. For if the law of nature is the law of God; and if God hath given every society or State, liberty, independent of all other States, to act according to their own choice in governing themselves, within the bounds of the law of nature; then it follows, that this freedom is of God; and he that is an advocate for it, espouses the cause of God; and he that opposes it, opposes God himself. This Liberty hath God not only given, but entailed on all men; so that they cannot resign it to any creature without sin. Therefore should any State, through fear, resign this freedom to any other power, it would be offensive to God. Thus, had *America* submitted to, and acquiesced in the declaration of the *British* Parliament, "That they have a right to bind us in all cases whatsoever," we should have greatly provoked God, by

† By enacting and enforcing laws contrary to the law of nature,

granting that prerogative to men, which belongs to God only! Nor could we have had reason to hope for pardon and the Divine favour on our land, without unfeigned repentance: But as repentance implies a change of conduct, as well as of mind, so we must have exerted ourselves to undo what we had done, and by every method in our power, to cast off the chains, and resume our Liberty :

BUT to leave the dim light of reason, let us hear what Divine revelation says in my text and context.

ISRAEL were a free, independent common wealth, planted by God in *Canaan*, in much the same manner that he planted us in *America*. The nations around always viewed them with an envious and jealous eye : As well they might, since they drove out seven nations more powerful than themselves, and possessed their land. But when by their grievous sins they provoked God, he often permitted those neighbouring nations to invade their rights, that they might be brought to a sense of their sin and duty.

Jabin the king of *Canaan*, one of those States, was God's rod to humble them. He invaded *Israel*, robbed them of their rights, and held them in slavery twenty years : In all which he acted the part of a cruel tyrant, and provoked God, to his own destruction. *Jabin* had long ruled over *Israel* ; but this gave him no right : His dominion was still mere usurpation, as he robbed them of the Liberty God had given them : And with a single view to recover this and punish the invader, God commanded them to wage war on the tyrant, and shake off his yoke. They obey the Divine mandate, assemble their forces, call on the various States to join them in the glorious conflict : And God himself curses those who would not assist to punish this oppressor.

No doubt *Jabin* called this Rebellion, and made proclamation that all who were found in arms, or any way aiding the revolt, should be deemed and treated as rebels, and their estates confiscated ; but that all who would make their submissions, should enjoy all their privileges, as before, at his sovereign disposal. A glorious offer ! How worthy the joyful and thankful acceptance of men born to freedom ! Rather, where's the wretch so fordid as not to feel this as an insult to human nature ? or where's the christian that does not view it as a reproach of

his God ? and who will not, with good *Hezekiah*, spread before the Lord, in humble prayer, the words of this *Rabshekah*, published to reproach our God, as unable to defend us, though engaged in his cause ? Or where is the man, so lost to all noble and generous feelings, that would not chuse to die in the field of martial glory, rather than accept such insulting terms of peace, or rather of misery ; to live and see himself, his friends, his wife, children and country, subjugated to the arbitrary will and disposal of a merciless tyrant ?

But doubtless these inviting, gracious terms of peace, had great influence on some. The inhabitants of *Meroz* seem to have been such dastardly, low-spirited, court sycophants ; and also many in the tribe of *Reuben*, for whose divisions there were great searchings of heart. These probably trembled at the power of *Jabin*, and thought him invincible, though opposing God himself, whose cause they were called to espouse. Some might call the war rebellion, and others, by open or secret practices, discourage and weaken the cause.

THIS is very applicable to our present case. We are declared rebels by the king of *England* : His servants offer pardon to all who will lay themselves at his feet to dispose of as he shall see fit, and “ to bind them, their children and estates, at his pleasure, in all cases whatsoever.” What gracious terms of peace ! Must not this yoke fit with peculiar ease and pleasure on the necks of free-born *Americans* !—Yet, with horror be it spoken, there are free-born sons of *America*, so lost to all sense of honor, Liberty, and every noble feeling, as to join the cry, and press for submission. O tell it not in *Gath*, publish it not in the streets of *Ashkelon*.

WE have some, but blessed be God, that we have no more, of the inhabitants of *Meroz* scattered among us ; some whose endeavours to divide us, cause great searchings of heart. But be it known to them, and to all men, that they, as *Meroz*, are fighting against God. This assertion is confirmed by the curse denounced on *Meroz* by Gods command ; for had they not opposed him, he would not have cursed them. They then were the rebels, in the judgment of God, and not those who took up arms to recover their liberties : Rebels against the God of Heaven ; and therefore fell under his, and his people’s curse ; as all those shall, who oppose, or neglect to promote the like glorious cause.

FROM what hath been said, the truth of the second observation appears ; viz.

II. THAT to take arms, and repel force by force, when our Liberties are invaded, is well pleasing to God.

THIS is a natural consequence from what is said above, and from the text itself. *Deborah* and *Barak*, in taking arms against *Jabin*, acted agreeable to the law of nature, which is the law of love ; were also particularly excited, directed and commanded thereto by God himself. † They did not by this war, aim at dominion over others, nor seek to deprive any of their natural rights ; but only to recover and secure the Liberties and rights which had been wrested from them ; that they might thereby spread peace and happiness through all the tribes of *Israel* ; while the real happiness of others would not thereby be diminished. This, by the law of nature, was sufficient to justify them. If then they conformed to the law of love in taking up arms ; and if God required them to make war on *Jabin* ; then it was undeniably pleasing to him. But if God approved their conduct in this case, he certainly will approve the like conduct in all similar cases. Therefore when one country or State invades the liberties of another ; it is lawful and well pleasing to God for the oppressed to defend their rights by force of arms : Yea, to neglect this, when there is a rational prospect of success, is a sin, a sin against God, and discovers a want of that benevolence, and desire of the happiness of our fellow creatures, which is the highest glory of the saints.

I need not spend time to prove that our struggle with *Great-Britain* is very similar to that of *Israel* with *Jabin*. As they had, so have we been long oppressed by a power that never had any equitable right to our land, or to rule over us, but by our own consent, and agreeable to a solemn compact. When they violated this, all their right ceased ; and they could have no better claim to dominion, than *Jabin* had over *Israel*. A power indeed has been usurped by the court of *Great-Britain*, “ to bind us in all cases whatsoever : Which claim hath already produced many most unrighteous and oppressive laws, which they have attempted to enforce by their fleets and armies : In all which they can be no more justified, than *Jabin* in his tyranny over *Israel*. Therefore if it was their duty to fight for the recovery

C

† Judges, 4. 6, 7.

of their freedom, it must likewise be ours. And to neglect this, when called to it by the public voice, will expose us to the curse of *Meroz*. Yea,

III. It is lawful, yea duty, to levy war against those who oppress us, even when they are not in arms against us, if there be a rational probability of success.

I say, if there be a rational probability of success. For the law of love or nature will not justify opposition to the greatest oppression, when such opposition must be attended with greater evils than submission. Therefore the primitive christians, and many of later ages, did not oppose their cruel persecutors; as it would, without a miracle, have brought on them inevitable destruction. But where there is a rational probability of success, any people may lawfully, and it is their duty, to levy war on those who rob them of their rights, whether they be rulers in the State they live in, or any more distant powers, even before war is waged against them.

THE truth of this appears from the instance before us. *Jabin*, at this time was not at war with *Israel*; no, they had been conquered and under his government twenty years; and nothing was heard, but the groans and cries of the oppressed. How then, it may be asked, can they be justified in commencing a war?—Doubtless they had often petitioned for redress of grievances, as we have done, and to as little purpose. What more could they do in a peaceable way?—They were reduced to the dreadful alternative, either tamely to submit themselves and children after them, to the galling yoke of merciless tyranny; or wage war on the tyrant. The last was the measure God approved, and therefore, by a special command, enjoined it on them. This we are sure he would not have done, had it been offensive to him. He did not require *Israel* to wait till *Jabin* had invaded their country and struck the first blow, (as we did in respect to our *British* oppressors.) but while all was peace in his kingdom, for ought we find, God commands *Israel* to raise an army, and invade the tyrant's dominions.

THE moral reason of this is obvious: For usurpation or oppression, is offensive war, already levied. Any State which usurps a power over another State, or rulers who, by a wanton use of

their power, oppress their subjects, do thereby break the peace, and commence an offensive war. In such a case opposition is mere self-defence, and is no more criminal, yea as really our duty, as to defend ourselves against a murderer, or high-way-robber. Self-preservation is an instinct, by God, implanted in our nature : Therefore we sin against God and nature, when we tamely resign our rights to tyrants, or quietly submit to public oppressors, if it be in our power to defend ourselves.

A rebel indeed is a monster in nature ; an enemy, not only to his country, but to all mankind : He is destitute of that benevolence which is the highest honor and glory of the rational nature.—But what is a rebel ? What those actions for which a man or people deserve this opprobrious charge ?—Those only are rebels who are enemies to good government, and oppose such as duly execute it. A state of nature is a state of war. Civil government, which is founded in the consent of society to be governed by certain laws framed for the general good, and duly executed by some appointed thereto, puts an end to this State, and secures peace and safety. He therefore who transgresses this compact, even he opposes good government, and is a rebel, *rebellat*, he raises war again.

In this, it matters not whether the person be a king or a subject ; he is the rebel that breaks the compact, he renews the war, and is the aggressor : And every member of the body-politic, is bound, by the eternal law of benevolence, to set himself against him, and if he persists, the whole must unite to root him from the earth, whether he be high or low, rich or poor, a king or a subject. The latter indeed less deserves it, by how much less mischief he is capable of doing. But when a king or ruler turns rebel, (which is vastly more frequent in proportion to their numbers) being armed with power, he ever spreads desolation and misery around his dominions, before he can be regularly and properly punished ; and therefore is proportionably higher in guilt : Witness *Pharaoh, Saul, Manasseh, Antiochus, Julian, Charles the first*, of blessed memory, and *George the third*, who vies with the chief in this black catalogue, in spreading misery and ruin round the world.

THE ruler who invades the civil or religious rights of his subjects, levies war on them, puts them out of his protection,

and dissolves all their allegiance to him : For allegiance and protection are reciprocal, and where one is denied the other must cease.

If these observations are true (and they cannot be denied with modesty) then it is as lawful, and as strongly our duty to prosecute a war against the king of *England* for invading our rights and liberties, as to bring an obstinate rebel to justice, or take arms against some foreign power that might invade us. Oppression alone, if persisted in, justifies the oppressed in making war on the oppressors ; whether they be rulers or private persons, in our own or a foreign State. The reason is, because oppressors are enemies to the great law of nature, and to the happiness of mankind. For this, God commanded *Israel* to commence a war against *Jabin*, that, being free from his power, happiness and peace might be restored.

IN our contest with the tyrant of *Great-Britain*, we did not indeed commence the war : No : But tho' under a load of almost insupportable insult, abuse and reproach, we raised our humble and earnest petitions, and prayed only for Peace, Liberty and Safety, the natural rights of all men. But be astonished, O Heavens ! And tremble O *England* ! While our dutiful supplications ascended before the throne, the monster was meditating the blow ; and e're we rose from our knees, he fixed his dagger in our heart ! If this is to be a father, where can be the monster ? If this be the exercise of lenity and mercy, as he vainly boasts, † what must be his acts of justice ? O merciful God, look down and behold our distress, and avenge us of our cruel foe. — Can we reflect on those scenes of slaughter and desolation which he hath spread before our eyes, and doubt of our duty ? Is it any longer a scruple whether God calls us to war ? If such insults and abuse will not justify us, no abuses ever can. Yea, had *George* withheld his hand from shedding our blood, the grievous oppressions we groaned under before, and the contempt and insult with which he treated our petitions, were fully sufficient to justify us in the sight of God and all wise men, had we began the war, and expelled his troops from our country by fire and sword. Is it possible that *Jabin* could treat *Israel* with greater insult, or more unjustly invade

† See Gen. Howe's proclamation of November 30th. 1776.

their rights? But for this God commanded *Israel* to make war on him, and pronounces a heavy curse on those who refused to join in carrying it on. This leads me to shew,

IV. THAT those who are indolent, and backward to take up arms and exert themselves in the service of their country, in order to recover and secure their freedom, when called thereto by the public voice, are highly criminal in the sight of God and man.

THIS doctrine is wrapt up in the very bowels of my text. *Curse ye Meroz, said the Angel of the Lord; curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.* The curse of God falls on none but for sin; for he delights in blessing, and not in cursing. And he never permits any of his subjects to execute his curses on their fellow subjects, but where the crime is highly aggravated; much less does he allow them to curse them bitterly, unless their guilt is exceeding great. Now since God commands *Israel* to curse *Meroz* bitterly, we fairly infer, that their sin was of a crimson dye, and most provoking to him and his people. And whoever is guilty of the like conduct in our contest with *Great-Britain*, incurs the like guilt.

THIS needs no further proof. For if it be allowed, that the state of the case between *Great-Britain* and *America*, is, in its main parts, parallel with that between *Jabin* and *Israel*, as hath been shewn, then the crime of negligence is as heinous in this struggle as in that. And as *Israel* were required to curse bitterly those cowardly, selfish, half-way people, so are we to curse the like characters at this day. And as those people, for their neglect, exposed themselves to the loss of all the privileges and blessings of a free State in this world, and to the eternal vengeance of God in the next; so it highly concerns all to take heed that they do not fall under the same condemnation. That we may avoid the rock on which they were lost, I will,

I. Give their character.

II. Mention some aggravations of their sin.

I. I will hint at some things which discover people to be like the inhabitants of *Meroz*.

Few, I fear, are perfectly clear in this matter : 'Alas, there is too great negligence among people in general. Private interests and selfish considerations, ingross the thoughts and cares of many, who with well to the cause of Liberty, and divert their attention and exertions from the main thing which calls for our first and chief regard, *viz.* the defence of our country from tyranny, and securing our civil and religious freedom. It is mournful to see most men eagerly pursuing worldly gain, and heaping up unrighteous mammon by cruel oppression and grinding the faces of the poor; while our country lies bleeding of her wounds, and so few engaged to bind them up. Let such consider, that they are guilty of the sin of *Meroz*, and tho' they may not feel the curse of men in this world, they shall not, without sincere repentance, escape the wrath and curse of God in the world to come. Every one is called, at this day, to come to the help of the Lord against the mighty; either to go out to war, or in some way vigorously exert himself for the public good. There are various things necessary for the defence of our country besides bearing arms, tho' this is the chief; and all may, one way or other, put to a helping hand. There are various arts and manufactures essential to the support of the inhabitants and army, without which we must soon be overcome: In one or other of these, men and women, youth, and even children, may be employed, and as essentially help in the deliverance of their country, as those who go out to war. All are now called to more than ordinary frugality and diligence in their respective callings; ¶ and those of ability should be liberal and forward to encourage manufactures for the public good.* But alas, that so few make the interest and welfare of the public the main object of their pursuit. Yet there are some, and I hope many, who with truth can say, they have done their best, according to their circumstances, for the defence and safety of

¶ Suppose every fifth man to be employed in the army, and the number of dependants to be as great as before: then every man must labour one fifth more than formerly, in order to support those in the army and their dependants, allowing them to live as cheap in the army as at home, which is not the case.

* There hath been a laudable spirit, especially in some towns, to encourage manufactures. I have been informed that *Newbury*, by a town vote, encouraged erecting works, and carrying on the making Salt-petre. And in *Salem*, where the first was made in this State, several gentlemen generously subscribed to assist me in making experiments, and erecting the works. And this winter they have subscribed above 500*l.* to enable me to erect large Salt works: A manufacture most necessary for the good of the State.

their country. Such, however the contest may issue, will enjoy the approbation of God, their own consciences, and of all the friends of mankind.

BUT not to make our case appear better than it really is ; I fear there are many among us, in one disguise or other, who, when stript of their vizards, will appear to be of the inhabitants of *Meroz* ; and who, if their characters were justly drawn, would secretly, if not openly say, as the *Pharisees* in another case, *In saying this, thou reproachest us also*. But as birds which are hit, show it by their fluttering, and it may serve to bring such contemptible characters to view, and expose them to the curse they deserve, and on the other hand, may convince some real friends to freedom, of their sinful negligence in the common cause, I will venture to point out a few.

AMONG these characters, I do not include such as aid, or in words or actions defend, or openly declare for the enemy, and plead the right of *Great-Britain* "to bind us in all cases whatsoever." Of such there are not many among us ; owing probably to their fear of a vast majority, which is on the side of freedom ; and therefore they put on the guise of friendship, while they endeavor secretly to work destruction to the cause. These may be known by the following marks.

1. Observe the man who will neither go himself, nor contribute of his substance (if able) to encourage others to go into the war. Such do what in them lays to break up the army : These incur the curse of *Meroz*.

2. Others will express wishes for our success, but will be sure to back them with doubts of the event, and fears of a heavier yoke. You may hear them frequently magnifying the power of the enemy, and telling of the *nine hundred chariots of iron* ; the dreadful train of artillery, and the good discipline of the *British* troops—Of the intolerable hardships the soldiers undergo, and the starving condition of their families at home : And by a thousand such arts endeavouring to discourage the people from the war,

3. THERE are other pretended friends whose countenance betrays them. When things go ill with our army, they appear

with a cheerful countenance, and assume airs of importance, and you'll see the Core holding conferences in one corner or another. The joy of their hearts, on such occasions, will break thro' all disguises, and discover their real sentiments; while their grief and long faces, in a reverse of fortune, is a plain index pointing to the end at which they really aim.

4. OTHERS, who talk much for liberty, you will find ever opposing the measures of defence proposed; making objections to them, and shewing their inconsistency; while they offer none in their stead, or only such as tend to embarrass the main design: They are so prudent, that they will waste away days, yea months to consider; and are ever full of their wise cautions; but never zealous to execute any important project. When such men get into public stations; especially if they fill a seat in our public councils, they greatly endanger the State; they protract business, and often defeat the best councils. Prudence and moderation are amiable virtues, and the modest mind feels pain on being suspected as sanguine, rash and imprudent. This gives the over prudent great advantage to obstruct every vigorous measure, which they brand with the name of rashness: And every friend to vigorous action feels the reflection, who, without great fortitude, sits down abashed, and with grief sees his counsels defeated. But if the measure be adopted, the next motion of the prudent man is, to delay the execution, that the happy moment, on which all depends, may be lost. ¶ These

¶ We have a remarkable instance of this nature in 2. Samuel 17. 1---14. *David* had just retreated from Jerusalem with only 600 men, when *Abshalom* entered the city, and night came on. *Abitophel* counselled for an immediate pursuit. This was wise and good counsel in the case. But *Hushai*, a friend in heart to *David*, and firm to *Abshalom* in appearance, disapproved the counsel of *Abitophel* as rash and imprudent at that time, and advised to more moderate and cautious measures: And to carry his point, he magnifies the generalship of *David*, and the valor of his troops: He hints the great danger there was, that his own troops, so new in opposition to their king, would be thrown into confusion, and melt away through fear of the valor of *David* and his men, and probably desert and join him, on a mere report, that there was a slaughter among *Abshalom's* army; and that a defeat would be utter ruin. He therefore moves, that all Israel be gathered together as the sand of the sea, that so they might swallow up *David* in a moment. But mark his design--was it to gain advantage of *David*? no; but to give him an opportunity to retreat, collect a larger force, and dispose his army for battle.

Happy should we be, if all *Hushai's* were banished from our councils, or their stratagems discovered and defeated. Prudence and caution are highly necessary: But to be always deliberating, and opposing vigorous measures, and slow in executing, such a crisis as this, is strongly characteristic of an inhabitant of Meroz.

over and over prudent men ought to be suspected, and viewed with a watchful eye : And the discerning mind will soon be able to discover, whether such counsels spring from true wisdom, or from a design to enslave us.

5. Some are discovered by the company they keep. You may find them often with those who have given too much reason to suspect their enmity to our cause, and rarely with the zealous friends of liberty, except by accident ; and then they speak and act like creatures out of their element, and soon leave the company, or grow mute, when *liberty* is the subject of discourse.

6. THERE are others who in heart wish well to our cause, but through fear of the power of our enemies, they are backward to join vigorously to support it ; they really wish we might succeed, but they dread the hardships of a campaign, and choose so to conduct, that, on whatever side victory may declare, they may be safe.

7. OTHERS wish well to the public cause, but have a much greater value for their own private and personal interest. They are high sons of liberty, 'till her cause crosses their private views, and even then, they boast in her name, while, like *George 3d.* they stab her to the heart, by refusing submission to those regulations which are essential to her preservation.

ALL these, and many others of the like kind, might doubtless have been found in *Meroz*, and yet the best of them all fell under this bitter curse : For whatever were their private sentiments, they all led to the issue, viz. to keep them back from those vigorous efforts that the cause of liberty then required, and for want of which, it was greatly hazarded. And whatever motives influence men at this day, whether a desire of ease, hope of power, honor, or wealth ; if they do any thing against, or neglect to assist all in their power, the glorious cause of freedom, now in our hands, they, in a greater or less degree, incur the curse of *Meroz*. Now, if ever, is that text to be applied to such, *Curse be he that doth the work of the Lord deceitfully ; and curse be he that holdeth back his sword from blood.* * This leads me

D

* Jeremiah 48 10.

II. To mention some aggravations of this sin.

1. **THIS** conduct is a violation of the law of nature, which requires all to exert themselves to promote happiness among mankind. Love is the fulfilling of the law, but this implies a benevolent frame of heart, exercised in beneficent actions towards all men, as we have opportunity. When therefore we see our fellow creatures, especially our friends and brethren, whose happiness is more immediately our care, reduced to a state of misery, robbed of their most dear and unalienable rights, and borne down with a heavy load of oppression and abuse by the hands of tyrants; this law requires us to stand forth in their defence, even though we are not involved with them in the same evils, and how much more, when our own happiness is equally concerned? † The man who can stand by an idle spectator, when a murderer or robber assaults his brother, and not exert himself, in his defence, is deservedly accounted as criminal, in law and reason, as the murderer or robber himself, and is exposed to the same punishment. Inactivity, in such a case, is justly esteemed an approbation of the crime. But as freedom is an inheritance entailed on all men, so whosoever invades it, robs mankind of their rights, endeavors to spread misery among God's creatures, and violates the law of nature, and all who refuse to oppose him, when in their power, are to be considered and treated as confederates and abettors of his conduct, and partakers in his crimes.

2. **THIS** sin is against posterity. Our children after us must reap the fruit of our present conduct. If we nobly resist the oppressor, we shall, under God, deliver them from his galling yoke; at least shall avoid the guilt of riveting it on them: But if we bow tamely to have it fastened on our necks, unborn generations, thro' unknown centuries, may never be able to shake it off; but must waste away a wretched existence, in this world,

† Moses, though enjoying all the honors and pleasures of a court, from the pure benevolence of his heart, interposed and smote an Egyptian whom he saw cruelly oppressing one of his brethren. This conduct is spoken of with approbation Acts 7. 24, 25, and was no mark of his want of meekness, in which he excelled all men on the face of the earth, Numbers 12. 3. How opposite to this is the character of many great pretenders to meekness in our day, who can tamely see their brethren abused and plundered, and are so meek, or rather selfish as to pay their court to the oppressors. One would think, that like some heathen, they worship the devil to keep him in a good mood, that he may not hurt them.

without any other claim to the fruit of their labors, or even to the dear pledges of conjugal love, the fruit of their own bodies, than such as depends on the uncontrouled will of an haughty tyrant.

Let us, for a moment, glance an eye on the next and succeeding generations. What a scene opens to view ! Behold these delightful and stately manions for which we labored, possessed by the minions of power : See yonder spacious fields, subdued to fruitfulness by the sweat and toil of our fathers or ourselves, yielding their encrease to clothe, pampér and enrich the tyrants favorites, who are base enough to assist him in his cursed plots to enslave us.—Does this rouse your resentment ?—Stop a moment, and I'll shew you a spectacle more shocking than this. What meager visages do I see in yonder field, toiling and covered with sweat, to cultivate the soil ?—Who are those in rags, bearing burdens and drawing water for these haughty lords, and then cringing to them for a morsel of bread ?—They are—O gracious God, support my spirits—They are my sons, and my daughters, the fruit of my body, the pledges of conjugal love, for whose comfort I tho't myself happy to spend my days in labor, my nights in care !—Thus are my hopes blasted !—O that they had never been born, rather than to see them loaded with irons and dragging after them, where ever they go, the heavy, galling, ignominious chains of slavery—But may we not hope for an end of these miseries ?—Alas, what hope ? Slavery debases the human faculties, and spreads a torpor and stupidity over the whole frame ! They sink in despair under their load ; they see no way, they feel no power to recover themselves from this pit of misery ; but pine away and die in it, and leave to their children the same wretched inheritance.—What then does he deserve ? or rather, what curse is too heavy for the wretch that can tamely see our country enslaved ?

4. THIS is a sin against our forefathers. They left us a fair inheritance. They forsook their native land ; the land of tyranny and the furnace of iron ; and by their blood, treasure and toil, procured this sweet, this peaceful retreat, subdued the soil when covered with eternal woods, raised for us the stately domes which afford us shelter from the storms, and safe repose, and were exceedingly careful to instruct us in the things which concern our temporal, and eternal liberty and peace.—And shall

we resign this patrimony, so dearly bought by them, and entail-
ed to us by their will, living and dying? Shall we, I say, resign
it all to that tyrant power, which drove them from their native
land to this, then howling wilderness? Shall we bow our necks
to the yoke which they, tho' few in number, nobly cast off?—
Should our fathers rise from their graves, they would disown
such children, and repent their care and toil for such degenerate
sons.

5. THIS is a sin against contemporaries. How provoking
in the sight of God and man is it to see some quite unconcern-
ed for the good of the public, rolling in ease, amassing wealth
to themselves, and slyly plotting to assist our enemies in their mur-
derous designs; while others endure the fatigues of war, and
hazard all that's dear to secure the peace, liberty and safety of
the whole? Surely every benevolent heart must rise with in-
dignation, and curse these enemies to God and nature.

6. THIS is a sin against the express command of God. He
commands us to *stand fast in the liberty wherewith he hath made
us free*† and not to bow to any tyrant on earth when it is in
our power to oppose him. I proceed,

V. To shew, that God requires a people, struggling for their
liberties, to treat such of the community who will not join
them, as open enemies, and to reject them as unworthy the
privileges of civil society.

THE single crime of *Meroz* is said to be this. When they
were called to arm in order to shake off the yoke of tyranny,
they did not join in the glorious cause. For this, and only
this, they fell under the curse of God and man. Not only
eternal wrath in the world to come, was the just reward of
this sin; but so highly was God provoked thereby, as to com-
mand his people to inflict his vengeance on them in this
world, that being held up as the monuments of his wrath, o-
thers might hear and fear, and do no more so wickedly.

A curse is something more than wishing ill to a person: It
implies a separating him to some evil or punishment. The
command in my text therefore required *Israel* to separate the-

† Galatians 5. 1.

inhabitants of Meroz from some temporal good the rest of *Israel* enjoyed, and inflict on them some severe punishment; for they were to curse them bitterly.

AND why may we not suppose that this curse consisted in these things?

1. That they should be deprived of that delightful freedom and liberty, *Israel* had regained from the tyranny of *Jabin*. As these wretches discovered their servile temper in refusing to exert themselves for the recovery of their liberty, why should they not be condemned to the slavery they chose? *Jabin* (like *George*) probably claimed a right to lay any taxes on them he pleased, and "to bind them in all cases whatsoever;" and they, rather than jeopard their lives in defence of their rights, tamely submitted to his demands. Well, since this was their choice, why should it now be denied them? Let them be taxed at the sovereign will of the other States, without allowing them any representation. Since they loved, and sought to involve all *Israel* with themselves in slavery, they should have it from the rest, and receive but the just reward of their conduct. With what face could they complain of such treatment, since they chose to submit to the same from *Jabin*? The change of masters made no change in the task; and if they preferred slavery then, rather than fight for their liberties, let them have it now, since they would do nothing to regain them. *

2. Why may we not suppose that they were deprived of their estates, and reduced at least to a state of tenantry at will?

* How absurd is their conduct who prefer, to our glorious struggle for liberty, a tame submission to the claims of the British parliament? If we submit, we must be slaves; for to be governed and guided by the will of another, and not our own, is perfect servitude. If we fight and are conquered, we can but be slaves. If we conquer, we gain our freedom. On one hand the event is certain, the chains are riveted. On the other, there is a possibility, and a probability too of a glorious deliverance; yea were all united, there would be a moral certainty of success. On those therefore, who like *Meroz*, refuse to come to the help of the Lord in the present war, will lie the sin of involving millions besides themselves, in the most abject misery and cruel slavery. Consider this, ye inhabitants of *Meroz*; remember, there is a God that judgeth in the earth, and tremble at your fearful doom. If murdering one man deserves death, what does the murder of thousands deserve? If God made the enslaving one of his people a capital crime to be punished with death, *Exodus*. 24. 7. what does your crime deserve, who are endeavouring to enslave a whole nation? If you chuse slavery for yourselves, don't force it on others who abhor it. You may enjoy it, tho' others are free. It is your due: And the curse in my text, when inflicted on you aright, will give it you in full tale.

They had implicitly joined with the enemy, by which they put to hazard every dear and valuable enjoyment of the whole nation. Thro' their neglect all might have been lost : And their fault was not the less, because victory declared for *Israel* ; and all their possessions could never countervail the damage their conduct had exposted the nation to.

THE application of this to our times is easy. The present war, 'tis probable, had never been commenced, had none of the inhabitants of *Meroz* been in our land ; or if began, could not have been carried on to this day. On them, therefore, as the confederates, abettors and supporters of the tyrant, lies the guilt of this war : And as they are partners with him in the sin, so they ought to be involved in the punishment he deserves. If it is lawful to deprive the inhabitants of *Great-Britain* of their property, when in our power, and convert it to our use ; if this be a just retaliation for the injury they have done us, and all too little to countervail the damage ; much more the interest of those who live among us, and yet assist the enemy in their cruel designs, ought to be confiscated for the service of the public, by how much more mischief they have done and are capable of doing these States, and by how much greater their sin.

I can't but think it would have been happy for these States, had our rulers, long e're now, declared that all who should be found any way aiding and assisting the enemy, or holding a correspondence with them, should be deemed enemies to these States, and forfeit all their estates at least. Yea,

3. As the curse of *Meroz*, no doubt, extended to a depriving the inhabitants of a capacity to enjoy any place of honor in government, and the ordinary privileges of free-men ; and also inflicted some corporal punishment at least on their principal leaders : So the like characters among us, ought to share the same punishment. And I am persuaded, these states will still be unsafe, and all our efforts for deliverance from tyranny, attended with great hazard and uncertainty, till there shall be some more effectual and vigorous measures adopted by our rulers, to distinguish friends from foes, and expose the latter to some exemplary punishment. The law of retaliation is sometimes just and necessary, even when the persons offending are not made the subjects of it ; how much more when the trans-

gressors themselves are in our power? * Nor can we do justice to ourselves or the public, or to our brethren now suffering in hard and cruel durance among the enemy; nor to our posterity; nor lastly to the manes of our murdered friends who have fallen in the field, or expired in loathsome prisons with cold and hunger; till we inflict some just and exemplary punishment on those who have brought these calamities on us.

* It was a righteous act in *Tamerlane* the great, to carry *Bajazet* the grand Turk, in an iron cage, round the world in triumph. The magnanimous, the benevolent *Tamerlane* marches with a great army to repel *Bajazet* who unjustly invaded the Greek empire. In a decisive battle *Bajazet* was made prisoner. "Being brought into his presence, *Tamerlane* asked him, why he endeavoured to bring the Greek Emperor into his subjection? He answered, even the same cause which moved thee to invade me, namely the desire of glory and sovereignty. Wherefore then, said *Tamerlane*, dost thou use such cruelty towards them thou overcomest without respect to age or sex? That I did, said he, to strike the greater terror into mine enemies. Then *Tamerlane* asked him, if he had ever given thanks to God for making him so great an emperor? No, said he, I never so much as thought of any such thing. Then said *Tamerlane*, it is no wonder so ungrateful a man should be made a spectacle of misery. For you, said he, being blind of one eye, and I lame of a leg, was there any worth in us, that God should set us over two such great empires, to command so many men far more worthy than ourselves? But, continued he, what wouldst thou have done with me, if it had been my lot to have fallen into thine hands, as thou art now in mine? I would, said *Bajazet*, have inclosed thee in a cage of iron, and carried thee in triumph up and down my kingdom. Even so, said *Tamerlane*, shalt thou be served. And causing him to be taken out of his presence, and turning to his followers, he said, Behold a proud and cruel man, who deserves to be chastised accordingly, and to be made an example to all the proud and cruel of the world, of the just wrath of God against them. (See *Clarke's life of Tamerlane the Great*, page 37, 38.)

But it too rarely happens that the perpetrators of these crimes fall in the way of justice; in which case it is sometimes lawful, yea duty to retaliate on some of their connections. For instance; The commanders of the British troops and their officers are the cruel monsters who treat such as fall into their hands, with unexampled barbarity, confining them in prisons and vessels, in the extreme cold, without fire or food sufficient to preserve life: By which hundreds, yea thousands of our dear friends have suffered the most cruel and painful deaths, and others lost their limbs by the frost. The real criminals are out of our reach.——What then can be done?—Nothing but to inflict a like punishment on a like number of their prisoners in our hands. Accordingly the Hon. Congress, long ago, assured the public, that they would retaliate all abuses offered to prisoners taken from us. Depending on this promise, as the means to secure good treatment, should they fall into the enemy's hands, many cheerfully offered themselves for the war, have been made prisoners, and froze or starved to death; and no retaliation that I have heard, hath yet been made, I hope for wise reasons. Hence the enemy exercise their more than brutal cruelty without fear, and many dreading the like usage, are disinclined to the war. If something be not speedily done to convince our foes that we are not afraid to retaliate, the consequence, I fear, will be fatal to our cause. Lenity and mercy are due to prisoners, and nothing can justify acts of severity, but where cruel usage makes them necessary; and then acts of severity become acts of mercy.

THIS discourse shews us, how defensive war is consistent with true benevolence, and a sincere desire of the happiness of mankind; and how it is consistent for the soldier to love and pray for the happiness of those he opposes and endeavors to root from the earth. Every soldier should enter the field with benevolent, tender, compassionate sentiments, which is the temper of Jesus Christ. A morose, cruel, revengeful, unmerciful temper, is no more consistent with the character of a christian soldier, than with that of a minister of the Gospel of peace; nor can it be justified even in the height of the fiercest battle. He should ever be possessed with a disposition to pray for those he endeavors to destroy, and to wish their best, their eternal good. These are no more inconsistent in a soldier engaging in battle, and doing his best to kill his enemies, than they are in a judge and executioner, who take away a murderer from the earth. For as the judge and executioner are God's ministers to execute vengeance on the wicked who endeavor to destroy

I can't persuade myself to put an end to this note, already too long, without transcribing a passage from the aforesaid life of *Tamerlane*, which, at once represents the true cause of making war, and also that noble benevolent spirit which should inspire every soldier to enter the field; both which are exemplified in this heathen warrior, in whose presence most christian princes have reason to blush.

After the battle, before mentioned, the emperor of *Constantinople* sent ambassadors to *Tamerlane* offering him his empire, and his person as his most faithful subject, in gratitude, and as a reward for the deliverance he had obtained for him from the most cruel tyrant. "But *Tamerlane*, with a mild countenance beheld them and said, That he had not come so far, nor taken such pains to enlarge his dominions, big enough already, (too base a thing to put himself into so great danger and hazard for,) but rather to win honor, and make his name famous to future posterity: And that he would make it appear to the world, that he came to assist their master as his friend and ally, at his request: And that his upright intentions therein, he believed, were the cause that God from above had favoured him, and made him instrumental to bruise the head of the greatest and fiercest enemy of mankind under heaven: And therefore to get him an immortal name, his purpose was, to make free, so great and flourishing a city as *Constantinople*. That he always joined faith to his courage, which should never suffer him to make such a breach in his reputation, as to have it reported of him, that, in the colour of a friend, he should come to invade the dominions of his ally. That he desired no more, but that the service he had done for the Greek Emperor might remain forever engraven in the memory of his posterity, that they might ever wish well to him and his successors by remembering the good he had done for them. p. 41.

THIS was truly noble ambition; to seek an immortal name and honor, not by actions which the ambitious call great; but by those which God pronounces Good. The battle being ended, *Tamerlane* said, this day hath God delivered into my hand a great enemy, to whom therefore we must give thanks; which was publicly done --- Excellent example!

the happiness of society; so the soldier, engaged in a just defensive war, is the minister of God to render vengeance to the invaders of others, right : And as the executioner may, and ought to pray for the suffering criminal, so should the soldier for his foe. As benevolence is the source of vindictive laws in the state, so it should ever be of defensive war; and they both tend to the same end, the happiness of mankind. How absurd then is the pretence that the Gospel of Jesus Christ forbids us to take up arms to defend ourselves? and that defensive war is inconsistent with the patient, meek, long-suffering temper it requires? It may with as much reason be said, that to punish a murderer or robber is forbidden by the Gospel; which is in effect to say, that the Gospel of peace forbids the exercise of love and benevolence in acts absolutely necessary, in this sinful world, for the peace and happiness of society and individuals.

FROM what has been said we may clearly infer, that to levy offensive war is murder, and all who engage in it are murderers in God's sight. They are guilty, not only of the murder of those they kill in battle, or who otherwise perish in the war; but they are self murderers: They put themselves to death; their blood is on their own heads. Well then might Solomon say, *with good adviſe make war.*

THE characters therefore of two States or armies at war, are as opposite as their actions. The aggressor is a murderer and robber, and all who assist him are involved in his guilt; every soldier who fights for him is a murderer too: But we know that no murderer hath eternal life. How should this make those shudder who engage on the side of the aggressor? If they fall in battle, what hope can they have of God's approbation; since they die murdering others and themselves too? But such who oppose them in defence of their own and country's peace, liberty and safety, are God's ministers, commissioned and ordered by him to punish his, and his peoples enemies: They therefore may draw their swords with a quiet, approving conscience, and with pity view the wretches slain by their hands as self murderers: Or if they fall, they can die, in regard to the war, free of the blood of all men, and in peace resign their spirits into the hand of their redeemer.

THIS consideration surely must animate every man, inspired with the benevolent temper of the Gospel, which disposes to the greatest advancement of human happiness, and to relieve the miserable and oppressed; to vigorous exertions in defence of our bleeding land; bleeding under the hand of oppression, rapine and murder. Would you, my friends, count it an honor to be employed by God to restore peace and happiness to the oppressed and miserable? do you wish to perform acts of love and kindness to mankind, and therein be like your creator and redeemer? do you fear the wrath and curse of God pronounced on all who spread misery among his creatures, and on all that aid or assist them, or so much as connive at, or neglect to oppose them? Do you desire to be workers together with God in restoring peace and felicity to your groaning country, and to be owned of him as his servants when you die? are these the object of your desire and pursuit? I know they are, if the love of God and your neighbour rules in your hearts.—Well then, here is an opportunity presented to you, to manifest your love, by *coming to the help of the Lord against the mighty*. The cause we are engaged in, is the cause of God; and you may hope for his blessing and fight under his banner. In supporting and defending this cause, you may, you ought to seek for glory and honor; even that glory and honor which comes from God and man for acts of benevolence, goodness and mercy, for the performance of which, the fairest opportunity now offers.

BUT what shall I say of those whose religious principles forbid the performance of any such labors of love, and necessarily involve them in the curse of *Meroz*? If their religion be right, love itself must be wrong. But arguments are vain.—May God in his mercy shew them their error, give them repentance, and inspire them with the love which the law and gospel require, before they fall under the wrath and curse of God, for neglecting to come to his help against the mighty.

THIS discourse also shews us how we ought to treat those who do not join in the cause of freedom we have espoused.

1. As they are accursed of God, and we are commanded to curse them; we ought, at least, to shun their company. What a shame is it, to see those born to freedom and professing zeal for her cause, associating themselves with the willing slaves of an a-

ndoned tyrant and murderer ? O how do such debase themselves, and give occasion to suspect them as belonging to the ne herd. But it may be asked, how shall they be distinguish- from friends ?—Attend to the characters already given, and u may see enough to justify you in avoiding intimacy with em ; tho' they may so disguise, that no evidence appears to ndemn them to open and condign punishment. Happy would be should our civil fathers draw some determinate line of distinction between free men, and these slaves of power. ¶ For unt of this we have suffered greatly already, and if this be not edily done, the consequences, I fear, will be fatal,

2. As soon as they are discovered, we ought to disarm them : For they will not assist us, we should put it out of their power to rt us or our families, when we at any time shall be called to tion.
Yea,

3. As such forfeit all the privileges of freemen ; their estates ould be forfeited and applied to support the war ; and themselves banished from these states. The curse we are commanding to inflict on the inhabitants of *Meroz*, must imply as much this ; and benevolence to millions demands this of us ; not it of hatred to their persons, but their crimes, which strike at e life and happiness of these States. This punishment must inflicted, not by the people at large ; but by our rulers, with hom, under God, we have intrusted our safety ; and in whose isdom we confide, to take proper vengeance on them in due ne. But should this be delayed, without proper reasons assigned, we shall have no cause to wonder, tho' there should be eat thoughts of heart among a people, beholding their friends d brethren, barbarously murdered, or wandering forlorn, destitute of food or shelter ; while the detested authors of these unrallelled distresses smile unnoticed and unpunished, at these calamities, and triumphing in our distress. But should ch delay happen, we must look on it as another instance of vine displeasure, which speaks to all to search after, and by sincere repentance and thorough reformation, remove the moral use of God's controversy with us.

¶ Since the above was copied for the press, a proclamation by his Excellency General WASHINGTON has been published, and also two acts to punish treason and crimes against this State of less enormity ; by which the line of distinction is, a good measure, drawn ; which is cause of joy to all the friends of Liberty,

WHEN this shall take place, we shall then see our council filled with men inspired with wisdom to know what *Israel* ought to do ; our arms victorious and triumphant ; the inhabitants of *Meroz* justly punished : Peace, Liberty and Safety restored ; the rod of tyranny broken ; pure and undefiled religion prevailing, and the voice of joy and gladness echoing round our land. May God hasten this happy, happy day. And let all the people say AMEN, and AMEN. ————— *Hallelujah.*

