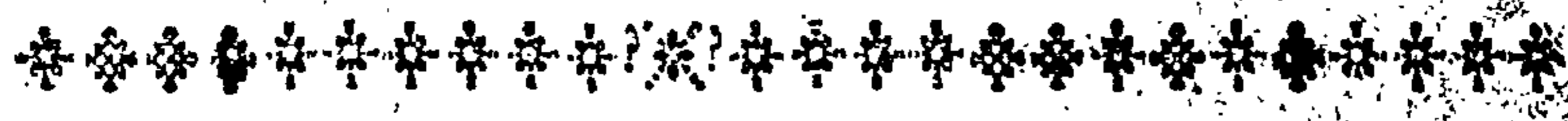


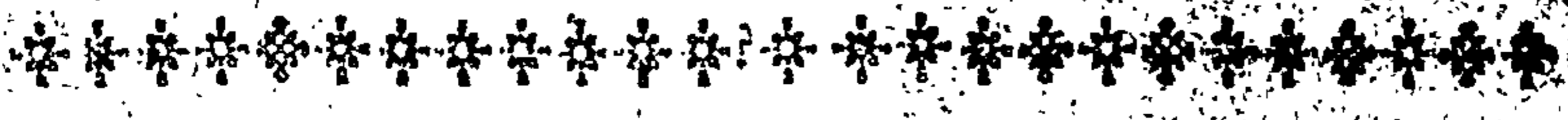
James Ensworth  
his Book God Give you  
Grace that you may look

William Ensworth  
his Book God Give you  
Grace that you may look 1773



Mr. Cogswell's  
Election SERMON,

MAY 9th, 1771.



A 10  
SERMON,

Preached before the

General Assembly

Of the Colony of *CONNECTICUT*,

At HARTFORD,

ON THE DAY OF THEIR

Anniversary Election,

May 9th, 1771.

---

By JAMES COGSWELL, A. M.

Pastor of the First CHURCH of CHRIST in *Canterbury*.

---

NEW - L O N D O N :

Printed by TIMOTHY GREEN, Printer to  
the GOVERNOR and COMPANY,

M, DCC, LXXI.

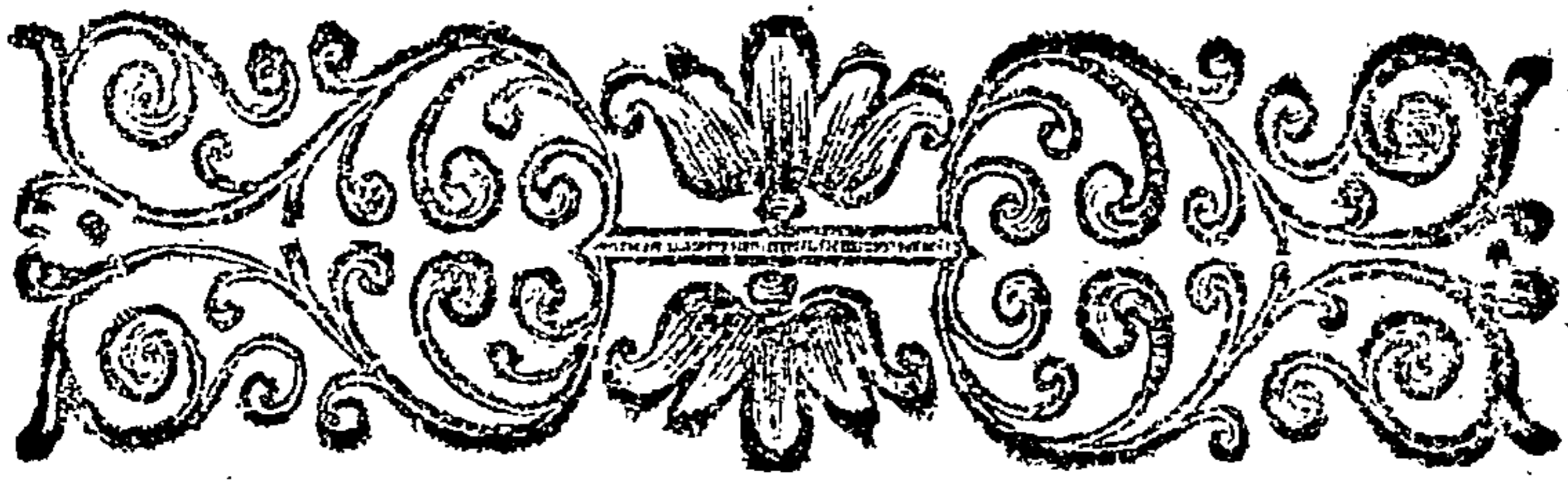
---

*AT a General Assembly of the Governor and  
Company of the Colony of CONNECTICUT,  
holden at HARTFORD, on the Second Thurs-  
day of May, A. D. 1771.*

**O**RDERED, That SHUBAEL CONANT,  
Esq; and Mr. JOHN CURTISS, return  
the Thanks of this Assembly to the  
Rev'd Mr. JAMES COGSWELL, for his SER-  
MON delivered before the Assembly on the  
9th Instant, and desire a Copy thereof, that  
it may be printed.

GEORGE WYLLYS, Secr.

---



*An Election* S E R M O N.



J E R E M I A H XVIII. 7, 8, 9, 10.

*AT what Instant I shall speak concerning a Nation, and concerning a Kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it :*

*If that Nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their Evil, I will repent of the Evil that I thought to do unto them.*

*And at what Instant I shall speak concerning a Nation, and concerning a Kingdom to build and to plant it :*

*If it do Evil in my Sight, that it obey not my Voice, then I will repent of the Good wherewith I said I would Benefit them.*



**H**E Attention of Americans has of late been uncommonly roused, and deeply engag'd about the public Good. We have look'd on our invaluable Liberties, and important Privileges to be in Danger. And such a general

neral Concern relative to these Things, and Zeal for their Preservation, has prevailed among us, as Regard for Liberty is wont to inspire a free People with—In such an alarming Situation, many invincible Reasons have been offered in support of our just and important Rights ; many Expedients of a political and prudential Nature have been urg'd with great Force, and press'd upon us by very weighty Motives : And may they have their Effect—The Design of them is certainly Noble and Important.

BUT there are doubtless Considerations of a moral and religious Nature, which ought to command our Attention, and which are really of far greater Importance, both to our present and future Happiness, than any Thing merely civil or political can be.—Indeed the chief and ultimate Design of Religion, as it respects Mankind, is to deliver us from the fatal Effects of the Apostacy, and to fit us for a State of perfect Holiness and Happiness in the coming World. But this is not all ; Godliness has the Promise of the Life that now is, as well as of that which is to come. And it tends to the present Happiness not only of Individuals; but the Love and Practice of it has a most friendly Aspect on public Weal ; and the neglect of it the most direct Tendency to the Misery and Destruction of a State.—Several Considerations of this Nature,

Nature, and of great Importance, are suggested to us from our Text and Context.

THE Jews were become a very wicked and abandoned People, at the Time when God sent this Message to them by the Prophet. Many Threatnings, and of fore Calamities had been frequently denounced against them, which had as yet, very little, or rather no Effect to reform them. The Prophet Jeremiah is directed therefore to go to the Place where the Potter fashioned his Vessels of Clay: There he observed that the Potter had an uncontrolled Power to form these Vessels as he pleased: If they would not serve for one Purpose he could very easily turn them to another. From this lively Similitude, the Prophet is ordered to represent to the Jews God's sovereign Power over the most formidable States and extensive Empires: And with how much Ease God either exalts or depresses them, prospers or afflicts, encreases or diminishes, or in a Word, preserves or destroys them. And God has certainly a greater Right to do this, than the Potter has to new Mould the Clay of which he is not the absolute Proprietor.

THIS was true in Jeremiah's Time, and is equally true now; and really it is a Truth of very great Importance to be considered and realized; for it shews us that we are  
absolutely

absolutely dependent on God for our all :— Prosperity or Adversity, whether private or public, is entirely from God.

BUT God gives us to understand in our (Text, that whatever his Power and Sovereignty might enable him to do,) he conducts not only according to the invariable Rules of Justice and Equity, which gives us the greatest Assurance that he never will wrong any People, or bring any Evil upon them, meerly to shew himself Sovereign, but farther that he is disposed to treat Mankind according to the Rules of Clemency and Kindness : So that when a Nation or Kingdom have been guilty of a Conduct criminal to that Degree, that they have greatly provoked God, and which would justify him in proceeding to the last Extremities with them ; yea, if God had proceeded so far as to threaten them with utter Ruin, if after all this, they should even then repent, and turn from their evil Ways to God, he would avert the Tokens of his Displeasure, recall the Threatnings, prosper and establish them.

ON the other Hand, God lets them know that whatever Encouragement he had given of granting Enlargement and Prosperity to any State ; if they after this degenerate and backslide, to that Degree, that their Character becomes that of Evil Doers, an unrighteous, ungodly People, they forfeit his Promise

mise and Protection ; and if they continue irreclaimable, he will not build them up, but destroy them.

It is worthy of Observation, that the Declarations made in our Text relative to God's providential Dispensations, are not confined to the Jews ; they are of a general Nature, and published in an indefinite Manner : Whence it appears that God Almighty designs here to exhibit a general Rule of his Conduct towards public Bodies or Communities.

It is indeed true that we have no Reason to expect an exact Correspondence between God's providential Dispensations towards the Jews and other Kingdoms or civil Communities. Yet as God is the moral Governor of the World, and approves of Virtue and Holiness wherever it appears, and always hates Sin and Wickedness among all Nations ; so it is reasonable to believe he will shew his Approbation, Favour and Protection to the one, and frown upon and punish the other. The State of the Case is very different (as to the Time of Rewards and Punishments) between Individuals and public Bodies of Men. The future State is the Time of Retribution to Individuals.—  
Though therefore many among the godly may suffer very grievous Things in this present State, they shall be abundantly Re-  
B warded



warded hereafter : In that happy World Light is sown for the Righteous, and gladness for the upright in Heart. And however the wicked may flourish and prosper here, their triumphing is short, for it is that they may be cut off and destroyed. But the Case is very different with regard to civil Communities. Whatever Forms of Administration they assume, they are the Creatures of Time. They have no Existence but in this World—All their Bands of Society, as Bodies-Politic, are dissolved, and have no Existence in a future State. If therefore they are not rewarded or punished in some Proportion to their Character as righteous or sinful in this World, they never are at all. It appears therefore agreeable to the Divine Perfections, that God should shew visible Marks of Approbation of public Virtue, and frown upon and punish a sinful People, as in our Text he has expressly declared he will do.

It appears then that God speaks to us in these Days as really, tho' not in the same Manner as he did to Nations and Kingdoms in ancient Times. To them he spake by immediate and particular Messages from Heaven, pointing out their Sins, and the particular and special Judgments which they might assuredly expect if they continued Incurable. To us he speaks by his written Word and his Providence.

Providence. In his Word he shews us what is the Character of such a People as have Encouragement to hope for his Favour, or Reason to fear his Displeasure ;—and what he justly expects from such a People as have wickedly departed from him, that they may be restored to Favour, and enjoy his Smiles. Many Examples are left us in sacred Scripture for our Instruction and Admonition. Thus God speaks to us now, and surely the Man of Wisdom will hear what God speaketh to the City and to the Country. We must carefully examine into our real Character, and compare it to that of other Communities, and then consider how God has declared he would treat them, and what Treatment they have in fact met with, and from thence collect what we have to hope for, or to fear from the Hand of God.

THAT which may be further attempted, by Divine Assistance, will be to shew,

I. THAT the Love and Practice of Religion has the greatest Encouragement of God's Favour ; and therefore is the surest Means of the Happiness of a People,

II. THAT the prevalence of Irreligion and Wickedness have a dreadful Tendency to their Destruction ;

And,

warded hereafter : In that happy World Light is shewn for the Righteous, and gladness for the upright in Heart. And however the wicked may flourish and prosper here, their triumphing is short, for it is that they may be cut off and destroyed. But the Case is very different with regard to civil Communities. Whatever Forms of Administration they assume, they are the Creatures of Time. They have no Existence but in this World—All their Bands of Society, as Bodies-Politic, are dissolved, and have no Existence in a future State. If therefore they are not rewarded or punished in some Proportion to their Character as righteous or sinful in this World, they never are at all. It appears therefore agreeable to the Divine Perfections, that God should shew visible Marks of Approbation of public Virtue, and frown upon and punish a sinful People, as in our Text he has expressly declared he will do.

It appears then that God speaks to us in these Days as really, tho' not in the same Manner as he did to Nations and Kingdoms in ancient Times. To them he spake by immediate and particular Messages from Heaven, pointing out their Sins, and the particular and special Judgments which they might assuredly expect if they continued Incurable. To us he speaks by his written Word and his Providence.

Providence. In his Word he shews us what is the Character of such a People as have Encouragement to hope for his Favour, or Reason to fear his Displeasure ;—and what he justly expects from such a People as have wickedly departed from him, that they may be restored to Favour, and enjoy his Smiles. Many Examples are left us in sacred Scripture for our Instruction and Admonition. Thus God speaks to us now, and surely the Man of Wisdom will hear what God speaketh to the City and to the Country. We must carefully examine into our real Character, and compare it to that of other Communities, and then consider how God has declared he would treat them, and what Treatment they have in fact met with, and from thence collect what we have to hope for, or to fear from the Hand of God.

THAT which may be further attempted, by Divine Assistance, will be to shew,

I. THAT the Love and Practice of Religion has the greatest Encouragement of God's Favour ; and therefore is the surest Means of the Happiness of a People,

II. THAT the prevalence of Irreligion and Wickedness have a dreadful Tendency to their Destruction ;

And,

And,

III. THAT if a People have revolted from God, Repentance and Reformation will be the surest and best Means to prevent their Ruin, and restore them to the Divine Favour.

I. THE first Thing proposed is to show, that the Love and Practice of Religion has the greatest Encouragement of God's Favour, and therefore is the surest Means of the Happiness of a People

THIS is implied in the Text. 'Tis indeed taken for granted, that God will bless and prosper a People who continue holy and obedient. Such who do not Evil in his Sight, but obey his Voice. These are Phrases frequently used in the Writings of the Prophets to decypher true Religion. But we must always remember that a right Temper of Heart is always included in this Obedience to the Voice of God: otherwise it is destitute of the most essential Property of Obedience. — A supreme Love to God, on Account of his transcendent Excellence and absolute Perfection: an ultimate Regard to his Honour, and a Disposition to be subject to his Will, are essential Ingredients in Obedience to the Voice of God. This Voice of God is no other than his Word, and when we have such a Temper of Mind as the Word of God requires; when we believe and live as God requires.

requires we should do in his Word, then are we religious.

“ ALL the great Truths and Duties of  
“ Morality are adopted by Christ, and in-  
“ corporated into his Laws, are refined and  
“ purified, and set in the fairest and strongest  
“ Point of Light, and raised to their highest  
“ Perfection in the Christian Institution.”

This Word or Voice of God discovers his glorious Nature and amiable Perfections, in Conformity to which, the Happiness of all intelligent Beings consists.—It shews that Mankind, tho' originally created in the Image of God, have fallen from him, and are become both guilty and polluted by Sin.—The surprizing Method of Redemption by Jesus Christ, the great Mediator; and the Recovery to a holy Temper and Life, which (thro' Divine Influence) always takes Place in all who are by Faith in him, made partakers of the great Salvation. All these glorious Truths in one connected View, all that Holiness that is required, and those Duties which are directed to in God's Word, tend to promote the Happiness of civil Communities; for God has most plainly shewn in his Word

THAT, Religion, and this only, will recommend to his Favour.

THAT, the Religion which God's Word requires, is so framed, as in the very Nature  
and

and Genius of it, to have a tendency to promote the public Good.

AND this Word of God points out many Duties to Men, in all Characters, Relations and Circumstances, which directly and immediately tend to promote the best Good of the State.

1. GOD has most plainly shewn in his Word, that Religion, and only this will recommend to his Favour. Very many are the Promises of this Kind. God promised the Israelites, † that if they would hearken diligently to the Voice of the Lord their God, to do all his Commandments, the Lord their God would set them on High, above all the Nations of the Earth. And thus also said the Lord to them by the Prophet Azariah, \*  
 “ Hear ye me Afa and all Judah and Benjamin, the Lord is with you while ye be  
 “ with him ; and if ye seek him he will be  
 “ found of you ; but if ye forsake him, he  
 “ will forsake you.” Many other Promises of this Kind, taken in connection with our Text, are so plain as to put this Matter beyond all Doubt ; for they are made not only to particular Persons, but to civil Communities as such.

I proceed therefore to say,

2. *THAT* Religion, which God's Word requires

† Deut. 28. 1. \* 2 Chron. 15. 2.

requires, is so framed, as in the very Nature and Genius of it to have a tendency to promote the public Good. It might easily be shewn, (were there Time) that the more general Requisitions and Prohibitions contained in that Religion which is described and required in the Word of God, have all a tendency to promote the Good of civil Society : But what I would especially insist on under this Head is, that the Religion of Jesus Christ forms Men to such a Temper as powerfully inclines them to promote the Interest of the Public.

THE Depravity of humane Nature, the corrupted and vitiated Temper of Mens Minds, is the real original Source of all those wicked Practices, which are prejudicial both to their private and public Interests. Hence proceed all those open, bold Violations of God's Law, those enormous Crimes and Debaucheries, which tend to the Ruin and Dissolution of a State. This Fountain must be cleansed, or putrid Streams will continue to flow. And when this Temper is changed, the Heart renew'd and made holy, the Man will be strongly and vigorously engaged in all the Duties of Holiness ; and consequently to promote the public Tranquility.

Now, (\* as one says) “ the Gospel and Religion

\* The Rev'd Mr. Lockwood, of Weathersfield, in his Election Sermon for 1754.



“ religion of Jesus is admirably design’d and  
 “ calculated to produce this blessed Effect ;  
 “ and this blessed Effect it does and will  
 “ actually produce, wherever it is cordially  
 “ and sincerely entertained and submitted  
 “ to. Hence we are said to be sanctified by  
 “ the Word ; to be born again, not of cor-  
 “ ruptible Seed, but of Incorruptible, by the  
 “ Word of God, which liveth and abideth  
 “ forever. The Gospel of Christ, attended  
 “ by the sacred Influences of the Divine  
 “ Spirit, is the powerful Means of rectifying  
 “ the sinful Nature of Man, and forming it  
 “ to Purity and Holiness, and a governing  
 “ Disposition to please and obey God in all  
 “ Things. As the Laws of Religion require  
 “ the universal Practice of Virtue & Holiness ;  
 “ they that are truly Religious, choote to  
 “ obey God and live holy Lives ; there is a  
 “ blessed Agreement & Harmony, tho’ not a  
 “ perfect one between the Temper of their  
 “ Minds, and the sacred Laws of Religion ;  
 “ they are not only aw’d and influenced by  
 “ the Authority and Command of God, but  
 “ they find an inward Propensity and Dis-  
 “ position to devote and approve themselves  
 “ to God, not only in the Duties of Piety  
 “ and Godliness, but in the Performance of  
 “ all relative and social Duties, and to exert  
 “ themselves in their Places, to promote the  
 “ Welfare

“Welfare of Mankind, and the Tranquility  
“and Happiness of the State.”

I proceed to say

3. RELIGION requires and implies many Duties in the various Characters, Relations and Circumstances of Life, which tend immediately to the Good of the State. And an inward Principle of Piety will prompt Men readily to perform them. A hint of the principal of these Duties as they respect Rulers and Subjects, will be all I have Time now to mention. And,

UNDER the Influence of Religion, Rulers will discharge the Duties of their important Trust with strict Fidelity. In the height of Elevation, they will not forget they have a Master in Heaven, to whom they are accountable, before whom they must shortly stand, strip'd of all the Robes of State and Ensigns of Grandeur, to give an Account of their Stewardship. They know God requires them, while they rule over Men, to serve the Lord, to serve him with Fear & to rejoice with Trembling.—Religion will influence and embolden them to distribute Justice with Impartiality and Intrepidity; knowing that it is an Ordinance of Him that ruleth among the Gods, That he that ruleth over Men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. In Obedience to this great Lord, they will endeavour to let Judgment run down as Waters,

C

ters,

“ Religion of Jesus is admirably design’d and  
“ calculated to produce this blessed Effect ;  
“ and this blessed Effect it does and will  
“ actually produce, wherever it is cordially  
“ and sincerely entertained and submitted  
“ to. Hence we are said to be sanctified by  
“ the Word ; to be born again, not of cor-  
“ ruptible Seed, but of Incorruptible, by the  
“ Word of God, which liveth and abideth  
“ forever. The Gospel of Christ, attended  
“ by the sacred Influences of the Divine  
“ Spirit, is the powerful Means of rectifying  
“ the sinful Nature of Man, and forming it  
“ to Purity and Holiness, and a governing  
“ Disposition to please and obey God in all  
“ Things. As the Laws of Religion require  
“ the universal Practice of Virtue & Holiness ;  
“ they that are truly Religious, choote to  
“ obey God and live holy Lives ; there is a  
“ blessed Agreement & Harmony, tho’ not a  
“ perfect one between the Temper of their  
“ Minds, and the sacred Laws of Religion ;  
“ they are not only aw’d and influenced by  
“ the Authority and Command of God, but  
“ they find an inward Propensity and Dis-  
“ position to devote and approve themselves  
“ to God, not only in the Duties of Piety  
“ and Godliness, but in the Performance of  
“ all relative and social Duties, and to exert  
“ themselves in their Places, to promote the  
“ Welfare

“Welfare of Mankind, and the Tranquility  
“and Happiness of the State.”

I proceed to say

3. RELIGION requires and implies many Duties in the various Characters, Relations and Circumstances of Life, which tend immediately to the Good of the State. And an inward Principle of Piety will prompt Men readily to perform them. A hint of the principal of these Duties as they respect Rulers and Subjects, will be all I have Time now to mention. And,

UNDER the Influence of Religion, Rulers will discharge the Duties of their important Trust with strict Fidelity. In the height of Elevation, they will not forget they have a Master in Heaven, to whom they are accountable, before whom they must shortly stand, strip'd of all the Robes of State and Ensigns of Grandeur, to give an Account of their Stewardship. They know God requires them, while they rule over Men, to serve the Lord, to serve him with Fear & to rejoice with Trembling.—Religion will influence and embolden them to distribute Justice with Impartiality and Intrepidity; knowing that it is an Ordinance of Him that ruleth among the Gods, That he that ruleth over Men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. In Obedience to this great Lord, they will endeavour to let Judgment run down as Waters,

C

ters,

ters, and Righteousness as a mighty Stream, as an irresistible Torrent, bearing down all Opposition, and sweeping away Wickedness, Oppression and Injustice from the Earth.— Religion, in the Life and Spirit of it, would dispose Rulers to be so far from any Aims after arbitrary Power, as to be zealous Guardians of the just and important Rights of the Subject. It would greatly Influence, not only by making them afraid to set themselves against the Lord, and against his Anointed; but would temper the Thoughts of Dignity, cure a godless Thirst for Despotism, and so keep them back from all guilty Reaches after arbitrary Power, and teach them to conduct as the Ministers of God for the good of their Subjects.—Religion would, above all other Things inspire them with paternal Tenderness, & engage them to act as Fathers of the People. There is no other Principle of true Patriotism equal to that of Religion. Men have indeed sometimes from lower Principles than those of Christianity done well for the Public: But certainly no other Principles can actuate them with equal Force and Alacrity to pursue the public Good. A Principle of Holiness is of a divine Original, and not only fills the Mind with Veneration and Awe of the Divine Majesty, but inspires the Heart with Love to God and Man. Such

a Principle will enlarge the Ruler's Heart, and engage him with unrestrained Benevolence to pursue the Good of all. Such Rulers would therefore willingly exert all their Powers, and employ their whole Time for the Interest of their Country. And no doubt their greatest and most valuable Interests will proportionably excite the generous Concern of such Rulers.—The Regulation of Commerce—The Encouragement of Agriculture and Manufactures—The Promotion of Learning—The Preservation or Restoration of Liberty—But above all, Religion will meet with their warmest Encouragement, be patronized by their Example, and their Hearts will bleed for their People when under the Rebukes of Heaven, or dreadfully exposed to the Frowns of an angry God for their Apostacy from him.—In a Word, what like Religion will be a source of Magnanimity and Fortitude in Seasons of special Danger?

WHEN nothing but the Testimony of an unrepublishing Conscience, and the plaudit of the Omniscient Judge can yield Support, what but this will support them when repay'd with Ingratitude for their noble and Self-denying Exertions for the Good of their Country? What but Religion will inspirit them with Resolution to persist with unre-mitted Vigour and unabated Diligence, tho' the

the more abundantly they Love the less they are beloved? What like Religion will arm those in Power against the Temptations to Pride and Luxury, Venality and Oppression which an elevated Station peculiarly exposes to? In fine; Religion and this only will Influence them to exhibit such an Example as shall have the greatest Tendency to reform a degenerate and backsliding People. As they are Gods by Office, Religion will render them God-like in the Temper of their Minds, in their public Administrations, and in private Life. Such an Example as this would have a peculiar Tendency to give Charms to Virtue, to make Religion appear reputable and amiable, and to reform a vicious Age.

From these particulars it appears that Religion in Rulers, not only in Speculation, but in Love and Practice; not only protected by wholesome Laws, but appearing in real Life, and in high Life, would have a Tendency directly to promote public Felicity.

AND no less would it do so with Regard to Subjects. The Religion of Christ directs Mankind in general to many Duties which have the most direct Tendency to render a State prosperous at home, and respectable abroad; and, when it is cordially embraced, will effectually incline them to such a Conduct.

duct : For Righteousness, i. e. Holiness exalteth a Nation. The Word of God strictly enjoins that Deference and Submission to Rulers, which is absolutely necessary for the public Peace and Happiness ; and severely threatens and condemns a disobedient, mutinous and unruly Temper and Conduct. In this Word God commands, † “ Let every Soul be subject to the higher Powers.” ‡ “ Submit your selves to every Ordinance of Man,” (viz. which is agreeable to the Ordinance of Heaven) “ for the Lord’s sake.” He that resists the just Commands of lawful Authority is threatned with no less Punishment than Damnation.—Religion, in the Power of it, would engage Men conscientiously to adhere to the Rules of strict Justice.—To speak the Truth in Love.—It would sweetly, yet powerfully incline them to lead quiet and peaceable Lives, in all Honesty as well as Godliness.—It would banish Luxury and Intemperance from the Earth ; for the Grace of God teacheth to live soberly as well as righteously and godly.—These Things most manifestly tend directly and greatly to increase the public Tranquility.—But beside and above all this, the noble and generous benevolent Spirit which real Christianity does not fail to inspire the Mind with,

† Rom. 13.

‡ 1 Pet. 2. 13.



with, would have an unfailing Tendency (if generally imbibed) to promote general Good, and diffuse Happiness all around — A selfish, narrow, contracted Temper is very inimical to the State. When Men are wholly intent on private Advantage, grudge every Farthing which goes beside their own Coffers, “and coil themselves up in the narrow “and dirty Shell of private Interest,” the Public will be neglected.—The State cannot prosper. Religion is calculated in the highest Degree to cure this Distemper. It enlarges the Heart, greatens and sublimates the Views of the Mind. That Benevolence which is the very Life and Soul of the Religion of the Gospel, embraces the whole System of Beings, thro’ the Universe, in the Arms of disinterested Love. This then will be the noblest Principle of public Spirit : ’Twill engage and dispose us to love our Neighbour as ourselves to pursue the public Happiness as our own and greatly to deny ourselves, from a generous and ardent Desire to promote the Good of Mankind.

... This brings me to the Second general Head, viz.

II. THE prevalence of Irreligion and Wickedness have a dreadful Tendency to the  
Destruction

Destruction of a People : As Righteousness exalts a Nation, so Sin is a reproach to any People. The general Practice of Wickedness, necessarily diminishes and weakens a State, and if Impenitently persisted in will terminate in their final ruin.—If such Persons as are promoted to Places of Power and Trust, and fill the Seats of Government, are destitute of Principles of Piety, void of Integrity and Honor, it will have a baleful Influence on the State of the People whom they govern. Whatever Talents or Accomplishments they are Masters of, while destitute of these, there can be no sufficient Security of their proving public Blessings : Most probably the noblest Talents will be abused and prostituted to serve the vile Purposes of Ambition, Avarice or Luxury, as their leading Passion chances to direct. And what can be expected under such Rulers but a perpetual Series of Distresses and Judgments ? What but Scenes of Oppression, Violence, Corruption and Effeminacy ?

THE Examples of such Men will be very fatal. “ If Magistrates have the Characters  
“ of Rulers of Sodom, it may be expected  
“ that their Subjects will be the People of  
“ Gomorrah.” The wise King of Israel observes, If a Ruler hearken to lies, all the People are wicked. When therefore Rulers  
take

take no Care to make and execute such Laws as are calculated to suppress Vice and Wick- edness, and to encourage Virtue and Religi- on, much more if Oppression, Venality or any Kind of Iniquity is encouraged ; or if by their evil Example they enervate the force of Laws, and put it out of their own Power to execute them to Advantage ; they give a public Invitation to their Subjects to shake off all Restraints to Sin, and to com- mit Iniquity with Greediness. Such Rulers have brought infinite Mischief on the State. “ They have” (as one says) “ like baleful  
“ Comets, spread Plagues and Desolation  
“ through a Land, by their malignant Influ-  
“ ences.” But,

HOWEVER virtuous, wise, faithful and ex- emplary Rulers are, if Vice and Irreligion prevail among the People, so that their go- verning Character is that of a sinful People, they have awful Reason to Tremble at God’s Displeasure : Indeed, according to that De- gree in which Sin prevails, it naturally weak- ens and injures the public Interest, as plainly appears from what has been already observed. For in the same Proportion that Religion tends to the public Emolument, Irreligion tends to the Damage of the State.—God, the moral and righteous Governor of the World, has so constituted the Nature of Things, and orde- red

red the general Course of his Providence, that the Consequences of Sin in general, should be very pernicious to the Temporal as well as the future and eternal Interests of Men. Nothing is more obvious than that many Sins tend to bring Misery, and indeed swiftly to hasten Ruin and Destruction on that People among whom they prevail.

THUS Pride and Luxury, Venality, Injustice and Oppression, Intemperance and Debauchery will have a most fatal Influence and swiftly hasten on every Kind of Misery. Dissipation, Indigence and Beggary tread on the Heels of Luxury, Pride and Prodigality. Men of this Character, thus reduced by their evil Courses, often betake themselves to Practices pernicious and ruinous to their Country, such as Robbery, Theft, Counterfeiting, or if not to these, to others, if not so scandalous, yet very hurtful and pernicious; such as sharpening, over-reaching, and the like.— Idleness often cloaths a Man with Rags, and reduces whole Families to the most forlorn and pitiable Circumstances. How often do the slothful and indolent plunge deep into some of the above-mentioned Vices? or into Intemperance, which is a Vice which may properly be more particularly mentioned and insisted on, as it contains in Embrio all other Vices. Riot; Excess, Debauchery, Gaming,  
D Prophaneness,

take no Care to make and execute such Laws as are calculated to suppress Vice and Wickedness, and to encourage Virtue and Religion, much more if Oppression, Venality or any Kind of Iniquity is encouraged ; or if by their evil Example they enervate the force of Laws, and put it out of their own Power to execute them to Advantage ; they give a public Invitation to their Subjects to shake off all Restraints to Sin, and to commit Iniquity with Greediness. Such Rulers have brought infinite Mischief on the State. “ They have” (as one says) “ like baleful  
 “ Comets, spread Plagues and Desolation  
 “ through a Land, by their malignant Influ-  
 “ ences.” But,

HOWEVER virtuous, wise, faithful and exemplary Rulers are, if Vice and Irreligion prevail among the People, so that their governing Character is that of a sinful People, they have awful Reason to Tremble at God’s Displeasure : Indeed, according to that Degree in which Sin prevails, it naturally weakens and injures the public Interest, as plainly appears from what has been already observed. For in the same Proportion that Religion tends to the public Emolument, Irreligion tends to the Damage of the State.—God, the moral and righteous Governor of the World, has so constituted the Nature of Things, and orde-  
 red

red the general Course of his Providence, that the Consequences of Sin in general, should be very pernicious to the Temporal as well as the future and eternal Interests of Men. Nothing is more obvious than that many Sins tend to bring Misery, and indeed swiftly to hasten Ruin and Destruction on that People among whom they prevail.

Thus Pride and Luxury, Venality, Injustice and Oppression, Intemperance and Debauchery will have a most fatal Influence and swiftly hasten on every Kind of Misery. Dissipation, Indigence and Beggary tread on the Heels of Luxury, Pride and Prodigality. Men of this Character, thus reduced by their evil Courses, often betake themselves to Practices pernicious and ruinous to their Country, such as Robbery, Theft, Counterfeiting, or if not to these, to others, if not so scandalous, yet very hurtful and pernicious; such as sharpening, over-reaching, and the like.— Idleness often cloaths a Man with Rags, and reduces whole Families to the most forlorn and pitiable Circumstances. How often do the slothful and indolent plunge deep into some of the above-mentioned Vices? or into Intemperance, which is a Vice which may properly be more particularly mentioned and insisted on, as it contains in Embrio all other Vices. Riot, Excess, Debauchery, Gaming,  
D Prophaneness,

Prophaneness, neglect and contempt of all Religion ; these all are the common Attendants on Intemperance : The Person who wallows in this worse than brutal Vice, invites every Temptation, enfeebles and emasculates himself, and is therefore in the high Road to Ruin. And with Regard to States and Kingdoms, all History Witnesses, that when such Sins have prevailed so as to become the general Character, they have been on the very Brink of Destruction. Those mighty Empires of the World, which had for Ages been growing respectable and happy, by Industry, Temperance, Oeconomy and public Virtue, whenever these Vices prevailed, have sunk by swift Degrees into total Dissolution.

THERE are other Sins, such as Idolatry, Prophaneness, contempt of the Grace of God, Incurribleness under Chastisements and the various Means which God is using for the Recovery of a backsliding People, which are daring Affronts and aggravated Provocations to Almighty God, and more direct and immediate Insults upon his Honor ; and therefore that People who are and continue Guilty of them, may expect severe Frowns and special Judgments from Heaven. — The God who governs universal Nature will often specially interpose to distress and punish

punish such a People.—When therefore all these Kinds of Iniquity prevail and abound among a People, natural and moral Causes concur to render their Situation gloomy and dismal. God severely threatens them ; he says of such a People, \* “ Shall I not visit  
“ for these Things ? and shall not my Soul  
“ be avenged on such a Nation as this ?” His Treatment of the Jews, (to wave all other Instances) may serve for a just Comment on his Promises and Threatnings of this Nature. By viewing their Circumstances at any given Time, a pretty exact Judgment might have been drawn up of the State of Religion among them : And that compleat Destruction which they finally suffered for obstinate Perseverance in Sin and Rejection of Grace, when God overthrew them, even as he overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, is left on sacred Record, as a monitory Example to all other Nations.

THIS brings me to the last Observation ;

III. THAT if a People have revolted from God, Repentance and Reformation are the most certain and best Means to prevent their Ruin, and restore them to the divine Favour. Indeed these are the only Things mentioned in the Text. It is true, when a  
People

\* Jere. 5. 9.



People by their own Folly and Prodigality are reduced into low Circumstances, or are threatned with fore Judgments and heavy Calamities, they are to use all proper Means of a civil and prudential Nature, as well as those which more strictly speaking are of a religious Kind. Frugality, a prudent Regulation of civil and commercial Affairs, a vigorous Exertion to preserve their just Rights, are all highly reasonable and necessary; they are no ways inconsistent with Religion or contrary to Repentance. But all these are insufficient without Repentance. They cannot ensure Success; they have no Promise from God. In a Word, whatever be their Struggles and Exertions; whatever the Expedients they use, yet if they leave Repentance out of the Question, they are very far from any certainty of Success; rather they have Reason to fear that the best concerted Plans will prove abortive, and that God will teach them by Experience, that the Race is not to the swift, nor the Battle to the strong, that their own Strength is Weakness, and that Salvation is only from the Lord.

It is allowed that in some extraordinary Cases God has for some Time spared a very sinful People from immediate and impending Ruin upon the Intercession of eminently godly Men. Thus he spared Israel at the  
request.

request of Moses on their Behalf. But in this Case God took sufficient Care to secure the honour of his Law, by the signal Punishment which he inflicted on them who were most guilty, tho' he did not destroy the whole People. Notwithstanding he heard the Prayer of Moses, he says ; † “ But as  
“ truly as I live, all the Earth shall be filled  
“ with the Glory of the Lord.” This threatening God accomplished when he shut those murmuring, stiff necked Israelites out of the Land of Canaan, and their Carcasses perished in the Wilderness.

BUT tho' God has in his great Clemency spared a People for some Time, whose general Character was very bad, on Account of the godly living with them, and especially when with Fervency and Importunity they have interceded for them ; or tho' he may have suspended the immediate Execution of Punishment on the Account of a partial or meerly external Reformation ; I believe Repentance attended with Reformation as the general Character of a People, has the only certain Encouragement of the divine Forgiveness and Favour. Such Repentance as is sincere, universal and evangelical ; as implies an inwrought godly Sorrow for Sin, as against a God of infinite Purity, Righteousness

† Num. 14. 21.

ness and Goodness ; as produces an inward, real aversion to all Sin, and endeavours against it. Such a Repentance, wherein the Soul taking its whole Encouragements from the Mercy of God revealed and manifested in the divine Redeemer, returns to God by a glorious Christ, as its rightful, original Sovereign and only Happiness ; in a Word, such a Repentance wherein every Sin is forsaken. Reformation from all evil Ways, and a Practice of all moral and christian Duties will accompany true Repentance.

AND where such a Repentance takes Place, though among a People who have been very wicked, and whose backslidings have been attended with the most crimson Aggravations, it will be a Means of averting the divine Displeasure. God will return in Mercy to them, and build them up. The many clear and positive Declarations which God has made in his Word, that Repentance and Reformation are agreeable to him, are indispensibly required by him, and are the only Terms on which he will turn away from his Displeasure and be reconciled ; and the undoubted Evidence which we have that these have been frequently the Means of averting impending Danger, and saving from deserved Ruin ; are sufficient to put this Matter out of all doubt ; and therefore should

be an effectual Inducement to a People, however sinful and degenerate, however afflicted, or however threatned, though on the very Borders of Extermination, to turn to God, through Christ, by unfeigned Repentance. The kind Declarations and Promises which God made to the Jews, of this Nature, are very many and express; and they were continued even to the last; when they were on the Brink of Ruin. Such was their Degeneracy that God says of them, † “ Ah sinful Nation! a People laden with Iniquity! a Seed of evil-doers! The whole Head is sick: The whole Heart is faint.” In fine, such was their Degeneracy, such their Obstinacy, that the Threatnings of Almighty God are levelled directly against them; threatnings not meerly of paternal Chastisement, as in the earlier Days of their State, but of the entire Destruction of the Kingdom. The Measure of their Sins was full, and God seems to be bringing Evil on them, even to the uttermost. He was just about to pluck up, to pull down and to destroy. — The Nation is here compared to a Vineyard; the Similitude is pertinent, and the threatned Destruction compleat. If the Fences be thrown down which surrounded the Vineyard, the Vines plucked up by the Roots,

† Mai. 1. 5.

Roots, and the Beasts of the Field let in and suffered to lay it waste, and to tread it down so that it should grow up no more, the Vineyard is compleatly destroyed. Further God says, † “Thou shalt say unto them, “Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, even so will “I break this People and this City as one “breaketh a Potter’s Vessel that cannot be “made whole again.” But behold the Clemency of God, “If that People against “whom I have pronounced, turn from “their Evil, I will repent of the Evil that “I thought to do unto them.” Again, God says, ‖ “Wash ye, make you clean, put “away the evil of your Doings from before “mine Eyes; Cease to do evil, Learn to “do well.—Come now and let us Reason “together saith the Lord, though your Sins “be as Scarlet, they shall be as white as “Snow, though they be red like Crimson, “they shall be as Wool. If ye be willing “and obedient ye shall eat the good of the “Land.”

I MIGHT also shew many Instances in which God has appeared in his providence, & signally delivered a penitent People from multiplied Distresses; but it is needless to recite particular Facts for the Purpose, since every one acquainted with sacred History especially

† Jer. 19. 11.      ‖ Isa. 1. 16, 17, 18, 19.

pecially cannot be at a Loss for them. Many a Time \* when they rebelled against the Words of God, and contemned the Counsel of the Most High ; so that he brought down their Heart with Labor, they fell down and there was none to help. Then they cried unto the Lord in their Trouble, and he saved them out of their Distresses.

FROM what has been said may be inferred the superlative Excellency of Religion, which is calculated to promote the noblest Ends, viz. to form Men in every Character and Relation to love and honour God, and to pursue and promote the highest Interest and truest Happiness of Mankind.

WE may also infer the inexcusable Folly of wicked Men, who while they are inordinately pursuing their present and private Interest, in the neglect and contempt of Religion, act in direct Opposition to both, and so expose themselves to everlasting Destruction, for less, for worse than nothing.

WE learn further, that it is a Thing of the last Importance to a People who are under the evident Frowns of Heaven, critically to examine what is their real Character : And if it should appear that they have done Evil in God's Sight, and have not obeyed  
E his

\* Psal. 107. 11, 12, 13.

Roots, and the Beasts of the Field let in and suffered to lay it waste, and to tread it down so that it should grow up no more, the Vineyard is compleatly destroyed. Further God says, † “Thou shalt say unto them, “Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, even so will “I break this People and this City as one “breaketh a Potter’s Vessel that cannot be “made whole again.” But behold the Clemency of God, “If that People against “whom I have pronounced, turn from “their Evil, I will repent of the Evil that “I thought to do unto them.” Again, God says, ‖ “Wash ye, make you clean, put “away the evil of your Doings from before “mine Eyes; Cease to do evil, Learn to “do well.—Come now and let us Reason “together saith the Lord, though your Sins “be as Scarlet, they shall be as white as “Snow, though they be red like Crimson, “they shall be as Wool. If ye be willing “and obedient ye shall eat the good of the “Land.”

I MIGHT also shew many Instances in which God has appeared in his providence, & signally delivered a penitent People from multiplied Distresses; but it is needless to recite particular Facts for the Purpose, since every one acquainted with sacred History especially

† Jer. 19. 11.      ‖ Isa. 1. 16, 17, 18, 19.

pecially cannot be at a Loss for them. Many a Time \* when they rebelled against the Words of God, and contemned the Counsel of the Most High; so that he brought down their Heart with Labor, they fell down and there was none to help. Then they cried unto the Lord in their Trouble, and he saved them out of their Distresses.

FROM what has been said may be inferred the superlative Excellency of Religion, which is calculated to promote the noblest Ends, viz. to form Men in every Character and Relation to love and honour God, and to pursue and promote the highest Interest and truest Happiness of Mankind.

WE may also infer the inexcusable Folly of wicked Men, who while they are inordinately pursuing their present and private Interest, in the neglect and contempt of Religion, act in direct Opposition to both, and so expose themselves to everlasting Destruction, for less, for worse than nothing.

WE learn further, that it is a Thing of the last Importance to a People who are under the evident Frowns of Heaven, critically to examine what is their real Character: And if it should appear that they have done Evil in God's Sight, and have not obeyed  
E his

\* Psal. 107. 11, 12, 13.



his Voice : If it should appear especially that they have gone away backward, and forsaken the Lord, that they speedily hearken to the Warnings of God's Word, and repent and reform what is amiss.—It appears of indispenfible Necessity that every Order of Men in their various Capacities, exert themselves vigorously to promote a Work of such Difficulty and Importance. And as in this critical Day this is the Duty of all, so it is in many Respects, eminently the Duty of Rulers.

As therefore in Obedience to his Honor's Command I stand in this Place on the present Occasion, may I be allowed, with all due Deference and Respect, yet with a Freedom becoming the ministerial Office, to address the honored Legislative Body of this Government, present in the general Assembly this Day.

WORTHY and renowned Fathers,

I TRUST it is the ardent wish of many in this Government, that you may have Success equal to your Desires and Endeavours for the public Good ; and that you may be long continued in your important Posts of Government, to exert your well known Abilities in defending our invaluable Privileges, watching for the public Peace, and at the  
same

same Time protecting, encouraging and promoting Religion.

IT is a signal Honor to you, (revered Senators) that by the Suffrages of a People, who still enjoy and highly prize Freedom, you have been entrusted with the important Affairs of Government in a Season so peculiarly Dangerous and critical as this. The Confidence reposed in you is indeed great, and we trust and have Reason to hope, your Vigilance, Firmness, Zeal, Prudence and Exertion will be answerable to our Expectations and to the Exigencies of the State.

WHAT Expedients of a political Nature are requisite at this Day to guard our just Rights, to regulate Commerce, to encourage Manufactures, Agriculture and Oeconomy, we leave to your Wisdom, not doubting your Care. These Things have been frequently and most pertinently urged, especially of late. —My Subject leads me to Considerations of another Nature, however not less important.

THAT we are involved in great Calamities, and have Reason to fear still greater, in this Day of perplexing Uncertainty and doubtful Expectation, is so Obvious that it is needless to enlarge on the disagreeable Theme. And whatever are the immediate Sources of these Distresses, our Sins are no Doubt the procuring Cause. Our Iniquities

ties have separated between us and our God. That Prophaneness, Impiety and Sensuality which have prevailed, and do still prevail among us, (may I be allowed to say) with too much Impunity ; “ Our stupid Forgetfulness of God, and our general neglect (under all our Struggles and Concern) of the only effectual Way of Deliverance, from all the Calamities we feel or fear,” these things point to us in a striking Light the Necessity of Repentance and Reformation.

UNDER God, our Eyes are unto you, our Dependance is upon you, to exert yourselves in your Places of Dignity and Authority, with yet greater Spirit and Vigilance, that you may not bear the Sword in vain, but be a Terror to evil doers, and a Praise and Encouragement to them that do well. We hope for the Continuance of your friendly Care to the Seminary of Learning in this Government, that you will promote Learning, and encourage a learned Ministry, between which and Religion there is so close a Connection. We also trust you will with Firmness support our religious Constitution in this Government, as being well calculated to subserve the Interests of Religion. And if it be possible, either by enacting other Laws, or more punctually executing the many good and wholesome

wholesome Laws now in being, to suppress the growing Prophaneness, Intemperance, Contempt of Worship and Prophanation of the Sabbath, which are visible and awfully increasing among us, it would have a happy Tendency to promote Reformation.

ONE very honorary and expressive Character given to Rulers in God's Word, is that of *Gods*; this implies that they should be God-like, and (as far as humane Infirmities will permit) imitate the God of Gods. And what a glorious Pattern is held up to the Rulers View in this particular? What boundless Compassion God has shewn to a guilty apostate World? What has he left undone to reduce guilty Rebels to Repentance, Love and Obedience? We trust you will imitate this glorious Example. That you " will sympathize with your People in  
" their Difficulties and Sorrows, and sensi-  
" bly resent all the Evils they groan under,  
" even when they suffer by their own De-  
" fault: That your Bowels of Compassion  
" will peculiarly move towards them, when  
" they are under deep Apostacies from God,  
" and under terrible Impressions of his  
" Wrath, both in Temporal Judgments and  
" Spiritual Plagues. As the Head in the  
" natural Body sees the uneasy State of the  
" whole and each Member, so you will have

“ a most sensible Share, in all the Losses,  
 “ Reproaches, Burdens and Dangers, that  
 “ are among this People ; and your Ten-  
 “ derness will be express'd, in taking the  
 “ best Measures for their Relief and Com-  
 “ fort.”

SUCH Rulers as have been Friends to God and to Religion, who have been nursing Fathers to the Church, have mourn'd for her Afflictions, critically observ'd her Declensions, and nobly exerted themselves to bring about a Reformation, have embalmed their Memories with Posterity, and their Names have been transmitted to future Generations, with peculiar Honors. Much more precious are their Memories than those of the most renowned Heroes, or Men of the most exalted Geniuses, who were yet destitute of and paid no regard to Religion.

SUCH a Ruler was Moses, a Man mighty in Faith and Prayer, eminent for Patience and Meekness, willing to relinquish Fame, and even to lay down his Life for the good of God's chosen People.

How glorious is the Character of Nehemiah and of Hezekiah and Josiah Kings of Judah, as Reformers and lovers of Religion ? Such have been many of our Rulers in this Government. Such in an eminent Degree was our late Governor. And was not he  
 in

‡ in some good Degree also deserving of the same Character by whose Decease a Breach is made in the honorable Council-Board ? He who had with strict Fidelity and to universal Approbation executed the various Important Trusts which were reposed in him, and might have been serviceable to the State yet for many Years, had God seen fit to have spared him to us. But Rulers as well as others must die. Though Gods by Office, they are Men by Constitution, and must in this Regard stand on a level with their Subjects. Animating Thought ! How uncertain the Term of Life and Opportunity of Usefulness ! And how glorious and incomprehensible the future Reward and Happiness of faithful and religious Rulers ?

MAY you (honored Fathers) be the happy Instruments of promoting Religion, of effecting Reformation ; may you be indeed Fathers to this People, the imitators of God, and late be received to those distinguishing Honors which await them who have served their Generation by the Will of God.

So

‡ The Honorable ZEBULON WEST, of Tolland, who was a great Promoter of Peace and good Order in the Town and Church where he belonged ; for many Years a Justice of the Peace, one of the Judges of the County Court, a Judge of the Probates, a Member and Speaker in the Lower House of the general Assembly, and elected into the Honorable Upper House in May last.

So great a part of the special Business of the Ministers of Christ, is to inculcate Repentance, and promote Reformation; and such is the general Character of this Order of Men in this Government, that I cannot doubt of their cordial Concurrence and sincere Endeavours to promote a Work so Important and necessary at this Day.

Reverend Fathers and Brethren,

In this apostate and sinful World it has ever been the Errand on which God has sent forth his Ambassadors to preach Repentance, and Reconciliation to God, through a Mediator; and at special Seasons to give Warning of impending Danger, and inculcate Repentance and Reformation, by all possible Motives.

\* NOAH warned the antediluvian World of imminent Destruction, and inculcated Repentance for a long Space. This was the great Errand on which the Prophets were sent to the Jews. The Burden of all their Messages was, Turn now unto the Lord with all your Hearts. And as their Sins increased and God's Judgments were more numerous and awful, and especially when the impending Storm thickned, and seem'd ready to burst on their guilty and defenceless Heads,  
the

\* 1 Pet. 3. 19, 20.

the Prophets were ordered to redouble their Efforts, and with an honest Freedom and pious Zeal, point out their Danger, and the Reasons of it. Thus Isaiah is directed to \* cry aloud and spare not, to lift up his Voice like a Trumpet, and to shew unto God's People their Transgression.—The weeping Prophet is sent with many such Messages as that in our Text.—When John, the immediate Fore-runner of Christ appear'd, he cried, ¶ “ Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at  
“ Hand.”—And our blessed Saviour, as the first of all his Messages, proclaimed, † “ Re-  
“ pent, and believe the Gospel.” And to add no more Instances, St. Paul in few Words tells us what was the main Business and Practice of the first Preachers of the Gospel, (and which no doubt we should imitate them in) ‡ “ Now then we are Ambassadors of  
“ God, as tho' God did beseech you by us,  
“ we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye recon-  
“ ciled to God.” And does not the Providence of God point out to us many peculiar Motives and loud Warnings, to be very earnest, vigilant and diligent in pressing Repentance and Reformation, on the People of this Government? Perhaps never in this Land was there greater need of Reformation, or louder calls to it. God expects we should

F join

\* Isai. 58. 1. ¶ Mat. 3. 2. † Mark 1. 15.

‡ 2 Cor. 5. 20.



join with our worthy Rulers in this most important Work, and not only faithfully shew this People their Sins and Deserts, but sincerely bewail their and our own Sins, and deprecate God's Judgments. In this Day of Darknes and Distress, ought not the Priests, the Ministers of the Lord, above all others, to weep and to say, " Spare thy People, O Lord, and give not up thine Heritage to Reproach." In brief, it appears clearly that Repentance and Reformation are that one Thing needful at this Day, on which our political and temporal Salvation, as well as our eternal depends ; and that God justly expects that we, above all others, should be sensible of it, and endeavour to promote them. This then should engross our Thoughts, engage our Solitude, and employ our Time.

AND I would humbly suggest, that as we would succeed in our Endeavours, we must hold fast the Form of sound Words, and adhere inviolably to the Doctrines of Grace, those great Important Doctrines, which our pious Ancestors held, and for which they suffered : 'Tis the plain, faithful preaching of these which is like to be attended with Success. It was observed by † a worthy Gentleman some Years ago, on this Occasion, that, " 'Tis the plain, serious, affectionate  
" preaching

† The Rev'd Mr. Lockwood, of Weathersfield, in his Election Sermon, 1754.

“ preaching of Christ crucified, and his un-  
“ searchable Riches, the merit of his Cross,  
“ the Prevalence of his Intercession, and the  
“ Power of his Grace, and the other pecu-  
“ liar Doctrines of the Gospel, that are nearly  
“ connected therewith, God has been wont  
“ especially to own and bless, to the pro-  
“ ducing of Faith towards our Lord Jesus  
“ Christ, and Repentance from dead Works,  
“ and all the excellent Fruits of Righteous-  
“ ness in Life and Conversation.”

MAY I be allowed just to add, that Union among ourselves is greatly necessary, that we may be successful in our Endeavours to promote the Interest of Religion among others.

SCARCE any Thing has given a greater Advantage to the Enemies of the Church, than that Discord which has prevailed among Christians ; or any Thing stab'd the Cause of Religion with deeper Wounds than those Contentions and unchristian Alienations which have took Place among the Clergy ; may they never prevail among us ; may we let alone Contention before it is any further meddled with. While we contend for the Faith, may we take heed that it is indeed the Faith of the Gospel, and those plain, great, important Truths which have a Tendency to promote practical Godliness, and not subtil Speculations and scholastic Niceties :  
And

And while we look upon ourselves obliged to contend earnestly, let us also contend meekly, and not loose Sight of Charity, in the Defence of Orthodoxy. Should not this thought, that there are cruel Foes enough abroad, watching for our halting, and rejoicing in our Divisions, cement us in the closest Union to one another? Should we not, as Servants of the meek and lowly Jesus, forbear one another in Love, and unite in this Day of great Degeneracy and Calamity, in every probable, suitable and prudent Method to promote the common Good :— Above all, are we not under the most sacred Obligations to join in humble fervent Supplications, to that God who heareth Prayer, who loves Unity and Fervency in our Requests, who has never said to the House of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain; who has often in answer to the united, humble Petitions of his Servants, appeared for Zion, and for New-England in particular. In this therefore I trust there will not be a dissenting Voice, or a disuniting thought among us.

THIS brings me to conclude with an Address to this numerous Assembly.

You have been often told, my Brethren, that this is the important Day which will probably

probably decide the Fate of America : That to be unconcern'd therefore in this Conjunction of Affairs must be the Effect of the most stupid Dulness, or unaccountable Frenzy : And that we are under indispenfible Obligations to use the most vigorous Efforts, and practice much of Self-denial (if call'd to it) for the good of our Country. All this is undoubtedly true : And God's Word directs us to the only certain and effectual Expedient to obtain Help in our Troubles, and Deliverance from our Dangers. In one Word, this is Repentance. This would be very reasonable and important, were we in no peculiar Circumstances of Danger, or under no special Frowns from Heaven : But as the Case now stands with us, 'tis necessary, in every View necessary to our civil and religious Interests, necessary to the Preservation of the State, as well as to the Salvation of our Souls. Is not God now in his Providence directing that same pathetic Exhortation to us which he did once to the Church of Ephesus ; \* “ Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first Works.” This Land, New-England in particular, was planted a noble Vine. We have the Honour to be descended from Ancestors who really deserved the

Name

\* Rev. 2: 5.

Name which was given to them in Derision, I mean that of Puritans.—They were indeed fast Friends of Liberty, but abhorred Licentiousness.—They were inviolably attached to Purity and strictness in Faith, in Worship and Conversation. God's Promise in our Text was fulfilled to them. He spake Good concerning them, and performed it to them. He marvellously preserved them from surrounding Savages, when they were few in Number.—He increased them almost to a Prodigy—Defended them from powerful Enemies abroad, and rendered abortive many deep-laid Plots for their Ruin.—The Time would fail, tho' in the briefest Manner, to recount the signal Appearances of God's Providence for them and us ; or to describe the distinguishing Privileges, civil and religious, which we have enjoyed. Is there a Spot upon the Globe, happier in these Regards than the British Subjects in America have been ? or a Government on the Continent which has exceeded Connecticut ? But we have evilly departed away from the God of our Fathers, and are in many Respects become the degenerate Plants of a strange Vine. How inexcusable is our Ingratitude herein ? And now when God is holding the Rod of Correction over us, let us not continue Incurable, and give Occasion for the  
mournful

mournful Complaint of the Prophet, " O  
" Lord when thy Hand is lifted up they will  
" not see:" Lest God should put in Execu-  
tion the threatening annexed to the fore-men-  
tion'd Exhortation : In these awful Words,  
" Or else I will come unto thee quickly,  
" and will remove thy Candlestick out of  
" his Place, except thou repent." May God  
mercifully grant that this dreadful Threat-  
ning may never be executed against us, as it  
has been long since, on all those renowned  
Churches in Asia. Who that has the small-  
est Degree of Love to God, or Regard to  
the Kingdom of Christ ? who that wishes  
well to his Country ? or who that has not  
put off all the Bowels of a Parent, or has any  
feelings of Humanity in his Breast, but must  
shudder at the Thought of New-England's  
ever sharing the dreadful Fate of those  
Churches ?

BUT unless we repent, have we not awful  
Reason to fear this will be our Case ? Should  
we plead that notwithstanding our general  
Declensions, we have many good Things to  
be found among us, and many good Men  
who are mourning for our abounding Sins,  
and the visible Decays of Godliness ; fer-  
vently praying for Zion, and willing as it  
were to thrust themselves into the Gap and  
stop the Plague ? This is no doubt true ;  
but

but could not all this and more be said in favour of some of those Churches, and of the Church of Ephesus in particular. Hear his Testimony, whose Eyes are as a Flame of Fire : † “ I know thy Works and thy Labour and thy Patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are Evil, and hast born, and hast Patience, and for my Name sake hast laboured and hast not fainted.” All this notwithstanding, Christ threatens to dissolve their Church state, and to take his Gospel from them except they repent. The Reason was, because they had left their first Love, were declining in their Affections and Regard to God and Christ, his Worship, Ordinances and Ways. Now we must be sensible that this is our sad Condition, unless we are still in a more lamentable Situation : That of Israel (I mean) when grey Hairs were here and there upon him, and he knew it not.

AND now behold God is waiting to be gracious : He says, “ Turn ye, why will ye die ?” How shall I give thee up, O New-England ! O that my People would hearken to my Voice :—May we then to Day hear his Voice, and not harden our Hearts.

MAY we hear the faithful Warnings of the compassionate Redeemer, and flee for  
Refuge

† Rev. 2. 2, 3.

Refuge to him, and by Faith in him lay hold on the Hope set before us.

\* HIM hath God exalted with his Right-Hand, to give Repentance and forgiveness of Sins.

IN his Name let us pray :

† “ O LORD, we have heard thy Speech  
“ and were afraid ; O Lord, revive thy Work  
“ in the midst of the Years, in the midst of  
“ the Years make known, and in Wrath  
“ remember Mercy.”

AND may God hear and save us, for his Name's sake, and for Christ's sake.

A M E N.



~~Journal~~

~~Journal~~

~~Journal~~

Journal of  
Book March the 28 1794

30000  
5 7e 61

Cogswell, James

56 -

-4

" BV 4260

.C9

1771

Rare BK Coll

1976