

# INDEPENDENCE-SERMON,

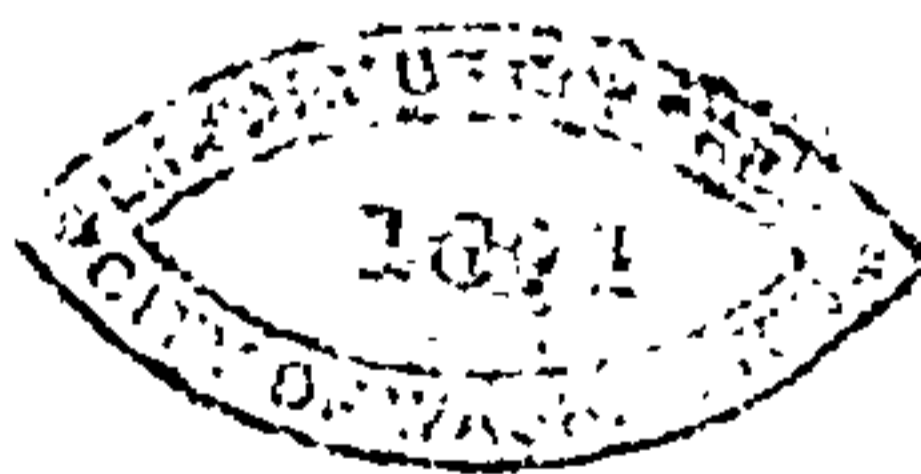
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Should any think an apology for the subsequent sermon necessary, I can only say, that I am requested, by those whom I wish to gratify, to publish it; and that a thousand copies are subscribed for. I am sensible that it has defects, but hope that in this evil day it may be useful.

24

## INDEPENDENCE-SERMON.

THIS is a day of *rejoicing* in our land ; and should be also a day of *praise*. It is a distressing thought, that, in our national *jubilee*, we should forget to bless the Lord. It is my intention to remind you this morning how kindly God has treated us: And would it not be treachery in his ambassador, not to notice our ungrateful return ? To contrast *his* goodness with *our* rebellion, will tend to make us humble and thankful. Hoping to promote your devotions on this auspicious day, and by this means to advance your happiness, and bring glory to God, I have chosen as the text,

### • ISAIAH i. 2.

HEAR, O HEAVENS, AND GIVE EAR, O EARTH ; FOR THE LORD HATH SPOKEN : I HAVE NOURISHED AND BROUGHT UP CHILDREN, AND THEY HAVE REBELLED AGAINST ME.

How provoking is the sin of ingratitude ! Among men it is considered unpardonable, while every other crime is forgiven. To be ungrateful argues a want of ingenuousness, of which even the most ungrateful are not willing to be accused. And how can we wonder that pride takes the alarm, when a charge is brought that argues baseness, not to be found in the herd of the stall.

The descendants of Abraham, to whom the prophet refers, furnish us a long history of ingratitude. God had so distinguished them as to render

them eternal debtors to his mercy, but they rebelled against him. He called Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees, a land of dark idolatry, gave him a large posterity, and made them the objects of his peculiar care. When oppressed with famine, the king of Egypt must feed them. When enslaved, God raised them up a deliverer, who brought them out with triumph. He bade the waves of the sea roll back and leave them a passage, and return to discomfit their foes. He miraculously clothed, fed, and guided them forty years. He then divided Jordan, and introduced them into a beautiful country, which, being watered with enriching dews and timely showers, furnished them all that heart could wish. To give them room he “drove out the heathen with his hand.” They had riches, honours, pleasures, and health. God delivered to them his word, called them his children, and placed in their magnificent temple the symbol of his presence.

When the ten tribes revolted from the house of David, and were abandoned to dispersion and slavery, he still kept his eye on Judah. He gave them wise kings, faithful prophets, and a mild and happy government. Still had they the means of knowing the mind of God. They had their temple, their high priest, their holy altar, and their daily sacrifice. For many years they sat under their vines and fig-trees, and none made them afraid.

Thus God nourished and brought them up as children. Had he not a right to expect their obedience? Was it not enough to astonish heaven and earth, to see it withheld? Can we, without amazement, be told, that, in contempt of all this succession of mercies,

that people made them other gods, and bowed to images which themselves had carved? They imprisoned their prophets, profaned their temple, hardened their hearts, and generated a posterity prepared to embrue their hands in the blood of Christ. All this mischief achieved by that people, God resolved to destroy; but first commands heaven and earth to listen to the story of their apostasy. “Hear, O Heavens,” &c.

How aptly does this whole history apply to us! If Judah’s ingratitude has ever been *surpassed*,—if it has ever been *equalled*, it has been in America. While attending to this short history, you have been making the comparison between that nation and ours. *We* have been nurtured with the same fatherly care, and have been equally rebellious. Of us, as of Israel, it may in truth be said, “Hear, O Heavens,” &c.

In pursuing the subject, I shall follow the natural division of the text; and show *first* that *God has nourished and brought us up as children*, and *secondly* that *We have rebelled against him*.

I. I am to show that God has nourished and brought us up as children. A kind parent aims to promote the best good of his children, and to this point bends every effort. So the dealings of God with us have been calculated to promote our best good. “He hath not dealt so with any” other “nation.” In proof of this assertion, we have only to look at facts. Is it asked, Wherein has God given us proof of paternal affection? I answer,

1. In preparing us such a goodly land. It is be-

lieved that no portion of the globe is to the same extent, so *fertile, healthful, and pleasant*, as the United States of America.

Our soil is *fertile*. Hardly does any land furnish its inhabitants comfort or luxury that ours does not yield for *us*. Our vallies wave with corn, our hills are white with harvests, and our very mountains, to their highest clifts, feed our flocks. 'Till God shall become angry, and shall forbid the showers to enrich our fields, we never need be dependent for our bread or clothing on any other nation. What one region of our country will not produce, grows abundantly in some other.

And we draw sustenance from our bays and rivers. Thus were "the fields to yield no meat, and should the herd be cut off from the stall," we should be still supplied. On this point every reasonable desire is satisfied, and every ground of fear removed.

To *fertility* God has added *beauty*. Ours is all that rich variety of scenery which can please the eye or charm the heart. Our extensive plains, encircled with cultivated hills, watered with meandering streams, and opening upon the traveller as he reaches the eminence, afford prospects the most enchanting. If any doubt whether our land is beautiful, ask the christian, who, in some favoured hour, ascended the mountain, and felt his soul rise from the broad-spread landscape to the God who planned and built the scene ;—ask *him* if "our lines have" not "fallen to us in pleasant places." Ask the mariner, who has been shipwrecked upon the coast of Africa, and has seen the sable tribes making a delicious meal on reptiles,—ask him

if we have not a goodly heritage. Ask the traveller, who has scorched his feet in Arabian deserts, and has climbed the Ararat, if the tender mercies of the Lord to us are not great. Ask one, if you please, who has seen the lawns and parks of polished Europe, if nature has not furnished our America with richer lawns and nobler parks. Will it not excite gratitude to compare our country *in point of beauty* with any region of the globe? What was once said of England is more true of America. “It is a paradise of pleasure, the garden of God. Our vales are like Eden, our hills as Lebanon, our springs as Pisgah, our rivers as Jordan, our walls the ocean, and our defence the Lord Jehovah.”

Nor is any portion of the globe, to the same extent, more *healthful*. This is particularly true of this state. From the eternal snows of the north, and from the sultry heats and deadly blasts of the south, we are well removed. The longevity of our grand parents, recorded on yonder tombstones; the many in our assembly to-day, on whom is seen the blossom of the almond-tree, bear witness that God has blessed with health and long life his American Israel. The numbers who can be spared from the sick and dying bed, to wait on God this morning in his house, bear testimony to the salubrity of our clime. Yes, God has fraught every gale with life, and has wafted health to us in every breeze. The effects of his bounty are seen in every countenance, and felt in every nerve.

In all this God has acted the part of a kind father; has nourished and brought us up as children. The land of Canaan, although described as flowing with

milk and honey, was not a better land. Nor will God demand less of us than of Israel. He charges us with every field, every spring, and every river. He notes against us every shower that falls upon our hills, and every dew drop that moistens the vales.

2. There was a display of God's parental affection in giving us existence in this favoured land. Long had it been the lonely haunt of savages. Our forefathers were natives of other realms, realms now perhaps in ruins. If God had not intended to be a father to us, we might there have been born, and might there have lived, in the midst of oppression, tears, and want. We might have been forced into those armies which have perished on the plains of Europe, stiffened with December's frosts, or fattening the soil with their blood. But God had kindnesses in store for us, and bid our fathers fly to some other land.

But *whither* could they fly? When they first began to feel oppression, America was unknown in Europe. It had lain hid beyond a vast expanse of trackless ocean ever since it sprang from chaos. True, it had been visited, but from its dreary bourn, no one had returned to bear tidings. Driven before the eastern tornado, the wretched had known its rocky shores as the place of their midnight shipwreck; else unknown. But Divine Goodness, which had long kept it in reserve for us, raised it into view, just at the moment when oppression was preparing our fathers to wish and pray for some asylum where they and their children might be free. The immortal Columbus sought our shores. Our ancestors followed him, under the same divine escort. And here we are this morning in a land of plenty, health, and freedom.



My hearers, do you not feel that God was kind in all this? Think then of the millions, who aret his day miserably poor, on that ground where *we* might have been wretched paupers, if our forefathers had remained at home. Think of Europe's precious youth, who have been lately torn from home in their tender years, to man the navy and fill the armies. Think of the fathers, who now need sons to prop their age, but have lost them in battle. Ah! and mothers, more helpless still, without a child remaining to solace their widow-hood. See that band of females! they have been to the shore to salute their husbands, but they return in despair; their husbands have fallen in the field.\* Think of the pleasant cottages wrapped in flames by the torches of a desolating army. Recollect the sufferings of that little Swiss Republic, to whom liberty was so dear, that mothers left their infants under the oak, and fought and fell by the side of their husbands. While humanity bleeds over these scenes of distress, let piety raise to Heaven a tearful eye, and say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all within me bless his holy name," &c.

3. As a parent his children, the Lord has instructed us. We were from infancy taught to read the scriptures, and were early placed under the droppings of the sanctuary. Many of us have been devoted to God in baptism, and have thus been made members of the school of Christ. Pious parents have whispered truth in our ears. Ever have we had line upon line, and precept upon precept. In no other quarter of the globe have *all classes* the means of instruction. And

\* A scene actually witnessed not long since in England, on the return from Spain of a remnant of Lord Wellington's army.

in this matter has not the Lord been a kind father? If a doubt remains, think of those crowds of Papists, who, through ignorance of the scriptures, pray to departed saints, and tender gold for the pardon of sin! See those herds of Mahometans, stupid as the beast, till their infuriated passions arouse them to spill a brother's blood. Think of the millions of Pagan tribes, who to this day worship a block of wood. Yes, think of the hundreds of millions, who never saw a Bible, who never enjoyed a Sabbath, and to whom no kind angel of mercy ever carried proffers of pardon. Think of these things, and you cannot doubt the fatherly kindness of God in providing for our instruction.

4. God has exercised parental love in defending our country in times of danger. Our whole history, from the first landing of our forefathers, is but one continued, affecting account of God's care of them and us. When that first ship brought that little band of persecuted christians, and landed them, in the midst of winter, on Plymouth's bleak, inhospitable coast;—when they there kindled their first fire, amidst howling beasts and yelling savages;—when they there fell on their knees, and to Heaven raised their eyes, streaming with tears;—when they covered their little babes with the leaves blown from the trees of autumn, and stationed a centinel to watch the foe; how could it be doubted but they would be driven from the land they had reached? Who could have predicted, or would have dared to hope, that God would soon give them peaceable possession of all this extensive country?

And afterward, when the savage band conspired

to destroy that little company of strangers ;—when the scalping knife was raised over the slumbers of the cradle ;—when the savage yell disturbed the midnight dream, and the angry flames were consuming the little thatched hovels where our mothers slept ; who could have thought that God intended so soon to give the word, and bid those savages retire to the western forests ? Who could have believed or dreamed that those miserable hovels would in a few years be exchanged for these beautiful mansions which now adorn our land ?

And when, afterward, the merciless Frenchmen bore down upon us from the north, and in the west hired against us the bloody tomahawk ;—when their ships of war covered our lakes, and spread destruction along our Atlantic shores, and the savage band broke in upon our frontiers, each pressed on by infernal fury ; who could have thought that Heaven designed, by this war, to prepare us for future conflicts, and raise us up an immortal Washington to be the future savior of our country.

And when, at length, the very land that gave us birth became hostile ;—when her floating purgatories thundered on our coast, and burned our cities, and her hard hearted veterans were ravaging our country, stripping our fathers of their flocks and herds, and our mothers of their well-earned food, and of the couch on which they dare not rest, and could not sleep ;—when at length we were forced to make an appeal to the sword, and our little companies of undisciplined troops were rallying round their general ;—when our fathers began to fall in the high places of the field, and our mothers, with some of us infants

in their arms, fled from the foe, and saw him burn their dwellings ;—when at length the temples of the living God were converted into barracks, profaned with the soldier's oath, and dissipated night with their blazing spires ;—when the meek ambassador of the cross\* must die for loving his country, and for wishing to be free ; and when all hearts began to ache and to bleed, and Heaven had not yet begun to give us the victory,—in this trying hour who would have thought, that God intended so soon to deliver us from the oppressive yoke of our parent country, and make us an independent and happy Republic.

While we look round us, and see some present, who still wear the scars they received in that perilous hour, we feel emotions of gratitude which we cannot suppress. Yes, fathers, while we bless God for being our rock of defence in the desperate hour, we thank you for the efforts you made to earn and deliver to us the fair inheritance of freedom. We never will, *no never*, forget your toils and dangers. We will cherish you in your declining years, and when you are dead, we will lead our infant children to your graves, and tell them the history of your sufferings in the cause of freedom. But, fathers, while we thank you that you fought in Israel's hosts, we entreat you to love Israel's God. And ye aged mothers, you fled with us from the malice of the foe ; O ! flee with us from the wrath to come !

Here I could stay and mention other mercies till the sun had gone down. God has given us a happier form of government than is now enjoyed in any other portion of the globe. Life, property, and the

\* Mr. Caldwell, of Elizabeth-Town.

rights of conscience are secure. Parents are not constrained to send their children, at the call of a tyrant, to be trained up to the art of murder. As yet *we* have suffered but little by the present distressing war. The foe has destroyed others; fellow-citizens have spilt their blood in the field, and others have lost their all, while we are unmolested. Nor have we felt the distresses of famine. The poorest among us have bread, while, in our world, and doubtless in some parts of our land, there are those who are destitute. God has kept us too from those plagues and pestilences which have desolated other countries. Our breezes are yet laden with health. O how good is the Lord!

And we could tell of *individual* blessings. God has guarded our lives. In the midst of a thousand snares we have been safely kept. Who can say why *we* have not been numbered among the millions dead, or the thousands now in the agonies of dissolution. Every day and every hour have our lives been forfeited. If God had bidden us die any morning or any evening, he had still been just and good. But he yet allows our blood to flow warm in our veins, and the heart to beat high with life in our bosoms. In all this how strong a testimony of the divine goodness!

But our wonder must increase. God has not only spared us, and defended us from harm, but has with his bounty rendered our lives comfortable and happy. We have been surrounded with every thing that could sweeten life. Our friends have smiled upon us, and loved us. "God has fed us with the finest of the wheat, and with the honey out of the rock has he satisfied us." We have sat peaceably in our dwellings,

and have seen the rich harvests ripening in our fields, while other dwellings have resounded with dying groans, and other fields have been fattened with human gore. Thus God has employed his wisdom and power in making rebels happy. If all this does not excite our gratitude, the beasts of the stall will find a tongue to reproach us: for “the ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master’s crib.”

But, to crown our other mercies, to blacken our ingratitude, and raise our wonder to its climax; God offers us eternal life through his Son. We are pressed with the obligations of dying love. The Holy Spirit, with kind intent, has come down among us. Through all the past year he has been knocking at the door of some of our hearts. And perhaps many present have continued to reject his kindest entreaties. And still divine compassion waits to save.

Thus after our cup has run over with earthly blessings, God has opened to us all the treasures of Heaven. First he fills our table with his fruits and his wines, and then invites us to the marriage supper of the Lamb. Here is unparalleled benevolence. No world has known the like. The angels have seen nothing like it in Heaven, devils have heard of nothing like it in hell. That God should be kind to the *good* is to be expected; but that infinite wisdom and love should exhaust their skill to make a *rebel* happy, is enough to excite wonder in the breast of Gabriel.

Having thus nourished and brought us up as children, had not the Lord a right to expect obedience? Are we not the basest of creatures if we do not love and serve him? I appeal to conscience which God

has placed as his witness, in your bosom. What demand does that messenger of Heaven make upon you to day? Should not the passing hours be spent in God's praise? If otherwise employed will not the God of Israel be angry? And yet we know that none will give him praise but those who love him. All others will profane this day, and thus provoke his wrath. I proceed to the other part of my subject.

II. While God has been exhibiting all this parental affection, we have rebelled against him. Every breach of God's law, every departure from duty, every unholy affection and improper action is rebellion. In our case, as in that of Judah, when God complained by the prophet, we exhibit *degeneracy* as well as *rebellion*. We have departed from the piety and rectitude of our forefathers. I shall at present mention some of the prevailing sins of our land, by which it is manifest that we are both a *degenerate* and *rebellious* people. And while I proceed every one must allow his conscience to do its office. It is to no purpose that the gospel is preached, unless the truth is *felt*.

The first sin I mention as proving our *degeneracy* and *rebellion*, is the want of family religion in our land: instance family prayer. While we are commanded to pray with all manner of prayer, lifting up holy hands to God, many families entirely neglect the duty. From no domestic altar ascends their morning and evening sacrifice. They rise with the sun, and address themselves to the business of the day, without asking God to watch or guide them. I fear some of my hearers did not pray in their families this morning. God only knows. And no doubt as many

will retire this evening, without thanking God for preserving goodness, or engaging any heavenly guard to watch the sleeping pillow. Now if parents do not pray in their *families*, we cannot hope that they do in their *closets*. That parent who finds secret prayer delightful, will endeavor by example to teach his children prayer. It is reported that some *professors of religion* have no prayer in their families, and ask no blessing over their food. Some are said to pray only on the sabbath, and ask a blessing over one meal in the day. Why not, with the same propriety, pray once in the year, and ask only an annual blessing over the ingathered harvest? This would cut the business short.

In this point we have degenerated. It is said that among our forefathers there was no family without a domestic altar, no little helpless immortals without a father's prayers. They partook not of the divine bounty till they had blessed the Giver. Could they return they would blush to own their offspring.

How can the christian neglect duties so plain? How can the father, whose title implies the warmest affection, let his children retire at night, till he has committed them to the care of God? If neglected by the father, how can the mother, a name yet more tender, lay her little ones upon their pillows, till she has put them under the care of the watchman of Israel. How do careless parents know that their children will live till the morning? And should they die on that night when they were not the subjects of parental prayer, how must those parents feel? With what heart-rending anguish must they convey their bodies to the grave. The neglect of this duty in par-



ticular, and of family religion in general, is doubtless a crying sin which proves our *apostacy* and *rebellion*, and must draw down divine judgments.

2. Another common sin, equally manifesting *degeneracy* and *rebellion*, is the neglect of discipline in families and churches. Many families have no government. The children never feel restraint, and so never learn obedience. The consequence is, they often despise their parents, and prove scourges to society. The world is the loser by their existence. They live only to cumber the ground, and reproach their parents: How ashamed ought parents to be of such children! and how afraid should society be of such parents!

In churches the same neglect of discipline prevails. Some, who have no pretensions to heart religion, are admitted to the communion. Many are seen there who are not *moral*. Yes, the lips of profaneness touch the symbols of a dying Christ. Hands polluted with the intoxicating bowl, and trembling under its dire effects, are moved to the sacred cup. The scorner, in many places, takes his seat among the followers of the Lamb. The very disciples of Iscariot, who envy Jesus a throne with the Father, and would pluck every gem from his crown; who trample upon truth; and would gladly extirpate the church, or at least kindle a hell in her bosom—these come forward, with brazen front, and commemorate the dying love of Christ. Were He to come and put himself again in the power of sinners, would not many of our communicants leave the sacrament and go to crucify him? In the days of our forefathers, there was not this want of discipline. Every family was a

little church, in which pious parents bent every effort to make their children like themselves. Departure from duty met reproof. The child who would disobey a parent, disrespect superiors, disturb devotion, or profane the name of God, would meet the frowns of his play-fellows.

The church member who walked disorderly was reproved, and at once either reclaimed or cut off. None came to the Lord's table who were not strictly moral, and hopefully pious. They had no idea, in those days, that unrenewed men had any right to the children's bread. If they were correct we are degenerate. It would be happy for the church and the world if that golden age could return. And return it must; discipline must be administered, before there will be a reformation of morals, or any extensive revival of religion in our land. And have we not reason to believe that a reformation in this matter must precede the removal of those judgments which we begin to feel. If God frowned because he *disapproved*, why smile till he *approve*?

3. The profanation of the Sabbath is another general sin, proving us *degenerate* and *rebellious*. Once that day was respected in America. The man who did not regard the Sabbath was not esteemed. The person who walked the streets on that day, unless to or from the house of God, was considered a disturber of the public peace.\* Then the waterman anchored his vessel in the harbor till the hours of Sab-

\* In one of the largest States in the Union, a tithing-man stopped the Lieutenant-Governor, as he was walking out on the Sabbath, and obliged him to return.

bath were by ; the traveller delayed his journey, and the young laid aside their pastimes. Now the sailor begins his voyage, the traveller pursues his journey, young men their pleasures, and children their sports, on that sacred day. On many public streets the way to the temple is obstructed with teams, and as you enter the very doors of the sanctuary your ears are assailed with the oaths of the heaven-abandoned teamsters. The innkeeper and his family can never hear the gospel ; they might as well live in India ; they must be at home to serve the Sabbath-breaker. In many parts of our land the evening of the Sabbath is not regarded.

And there are none who dare oppose this flood of corruption. One plea is, there are no laws. If we have no laws sufficient to enforce the observance of the Sabbath, and our Legislators refuse to enact any, we must be a very corrupt people ; if we have, and none dare enforce them, then our corruption is incurable. In either case, we have a striking demonstration that we are a rebellious and degenerate people.

4. "Because of swearing the land mourneth." This sin proves us *degenerate* and *rebellious*. The profane oath used to be the subject of public prosecution. Men dare not take in vain the name of the Lord their God. When respect for the great Jehovah did not restrain, the fear of man did. But the gold has become dim. In many awful instances, the child, who has just begun to speak, is taught to swear. The evening streets profanely echo with the names of the eternal God. The inn, formerly the peaccable asylum of the pious traveller, is now often

rendered intolerable by resounding oaths and curses. What sin can be more daring? It is a direct attack upon a holy God. It evinces a heart desperately rebellious. Its prevalence evinces a state of society monstrously degenerate.

5. Another sin, equally proving us *rebellious* and *degenerate*, is intemperance.\* This is a growing sin, which should alarm every friend to human happiness. It prevails among both sexes,† and in all classes of society. Numberless families in our country are rendered miserable by this unnatural iniquity. To-day they are happy and useful, to-morrow lost. Intemperate creatures are now found in every place. They come to our holy communion, they are entrusted with public offices, they officiate in our churches, and have, in some distressing instances, made their way into the sacred desk, and have there stood in the place of God's ambassador.

6. Another sin which proves us *degenerate* and *rebellious*, is the existence of two *hostile* political parties. The manner in which these parties treat each other, prove us a vicious race. Each accuses the other of designing the ruin of his country, of being vile, and false, and under foreign influence. Now if both divisions speak truth, in bringing this charge,

\* It is credibly reported, that in the first settlement of this country, spirituous liquor was kept only by the apothecaries as a medicine.

† It is ascertained to be fact, that under the plea of the sick head-ache, many ladies of fashion retire to sleep off the fumes of excessive drinking.

then we are all an abandoned people ; if one party only speak truth, still about half of us are irrecoverably lost ; and if neither keep the truth, then “ all men are liars.” Take either ground, and we are a wicked race. An unhappy result of this political division is, that we have corrupted the press. It is almost impossible to learn *truth* from the public gazettes. By party prejudice and rage, facts are discoloured. The honest man dares not confide in what he reads. On either side the plainest facts are sometimes obstinately and perseveringly denied ; I do not charge it all to the editors, nor dare I attempt to exonerate them.

Once things were not so. Our fathers knew but one party : they were Americans. They contended only for the interests of their *own* country. Every public paper was the vehicle of *truth*. If one said, “ I saw it written thus in the *newspaper*,” there were none to contradict. Nothing was written there that was not believed to be truth. But that golden age is gone. Truth, unable to breathe our polluted atmosphere, has taken its flight. As if the tongue, that “ world of iniquity,” could not sufficiently disperse falsehood, men have taught the paper and ink to lie ; and yet there is not a shadow of evidence, that there may not be, on both sides of the question, the firmest friends and the vilest enemies of their country.

Here I could enumerate many other sins ; among which are conspicuous a disposition in professors of religion to conform to the world, the little regard paid to an oath, a proneness in ministers to seek *popularity* rather than *usefulness*, to consult the *taste* rather than the *good* of their hearers, and the prevailing pro-

pensity to asperse character.—I am ashamed to name any more.

These sins have offended God, and he has come out of his holy place to punish us. If we do not repent, how can we hope that God will not treat us as he has other wicked nations, and discharge upon us ultimately the full vial of his wrath. Is there not occasion why this day should be devoted to God. If he be for us, none can be against us; but if God forsake us, we are as stubble, and can be trodden down by any foe that he may commission. And can we hope that he will continue to protect us, when discipline and prayer are neglected, when the name, the worship, the sabbath and the sacred honour of God are disregarded; and when every sin that can be named prevails? Will he continue to shield us by his power, when no longer his people? Will he be “a wall of fire round about us,” when no longer “the glory in the midst of us?” **As the Lord liveth,** our sins have placed us in danger.

Is it not then a time when all classes of men should fear before the Lord? Ought not the ministers of the gospel to take their stand between the porch and the altar, and cry, with incessant tears, “Lord spare thy people, and give not thy heritage to reproach.” Have they not reason to fear, that the ark of God may be taken from us, and carried to the heathen? Alas! if we look round us, must we not fear, that the divine glory is now hovering over the threshold, in the attitude of departing? Since our iniquities put us in danger, may every watchman be awake upon his watch tower, and be ready to give the alarm, that

if he cannot save others, he may at least free his own skirts from the blood of souls.

And shall not parents, who look forward to the destinies of a rising offspring, which they are about to leave in the midst of dangers like these;—parents to whom God has committed in charge, souls more precious than material worlds—shall they not this day mourn over their own sins and the sins of their children? Shall they not bring them in faith and prayer to the arms of a compassionate God. My dear fathers and mothers, soon opportunity to pray for your children will be gone. Your withering locks will soon lie in the dust. We do hope that before your dissolution arrives, we shall be the subjects of your earnest prayers. We entreat you to pray for us to day.

My christian friends, it will become us to lie low in the dust to-day, and to review all our sins, by which perhaps we have stumbled the impenitent, and provoked our kind Redeemer. Think, brethren, of the impending dangers. Every thing dear to the pious heart is at stake; the country bought with the blood of our fathers; yes, and the American churches bought with richer blood. As we enquire now respecting the seven churches of Asia, others may, another day, enquire, “Where are now the once flourishing churches of America?” O! is this ground, made sacred by the impress of a Saviour’s feet, to be trodden down by a savage band? Is this temple of God to become, ever, a Mahometan mosque. After God has baptized it with his Spirit, will he suffer it to become a heathen temple? “O! tell it not in

**Gath! Publish it not in the streets of Askelon!"**  
**The enemies of truth will triumph. Christians, pray**  
**this day for Zion. Go to your closets, while others**  
**are abusing the day, and deplore prevailing iniquities,**  
**and weep over a people who, by their sins, are des-**  
**stroying themselves. If God will not forgive us, and**  
**still be for us, we die. And the prayers of the saints**  
**must bring the blessing down.**

**One word to the impenitent. This is an impor-**  
**tant day for you, but I fear that some of you may**  
**this day do your souls much injury. The saints con-**  
**sider your danger very great, and many a prayer has**  
**ascended this morning from "the dwellings of Jacob"**  
**in your behalf. If ruin comes upon our land, you**  
**have no place of refuge. The christian has a strong**  
**tower, into which he can run and be safe; but des-**  
**truction will overtake you, if out of Christ. O!**  
**what need have you to be afflicted, and mourn, and**  
**weep! All your sins are still written against you.**  
**Not one of all the myriads is pardoned. See to it that**  
**you do not act to day so as to provoke God to anger,**  
**and perhaps induce him to abandon you forever.**  
**May we all so spend the day, as to do our country**  
**good, and promote our future eternal blessedness.**