



MR. DODGE'S SERMON,

ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE.



A

S E R M O N

DELIVERED, AT

WEST-SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS,

4

On the 5th of July, A. D. 1802,

TO THE INHABITANTS WHO MET TO CELEBRATE THE

ANNIVERSARY OF THE 4th OF JULY.



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Of Berlin, in Connecticut.



John Babcock. Printer, Hartford.

1802.

TO THE READER.

I DO not profess to be a grammarian, nor a logician, but a hearty lover of truth and righteousness : not engaged in political disputes, but in illustrating the truth of the gospel, according to my feeble abilities ; believing that ministerial influence in political affairs has done much more hurt than good in the world for a long time ; believing also, that gospel ministers, as such, have nothing to do with political matters, except being set for the defence of the gospel of Christ, are sometimes called to defend it from political invasions ; believing that God has allowed no connection between the spiritual kingdom of Christ and the carnal policy of the world. In the following discourse I have endeavored to illustrate the things most essential to our spiritual good, and in my improvement tried to shew that our gospel privileges are not defended nor supported by legislative power and skill, but by the *Spirit of the living God*.

A

S E R M O N.

PSALM XLVI. 4.

There is a river the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God.

THIS psalm encourageth us to hope and trust in God, and to believe that through his power, providence, and gracious presence with his church, even in the worst of times, she shall be preserved secure beneath the shadow of his wings.— Notwithstanding the loud and noisy threatenings of an angry and malicious world, *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.* ver. 1. This has been the language of the redeemed in all ages, and may still be uttered with as much propriety as ever; especially when we have had some fresh experiences of his appearing on our behalf, as at the present day, which is illustrious with his favor both in providence and grace. Are we pursued with persecutors? God is our refuge to whom we may flee, and think ourselves safe and secure upon good ground. Prov. xviii. 10. Are we oppressed with troubles? Have we enemies to encounter, or work to do? God is our strength, who hath promised, that as our day is our strength shall be: *Therefore will not we fear though the earth be moved, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.* ver. 2. Notwithstanding the war of elements, the wreck of matter, and crush of the world, which will one day take place, our souls are happy who trust in

God, with all our hearts and lean not to our own understanding. Though kingdoms and states be in confusion, embroiled in wars, tossed with tumults, and their governments in continual revolution; tho' their powers combine against the church and people of God, aim at no less than their ruin, and go very near towards gaining their point; yet will not we fear, knowing that all these troubles will end well for the church. Psal. xciii. 4. Not only the preceding verses, but our text especially gives us abundant reason to exult in God in such a day as this: And that you may gain a familiar understanding of the sense of my text I shall,

I. Give you a concise description of the church of God from the similitude of a city.

II. I shall endeavor to describe some of her blessed privileges from the similitude of a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God.

The first thing now before us then is, a description of the church of God from the similitude of a city: That the church is called a city both in the old and new testament will appear from psalm lxxxvii. 3. and Heb. xii. 22. Anciently a city was a walled town, where the people had much trade, wealth and honor: they were subjected to their proper rulers, and had their distinguished privileges. In the present day there are cities which differ somewhat from this description. According to Mr. Brown's dictionary, the most noted cities now destroyed were, Thebes, Memphis, and Alexandria in Egypt; Jerusalem and Samaria, in Canaan; Babylon, in Chaldea; Nineveh, in Assyria; Shusham, Persepolis, and Rhye, in Persia; Antioch, in Syria; Ephesus, Philadelphia, Pargamas and Troy, in Lesser Asia. Some one of these ancient cities was doubtless alluded to as a figurative representation of the Zion of God, and I think we cannot be much at a loss which, when we consider that Jerusalem was called *The Holy City, City of God, City of Sanctities*, &c. because there the temple of God

was built, his holy and solemn ordinances observed. Mat. v. 35. and xxvii. 53. Isaiah xxxiii. 20. If we take this city for our similitude, it may be observed, that the church is represented by it in the following particulars, viz. 1st. Jerusalem was a well built city, its houses were closely joined together, and its streets uniform; hence the Psalmist says, Psal. cxxii. 3. Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together: so the church of Christ and the members of it, as they are built upon the same foundation, and are closely joined to the same head, Christ; so they are strictly united one to another, and are like a building fitly framed together, or like an human body that is fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, all the members being set in their proper places, in a just symmetry with, and subserviency to each other. See Ephesians ii. 20, 21. and iv. 16.

2d. Jerusalem was not only the metropolis of Judea, but was the chief city in all the world: and this may set forth the super excellency, glory and comeliness of the church, above all the world besides; which will more manifestly appear, when the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and be exalted above the hills, and God's Jerusalem be a praise in the earth. See Isaiah xxii. and lxii. 7.

3d. It was a very beautiful city; it had many beautiful structures in it, particularly the temple, which was the finest building that ever was seen in the world: it was also very beautiful for situation, as well as for buildings, and therefore was called the perfection of beauty; as the church also is, being beautified with the garments of Christ's salvation.

4th. It was a very rich and opulent city, especially in Solomon's time, who made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones: in the church, not only the unsearchable riches of Christ are preached, but also the immense riches of divine grace and mercy are expended

upon the members of it, so that every inhabitant of this Jerusalem is a king and a prince. How rich must that city be, all whose inhabitants are kings and princes? Such are the saints, the members of Christ's church, who are made by Christ kings and priests to his Father.

5th. It was not only the place of the residence of the kings of David's line, where they had their palaces, and kept their courts; but also, what made it more glorious and comely than all the rest, it was the city of the great King, even of him who is the King of kings, who was set up by his Father, as king over his holy hill of Zion, so the church in Christ's palace, where he keeps his court, grants his presence, shews himself, and entertains his friends as courtiers; it is his rest, his habitation, where he dwells and delights to be, having chosen it for that purpose.

6th. What made Jerusalem exceeding comely, was, that the worship of God was kept up there: here was the temple; here sacrifices were offered up; hither the tribes went up to worship; and therefore is called the city of our solemnities: Christ's church is the place of worship where saints assemble together; where God is revered and adored by them; where the sacrifices of prayer and praise are offered up; where the word of God is preached, and his ordinances administered, to the comfort of his saints, and to the glory of his name.

7th. Jerusalem, as it was beautiful in its inward buildings, so it was likewise in its outward fortifications, which were both natural and artificial: it had not only many towers and bulwarks, which were its artificial fortifications, but it had also mountains around it, which were natural ones; and for this reason the church and people of God are compared to it in Psalm cxxv. 2. *As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people, from henceforth even forever.* God himself is a wall of fire around his

church; Christ is a strong tower in the midst of it; and salvation has God appointed for walls and bulwarks about it.

3th. *Jerusalem* was a free city, as is *Jerusalem* which is *the mother of us all*; it had many privileges and immunities, as has also the church of Christ, and all the members of it; all who are fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God, are all Christ's freemen, and enjoy the liberty of the gospel, and can never lose their freedoms nor be deprived of them; they shall never be arrested by divine justice, ~~nor~~ come into condemnation, nor be reduced to a state of bondage.

9th. *Jerusalem* abounded with vast multitudes of inhabitants; and the church of God though said to be a little flock when compared with the world, but yet, considered by itself, it is very large and numerous; John saw at once, after he had beheld the forty and four thousand, a great multitude which no man could number, and that of such who belonged to Christ, and were saved by him; and so will the church on earth, appear very numerous, when those prophecies are fulfilled, which you may read in *Isai. xlix. 19, 20, and lx. 4—8.*

10th. The diversity of the inhabitants either at *Jerusalem* or in any other city, such as rich and poor, good and bad, &c. may represent, that in Christ's church here on earth, there is a very great difference of its members; some have greater gifts and more grace than others have; some are more public spirited than others, and so of greater usefulness; some are real and hearty believers, others are only painted hypocrites; for there has been always tares among Christ's wheat, wolves and goats among his sheep, and some who have had a name and place in this city, whose names were never written among the living in *Jerusalem.*

11th. In well regulated cities, there is good order and decorum kept; there are good laws made,

and proper officers appointed to put them in execution; as well as a good watch and guard provided for the security of the inhabitants: in the church of God there are good and wholesome laws enacted by the great legislator, which concern the admission of persons into this city, their behavior whilst in it, and their removal from it, if disagreeable; and these are preferable to all others, not only because God is the author of them, but also, because they are written upon the hearts of all those who are true citizens, according to that promise in Jeremiah. xxxi. 33. *I will put my law in their inward parts and write in their hearts*: moreover, here are proper officers appointed, such as ministers of the gospel, who are to see that these laws are carefully observed and exactly complied with; who also bear the character of watchmen, being set as well for the defence of the church, as to give direction and instruction to her, which is the twelfth and last particular that I shall here name in shewing the parity between the peculiarities of a city and the church of God. Of watchmen in cities, there are two sorts, some that go about the city, and others that are set on the walls of it; Cant. iii. 3. *I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, &c.*

The qualifications for such an office are quickness of sight, vigilance, constancy, courage and faithfulness. Watchmen ought to have their sight, and keep a good look out; they ought to be awake, and not asleep, and constant in their post; should be men of resolution and intrepidity in time of danger, and faithful to give warning of it; and so should the ministers of the word. Sad it is when Zion's watchmen are blind, and yet we read of such: The four living creatures mentioned in the book of the Revelations Chap. iv. 6, 8. are emblems of gospel ministers; and they are said to be full of eyes within, and before and behind; and they have need of all the eyes they have, to take heed to themselves, and

to watch over others: they ought to be sober and vigilant, and in their watch-tower, and on their guard; for while men sleep, the enemy sows tares of error, heresy and division: They should be steadfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord: they should watch and stand fast in the faith, and quit themselves like men, and be strong; and they should not conceal any thing that ought to be known, or keep back that which is profitable, but declare the whole council of God.

Their work is to warn sinners of their evil ways, of the danger they are in by them: to shew them what an evil and bitter thing sin is, and that the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against it: that the wages of sin is death eternal; and that destruction and misery are in all their ways, in which they will issue if grace prevent not; and to convince them of the worth of their precious and immortal souls, and that the loss of them is irrecoverable, and that nothing can be given in exchange for them. Also their business is to arouse and awake sleepy saints; the wise as well as the foolish virgins sometimes fall asleep, and it is the duty of the watchmen to awake them, and let them know how unbecoming it is for persons of their characters to be asleep, *They that sleep, sleep in the night; but let us who are of the day be sober; let us not sleep as do others but let us watch:* 1 Thes. v. 5, 6, 7. Children of the light and of the day, should not sleep as those who are of the night and darkness; the watchmen should tell them, it is high time to awake out of sleep, and jog them and stir them up; and if this will not do, they should cry aloud and spare not, and lift up their voice like a trumpet, and say, awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead and Christ shall give thee light. Ephe. v. 14.

Moreover another part of their office is, to give the time of the night, as it is the business of a watchman on the walls to look out, and if he descries an enemy, to observe his motions and advances, and give notice

of approaching danger to them within the city ; so it is the business of the watchmen that go about the city, as to take up strolling persons and examine them ; so to give the inhabitants the hour of the night, that they may know how much of it is gone, and what is yet to come ; and this is the office of the ministers of the word : The watchmen of the Old Testament, the prophets, gave the time of night then ; *they enquired and searched diligently, searching what, or what manner of time, the spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified before hand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.* 1 Pet. i. 10, 11. And so the watchmen of the New-Testament, the ministers of the gospel, it becomes them to enquire what time it now is, that they may be able in some measure to give an answer to such a question as is put in, Isa. xxi. 11, 12. *Watchmen what of the night ? Watchmen what of the night ?* In order to which it is necessary to study the prophetic parts of the New-Testament, and abide in the calling wherein they are called : Not like some of modern times, who seem to pay more attention to politics and philosophy, to traditions of men, superstitiously gathered from the church of Rome, and to worldly popularity, such as wealth and power, parts and learning, than to the flower and quintessence of soul-saving wisdom, taught in the word of God !

Again, The Zion or city of God, is not only favored with gospel ministers for her watchmen ; but also with the angels of God, Psalm xxxiv. 7. *The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them,* and in Heb. i. 14. *The angels are said to be ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.* Yea, the character of a watchman agrees exceedingly well with our Lord Jesus Christ ; as he is the shepherd, one part of whose business it is to watch over the flock by night and by day. Christ does the whole work and office of a shepherd to his flock ; he feeds his flock like a shepherd ; he guards and protects it as David his

type did; he secures it from the lion and the bear; and being the proprietor of the flock, whose own the sheep are, will not flee as an hireling does when the wolf cometh, but expose his life to danger for them; and indeed he laid down his life for the sheep.

This character of a watchman agrees with him, as the keeper of his people; they are put into his hands, and there they are, out of which none can pluck them; they are preserved in Christ, who is able to keep them from falling, and who keeps a watchful eye over them continually, and will take care that not one of them should be lost or perish, but have everlasting life. And now as he is the omniscient God; he knows and can *declare the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done*, *Isai. xl. 1, 10.* He knew the time of his first coming into the world, and so likewise of his going out of it. *Jesus knew that his hour was come, that he should depart out of this world unto his Father.* *John xiii. 1.* And he knows the time of his second coming also, and of all intermediate events, of every thing that should happen from his first to his second coming; he knows the things that are and which shall be hereafter.

The book of the *revelation* is called *the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him to show unto his servants, things that must shortly come to pass.* *Rev. i. 1.* Wherefore whether should we go but to him to know what of the night it is? but I pass on,

II. To describe some of the blessed privileges from the similitude of a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God.

Having been so lengthy upon my first proposition, I shall endeavor to be more concise upon this:

This river to my understanding, represents to us the fulness of blessings, flowing from the spirit of God, unto his church. That the spirit of God and blessings of gospel grace are illustrated in scripture from the similitude of water, is evident from the

following passages, Jer. ii. 13. *They have forgotten me, the fountain of living waters.* Rev. xxii. 17. *And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.*

1st. It is a great blessing to the inhabitants of any city to have their city situated, or built upon some clear, everliving fountain of navigable waters. And this is the case of God's church in a spiritual sense, more, abundantly than it ever was with any city in a natural sense. Here is not a well of water, but a river, not of muddy water, but clear as chrystal, not corruptible or dead, but living water, *water of life.* Rev. xxii. 1.

2d. The head or spring of this river is declared in the text above, from whence it doth arise, not from the hills, which may be cut off, diverted or dried up, but it *proceeds out of the throne of God and of the Lamb,* and therefore can no more fail, than God and Christ can fail: no river can fail unless the springs that feed it fail, the saints shall be refreshed with such consolations as flow from the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and their comforts can never fail till they fail.

3d. The fulness of this river may be illustrated from the river Nile that runs through Egypt; or from the Mississippi river, the western boundary of these United States: which rivers are said to overflow their banks annually, and emit many small streams, which run from them, extending into the country, especially the vallies, and greatly enrich the soil, making their lands very productive, in consequence of a rich slime, which is left upon them.— In like manner this river of God, through superabounding grace, continually overflows, and emits streams of heavenly joy, through every sacred text, extending far and wide amidst this vast domain, among the inhabitants thereof; but more especially flows unto all such as dwell in the vallies of humiliation: always leaving the effects of gospel grace upon the heart, which is productive of fruits unto holiness; *such as faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience,*

gallinets, brotherly kindness and charity: and more also, the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, &c.

When any one of the streams that run from the before mentioned rivers, are traced or pursued towards the fountain from whence it came, it continually enlarges; but if traced from the fountain, it grows less and less, until you come to a dry and barren land, where the waters do not flow: so when any stream of bible truth is rightly traced or pursued towards the fountain from whence it came, it always enlarges and dilates, as you advance heavenward in the stream of gospel grace, until it will expand like eternity; and center in its author God! a sea without banks, bounds, bottom, or shore.

4th. They are proportionable to the strength of those, who have occasion to wade in them, like the waters mentioned in the 47th chapter of Ezekiel's prophecy, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, verses, some of which were but ankle deep, so that children might wade, and some bible truths are so familiar and plain, that the weakest capacity may understand them; some were to the knees, where children of a little larger size might wade, and some bible truths requires minds a little more enlarged than the smallest capacity to understand them. Some were to the loins, where men in general may wade; a great part of the bible is so familiar, that men in general may understand it. The same waters however, became an unpassable river: and this our bible, however contemptible it may appear to infidels, emanated from the Father and the Son through the Holy Spirit. This river of God, of which I am speaking, and before it can be traced to its source, will be found to contain mysteries too wonderful for men or angels to comprehend; like an unpassable river where the most enlarged capacities, and the most refined understandings may swim as long as time endures, and stretch themselves in the eternal ocean, while God exists:

and yet cannot comprehend it, for it is an unpassable river. Heaven is not an eternal tautology, but an everlasting enlargement of the water which Jesus recommended to the woman of Samaria, of which every saint is made to drink, and which is in them a well of living water, springing up into everlasting life.

5th. What was said by the Revelator, ch. xxii. ver. 2. may with propriety add to the illustration of our present subject; speaking of this river he said, *In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.* This tree can be no less than Jesus Christ, and in that he stood in the midst and on either side; it must be that the river run through the tree, shewing us that every stream of gospel grace, that flows from God unto us, comes through the heart of Jesus Christ the Mediator; of whom to whom, and through whom are all things. Rom. xi. 36.

6th. As such a river rolls with inconceivable grandeur, crushing and bearing down all before it; so the spirit of God through Jesus Christ shall continue to flow, until every herd of swinish persecutors are overwhelmed, and choaked in its waves; yea, until wicked men and devils are washed into hell. Should all the kings and priests now existing in the world, in connection with every pope and pontiff, join with them every legislative body politic, that ever was or ever will be, could they all meet in one grand convention, and be disposed to take council together against the Lord and against his feeble, humble followers, together with Gog and Magog, with every other infernal power to assist them in persecuting the saints, they could do no more towards damming up this river, stopping its current or diverting its streams than the smallest feather could towards making a dam across the great river Uphrates! if this be the

case, how insipid and mean must it appear to every person that has got as much faith as a grain of mustard-seed, to hear the common complaint of many in the New-England states, saying that religion will come to naught, and religious privileges be abolished, unless supported by civil power, and the fostering hand of legislative bodies ! !

7th. As citizens on navigable waters have the privilege of receiving food and clothing from far countries ; so the citizens of Zion are privileged with heavenly food and heavenly clothing, from the heavenly country, brought in Jesus, the ark of the covenant : through him they receive heavenly bread ; through him they receive the waters of the sanctuary, of which they may drink their fill ; through him they receive heavenly ornaments, and are clothed with a meek and quiet spirit, like the king's daughter, who is all glorious within and whose apparel is of wrought gold, and raiment of needle-work. Psal. xlv. 13, 14. Through him we send our thanks back, and also our petitions for *new recruits in every time of need, being careful for nothing, but in all things by prayer and supplication make known our requests to God.* Phil. iv. 6.

8th. Citizens, who live near navigable waters, are commonly privileged with an opportunity of taking their flight to a different kingdom any time when they get ready : In like manner the citizens of Zion have the privilege of taking their flight, from this to the heavenly Canaan, any time when they get ready, one thing to be considered by the way, however, *but there the glorious Lord shall be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams, where shall go no galleys with oars, neither can gallant ships pass thereby.* Isai. xxxiii. 21. The galley with oars, may teach us, that no legal arminian, rowing by the strength of an arm of flesh, without the sail of evangelical faith, shall be able to go up stream in this river, but shall be driven before its current down the falls to hell. The gallant ship may also teach us, that no high-flying antinomian, under

the sail of faith, without works, shall be able to beat against its current, but must be driven to hell before it, with the other. In order for a vessel to pass up this river, it must be well furnished with both sails and oars; as Dr. Watts saith, "their faith and works brought forth to light, shall make the world confess." Much might be said about the cooling, cleansing, healing and fructifying nature of these waters, but time would fail me: I must hasten to some improvement.

Dearly beloved brethren, who love our Lord Jesus Christ; while the convulsive heavings of the political seas are causing the hearts of many nominal professors to fail them for fear, and discovering the sandy foundations of worldly churches, who have nothing better to lean upon, than human wisdom, wealth and power, parts and learning, legislative skill and civil establishments, let me invite you to consider, that God's divinity is the foundation of the city I have been describing, and that you profess to belong unto. With propriety may I say, fear not little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Luke xii. 32. The foundation of God stands sure, having this seal, the Lord knows them that are his. 2 Tim. ii. 19. The present convulsions of churches and states, are but the fulfilment of scripture prophecies. It evidently appears that God is now bringing forward the sacred energies of the refiner's fire and fuller's soap, to cleanse his sanctuary. The spirit of life from God, begins to enter into the witnesses, that have been slain, and been prophecying in sackcloth, in the streets of the great city, spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, where our Lord was crucified. By the two witnesses, I understand the kingly and priestly display of Jesus Christ among his people: that the laws and regulations which Jesus Christ, as king of Zion, and mayor of the holy city, of which I have been speaking, has been trampled under foot, and the

traditions of men introduced instead thereof, can not be denied, especially in the Church of Rome, the mother of harlots, the whore of mystical Babylon. But should I say that the church of England, under the British crown, is her daughter, and that the things before mentioned, have been as apparent there as in the church of Rome, it would be equally true, though perhaps denied by some. Should I again say, that all religion in any and every country, whether in Rome or in England, or in New-England, which is established and defended by civil law has done the same things, it would be equally true; although doubtless it would exasperate the advocates of such religion with burning rage and cruel envy. Such pretenders have not only denied to the Redeemer a rightful sovereignty in his own house, by bursting into the chambers of the heavenly bride, and robbing her of her innocence, by forcing her into the chambers of mystical prostitution, by kingly, national or legislative power; and so denied and trodden under foot this witness: but they have also trampled on and despised the other, by introducing the mark of the beast in the forehead, called infant sprinkling, which they have held up as regeneration; teaching ignorant hearers, that they were thereby born again, and introduced into the holy city or church of God: implicitly denying the priestly blood of atonement, and so refusing to enter by the gate or door into the city; but have climbed up by this tradition. But the spirit of life from God begins of late to enter into his church by the widely extended display of gospel grace upon the habitations of Zion, working reformations in different parts of the world; so that while true religion revives, antichristian churches begin to fall and crumble to nothing, both in Rome papal and Rome protestant.

A wonderful mercy of the great God indeed! that he hath so caused the wheels of providence to roll in these United States; that we have a Jefferson

at the helm of government, who is fully convinced that the church of God needs none of his unmasked-for aid, no more than the ark of God did the hand of Uzziah to steady it; and that the spiritual kingdom of God is not to be handled by the contaminating hands of those, who in former times, under the pretence of supporting her by the fostering hand of civil power, have thereby persecuted her, and caused her borders to be filled with blood, slaughter and carnage.

Dear fellow citizens, who in heart are friendly to the city of God; let us this day rejoice, as on the birth day of our country, wherein our United States were born to freedom; praying that our constitution may be ever understood and explained according to its virgin purity, and never be metamorphosed into a trumpet for religious bigots. While God is shaking, not only earth, but also heaven, we must expect to see those, whose fear towards God is taught by the precepts of men; and those who have huddled into churches because it was the fashion, after the tradition of their fathers; and those who have been crying peace, peace, because their religion was established by civil law, like the faithless multitude turning away.

Should all presidents and governors, together with all those, who set in council with them, be convinced, that they have no right to assume the seat of God Almighty, in making laws to regulate, dictate and control in matters of religion, and act accordingly, by withdrawing their aid from those, who have nothing greater to lean upon, and grant the petition of the oppressed, viz. to let us alone as to our religion: then may we expect to see those, who have not regard enough for the gospel to contribute to its support out of love to God, withdraw to their own company, and say, ministers may go to work with other folks, and christians may pay their own rates, and support their own cause for what we care!

Then may we expect to see but few professors, and but few ministers to what there are now : but more real christians, and more gospel ministers, and less persecution. Christian friends, beloved of the Lord, think it not strange concerning these fiery trials, which are to try you : But remember those who endure to the end, while God in cleansing his sanctuary, and refining his church, are like victorious troops of faithful veterans, inured to suffer toils, while led by the discipline of heaven, trust in the Lord with all their hearts and lean not to their own understanding. This will I recommend to you ; however, by trusting in God, I do not mean, to do our duty, for neither God, angels nor men can do it for us : nor to grant us any thing inconsistent with his word to consume upon our faults. But to do all that for us which we need, and which none but a God can grant, ~~we~~ To give us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption through his Son our Saviour.

1st. Let us trust in God for justification, through the righteousness of Christ, apprehended by faith, and manifested by our works.

Not like some, who believe infant sprinkling is the new birth, and trust in that instead of a justifying faith : nor like others, who believe men are going to Heaven by wholesale without gospel piety.

2d. That we trust in God for sanctification, thro' the reigning power of his grace in our hearts, by which we are kept through faith unto salvation.

Not like some, who trust in their own economy and ambitious zeal, not according to knowledge to keep themselves from falling and from sin, and to persevere by their own strength or fall short of heaven.

3d. Let us trust in God to secure and defend our churches, and gospel privileges, by the walls of salvation before mentioned, through the holy child Jesus, who is like a wall of fire round about them, and a glory in the midst. Not like some who trust in the

economy of earthly judges, civil law, and military strength, for their support and protection, as though they thought Jesus was superannuated, and needed help, or had altered his mind and practice, and refused to be with and protect his people as formerly. Or as the truth may possibly be, having regulations which they know are contrary to the word of God, have no reason to expect his protection.

4th. Let us trust in God for the enlargement and repairing of our churches through the out-pouring and down-showering of his holy spirit and grace, to bow the stubborn wills, and melt the hard hearts of incorrigible sinners, that Zion's gates may be thronged with crowds of such as shall be saved.

Not like some who look for enlargement in their churches, because their religion is popular, their minister eloquent, and their meeting-houses elegant, and their society multiplying fast, and very respectable because of their connection with the antichristian family.

5th. Let us trust in God to supply our churches with ministers, who calls them by his grace, constrains them by his love, teaches them as never men taught, the circumstances of his people: Shews them the latitude and longitude of Zion's ship, while sailing through dismal deeps and dangerous inares, and grants them his holy spirit, to lead them into all truth, that they may communicate to every one his portion in due season: and lays them under necessity of feeding Christ's sheep and lambs, and seeking the good of his flock; though it should be to the loss of all their temporal riches, honors, and pleasures.

Not like some who say if men have learning sufficient, and have an inclination to the work, are licensed by the clergy, and called by the major vote of the society, they have a right, and they only, to preach, and that pretending to an internal call from God as above mentioned is enthusiasm.

6th. Let us who are ministers trust in God for our support and believe that the same God who influences men to love his cause, will influence them, who are taught in the word, to communicate to him that teacheth, in all good things. But should these be overtaken with covetousness, which is idolatry; as Mordecai said to Esther in another case, so say I to you in this. Then shall enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place. Christ is not a matter who will set his servants to work for him and let them or their families suffer. The righteous shall never be forsaken, nor their seed be found begging bread.

Not like those who say they are Jews and are not, being afraid to trust God, will not preach without an important salary secured to them by law. Let us hear the words of Jeremiah, *Cursed be the man, that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord and whose hope the Lord is.* Jer. xvii. I grant that as citizens of a free country, it is our duty to contend for our inalienable rights and privileges of a civil nature, even to a defensive war, if we cannot enjoy them without. But as to our religious rights and privileges, if they are not secured and defended by some being more important than Washington, Adams or Jefferson; we shall all turn out like hypocrites upon a sandy foundation: whether republicans, or federalists, for my part I do not thank any man or body of men for granting me the privilege of worshipping God how, when and where I please as bible and conscience dictate; for we all have this privilege secured to us by a *more sure word of prophecy, unto which we do well to take heed as unto a light that shineth in a dark place.* May God grant that it may become our greatest strife to seek a residence in the city before mentioned near the river of God, that we may be ready to take our flight from this to a better country, *that is an heavenly,* whenever he shall call, for Christ's sake. AMEN.