

A
DISCOURSE,
DELIVERED
In the Synagogue
IN
NEW-YORK,
ON
THE NINTH OF MAY, 1798,
OBSERVED AS A DAY
OF
HUMILIATION, &c. &c.
Conformably to a Recommendation
OF
THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF
AMERICA.

BY REV. G. SEIXAS.

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The Editor thinks it necessary to inform the Public that by the solicitation of several of the Author's friends, who were present at the time of his delivering the following Discourse, he has been induced to have it printed, merely to gratify them.

ORDER OF SERVICE,

As performed in the Jews Synagogue, in
New-York, the 9th May, 1798.

Prayer by the Reader ; repeated by the
Congregation.

Psalm xlvi. and li. chaunted verse by verse ;
first by the Reader, and repeated by the
Congregation.

Prayer by the Reader.

THE DISCOURSE IN ENGLISH.

Prayer for the United States and the adminis-
trators of the government.

Prayer for the Congregation, and Psals. 120,
121, 130, & 20th, chaunted jontly by
the Reader and Congregation.

A

DISCOURSE, &c.

TO contemplate the mercies of Providence; to celebrate his praises; to glorify his name; to pray for the peace of the city wherein we dwell; to conform to all ordinances of the government, that do not interfere with the principles of our holy religion, are duties incumbent on us at all times to perform. I have therefore selected the 133d psalm, as applicable to the present purpose, wherein you will find these words: “*Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!*”

By this verse we may naturally infer that king David had experienced the evils of dissention, and of a solitary life; and after having tasted the sweets and comforts of society, he joyfully exclaimed, “How good,” &c. King David, perfectly acquainted with human nature, and all the secret springs to action, after an useful life of observation, asserts, that an union in society is to be deemed one of the greatest blessings that can attend them; for in a most beautifully descriptive stile, he compares it to the precious ointment which was used for the beard of Aaron, to the refreshing dews of Mount Hermon, and the mountains of Zion,

and concludes with declaring, “ for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for ever more.” When we consider the advantages king David possessed, and the opportunities he had of gaining universal knowledge by being inspired, we might readily assent, without any other proofs than his bare assertion ; for we daily discover the truth of his observations in general, and full well we know the pangs and distresses that occur in this transitory state. When the spirit of discord is extant, the imagination of man is filled with terrific ideas, and the apprehensions of evil arise from the most trifling causes ; then it is that we fly for succour to our Maker, and we become more fully sensible of his almighty power. Let us not then delay imploring his divine protection at this time, when we are threatened with all the horrors of war by a great, a conquering nation ; who but a few years past was looked upon to have been highly instrumental in procuring liberty and independence to the United States of America, when we were oppressed by the ravages and devastations of an enraged enemy, who sought to deprive us of our invaluable rights and privileges ; when it pleased God to establish us in a state of freedom, independence, and peace, so that we became respectable among the nations of the earth. But, alas ! how are we fallen ! Our commerce is destroyed, our rulers are treated with indignity, and our envoys with contempt. I shall not take it upon me to enter into any civil or political discussion

upon the subject, but shall confine myself entirely to the nature and consequences of such actions as are consistent with the true spirit and principles of religion.

ON examining the sacred texts of Scripture, we find the precepts and moral doctrines are given to us as a collective body, though generally mentioned as if to an individual, as in the dialogue, “ I am the Lord *thy* God,” meaning thereby, that in the observance and performance of our several duties, each one received the command personally, and each one seems to be accountable for the other’s actions ; as in Gen. ch. xx. it is related, that when the Lord came unto Abimelech in a dream, and reprov’d him on account of having taken Sarah, the wife of our father Abraham, he said, “ Lord, wilt thou also slay a righteous nation ?” Hence it appears, that Abimelech (having heard of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorha) had in idea, that the sins of an individual might involve a whole nation in ruin, and his kingdom be annihilated. And in Gen. ch. xxvi. we find a something similar happened to Isaac and Rebecca ; and it is said in Numbers, ch. xvi. when Korah and his associates had excited the whole congregation of Israel to a state of rebellion, that the Almighty ordered Moses and Aaron to separate themselves from the congregation, and he would destroy them in a moment ; when “ they fell upon their faces and said, Oh, God, the God of the spirit of all flesh, shall one man sin, and wilt thou be wroth with all

the congregation? And in the time of Joshua," did not Achan the son of Zera commit a trespass in the accursed thing, and wrath fell upon all the congregation of Israel, and that man perished not alone in his iniquity?

FROM the nature of these sacred evidences, which we cannot controvert or invalidate, how necessary is it for every individual in a society, to be particularly circumspect in his morals and behaviour, so as not to incur censure for his misdemeanors, by setting an evil example to his fellow creatures to follow; for we know of a truth that men are often influenced to do evil, merely from the habit of seeing others acting contrary to the rules of rectitude: for when Jeroboam sinned against God, by erecting the golden calves to be worshipped, he drew after him a considerable number of the children of Israel from the true worship, and was ultimately the cause of the lost tribes being carried into captivity, and where they now are, is even at this day utterly unknown.

LET us, therefore, humble ourselves before God and confess our sins, ere yet it be too late. Let us benefit by the instruction given to us by our divine legislator, in Deut. "When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn unto the Lord thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice, for the Lord thy God is a merciful God, he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he sware unto them." And in

the Psalms we are confidently assured that the Lord is nigh to all those who call upon him, to all who call upon him in truth. It is now requisite that we should beseech the Almighty God of Israel for his interposition, to deprecate his wrath, to turn from our evil doings, and to do good, seek peace and pursue it, until we have accomplished that order and harmony, which ought always to subsist in society, that we may say in the fullness of our hearts as king David did, Behold, &c.

BUT how can we hope or expect this merciful blessing of our God, unless we enter into a self examination, as Zephaniah (in the 2d chap.) recommends to us in these words, "Examine yourselves and be ye examined, O nation not desired, seek ye the Lord all ye meek of the earth, who have wrought his judgment: seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." Hence arises the necessity of repentance, for who can say he has not sinned, after he has looked within himself? Supplicate, therefore, the throne of grace, that we may become sensible of our imperfect state, that he may "create in us a pure heart, and renew in us a true spirit," that we may be acceptable in his sight, that he may avert the evils that seem to be hovering over us from the apprehended invasion of a foreign power; I speak as well in our situation as citizens as Jews, though you are to know and consider that there is no punishment

cometh to the world but for the sake of Israel, as you may find in the Talmud partly quoted from our divine law ; and it is a maxim held out, in general, by all our ancient sages, that we may receive benefit, by seeing the nations with whom we dwell, each one in their turn suffering the displeasure of our heavenly Creator, and who will, when we have sincerely returned unto him, with a contrite heart and true spirit, receive us again into favor, and restore us to our own land, agreeably to our prophetic writings, which are numerously expressed throughout the scriptures, from Moses unto Malachi, and which may be known by only turning over the sacred pages.

WHEN we reflect on the situation and circumstances of the present wars, and the depravity and corrupt state of human nature, that prevails almost throughout the world, we must necessarily be led to believe that the glorious period of redemption is near at hand, and that our God will make manifest his intentions of again collecting the scattered remnant of Israel, and establishing them according to his divine promise, provided we use the means that are pointed out to us to perform, which never can be thought hard of, for what is it the Lord requireth of thee ? “ To do justly, and to love mercy, and walk humbly before thy God.” These are among the chief practical duties of man, but they are not to be considered in a passive sense, they must be active, they must be put in operation, by the power of the will,

and not from necessary principles, whether in a collective or in an individual state. It may not be amiss here to enquire into the origin and progress of men's entering into what we call civil society. The first account we have in scripture is of Nimrod, who being "a mighty one in the earth," with strength of genius had the art to accomplish a subordination to a specific government, which perhaps till then had not been thought of, or if it had, was deemed impracticable. He it was who formed and established a kingdom, and founded cities for his subjects to dwell in. They soon began to increase and multiply on the face of the earth, and by being of one language, and accustomed to live together, they thought of building a tower which should reach to Heaven: as this was a presumptuous attempt, the Almighty, agreeably to his own will, immediately resolved to punish them, whilst yet the work was in its infancy; as in Gen. ch. xi. they then were dispersed and entering into smaller societies; each head of a family was looked upon both as king and priest; to him the younger branches were subservient, and on him they depended for protection and instruction, and copying after them imbibed their manners and habits. And although the Almighty had revealed himself to Noah after the deluge, and had enjoined him an additional precept to the six he gave to Adam, still we find in process of time that idolatry prevailed among the sons of men, until the time of

Abraham, who separated himself from his father's house, and from the place of his nativity, in compliance with the express command of the one only God, whom we at this day worship, and who will in his own good time make himself known throughout the world, by such a glorious display of his Omnipotence as will astonish the multitude of different nations: then will be verified the prediction of Zachariah the prophet, when "ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, we will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you." After such assurances, who can refuse using the means to promote so desirable an end? surely no one who feels within himself a consciousness of being a descendant of Abraham, in whom will be blessed all the nations of the earth, as in Gen. chap. xviii. where the Lord says, "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment," and if we perform not these obligations, of what use is our knowledge? What are we the better? How are we the happier?

THOUGH the blessings of this life are many, and the allurements to pleasure great, still they can not be put in competition with those of the life to come. If you commit yourselves only to the gratification of your sensual desires, what can you rationally expect either here or hereafter? Misery and affliction whilst here,

and shame and condemnation hereafter : be ye therefore ready to appear before your Creator, for ye know not when your change cometh ; “ execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassion every man to his brother ; oppress not the widow nor the fatherless, the stranger nor the poor, and let none of you imagine evil against his brother.”

IT is natural for the mind of man to trace effects from causes, and to investigate effects in order to discover the cause ; by this method we come at the knowledge of truth. Envy produces calumny with all its concomitant evils, and this oftener flows from a principle of pride and ambition than from any other source. This it was that induced Korah and his company, when he assembled the whole congregation of Israel against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. His pride led him to assume a greater degree of dignity than what he was entitled to ; for not contented with the station he was placed in, he aimed at being made equal if not superior to Aaron. In consequence of his improper conduct, he, with all his adherents, were swallowed up in the earth alive, in a most tremendous and miraculous manner, in the presence of all Israel, who fled at the cry of them, for they said, “ Lest the earth swallow us up also.” Numb. ch. xvi.

HENCE we may observe the dismal result of acting from a bad principle, which is pride, and as it is said, “ the haughty of heart is an abomination of the Lord, and he that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife.”

How widely different does this principle operate to the zeal that actuated Phineas, when Zimri the son of Salu, a prince of the house of Simeon, had committed an abomination in the sight of all Israel, and had been the chief instrument to occasion a plague in the congregation, of which twenty four thousand died, that “the Lord said unto Moses, Phineas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, hath turned away my wrath from the children of Israel whilst he was zealous for my sake among them, that I consumed not the children of Israel in my jealousy; wherfore say, behold I give unto him my covenant of peace, and he shall have it, and his seed after him, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel.” Here was a blessing obtained both in a collective and in an individual state, whilst the other involved even innocents in mischief. Zeal always operates in such a manner as to answer the best purposes, while pride has a tendency to every species of malignity.

When we consider the many various opinions that commonly exist in a society, either religious, or civil, composed of all ranks and descriptions of men, collected (perhaps) from different countries, each bringing with him the prejudices of the government he was brought up in, it would seem to require more than human means to form any kind of system to govern them, that would suit the geuius, temper,

and disposition of such a mixed body. Hence arises the question, how, or in what manner, is an union to be effected? The answer is plain; by strictly adhering to the grand principles of benevolence towards all our fellow creatures; and the only invariable rule is founded on the instructions given to us by our prophets, who received their knowledge of men and manners, from the fountain of all perfection. Attend to what is said by Moses, Lev. 6. 19th, “thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” By following this rule in its general and extensive sense, you will have the means at all times within your power to promote unity in society, and you may with reason hope to accomplish whatever may be thought to produce an eventual benefit; nor is this so difficult a thing to be observed as many falsely imagine; for it only implies, do not unto another, what you would not have done unto yourself.

In the 34th Psalm which I have before quoted, “Depart from evil—and do good—seek peace—and pursue it,” king David highly recommends a sure mode to effectuate unanimity in society. In these few words four distinct moral lessons are to be deduced: in the first place, he informs you that the most necessary step to be taken, is to depart from evil; but this alone is insufficient, as it only implies an omission of that which is injurious to society; but the positive precept immediately follows in the 2d instance, do good, that is, you must absolutely exercise the principles of benevolence and jus-

tice ; dispense the means Providence has blessed you with to promote the cause of virtue and religion ; view things as they are in fact, and not according to appearance : nay, you cannot form a judgment of men but by their works, for they often are the reverse of what they seem to be, as it is said in Jerh. ch. xvii. “ the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked ; who can know it ? From this question, we must conclude it to be impossible for us to judge rightly ; we may be deceived. But in the subsequent verse it is said, “ I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings ; for he who getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool.” Therefore I say, appearance being only an outward sign of the affections of the (human) mind, it may be so disposed as to answer an hypocritical or sinister purpose ; but when you are possessed of the knowledge that your fellow creature is suffering the ills of life, it becomes your duty to assist him, with your counsel ; with your interest : this will be actually doing good in its most unlimited sense, and will ultimately procure the blessing of “ life ever more.”

Neither let your heart be evil inclined when you relieve the poor and the indigent, nor suffer yourselves to lay under the imputation of what is set forth in Deut. ch. xxviii. “ because thou servest not the Lord thy God with joy-

fulness and gladness of heart for the abundance of all things." In this verse is described the manner of doing a good action, according to the divine pleasure, which ought always to be attended to ; for it is not solely the deed that constitutes merit ; actions are sometimes compulsory, but the manner depends entirely upon the freedom of will : this it is that enhances the value of the benefit, either conferred or received. The benefactor, from a consciousness of having performed his duty, feels himself gratefully disposed towards his Maker, for having enabled him to assist his fellow creature, in the time of his necessity. And when the action and manner of doing good correspond, it is pleasing both to the giver and receiver.

We come now to speak, thirdly, of seeking peace. In the 2d Book of Kings, we find, that the Lord gave Solomon his choice of three things, and he preferred wisdom ; and in the subsequent relation of this circumstance we discover, that the Lord gave wisdom unto Solomon, and there was peace between Hiram and Solomon. From this passage, it appears as if peace was a natural consequence of wisdom ; but the first leading principle thereto is the fear of the Lord, as it is expressed in the psalm : " The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom ;" and without we have this leading principle in our hearts, we never shall attain wisdom, nor its natural conse-

quence, peace: But by accustoming yourselves to seek peace, you will acquire that fear of the Lord which is necessary to conduct you in the pursuit, which is the 4th lesson; and when once you have discerned the paths that lead to it, you must not leave any thing undone in order to attain it: Try every thing and every mode within your power to effect this invaluable blessing, and pursue it through every stage of life until you have obtained it; then will you become worthy of being called those who fear the Lord, which is certainly one of the grandest appellatives that can be applied to the human race; and as king David says, in Psalm 112th, "Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord;" and in Malachi, it is said, "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one unto the other, and the Lord hearkened and heard it."

Such are the works necessary to be done to procure redemption and salvation, that we may arrive at that glorious epoch, when the hearts of stone shall be taken away, and hearts of flesh be given; when we shall be taken from among the nations, and gathered out of all countries, and brought unto our own land, as particularly mentioned in Ezekiel, ch. xxxvi. Then shall we reap the real blessings that are derived from an union in society in its fullest extent, even "life for evermore." Can any reasonable being object to follow such monitions, when the recompence is so excellent? Does not the heart of man in general expand

at every benevolent action? How pleased, how satisfied does he feel, after assisting the distressed, giving food to the hungry, cloathing the naked, bestowing alms to the indigent, visiting the sick, supplying them with nourishment, consoling the widow and the fatherless, thereby imitating our heavenly father, who not alone considereth the wants of man, but even, as king David says, “giving food to the beast and to the young ravens that cry.” Such are the actions that proceed from the principles of benevolence. This it is that constitutes the chief operations of charity; which is of so commendable a disposition in the heart of man, that we find a prophetic assertion that “charity delivers from death.”

The holy language is so constructed, and its idiom and phraseology is so different from all other languages, that it is almost impossible for a translator to do justice to it, according to its comprehensive meaning; for instance, the word *seduka*, which is generally understood to mean that kind of charity which is known by giving alms, does sometimes imply righteousness, and they both are derived from the same root, justice. To you who are acquainted with the holy language, it is needless to say any thing on the subject; but for the information of those who are not learned therein, it becomes necessary for me to explain myself in such manner, that they may be enabled to judge of its sublimity and beauties, according to truth. Perhaps they may say what affinity

has charity with justice? They appear to flow from different sources, and operate from different motives. Charity is excited by the impressions of the outward senses, and justice proceeds from an intellectual faculty of the mind, after observation and reflection; therefore, you will more or less find a combination of these two principles accompanying each other; for in dispensing charity you generally consider the real wants of the object, and accordingly thereto augment or diminish your bounty. This depends on knowledge—on judgment. Conformably to justice, you are obliged to take care of the poor and the needy; they are as necessary beings in the scale of creation as any among the greatest or the richest; for “the rich and poor meet together, the Lord is the maker of them all:” And in Deuteronomy, you will find “for the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy in the land.”

Here is an express command given to us by our divine legislator, in respect to assisting the poor in a special manner, besides the general rules to be observed by the gleanings of the field and the vineyard, which are designed as trials to know whether or not you will obey the law of God; by so doing you will enjoy the blessings of this life, and thereby may hope to procure salvation in the world to come. Is there a better way of manifesting our gratitude to

God, than by relinquishing a part of our substance to those who stand in need? Is not this acting to others as we should like to be dealt with, were we in their situation? This is complying with our duty of loving our neighbour as ourselves, doing justice from a principle of grateful reverence to our creator; and as he hath blessed us with the necessaries and comforts of this life, so should we impart to those who are unable to provide for themselves. This is practising charity, executing justice, and acting righteously, and all under the idea of only being actuated by charity; at the same time viewing ourselves as stewards in the house of God; that he hath appointed us to the management of this important temporal trust, to supply the poor with the means of sustenance, to guard them against the inclemencies of seasons, to provide such necessaries as may be found requisite for them, and to support them whilst in this probationary state. This will be exercising our duty, in relieving the poor from their distress; and, as king Solomon says, in Prov. "He that hath pity on the poor lendeth unto the Lord, and that which he hath given will he pay him again." And, "He that giveth to the poor shall not lack; but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse." But as it is impossible for every individual in a society to conform to, or comply with this great moral obligation (of helping the poor) how, or in what manner, can a poor man act so as to be useful in his

turn? The poor man can only render personal services, although his heart be ever so well disposed to charitable purposes; and as he cannot contribute in the manner that others do, whom Providence has been pleased to prosper in their worldly occupations; he ought at all times to manifest his gratitude to his benefactors, by a uniformity of conduct agreeably to his situation, and by a strict compliance with every religious and moral law that he is capable of performing.

Notwithstanding the practice of charity is so highly meritorious, still we find that there are social obligations, that are equal (if not superior) which we call *gemilut besed*; which may be translated, recompence of mercy, favour, piety, according to its literal sense, but in this expression is comprehended every species of kindness that can be rendered by one man to another. For charity is confined to one set of beings only, whilst piety extends to every station of this transitory life, in this, the poor are only benefitted; in that both the rich and the poor are made equally partakers, the dead as well as the living, for there is not a person in existence, let him be ever so rich, wise or strong, but who must sooner or later stand in need of assistance, from his fellow-creature—for what avails his riches on a bed of sickness, without society? What will his wisdom procure without society? Of what advantage is his strength when in the last agonies of life, without society? They are all incapable of

helping themselves, either in sickness or death which is the lot of mortal man ; to whom then can he apply in sickness (under God) but to his associates for the things necessary to restore him to health ? What is to become of his poor bodily frame when life is departed ? Is it to be left as a prey to the ravenous beasts of the field, or to the carnivorous birds of the air ? What a wretched condition must he be in who suffers in either of these cases without society ! Our reason, that emanation of the divine essence, teaches us the necessity of forming societies, and our necessities point out the reason of supporting societies ; and no doubt king David from this consideration exclaimed, “ how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.”

It hath pleased God to have established us in this country where we possess every advantage that other citizens of these states enjoy, and which is as much as we could in reason expect in this captivity, for which let us humbly return thanks for his manifold mercies, and sincerely pray for a continuance of his divine protection : Let us not be deficient in acknowledging his power and his goodness, and with one heart supplicate him to promote the welfare of these states, the United States of America ; to grant wisdom, knowledge and understanding to the rulers and administrators of the government, and enable them to persevere in the paths of rectitude, so as to procure peace and safety to the citizens, both in their persons

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and their properties; that every man may sit under his own vine and under his own fig-tree, when ye shall have beaten your swords into plough shares and your spears into pruning hooks.

The many marvellous deliverances that we have experienced since the time of our redemption from Egypt, are manifest evidences of our being under the providential care of the God of Israel; for “had it not been that the Lord was on our side,” where should we have been now? Perhaps not in existence (as a peculiar people among all nations); for of all the ancient nations that were famous in the world at the time of our being settled in our own land, there is none remaining but us, who I am confident are reserved to answer the particular purpose of infinite mercy. He it was who led our fathers through the Red Sea on dry land: He it was who fed them with manna in the wilderness for forty years: By his direction they were settled in the holy land: He it was that destroyed the enemies of our faith, and subdued those that rose up against us, and he it is who hath preserved us alive, even as at this day.

For all those benefits, what can we return but an humble acknowledgment of our dependance on him, and by a steady observance of his holy law, endeavor to retain his protection and mercy; for we know ourselves to be deficient in good works; but, as it is said in Jer. ch. 14, “Oh Lord, though our iniquities

testify against us, do thou it for thy name's sake, for our back-slidings are many. We have sinned against thee," and again it is said in holy writ, "He who confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall have mercy."

FROM these assurances we are led to expect, that a sincere repentance of our sins, both of a national or private nature will be remitted through divine grace, and by an amendment in our moral and religious conduct, in obeying the voice of God, and the instructions of our holy prophets, we shall become sensible of the real blessings that flow from a well regulated society, then shall we know the advantages of living together in unity; to guard ourselves against evil bickerings, discord and schisms, the fatal consequences that attended the kingdom of Israel by the separation made by Jeroboam: the introduction of false worship, and the total overthrow of the separated tribes, was in fact the origin of all the evil that befel the house of Israel; jealousies, animosities, envy and all the trains of ills that naturally result from those vicious passions, were the cause of a partial punishment; this it was that occasioned both the Babylonish and the Roman captivities; and had it not been for the hatred and envy that subsisted among the few remaining Jews in Jerusalem in the time of Vespasian, they never would have been conquered in the manner they were: the disrespect shewn to each other, the contemptuous light they held each other in, were more powerful weapons against

themselves, than all the engines or battering rams brought against them by their adversaries. Their abominations were many, and their fate had been foretold long before, by the holy prophets, but they were so obdurate that they put no faith in their predictions. How different was their conduct to those worthies who were in the time of the Maccabees, where a few virtuous men resisted for a long time the united efforts of all Greece, and at last by their trust in the God of Israel they finally vanquished their enemies, and again established themselves in peace in their own territories. This was owing to their unanimity in council, their friendly disposition towards each other, the respect they shewed to merit, and the strict attention they paid to God's holy commandments.

FROM what has been said, my dear brethren, you will have observed the several duties we owe to God and man, both as a collective—a national body; or as an individual—a private society. It now rests with you to choose whether you will follow the doctrines inculcated therein, or by a continuance of reprehensible actions, reject the means that are pointed out to procure a redemption of all the house of Israel. Does not the sacred scriptures abound with calls to repentance? And do they not confidently assure us of our glorious restoration, when that we have returned unto the Lord? Can any words be more expressive than the persuasive language made use of by the prophet Ezekiel, ch. xxxiii. “ Say unto them, as

I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" And again, in the xxxvi. chap. it is said, "Therefore say unto the house of Israel, thus saith the Lord God, I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the Heathen, whither ye went."

There are those among ye who may say, wherein have we sinned? Have we not always observed the law of God? Have we not fulfilled every duty specified in the decalogue? Have we not at all times abstained from things unclean? Have we not continually paid our adorations to the God of Israel? Do we not look forward with hope and expectation to the coming of the Messiah, to the resurrection of the dead, and to the state of retribution? Wherein then have we sinned, that there should be need of repentance?

These are questions that may be asked by every individual; and if you will recollect what I said in the beginning of this discourse, that it seems as if all men were answerable for each other's actions, you will still find a sufficient necessity of repenting, both as a particular people or a collective nation; that is, either as Jews, or citizens of these states. The present apparent calamities, the judgment of Providence manifested by his visitations of war and pestilence, for some few years past,

in various places of the globe, are sure indications of his wrath in consequence of sin, if you consider these things how can you say with propriety we have not sinned, we have not transgressed either the preceptive or the moral law. Are not these circumstances loud calls to repentance and amendment?

As we are the living evidences of the unity of God, of his miraculous interposition whenever called upon in truth, it behoves us in a more peculiar manner to glorify his name, to celebrate his praises and magnify him above all Gods, that the heathen may know that there is no God, like our God, and that there is none else; that he is a God of compassion and mercy, continually inviting sinners to repentance, through the medium of his prophetic messengers.—Hasten then and confess yourselves before him, let your professions and your actions correspond, shew to the sons of men that you are sincere in your declarations, and set them an example worthy of imitation, that they may (as well as yourselves) know that there is no man living, or ever did live, but who must in some degree have deviated from the rule of right even so saith Ecclesiastes, “for there is not a just man upon earth who doeth good and sinneth not” how then can we expect to be exempt from sin when the very nature of man is frail and liable to err! do we not continually find the truth of this assertion? if not in ourselves, we discover it in others.

Let us then join unanimously in beginning a reformation of our conduct; let us universally observe the law of God; let us meditate therein both day and night; let us behave to each other as brethren ought—be kind, be compassionate; let us assemble in public at the stated times, and with one voice and one heart offer up our prayers to our common Father, who is our heavenly Creator, and hope for his efficient grace to conduct us in the road of salvation; let us beseech him to fulfil his divine promise of restoring us to our own land, as declared in the prophecies, and that his sanctuary may again be built where we may perform our daily obligations, according to the ancient institutions; let us instruct our children by the practice of our religious duties, and teach them to fear, to love and to obey him; make them sensible of their dependence on him, to know that he is omnipresent, and that there is nothing hid from his sight; that he rewards those who act justly, and punishes those who are refractory and obeys not his commandments; that he is a God of infinite justice, though blended with infinite mercy; and that he will again renew the covenant with us, that he made with our fathers, and he will again build up our cities which are desolate, and we shall dwell therein, and as it is said in Jeremiah chap. xxiii. “Behold the days are come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David, a righteous branch, and a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice on the

earth. In his days Judah shall be saved and Israel shall dwell in safety : and this is his name whereby he shall be called ; the Lord our righteousness ; therefore, behold the days come, saith the Lord, that they shall no more say, the Lord liveth which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt.”

“ But the Lord liveth who brought up and led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I have driven them, and they shall dwell in their own land.”

To ye, ye youths who are present, I shall now address myself particularly, before I conclude. My dear children ; it has been suggested to me by some respectable characters among us, that a short exhortation to you at at this juncture would have a general good tendency towards improving your conduct, when assembled to join in prayer with the congregation, especially as it would come explanatory of the reprehensible actions already spoken of.

You ought to know that this place is built merely for a house of prayer, and set apart for the express purpose of assembling herein to worship our creator, and that when you enter in here you should consider and “ know before whom thou standest” and with all reverence you are to pay your adorations to the God of our fathers (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob,) who hath chosen us from amongst all the nations of the earth to be his peculiar treasure, and we find by the scriptures, that whenever we serv-

ed God faithfully and obeyed his commandments, we were blessed above all others, but when we forgot the Lord who made us, and strayed after other Gods, or neglected our duties to him, that we were punished according to our deserts, untill we repented and amended, then we were again reinstated in his divine favour, this happened for a series of years, in the same unsettled manner; sinning, repenting, and being restored, but at the last we were so very incorrigible, that we became scattered throughout the world as at this day, and though we are now so dispersed, the Almighty has not utterly cast us off for ever, but he will again collect us from all parts of the world, and bring us again to our own land, provided we behave so as to deserve it, from the statement of these facts, you will readily see how much depends on your moral conduct and manners.

You are likewise to consider that the honor and reputation of your parents are involved in your characters: either they have not done their duty in teaching you the rules of moral rectitude; or that you are undutiful and disobedient children, for it is a maxim held out universally, that the true character of the people of a city, may be known by visiting the children's schools; in either case, this must be repugnant to your feelings, when you come to reflect on the disagreeable consequences, that must inevitably follow any misdemeanors.

In the 19th ch. of Lev. 17th verse it is writ-

ten thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart; thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour and not suffer sin upon him;" upon this principle and from an earnest desire to see the rising generation excel in virtue—in religion—I have now addressed you, and am in hopes of promoting peace and good order in this society, that we may say with king David, "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

May the great God of Israel, in whose presence we now stand, bless you, and all of you, with every temporal good, and conduct you safely through this troublesome life, and prepare your minds aright, that when he pleases to call you hence, you may be ready to appear before him, and be entitled to enjoy "everlasting life for evermore."

AMEN.

ERRATA.

In Page 7. Line 9th read decalogue instead of dialogue.