



Mr. *Cooper's*

Election-SERMON.

*May* 26. 1756.



# S E R M O N

Preached in the Audience of his Honour  
*S P E N C E R P H I P S*, Esq;

Lieutenant Governor and Commander in Chief;

The HONOURABLE His MAJESTY'S  
*C O U N C I L*;

And the HONOURABLE House of  
*R E P R E S E N T A T I V E S*,

Of the Province of the

*Massachusetts-Bay in New-England,*

M A Y 26th. 1756.

Being the *Anniversary* for the *Election* of His Majesty's COUNCIL for the said Province.

---

*By* S A M U E L C O O P E R, A. M.  
Pastor of the Church in Brattle-Street, *Boston.*

---

---

B O S T O N ; N E W - E N G L A N D :

Printed by *Green and Russell*, by Order of the  
Honourable House of REPRESENTATIVES.

M.DCC.LVI.

---

*In the House of* REPRESENTATIVES,

*May 27. 1756.*

*O R D E R E D,*

**T**HAT the Members for the Town of *Boston*, be directed to give the Thanks of this House to the Rev'd Mr. *Samuel Cooper*, for his Sermon preached Yesterday before the GENERAL Court; being the Anniversay for the Election of COUNCELLORS, and to desire a Copy thereof for the Press.

T. HUBBARD, *Spkr.*

---



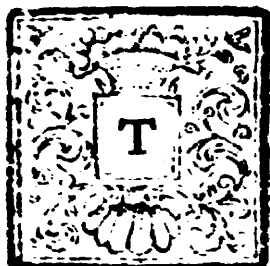
A N

# *Election* SERMON.

---

H E B. XI. 24, 25, 26.

*By Faith Moses when he was come to Years, refused to be called the Son of Pharaoh's Daughter ; choosing rather to suffer Affliction with the People of God, than to enjoy the Pleasures of Sin for a Season : Esteeming the Reproach of Christ greater Riches than the Treasures in Egypt : for he had Respect to the Recompence of the Reward.*



HE divine author of this epistle, designing to encourage the christian *Hebrews* to a steadfast profession of their faith, and a resolute discharge of their duty, in opposition to all worldly discouragements, propounds to them some eminent examples of piety, fortitude, and self-denial ; among which, that of *Moses* appears with a distinguished lustre :—And

as

## 6 *An Election* S E R M O N.

as he was the renowned *lawgiver* of the *Hebrew* nation, the consideration of so great a character cannot be improper to the present occasion.

The Text leads us to consider in the first place, the public spirit of *Moses* ; the services he performed, and the self-denials he endured for his own nation—and then, the principle of piety which cherished and supported his patriotic spirit, and co-operating with it, carried him thro' such a shining course of self-denial and public service.—After which, it may be proper to say something of the wisdom of *Moses* in following the dictates of his conscience, and answering his obligations to God, and to his brethren the *Hebrews*, in opposition to such great worldly motives.

SUCH was the public spirit of *Moses*, that he resigned the most tempting secular prospects, and voluntarily partook of the afflictions of the *Hebrews*, that he might become their deliverer. He refused, says the text, to be called the son of *Pharaoh's* daughter ; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

# *An Election* S E R M O N. 7

At the time when the founder of their state was born, the *Israelites* were cruelly oppressed by the monarch of *Egypt*. The important services which *Joseph* had rendered that kingdom were now forgotten ; and the posterity of the twelve patriarchs who had been invited to dwell in *Egypt*, upon the terms of friendship, were, without any provocation, treated with a barbarity which humanity forbids to the worst enemies. God saw and resented the oppression of his people, and the cruelties practised upon them by *Pharoah* and his officers. *He, who has made of one blood all nations to dwell upon the face of the earth ; who is the patron of the oppressed, and who delights to humble exalted wickedness, espoused the cause of this poor and injured nation, and opposed himself to the tyrant of Egypt : and as he had promised great and singular blessings to the seed of Jacob, he remembered his promise. I have seen, said the God of Abraham, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their task-masters, and am come down to deliver them.—*God raised up *Pharoah*, or rather suffered him to rise, that he might be an illustrious example of his own power and justice ; and in the plagues which soon after came upon that haughty oppressor and his people, the world was taught, what

## 8 *An Election* S E R M O N.

what those potentates deserve, who harden their hearts against the most high, who divest themselves of the common sentiments of humanity, and who trample upon the rights of mankind.

*Moses* was the chosen instrument of that deliverance which Heaven had decreed to the posterity of *Israel*; and by him God gave them the most important blessings any people can enjoy;—a free government, and a divine religion. The *Hebrew* polity is not only one of the most antient, but one of the best civil constitutions that ever the world was blest with; a constitution worthy of it's divine Author, and nicely adapted to preserve the property, freedom, peace and safety of the people to whom it was given\*: and had it been of a contrary nature and tendency; had it been calculated for the oppression, rather than the general happiness of the subject, no man would have been oblig'd to believe that it came from Heaven.

There

\* The frivolous objections and gross calumnies, thrown out by some against the law of *Moses*, have been more than once answered and exposed. Mr. *Lowman* has treated this argument to the bottom, in his dissertation on the civil government of the *Hebrews*, in which, the justice, wisdom, and goodness of the *mosaical* constitution, are fully vindicated.

## *An Election* S E R M O N. 9

There is a close connection between civil liberty and true religion ; Tyrants are commonly equal enemies, to the religious and civil rights of mankind ; and having enslaved the bodies of their subjects, they affect also to enslave their consciences. The people of *Israel* were made free, in order to their being prepared for the service of the God of *Israel* ; and without freedom, they would not have been happy, even in the land flowing with milk and honey. It was this that completed their worldly felicity, and added a peculiar sweetness to all the fruits of *Canaan*, that they entered upon it as their own possession and inheritance, and not as the propriety of an absolute lord.

God had pronounced a blessing on the seed of *Jacob*, and nothing could hinder this blessing from taking effect. In vain did *Pharaoh* attempt to weaken and destroy them : the people grew and multiplied under all their oppressions ; and *Pharaoh* himself, educates that child in his own court, who was designed to lead the *Hebrews* from their bondage, and to abase the pride of *Egypt*. So short is human fore-sight ! so weak is human power ! and so certainly shall the divine decrees be accomplished !



The *Jerwish* lawgiver was furnished with all the great qualities, proper to the public and important services, to which he was appointed. He had a princely education from *Pharoah's* daughter, who had adopted him for her son, as well as a religious one, from his own mother, by whom he was nursed. *Egypt* was a renowned school of wisdom, and the fountain of arts and sciences : here, the most illustrious men of antient *Greece*, her poets, philosophers, and legislators, improved their minds, and perfected their studies ; and from this fountain, they drew their learning and their fame. So that when *St. Stephen* tells us, that *Moses* was learned in all the arts of the *Egyptians*, he does in effect say, that he had the best, and most liberal education, that the whole world could afford. The same divine author assures us, that *Moses* was mighty in deeds, as well as words ; discovering a singular prudence and firmness in his conduct, as well as great learning and penetration in his discourses : and uniting the fortitude of a commander, with the wisdom of a legislator. Archbishop *Tillotson*, with many others, supposes that *St. Stephen* in this passage, has a reference to the great actions, which, *Josephus* tells us, *Moses* performed, when he commanded the forces of *Pharoah*, and overthrew a vast army of the *Æthiopians*, that had invaded *Egypt*.

But

## *An Election* SERMON. II

But the piety, and public spirit of *Moses*, compleated his shining character, and peculiarly fitted him to answer the great designs of providence, in the deliverance of *Israel*. These divine qualities, gave a lustre to all his other great endowments, and made him happy in a right application of them. What advantage would the *Hebrew* nation have reaped, from his learning, wisdom, and fortitude, had he not been possessed with a generous concern for its welfare? Without this, he might have ascended the throne of *Egypt*, unmoved with the cries of his oppressed Brethren, and proved, perhaps, as great a scourge to the race from which he sprung, as any of the *Pharaoh's*. But God, who designed him for a deliverer, softened his breast with compassion, and gave him a benevolence of heart equal to the extent of his capacity.

It often happens, that great and uninterrupted prosperity hardens the heart: A constant succession of gay and pleasurable objects, diverts our attention from the miseries of others; and we too seldom sympathize with them, in those calamities which we never felt ourselves, and are never like to feel. But the surprizing advancement of *Moses* in *Egypt*, was far from having such an effect upon him. He did not disdain,  
from

from the height of his prosperity, to cast a tender look upon the low and suffering condition of his brethren ; and after he had lived many years, incircled with all the splendors and luxury of the court of *Egypt*, he had not forgot to *weep with them that weep*.

*Moses* might have been very happy, according to the opinion of those, who never knew the force and pleasure of the social affections, had he abstracted himself from his own nation, had he been regardless of those sufferings, from which he was personally exempt, and been wise enough, to make himself the centre and circumference of his own wishes. He was a favourite in one of the politest, and most magnificent courts, and had the prospect of being advanced to the head of one of the greatest kingdoms, in the world : for *Josephus* tells us, that as *Pharaoh* had no child, he designed him for his heir. But *Moses* could not endure to be happy alone ; his heart was too tender, to violate his obligations to God, and his own nation, from any worldly considerations ; and he preferred the soft anguish of compassion for his brethren, to all the pleasures of sin. Their welfare, was a dearer object to him, than the crown of *Egypt* : His own prosperity was tasteless, so long as the lives of the *Israelites* were embittered with hard bondage ;

*dage* ; “ and their groans found a way to his ear, and to his heart, thro’ all the music of the court, and all the martial noise of the camp, in which perhaps he sometimes commanded.” Accordingly he seemed to value his advancement in *Egypt*, only as it might render him a greater blessing to his people ; and made no other use of it, than to prepare himself, to execute the great purposes of providence, and to become the saviour of *Israel*.

Fir’d with these noble views, he left the court of *Pharoah*, and ventured to visit his despised and oppressed brethren.—Observing, as he looked upon their burdens, an *Egyptian* talk-master smiting an *Hebrew*, and using him with great inhumanity, he warmly resented the injury. —Led by a divine impulse, to give a specimen of that deliverance, which God designed to send by his hands to the Israelites, *he rescued him that suffered wrong, and slew the Egyptian*. This action, which he performed, not only at the hazard of his court-preferments, but even of his life, was a proof of the generous ardor of his mind, and of his brave resolution, either to redress the injuries of his brethren, or to share their afflictions.

Having

# 14 *An Election* SERMON.

Having given this instance of his honest indignation at the oppressions of *Pharaoh*, which was very ungratefully received, even by his own nation \*, for whose sake he had thus exposed himself, he left the court of *Egypt*, and fled to the land of *Midian*. But no change of place ; no length of time ; no ingratitude of his brethren, could obliterate his affection to them. Indeed, when the appointed time of *Israel's* deliverance was come, and God called *Moses* to lead in this glorious work, he at first, appeared backward to accept the call ; which proceeded, not from an abatement of love to his nation, but a modest self-diffidence, not rarely found in great minds, and from the hopes, that God might select some fitter person for this great undertaking. Who am I, said the accomplished son of Amram, *Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt ?* How far was he from being influenced by a lust of dominion ! how sensible, that the office of a ruler is not to be sought, for the sake of the external advantages annexed to

\* When one of the two *Hebrews* who were striving together, and whom *Moses* would have reconciled, thrust him away, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us ? it is plain, the speech of this single person is represented in *Acts* vii. 35. as expressing the sentiments of the whole body of the people ; as their slowness afterwards, to believe the mission of *Moses*, when attested by miracles, seems evidently to shew that it was. Vid. *Dod. Fam. Exp.* on *Acts* vii. 27.

## *An Election* SERMON. 15

to it ; and ought never to be accepted by any man, but from a sense of duty, and an inclination to deny himself for the public happiness !

Such an inclination *Moses* early possessed, and carried with him, through all the surprising revolutions of his life. With this public spirit he left *Egypt*, and with the same spirit, he set himself at the head of his distressed people, when he could no longer doubt the appointment of heaven, and resolutely discharged the laborious, and hazardous duties, of his high station : With this spirit, he led them out of *Egypt*, not fearing the wrath of the king, who followed close at their heels, with a mighty army, threatening their destruction : With this spirit, he conducted them in the wilderness, and shared the hardships and dangers to which, for many years, they were exposed, in that inhospitable place : With this spirit, he greatly endured the peevishness, murmurings, and provoking carriage of the *Israelites*, exhibiting an astonishing example of condescension, patience, and tenderness towards that perverse, and ungrateful people : With this spirit, he fervently interceded with God for them, and stood in the gap, to appease the anger of heaven, when divine judgments were breaking in upon them : With this spirit, when  
God

## 16 *An Election* SERMON.

God was pleased to offer, to make him a greater nation in the room of *Israel*, he humbly refused ; and still, earnestly implored the continuance of the divine patience towards that people, preferring their welfare to the dignity of his own family ; and even wishing, that his own name might be blotted out of the book of life, rather than they should fall by the stroke of divine justice.— With so constant, and inextinguishable an ardor for the welfare of his nation, was the breast of the *Hebrew* lawgiver inspirited ! A love strong as death, and which many waters could not quench.

How happy were the *Israelites*, in so wise and tender a Leader as *Moses* ! and how happy the people, who are governed by men of the same disinterested and public spirit ! who consider the community over which they preside, as their own family ; who watch over it with a paternal care ; who strenuously exert themselves for it's welfare, and take pleasure in doing so : who desire no more power than is necessary for the good of the people ; who zealously employ, all which they possess, for this noble purpose ; and can relish that happiness as their own, which they communicate to others. This is the spirit with which every magistrate ought to enter upon his office ; which will

will animate him to the duties, and sweeten the cares and fatigues of it ; and this, every man professes who accepts a place of authority. A public character implies a public spirit ; without which, it is a badge of infamy, and not of honour to him that wears it ; but when both are united, nothing human can more deserve our esteem and reverence.—Nor should a ruler content himself with a small degree of public affection : there is no danger of excess in this divine passion ; and the duties and dangers of an high station require a double portion of it. For that degree of virtue, that has adorned a private character, has often been found insufficient to resist the charms of power, and the temptations of a more exalted state. *Tacitus* observes, the great change that was made in the temper of *Caligula*, by a change of his circumstances : \* No man, says he, ever knew a better servant, nor a worse master.

I know philosophers have disputed much about the motives of human actions, and some have endeavoured to prove, that all our passions are modes of self-love. But perhaps, the controversy is rather about words, than things. It is plain, that some men are little affected with any thing, but

C

what

\* *Nec meliorem servum, nec deteriozem dominum.*



what relates to their own interest, and vainly attempt, to establish a private and solitary happiness; others possess the social affections in a due degree, and find a wonderful pleasure in doing good: the former are called selfish, the latter disinterested, and benevolent. Both these sorts of persons, it is allowed, follow their own taste; but as their tastes are very different, so are their characters: The one is hated and despised; the other loved and admired. These are sentiments founded in nature, in which all nations and ages have generally agreed; and which the refinements of a few speculative men can never subvert †.

But

† Besides our bodily appetites, says a late writer upon this subject, there are certain mental passions, by which we are impelled immediately to seek particular objects, without any regard to interest; and when these objects are attained, a pleasing enjoyment ensues, as the consequence of our indulged affections. If we enjoy praise, or power, &c. in all these cases there is a passion which points immediately to the object, and constitutes it our good, or happiness; as there are other secondary passions which afterwards arise, and pursue it as part of our happiness, when once it is constituted such by our original affections. Were there no appetites or affections of any kind, antecedent to self-love, that propensity would scarce ever exert it self: because we should in that case, have felt few and slender pains or pleasures, and have little misery or happiness to avoid or pursue.---Why then may we not from the frame of our temper, feel a desire of another's happiness, which by means of that affection becomes our own good, and is afterwards pursued, from the conjoin'd motives of benevolence and self-enjoyment.

But whatever may be advanced in the school of philosophy, disinterested love, is, without all doubt, strongly asserted, and recommended in the sacred writings. Our divine Redeemer gave us a most affecting example of it, in his own incarnation and sufferings; and has commanded us to love one another, even as he has loved us. Whoever is born of God, and possesses the spirit of Jesus Christ, knows the force and sweetness of this divine principle; and is taught, to love his neighbour as himself. — This leads us to consider in the

SECOND place; the principle of piety, which cherished, and supported the public spirit of *Moses*, and co-operating with it, carried him through such a shining course of self-denial, and public service. *By faith, he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; by faith, he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ, greater riches than the treasures in Egypt, for he had respect to the recompence of the reward.* — The providence of God so ordered it, that the education of *Moses* was, for some time, committed to his own mother, who nursed him as the adoptive son of *Pharaoh's* daughter. Both his parents, are celebrated by the divine author  
of

of this epistle to the *Hebrews*, for their faith. From this principle, they hid their infant son three months, not regarding the cruel commandment of the king, which had destin'd all the male children of the *Hebrews* to immediate destruction. The singular beauty of *Moses*, who is called in the sacred writings, *divinely fair* ; \* and the signal interposition of providence for his safety, and advancement, might naturally lead his parents to hope, that this child was designed by heaven, for some great and extraordinary purposes. This apprehension, as well as their great piety, could not but engage them, to give their son a religious education ; to instruct him, with peculiar care, in the knowledge of the God of *Israel* ; in the promises made by Him, to the *Hebrew* nation, and the deliverance which they had been taught to expect.

Such an education was not lost upon *Moses*, though from his early youth, he was surrounded with all the temptations of an idolatrous court. All the learning of *Egypt*, gave him no prejudices against religion : His philosophy never subverted his faith ; nor did he throw off his piety, as an incumbrance, while he rounded the circle of the sciences. His faith in the perfections,  
and

\* So the original signifies ; *Acts* vii. 20.

and providence of God, and his reliance on the divine promises, made to *Abraham* and his seed, animated him to his public services, and supported him under all the discouragements with which they were attended. This illustrious patriot, *endured as seeing him who is invisible*. The consideration of an infinitely perfect mind---presiding over all events---making the happiness of mankind the object of his care---delighting to execute *loving-kindness, and judgment in the earth*---and under whose government, only upright and benevolent men, may expect to be finally happy : Such considerations as these, confirmed the virtue of *Moses*, and made it invincible. His faith, being of the *operation of God*, was a living, active principle---it assimilated him to the glorious Being, in whom he believed ; it formed him to a divine temper ; it wrought by love ; and impelled him to the execution of all his great and benevolent designs. The natural affection of *Moses* to his nation, was improved, and exalted by faith, into a divine vertue. Common humanity, and the dictates of nature, led him to sympathize with the *Hebrews* in their sorrows, and to exert himself for redressing their wrongs.---Religion, confirmed the voice of nature ; taught him to cherish these benevolent inclinations, and reinforced them, with some peculiar

peculiar motives of her own. He had an affection to the *Israelites*, as they were his own brethren; but they were still more dear to him, as the people of God; the offspring of that Being, whom he supremely loved; peculiarly related to *Jehovah*; and for whose welfare *He* had expressed a particular concern. *Moses* joyfully took part in the reproach of *Israel*, because he esteemed it the reproach of Christ himself; that Angel of the covenant from whom *Jacob* obtained the blessing; who had taken the seed of *Jacob* under his own conduct and patronage; who was afflicted in all their afflictions; of whose incarnation, *Moses* prophesied; and of whom he was a type.

Thus the public spirit of *Moses*, was enlarged, and invigorated by a principle of true religion; in him, the love of God, and benevolence to men were happily united; and by the joint force of these principles, he supported his great character, and became superior to the mighty temptations, with which he was encounter'd. His faith taught him to extend his prospect, far above all present and sensible things, to that glorious recompence of reward, which God has laid up in another state, for upright and good men. While this was full in his view, the sceptre and wealth of *Egypt* appeared but  
small

small and contemptible things ; and he could cheerfully resign, a palace for a cottage ; royalty for reproach ; and pleasure for affliction.---He could make this resignation, when he was come to years ; being past the folly of child-hood, and not yet arrived to the insensibility of old-age. The far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, which was set before him, extinguished the little honors of the world, and sweetened all the self-denials, which God called him to endure, for the good of his nation.

Such is the influence of true piety ; so certainly does it greater the human mind, and become the support of genuine vertue ! While it leads us to discharge our duty to God, it gives us a quick sense of our obligations to men ; and breaks the force of those worldly temptations, by which, many are unhappily perswaded to violate these obligations.-----Piety adorns every station of life ; but appears with peculiar advantage in the character of a ruler-----It teaches him the right use of power, and gives an happy direction to the whole of his public conduct. A pious ruler, consecrates all his talents to the honor of God, and the good of mankind---He makes the perfect rectitude of the divine administration, the rule and model of his own ; and imitates the justice  
and

and benevolence of that Being, to whom he pays his first regards. And in such a conduct, whatever self-denial it may cost him, he will certainly at last, find his own interest. And so we come to consider in the

THIRD, and last place, the *wisdom* of *Moses*, in following the dictates of his conscience, and answering his obligations to God, and to his brethren the *Hebrews*, in opposition to such great worldly motives. Whoever resolutely discharges his duty under the greatest discouragements, and can generously deny himself for the good of others, lays the surest foundation for his own happiness ; and will certainly gain in the end, much more than he parts with at present. Piety and benevolence are, in a good measure, their own reward ; and the consciousness of having done our duty, is in itself, no small and contemptible pleasure. A self-approving mind, and the sweet hope of the divine favour, are a treasure, which is ill exchanged, for any thing that the world has to bestow. *Moses* therefore, shew'd his prudence, in despising the treasures of *Egypt*, the magnificence of it's court, and the lustre of it's crown, when he could not enjoy these, without forfeiting his allegiance to God, and becoming the oppressor

oppressor of his own nation †. Had he renounced his religion, for the riches of this world ; had he stopt his ears against the cries of his brethren, and laid the foundation of his own greatness in their misery, he would after all, have procured for himself but a wretched kind of happiness. A mind capable of so much baseness, perfidy, and cruelty, could never have been the seat of self-enjoyment. An accusing conscience, and a certain fearful looking for of judgment, must have damp't his sprightliest pleasures, and destroyed the relish of all that had been so dearly purchased.

Many, who value themselves upon their worldly wisdom, betray the most egregious folly, and grasp a shadow, while they loose the substance.----All the pomp of wealth and power, ill-gotten, and ill-employed, is but the gay outside of woe ; a splendid covering to a restless mind, and to an aching heart. This pomp is indeed too commonly esteemed a mark of happiness : and upon this account, perhaps, it is chiefly valued : “ tho’  
D very

† The idolatrous *Egyptians* had conceiv'd a great hatred to the *Hebrews*, and their religion, which was heightned, by a strong jealousy, that in case of a war, these strangers might join with their enemies, and become masters of *Egypt*. So that *Moses* had no prospect of inheriting the crown of *Pharaoh*, with safety, unless he could resolve to renounce his religion, and remove all suspicion of an attachment to his brethren, by continuing, or increasing their oppression.



very imperfect must be that happiness, which a man derives from what another imagines, and not from what he himself feels."---But if any are desirous of appearing, with the greatest advantage, in the eyes of their fellow-men ; if they have a thirst for true glory ; and can relish that *good name which is rather to be chosen than great riches* ; let them join piety, and a public spirit, to their titles and authority, and employ their abilities in doing good. God often honors, even in this life, those who honor him. So *Moses* was taken up into the mount with *Jehovah* ; and when he descended, to bring the divine constitutions to the people whom he had delivered, he was encircled with a glory that strook the whole congregation of *Israel* : A brighter lustre, than he could have derived from the diadem of *Egypt*. And so highly was his character at last revered by the *Hebrews*, that God saw fit to conceal from them the place of his burial ; lest their ardent affection to their departed deliverer, should rise into idolatry ; and they should make the ashes of *Moses*, the object of their adoration.---His memory wanted no monument of brass, or marble, to perpetuate it : it has liv'd thro' all ages, without such a feeble support ; and his name has been mention'd with respect by gentile authors, as well as gloriously distinguished in the sacred writings.

Great

Great minds are very sensible of true honour. They who love the public, cannot but desire a return of it's affection, and think themselves happy in it. When *Themistocles* received, at the olympic games, the acknowledgments and acclamations of *Greece*, for his public services : " When all eyes were turned upon him, and every body was eager to point him out to the strangers who did not know him, as the saviour of his country ; he confessed afterwards to his friends, that he looked upon that day as the happiest of his life ; that he had never tasted any joy so sensible, and so transporting ; and that this recompence, which was the genuine fruits of his labours, had exceeded all his desires."

But the chief reward of piety and public service, the glorious recompence which *Moses* principally respected, lies beyond the little circle of the present life, and is reserved in heaven. And did we strongly believe the account which revelation gives us of this reward, it would immediately become the first object of our wishes ; and we could never doubt, whether it were prudent to procure it, even at the expence of our whole worldly interest. What is a name on earth, a name written in the dust, when compared to the *new name*, that is worn in the *Jerusalem which is above* ! What is the commen-

dation

dation of mortal men, who are often mistaken in their judgment, and inconstant in their affections, to the applause of the *general assembly on high* ; confirmed, by the approbation of the great Lord of all ! Will the treasures of the world bear to be set in competition with the inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away ? Or, can the momentary pleasures of sense, especially the unnatural and unquiet gratifications of sin, vie with the joys that are at God's right hand for ever ?

To judge rightly of our own interest, we must consider the future part of our existence, as well as the present ; and what proportion time bears to eternity. And, if we extend our views beyond the grave, to that unchanging state that lies before us, we shall be irresistably convinced, that nothing is of importance to us in this life, but what will turn out to our advantage in the next. Such a view, will enlarge our minds, confirm our virtuous inclinations, and give us new motives of action ; motives, pure and strong, and superior to all the sollicitations of sense, all the terrors and blandishments of the world. While we are intent upon this prospect, — the general judgment ; the solemn process ; the close examinations ; the impartial decisions, of that day ; and the great, the  
ever-

everlasting difference it will make, between the state of the righteous and the wicked ; while we view these scenes by a strong faith, the world is vanquished, and the temptations of it are disarmed of their power. Now, we applaud the wisdom of the humble christian, who prefers the afflictions and reproaches of Christ, to prosperous wickedness ; and of the pious patriot, who regards his usefulness more than his ease, and his duty rather than his secular interest.

FROM the character of *Moses*, though too imperfectly delineated in the foregoing discourse, civil rulers are reminded of what is required in their own character : what will raise and adorn it ; and give them an intrinsic worth, answerable to the station which they fill, and the respect which they demand from others. From this great example, one of the most illustrious that either sacred or profane history presents us with, they are taught, for what end they are elevated above the common level of mankind ; to what purpose, they are intrusted with their authority, and invested with their dignity ; and what they owe to God, to their country, and to themselves. They are under peculiar obligations, as they have singular opportunities, to promote the honor of the supreme ruler of the world ; and the good of  
men

men ; and they answer the end of their institution, only so far, as they accomplish these noble purposes. They are the *ministers of God for good* : this is the errand upon which they are sent, the work that is assigned to them by heaven. And, in the execution of it, they appear glorious in the eyes of men, and acceptable to the infinitely benevolent Being, who employs them. As they are in a peculiar manner, the servants of God, it is justly expected of them, that they do him peculiar honour ; that they go before others in a reverence of the divine authority ; that they exhibit in their own example, the moral character of the Deity ; and make the great end of the divine government, their own ultimate design.

And is there not a reciprocal regard due from the people to the civil magistrate ? Ought we not to reverence the appointment of heaven ; “ to be subject to principalities and powers ; to submit to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake ; whether it be to the king, as supreme, or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him, for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well ? ” This is the precept of Christ ; this, is the voice of reason. How can government exist, and the advantages of it be felt in the world, without a proper  
sub-

submission to it ? I say, proper submission ; for absolute, unlimited subjection belongs to bruits, and not to men. Can we relish order ; can we enjoy the peace, the safety, and the innumerable blessings that are found in a well-regulated society ; and not pay a grateful respect to those, by whom this order is preserved ; and from whom, under God, we receive these blessings ?

But it is expected, that the discourse should be turned into a particular application to our honoured Rulers, the Legislators and political Fathers of the province, at whose call, we are this day assembled in the place of divine worship. Accordingly, as custom and decency require, I would now address myself, with a most dutiful respect, to your HONOR, whom Providence has placed in the first chair of government.

You are not insensible, Sir, of your obligations to the supreme Ruler of the world, who has entrusted you with this large portion of authority ; who observes the manner in which you employ it ; and to whom you are accountable for it. Nor have we any reason to doubt the rectitude of your intentions, and your sincere desire to discharge the trust reposed in you, to the honor and acceptance of your Master in heaven.

32 *An Election* S E R M O N.

A sense of duty to God, as well as the benevolence of your heart, and your natural affection to the people committed to your care, cannot but engage you, steadily to pursue the general welfare of the Province ; which, under your mild administration, has already enjoy'd *very great quietness*. In this pursuit, we heartily pray God to direct, support, and succeed you.

We can wish your Honor, nothing greater, or more happy, than like *Moses*, to unite a strong principle of piety, with a warm public affection : to possess the sweet peace, and home-felt joys, that these qualities immediately produce ; and to reap the eternal reward which God has prepared for them.

The discourse, in the next place, may be directed with all due reverence, to the honorable his *Majesty's Council* ; and the honorable *House of Representatives*.

You not only see in the example of *Moses*, our civil Fathers, but know, we trust, from the sensations of your own hearts, that patriotism is not a meer creature of the fancy : not a shadow, projected by artful men to impose upon the vulgar ; but a real passion, which degenerate as our nature is, has not wholly left the human breast : a pure and  
divine

divine passion, that elevates the mind ; that presses to it's object the public good through toils and dangers ; and renders the suffering patriot, much more respectable and happy, than the successful sycophant, or triumphant tyrant.

The force of religion, is also beautifully illustrated in the character of *Moses*. In this you see, that true piety does not lower the temper, and contract the heart ; but is the proper root of the social affections ; on which, they will flourish with the most vigor, and bring their fruits to the greatest maturity : that it forms the patriot, and supports and accelerates him in his bright course. How strange is it then, that piety and benevolence, should ever be set in opposition, as though their obligations could interfere, or their interests clash.—From your example, much honoured Fathers, we expect to learn with what advantage these principles may be united ; and that he, who best discharges his duty to God, will most resolutely and uniformly act up to his obligations to men,

What a foul dishonour must it reflect on our divine religion ; what a reproach to the name of Jesus Christ ; should there ever be found a christian ruler, inferior in vertue and public spirit to any pagan magistrate ! And yet *Cicero*, after having invoked



## 34 *An Election* SERMON.

the gods as witnesses of the sincerity of what  
 he was going to expose, could make this  
 public declaration. \* ‘ In all the employ-  
 ‘ ployments with which the *Roman* people  
 ‘ have honoured me to this day, I have ever  
 ‘ thought myself obliged by the most sacred  
 ‘ ties of religion, to discharge worthily the  
 ‘ duties of them. When I was made questor,  
 ‘ I looked upon that dignity not as a gratu-  
 ‘ ity conferred upon me for my particular  
 ‘ use, but as a depositum confided to my vi-  
 ‘ gilance and fidelity. When I was after-  
 ‘ wards sent to act in that office, I thought  
 ‘ all eyes were turned upon me, and that my  
 ‘ person and administration were in a man-  
 ‘ ner exhibited as a spectacle to the view of  
 ‘ all the world ; and in this thought, I not  
 ‘ only denied myself all pleasures of an ex-  
 ‘ traordinary kind, but even those which  
 ‘ are authorized by nature and necessity. I  
 ‘ am now intended for ædile. I call the  
 ‘ gods to witness, that how honourable  
 ‘ soever this dignity seems to me, I have too  
 ‘ just a sense of it’s weight, not to have more  
 ‘ sollicitude and disquiet, than joy and plea-  
 ‘ sure from it ; so much I desire to make it  
 ‘ appear, that it was not bestowed on me by  
 ‘ chance, or the necessity of being filled up ;  
 ‘ but confided deservedly by the choice and  
 ‘ discernment of my country.’ Shall such  
 examples be found, amidst all the disadvan-  
 tages

\* Cic. Ver.

tages which pagan nations laboured under, and shall all the light and motives of the gospel, ever prove insufficient to produce an equal vertue ? Should a christian ruler, who receives his authority not only as a trust from the people, but as a depositum from the *King of kings* ; to whom the moral government of God, and the eternal rewards and punishments with which it is supported, are so clearly revealed ; should such an one ever forget the end of his advancement, or act contrary to it from any worldly considerations ; should he grow regardless of the welfare of the community committed to his care, or set up an interest of his own in opposition to it ; what guilt must he incur ; what a sentence must he fall under !

Suffer me then, honoured Fathers, with a becoming importunity as well as respect, to remind you of the importance of your public conduct ; how deeply the glory of God, as well as the good of the community is concerned in it ; and how much your own everlasting interest depends upon it ! a sense of duty to you, by whose order I stand in this place, an affection to my dear country, and a regard to that Being in whose name I speak, all constrain me to be in earnest upon this head. The religion, the mo-  
rals,

rals, the trade, the order and safety of this whole community, all that ought to be dear to us, are in a good measure confided to you : an important trust, of which you must one day give an account to him, who shall judge *both the quick and the dead at his appearing, and who accepteth not the persons of princes.*

By this motive, as well as a generous affection to the public good, may you be guided in the weighty affair that lies before you ; teaching us the worth of that privilege which you are now called to exercise, by a wise improvement of it.

No one can be insensible of the importance of his *Majesty's Council*, this day to be chosen, and of the influence which that respectable Board has upon our public affairs. With their advice the state is to be steered ; with their approbation civil officers are appointed ; and the College which ought always to be dear to us, which needs and deserves to be tenderly cherished, falls in part under their inspection. A person then who is known to be loose in his morals, and not to hate covetousness ; one whose capacity will not allow, or whose base and cowardly heart forbids him, to give sound and upright advice : one who is indifferent to the interest of learning and religion ; and who wants  
fortitude

fortitude enough not to consent to a mistaken nomination ; a person of such a character, can never be qualified for a place of so much dignity and importance.—The wise and pious, the loyal and disinterested patriot, can alone fill and adorn that honourable seat. This is the character, which all who are concerned in the election of this day should require ; and in such a choice, we pray God, you may be happily united.

We trust, our civil Fathers, that you are now assembled for the transaction of our political affairs, in the fear of God, and under a deep sense of your dependance for direction and success in all, upon him, who giveth wisdom to the wise, who inspires the generous sentiments of the patriot, who prospers his endeavours, and rewards his services. You have chosen, agreeable to the pious custom of our ancestors, to enter upon the public business of this year, perhaps as important an one as we ever saw, with a solemn act of religion. You have called us into the house of God, to unite with you in imploring the divine blessing upon your administration. Happy will it be for you, happy for this whole community, if you always preserve a supreme respect to that glorious Being, before whom the principalities and powers in heaven cast their crowns ;  
who

who stands in the congregation of the mighty ; who knows your thoughts afar off ; to whom the happiness of communities is dear ; and whose favour you can never expect, without faithfully improving your talents and opportunities for the public good. Like *Moses* may you endure, by a firm faith in the invisible God ; and lead this people with the spirit of that shepherd and saviour of ancient *Israel* !

Possessed of this spirit, you will assert and patronize our civil and religious rights ; and be concerned to secure us from domestic oppression, and foreign slavery : you will consult the genius and temper of the people over whom you preside : you will choose that they should understand and relish the free constitution with which we are blessed ; and endeavour, by rendering their country happy, to inspire them with an ardent love to it, and an invincible spirit to defend it. Possessed of the spirit of *Moses*, you will bear the misapprehensions and even ungrateful murmurs of the people, should such arise, (which God forbid) with a paternal meekness, and not suffer them to cool your public affection, or divert you from your benevolent intentions. Animated with the faith and piety of the *Hebrew* lawgiver, you will despise secular honors and profits, when they

they come in competition with the favour of God, and the good of your country ; and know, that the *crown of righteousness* is infinitely preferable to all the little distinctions and possessions of the world. Such a spirit will lead you to pity this people, under our great degeneracy, and the decay of that piety, righteousness, and sobriety which adorned and blessed our ancestors.

Touched with this melancholy prospect, like *Moses* you will intercede with God for this sinful and afflicted people : you will exert yourselves for the support of pure and undefiled religion ; and endeavour to revive a respect to the holy Sabbath, and all the sacred institutions and precepts of christianity : you will honor them by your own example ; and employ your authority for the suppression of vice and immorality. In a word, you will be zealous for the glory of God, and go before us in the most reverend regards to that Being, who has lately given us very affecting demonstrations of his power and dominion, and of his anger at the sins of men, in the amazing EARTHQUAKES that have shook the world ; before whom our gracious king, and the whole British nation have lately humbled themselves ; and by whose providence we are all loudly called to repentance.

Were

Were the *British* affairs either in *Europe* or *America*, ever brought to a more important crisis? Are not our religion, and liberties, every valuable right and enjoyment which heaven has indulged to us, threatened by a powerful invader? Are we not struggling hard to maintain ourselves in the possession of this good land, the inheritance left us, and dearly purchased by our fathers? Are not our towns emptied, and our fields uncultivated, while so great a number of our brethren the freemen of this province, are employed in defence of the *British* rights in *America*, and are now *jeoparding their lives in the high places of the field*? Under all our distresses, and amidst all our dangers, what succour or security can we expect, without the favour of almighty God? But this we cannot hope for, without sincere repentance and a general reformation. And will not you, our civil Fathers, encourage us to obey the call of heaven, and lead us in this important, this most necessary work?

If you are successful in your endeavours, as well as earnest in your desires to revive a spirit of religion and vertue among us, you will render your country the greatest and most lasting service: for this spirit naturally tends to the public good, and will procure  
the

## *An Election* SERMON. 41

the divine protection and blessing, which alone can render our safety and happiness compleat.

In this work of reformation, the ministers of religion are peculiarly obliged heartily to engage, and strenuously to labour. To us it belongs, my reverend Fathers and Brethren (you will permit me to remind you of it) to us it belongs, with a ceaseless importunity to intercede with Heaven for our nation and land, and *to seek the Lord till he come and rain down righteousness upon us.* To us it belongs, to explain and enforce the vocal dispensations of divine providence from the *lively oracles.* To us it belongs, faithfully to reprove the impiety and immoralities that abound among us; and warmly to urge upon the consciences of men, the pure precepts, and affecting motives of the gospel. In fine, to us it belongs, as we have any regard to our distressed country, any zeal for the honor of our divine master, any hope of being *found of our judge in peace,* to endeavour, both by our example and doctrine to revive the power of godliness, and to propagate the pure morals of the christian institution.

And how much does it concern the whole body of this people, not to be deaf to the  
F loud



loud admonitions of Heaven ; not to neglect the season, nor resist the powerful means of repentance, with which we are favoured ? May God pour out his spirit from on high upon us, that we all may be formed to the piety and benevolence which the gospel so strongly recommends, and so indispensibly requires of us ! Then, all would contribute to the common stock of happiness, and every man would find his own, in the public good. Then, the providence of God would concern itself for our welfare, and *upon all our glory create a defence.*

But alas ! there is so little true vertue in the world, that the happiness to which it tends is but imperfectly felt, and the blessings of society do not come to any great maturity, in these lower regions. Sin has intermixed a large portion of vanity, with all that is under the Sun. There is no country here, no soil, no civil constitution, no rights, no enjoyments which deserve our first care and affection." "Here, we have no continuing city ; no kingdom that cannot be moved ; for the fashion of the world passeth away."—The faith of *Moses* will point us to a *better country* ; it will guide us to the only society where perfect devotion, benevolence, and happiness are found ;—"to the city of the living God, the heavenly  
" Jeru-

“ Jerusalem ; to the spirits of just men made  
“ perfect ; to an innumerable company of  
“ angels ; to Jesus the mediator of the new  
“ covenant ; and to God the Judge of  
“ ALL. To whom be dominion and glory  
“ for ever. AMEN.

---

F I N I S.

---