

*Integrity and Piety the best Principles of a  
good Administration of Government,*  
ILLUSTRATED,

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IN A

S E R M O N,

PREACHED BEFORE THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
THE COLONY OF CONNECTICUT, AT  
HARTFORD,

ON THE DAY OF THEIR

Anniversary Election,

MAY 10th, 1770.

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By STEPHEN JOHNSON, A.M.  
Pastor of the First Church of Christ in LYME.

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N E W - L O N D O N :

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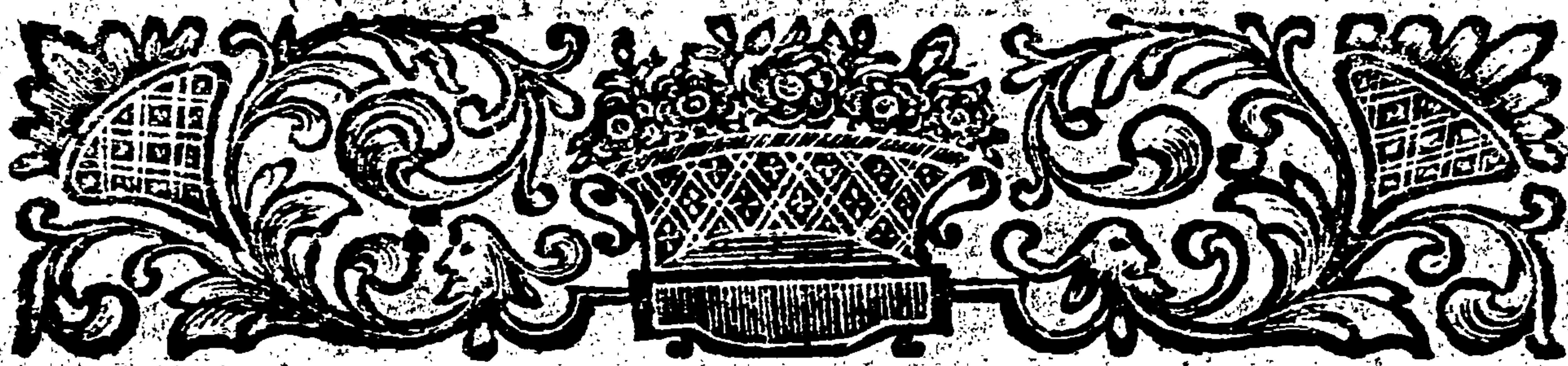
*AT a General Assembly of the Governor and Company  
of the Colony of Connecticut, in New-England, in  
America, holden at Hartford, on the second Thursday  
of May, A. D. 1770.*

**O**RDERED, That the Hon. *Matthew Griswold*,  
Esq; and *John Lay*, 2d. Esq; return the Thanks  
of this Assembly to the Rev. Mr. *Stephen Johnson*,  
for his SERMON delivered before the Assembly  
on the 10th Instant, and desire a Copy thereof  
that it may be printed.

GEORGE WYLLYS, *Sec'ry.*

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# An Election SERMON.

## II SAMUEL, XXIII. 3.

THE GOD OF ISRAEL SAID, THE ROCK OF ISRAEL  
SPAKE TO ME, HE THAT RULETH OVER MEN  
MUST BE JUST, RULING IN THE FEAR OF GOD.

**I**MPORTANT are the rights of mankind, to  
the safe and unmolested enjoyment of life,  
liberty and property, and to the best improve-  
ment of all their powers, with every reasonable  
and equitable advantage they have to promote  
their present and everlasting welfare. These na-  
tural rights, civil and religious, are the gifts of  
God, as such sacred ; nor may any but He, as  
original proprietor, resume them at pleasure.  
But in such a world as this, lying in wickedness,  
abounding with unruly passions, mistaken views,  
clashing interests and violence, there can be no  
rational



rational foundation for the security of them, without civil government.

THIS evinces the urgent necessity and high utility of civil institution; and proclaims it the dictate of reason, of nature, and the will of God. Divine revelation, in express and peremptory language, confirms it, "the ordinance of God." \* This likewise points out to view, the good of the community, to be the high end of government, and the supreme law of the state. The important rights, liberties, privileges and immunities of the community, (so far as is requisite to the end of government) being by special trust put into the hand of rulers, by God and the people, for their preservation, best enjoyment and improvement. A trust, of very high and endearing importance, by which they are constituted the immediate guardians of them.

THESE, as the salutary objects, and sublime end of government, are tacitly pointed out in the text. "He that ruleth over men," not brutes, who may be made slaves, or killed for the convenience of others; but men, of the same rank of being, dignity of nature, and vested with the same great and essential rights with themselves, "must be just" in his attentive regard to them, "ruling in the fear of God."

UPON

\* Rom. 13. 2.



UPON these principles, it is evident, that the dignity of government, and the great essential rights and privileges of subjects, must, of right, be inviolably maintained. "He that ruleth over men," must be known, duly honored and obeyed, in his exalted station. If the dignity of government, be degraded and weakened, the strength and energy of government, will be proportionably enervated, that it cannot reach, and effectuate, the great design of it. On the other hand, if the great and essential rights and privileges of the people, be invaded and supplanted, usurped and destroyed: the design of government is subverted, and the end of it frustrated, in the primary and fundamental intention of it. No exalted ideas of power and prerogative, can be just, as applying it to such destructive purposes. All the high prerogatives of power, are for the good of the subjects, their wanton exertion therefore, for the destruction of their unforfeited lives, liberties and properties, must be the perversion of them, a contravention and subversion of their true intention.

THESE two important objects, which demand every one's attention, may with great reason be supposed to be invariably united, in the constitution and nature of things—and yet, there may sometimes happen no small difficulty, to adjust  
and



and compromise both : but perhaps, this will seldom or never occur ; except, where there has been a deviation, from true wisdom, good policy and righteousness : in such case, the remedy may seem equally plain and easy, in a speedy reversion of the measures, which have occasioned such perplexity in administration.

THERE is a method, in the constitution and nature of things, forever to maintain (so far as is within the power of the state to do it) the dignity of government, with the rights and privileges of subjects, in the greatest harmony. This will be found, in a good constitution of civil polity—in a good administration of civil government, pursuant to the spirit and intention of such a constitution—and in the joint concurrence and co-operation of subjects with their rulers, to the same noble and important design.

A GOOD constitution of civil polity, by which, rulers of every rank and order from the highest to the lowest, hold all their powers and prerogatives, emoluments and honors ; and the subjects, all their rights and liberties, privileges and immunities ; is of very interesting importance to every free state ; without which, all the rights and privileges of subjects, rest upon a very weak foundation,



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foundation, and are held by a very slippery and uncertain tenure, the will and caprice of rulers in power. What a miserable foundation of security this! is fatally seen and felt, in despotic and arbitrary governments through the world. Whereas, in a well framed constitution, which contains ample provision, to maintain the dignity of government, with the privileges of the people—where power and privilege are so essentially incorporated—that the one cannot of right, be held and exercised, without the protection of the other—nor the other enjoyed, without the support of the powers of government ; there is the best and strongest securities, both to rulers and subjects, that can be, in the imperfect and mutable state of things, in this world. Such is the strong, the beautiful and happy complection of the British, of our own constitution.

A GOOD administration pursuant to the spirit and intention of a free and good constitution, is of like importance with the constitution itself. The best constitution cannot operate, as an efficient effectual machine to the ends of government, unless life and energy be given to it, in administration. The Jews were endow'd by the singular favour and gift of God, with an excellent constitution : adapted with infinite wisdom and goodness to their state,

B

and



and to the best ends of government and religion to them ; (it were easy to shew the eminent advantages of it, were there time and were it not foreign to the occasion) but the Rock of Israel said—there must be just rulers in administration, “ruling in the fear of God.” And if rulers and subjects had fully answered the great design of their constitution ; God would have exalted them in name and praise, felicity and honour ; high above all the nations of the earth. ¶ Their history fully evinces, it went well or ill with them, according to good or bad administration, and their conduct under it. The great consequences which follow a good or bad administration, do most fully evidence the importance of a good one. The shadow may remain, and the substance be destroyed, the form be retained and the spirit of the constitution vanish, and the great intention of it be defeated ; yea the powers erected by the best constitution may be turn’d against it, to invade, subvert and destroy it, in the fundamental intention and municipal privileges of it : Subjects may feel themselves very sensibly injur’d, perplex’d, distress’d and wretched ; and the cry of grievance and oppression, complaints and groans may be heard from every quarter, under the tragedy of a bad administration. Whilst on the other hand, the ends of government may be tollerably answer’d, the people



## An Election Sermon.

II

people enjoy much peace and quiet, under the most defective constitutions and ill-fram'd governments in the world ; under a wise, righteous, lenient and good administration : which however rarely happens in them ; but how much more under the meridian shines of a good administration, pursuant to the spirit and intention of a free and excellent constitution ; where they enjoy it with its best and most desirable advantages : *and whereby* the dignity of government, and privileges of the people will be exalted in safety.

THIS shews the vigilant attention, every free people should give, to the spirit, tenor and tendency of administration : Their peace and welfare, their constitution itself, with all its important privileges and securities, to themselves and posterity to the latest generations, is nearly concern'd in it.

PERHAPS, this view of administration may also suggest to us, why the all-wise and gracious God has instituted and enjoin'd no particular form of government, for all the nations, kingdoms, empires and governments of this world ; but left each to choose and determine for themselves, as is judg'd most suitable, convenient or necessary to them. “ The  
“ God of Israel hath said ” in the revelation given us, that civil government is “ the ordinance of God ” —has set to view the end of it, rulers are the ministers of God for good—has ascertain'd the general duties



duties of rulers and subjects, and bound them thereto, by the strongest ties of interest and conscience, in the motives of this world and eternity—these well attended to by both, and the ends of government are well answered.

It is of weighty concern, that there be the joint concurrence and co-operation of subjects with their rulers to the same excellent and important design.

THE duty and interests of subjects, inseparably conjoyn'd, most strongly oblige to it : and ordinarily, under a free government and good administration, they will fully effect it. Indeed, the infatuated with slavish principles of religion and policy, may, under a foreign influence, be instigated to insurrections and rebellions under a good administration ; (as happen'd in the good reigns of our illustrious Kings GEORGE I. and II. of precious memory) but it is not the true spirit of British subjects, Europeans or Americans, (however slandered) to act such a treacherous and detestable part : but the body of the people, well used, will readily unite their power and influence, in support of the constitution and powers of a good administration.

It is allow'd, that parties and factions may be form'd by the uneasy, restless and ambitious, under the best administrations, may injure and disturb government, and obstruct the salutary good effects of it



it for a season—but can seldom rise high, spread far, or long continue without real and very sensible injuries and grievances : And are usually reduced or remedied without great difficulty or hazard.

BUT too often, the most loyal, best and vertuous subjects are misrepresented, and blacken'd with the wrong imputation of those heinous crimes of disloyalty, disaffection, rebellion, &c. which they abhor with all their hearts : As it was with Daniel and his brethren, when they refus'd obedience to the most stupid edict of idolatry. And this is commonly the case, where a brave, loyal, and vertuous people, are to be strip'd of their invaluable privileges, and reduc'd to abject slavery, by the arm of power. But no arts, falsehoods, or disguiseful colourings, can alter the nature, or long conceal this plain truth—that an unoppressed, free and vertuous people, will see it their interest and important duty ; and will readily concur and co-operate with their rulers in supporting the dignity of government, with their own rights and privileges—the last, and finishing stroke by the hand of man ; to the harmonious accomplishment, of this great and excellent design.

WE rejoice, we boast in the British constitution, and in our royal charter, the best privileges and immunities, the happiest constitution and form of government in the whole world : the next matter of highest moment to us, to our enjoyment of the  
C best



best blessings we can hope from civil polity, is a good administration pursuant to the spirit and grand intention of it.

To investigate the spirit and best principles of such an administration, is of importance in it self, suitable to the present occasion, and what I shall briefly attempt.

It is concisely and comprehensively suggested, in this inspired message from God, to the exalted King of Israel, and to all the rulers of this world, where his revelation comes. "He that ruleth over men" must be just, ruling in the fear of God."

THE phraseology of the sacred cannon, will warrant us to understand by justice, *integrity*; and by the fear of God, *piety*. Nor will it be doubted, but this royal instruction and mandate, from the supreme and eternal King, is to all the powers of government, supreme or subordinate, legislative or executive, to every department and trust in the state.

WHENCE we collect this observation;

INTEGRITY and piety, joyn'd with suitable talents, are the best principles, and give the strongest assurance of a good administration of government:

Or,

AN



AN administration, form'd and conducted, by integrity and the fear of God ; will best support the dignity of government, secure the liberty of subjects, and advance the public welfare.

THIS might be illustrated by shewing—these divine principles are the highest and most energetic principles of good action in general, and proportionably in rulers in their high spheres of action—they are the best safe-guards against all the high temptations of power, from fear, interest or ambition—they dictate the most excellent designs, and urge to the best prosecution of them—they derive great energy and support, from the most weighty motives of religion and eternity—they ensure the best and most excellent rewards to enforce duty—the best esteem of mankind, at least of the wiser and better part—the approbation of God and conscience, infinitely to be preferred to the plaudit of the whole world—and in connection herewith, the great and blissful rewards of eternity. But waving these, with many other topicks—it may appear with full evidence, by tracing the genuine spirit, principal linaments and characters of an administration formed upon these divine and excellent principles.

To make this evident, it is sufficient to observe,

WISDOM will conduct—righteousness shine—  
lenity



lenity temper—religion be warmly cherish'd—the public welfare inspire and invigorate—and intrepid courage and magnanimity support, an administration form'd upon the principles of integrity and piety.

FIRST, Wisdom and prudence will conduct the administration, form'd upon the principles of integrity and piety. The wisdom of its councils, is the high honour as well as safety, of every state. Superior talents are very important, in exalted stations of power ; but it is wisdom and integrity, gives them a right direction ; and turns them to the greatest advantage : sever'd from these virtues, they will be in a great degree useless, and may be turn'd to pernicious purposes. These illustrious virtues, are of high utility and continual importance, in the widely extended concerns and interests of the state ; to guide the exterior connections and internal regulations of it, by the wisest measures, to the most salutary purposes : and eminently so, in seasons of peculiar embarrassment, perplexity and dangers. Under the best constitution, things will not long remain upon their proper basis—the spirit of it will not be retained, nor the best interests of the state pursued and accomplished—nor can they ordinarily be reliev'd, when reduced to great perplexity and embarrassment ;  
without



without wisdom and prudence conduct the administration. This wanting, the best opportunities and advantages may be lost, and the best designs defeated: The wisest king of Israel long ago admonished the world, “by wisdom and counsel purposes are established,” and by the want of it are defeated. An antient adage founded on the experience of ages, may be applied to the greatest powers of this world—*vis concilii expers, molâ suâ ruit*, “power void of counsel, rushes to ruin of its own weight.” No arts, frauds, disguising tricks of state, or political reaches of refin’d cunning, can be substituted and supply the place of wisdom; as they tend in their nature, so they have often reduced flourishing states to great embarrassing perplexities, and to the brink of ruin; while it is sound wisdom, integrity and righteousness only, that conducts the state in dignity and safety. Perhaps as many states have been ruined by the infatuated folly of false policy, as determined perverseness. The ruin of Jeroboam, his family, and finally of the ten tribes of Israel was laid in his impious scheme of false policy. To a ruined people, the consequences are just the same; whether it be brought on, in the one way or the other. The man of integrity must know and feel, he cannot answer it to his own conscience, to the state, nor to God the righteous judge, if such

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spacious



spacious ruin be brought on by his neglect, criminal ignorance or ill policy. This may induce him modestly to decline stations he cannot fill with honour and usefulness—this will engage him, when in an exalted station, to have his ears and heart open to the dictates of sound wisdom and policy—to use the best means to attain it for all occasions ; above all to ardent applications to Him who proclaims, “ Wisdom and council are mine,” and “ who gives liberally and upbraideth not,” as the surest way of a supply : exemplified with great encouragement in king Solomon. In a word, this will determine and excite him to the best exertion and use of all his wisdom and prudence, in the important concerns of an exalted station : in imitation of king David, who guided Israel by the skilfulness of his hands. What illustrious wisdom conducted the administrations of Joseph in Egypt, Daniel in Babylon, form’d upon the principles of integrity and piety.

SECONDLY, Righteousness will shine with lustre in an administration founded on the exalted principles of integrity, goodness and piety.

THE ruler of this excellent spirit, will cloath himself with righteousness as a robe ; and estimate it a diadem of glory. His love of righteousness, the high importance of it, by which a nation and government is exalted and established—his benevolent and tender regard



regard for the rights and interests of the community and of mankind—above all, his supreme love to God, and his accountableness to him, who is the almighty patron of right and justice, and avenger of unrighteousness, will urge him to promote the interest of righteousness, to the utmost of his power. Under an administration form'd by a spirit of righteousness, effectual care will be taken, that the properties of subjects, and their great essential rights and privileges, they have by nature or constitution, be preserved to them, inviolate. These being their best birthright inheritance in this world, and dear to them as life, an injury here must be highly injurious to the state, and of most fatal consequence—these may by no means be invaded and usurped, betrayed or sacrificed. When leaders of administration openly adopt arbitrary and oppressive measures in a free state, government is corrupt as in its fountain, and the foundations of it are shaken. Rulers of integrity will do their utmost in their places to prevent or remedy such measures, with all their ruinous operations and consequences—that all their privileges may be amply enjoyed in their day, and transmitted full and unimpaired to succeeding posterity. Tyranny and anarchy they will equally avoid, and if possible prevent; each being replete with infinite mischiefs to the state. The just prerogatives of power and  
rights



rights of subjects will alike engage their attentive care : The peace of God and the King will be preserved, and good order established—public merit and good services be amply rewarded—men of virtue and merit be impartially promoted, and continued during good behaviour ; while misdemeanor in office will be properly discountenanced—The treasures of the people will not be lavished to support idle drones, favorites and minions of power ; who add no strength or glory to the state, but are a scandal to government, debilitate and degrade the dignity of it : And much less will such treasures be squeez'd out of the community, by the wiles or arms of oppression for such destructive purposes.—Bribery and corruption will be discountenanced, and if possible banished the state, by rulers of integrity, as condemned by the law of God, and of most ruinous tendency to every free state.—The lives of subjects will be precious—the blood of war will not be shed in peace with impunity—righteousness of administration will pursue the unchangeable law of God, “He that sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed ;” and, “A man that doth violence to the blood of any person, shall flee to the pit, let no man stay him.”—The channels of public justice will be kept open, pure and uncorrupt—righteousness be impartially administered



SUCH, I apprehend, the spirit of an administration founded in integrity, goodness and piety; wherein righteousness will shine with lustre, or in the metaphor of the prophet, "will be as the waves of the sea, bearing down all opposition; and peace and prosperity flow as a river."—Such an overflowing benignant protection of government and administration, as extended to different incorporate nations, and to distant climes and countries, is beautifully represented by the prophet Ezekiel, under the figure of a tall pine, with wide-extending boughs and branches, affording

E lodgment

lodgment



lodgment for birds of every wing, and shelter for every beast of the field.\*

THIRDLY, Lenity and moderation will temper, and be the glory of an administration, formed upon these excellent principles: Wisdom will dictate it, and the benevolence of an upright and pious heart will strongly dispose to it.

THE throne is upheld by mercy as well as righteousness. Crimes of high malignity against God and the state, or particular subjects are not to be spared: justice must take place—the exercise of lenity to such offenders may be cruelty to the state. But slight disorders, not of a malignant nature, nor long continuance, like the follies of children, are oft best cured by wise paternal lenities. 'Tis no departing from the dignity of government, to conduct with lenity and moderation; but adds lustre to it. Sudden fallies and emotions, perhaps from laudible principles, but misguided zeal, and without malignity of design, have often been rectified by lenient moderation; while slight disorders magnified by misrepresentation, and followed with an undue exercise of power and severity, have produced serious evils and much greater disorders and ill consequences in the state.

WISDOM.



WISDOM and lenity may temper the heat of parties, remove misunderstandings, and allay animosities; when rigor and undue severity would but alienate and disaffect, irritate and inflame.—When the two tribes and half tribe in Israel built an altar by Jordan, there were great apprehensions in the rest of the tribes, of a very criminal defection and revolt; a fire was in kindling and ready to burst into a flame: but by wise and moderate measures, true information was obtained, all misunderstanding removed, and the fatal fire extinguished.\* Afterward, when a threatening storm was arising in Ephraim, Gideon by his wisdom and lenity, calms and diverts the leading passions into another channel, and allays the tempest.† It is the glory of an administration, where wisdom and justice, lenity and moderation, each shine in their proper place and with due lustre.

FOURTHLY, Religion and vertue will be patronized and warmly cherished in an administration formed upon the principles of integrity and piety.

THE man of integrity and piety cannot feel indifferent to the important interests of religion and vertue, which ought proportionably more to engage:

\* Joshua 22. 10, to the end.

† Judges 8. 1,—4.



engage his attention, in a superior sphere of action and influence. Are they ministers of God? In reason and gratitude they ought to acknowledge and honor him, as the fountain of their abilities and authority, honor and influence. They must be just in their care of the rights and interests of subjects; they must rule in the fear of God and for God, with a supreme regard to his will and law, authority, honor and approbation. The interests of true religion and vertue, as well as justice, must be patronized and encouraged according to its benignant influence to the good of the state and happiness of rulers and subjects, answerable to the character of nursing fathers to the church of God. It is by no means my design, to labor this point, and pursue the argument at large——But allowing king David to understand the instruction of God to him in the text, and his example in administration to be a just comment upon it, (which is but a reasonable allowance, considering he was a man after God's own heart, and also an inspired prophet) and the point seems clear. So he understood and practised upon it, removing the wicked far from him, and putting the faithful of the land in office; who would have a care of religion and vertue, as well as justice. He was an illustrious patron and encourager of the worship of God, of true religion and vertue, by word, example and influence.

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He may not be imitated by uninspired men, in things which he did as an inspired prophet : but in his general conduct as an eminent friend, patron and encourager of piety and vertue ; he is set up by God, as an example for his successors in administration.

1 Kings 11. 28. ch. 14. 8. and other places.

MUCH may be done by rulers, in making salutary provision for the protection and support of public worship, religion and vertue, and by countenance, example and influence, without interfering with the sacred rights of conscience, or the prerogatives of the Lord of conscience, in adding to, or diminishing from what is already established by his supreme authority. And it is evidently important, because religion and vertue are the great supports of the state. This is so plain a dictate of reason and observation, that it has had the general concurrent testimony of the wisest and best in all ages. Impiety, immorality and vice are a wound to the vitals of the state ; nor can any long flourish, or if free, retain their liberty, if these enemies are prevalent in the bowels of it. The favour of God, (from whose grace and providence comes all good) will accompany true religion and vertue : but his wrath will be pour'd out on profligate states and kingdoms. Great were the effects of a good or bad administration in this point, in Judah ; it went



well or ill with them accordingly ; pursuant to the fix'd rule of divine dispensation, address'd by the prophet to the king of Judah, " The Lord is " with you, while ye be with him ; if ye seek " him, he will be found of you ; but if ye forsake " him, he will forsake you." † The subversion or perversion of true religion and vertue for political ends, is the worst policy in the world, as is fully exemplified in the instance of Jeroboam. Upon every principle of duty and good policy, rulers of integrity and piety will discountenance all impiety and wickedness, and patronize true religion and vertue, as the best means and token of a flourishing and happy state.

FIFTHLY, The public welfare will fix the attention, inspire and invigorate the best efforts for the advancement of it ; in rulers of integrity and piety. Actuated by the exalted principles of love to God, to their country and to mankind ; they will be born on, with an inextinguishable ardor in the pursuit of the public welfare. These exalted principles will inspire noble designs, make them attentive to the wisest and best measures, and invigorate the pursuit of them, in exalted stations, with unwearied constancy. Rulers of this excellent spirit, will feel themselves most strongly united in interest and affection.

† II Chron. 15. 2.



fection to their country, and to the community whose interests are intrusted to their care : will view all their own interests in this world, as closely connected with the public welfare ; and all embarked upon the same bottom, will regard the freedom or slavery, glory or dishonour, prosperity or adversity of the community as their own. This is a source of the best paternal or patriotic affection and labors ; which cannot fail of the benignant effects of true patriotism, controuling and subordinating all irregular selfish views and interests to the good of the public. This excellent spirit, with its benign influence and effects, shone with great lustre in the administrations of Moses, Mordecai, Daniel and others in sacred history. The public good, in all its important branches, the liberty, wealth, power and honor of the community, whatever tends to make it easy, prosperous and respectable, will engage the attention, and invigorate the labors, of rulers of integrity and piety. Vigilant care will be taken, that the best ends be proposed, the best and wisest measures be concerted, and carried into execution, for the public welfare.

LASTLY, A dignity of spirit, an intrepid courage and magnanimity will support an administration form'd upon the principles of integrity and piety.

A.



A PERTINACIOUS obstinacy in the pursuit of wrong measures, evidently injurious to the commonwealth ; and an easy flexibility and instability that turns with every wind, are alike very pernicious to government. They greatly sully the glory, degrade the dignity, and weaken down the strength of an administration. Whereas, 'tis the dignity, strength and glory of an administration, where the best ends are pursued—the best causes supported—the best measures adopted and carried into execution with unshaken firmness, intrepid courage, and unfailing magnanimity. And beyond controversy, conscious integrity and piety, whereby in the language of the prophet, they lay hold of God's strength ; and the Almighty becomes their dependance and strength ; is the best support of such firmness, courage and magnanimity. The frowns or flatteries of the world, the cavils or reproaches of the discontented and factious cannot shake such a firm foundation. The high temptations of interest or ambition—the wily promises or menacing threats of power, will be useless and vain—integrity makes them proof against the one, and the fear of God against the other. Of this we have a memorable example in the three worthies in Babylon—they stood forth the illustrious advocates of liberty and religion, and with what easy, amiable



amiable dignity ! with what intrepid firmness, courage and magnanimity ! do they make answer to their menacing prince, “ We are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve, is able to deliver us from the burning, fiery furnace ; and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known to thee, O king, we will not serve thy Gods, nor worship the image which thou hast set up,” Daniel 3. 16, 17, 18.

THE general observation being sufficiently illustrated in the course of this representation, we may not omit these two remarks.

REMARK I. It were ingratitude to God, and to our British sovereigns, not to acknowledge we have generally enjoy'd ample indulgence and protection of our liberties and privileges under the administration of the British court : especially since the glorious revolution. But justice requires it to be said, we have ever made answerable returns of affection and loyalty, duty and obedience. We never betrayed their trusts, their confidence or their interests ; but every requisition constitutionally made, has been readily answered with duty and loyalty, to the good acceptance of his majesty and the Bri-



tish court : and, in conjunction with our sister colonies, have been an eminent source of the wealth, power and glory of Great-Britain. The character and conduct of this government and American colonies in general, in this point, stands unimpeachable and irreproachable, but to ignorance and misrepresentation.

REMARK II. IT were ingratitude to God, and to the memory of our honorable rulers, not to acknowledge, we have generally enjoy'd in this colony (from the beginning, to this day) as wise, righteous and benignant an administration, as can be boasted in any part or province of the British empire. And in justice to the community it must be said, that in general there has been as free and unanimous a concurrence of subjects with their rulers, to support the dignity and attain the best ends of government, as can any where be found. An evident proof, of ample provision made in our royal charter, for the best administration and ends of government ; without any superadded regulations whatsoever.

NOR may we pass the tribute we owe to the memory of our late honorable and very worthy governor PITKIN, deceas'd, a christian of the primitive



mitive stamp, a patron of liberty, religion and virtue ; a dignified ruler of distinguished integrity and piety, well answering the instruction of God in the text, who filled his exalted station with honor and usefulness—liv'd respected and died lamented ; whose memory will be deservedly precious. May the divine hand that has given, sanctify this rebuke to us, and the whole colony.

I WOULD now turn the discourse in a respectful address to your honors the Governor, Deputy-Governor, the Assistants and Representatives in general court assembled.

HIGHLY honor'd and rever'd,

YOUR candid and noble minds will indulge a respectful freedom, in the language of confidence in you, suitable to the dignity of the ministerial office and present occasion.

THIS day brings us the recognition and enjoyment of the important privileges we hold, by the spirit of the British constitution and by our royal charter——Privileges more precious than the gold of Ophir, and of greater importance to the welfare of humane society, than all the treasures of the Indies ; privileges, whether we consider their intrinsic



trinsic importance and use, or the manner in which they have been retained, secured and transmitted to us, by our glorious ancestors, through extraordinary struggles and scenes of blood, must be very precious to every heart. Privileges, we have confidence in you (highly rever'd senators) will never be lost out of our hands, by any neglect or default of yours. In our constitution a good foundation is laid; may I say 'tis yours first, to build the noble structure of a wise, righteous and benignant administration of government upon it. The work is made easy to your hands, by the wisdom and integrity of foregoing administrations, into whose labors you enter. We doubt not your wisdom and best abilities will be exerted, to further and compleat what has been so well begun: that in respect to our civil state, we may be one of the happiest provinces in the world. The welfare of the community you will ever regard as the high end of your trustments—The man that betrays his trust, or sacrifices the interest of the public to his own private ends, interest or ambition, will ever stand expos'd to the just resentment of God and men. The dignity of government, in conjunction with the liberties and privileges of subjects, is an object you will never loose sight of: whatever is injurious to the one or the other, will engage your vigilant care and



and attention to prevent. Your eyes will be upon the faithful of the land, men of integrity and vertue, to fill the executive trusts of government.—You will shew yourselves the amiable patrons, examples and encouragers of true religion and vertue—justice be impartially administered—vice and wickedness you will bear down with an equal, steady, impartial but powerful hand. Whatever your wisdom may suggest to increase the wealth, power, reputation and interest of the government will engage your attention. We have full confidence, you will continue your paternal patronage and generous support of the college. We rejoice in the great utility of that institution, in the widely extended benefits flowing from that society, to the colony and land, to church and state. It spreads not only a literary glory upon the government, but imparts an important, real advantage, in the knowledge there obtain'd, and then communicated and diffus'd (in some degrees) through all ranks and orders of men, of unspeakable service to church and state.

You will have it in view and at heart, that wisdom, righteousness and benignity may shine forth in the administration of this government, to the glory of God, and the best good of the state: that such as may seek occasion against you, or the government, may find no place for accusation

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or reproach. You need no information, of the alarming apprehensions of your constituents and of Americans in general, from the late parliamentary regulations, and the measures adopted to carry them into execution. We look up to you as our more immediate guardians, of whatever is most dear to us and to our posterity pertaining to this world : With such a trust repos'd in you, and such an expectation may I say from God and us, you will feel a most tender, paternal regard for us, and execute a most vigilant care and endeavor for our rights and interests : that our privileges may be amply enjoy'd by us, and transmitted full and unimpaired to posterity after us. You will adopt the most wise, salutary, constitutional measures for their security, and confiding in God, adhere to them with decent dignity, unshaken firmness and intrepidity. You will not omit anything, nor do any thing, which you cannot answer for, to conscience, to the state and to God the righteous Judge,—to whose wisdom and grace, care and blessing we most heartily commend you.

I would now proceed, in a respectful address to my honoured fathers and brethren in the gospel ministry.

REVEREND and beloved,



As ministers of the Lord Jesus, our principal business, doubtless, centres in the great concerns of the kingdom of God. But is there not an important service, which we owe to the state, to the support of government, and to the welfare of our country; which may properly be touch'd on this occasion? The public welfare must attach and deeply affect us; nor can we behold the approach of danger and ruin to our country, from any quarter, without strong emotions of heart: and proportionable should be our endeavours, in our proper sphere, to prevent it. While a public spirit, a love to their country, to their privileges, and to righteous, vertuous liberty is cherish'd, in our people, which in every free state is of importance to be encouraged: 'tis our's to maintain civil government "the ordinance of God:" to inculcate and encourage all due obedience to the higher powers, to magistrates of every rank and order, in the due execution of their office, "as ministers of God for good"—to forward the good designs of government—teaching the right improvement of it, in living soberly, righteously, peaceably and godly in the world. We are to inculcate faith and universal obedience to the gospel of Christ: and exert our best endeavours to form our people to be good christians, good subjects, useful members of the state, as well as amiable subjects



subjects and happy heirs of the kingdom of God. It is our's to lay open to them the moral causes of all the calamities we feel or fear, to lead them to a due acknowledgement of the hand of God in every providence, to direct and urge their application to the grace of God in Christ, to sanctify and form them for his service, in the best manner to answer the great designs of providence, and of their creation and redemption. To us it belongs to cry aloud and spare not to shew them their transgressions and warn them of those sins and provocations, which bring down the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience, in this world ~~and~~ to eternity—to give warnings against that impiety, vice and wickedness which has strip'd many a people of their best privileges, and fix'd the galling yoke of arbitrary power and tyranny upon the necks of so many of the great and mighty nations, kingdoms and empires of the world : whereby they are rul'd as with a rod of iron ; and fruitful lands are turn'd into barrenness. And should our nation and land follow their examples of corruption, wickedness and provocation (which God mercifully forbid and prevent) how can they always escape their exemplified, tremendous punishment. In a word, it is our's to urge a thorough repentance and reformation of the evils found with us, and a hearty return to God in Jesus Christ—to the best improvement



improvement of the glorious gospel, and of all our privileges ; as the way to secure the favour, protection and blessing of the almighty, as the surest foundation of lasting peace, tranquility and prosperity. Our principal labours are to be employed, to carry into execution the great designs of redeeming love, in the salvation of perishing sinners in Jesus Christ to the glory of God and the Redeemer—This is a service so every way important, as discloses the most glorious prospects which can open upon the humane mind—and brings with it the strongest motives that can influence the heart of man. May it ever deeply impress us, and excite to all fidelity : May we obtain mercy of the Lord, to serve the best interest of the public, and to save our selves and them that hear us.

I SHALL now close the discourse with a solemn address to the audience in general.

INTEGRITY and true piety, which are of such use and importance to rulers in their exalted stations ; are of absolute necessity to every one of you—to render you good christians, most useful members of society in your several places, and above all to insure you the approbation of God our righteous Judge, and a blessed inheritance in his everlasting kingdom. Be it your principal care then



to seek and secure the grace of God in Christ—to form you into this excellent spirit ; and to improve it in a sober righteous, peaceable, holy, useful, godly life. Be attentive to your privileges, thankful for them, careful to improve them to the best purposes, and stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free. Be it your care to be good christians, good subjects, to honour and obey your civil rulers, as the ministers of God—pursuing their proper office and trusts, and to co-operate with them, in carrying into execution the best designs of government ; and to prosecute the duties of your respective callings faithfully, that you may be the children of God, without rebuke, and worthy members of society.—We are here, but beginning our existence, bound and hastening to another and eternal state—in the best state, and under the best administrations of government in this world, we are not to expect true and lasting happiness. All things here, are transient, and upon the wheel of change—but blessed be God, there is a rest which remains for the people of God, in heaven—far out of the reach of all the calamities of this world, and the power of death, and where the cry of the oppressor will be no more heard : be it our principal care to secure and attain it. To this we are urged by the importance of the prize set before us, and all the peculiar motives



tives of the gospel, and loudly admonished by the great changes which have pass'd over us—of repeated imminent dangers, and then of eminent salvations brought us, by the hand of our God—and more especially by the threatening clouds which spread over us, and the shaking apprehensions which are felt through the land——Be it our care to make God our friend and trust—to put away all evil from before him—and make sure an interest and glorious inheritance in that kingdom which shall never be mov'd. Then shall we be happily prepared for all events—and in that all-important day which hastens—(when the governments and kingdoms of this world, with all their powers, pomps and pageantry shall pass away and be no more), shall we rejoice and triumph in the GREAT SALVATION OF GOD.

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