

DELIVERED IN THE 2d.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

IN THE

CITY OF BALTIMORE,

On Thursday, the 20th of August, 1812.

BEING THE DAY APPOINTED BY THE

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

FOR NATIONAL

HUMILIATION AND PRAYER;

Together with the other purposes recommended in his PROCLAMATION.

Published by particular request of the Military Corps that attended on that Occasion; and several respectable members, also, of the Congregation.



"Trust ye in the Lord Jehovah, forever, "For in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."

S BALTIMORE: PRINTED BY WILLIAM WARNER, 1812. .

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Revd. Samuel Knox,

Sir,

THE Maryland Chasseurs, whom I have the honor to command, and who composed a part of the congregation in the 2nd. Presbyterian church on Thursday last, the day appointed by his excellency the President, and approved of by Congress, as a day of fasting and general humiliation throughout the United States; beg leave to express their sincere thanks to you for the excellent Discourse delivered on that occasion, as deeply impressing on their hearts, the sublime duties which they owe to their God and their Country, in the holy cause which the present crisis of our affairs has created, and in which they are ardently interested : believing it would be of general importance that the same should be published, I have been desired, on behalf of the corps, to request you will be so obliging as to permit the publication thereof.

> I have the honor to be Your obdt. scrvt. JAMES HORTON, Capt. Md. Chasseurs.

Baltimore, 22nd. August, 1812.

A DISCOURSE, &c.

" Trust ye in the LORD JEHOVAH, forever, For in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."

Isaiah, xxvi. & 4th,

IN this chapter, as well as in many other chapters of Isaiah and the other prophets, we find that the great subject of their complaint was, that the people had forsaken God and his laws; and though many of them did still support some kind of formal service and worship; yet, that the true spirit of devotedness to God, had nearly become extinct among them—and that, of course, they had forgotten that trust in, and dependence on, his power and providence, by which they had often been, graciously favoured and delivered. The prophet had, elsewhere, endeavoured to awaken their sensibility and gratitude, as a nation, by calling to their minds the blessed display, of divine goodness in their favour; he had also, in the most interesting terms, exhibited to them, the high importance of enjoying the favour of God —and had pointed out to them, the advantages which flowed from having his divine favour and protection, so eminently manifested toward them, both as a nation, and as individuals.

But, in order that they might be, more effectually, roused to a becoming sense of their duty—he also forewarns them of the dreadful evils, they might incur by their impious conduct; and which, indeed, by their neglect, their obstinate and blind neglect, of the awful warnings of Isaiah and the other prophets, they, actually, did suffer, from the offended majesty of heaven, on account of their many national sins.

In proportion as God hath been merciful, or favourable, to any people—so are they bound to trust in, and depend on, him and his divine providence, on proper principles. Consequently, wherever, there exists an evident neglect of the great and Almighty source of all our benefits, whether public or private, national or individual; or, where any flagrant, or notorious want of principle prevails—there we may conclude, also, that degeneracy in religious principle hath taken deep root; and that piety and morals have sunk down to that guilty state of neglect, which, sooner or later, hath called down the divine judgments on any nation; and must prove the overthrow of any people.

It is but too common with men, to put their principal trust and confidence in their own strength and resources. In a state of prosperity, this is peculiarly prevalent and imposing. But no sooner does a reversion of this state obtain—no sooner does the collecting cloud threaten to burst on their guilty heads, than their mistaken folly appears, in its true light—if not always, to themselves, at least to the world. Then, and not till then, are they brought to a sense of duty—and to reflect on their past ingratitude to that God, with whose favour and mercy, they had been so long blessed—and then, also, and perhaps, not till then, are they brought to assent to the words of the prophet, in the Text—" Trust ye in the Lord Jehovah forever —for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."

In farther discoursing, from these words, it is proposed, in the first place, to explain what is implied by, Trusting in God, especially, as applied to a nation.

In the second place, I shall examine into the grounds, on which, as a state or nation, we should eherish this Trust in Jehovah.

And, in the third place, I shall urge the propriety and importance of cherishing such a Trust in God, as our indispensible duty, in all our most publick and interesting concerns.

Lastly, conclude with some improvement of the subject, suited to the present occasion.

Agreeably, therefore, to this method, it is proposed, in the first place, to explain what is implied by Trusting in God; especially as applied to a nation. High, indeed, independent and powerful, must that State be on the one hand, or, grossly blind upon the other, where no proper sense is manifested of Trust in God. It is true, there are many situations in life, much more favourable than others to cherishing and cultivating this divine Trust. There are none, however, of any description, whom it becomes to be so presumptuous, or so ignofant and negligent, as to forget that subordinate state in which they stand, or are placed, under the dispensations of divine Providence ; under the direction of HIM, who is the moral Governor of the Universe.

Trusting in God, therefore, implies, in the first place, a confirmed and steady belief in the divine power and supremacy, providence and sovereignty, over his creatures; and this belief is so interwoven, so closely connected, with that of the truth of his being and perfections, that whosoever is, thoroughly, convinced of the one; must also be fully persuaded of the other.

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But, Trusting in God, also implies a full conviction of the infinite extent of all the divine attributes and perfections; his inflexible and impartial justice; his unerring wisdom; his infinite mercy, and unbounded goodness and truth. That with him causes and effects; yea all things, past, present, and to come, are equally known; that his pover to save, and his wisdom to discern and direct, are all infinitely superior to error, misapprehension, or mistake.

Now, wherever there exists any scepticism or doubt, respecting the divinity in these respects or concerning his providence, in taking cognisance of the affairs of this world—it is evident there can be no real dependence on, or well founded trust in, hin. Sceptical doubts lead to practical impiety; and this impiety destroys all confidence, or well founded trust and hope in him, who is the rock of ages—the only just and true foundation of trust, on which we can build our hopes; whether in *peace*, or in war—in prosperity or in adversity, and more especially, as a nation or community. But to trust in God, also, implies an habitual regard to piety; a constant and unremitting sense of the superintending care and protection of him, " who never slumbereth, nor sleeps; but, who doth whatever seemeth good unto him in the armies of Heaven; and among the inhabitants of this Earth."

Wherever, thete is no practical religion; no public tribute of service paid unto God, there can be *there* no well founded trust in his divine providence. We would not trust even to an earthly Governor, to whom we paid no just homage or respect. Much less, therefore, can there be any well founded trust in God, by those who neglect to serve, honour, or respect him and his divine Laws.

It is evident, even from considering the nature of that trust, that should subsist between men in civil society—that, in proportion as our ideas and sentiments of the divine being are more, or less, enlarged and exalted—so must that trust and confidence be, which we place in him and his divine power and providence. Whoever, then, are possessed of a true spirit of reverence, worship and adoration, due to the most High, are also possessed of a just and well founded trust in his divine perfections. The latter principle or disposition is a certain, and necessary consequence of the former. And if this be admitted, there can exist among no people, or nation, any well founded trust in God, where there is an open and profane violation of his Laws; or a general neglect of his publick worship and service—who is the sovereign disposer of states, empires, and nations.

But, if this trust in God be founded on just and genuine principles, it by no means, should influence us to neglect, or set aside, those means which God hath placed in our power, for the just and laudable accomplishment of any purpose, end, or design we may have properly, or lawfully, formed and much less should it prevent us from using the best defence in our power, against violence and injustice—and all the offspring of a spirit of encroachment and oppression, from whatever quarter they may assail. It is evident. indeed, from the Constitution of our nature, and the consideration of that Sphere of Duty and Action allotted to man, that God, by promising his support and deliverance to such as Trust in HIM, on sound principles, hath made this gracious promise, not for the purpose of checking or preventing human industry and exertion. No, but rather, as an additional excitement to activity and perseverance, to Virtue, to Courage, to Fortitude; and the diligent use of such means, as from their very nature and exercise, can best afford us any rational ground for confidence and trust in the divine blessing and favour.

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We can only be justified, therefore, in looking to Heaven for this favour; when, by our honest, zealous, patriotic, and persevering conduct, in all our important concerns; especially as a nation, we are animated by a true sense of those principles of justice and rectitude, which in all our conduct, public or private, leads to a well founded Trust in that God, whose Almighty Arm, alone, can give success to our endeavours for peace; or our efforts in War; for the maintenance and defence of every thing dear to us, as an independent nation—And, which I may add, can alone, also, influence us, on good ground; and under all circumstances, to comply with the Exhortation in the text, "Trust ye in the Lord Jehovah, forever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."

I now proceed, in the second place, to examine into the grounds on which, as a State or Nation, we should cherish this " Trust and Hope in Jehovah."

My fellow christians, it is too true that when we reflect on the grounds of our hope and trust in God, as a people or nation, favoured, highly favoured, with the Gospel; and the light of all its benign and saving truths and doctrines; we have too much reason, in common with all the Nations of the earth, to fear and tremble before HIM. Nay, it becomes us to acknowledge, that to the perversion, or abuse of the best principles and privileges, civil and religious, with which any nation, under Heaven, has teen favoured; we may justly assign our having incurred any portion of divine judgment, in this day of general visitation.

It is not consistent with my present purpose; or the time allotted to it, to dwell, as long on this view of the subject, as it might justly claim. But, I may be allowed to observe, that HE who can trace among us, no marks of degeneracy from the first. principles of the Fathers of this nation; yea from the justly honoured fathers and founders of this nation; and who formed and established it, under the special blessing of Divine Providence, not only as a goodly fabric, and mighty bulwark for the security of their own, and their posterity's freedom and independence—But as the asylum also, the offered asylum for all of congenial, civil, and religious principles with themselves-I say, whoever can trace, among us, no marks of degeneracy from these first principles, must be blind indeed.

Again, if we turn our attention to those curses of all nations and empires, of which the impartial page of History now beareth any Record; I mean, to our own young ambition, and pride, and luxury; and inordinate love of the world, and the things of the world, together with the baneful and ruinous, and sometimes sanguinary, effects of these destructive vices; and the passions that foment them.—Ah! my Brethren, on what ground, what good ground is it, that we dare hope for an exemption from all divine displeasure, more than other nations?

I'll grant you, other nations, may from their long standing be more vicious; have more of the pride of life; more luxury; more ambition; and be also more generally and extensively unjust, oppressive and tyrannical than we are, or, what is in our power to be. But, my Brethren, can we say that God hath dealt more kindly with any of those nations than he hath with us? Have they in all respects, been as highly favoured of Heaven, as this land hath been-And blessed be God still continues to be? Have their national blessings and privileges, in their rise and origin; or, in their nature and constitution, been equal to ours?-Or, has their career to public vice, and corruption of morals, and an abandonment of first principles been more rapid; or more ungrateful for, or disregard.

ful of divine favour than ours hath been-And alas! I greatly fear, is but too likely to continue?

With these acknowledgments—and on this day, set apart, by national authority, for national fasting and humiliation—and we trust for national "repentance and amendment"—It surely becometh us, with contrition of heart, to bring all these things under a strict and conscientious review; imploring, with unfeign'd penitence, the divine pardon and forgiveness of these, and of all our other publick or private delinquency, in the sight of God; and humbly beseeching his infinite mercy, that it may please him to avert, in this our day of trial, his righteous displeasure, on account of all our national sins, degeneracy, and ingratitude.

* But, on the other hand, would we confine our

^{*} Lest any well meaning christian incline to think, that any discussion on the justice of the war, as a ground for trusting in God, might have been here dispensed with --such may be informed, that, neither the word of God; nor the conduct of His most faithful and zealous servants, either in warning the nations; or in encouraging them to appeal to Jehovah, for the righteousness of their cause, affords any example, or anthority for declining this essential part of the subject.

^{&#}x27;The Day, it is to be hoped, called forth a spirit of general piecy throughout the Union-not only from a conviction of the necessity of national repentance and turning unto God; but also as is recommended by the Chief Magistrate; and sanctioned by the Directory for worship of the Presbyterian church, in these states, for "animating the Patriclism" of the community at large-which as was conceived by the author, could not be duly regarded, without some vindication of the righteousness of that CAUSE, in which the Nation is now engaged.

enquiry into vhat ground we have, as a nation, for trusting in Jehovah, to the great publick cause in which we are now engaged—it is hoped and believed, that here, indeed, we may appeal, not only to our own hearts; or to every just and conscientious heart throughout the world, for the rectitude and justice of this *Cause*—but also, to him who is the searcher of hearts, and the trier of the reins of the children of men.

To have a just and impartial sense of our own conduct, in this respect, we have only to look at the conduct of other nations; especially to that of those opposed, or hostile to us—and then, to our own, in consequence of their conduct.

With what rashness and precipitancy, have they rushed on the violation of each others Rights—and then upon ours, who had given them no ground of offence? With what regardless indifference to the laws of nations—and to the sacred claims of humanity, have they drenched each others dominions—and empurpled even the face of the Ocean itself, with human gore? For a duration of more than twenty years, have the European nations dealt in injuries, violence, and bloodshed—while the leading principle of that government, under which we have pursued peace, freedom, humanity and happiness, has been to avoid all such guilty violence, and interference with the rights of others—and to maintain for ourselves; and transmit to our posterity, our civil and teligious blessings, rights and prerogatives; holy, pure, perfect, and unimpaired, either by corruption at home; or, by deeds of violence from abroad.

Is this a cause, worth contending for; or is it not? Is this a cause, or is it not, in which we may, on good ground, "Trust in the Lord Jehovah, forever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength?"

I pretend not, my brethren, to urge this view of the subject on your attention, at any great length. It has already been done by the proper authorities—and it might be considered in the light of an insult to your understandings; as well as to the patriotic feelings of your hearts, to advocate from the pulpit, a cause, sanctioned by the government of your choice—and executed, main, tained, and defended by a chief Magistrate, whose talents and whose virtues, justice and moderation, are revered, as the zealous and able vindicator of your rights, as well abroad as at home—and, perhaps, no where, more than in that very nation, whose corrupt and corrupting government, has so long been the jealous, and the envious enemy of your most invaluable privileges—of all your nation's unexampled growth, independence, and prosperity.

If then, it appears—on honest and impartial scrutiny appears, that instead of imitating the violence and injustice of other nations—the government of your own, hath uniformly cherished forbearance and neutrality—and that, instead of wanton provocation; or even rigid retaliation, it hath long pursued only peace and honest negociation if, instead of any nation having to complain of our violence and injustice; their's toward us appear to have been dictated, chiefly, by our spirit of meekness and forbearance—1f, instead of outrages on

their persons or their property; if, instead of seizures, captures, and condemnations, we have borne-yea, patiently borne all these; and that in an unremitted series of annual aggravations-and even under circumstances, supposed by many, to be very subversive of a proper spirit of national freedom and independence-until at length the cup of forbearance was drank to the last dreg-could the alternative of War be longer avoided; or dare any presume to say that, under such circumstances, it is any other, than an alternative of the defence of all that is dear to Freemen-an alternative, which, in every age; and under every government, hath summoned forth all that is virtuous; all that is heroic in the soul of man-and, I might add, an alternative, that hath, not seldom, received the sanction and the countenance of Heaven?

Indeed, when we review the history of our national forbearance and neutrality for a lengthened series of years; when not even the most solemn treaties, and engagements, formed, sanctioned, and recognised, at a great expence of time, talents, and treasure, have been able to secure and guard from lawless violence, those blessings and privileges, purchased by the blood of your fathers and brethren—On what principle of national justice; of national honour, or even of humanity itself; is it, that any can advocate longer forbearance from the last appeal; or, deny that our national cause is a religious cause, and such, as should justify our humble "Trust in the Lord Jehovah, forever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength?"

I proceed, now, to what was proposed in the third place; briefly to urge the propriety and necessity of cherishing this Trust in Jehovah, especially, in all our most important national concerns.

Were men, sincerely impressed with the belief of a superintending Providence, as particularly regarding the affairs of this world; they surely could not be averse to cherish that trust and dependence in God, which is inculcated in the text.—A trust which, in every respect, is so well suited to the state of mortal and changeable creatures.

The very great uncertainty of all human affairs, the disappointments which so often attend even the best concerted schemes, or plans of human wisdom and prudence; together with the precarious tenure which we hold of the possessions, attainments, and enjoyments of this world, either as nations, or as individuals; do all conspire to render such a trust, as is here enjoined, the most necessary and proper.

The wisest Sages, as well as the humblest understandings, agree in this; that none of the children of men, can ensure any thing to themselves, beyond the narrow limits of the present moment. How incumbent, then, is it that, in all our public or private concerns, we should cherish a well founded trust in that great and *Almighty Being*, "who commandeth, and it cometh to pass," however far beyond the reach of human power, or capacity?

Indeed, wherever we find men throwing off all proper dependence on God—from a sense of his being and perfections—from a sense of his Almighty power and presence; or, wherever, they are prone to give all the praise to their own conduct, or prowess; there, indeed, it is no wonder we chould observe every mark of disregard to the culture of any genuine trust in the most High God; neither is it any wonder that there, also, we should see the aweful effects of such a spirit of impiety and irreligion, sooner or later, terminate in their downfall and destruction.

If any be unconvinced of this solemn truth, let them read the historical records of all the Nations, and Empires, and Kingdoms of the world; on which ruin-often sudden and unexpected ruin, descended from heaven, on this very account.

On the other hand, should we take under review either those nations, or those individuals, who have been the most eminent servants of God; and of whom either sacred, or profane history furnishes us any knowledge, we may find that, in proportion as they were sensible of divine favour—in proportion as they expressed their gratitude to heaven—and, in proportion also, as they testified this gratitude for all the blessings and favours, whether public or private, of a gracious God; so in proportion, hath been the duration of their national prosperity and happiness. Various, indeed, are the considerations which should urge us, as men and as christians, to such a trust and dependence upon God, as that which I endeavoured to explain to you, in the first part of this subject; but more especially, when the public interest is at stake, when that appeal is made to our understandings, and to our hearts, which ought to rouse all that is magnanimous in man.

However confident even the just, or the **bold**, or the sanguine, may be of success, "The race is not, always, to the swift; nor the battle to the strong." Beside, however just the *Cause* may be; God doth not always give success to those who have neglected, or disregarded all confidence in his power or protection. For the best and wisest reasons, even the upright, are sometimes made to suffer a disappointment in their most sanguine hopes.

How necessary and proper is it, therefore, under our present national circumstances; and indeed on every view in which the subject can present itself, to cherish and cultivate a well founded Trust in God? It is this *Trust* that furnishes us with the best preparation of mind, for every event; and, at the same time, with those principles of conduct which are best calculated to ensure success. It is this trust—and this alone, that, in the day of trial, can best arm the soul with becoming fortitude, for every event; with that calmness of temper, unabating courage, and steadiness of spirit, which constitute, or promote the most rational happiness, in case of success—or to bear a reversion, with unshaken resolution and perseverance.

Whatever nations or communities, can, thus, in a spirit of religious rectitude, Trust in God; have a strong Tower and Fortress indeed! Have a defence as omnipotent as the Almighty Arm of Jehovah—have a cause more powerfully guarded than with walls of brass—a *cause* supported by the promises of God, maintained on the principles of eternal justice; and, with reverence be it spoken, vindicated by all the battalia of Heaven.

I trust, my fellow christians, I have now endeavoured, at sufficient length, for the present occasion, to explain unto you, the true nature of trusting in God—the grounds, or principles, on which this trust should be founded—and also the necessity of our cherishing this trust, especially, in all our concerns, as a state or nation.

One important part, however, of our present duty still remains-and that is, to improve the subject to our own particular advantage, as a portion of that great national commonwealth to which we belong. And how is it, my brethren, let me ask, that we can better discharge this duty, than by bringing the enquiry home to our own hearts --- whether we have, or have not, been cherishing this. trust in Jehovah, on proper principles? Believe it, Christians, that without such principles as those briefly stated in the first part of this subject, our trust in God, cannot rest on any secure or lasting foundation. For with what sincerity, as a nation, or as individuals, can we appeal to that God, whose religion we neglect-whose laws we wilfully transgress-or, whose sacred worship we have either forsaken; or perverted and abused? Or, with what confidence, can we even apply to that divine being, from whom we have withheld that tribute of worship, adoration, and praise, for the neglect of which, he hath, in every age, visited the nations; but, more especially, those nations who

confessed him with their lips—while, in works, they denied him?

It hath graciously pleased that God whom we serve, to favour us, as a people, with several years of peace and prosperity. He hath conferred upon us, many greatly distinguished blessings and favours —civil and religious. Your fathers and your brethren, he led, victorious, through a long and glorious struggle for Liberty and Independence. Like as he favoured Israel, of Old, he raised up one of the mightiest among your brethren—and endowed him with talents suited to the great and arduous work he had to perform.

Under his happy auspices in the field, the nation was led to victory and triumph—and that God, in whom he trusted, before giving him the victory, his last immortal victory, over Death and the grave, blessed him, also, with the exquisite happiness of seeing his country—his beloved country—free, united, prosperous, and independent—the happiest far, of all the civilised happy nations o'er the habitable Earth.

The same inveterate Foe, over which the nation then triumphed, hath again, assailed your invalu29

able rights. The voice of your country again calls for their defence—for the defence of all that is dear to Freemen—nor doth she call in vain—no—I bless God, that even here, within those sacred walls, I see before me, a proof—an illustrious proof—that she does not call in vain.

While, then, the mercenary bands of despots, to enforce the tyrannic councils; or decrees of their lords and masters, sell their lives for a hireling pittance; the paltry price of their own wretched slavery—It is the pride and the happy privilege of the Volunteer Soldiers of a free Republic, to boast a nobler claim to Glory and Honour; and, therefore, a more sure foundation for trust in God.

Go then ye citizen soldiers, and the God of those armies that fight in a righteous cause—and a righteous cause only, go with you. But, allow me, to beseech you to remember—and may it be remembered by all your companions in arms, that the most pious are generally the most valiant—" That the righteous alone, are as bold as a Lion"—and that the most nervous arm—as well as the most courageous heart, can lose none of their strength—none of their energy, by their " Trusting in the Lord Jehovah, forever; for in the Lord Jehovah is ever'asting strength."

Finally, brethren; let us all, in our various stations and relations, improve this occasion in strengthening that claim—that powerful and commanding claim, which America—or, as I should rather say, our beloved country, has on all ber citizens whether native, or adopted, for the promotion of the public safety. Whoever feels not this claim as paramount to all other claims or concerns, of a local, of a selfish, of a partial, or of a party nature, must be unworthy of the blessings which his country so profusely bestows—must be lost to any just sense of whatever is virtuous, or pious, or patriotic in human conduct.

While then the more heroic part of the community, thus, voluntarily, turn out to brave the dangers of the field, shall those who remain at home, become lukewarm, inactive, and uninterested? I trust not. Our duties, in this our day of trial, as men; as christians; as the most favoured beneficiaries of divine bounty of any people upon earth, are highly important and various; and an inflexible fidelity in the faithful discharge of all these duties, is honourable and interesting—nay I might say, sacredly indispensible.

If, then, it be the duty of those who are buckling on their armour-to look up to a righteous God for the justice of their country's cause-and in this cause to vanquish, or to die. Is it not, may I ask; is it not as much the duty of those who remain at home, to be equally zealous in the same cause—to be vigilant— and while they try, as much as in them lies, to live peaceably with all menand to cherish and promote a harmonising spirit; at the same time, is it not also equally their duty, to see to it, that no enemies get leave to lurk in the camp-to weaken or betray the CITADEL within, while our armies are bravely defending it without? To this unshaken fidelity to our country, we stand pledged; not only to ourselves, and to the government of our choice-but more especially to those brave men, who leave with us the pledge-the sacred deposit of all they hold dear on earth; and boldly court the post of danger and of honour, for their country's security and defence.

On any other principles of conduct than these, can we act as honest and independent freemen? Can we pretend to be pious to our God, or patriotic to our country—Or merit a rank amon₃ any upon earth, who lay claim to either public, or private virtue?

While a portion, therefore, a respectable portion of our fellow-citizens are shedding their blood in the field, or, on the ocean—shall there be any found so base, so profligate, so disaffected, so unprincipled—I might say, so treasonable and rebellious, as wantonly to vilify and traduce the holy cause of defence, for which our brethren in arms; are expected to conquer—or to die ?

Forbid it heaven ! Forbid it all that is virtuous, all that is reputable, all that is honourable in society, all that is moral, or pious, or praiseworthy among those who in peace, or in war; in prosperity, or in adversity; in the arms of victory—or in the grasp of death, would look up to a righteous God—and under all circumstances, would *still* "Trust in the Lord Jehovah, forever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."

END.