
Mr. Robbins's Election Sermon.

A. D. 1789.

*The Empires and Dominions of this World, made
subservient to the Kingdom of CHRIST; who
ruleth over all.*

A
S E R M O N,

DELIVERED IN PRESENCE OF
HIS EXCELLENCY
SAMUEL HUNTINGTON, Esq. L.L.D.
GOVERNOR,

And the Honorable the GENERAL ASSEMBLY of the
STATE of CONNECTICUT,

Convened at HARTFORD, on the Day of the
ANNIVERSARY ELECTION.

MAY 14th, 1789.

BY AMMI R. ROBBINS, A. M.
PASTOR OF THE CHURCH IN NORFOLK.

*“ And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the
kingdom, under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people
of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlast-
ing kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.”*

Dan. vii. 27.

H A R T F O R D :
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*At a General Assembly of the State
of Connecticut, holden at Hart-
ford, on the second Thursday of
May, A. D. 1789.*

*ORDERED, That Dudley
Humphry and Giles Pettibone,
Esquires, return the Thanks of this
Assembly to the Reverend Ammi
R. Robbins, for his Sermon deliv-
ered at the General Election, on the
14th Day of May, A. D. 1789,
and request a Copy thereof that it
may be printed.*

A true Copy of Record,

Examined, by

George Wyllys, Sec.



AN ELECTION SERMON.

D A N I E L, ii. 44.

In the days of these Kings, shall the God of Heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed ; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people ; but it shall break in pieces, and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.

WHEN our LORD JESUS was about to ascend from earth to heaven, having finished the glorious work for which he came, he gave in charge to his immediate followers, to go forth and *disciple* all nations. This commission he was pleased to preface with these words : “ *All power in heaven and in earth, is given unto me.*”

THIS same divine person many ages before, appeared to *Moses*, the Hebrew law-giver, and

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spoke from the burning bush, when he gave him commission to go for the redemption of his people from their severe bondage, by the name of "I AM THAT I AM :". And told him to say "I AM" hath sent me. It was HE also who, many years after, appeared to *Joshua*, the commander in chief of the Hebrew bands, by the name of the "*Captain of the Lord's host.*"

IN the Proverbs of king *Solomon*, divinely dictated, under the name of *Wisdom*, this same divine Being makes no hesitation to declare, "*By ME kings reign and princes decree justice ;*" "*by ME princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth.*"

HIS holy apostle declares that "*God hath exalted him far above all principality and power, and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come :*" that "*all things are put under his feet,*" and that "*he is given to be head over all things to the church.*"

FROM all which we safely conclude, that absolute DOMINION belongs to the LORD JESUS CHRIST. And that all the limited authority, dominion and power, to be found among men, is, either mediately or immediately derived from him.

"THE power of those who are exalted to seats of government," said a venerable father on a like occasion, almost a century past * "*is*

* Rev. Mr. Bulkley's Election Sermon.

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“ from HIM. Whatever the particular instru-
“ ments or means of conveying this power, and
“ vesting it in these and those particular per-
“ sons, may be : yet the power itself is from
“ GOD, a ray of His. In elective states where
“ persons are advanced by the suffrages of o-
“ thers, to places of rule, and vested with civil
“ power ; the persons chusing, give not the
“ power, but GOD. They are but the instru-
“ ments of conveyance, and do but design, i. e.
“ *nominate*, the persons that shall receive it from
“ Him.”

HENCE it is HE, who in his holy providence,
putteth down one, and setteth up another. HE
exalted even heathen princes—raised up a *Pha-
raoh*, called *Nebuchadnezzar* his servant, and
Cyrus his shepherd and his anointed.

THIS divine IMMANUEL was pleased, in the
visions of the night, to give to an heathen *des-
pot*, some intimations of the glory and success of
HIS KINGDOM on earth.

IT is hoped it will not be thought unseason-
able, if the speaker humbly invite the attention
of this very respectable auditory for a few min-
utes, to that KING and KINGDOM which hath no
end. Especially when it is remembered that it
is his duty and business, to study its laws and
maxims, to endeavor to proclaim its beauties,
and to persuade his fellow-men, to seek first its
righteousness, prosperity and glory.

THE context, it is presumed, is so well re-

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membered by all who consult the sacred pages, that it precludes the necessity of any rehearsal. The image that appeared to stand before the astonished prince, is so particularly described and so minutely interpreted, as renders a repetition needless. Great numbers in this auditory have, no doubt, received profitable instruction, as well as pleasing entertainment, in reading in antient history, a more full account of the prophet's prediction, of which this chapter contains only the out-lines.

WE may observe therefore, from the text, that a glorious kingdom is to be set up; and that it is to be set up, in the midst of the changes and overturnings of earthly dominion and greatness. Agreeably to the prophet *Ezekiel*, who was contemporary with the one who gave us our text. "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, i. e. dominion, and *it* shall be no more."

THUS the *Chaldean* dominion was transferred into the hands of the *Persians*; thence into the hands of the *Grecian* conqueror, and from the *Greeks* to the *Romans*. This last empire arriving at the highest pinnacle of earthly glory: HE, *whose right it is*, even the LORD from heaven—the LORD JESUS appeared to lay the foundation of this kingdom spoken of in our text.

BE pleased further to observe, that this kingdom *shall never be destroyed*. While the formidable empires and mighty kingdoms of this world, in their turn, rise and fall, yea, become

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extinct and forgotten ; this kingdom shall abide and remain—shall out live and be an attendant on the funeral of all the short-lived dominions of the earth. Moreover, that it shall *brake in pieces and consume* all those that are in opposition to it ; or bring into it, *crowns and sceptres*—absorb all earthly powers, and make them contribute to its progress, advancement and glory.

I HAVE now to ask your attention, to *the supreme RULER in this kingdom—The nature of its laws and maxims—and the character of its subjects.*

THE supreme ruler in this kingdom is none other than the LORD JESUS CHRIST. He who made all things, and by whom all things consist. He who thought it not robbery to be equal with God : but made himself of no reputation, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the *cross*. And this, that he might erect a kingdom on earth, and with such subjects as a lapsed world is composed of ; even sinners and transgressors against their God.

FOR this, it was necessary that he should purchase and redeem them, and that with the price of his own BLOOD—That he should assert the rectitude of the divine administration, the equity and goodness of his LAW ; which could not be, but by his *obedience and sacrifice*. This therefore he cheerfully undertook. “ Behold I
“ come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, to do thy will, O God.” In order for the accomplishment of which, he appeared meek and lowly ; submitted to the

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reproaches and indignities of wicked men—to be accounted mean and contemptible, and when he was reviled, reviled not again. He was full of philanthropy, went about doing good, and was emphatically the sinner's friend.

His obedience in his threefold character, as a *Man*, a *Jew* and a *Redeemer*, was perfect and persevering; his sufferings and death meritorious, and his resurrection and ascension, certain and triumphant.

THIS divine Ruler is possessed of every perfection suited to be the great head of this kingdom. He is now continually operating in the course of his all-governing providence, with such wisdom, power and goodness, as to make all things subservient to his grand design, in bringing glory to God, and happiness to the system of intelligence. “He maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.” He conducts the affairs of this world in such a manner, as is best calculated to promote, and most wisely adapted to advance, the interests of this kingdom on earth. When “the heathen rage and the people imagine a vain thing:” He sitteth in the heavens and laugheth at their folly. When the kings and potentates of the earth take counsel together, and set themselves against him; “He dasheth them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.”

FROM the earliest ages, He hath so ordered the events of time, that the rise and fall of nations—the revolutions and changes which have

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come to pass, among the generations of men ; have all contributed to bring forward the mediatorial plan, and will, in issue, produce a large revenue of glory to the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

NOR is this kingdom propagated by fire and sword, or by the arts and stratagems of war ; by which indeed most of the kingdoms of this world have been set up and established : but by the still small voice of the *divine spirit*—by heavenly influence on the minds of men ; without noise, pomp and magnificence : For “ this kingdom cometh not with observation.”

THIS supreme King of Zion, not only disappoints and confounds the devices of those who are in opposition to his kingdom ; but rules in the hearts of his people by love. As his administrations are all wise, just and good ; so the laws, precepts and maxims by which he governs, are excellent and divine. To *these* then in the *next place*, I am to ask your attention.

THIS is the only absolute monarchy we know of, that is without its faults. Monarchical government, we may, perhaps, be allowed to say, is the best in the universe, provided the monarch be wise, just and good. But such are the imperfections and corruptions attendant on lapsed degenerate men, that it is exceedingly dangerous to erect such a government in our world ; lest oppression and violence should stalk untrouled, and misery and wretchedness be still more accumulated among the children of men.

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THE history of past ages exhibits a hideous portrait of the diabolical effects of absolute despotic government. "What mighty blessings "to mankind," remarks a worthy divine* on a similar occasion, "were the famous *Ninus*, "*Nebuchadnezzar*, *Alexander*, yea even *Cæsar*, "and later heroes of that sort; who have been "celebrated in the records of fame? What "did they ever do, but butcher mankind? "ravage, rob and plunder millions better than "themselves? And to what other end, but to "serve their own lawless and unbridled lusts? "What were their most celebrated virtues, but "the wonderful generosity of giving those riches, honors and privileges to some of their "slaves, which they had first unrighteously gotten into their power, and taken from others?"

BUT in the government we are contemplating, although it is absolute monarchy, it is, nevertheless, the most wise, equitable and mild. The laws in this kingdom are, indeed, calculated to bring glory and dignity to the prince—to exalt the sovereign: yet also to secure the liberty and felicity of the subject.

A FUNDAMENTAL law in this kingdom is LOVE. "Thou shalt love the LORD thy GOD "with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself." On this, all the rules, statutes and maxims of this kingdom are founded.

As the glorious Ruler himself was full of love

* Rev. Dr. Williams, of Lebanon.

to God, and benevolence to mankind, so he requireth the exercise of this capital virtue, in all his subjects. This constitutes order and peace, and lays a foundation for a most agreeable and happy society.

JUSTICE, integrity and uprightness, are urged, as most essential requisites for the conduct of all the subjects of this kingdom. It is a most important maxim given and insisted on, by the glorious Legislator, "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise." This is that which the LORD requireth, "to do justly and love mercy."

It is an important direction in this kingdom to render to all their dues. Various are the relations and different the offices to be sustained in social connection, whether in civil or religious life. And hence different duties and obligations arise; according to the various stations among men, in which, by divine Providence, they are placed. Hence rules are prescribed. He that *ruleth* is required to rule "with diligence." And to "be just, ruling in the fear of God." To be a "terror to evil-doers, and a praise to such as do well." He is to consider himself as "God's minister," attending continually on this very thing.

Of *subjects* it is also required, that they "submit to the ordinances of men"—and "be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake." And of him that *teacheth*, it is required "that he wait on teaching"—and

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“ give himself wholly to these things, that his
“ profiting may appear.” In a word, the rule
is, “ let every man abide in the calling where-
“ in he is called”—and “ render to all their
“ dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, honor
“ to whom honor, and fear to whom fear.”

BENEFACTENCE is also required of the subjects
of **CHRIST**'s kingdom. Not only that benevo-
lent affection be exercised; but that it be ex-
pressed in beneficent actions and conduct to-
wards our fellow-men. The rule adopted is,
“ look not every man at his own things, but
“ every man also, at the things of others.” In
opposition to that narrow and contracted selfish-
ness, which is so incompatible with all moral
and social virtue.

TRUTH and sincerity, in opposition to hypo-
crisy, and artful dissimulation is strongly urged,
as a necessary regulation for the conduct of the
subjects of this dominion. An open and honest
frankness in communication, with “ yea, yea,
“ nay, nay,” inasmuch as “ whatsoever is more
“ than this, cometh of evil.” To these may be
added, sobriety, temperance and charity, as dis-
tinguishing ornaments of those who belong to
a kingdom which is never to have an end.

I ONLY add here, that cheerful, uniform and
persevering obedience to these, and all the com-
mands of **CHRIST JESUS**, is strictly enjoined:
For it is “ he that endureth to the end, that
shall be saved.” But the bare mention of all
the laws and maxims of this kingdom, would

be to copy a considerable part of the New-Testament. Give me leave to suggest one thought more, under this head of discourse and it shall be dismissed : and that is, that as the laws in this kingdom are all founded in consummate wisdom ; so they are not too many, nor too few—they need no amendments, nor do they ever require any repeal. Such is the imperfection that attends the human-kind, that the wisest constitution that can be formed by men, and laws and statutes thence arising, may, and often are, attended with mischievous and unhappy effects. Nor is it possible to foresee, with precision, their operation, so as to prevent them. Hence ariseth the necessity of alteration and change, in legislation, and consequently in administering upon it. But instability in government, ever disposes to discontent and faction. These things are in a greater or less degree, necessary attendants on this imperfect state—such is the situation of our world. But in the kingdom of the REDEEMER, the constitution is perfect—the laws and rules consummately wise, and the administration, of consequence, perfectly equitable and just.

I HAVE now in the last place, to request your attention to *the character of the subjects* of this dominion, of which we have been speaking. And if in doing this, we find the principal outlines of the truly virtuous and godly man—the chief characteristics of the *real christian* ; it is hoped, it will not be deemed a mispending the time. For I may presume to assert, that it is our highest honor, and will be our greatest feli-

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city to be truly religious—to be real christians ; whatever be our stations and employments in this uncertain world. The speaker would be understood therefore, by delineating the character, humbly to recommend it.

THE subjects of this kingdom partake of the same spirit and temper of their glorious Ruler and Lord—and they walk in some measure even as he walked. They are endued with a principle of real virtue, being born from above. This lays a foundation for virtuous conduct, and holy practice, both towards GOD, themselves, and mankind. They exercise “ *Repentance* toward GOD, and *Faith* in the LORD JESUS CHRIST. Sensible they are sinners, and of consequence, under a forfeiture of the divine favour : they look to the free mercy of GOD, through the *atonement* of CHRIST, for pardon and acceptance unto eternal life. They are (acting in character, and in this view it is intended to consider them) strongly attached to their Prince. They are voluntary in his service—are not subjects by constraint ; but find that in being obedient, and in “ keeping his “ commands there is a great reward”—and that “ his yoke is easy and his burden light.”

SUCH is their love and attachment to their Sovereign and Lord, that they have a tender concern for his honor and interest, and his glory ever lies near their hearts : For when they “ behold the transgressors they are grieved.” As they love GOD, so they love mankind—they are disposed, as they have opportunity, to do good

to all. They love not only their friends, but their enemies. Their benevolent affection is not bounded by their peculiar connections, nor circumscribed with their own community or nation : but their philanthropy extends to all mankind.

ANOTHER characteristic of the subjects of this kingdom is, they are solicitous to approve themselves faithful in their stations. Agreeably to the rule given : “ Let every man abide in “ the same calling wherein he is called.” And are diligent in improving the talents committed to them, be they more or less ; feeling the weight of that charge, “ Occupy until I come.”—They keep in mind, that they are amenable to their glorious LORD, for the privileges they enjoy, and trustments committed to them. They fear the doom of the slothful servant, and are anxious to obtain the blessed *Euge* pronounced on the faithful ones.

MOREOVER the subjects of this kingdom are quiet and peaceable members of the community, to which the providence of God hath joined them. They are disposed not to be factious, turbulent and boisterous ; but rather to feel the influence and obligation of true patriotism—to seek the real prosperity and good of their country. Hence they feel bound by the precepts and example of their Lord, to discharge the duties they owe to their country, and in whose protection they share a part. From this consideration they will not murmur, much less refuse, to contribute their proportion for its security and

defence : remembering that their blessed LORD, even after he had proved an exemption, yet wrought a miracle to pay his *poll-tax*.

I ADD, the subjects of this kingdom are men of *prayer* ; and entertain a sacred regard for the christian institutions. Whether in more exalted, or in humbler stations, they are not ashamed of JESUS and the cross of CHRIST. They love his sabbaths, they attend on his worship and ordinances, and set a greater estimate on the light of his countenance and the communications of his grace and love, than they do on gold, yea than much fine gold.

IN fine, they endeavor to keep a conscience void of offence, both toward GOD, and toward man. They are influenced, from a sacred regard to their GOD and their SAVIOUR, to live “ soberly, righteously and godly in the world ” —And in their habitual conduct, they are disposed to act as in sight of the solemn judgement to come—and with a serious view to the glorious and awful retributions of eternity.

THUS having an unshaken trust and confidence in GOD, and abiding under the shadow of his wings ; they can be calm and sedate, in the midst of the boisterous tumults, and shaking perplexities of a tempestuous world—soar above its frowns—despise its flatteries—look with becoming indifference on its sublunary vanities—wait for a comfortable dismissal from its vexations and evils—and hope and look, through grace, for the approbation of their LORD, and an

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open and abundant entrance into his kingdom of glory.

WITH pleasing contemplation we remark ; *how glorious is the King of Zion.* Who will not fear, who will not love, this supreme Ruler, how glorious his person, how exalted his kingdom, how excellent his laws—how wise his administrations, and how happy his subjects. Is all power in heaven and earth given unto Him ? Is it by Him, kings reign and princes decree justice ? By Him, do princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth—and doth his kingdom extend over and absorb all others ?—Then it is easy and natural to conclude, that all authority and power, short of Him, when viewed on a large scale, is only executive. By Him, and under Him they rule and govern, are executing his purposes, and bringing about the infinitely benevolent designs of his heart.

THE christian ruler, the really virtuous, who are in authority, will rejoice to subserve the interests of his kingdom. They will contribute all in their power, to promote the greatest good—the honor of the REDEEMER and the best good of mankind. They will feel that it is a privilege, as well as an honor, to be by Him furnished with superior abilities, and placed in circumstances, to imitate their divine LORD in *doing good*—in seeking to diffuse happiness around them. And thus the LORD JESUS makes them happy instruments to promote his glorious purposes.

AND indeed, this divine Ruler, in the course of his wise providence, doth so dispose and order events, that those who are not virtuous rulers, not friendly to his kingdom ; but rather seek to oppose and hinder its progress, shall yet be under his controul ; so that they shall subserve his pleasure. For “ the wrath of man
“ shall praise him, and the remainder of wrath
“ will he restrain.”

NOT the most bloody tyrant that ever swayed a sceptre, or disgraced a diadem, can go a step beyond his divine permission : nor a wicked *Hazael* be king over *Syria*, but by his designation. How animating the thought that the LORD JESUS reigns—that he hath a kingdom which shall know no end—and that he is gathering subjects into it, all around our world !

NOTWITHSTANDING all the opposition that hath taken place, and the many efforts which have been made to overthrow this kingdom, it still abides. It hath withstood the shock of its enemies for ages, and will still withstand them.

GREAT indeed, hath been the opposition to this kingdom in the world. Besides the *pagan* darkness which hath, for ages, brooded over the greater part of the earth—besides the awful *delusion* of that grand *Impostor*, the false prophet in the *East*—besides the tyranny and superstitions of the *Roman Pontiff* and his zealous votaries : there have been swarms of errors, wild enthusiasm and superstition, with a kind of religious phrensy and madness, which have prevailed in

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AND when we see men impatient under proper government, disposed to discontent and faction, to disseminate a spirit of contention—to “speak evil of dignities,” and despise their rulers: if the character of the subjects of CHRIST’S kingdom hath been justly drawn; it is indeed difficult, if not impossible to reconcile this character, with that of a real christian; let their professions and pretensions be what they may.

“TYRANNY and anarchy,” said another of our fathers, many years past,† “like fire and frost, though contrary in their natures, are, in many instances, much alike in their effects. A factious and ungovernable disposition in the people, does as effectually destroy the public happiness, as tyranny in the rulers. And a man has no more security of his life, or any of the enjoyments of it, when the execution of the laws is prevented by a mutinous temper of the people; than he would have if the laws were suspended by the arbitrary will of tyrannical governors.”

THE maxims of the religion of JESUS, abundantly teach and inculcate, nay strictly enjoin, cheerful and ready subjection to civil government; and under its happy influence and protection they may hope and expect “to lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty.”

IN a view of the glory of the kingdom of the REDEEMER, and the certainty of its spread and

† Rev. Mr. Hobart, in his Election Sermon.

progress in the world ; permit me once more to remark—*The importance of this new and extended dominion to which we belong*—and which covers no inconsiderable part of this *western continent*.

MAY we not anticipate the joy that shall arise in every truly virtuous and pious mind, from a consideration that this shall be the *Theatre* on which, angels and men, shall behold the displays of the REDEEMER's grace, and the glorious enlargement of his kingdom ?

It is a just remark of a truly *great man*, that the visible kingdom of CHRIST, from its first rise, is making its progress towards the *West*. A vast, an immense, yea in great part, an unknown territory lies before us in that *direction*. And, so far as it hath been explored, for fruitfulness of soil, mildness of climate, and superior advantages of inland navigation, equals, if not surpasses any other part of the *globe*. Hitherto it hath been occupied, by little more than savage beasts and savage men. Shall this be all ; until it shall be consumed with the rest of the burning world ? Surely not.

THE special *agency of Heaven* was so visibly manifest, in the late American Revolution, as forced the acknowledgment of it, even from the inattentive as well as the attentive mind—from the profane and impious, as well as the virtuous and sober.

THE Supreme Ruler, whose province it is, to tread out empires, and give them birth ; hath,

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in his holy providence, laid the foundation of this new and extended empire. Nor is his hand less conspicuous, in opening such a fruitful world before us ; sufficient for the support of many millions of inhabitants ; than also in inspiring such a remarkable spirit of emigration to the *west*. And this, not only from amongst us on the *eastern* shore of this *continent* : But also from various parts of the *other*. Hardy adventurous souls, quitting the narrow and barren limits that gave them birth, to go and dwell in a more goodly land. And thus lay the foundations for immense population and increase ; and open the way for the progress of this kingdom, and spread the praises of the great Redeemer, in that land of darkness and “ shadow “ of death.”

He must be very contracted in his views, who imagines that all these preparations, in Providence, are only for men to act over the busy scenes of a short life, in pleasure, voluptuousness and sensuality : or that earthly *parade* and *show* ; is all that is intended. No, surely. 'Tis no enthusiasm, 'tis no utopian chimera, to hope and *believe*, that this kingdom shall there spread and prevail, and the LORD JESUS get to himself a name and a praise in those ends of the earth.

BUT I may not dwell, any longer on the pleasing contemplation. The important business of the day forbids ; and requires that the discourse be shut up with the usual addresses.

I CONGRATULATE my friends, and brethren of this Commonwealth, on the joyful return of this pleasing anniversary. Great and distinguishing have been the mercies of the God of heaven to our nation and infant empire. And when we were in imminent danger of such internal convulsions and divisions, as, had they not been checked, portended our overthrow and speedy ruin ; and this notwithstanding the infinite expence of toil, treasure and blood : Behold it hath pleased HIM, by whose special providence, our empire was founded, to unite a great people, in strengthening the bands of union, in forming and adopting a *Constitution*, in a manner unequalled by, nay without a precedent among the nations of the earth.

WITH ineffable pleasure, the citizens of the *United States*, may once more behold HIM who is justly esteemed the Father of his country, and, under God, the Saviour of a great people ; from the toils of war, tasting the sweets of his beloved retirement and domestic tranquility for a short season—at the *united* solicitations of a grateful and feeling people ; again step forth, and though reluctant, take the Presidents' Chair : to head, not the gallant heroes and veteran soldiers in the *field* ; but the sage councillors in the *cabinet*—the august legislature of America.

WITH equal satisfaction, we also view that distinguished *Patriot*, whose invincible attachment to his country from early life, hath called

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forth his great exertions, not only by his instructive *pen* ; but also in *person*, from Court to Court, as our *Ambassador* abroad : now, as a tribute of gratitude from his country, at their call, is pleased to take the *Chair of Vice-President*.

WITH no less joy we view the venerable *Senators* and *Representatives* of our nation, in general Congress assembled ; with deliberation and firmness, unitedly exerting their wisdom, integrity and zeal, to heal the wounds, and cure the disorders of their distressed country, and render their fellow citizens both happy at home, and respectable abroad. Was the revolution and the establishment of our *Independence*, the “ LORD’S doings ?”—Surely *this not less*.

GREAT and distinguishing have been the mercies of GOD to this State in particular : and this *day* is a witness, of the patience and goodness of the *God of our Fathers*, towards us their children ; in continuing to us, our civil and religious privileges of such inestimable worth.—We behold our fathers and brethren, who are constituted by the suffrages of a free people, the pillars and supporters of this state—the guardians of our precious immunities. And when in General Assembly met, as soon as formed, we view them resorting together, to the house of GOD, unitedly to look up to the great Fountain of Wisdom, “ the Father of Lights,” and to implore his presence and direction with them. The weighty concerns before them call for it, and the prayers, and best wishes, of all good and virtuous citizens, will attend them.

NOR is it a small part of the joy that appears in the countenances of this numerous throng,—*May it please your Excellency*; for to you, Sir, I beg leave, with filial confidence, yet humble deference, more particularly to direct my discourse.—It is not one of the least felicities of this people, to behold you, Sir, at the head of your numerous brethren and citizens of this commonwealth. Especially when we consider you as one born and educated among us—as one who hath given early and continued assurances of your steady attachment to the best interests of your citizens, by a long series of public and unremitting labors both at home and abroad.

SHALL we repeat our expressions of gratitude, for the eminent services you have rendered to this *State*, and to the *United States*? Although this may be acceptable, yet a consciousness of your own integrity and fidelity in your various important offices, I know, must afford you much greater satisfaction. You will permit me, Sir, as one of the ministers of the LORD JESUS, to request you often to reflect, that the eyes of God, and this people, are upon you—that as your office is high and honorable, so the duties of it are arduous and difficult. That you are accountable to Him, by whose providence, you are raised to your exalted station: and that “where much is given much is also required.”

You will often contemplate, with divine pleasure, the glory and importance of that King and Kingdom, which hath been the *theme* of the foregoing discourse. Nor will you be ashamed to

be, and continue to be, a faithful subject of the Prince of Peace. To Him you will still repair, and on his grace you will rely, in all your trials, whether *official* or personal—even to Him who hath said, “ My grace is sufficient for you.”

A BECOMING sense of your own insufficiency without divine aid—the sweets of an approving conscience, and the approbation of your Judge at last ; will often bring you, with a spirit of humble dependance, to the throne of grace, with that petition which proceeded from *one** who presided over a greater people than your Excellency now doth.—“ Give, therefore, thy servant
“ an understanding heart, to judge thy people,
“ that I may discern between good and bad :
“ for who is able to judge this thy so great people.”

YOUR Excellency, will suffer me to remind you, that as the LORD JESUS, who is the head of all power, hath, in his holy providence, furnished you with ability, and placed you in circumstances, to be eminently useful ; so He will, one day, call you to render an account to Him your glorious Master.— Before whose tribunal, shall you and we stand, divested of every official distinction and titles of honor, which are peculiar to this world.

AND now, That your Excellency may still possess the fullest confidence, and the warmest affection of a grateful people—a long and suc-

* King Solomon.

cessful administration—the testimony of an approving conscience—the supports of religion through life—the consolations of divine grace at death—and the final approbation of your Supreme Judge ; is our devout wish and ardent prayer.

SUCH, my indulgent auditors, is the imperfection that attends the wisest and best men, that they may sometimes, even in the great affairs of legislation, and in the appointment of executive authority, do that, which on further inspection, they are convinced is not wisest and best. For it is a received maxim, “ *Humanum est errare.*” Therefore we find by experience that *two different boards* in the great representation of the people, is exceedingly useful and necessary : For “ he that is first in his own cause seemeth just ; but his neighbor cometh and searcheth him”—And “ two are better than one.”

IN such a government as ours, that there should be a *check* upon the great body in General Assembly, is found to be peculiarly salutary and beneficial.

THE *upper board* of this great representation, in conjunction with his *Excellency*, and his Honor the *Lieutenant-Governor*, we consider as the representation of the people at *large* : and being promoted to that dignified station by the suffrages of the people through all parts of the *State* ; they will, of course, be free from partial and local feelings, and consider themselves equal-

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ly concerned for the whole body of their constituents.

You will suffer me then, *May it please your Honor, and you Honorable Counsellors*, just to remind you that, great is the confidence this people repose in you, when you are selected out from the many thousands in this commonwealth, to compose the circle around the council-board. Peculiar deference, esteem and honor is due from us to you, in your high stations : as also fatherly care, love and faithful exertion from you, honored Gentlemen, to us. The many proofs you have given of your ready discernment of, and regard for the real interests of the people, are not altogether unknown or wholly unnoticed. We request your Honors, still to exert your patriotic zeal and abilities for our good, and wish you at all times that “ wisdom which is profitable to direct.”

You will indulge the freedom of a christian minister, when he exhorts you among all the weighty concerns to which you are called ; also to attend to that *King and Kingdom* of which we have been speaking. By His providence, you are raised to places of distinguished honor and trust. By Him you “ Nobles and Judges rule,” as well as “ all the Judges of the earth.”

You will remember, venerable Fathers, that you have not only to be, and do, that which is right in the sight of men ; but especially to see that you approve yourselves to your own consciences and to the LORD JESUS, to whom you

are accountable. And that it is your highest honor, and will be your greatest felicity, to be found at last, the faithful subjects of that kingdom which shall outlive all others. Cultivating the spirit and temper with which that Supreme Ruler was possessed; will expand your hearts with *philantbropy*, and dispose you to exert yourselves in the improvement of the talents which, by your accomplishments and situations, God hath committed to you. Nor will the dazzle of earthly honors make you forget, that though you are stiled *God's* on earth, you must die like *men*; and be called to render an account of your stewardship.

AND the weight of this serious truth, you will the more sensibly feel, when you reflect that *one* of your number hath been called away from your *Board* and from our world, the year past. Although for a series of years, he adorned his seat at the Council-Board—he was not suffered to continue by reason of death.

HIS ability, integrity and zeal, for his country's welfare—his fidelity and perseverance, in the duties of his civil, social and religious life, could not prevent the Honorable JOSEPH SPENCER, Esquire, from a dismission from his useful offices and employments here: but having served his generation, “ he is gathered to his fathers.”

BUT that I be not tedious, we wish you, honored Senators, and *those Gentlemen*, who may, this day, be invited, by the providence of God

and the voice of the freemen, to join your circle, and supply the place of him who has slept in death; and any or all, the seats of those worthy members of your body who are called away to attend on the interesting concerns of the federal government in our national Congress: We wish you, revered Fathers, heavenly wisdom and understanding in all your consultations and decrees. And that you may be so happy as that having served your generation faithfully by the will of God, you may be gathered to your fathers in peace, meet the approbation of your own consciences and of your final Judge; and by Him, through grace, be admitted to the rewards of the faithful.

How great is the privilege, my candid hearers, that when our numbers and local circumstances will not admit of the great body of the people to meet together, to consult the general good, and give themselves *law*, or enact *statutes* by which to be governed: that we may detach a number of our brethren from every part of the community, to represent us in General Assembly. That they should here convene, and mutually communicate and receive, the feelings, the wants, the maladies and complaints of the *great whole*. But alas, how difficult, how arduous, how embarrassed oft times and perplexed, is their situation? Though their stations are respectable, and demand our esteem and reverence; yet their situation requires our prayers, our best wishes and every friendly aid.

It is not one of the least of our precious pri-

vileges, Gentlemen *Fathers* and *Representatives* of this whole Corporation, that you, and such as from time to time sustain your offices, may meet twice a year, and oftner if the public exigencies require ; to look over every part of the community and carefully to see ; not only “ ne
“ quid Respublica detrimenti caperet” as the Roman phrase was ; not only, lest the commonwealth receive any detriment ; but also studiously to exert yourselves, as fathers of the people you represent, to build them up—promote their tranquility—cement their union, and do all in your power, to advance the public *weal*.

It belongs not to me, Gentlemen, to dictate to you how to rule—what must be done, or what not be done, in your legislative or executive departments. Ye yourselves know what are the exigencies of, and what the necessary provisions for the commonwealth, and to you, a particular attention to this duty belongs. You will therefore make the general welfare your grand object, in all your consultations and resolves.

INDULGE me, honored Gentlemen, the freedom to intreat you all to become the willing subjects of that kingdom, which shall flourish when all earthly power and authority, shall no more be needed. And to make the laws and maxims of that Supreme Ruler, whose character we have described, the measure of your conduct, in your political as well as private capacities. I may not doubt, honored Sirs, you will bear in mind, that you are accountable to him, and that his eye is ever upon you.

E.

You are, when in Assembly met, acting in a legislative capacity, and many, if not most of you, when dispersed, are called to act in judicial and executive departments. In each and in every character you sustain; if you “fear God” like *Joseph* of old, you will indeed be pillars and supporters of our republic. Should you keep in mind that you are, not only amenable to the public; but that you must give an account to that Supreme Judge, whose eye beholds the secret springs and motives of every heart; and let this be uppermost in your minds; you will then hardly do amiss: But, destitute of benevolence and virtuous principle, as the great *Pole-star* to influence and guide you; although your knowledge and abilities may be great; you will be in danger of ship-wreck—of bringing ruin on yourselves and those who are embarked with you.

WORTHY Gentlemen, we ardently desire and devoutly wish you the divine guidance, the gracious presence, and blessing of the Supreme Ruler—the LORD JESUS CHRIST—and that by wise and judicious precept, and faithful correspondent example, you may be great blessings in life, and, through grace, accepted at death, and made happy when your places shall no more be found in this uncertain world.

ALTHOUGH the business of the day doth not call for the special attention of the Ministers of the *Gospel*, any farther than that they shew themselves friendly and solicitous to promote in their *line*, the general good; and meet in convention

to cultivate harmony, and strengthen and assist one another, in the important business in which they are called to act: yet the subject of the foregoing discourse, exhibiting the nature and importance of that divine and glorious kingdom, in which they are called more immediately to labour; will allow a word from one who esteems it a privilege to be accounted one of their brethren.

THE consideration, *My Reverend Fathers and dear Brethren*, that the kingdom of the divine REDEEMER shall survive all others, and that by His providence, others shall be made subservient to its interests—The consideration also, of the utility and importance of civil government to promote the interests of this kingdom; should fill our hearts with joy and gladness, and animate us to a diligent and laborious attention to the work, whereunto we are called.

To *us*, blessed be God, even to us, is this grace given, to preach among our fellow-men, our fellow-sinners, “the unfearchable riches of “CHRIST.”—To exhibit the character of the REDEEMER—to unfold, explain, and enforce the laws and maxims of his kingdom, and to beseech lapsed men “in CHRIST’s stead, to be reconciled to GOD.”

If this employment as the antient divines used to say, is “formidable to the shoulders of “angels;” what must it be in our view, when we consider ourselves, equally involved in the apostacy, guilt and ruin of our fellow-men?

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SHOULD we not ever entertain an abiding sense of our own insufficiency, and continually look to JESUS our divine Master, for needful grace and aid, to enable us to the faithful discharge of our important trusts. And while we are favored with the protection and countenance of our civil fathers, we are under better advantages to do good among our people for both worlds. They will readily tell us, that by faithfully attending, to the duties of our office—by public and private precept and exhortation, enforced by proper and becoming example; we may do much towards the peace and order of society, and good of the commonwealth. This, then should be a powerful stimulus to faithful and laborious exertion in our profession. But when we reflect on the exalted glory of the REDEEMER—the infinite importance of the spread of his kingdom—the glorious things spoken for the city of our GOD—the perishing condition mankind are in by sin—the door of mercy opened in the gospel, and the solemn account we shall soon be required to render of our ministry. When we reflect on these things, surely we shall be humble, prayerful, watchful, zealous and engaged in every branch of our arduous work. We shall strive together in love for the faith of the gospel, and the promotion of that dear cause which we have espoused. We shall abound in love to our common LORD, in love to one another, and tender benevolence to mankind. And when one and another of our fathers and brethren are summoned off, from the wall of our Jerusalem, calling on us as they go; to make haste—to finish our ministry and follow them;

shall we not hear—shall we not *feel*!----shall we not be all attention, and look and wait for the coming of our LORD?---“Blessed is that
“servant whom, his Lord when he cometh,
“shall find so doing.”

I WILL detain this numerous auditory no longer, than only to beseech your attention, *My Brethren and Fellow-Citizens*, to that glorious *Ruler* and that blessed *Kingdom*, which hath been briefly described. Suffer me to ask you, my friends, what think you of CHRIST—what think you of his kingdom—what think you of the final happy condition of his subjects? Permit me to exhort and charge you all, to become the faithful and loyal subjects of this Prince of Peace.---In his own words, to “seek first the
“kingdom of God.” Your peace and quiet in this world; but especially your comfort in death, and your happiness in the world to come, depends on your speedy compliance with this, his exhortation.

THE *day* and *age* in which we live is evil. The preachers have been wont on these most public occasions, to shew to our *Israel* “their
“transgressions.” And may not he who now speaketh be allowed to bear a testimony against the prevailing evils which threaten our ruin---which presage the awful displays of divine indignation, and call for the uplifting hand of a sin-revenging God. When he dares to make mention of them, he feels the more undaunted, from a conscious persuasion that he hath the favor and countenance, not only of his *Excellency*

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who hath commanded him to speak this day, and the honorable legislative body---together with the concurrence of his brethren of the sacred character and all serious men : but also the approbation of his God. He dares then to say, *O Connecticut*, how art thou fallen ! Once famous for benevolence, righteousness and the fear of God---for the belief and practice of religion ---even the religion of Jesus, which alone brings sinners to heaven. Now abounding with impenitence, infidelity and all manner of impieties.---The precious word of God disregarded. ---The holy sabbath treated with growing neglect.---The sacred institutions of the LORD Jesus, by many despised.---Family-prayer awfully out of fashion. And of consequence, all manner of violations of the duties we owe to one another. Injustice, fraud, violence, profaness, debauchery, intemperance, deceit, falsehood, and covetousness---these and many more evils which are the genuine offspring of these ; too much mark our towns and communities. Meanwhile the God of our Fathers in anger withdrawn, and the necessary influences of the blessed spirit withheld !---Is it not time to stop in our career, and enquire---where are we---and what must we expect ? Hath not the Most High given us a gentle rebuke in cutting short, both the harvests in the year past, and thereby caused the cries of the poor to be more than usually heard for *bread*.

WE have heretofore, felt the rod of the Almighty, in the desolations of *war*, and in the destructions of the *pestilence* that walketh in

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darkness: but have, as yet, God be thanked, been strangers to the horrors of *famine*. Have we not reason to tremble, and be “ afraid of his “ righteous judgments ?” General and open impieties, are followed with public and sore judgments. Let us open our eyes and see---receive conviction, repent and reform.

BRETHREN, the time is short. Religion is a reality. Gospel truths all-important. The concerns of eternity weighty and momentous. The retributions of the last great day, glorious and awful. To leave the paths of sin---to forsake the ways of the destroyer---to become friends to the LORD JESUS, and lovers of mankind: this will secure the favor of GOD---will make us a happy people. This will make us good citizens and good subjects. This will make it easy to rule, and to be ruled; each one attending to the duties of his own proper station. Then shall we strive together to promote the general good. So shall we behold our *Jerusalem* built up---this, a land of light, liberty and religion---our country grow and increase---our empire enlarge and extend---and that divine kingdom, which shall absorb all others, spread and prevail, “ till the earth shall be full “ of the knowledge of the glory of the LORD.” Then “ *violence shall no more be heard in thy “ land, wasting and destruction within thy borders : But thou shalt call thy walls salvation, “ and thy gates praise.*”

