

T H E
R I G H T S O F G O D,

O C C A S I O N E D B Y

Mr. Paine's "Rights of Man,"
and his other Publications;

By Way of brief ANSWER to THEM:

INTENDED, AS 4371. 66. 24

A WORD IN SEASON, 9

T O T H O S E

Who wish, and to those who dread a Revolution
in ENGLAND.

By the REV. JOHN RILAND, M. A.
Rector of Sutton Coldfield, Warwickshire.

T H E S E C O N D E D I T I O N.

MATTHEW xxii. 21.

“Render therefore unto *Cæsar*, the Things which
“are *Cæsar's*; and unto GOD, the Things which are
“GOD's.”

B I R M I N G H A M:

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P R E F A C E.

To those GENTLEMEN, who meet at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, in London, as an “ Association “ for preserving LIBERTY and “ PROPERTY, against REPUBLI- “ CANS and LEVELLERS;” and more particularly to those GENTLEMEN in the Town of BIRMINGHAM, who meet there for the same laudable Purpose:—

GENTLEMEN,

AS one professed Design, I observe, of your Association is for the “ discouraging and suppressing seditious Publications, tending to “ disturb the Peace of this Kingdom,” I trust I may venture to say, I cannot surely but meet your private Feelings, and further your Public Resolutions, with a brief Publication of an opposite Tendency; I hope, therefore, it will find with you no unpleasing Reception, and especially when I Notice your *third* Resolution. The Maintenance of Truth is the Refutation of Error; and, I hope the latter is before you; because

because I believe the first is. If THE RIGHTS OF GOD were made more of, and were more spoken of, by us, the real Rights of Man would be less, and his imaginary ones not at all. They who would have GOD'S Blessing on the Nation, ought to make more mention of his Name, in their Public Resolutions for the Welfare of it, than they do. I hope this Attempt, however little and feeble, which I make, not unfitly, I trust, in my clerical Line and Office, will help to supply that observable, and lamented Omission: And, may this my Endeavour be blessed of GOD, that the Nation may! Praying our GOD to prosper what is done, by you and by me, for his Honour, with our Country's Good, and hoping, whilst your Candour covers the Deficiencies, your Zeal will display the Design of my Address: I remain, thanking you all for your united and laudable Association, and begging your Steadiness and Perseverance in your generous Purpose.

Your obliged and obedient,

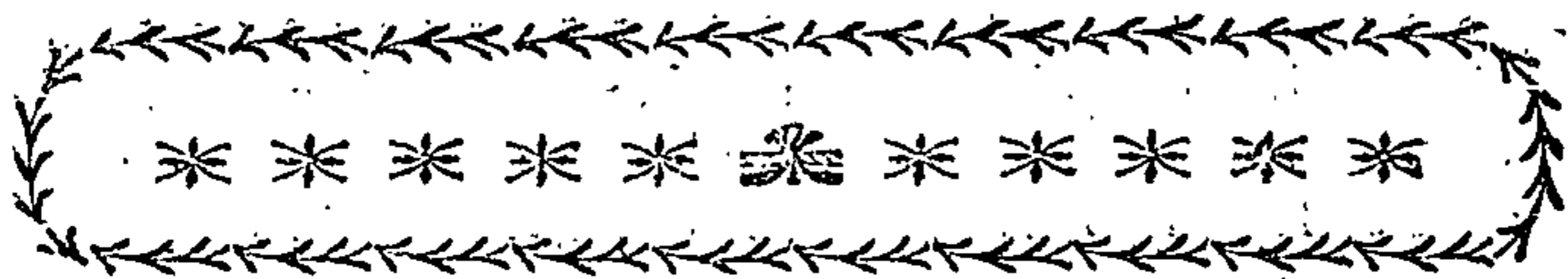
Friend and Servant,

J. RYLAND.

PARSONAGE,

Sutton Coldfield,

December 12, 1792.



THE RIGHTS OF GOD, &c.

1. **H**AVE Men Rights? They have. And has not the great GOD? Surely he has. And which are prior? His, doubtless. Which should be heard first, the Creator, or the Creature? Certainly not the latter, but the former. Then let him be heard. Is it not as rational as fair, that the first in wisdom should be the first in speaking, and in claiming? Man may mistake the Case; God cannot: he may add where he should diminish, diminish where he should add; alter what he should leave unaltered, and leave worse what he found better; not so his Maker.

2. GOD is the great, yea, the only *Ruler* of the *World*; the Maker is fit, and he only is fit to be the Governor of the World: Who else is? We may as well pretend to be our own Makers, as claim to be our own Governors. The Church of England says, and says rightly, God's "never-failing Providence ordereth all Things both in Heaven, and Earth." The Creator, surely, is capable to be the Orderer, as of Things, so of Persons: The Superior is to give Laws to, and not receive Laws from the Inferior, as if the latter could perfect what the former left imperfect. He that governs Angels in Heaven, can govern Men on Earth. His Government must take Place; should it not? Men, surely, are bound to mind him, and not he to mind Men. As it is their Duty, so it is their Benefit.

3. GOD, if he made Men, may be expected to *command* them. Of what he has commanded, he can *inform* them: Who can say their Maker knows not how to tell his Mind, and reveal his Will? He that can do this, has done it. I roundly assert (as I cannot stay to prove, and need not) the *Bible* is GOD'S *Revelation*: It cannot be Mens'; for the same Reasons it is his, it is not their's. In this Book the Will of GOD, respecting Men, is plainly revealed. It is the most important Gift the World was ever favoured with, or the most detestable Imposition the World was ever defrauded by. It must either come from Heaven to teach Truths, or from Hell to teach Falsties. THE RIGHTS OF GOD are there declared, and there claimed; and they are to be given to him, not taken from him, by his Creatures.

4. *Human Governments* are derived from *divine*. Theocracy is Origin; Monarchy is GOD'S Order; their's are Streams from his Source. GOD IS KING OF KINGS; or, Man is King of GOD. The latter cannot be because the former is. It is presumed the Account of GOD as given particularly in Prov. viii. 15, 16. Dan. ii. 21. and Rom. xiii. 1. respecting his Government, is a true one; and as becoming as true. If it be not the Account of GOD, it must be the Account of Man. Surely Man himself must grant this, not having Sense enough, or too much, to deny it. Has not GOD this Privilege, as Sovereign of Sovereigns? It will follow, That the *Kingly Government* in *England* is of GOD; not as particularly modified by him, but as, in general, proceeding from him, and according to him. The Scripture Account of Governors is the Account of Government by *Kings*. They, therefore, who would overthrow our English Constitution, must overthrow GOD'S; Romans, i. 1, 2. Spoiling the Effects is like nullifying, or annihilating the Cause. They who wish a Revolution in England, must wish a Revolution in Heaven; and if in the Minds of Englishmen, they must in the Mind of GOD: And, if they change the Government of *our* King, they would change
change

change the Government of *his* King; the latter being the Cause of the former; (Monarchy on Earth proceeding from Monarchy in Heaven) and so dethrone both Kings, to place themselves on the Thrones of both. No fair reasoning Man can deny this reasoning.

5. I must observe again; It is GOD's Right to *govern*; and it is Man's to be *governed*. In subverting our Government, Men rebel against God; or in preserving it, God rebels against Men. But, who spake first? And who is to hear first? Surely he that makes, was before him who was made; and he that was Ruler first, must rule on; till he himself goes off his Throne, to place Men there in his Room. Does Mr. *Paine*, in his Publications, observing the Scripture-Rule (by which alone, Man can go) enquire, and ought he not enquire? what is the Will of GOD, in our English Government, that it may be done, and what the Will of Man, that it may submit to that of GOD therein? No; no more than the Revolutionists in France have done. Does he plead enough, first, for THE RIGHTS OF GOD, lest he should plead too much for the Rights of Man? No; no more than the National Convention of France. Does he make much of GOD to make little of Man? No; or all of Man to make nothing of GOD? Yes; as they have done in France. Does he talk of what the Creator should have from the Creature, before what the Creature should have from the Creator, keeping God's Book in View, as the only Rule to go by, and the only Authority for any Government? No; no more than the French have. Then, how can his Book be right? It cannot; it is impossible it should. Must not GOD's Book be wrong, if Mr. *Paine's* be right? Reason must say, Yes. But what rational Man, considering himself as the Creature of GOD, will dare to say, That the Rightness of Mr. *Paine's* Book is such as that it proves the other wrong?

6. Let us try this Matter in *other Particulars*, which claim our serious Attention. The divine Lawgiver claims *one Day* for himself out of every *seven*. Has he not a Right to this? Doubtless. But Men (O think how *many!*) take it to themselves for their Pleasure, or their Business, and will not let him have it, for his Worship and Service. Is this their Right? No; it is their robbing him of his. Their Right is a Violation of his. If Men act right in profaning the Sabbath, GOD acted wrong in appointing it to be observed.—Again, GOD, in his Word, has revealed *peculiar Doctrines*, which he calls, “The Mysteries of the Gospel.” Had he not a Right, as well as that he had Wisdom to do this? Surely, Who could, or would dispute it? He that is so loving as to save at all, in any Way, may be so wise as to save in the best, his own Way; Man not knowing how to save himself. If Men reject this evangelical System of Salvation (and this Rejection is the great Evil in this Land, calculated to bring GOD’s Judgments upon it) they rob GOD of his Right, (yea, and themselves too of their Salvation) and what they take from him they should give to him. GOD has appointed a *Ministry* of his *Word* by *Preachers*, sent by him. Had he a Right to do this? He had. But, if Men refuse to hear them, they deprive him of his Authority again. And have Men a Right to refuse them? No; how can they? unless they can prove themselves Lawgivers to him, or Gospelgivers for him.—Once more; GOD has a Right to expect all his Creatures to *keep* their *Places*, in which he has *put* them; has he not? He has. But, if Inferiors are for acting like Superiors, if Servants aim to turn Masters, and Subjects try to become Kings, and so labour to make an evil Equality; where GOD has made a good Inequality, do they not take from GOD his Right of Disposal? Yes. And do they not exercise a Power, to which they have no Right, and for which they have no Ability? Incontrovertibly. So then these Rights of Men, take away THE RIGHTS OF GOD; and, is there in this no real Evil, but is it all true Good?—But, now let

let us return, and speak once more expressly to the Point in Hand.

7. Is it possible for any one Englishman, who loves his Neighbour, and his Country, to wish for a Revolution in England, without wishing to take away the Rights of all the Rest, with his own too? No. As a Subject of King *George*, I do say, and will say, and no Man shall deprive me of my Power to say, I claim the Privileges of his Government, to which I have a Right; I insist upon the Continuance of them, under his Laws, which are Laws for me, and for mine; no Man can take them from me, without injuring me, as a Robber would. Whilst I claim my Rights, I maintain my King's. It is my happy Privilege to have *my*, yes my own King, favor me with his free Government; and it is my happy Place to live under such a Constitution as gives me all I need to have, and all I can fairly claim, and more I need not have, and all else I ought not to have. That Man robs me of my Due, and deprives me of my Liberty, who takes any Methods of changing that Constitution in England, the Benefit of which is so great to me. He cannot possibly have a Right to take away mine; for who gave him that Right? God has not, and Man cannot. No one has, and no one could. Thus may I speak for myself; and so may all others speak for themselves.—We will give another Look at the Point before us, by looking back on one past us.—In the last Century, I ask, did those Levellers and Republicans, those Robbers of the National Peace and of Englishmen's Rights, in overturning the Government, bringing the first *Charles* to the Block, and making their Fellow countrymen miserable, till the Restoration of the second *Charles* made them happy, exercise one of their Rights? Had that murdered Monarch himself no Rights, that he was deprived of, any more than his obedient Subjects? Were no Wrongs done to any, what, neither to him, nor to them? Had the robbed a Claim to such an Advantage from the Robbers? Or, had the latter a Power to deal with the former? Had the latter done the former an Injury, if they had withheld from them such a Good,

Good, viz. the Subversion of the Government, by the Murder of the Governor? Should you not say, yes? Why should you not? Surely, if you are exercising one of your Rights, in attempting now a Revolution, they did the same in effecting then a Usurpation; and the English did wrong in bringing about the Restoration; for what was it a Restoration of, but of Englishmen's Rights? Is a Restoration of Rights an Infliction of Wrongs? If our Nation be right in Annually thanking God for the Restoration of Kingly Government, on the 29th of *May*, assuredly those Persons were wrong, who brought about an Event, which our Nation Annually depløres, and for which they fast on the 30th of *January*. (See, in our Common-prayer Book, the National Church-Services for those two Days; and also, for *October 25th*. O! that Englishmen would but mind their English-Prayers!)

8. In the Close of this brief Answer to the one great Drift and Design of Mr. *Paine's* Publications, I have only to say, (and may the Saying deeply impress!) That, if he, and his Abettors, his Friends, but our Foes, (and not "Friends of the People") should proceed till they have accomplished the awful Event of a Revolution, and so of a Republicanism taking Place in England, it will prove, in their idly maintaining their Rights, a shocking Deprivation of ours. The imaginary Rights of a few will destroy the real Rights of the many. The Reception of Mr. *Paine's* Books, I hesitate not to say, is the Rejection of God's: And, what will this do, if Practice follow Reading, but bring down a Divine Curse upon us, and take away a Divine Blessing! Are these an Englishman's Rights? Are such Proceedings as their's neighbourly? Are they brotherly, and friendly? Are they pleasing and profitable? Is this their Morality? Is this their Religion? Will the English be made more peaceable, loving, harmonious, gentle, kind, beneficent, and godly, when all govern, and none are governed, in the State of supposed Equality? Is this the Case with the French, by the Revolution in their Government?

Government? O that Englishmen may open their Eyes to see English Privileges, and their Ears to hear English Rights; THE RIGHTS OF GOD, that he may not be robbed of THEM, by those who profess to maintain the Rights of Men, but effect their Wrongs!—In Conclusion, I would say, Let us pray in the Collect of the Church of England;—“ Grant, O Lord, we beseech thee, That the Course of this World may be so peaceably ordered by thy Governance, that thy Church may joyfully serve thee in all godly Quietness, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” *Amen.*

N. B. Read the *Considerations and Resolutions* of the ASSOCIATION, at the *Crown & Anchor Tavern*, in *London*, for preserving LIBERTY and PROPERTY, against *Republicans* and *Levellers*; also, the like of the ASSOCIATION in *Birmingham*.

F I N I S.