

DISCOURSE

DELIVERED ON THE

FOURTH JULY, 1864.

AT RANWICK, NICH TO ELIZABETH-TOWN,
BY INVITATION, TO A RESPECTABLE
AUDIENCE, ASSEMBLED TO COM-
MEMORATE THE

TWENTY-EIGHTH ANNIVERSARY

O F

AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE.

BY DAVID AUSTIN.

*"The street shall be built again, and the wall,
even in troublous times."*—Dan. ix. 25.

JOHN WOODS, PRINTER, ELIZABETH-TOWN.

D I S C O U R S E

DELIVERED ON THE
FOURTH JULY, 1804.

Citizens and Fellow Christians,

You are all concerned in this matter. As citizens, ye are the atmosphere; as Christians, ye are the globe. Thus hath it pleased an all-wise God, in all things, to clothe and to cover that which is goodly in his sight.—In himself, he is buried, in brilliancy unapproachable; and is, to a mortal eye visible only, by the raiment which he wears. Perhaps to immortals, he is seen but in the clothing of a brighter effulgence. Of the ineffable glories of that higher estate, we shall be able to speak; when to the praise of sovereign and matchless grace, we are brought to unite in the anthems of redeeming love.

Before we reach this point, we have many "straits" to go through, and many desolations to make up.

The labors of this life, in an external providence, among the nations, are as the flashings of fire amongst the clouds, and as the rollings of thunder across the heavens. The labors of Zion, in the trunk of the tree, partake of the storms which agitate the branches.

The land in which we live is called Christian land. Many of you are called Christians, and, I doubt not, glory in the name. It is a legacy left us by our ancestors; and the more to be prized, as it is handed to us free from the alloy of antichristian contamination.

We tread free ground, draw a pure air, and have the oracles of life before us. Under such circumstances, what can we not do? What ought we not to do?—Ye will say “we can do all that needs to be done, we have clay, and wood, and straw, and behold our hands ready to the work.”—

The Lord “loveth a cheerful giver;” and when the people had of old “a mind to the work,” the walls of the city were soon set up. They wrought with one hand, and held a sword with the other, because the “times were perilous,” and their enemies were round about.

Ye will be ready to say, “Sir, perilous as the times are in the old world, we have peace and prosperity in the new! The soil is our own! The labors of the revolution have frayed away the rubbish of foreign misrule, and there is not a toad to croak, nor a chicken to peep against our performing what the Lord may command.” If such be your temper, and ye have eyes to see the preparation already made, let us advance to the work. “*The street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.*”

A street and a wall, in their literal sense; express an avenue among the houses of a city; and a bulwork or battlement by which that city is defended. Thus, in the city of New-York, with which most of us are acquainted, there are leading streets, and the whole protected by a partial wall or battery.

In the old world, there are cities wholly surrounded by a wall. This stands as a mean of defence, behind which the inhabitants annoy their enemies in the day of assault.

CONSTITUTIONS of political government are *cities*, within whose limits the subjects or citizens of that political district may dwell.—The constitutions of the old world, both *civil and ecclesiastical*, are like to the cities which the inhabitants of the old world do literally inhabit. They seem to have waxen old; to have become subject to political earthquake; to plunder and to decay. Their streets afford but a shaking journey to the former travellers, and the walls of defence, in many places, “are broken down.”

We leave them with that God who judgeth righteously, and who, among the wonders now performing, causeth the “cities of the nation to fall.”

Whilst, with solemn awe, we behold “perplexity among the nations, sea and waves roaring,” and the “islands removing out of their places”—as possessors of this soil of freedom,

We have cause to tread "with holy steps."—
 We, as citizens, are walking streets which are
 new, surrounded by a wall, concerning which
 the enemy is ready to say, "If but a fox go
 up upon it, it will fall to the ground."

True, our wall is new; but we leave its de-
 fence to those to whom it belongs. We are
 now to turn our eyes towards *another city*,
 which hath its foundations in the chain of the
 gospel covenant, and its wall of defence from
 on high:

This city is stiled the city of the NEW-JE-
 RUSALEM.—The time is come, in which, by
 the providence of God, preparation is made
 for its foundation to be laid, and the features
 of the glorious design to be set before the eye
 of the sons of men. All are sensible who
 have studied the ways of providence in things
external, or in things *internal*, that there is
 nothing in the ways of God, which partake
 of the nature of *making haste*. In conformi-
 ty to such example in himself, it is written,
 "he that believeth shall not make haste;"—
 that is, the man whether endowed with ordi-
 nary or extraordinary gifts, who believeth in
 the accomplishment of the object of his hope,
 or in the performance of things written or spo-
 ken of divine command, shall not be hasty in
 his work.

The use of such precept is found, in that

it assimilates the mind of the agent to the temper of him who commands; it causes him to eye the pointings of the finger of God, marking out his duty; and affords opportunity for the exercise of "like precious faith" according to examples given.

Eight years have passed since the dawn of this design was revealed, to the agent, from heaven.

Of a ready mind, and of an active turn, the subject of this revelation was ready (like Moses in killing the Egyptian) to spring to the work. Much, very much, had such an one to learn before he had learned "not to make haste."

If *one hundred and twenty years* were not too many for the trial of Noah; *forty*, not too many for Moses, and so on, for the trial of all at the introduction of any new economy: and if it cost our Lord the labor of *three years and half*, to be become "perfect through suffering" in order to lay, as was appointed, the foundation of the *Gospel Jerusalem*; it cannot be thought too much that double of this period should be manifest in the experience of one, to whose lot it hath fallen to re-lay, to restore, or to re-build that same *Gospel Jerusalem*, until it shall shine forth in the splendor of that *New-Jerusalem* which cometh down "from God out of heaven."

Most of you who are present, have been

witness to the desolations which followed the manifestation of this design, eight years past at Elizabeth-Town. The tree was one year in falling; and from the sabbath of our departure until the last sabbath of our ministration in the same place, is said, to have comprized the period of *seven years*.—This doubles the period of “sackcloth testimony” in the ministration of our Lord, and now prepares the way for a beginning of the glorious labors of an opening salvation.

Ye will judge, perhaps, that the day, is not well chosen, nor the temper of the audience at this moment well suited to the critical and sublime investigation of those mysterious characters, emblems, seals and figurative writings under which the mysteries of the New-Jerusalem are hidden:—pledging myself, however on some future occasion, providence permitting to perform for you this service; I shall for the present leave the subject as it lies, and proceed to touch a little those introductory and national events with which ye are all acquainted; and which from their familiarity, will neither weary your attention, nor strain the powers of your understanding.

Ye will be doubly joyful, in the recollection of the labors and toils of the nation, thus far done, since ye have an intimation that they are to end, in the unbosoming of the most sublime object ever sought for in the faith and

labors of the antients : fought for by contending nations ; dreamed of by poets, pursued by the learned, or leaned upon by those who have gone to rest ; “ having seen the promises afar off.”—This is Christ and the glory of the father’s kingdom on earth !—“ Thy kingdom come thy will be done.”

This will prove matter of joy to you who are saints, and I hope salvation to you sinners.

The field in which the seed of this kingdom is to be sown, and the ground on which this harvest is to be raised, was ploughed up by our old revolutionary plow ; drawn by the oxen of *seventy-six*. Many of you helped to drive this team, and some of this little State, helped to hold the plow. Our friend, neighbor, and acquaintance governor Livingston, helped by his quil to smooth the ground. He shewed the propriety of resistance to the yoke of a foreign parliament claiming privily “ to bind us in all cases whatsoever.” A sorry set of draught-horses we should have been ; lashed about at the will of parliament and plowing ground for the beef-eaters of Old England.—Yea, those of you who now labor in the clay, and return from market with its price in your own peckets, might then have delivered bricks full tail to Pharaoh and his host, and have taken your reward in the sweat of your brow.

Now ye can go and come, labor in the week, and come up to the house of the Lord on the

sabbath, and no parliamentary edicts to spread a cloud upon your prospects, or to claim the prerogative of leading you in chains to the kingdom of heaven.

In the garb of the "Jersey Blues," ye did honor to yourselves, to your state, and to the common cause.

Reverend James Caldwell, my worthy predecessor at Elizabeth-Town, was a man who fought with two swords. The one was *political*, the other was *spiritual*. He loved the liberties of his country; and he was an enthusiast for "the freedom of the sons of God." Did I call him an enthusiast! Who were not enthusiasts in that day? Was it not a blaze of enthusiasm, which, like a flash of fire, ran through the ranks of the country? Were we not all enthusiasts from old men to little children? It was the enthusiasm of a new design; such as you seem to imagine the present speaker is sometimes clothed with, when he talks to you of the *New-Jerusalem*. Be it so; what is enthusiasm, but the ardency of desire; but the rapture of affection towards an object sought? What would have become of us; what of our country, and what of you, had it not been for the raptures of enthusiasm reaching towards a state of things then pursued?

Let us go on with these raptures! Who can tell what is ahead! It is no time for us to take

a retrograde motion; to turn back; to go down hill!

Let us shake again the *two-edged sword*; or rather let us enjoy the fruit of its exploits; political and religious liberty are now at command. To preserve, to maintain and to enjoy them is our duty as citizens and as christians. With this sword the people are to be taught how to "bind their princes in chains, and their nobles in fetters of iron; this honor have all the saints; praise ye the Lord."

Who lived, also, in the days of Mr. Caldwell? Where is our old friend, acquaintance and statesman, Abraham Clark? Sometimes he was, in religious services, here at Rahway, and sometimes he was at Elizabeth-Town—always as your friend, the friend of the people, and an advocate for the rights of this rising empire he stood forth steady in council. He now sleeps in the dust! His name is entitled to honorable mention, and his services to grateful recollection.

Who stood with him? Where are your Hancocks, Adams, Shermans, Morris, Randolphs, and the honorable list of *first counselors* who, in the affairs of the old confederation were laid, and in the order of the revolution do still lie, as the floor—timbers of our national fabric? Where are they? Ye will say, "many of them are fallen asleep, but some of them remain until this day."

Let them be remembered as the *floor-timbers*

bers of the national labor. Of the old war Congress, who served at the declaration and during the struggle for independence, it may be said, that for fortitude in moments of disaster, for activity in dispatching questions of moment, and for the glory of achievements under burthens the most intolerable: no timber in the house deserves a better engraving.

Let them lie, clothed with the garments of their own work, and the grateful acknowledgments of their country at large.

What comes next? This period of *eight years* in council, and *eight years* in war, was finished. It so exhausted the funds of the nation that the soldier went home with two and six-pence for the pound: the officer went home with wages and commutation of the same stamp; the commander in chief left his camp, seeing nothing by which to reward his army but a legacy of good advice; and the Old Congress had little more to do than to knock the ashes of their tobacco from their war-worn pipes, and to return and recline with their families under the shelter preserved.

The government was now paralyzed. The old confederation was worn out. It had employed all its energies. It reached the conclusion of the war: it saw the acknowledgment of independence and it died.

From 1783, until '87, the country lay prostrate. This forms a period of *four years* of

desolation ; for it may be understood that our national labor advances by squares and by double squares. The eight years of war forms a double square. The four years between the old confederation and the new constitution form a single square. The presidency of George Washington for *eight years* forms a double square ; and the presidency of John Adams, for *four years*, a single square ; and this finishes the labor of what may be stiled the *federal service*. A kind of political tempest struck the *key-stone*, and other stones of greater and of less magnitude soon fell out.

To some it may be entertaining to hear what might be the physical, providential or necessary causes, why the federal temple should become exposed and caused to sustain this shock.—

First, the national fabric was complete in the person of John Adams—Secondly, it being at best, but an outside shelter, it was needful that it should not abide a *Babel* to its builders.—Thirdly, it seemed to be taking the form of the political fabrics of the old world, and looking to raise a wall around itself ; unmindful of the hand behind the cloud—and that in its fall, *a new era might commence*.

Republicanism boasts of little else, than of general diffusion. “Gentlemen, all take your own way !” To the Greek and to the Jew, to the bond and to the free, to the Scythian

and Barbarian it is said, "possess your own freedom as men, and if unlawfully bound as Christians, or in any other way, be ye free!" All this is constitutional and nothing is wanting but the knowledge of this estate of perfect freedom, and dispositions to make a virtuous use of it to complete the felicity of man in the present. &c. It presents a kind of national burst. The pieces of cordance or fragments of ideal intolerance, are thrown upon the floor, and a fair opportunity is presented for such new engravings upon the tablet of the national mind, as in the providence of God may be brought to pass, or in the councils of eternity may be predetermined.

To us as Christians, it now belongs to take to ourselves that *spiritual* independence which we enjoy in our *political* character.

This is necessary—*First*, that this nation, and the world may see, that "shaken as all nations are," we have a solid basis to build upon, and are hastening toward the period when "the desire of all nations shall come."

Secondly, That we may be far removed from a bowing of the neck to any yoke of political bondage, or heretical error through unbelief, or want of confidence in the faith already received.

Thirdly—That as the old world wears out, the new world, in the faith of the truth may revive.

Fourthly—That the [] of this world may cease to rally Christian brethren one against another, in political enterprize, promising freedom, whereas we are all free on our own footing, and need not to ask freedom or toleration of any man.

Fifthly—That proselites to the Christian faith may be gained, on the ground that the empire of the covenant of life will stand, when the mountains of this world do pass away.—“For though the mountains depart, and the hills be removed, my loving kindness shall not be taken away from thee, nor the covenant of my peace removed, saith the Lord of Hosts, who hath mercy on thee.”

Sixthly—That the banners of the great salvation may be set up, and Zion hear of her glorious destinies, and the nations learn that their safety can alone be found under the pavilion of “the Prince of Peace; for as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and the garden causeth the things that are sown therein to spring forth, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.”

If the fall of the Federal service is to be succeeded by events and prospects such as these, who need repine? Let old worlds tremble, and new ones arise; for it is written, “overturn, overturn” until he whose right it is.

Let Thomas Jefferson hold on an easy helm, with a good eye, whether for a single square

or a double square, time will declare. His mouth is to speak the language of the nation, in national things; the mouth of prophecy will speak of heavenly things.

You will say, the spirit of the prophet is not subject to the prophet, unless he speak more of the city, whose "street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times."

This language in its early reference, may point you to the city of the prostrate Jerusalem, which after the captivity of the Jews was re-built by Zerubbabell and Joshua. The city was built again, and the wall thereof, as the scriptures teach, in "troublous times."

Deepening the prophecy, reference may be had to "the street" of our gospel Zion. The *avenue of life*, the street of the gospel Jerusalem was opened in the doctrine, miracles, death, resurrection and exaltation of the son of God. The avenues of this city were extended, and distributed by the labors of the Apostles. Walls of defence in the Papal and Protestant countries have been built; but they have become, to look at, like walls appointed to desolation. The best "wall" of defence hath been found in the authenticity of the original testimony; in its power upon the hearts and consciences of men; in the promises of its ultimate dominion upon the earth; and in the glory of its power in heaven. The "ark of this testimony," hath been rolling as upon a

tempestuous sea until it finds the Palestine of the West. Under the shade of overshadowing Providence we here find ourselves, under divine commission, allowed to bring these gospel waters to a point, and send forth their streams as under the swellings of a prophetic tide. In the fountains of promise and of prophecy, we have always known were contained refreshing streams to be sent forth in due time as from the river of our God.

I shall not say much more to you on this subject at this time. Hold yourselves in readiness to drink of "the river of water of life," which was seen by St. John, flowing through "the beloved city." I think its waters are not far off, and they will afford a refreshing draught to our divine abode. What shall we say of this 4th of July, A. D. 1804?

Casting off the four years, to supply the lack of the four years lost at the date of the Christian era, it will be found that we now finish precisely, eighteen hundred years from the birth of our Lord, the glorious founder of this gospel Jerusalem, the ruins of whose walls it is now our duty to make up. And if you are minded to say *the restoration* of our gospel Jerusalem shall find a place with you, be it so be fire! when you fire, as old Israel shouted at the re-building of the city and walls of the Old Jerusalem! Let the earth ring with the shoutings of this enterprize! Say, we are *free men*.

as citizens, and we will appertain to the *freedom and enlargement* of the empire of the "sons of God." "The street of the city, & its wall shall be built in perilous times." Perilous the times are to the old world; but here is a little spot of ground; here is a large garden, wide as the United States, in which the spices of the great salvation may flow out; may ascend as in a common perfume to the glory of the Great Supreme. Let us say, "fear God, and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come; and worship him that made the heavens and the earth, and the sea, and the fountains of water."

Let this be the first day of the New-Jerusalem power! Love the sons of God, unite in the fellowship of the saints; receive the gospel in all its doctrines, promises and prospects; and obey it in all its precepts. This will produce a benign effect upon your own minds; upon the minds of your fellow men and upon the world. This will correct the disorders of your conduct, regulate the footsteps of your future lives, and shut the mouths of gainsayers.

There is a loud call for this in the language of prophetic thunder. Look at the old world! "I will shake all nations!" See how they totter! From Old Palestine where the Mahometans reign, "ad ultimos Brittannos"—where the British govern, see how the nations shake! In fact all Christendom is rolling as upon the waves of a tempestuous sea. Many are swallowed up; and others wait the disaster. All the wise, the learned in the law, the scribes of the kingdom, and the disputers of

this world are amazed. Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?"

"I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come."

There is but one nation that hath sustained and survived the revolutionary shock. That nation is our own. We are in a sense behind the storm. The wind hath gone over our head, which is still upon the islands and upon the nations. And "the islands were moved out of their places," they change masters, they throw off the yoke, they stand not in the same relation to the falling mountains of this world. Behold the operation already begun!

The sweeping breath of purifying indignation hath passed us by, and the land we inhabit becomes "the goodly land." Its inhabitants, in discovery, and in devotion, are far behind the hand of heaven. We scarcely tread this ground as unto God. We have little sense, that we have escaped the storm. It is in fact known, but who is found to give God the praise? Let not the United States imagine that they are out of danger. I heard a word the other day, it may be of moment for you to hear. One of the officers escaped from the disasters at St. Domingo, was, with many others lately at New-York. In a question with his landlord, his spirit rose; he uttered words which he might as well have concealed. "I know your politics," said he "I understand your divisions! I will return to France and report the matter, and we will come out with an army and *settle matters for you.*"

The landlord answered, "you have not influence enough to do such a thing; and if you have, you will find some good blood to con-

send with ; our revolutionary war hath not lost all its force ; we will shew you with whom you have to deal ! For the impudence of your language, you ought to be pitched in yonder dock !”

This spark of fire may be worthy of notice. We are not ignorant that an armament might have been upon our coasts long since, had not other work been found to do, or unexpected obstructions been thrown in the way. We are at this moment a people favored above all nations. “ He hath not dealt so with any nation,” and it is time that these acknowledgments be publicly made, and everlastingly maintained. The most high God once dealt with ancient Israel, as with a nation of his peculiar charge. He is about to deal with us in the same sort. “ Son of man speak to the children of thy people, and say unto them when I bring the sword upon a land, if the people of the land take a man of their coasts and set him for their watchman ; if when he seeth the sword come upon the land he blow the trumpet, and warn the people ; then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet and taketh not warning, if the sword come and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head.”

Now let the American nation take warning. There is a sword abroad ; it need not be described ; it is upon the nations of the old world, and blazes in the sight of the new. Let our nation henceforth walk in righteousness, and lift up their voice together in prayer and in praise.

Watchmen ! upon the coast of our *spiritual Jerusalem*, can ye not begin to “ see eye to eye ?” Is it not time that ye advance upon the

base of this great design? Ye need not to obstruct your celestial testimony by reason of care for the fragments; chips, or pieces of timber which may have fallen like bark from the tree of national growth. Let us come to the heart of the business. Possess the *pure testimony* of life eternal, and urge on the saints to freedom here! And to glory hereafter! This is inside work; this is the labor before us! The tempest begun; the accompanying judgments may prevail until under the shelter of the *everlasting covenant* alone, grace and protection can be found.

If ye judge your brother watchman hath taken advanced ground, let him have your eye! Hear the sound of the trumpet from the walls! Supported by your good wishes and your prayers, not a serpent shall be seen to foam upon the waters of the deep, or to hiss amongst the briars; but ye shall hear of his approach.

On this fourth day of July, A. D. 1804, we raise the standard of INDEPENDENCE on the part of "the sons of God;" we hold manly ground, capable to give good reason "with meekness & fear" of the hope within us. Our duty will be to maintain the gospel testimony, to diffuse of its benignities to all the children of its power, and to invite to its consolations, all who are distressed, or out of the way.

Our standing, like the stripling of old, is between the hosts of Israel and the armies of the aliens. Should any Goliath approach for the discomfiture of the children of the covenant, we will not be backward to reach him a stone.

“ Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in, through the gates into the city ; for without are dogs, and sorcerers and whoremongers, and murderers and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root of the offspring of David ; the bright and morning star.”

On this day, therefore, we pronounce Independence for the **HÓSTS OF ZION**. We have had twenty-eight jubilees for the nation. We have rejoiced and rejoiced, again and again ! We have well nigh worn out the song of *seventy-six*. It was a good song, and may be sung again and again ; but if Zion can present a song which shall better entertain the family on earth, and the family in heaven, who will complain ? Not one !—Nay, not a man !

We have sung, hitherto, but the “ song of Moses ;” that is, the song of our political redemption ; now we will sing, in addition, “ the song of the Lamb.” We will get ourselves as nigh to the example of the heavenly host as our faith, zeal, and opportunities will allow.

GEORGE WASHINGTON, in the outside work, was our political Moses ; and all Israel were as sheep upon the mountains. Now the time approaches, that the shepard of Israel will take care of his flock, and bring them to one common fold.

Why should we be found floating on the fragments of Federal timber, or cleaving to Republican hopes ? These are but the reeds

of Egypt. To us it appertains to shout from
 “the tops of the mountains; for the moun-
 tains shall drop down new wine; and the hills
 shall flow down with milk; and the *rivers of*
Judah shall be full of water, and a fountain
 shall go forth from the house of the Lord which
 shall water the valley of Shittim.”

Fellow-citizens—we wish you all joy, we
 congratulate you and the nation on this aus-
 picious occasion; we cast our eye over this
 land, and behold all in peace! In that day
 shall ye say, every man to his neighbor; “come
 under the vine, come under the fig-tree:” let
 the call be heard, let peace abide and love and
 joy abound!

Let “the mountain of the Lord’s house be
 established” in the American nation; let it
 outtop “the height of the hills—let all nations
 flow unto it.”

Let the Lord reign in Zion, and in Jerusa-
 lem “triumph gloriously.”

What glories were described of old!
What wonders are in Zion told!
Thou city of our God below,
Thy fame shall Tyre and Egypt know.

Egypt and Tyre, and Greek and Jew,
Shall there begin their lives anew:
Angels and men shall join to sing,
The hill where living waters spring.

When God makes up his last account,
Of natives in his holy mount;
’Twill be an honor to appear
As one new-born and nourish’d there.”

At the birth of the Lord of life, did not old Simon say, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared *before the face of all people*, a light to *lighten the Gentiles*, and the *glory of thy people Israel*?"

"The testimony of Jesus" in the Revelations is said to be "a spirit of prophecy."

In the light of that spirit—let the nations look *for relief*, and Zion for *her glory*.

"When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him."

The features of the American revolution are clearly seen in the light of prophecy. This, indeed, is an outside work; it is time that "the headstone," be brought forth with shouting—crying "grace unto it"—and "the spirit" of the kingdom, and "the bride" of the kingdom "say come, and let him that heareth say come, and let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely. He which testifieth these things saith surely I come quickly, even so; come Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, be with you all, Amen."