

TOWN of WASHINGTON, JULY 7, 1802.

SIR,

I N compliance with a request of th^e officers of the first regiment of militia, I have the honor to ~~express to you their~~ thank for the sermon ~~you~~ delivered on Monday last, in commemoration of American Independence; and to desire a copy for the Press.

With great respect, and sincere esteem,

I am &c.

WILLIAM C. C. CLAIBORNE.

Rev. Adam Boyd,

Natchez.

A D V E R T I S E M E N T .

WHEN a previous engagment made it necessary to turn attention to the fourth of July, my head was so tortured with a rheumatic affection, that it confined invention to the land of barrenness. Hence this discourse was delivered under apprehensions of disapprobation.

But the day inspiring the audience, their own mind furnished the rest of their entertainment. Hence they were pleased to receive, on good part, this humble attempt.

At their desire, it is now presented, with much deference, to the public. But indisposition so maintains its ground, that the attempt hath not derived usual benefit from a revision,

Wherefore, its own objects being gratitude and friendly dispositions; it trusts to the indulgence of a candid public, for permission to live out its nine days in peace.

T H E A U T H O R .

A BRIEF VIEW, &c.

PSALM CXXIV. 7—8.

—*The snare is broken, and we are escaped.*

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

THIS psalm is a song of thanksgiving and praise; the overflowing of a heart enraptured with gratitude, for some signal deliverance from dangers, which threatened universal ruin.

It likewise appears, their deliverance was thro' the immediate interposition of Heaven; and throughout the whole, there is an expression of such piety, as the mercies of our heavenly Father should kindle in the hearts of all, but especially of those happily distinguished by the rich blessings of Jehovah, Lord of Hosts.

ALTHO' the soul of the Psalmist must have been all transport; because he had escaped the snare: yet no merit doth he arrogate to himself. He boasts not his virtues, nor his prowess; his counsels, nor his exertions. But with a just sense of his own weakness, and exalted ideas of the overruling power of the Deity, which nobly elevates the soul with reverential awe, he piously declares, "Had not the Lord been on our side, when men rose up against us, then had they swallowed us up quick. Then had the proud waters overwhelmed us. For our help; our only hope was in the name of the Lord, who made heaven, earth."

How sweet is the effusion of gratitude! This flows spontaneous from the heart; and from our hearts, such should daily flow.

THROUGHOUT this whole psalm, there is a pathos, which simple language could not reach; neither could the cold heart of insensibility conceive it. Emphatic is the figurative representation of their danger. When gratitude mentions their *great Deliverer*, how doth it delight in the name! How doth it raise our thoughts! How grand; how august, are the ideas thus communicated! When speaking of

themselves, how picturesque is the language of the low state of the church! Not more resistance was it then able to make, against its numerous foes, than a weak defenceless bird against the hidden snare of a fowler.

AFTER this commentary, it is almost superfluous, in this audience, to observe the similitude between the state of the church, in the days of David; and of the past and present situation of the American states.

MANY years had we traversed commercial ground, in amity, with our brethren of Europe. But, at last, through the oppressive assumptions of power, we were compelled into a war. At that time, ~~our weak~~ and unprepared condition, opposed to the power, and experience of our enemy, intimidated thousands within our states, and filled Europe with astonishment. Arduous and bold was the enterprise. But our birth-right, and every thing, which, in this world, is dear to man, was at hazard. *The snare was set, and we must break it, or be undone!*

A TAME and passive acquiescence, which some *gentle spirits* approved, would have secured to us such immortality of fame, as time can give. Ever whilst the blessed luminary, that enlightens this orb, should be permitted to declare to distant worlds, the glory of the great I AM; never, in that revolution of time, never should our *reproach* have died; nor ever would our *timidity* have been forgotten.

AFFLICTION, and pain, and even death shall a good man suffer, rather than violate the sacred laws of virtue, and betray his country. To commit such offences, is fatal to peace of mind, and dangerous to a deathless soul. Thus to preserve life, or a temporary ease, is to put man's all at hazard. For, with a wounded spirit, how can life be made enjoyment? And in exchange for the soul, what can possibly be acquired? Twice ten thousand worlds are as nothing; not even as a drop to the ocean.

Besides, real endeavors to do good, the Almighty is graciously pleased to accept, as works conducive to His glory. Even the very act of doing good, is, in some degree, "doing the work of the Lord." It is aiding the general cause of general happiness; which is the great, the wonderful object of the *Scmpiternal*, or the ever living Jehovah.

Thinking thus; and inspired with most exalted virtue, as if ani-

mated with one soul, America, from east to west, united. Many, almost infinite were their difficulties. But a glorious love of country, and the independent state, taught them perseverance; the magnitude of the object, the vast recompence of reward, enabled them to rise superior to every difficulty, and every danger. But the justness, and benevolence of their cause, crowned the whole, with an humble, but firm trust and confidence in the protection of *Divine aid*.

In this blessed hope of divine aid, they have not been disappointed. On the slightest review of the war, in every stage of its predatory progress, hosts on hosts of arguments shall we find, compelling us most gratefully to acknowledge the protection of *Omnipotence*.

It was the power of the *Omnipotent*, which gave our people perseverance. It was the same uncontrollable power that gave to our troops unwearied patience, and unabated firmness; that gave them intrepidity in the field, where *the big war raged* dreadfully glorious. It was the same Power, the same *Almighty Arm*, which protected them, as with a shield impregnable, but invisible, from the death fraught balls, that showered around them. It was also that all-conquering power, which gave success to our efforts, and so oft confounded the councils of our enemies.

To the same great, but gracious Power, were we indebted for His goodness, in not remembering against us our multiplied transgressions. In the midst of deserved wrath, He was pleased, in His great mercy, to enable us to obtain the grand victory; the great object of our toils and wishes.

WHEN the proud waters swelled high, and appeared in act to burst over us, then, blessed for ever be His great, His holy name, *He* staid their dreadful rage; *He* turned the storm into a calm, and blustering war into gentle peace. *He* broke the snare, and we escaped. Blessed, blessed be the Lord, who made heaven, and earth; for our hope and our help were in His great name. Most truly may we say, "Had not the Lord been on our side, they would have prevailed against us." Dreadful would their triumph have been; and our defeat dismal, worse than death. But now, under his vine, or his fig tree, every one may set him, in safety, down; for there is none to make him afraid.

FOR which, O my friends, let America rejoice; let the multitude of her inhabitants be glad thereof. It was the right hand of Jehovah; it was *His Almighty Arm*, that gained this victory, which is so great and wonderful in our eyes. Therefore ought we to say,

with gratitude and joy; in pious raptures should we, with all the powers of our soul declare, "not unto us, not unto us, O Lord; but to Thy great and glorious name be the praise forever, and ever."

THIS, my brethren, this should be our daily song; and our life should be a paraphrase thereof.

No more to hear the shrill sound of the trumpet; the clang of arms, and the din of war. Instead of desolation, and blood, to hear the voice of gladness and of mirth in our streets; instead of armed hosts, to have peace, and her fair daughter, *Safety*, about our dwellings, and our beds about! Years of rapine to terminate thus in *peace, liberty and safety*,--thrice happy change! Blessed, blessed situation!

HAVING been so highly favored by the great OMNIPOTENT and ETERNAL; having been by *Him* supported under the various pressures of a long and rageful war; having been by *Him* enabled to wade through such a sea of troubles, and at last to regain the shores, where the best national blessing, PEACE, dispenses her benign influence, kindling, all around the torch of joy; what is incumbent on us, that we may enjoy the blessing, and assist our brethren to improve the great, the important dispensation?

BRETHREN, what infinite variety is here presented? But suffer not imagination to sport with judgment. The heart enraptured with the blessed view, presses on our first attention, *unwearied diligence* in cultivating all friendly, and good dispositions to one another; and *fergency* in shewing forth our gratitude, to the glory of *that goodness*, which gave us *such a rich gift*.

IF He, the Father everlasting, thus loved us, shall not we love one another? Shall we not gratefully acknowledge all his mighty benefits, and, by a life of obedience, shew the sincerity of our thanks and our praise! This, as citizens, we owe to our country—as men and christians we owe it to each other: but in all these characters, we owe it to ourselves. It is likewise a debt which we owe to the great *Eternal*, who commands, that we "follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." Can it be more positively enjoined, or more imperatively commanded?

THUS we are taught to avoid, if possibly we can, all party rage, and discontent. Should hydra-headed discord present her hideous form, to unite in expelling or destroying it, becomes our great duty to our Maker, as well as to our fellow mortals. For strife is a baleful enemy to man as well as to communities of men.

BESIDES, cultivating the blessed disposition to preserve peace, includes that noble, that god-like act of forgiving injuries.

THUS to forgive, in some cases, it is difficult even to the generous mind. But then it is, literally, the more difficult the greater glory. The great, the benevolent work must be accomplished. For it is the command of Him, who, touched with a feeling of our infirmities, never issued a command, which we are not able to obey. *His grace is sufficient for us!*

BUT in this instance to obey, gives dignity to our character. It is an honor to human nature. Even the eternal welfare of our soul depends thereon. Unless we forgive our enemies, every time we repeat the Lord's prayer, we pass sentence of condemnation against ourselves.

BESIDES these, as farther incentives for procuring to our souls this refined enjoyment, be it always remembered, that, "Our holy religion is founded on mercy; that its divine author is emphatically styled, *the prince of peace*; and that in His last moments;—His expiring agonies, He prayed his father to *forgive his murderers!*"

TO live in charity, or on terms of brotherly love, with all men, is the injunction of Heaven, Who rules supreme, governor and judge of all mankind. With this sovereign injunction, or command, no power, no circumstance, not even the unworthiness of the object, can possibly dispense.

THE preservation of civil order, oft imposes the sad alternative of putting men to death. Yet most certainly it is our duty to pray, that the Almighty Lord of all, would graciously hear from heaven, His dwelling place, the sorrowful sighings of these hapless out-casts, and, out of the greatness of His power, preserve the souls of these unhappily appointed to die. In malice or revenge, nothing should we ever do.

JUSTICE guarding the public welfare, must sometimes decide, while Pity bleeds. She may inflict banishment or death. But neither in banishment, nor in death, doth She require of the heart to be insensible to the touch of humanity.

THUS in the great command, "*love your enemies,*" the love of benevolence is obviously meant; and not that love, which is founded on esteem; and proceeds from a belief of merit. The first is practicable; it is congenial: but the last is neither the one nor the other.

HUMAN nature can forgive; and enjoy, in forgiving, a pleasure ineffably sweet to the soul. But if a man persevere, wantonly or wickedly, to destroy life, or to make it miserable; such ~~man~~ human nature cannot esteem, so as to wear him in her affections. But she can pity and forgive, and even repay injuries with offices of benevolence.

THE next great mean of improving this talent, and of making it a blessing, is a *reformation of manners*; that is, of *life*, and conversation. Who is a wise man, and endued with knowledge amongst you? Let him shew out of a good conversation his works with the meekness of wisdom.

THE great object of government, is *the happiness of all*. But such happiness cannot be obtained, *whilst religion lies neglected*. If a people wish to be happy, they must be virtuous. Laws restraining vice should be enacted, and carefully executed. To this care in the execution, the magistrate of whatever degree, should always add the *precedent of his own example*. Thus, the practice of the duties and of religion, will *grow into fashion*, and so become pleasant and agreeable to all. Hence, by yielding refined pleasure to the mind, those duties will recommend themselves; and the heart will pant for the enjoyment, derived from a *faithful* performance thereof.

THE necessity of respecting *such practice*, if we indeed believe in a God, is established in this injunction of a blessed Jesus—"First seek ye the kingdom of heaven, and its righteousness; and then all these things shall be added. For your heavenly Father knoweth of what things ye stand in need."

BUT to have a *rational* hope, that due respect will be paid to religion, and the duties thereby enjoined, much pains should be taken to instruct youth, in the *principles* as well as in the *practice*. Youth thus instructed "to remember their Creator in the days of their youth," when they grow old it is not likely they will forget *Him*, and prophane *His* great and holy name. Were but half the pains taken to instruct children in the ways of virtue, as there are to harden them in the dismal paths of vice, we should not be so often shocked at the infant tongue, lisping out horrid execrations, and practically denying a God.

BESIDES, we have the assurance of inspiration, that Godliness is profitable for both worlds; in as much as it hath the promises of this life, as well as of that which is to come. Hence a people, who are blessed with true political wisdom, will labor, and strive to at-

tain to the dignity of that exaltation which righteousness secures to a nation. As zealously shall they likewise abhorrent turn from, and strenuously labor to avoid throughout all their domain, that reproach which sin, soon or late, will most certainly entail on any people, who corrupt their ways before the Lord, and revel in the hollow joys of iniquitous indulgencies.

LAY, my friends, I beseech you, in time, lay those things to heart. They are truths; and truths of infinite importance. If you neglect to improve them now, to your temporal and eternal benefit; soon shall you find a day of tribulation: but in that day, none shall ye find to deliver or save.

WHAT revelations have been made? what counsel, what plain instruction hath been given us to spurn the wages of sin? Yet, alas! so neglected is that book of *divinely* wisdom, that scarcely can be traced out, in many parts of the world, the vestiges of that pure and rational religion, which is founded on the immutable laws of the INFINITE, and the ETERNAL!

MANY, during the rage of our late war, many alarms, must we have had to rouse us from our lethargy, and prepare for our final change. Many favors too have blessed us, and should have quickened us into fervent and active zeal to serve the Lord our God.

EVEN the last great gift, the accomplishment of our wishes; the object for which we fought and bled, and by which we gained possession of that vast inheritance, *peace, liberty and safety*—This great benefit, this infinitude of blessings should compel us, “from the highways and hedges, to come in and bow before the Lord our maker and our judge.”

HATH this glorious and happy effect been produced? Have we thus, piously, come in? Where, O where, is the man so blessed, as to be able to answer these questions, in a joyful affirmative?

REMEMBER, O my friends, remember, the Israelites. So highly favored as once were they, lo! now they are despised; and no where under the sun as a nation or a people are they, this day known. He, the great Jehovah, who did those wonderful things, is now showering on us, such rich blessings, as nations, never before knew. But, O beware; tho’ patient and long-suffering, yet he declares himself to be a jealous God, and will by no means suffer the workers of iniquity to go unpunished for ever! Similar causes will for ever produce similar effects. If we *madly*, slight His threatenings, as did

the Israelites; if we prove ungrateful, and rebel against the *royal High*, will not he be displeas'd to do such great and wonderful works on our behalf, how can we hope to escape their doom? How can we hope, that we shall not be, like them, cut off from being a people, and be held in derision of all the world?

ALTHOUGH to the great *Eternal*, the chief of all the armies in heaven & in earth, the glory and the praise, is ever most certainly due, undivided and far from all competitors, *He* must for ever and for ever reign. Yet let not gratitude forget the happy instruments; the patriotic band of brothers, with Washington their guide. Inspired with noblest sentiments, the sentiments of a christian hero, that they might secure the sovereignty of their country, and prepare an *asylum* for the oppressed of Europe, they surmounted every difficulty, and every danger, that could arise from such unequal contest. Thus, in establishing for their country, *peace, liberty, and safety*, they raised for themselves, in the temple of Fame, a monument of glory, which shall retain its splendor, until despotism fall throughout the world, and time shall be no more.

On a review of these momentous transactions, altho' our hearts must gratefully acknowledge and adore the *goodness* of the *Almighty Ruler* of the universe: yet we must raise our ideas to an object infinitely higher than a political contest; or the flame of wild ambition. To imagine the great Jehovah acted therein, as a *Caribbean* amongst men, is to dishonour the God. No, my beloved, no! If we have any reverence for Him, who is *greater* and *goodness*, and who is pleased to promote *His* own glory, by extending his pains to man. If we view this adorable *Being* as we ought, filling, with his mercy, all unlimited space, we must consider this great event, the severation of one of the first empires in the world, as an admirable dispensation to expand the human heart; to compel man to admire, adore and praise Him, who liveth for ever, and ever.

To kindle in our breast this glorious flame, let us oft remember this gracious declaration, which is glad tidings of great joy to the whole human race—"From the rising of the sun even to the going down of the same, my *Name* shall be great among the gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my *Name*, and a pure offering; for my *Name* shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of Hosts."

To accomplish this, and to establish a city of refuge for the oppressed, how glorious, how great! Glorious it is also to those, whose

generosity, and *benevolence* induced them to unite in the grand achievement.

THAT *He* was graciously pleased to enable me to join my feeble aid to these friends of man, I have thanked; and shall for ever thank and praise my God. And now, when adversities had well nigh overwhelmed me; when poverty is become my companion, and crutches my support, thus tottering over my grave, with what joy do I find myself called on, in some small degree, to contribute to the completion of that glorious promise of mercy and grace, by declaring *His* word, and by preaching his salvation in what so lately was a howling wilderness!

O MY beloved, if we did but consider the situation of our country; in what pleasant places our lot is fallen, how delightfully should we exalt our minds, and attune our hearts to the melodious strains of gratitude and love? How should they burn with thanks and praise to our great deliverer, the *Eternal*; , and at the same time glow with benevolence to our fellow citizens? But, alas! instead thereof, what contests; what strifes; what rage of party spirit? O shame!

BRETHREN, these things ought not to be so! They degrade the man. They quench the christian spirit, which is the glory and happiness of man! But why will not men be wise? Why not remember, that all depends on mercy? Why, O why will they not love one another, as the Lord their Redeemer hath commanded; and pass the days of their pilgrimage in amity and peace?

BRETHREN, through dispensations of Divine Providence we are now here, set down, each man, under his fig tree or his vine. We see the wilderness, all around us, beginning to *bud and blossom as a rose*. Will not these blessings; those great proofs of mercy and love to man—shall they not compel us, with all the powers of our soul, to sing his praise, with whose goodness earth, sea and sky, from pole to pole, resound? Whatever others may do, shall not we, from a high sense of his unmerited love, shall not we zealously strive to suppress all unfriendly dispositions, and cultivate peace? Discord and strife are the bane of communities and societies. They undermine the christian religion, which is “Glory to God in the Highest; on earth peace; good will towards man.” They are big with ruin to individuals and to our country.

WHAT? Shall we thus sacrifice the glory, the happiness of a country so lately purchased, so lately redeemed from bondage, and

raised to a state of prosperity, and a name, by the precious blood of our fellow citizens? Shall we prove so ungrateful to *them* and to our God, who hath been graciously pleased in so conspicuous a manner to "make bare his arm" in favor of our *United States*.

BANISH, I beseech you—rather would I say—*be upon your guard*, suffer not, I pray you, contention and strife to live among you. Let them not find a kindly soil in this part of the vineyard, which is as the promised land, *flowing with milk and honey*.

Thus blessed, spurn the groveling spirit, the spirit of *invektive*. Instead thereof, open, each of you, open wide your heart, and mind for the benevolent, the friendly affections. Disdain all reviling. Let no contention be known amongst you, but this: who shall most labor to promote domestic peace, and happiness; and repel all foreign attempts to controul our government, and make our beloved citizens *hewers of wood and drawers of water*, "for any power under the sun."

WITH a mighty hand, and a strong arm, the Lord, even the God of Jacob, hath been pleased to bless the United States beyond all comparison, and far beyond every conception of man. Beware, and O my friends, remember, "To whom much is given, much of them shall be required." Retain this; engrave it on the tablets of your heart for ever, and abuse not the infinite goodness. Prove not ungrateful, Be not puffed up; neither be contentious. Let not brother war with brother. But to each other be kindly affectioned. Reverence, adore, obey your Lord, the *great I AM*.

PROTECT, preserve, and carefully cherish the great blessings, He hath given so liberally to your country, and to you, so that they descend as blessings to your children for ever.

THE blessing is great; the trust is great. To you it is committed. Will you, to gratify an illiberal impulse, will you be unjust

* "Brethren, if the tempest of war be permitted to beat on us, such a foundation we must lay, or our goodly edifice will fail, and we be undone. Better, far better to perish in the last mount of Independence, than to assume the yoke of any nation under heaven."

"Whilst hoping for the best, let us be prepared to meet the worst. United as a band of brothers, let us firmly as before, face all the dangers, that war can possibly create; and be, to a man, resolved either to bravely conquer, or more bravely die." To preserve the sovereignty of the states, might be the wish; the prayer of every American.

to your children; to your country; to your God? Will you suffer rage and discontent to possess that heart, which is fashioned for peace and love; and all the friendly offices?

To indulge in contests and strife for trifles, is to be cruel to your own soul. For such contests destroy peace of mind; disturb the common harmony, and good will, which are essential to the quiet, and satisfaction of any people. They are likewise offensive to Him, who is appointed *Judge of all!*

WHAT unhappy men are they, who find enjoyment in such mal-practices? To their country they are real enemies. Because, all manner of wickedness, exposes to the vengeance of Jehovah; and, unless they repent, their hatred and contentions must draw punishment from that *Omnipotent Being*, who is pleased to prefer mercy to sacrifice.

BRETHREN, on this short review of contingencies, and events, how important appears to be your station in the world? Guardians of that civil and religious liberty, which your fellow citizens purchased at such immense expence of life and blood; if ye suffer the precious inheritance to be reduced, what an eternal weight of shame and remorse shall vex your soul in all its faculties!

WHAT! abuse or waste the estate, thus, in trust, committed to your care? But whilst you commit this heinous offence, you set yourself in opposition to the plans of Providence! How dreadfully shall you thus aggravate your final doom!

BUT, alas! how wicked and how vain! you may thus go on, madly adding guilt to guilt: but the *great RULER* of the skies will accomplish all His decrees. He will enlarge the sphere of happiness to man. *He* will make his *name* great in the heathen world. *He* will cause the wilderness to blossom, like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord. Joy and gladness shall be found therein; thanksgiving and the voice of melody.

BRETHREN, recollect you are ever in the presence of Him, who *pondereth the heart*. If ye prove faithless; or lukewarm, or negligent; or if ye acknowledge another, as the Lord of the vineyard, He shall cast you out, and let it to others more faithful than you. This do, and you shall have the condemnation of the unjust steward for your inheritance for ever. For the vine *He*, the Lord of Hosts, brought out of Egypt and planted it. He cast out the heathen, and prepared room before it. *He* will cause it to take deep root, and it

shall fill the land. Thus shall *He* make His name glorious amongst the gentiles, even to the going down of the sun.

BRETHREN, I beseech you, by no means, slight ye, this glorious inheritance. This pearl of great price. If we unwisely slight it, others shall obtain it. Think what a hapless state we shall then be in! By such neglect, we shall prevent to our souls for ever, the great happiness of praising a good God for all His mercies, and His love for man so wonderfully displayed in Jesus the Mediator and advocate. Perish, perish the thought. It is ruinous to the soul. Confiding, as we ought, in His grace, let us not cease to strive, until we obtain a grateful heart, which is an inexhaustible treasure, and a perpetual

joy to the soul. **My beloved friends,** when our spirits shall take their flight, redeeming love shall attend and comfort them. They shall know the rapturous bliss of *dying* in the *Lord*. The everlasting gates shall lift up their heads, that we, thrice blessed we, heirs of glory, pass in, and inherit the fulness of joy to all eternity.

Go, then, my beloved, go. With fervency of strong faith, add to faith virtue; to virtue, knowledge; to knowledge, temperance; to temperance, patience; to patience, godliness; to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity; and if there be any virtue, or any praise, think, often think of them.

LIVE then, my friends, in charity and peace with all men; and the God of peace and love, even **JEHOVAH JIREH**, be with you, that *in the hour of your change*, you be prepared to sit down at the great feast of love, and there sing, enraptured sing, the song of Moses and the Lamb forever and ever.

GRANT, we beseech Thee, O our God, in mercy grant, that *concord* and *amity* reign in every heart, throughout our highly favored states—that *discord* and *vice*, of every species, be banished from among us forever—that *pure religion* flourish, and that *peace*, which passes all understanding, be the rich and happy gift to all men. For the infinite riches of thy mercies, hear us now, O Lord our God, and unto Thy great, adorable name be songs of thanksgiving, of glory, and honor and praise, through Jesus the Mediator, for ever and for ever. **AMEN.**