
Mr. West's
ANNIVERSARY SERMON,

PREACHED AT PLYMOUTH,

DECEMBER 22d, 1777

A N
ANNIVERSARY SERMON,

PREACHED AT
P L Y M O U T H,

D E C E M B E R 22d, 1777.

IN GRATEFUL MEMORY OF THE FIRST LANDING OF
OUR PIOUS

NEW-ENGLAND ANCESTERS

IN THAT PLACE, A. D. 1620.

By SAMUEL WEST, A. M.
Pastor of the CHURCH in DARTMOUTH,

The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him ; and he will
shew them his covenant. *The Psalmist David.*


Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret
unto his servants the prophets. *Prophet Amos.*

Thus saith the Lord, the holy one of Israel, and his Maker, ask
me things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the
work of my hands command ye me. *Isaiah 45, 11.*

Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.
Daniel 12, 4.

B O S T O N :
PRINTED, BY DRAPER and FOLSOM, AT THEIR
Printing-Office, AT THE CORNER OF Winter-Street,

= 1778 ; ?




*At a Meeting of the Town of PLYMOUTH,
legally assembled and held at the Court-
House in PLYMOUTH, March 16, 1778.*

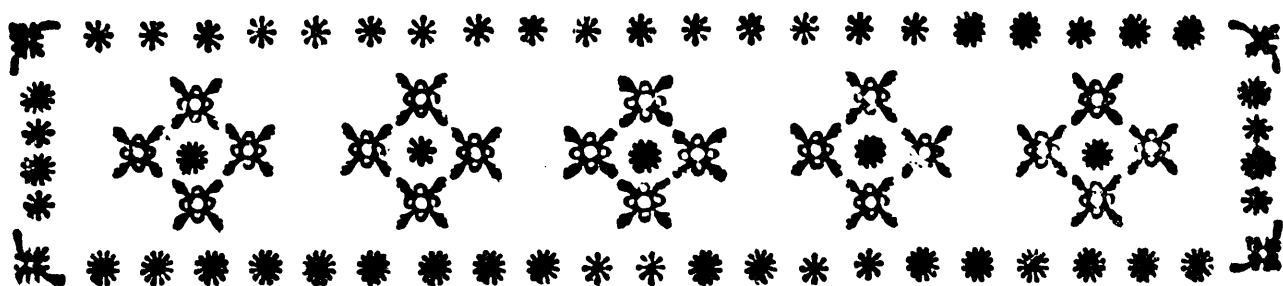
Voted,

THAT Major *Joshua Thomas, William
Watson* and *Isaac Lothrop, Esq's.*
be, and they hereby are appointed a
Committee, to wait on the *Rev. Samuel
West*, with the Thanks of this Town,
for his learned and ingenious Sermon,
delivered in this Town, on the last An-
niversary of the landing of our Fathers
here, and request a Copy thereof, that
it may be printed.

Attest,

Ephm. Spooner, Town-Clerk.





A N

ANNIVERSARY SERMON.

I S A I A H L X V I 5, 9.

Hear the word of the LORD, ye that tremble at his word : your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my names sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified ; but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed. A voice of noise from the city, a voice from the temple, a voice of the LORD that rendereth recompense to his enemies. Before she travailed she brought forth ; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child. Who hath heard such a thing ? Who hath seen such things ? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day, or shall a nation be born at once ? For as soon as Zion travailed she brought forth her children. Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth ? Saith the LORD ; shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb ? Saith thy God.

AS the end of our assembling together at time, is to commemorate the goodness of God towards our forefathers, in conducting them from their native land, into this American wilderness, and providing for them here a safe retreat from the rage and malice of prelatical bigotry ;---and as he has, by a numerous train of surprizing events, remarkably

shewn himself to be our God, as he was the God of our fathers ; I thought I could not better entertain this respectable assembly, than by chusing this passage of sacred scripture for the subject of our present meditation : For, I have been fully persuaded in my own mind for several years, that this text does contain in it, a prophecy of the dispensations of divine providence towards his church and people in New-England : And I hope to make it appear highly probable, that a great part of this text has already been remarkably fulfilled in our Land.

IN the words of our text, we find two things worthy of observation. The first is, the relation of a fact, viz. That the church and people of God were hated, and grievously persecuted by their brethren. The second is, a gracious promise, that God would appear for the deliverance of his church and people, and to the confusion of their adversaries.

The first thing worthy of our observation, is, the relation of a fact, viz. That the church and people of God were hated, and grievously persecuted by their brethren. That the persons who suffer this affliction

from their brethren, are the church and people of God, appears from the character given them in our text, of trembling at the divine word, ---*Hear the word of the LORD, ye that tremble at his word ;* Now those that tremble at the word, or command of God, are the peculiar favorites of heaven, *who walk in all the ordinances and commandments of the LORD blameless*, who are in heart sincere, and being humble and contrite, are afraid to disobey, or break the divine law. These are the true church of God, in opposition to all hypocritical, formal professors, who are strangers to experimental religion and the power of godliness ; see the second verse of the context,---*But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word ;*---this is the man whom God will accept ; whereas the hypocritical formalist displeases God, while he pretends to obey his ordinances ; as we may see in the third verse : *He that killeth an ox, is as if he slew a man ; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck ; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swines blood ; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol.* The reason of God's displeasure at such persons, is rendered in the following words ;

Yea they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their obominations: i. e. They had mixed their own inventions with the divine institutions ; they had made void the law of God, through their own traditions, and had taught for doctrines, the commandments of men ; and they delighted in many things, that were contrary to the divine will. But those who tremble at the word of God, dare not delight in anything that is an abomination to the LORD: they dare not add any thing to the word of God ; neither dare they diminish ought from it ; they are afraid to corrupt the Divine Word with their own inventions ; they dare not set up any human institutions in the room of the Divine Commands. To tremble at the word of God, and to fear God, are synonymous terms, and mean the same thing : see Philip. 2d chap. and 12th verse. *Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.* Now the fear of the Lord in scripture, signifies the whole of religion and true piety ; see Eccles. xii. 13. *Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter : Fear God, and keep his commandments ; for this is the whole duty of man.* The object of the divine fear in the law of God ; hence the Psalmist speaking of the Divine Law,

calls it the fear of the Lord, Psal. 19. 9. *The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever : i. e. the Divine Law, which is the object and only rule of true religious fear, is pure and free from all corrupt mixtures of human invention, and, like the author of it, shall abide forever.* If the law of God is the whole rule of our conduct, and the sole ground of all true religious fear ; then those who fear God, and tremble at his word, are such, who dare not set up the ordinances and commandments of men in the place of the Divine Institutions ; they are afraid to solicit the favor of men by any sinful compliances with their humours ; because that such a conduct is inconsistent with their being the servants of God : Therefore they are hated by the world ;---there always was, and there always will be, an enmity between the seed of the woman, and the seed of the serpent ; the true children of God have always been hated by the children of the wicked one ; hence our Saviour tells his disciples, Matt. 10. 22. *Ye shall be hated of all men for my names sake ;* and he declares, in John 17. 14. *that the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world ; i. e. because they disapprove of the maxims of the world,*

and bear testimony against the wickedness of it.---But what renders the case in our text the more aggravated, is, that the children of God are hated, not by strangers and foreigners, but by their own brethren ; *your brethren that hated you* ; by which we are to understand, that they were hated by their own nation, who professed the worship of the true and living God ; for the persecutors of the church of God in our text, are doubtless the same that are described in the 3d and 4th verses of the context, who, under pretence of worshipping the true God, chose their own ways, and delighted in their own abominations ; i. e. they mixed their own inventions with the Divine Institutions ; they did evil in the sight of the Lord, by adulterating and corrupting his word ; and they were angry with the true worshippers of God, because they rejected the unscriptural traditions, by which these hypocritical professors had adulterated his pure worship, and because they would not submit to their corrupt additions to the word of truth. This excited the hatred of these bigotted traditionists, who were determined to cast them out, as unworthy of their communion and fellowship, pretending

that God could not be acceptably worshipped, nor duly honored, unless their own additions to the word of God were readily complied with and obeyed. *Your brethren that hated you ; that cast you out for my names sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified ; i. e. the men that hated you, and cast you out, did it because you strictly adhered to the truth ; because you professed my name, and kept to my worship in the purity of it ; for they pretended, that God could not be glorified, unless their inventions were complied with, and their commands were obeyed.*

It is worthy of observation, that the word which we translate, *cast out*, is very emphatical in the original, and signifies to separate from, and to reject any person or thing as impure and unclean, and also to expel, remove far away, or to cast afar off ; so that the people of God, for maintaining Divine Worship, in its genuine purity, were viewed by their superstitious brethren as being so impure and unclean, that out of zeal for God, lest his name and worship should be polluted, and themselves defiled by conversing with such scandalous persons, they thought themselves obliged, not only to cast them out of

their communion and fellowship, but that they ought to use them with such rigor and cruelty as would in effect drive them afar off, and force them to seek a retreat from their rage and malice in some foreign land :--- and that this is the meaning of their being cast out by their brethren, is fairly implied in the 8th verse. ---*Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day, or shall a nation be born at once ; for as soon as Zion travailed she brought forth her children ; i. e. as soon as their extreme tribulation came on, the whole land where they dwelt became a distinct nation from their enemies ; but this could not have taken place had they, at that time, dwelt in the same land with their persecuting brethren ; the conclusion then is, that when it is said, they were cast out by their brethren, it means, that they were forced by the persecution of their enemies to flee into a foreign land, that thereby they might escape the malice of their foes.---A false blinded zeal prompts its votaries to commit the greatest outrages and cruelties against the maintainers of true religion under the notion of pleasing God : hence our Saviour tells his disciples, John 16. 2. *They shall put you out of the Syna-**

gogues, yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doth God service. So these hypocritical professors in our text, thought they were glorifying God, while they were hating, persecuting and expelling from their borders, the true worshippers of God.

NOR could they rest contented with only exercising such rigor, as to drive them out of their sight, and cause them to flee into a foreign land ; but their restless fury and ambition prompted them to pursue their brethren, with unrelenting cruelty, into the very place to the which they had retreated for shelter from their rage and malice. This appears to me to be fairly implied in the 7th and 8th verses—*Before she travailed she brought forth, &c.—As soon as Zion travailed she brought forth, &c.* Here you see is mention made of the travail of Zion, i. e. the church of God. Now this metaphor is used in scripture to denote and express a very severe tribulation, even such an one as fills the mind with great consternation and anguish ; see Jeremiah 30. 5, 6, 7. *Thus saith the Lord, we have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child : where-*

fore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness ? alas ! for that day is great, so that none is like it ; it is even the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it. This terrible calamity, here called a travail, appears to me to be something that takes place long after they were cast out by their brethren, and to be entirely distinct from it ; because this travail is represented as being the immediate occasion of their becoming a distinct nation from their brethren ; *shall a nation be born at once ? for as soon as Zion travailed she brought forth her children ;* and also, because before this travail came on, they were possessed of a political head, signified, as we shall shew hereafter, by the birth of the man-child ; which seems to be considered as the means of their being supported, and carried thro' this tribulation ; but before they were cast out by their brethren, they are not considered as having any civil powers distinct from them : Nor could a few weak refugees, that were obliged to flee from the persecution of their brethren into a foreign land, be able immediately to form themselves into an independent state, and become a distinct nation from their bre-

thren ; for without a miracle it must take up a great length of time to perform all this.---For these reasons I conclude, that Zion's travail is some very severe and terrible affliction, that was brought upon her by her enemies, many years after they had cast her out from among them. Now this severe tribulation brought upon the church and people of God by their persecutions, most evidently means, (as I take it) the calamity of war. First, because the scriptures frequently express the judgment of war by this metaphor, as seems fairly implied in the text just now cited from the prophet Jeremiah : So the prophet Micah speaking of the distress of the daughter of Zion, when many nations were gathered together against her, uses the same figure ; see Micah 4. 9. *Now why dost thou cry out aloud ? is there no king in thee ? is thy counsellor perished ? for pangs have taken thee as a woman in travail : Jeremiah also speaking of the destruction brought upon the Jewish state by the Chaldean army, expresses their calamity by this metaphor, Jerem. 4. 31. For I have heard a voice as of a woman in travail, and the anguish as of her that bringeth forth her first child, the voice of the Daughter of Zion ; that bewaileth herself, that*

*spreadeth her hands, saying, Wo is me now, for my soul is wearied because of murderers : And the same prophet speaking of the consternation that should seize the Moabites, and Edomites, when they saw themselves surrounded by their enemies, declares the hearts of their mighty men should be, in that day, like the heart of a woman in her pangs ; Jerem. 48. 41. see also Chap. 49. 22. Many other passages of scripture might easily be produced, where this figure is used to signify the calamity of war : So that from the known and usual sense of this metaphor, I conclude, that the travail of Zion in our text, implies in it that consternation of mind, which had seized her, because her enemies had engaged her in a calamitous war. Secondly, another reason, which convinces me, that Zion's travail means the calamity of war, is, that the 6th verse does plainly contain in it an alarm of war : *A voice of noise from the city, a voice from the temple, a voice of the Lord that rendereth recompence to his enemies ; i. e. an alarm of war to rouse the inhabitants to defend themselves against their enemies.* Thirdly, the man-child, or ruler, mentioned in the 7th verse, as being born for the protection of the people of God ; and*

the children that are mentioned in the 8th and 9th verses, as being born for the defence of Zion against her foes, plainly imply, that her persecutors had made war against her.---We see then, that the persecution and affliction which the people of God suffered from their brethren, was, their being cast out, in the first place, as unworthy of their fellowship, and driven by them afar off, even into a foreign land, where, after many years, the malice of their enemies pursues and involves them in all the horrors of a calamitous war ; just as in the Revelation of the Apostle John, we find, that when the Dragon had by his persecution driven the woman into the wilderness, he still continued to vent his rage and malice against her ; for we read, Rev. 12. 17. that *the Dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.*---Having considered what the persecution was, which the people of God suffered from their brethren ;

I come now to the

SECOND thing worthy of observation in our text, viz. A generous promise that God would appear for the protection and

deliverance of his people, and to the confusion of their enemies ;---*but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed.* God is always ready to appear for the protection and safety of his covenant people, while they put their trust in him ; and he will deliver them from their enemies : thus God's promise to David in Psalm 89. 23. *I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him.* The Lord promised the children of Israel, that if they would be obedient to his laws, they should overcome their enemies ; see Lev. 26. 3, 7, 8. *If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them---ye shall chase your enemies, and they shall fall before you by the sword ; and five of you shall chase a hundred, and an hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight ; and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword.*

SUCH a regard has God for his covenant people, that he ever esteems what is done against them, as being done against himself, see Luke 10. 16. *He that despiseth you, despiseth me ; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me ;*---Thus when Saul was persecuting the church of Christ, the Lord says to him Acts, 9. 4. *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me ?* For this reason

God always brings the most terrible and desolating judgments upon those that persecute his church and people ; hence he tells the Jews,---*He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye*, Zech. 2. 8. Even when the church and people of God have very grievously sinned and rebelled against him, so that in holy anger he has permitted the nations of the world to overthrow them, and bring them into bondage ; yet he has been pleased to bring the severest judgments upon those, who were the instruments of punishing his people for their sins : Thus we find that the Chaldeans, who were permitted for the wickedness of the Jews to carry them captive into Babylon, were for this very thing, threatned with no less punishment, than that of being given up as a prey to their enemies ; see Jerem. 50. 10, 11. *And Chaldea shall be a spoil ; all that spoil her shall be satisfied, saith the Lord ; because ye were glad, because ye rejoiced, O ye destroyers of mine heritage*. From what has been said, we learn, that it is part of God's covenant with his people, to deliver them from their oppressors, and severely to punish all that have injured them. Now the means whereby God appears for the help and deliverance of

his people, in our text, are, 1st. By rousing up and animating them to stand in the defence of their just rights against their enemies. 2^{dly}. By providing them with a political head, or ruler ; and 3^{dly}. By continuing to animate the people to resist their foes, untill their deliverance is completed.---In the *first place*, we find the Lord stirring up and animating the people, in the 6th verse, to stand forth in the defence of their invaded rights. *A voice of noise from the city ; i. e. a call to the people together themselves together, to stand in their own defence against their foes. A voice from the temple ; i. e. a call to the ministers of the altar, animating and encouraging the people, bravely to defend their just rights. A voice of the Lord that rendereth recompence to his enemies ; i. e. This voice of the people, is the voice of the Lord ; 'tis he that has moved and excited the people, that by them as instruments, he may render recompence to his enemies by severely punishing them for oppressing his people.*---We are, in the *Second place*, informed of their being provided with a political head for their protection, expressed in the 7th verse, by the birth of the man-child ; *before she travailed, she brought*

forth ; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man-child : i. e. before her enemies had brought upon her the calamity of war, which surprized her suddenly, like the pains of a travailing woman, her king, or political head, was established. That by the man-child is to be understood a king, or some person or persons endowed with supreme civil power. I have the authority of Jonathan Ben Uzziel, in his Targum upon the place, who paraphrases the words of the 7th verse thus,--Before her tribulation comes upon her, she shall be redeemed ; before trembling seizes her like the pangs of a travailing woman, her king shall be revealed. Thus you see, this antient Chaldec Paraphrast, who flourished in the reign of Herod the Great, or near about the time that Christ was born, understood by the man-child, a king, raised up to deliver the people of God from their tribulation ; and that he was to be manifested before their trembling for fear came upon them. We find also the Apostle John in the Revelation using the same metaphor to signify a king, or ruler ; see Rev. 12. 2, 5. Where he tells us that he saw a woman clothed with the sun, and having the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars ; and

she being with child, cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered--and she brought forth a man-child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron : and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne. Here we see, that by a man-child is meant a king, who was to rule all nations with an iron rod : and the best expositors by the man-child understand Constantine the Great, the first Christian Emperor, who defended the church against the rage and malice of the heathen world. From these authorities I conclude, that by the man-child in our text, is meant supreme civil power, whether lodged in the hands of one, or many ; for in antient times, by a king was frequently meant any kind of political head--hence John, in the Revelation, calls the seven heads of the beast, seven kings, by which he means the several forms of Roman Government : for, according to our best interpreters, not only kings, emperors and dictators, but also consuls, tribunes and decemviri are here called kings. So the learned Mr. Mede cites a passage from Homer, where he calls a senate of nobles by the name of Famous Kings : we likewise find Abimelech putting the question to the men of Succoth, Judg. 9. 2.

Whether (says he) *is better for you, either that all the sons of Jerubbaal, which are three score and ten persons, reign over you, or that one reign over you :* we see from this instance, that the being governed by one person or by many, is expressed by the same phrase of reigning over them.---From these examples it appears, that king, or kingdom, was sometimes used by the antients to signify any state or polity, whether monarchical, aristocratial, or popular. The people of God being thus possessed of a political head by the birth of a man-child, even before they were involved in the calamities of war, we find, that as soon as the war had taken place, God in a most wonderful and unheard of manner stirred up the people through the whole land to resist their foes, and to appear for the help of Zion in her distress ; and of a sudden they were formed into a distinct nation, and acted as a people independent of any foreign jurisdiction : *Who hath heard such a thing ? Who hath seen such things ? shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day, or shall a nation be born at once ? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.* Here we see, that the firm union of all the people thro' the whole land, and their being fully

determined to assist Zion in her distress, is represented as a very wonderful and unheard of thing ; even as strange as though the earth should bring forth a people in an instant, or as if a whole nation should start into existence in one day. Now according to the common course of things, we know, that it must naturally take up a great length of time for a people to be brought forth, or for a nation to come into existence ; may we not then very naturally conclude from the words of our text, that the malice of the enemy was directed principally, if not wholly against Zion ; and that multitudes of people immediately espoused her cause, against whom the malice of the foe had not been levelled ; and that their so readily espousing the cause of Zion, is the reason why they are considered as children born for her assistance. And does not the wonder consist in this ? viz. that the whole earth, i. e. a great and numerous people inhabiting the adjacent countries, should espouse the cause of Zion, who in numbers was much smaller than themselves, and by so doing, involve themselves in the calamitous war that had been commenced against her ; and consequently be obliged to act as a

distinct and seperate nation from the power they were opposing, and with which they were, till now, united into one people. This is a thing wonderful indeed ! and this, I apprehend, is the very thing spoken of in our text, as what had never been heard of, nor seen before : for a nation being born at once, as soon as Zion travailed, implies, that before this travail had taken place, neither the city of Zion, nor any of her friends, were considered as a distinct nation, from their persecuting brethren ; and their immediately becoming a distinct nation as soon as Zion's tribulation seized her, was a thing unexpected by their foes, and surprizing to all that heard it. Further, we may observe, that when it is said, that the man-child was born before Zion travailed, i. e. that a political head was established before the war against Zion commenced, it implies, that the people of God were alarmed with certain cruel impositions, that were laid upon them by their enemies, which made them judge it necessary to be provided with a political head, or leader, to conduct them through those calamities, which they were apprehensive were coming upon them : but though they had

such a foresight of the dangers that threatened them, as to think it prudent to establish a political head ; yet it appears from the text, that they had then no design of becoming a distinct nation from their persecuting brethren ; for had they designed a revolt from their brethren, when they first established their political head, their becoming a distinct nation would not have been spoken of as immediately taking place upon the travail of Zion, i. e. upon the commencement of the war ; for in this case, their becoming a distinct nation must have been placed at the birth of the man child.--It is further implied in the text, that although as soon as Zion travailed, she should bring forth her children to defend and protect her cause ; yet it would be a considerable time before her tribulation would be at an end, and her deliverance be fully completed ;--this I gather from these words, *Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth ? Saith the Lord : shall I cause to bring forth and shut the womb ? Saith thy God ; i. e.* As I have so wonderfully brought forth a people to maintain the cause of Zion against her enemies, can you think that I will stay my hand, and not continue to

raise up persons to defend her, till her deliverance is compleated : be not discouraged nor dismayed, either with the length, or with the severity of your tribulation ; for as I have began to raise up sons for the defence of Zion, so will I continue my mercy in raising up children for her protection, until she is entirely delivered from her enemies.---Here then is the *Third means*, by which God appears for the help and deliverance of his people, viz. his continuing to animate them to resist their foes, until their deliverance should be compleated.---For we have the faithful word of God, that Zion should not be forsaken in her tribulation, but that like a fruitful mother she shall be continually bringing forth sons for her defence, until she has obtained an entire victory over her foes. A most glorious support in such a time of distress.

I have now gone thro' with the explanation of the text ; but before I apply it to the present occasion, I beg leave to take notice of the glorious, peaceful and happy state of the church, which is to take upon her being entirely delivered from her persecuting brethren ; as also of the utter overthrow and destruction of her

enemies. This prediction is contained in the words immediately following our text, from the 10th, to the end of the 16th verse ---*Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her : rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her : that ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations : that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory. For thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream : then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dandled upon her knees. As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you, and you shall be comforted in Jerusalem. And when ye see this, your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb ; and the hand of the Lord shall be known towards his servants, and his indignation towards his enemies. For behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire, and by his swords, will the Lord plead with all flesh, and the slain of the Lord shall be many.* Here we see, that all the friends of Zion, all who loved Jerusalem, and mourned for her, i. e. who sought her prosperity, and were grieved for the affliction which she

suffered from her persecuting brethren, are called upon to rejoice with joy for her compleat deliverance from her enemies : because, that now *they might suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolation ; i. e.* they have the greatest reason to rejoice at the prosperity of Jerusalem, because that from her, as from a spiritual mother, they might receive the sincere milk of the word, the food of immortality, i. e. the clear knowledge of divine truths contained in the word of God, and become acquainted with the glorious promises of divine grace, and of eternal life, which are the precious privileges of that covenant of everlasting life, that contains in it the sure and never failing mercies of Jesus Christ, the son of David, and that they might be made partakers of the abundant glory that should be bestowed on her : these spiritual blessings will yield an everlasting consolation, and will abundantly satisfy the longing desires of every needy soul. Here is a gracious promise also of a solid and lasting peace ; *for thus saith the Lord, Behold I will extend peace to her like a river ; i. e.* as a river keeps continually flowing, without any intermission, and its streams never fail ; so shall your peace be firm, un-

interrupted and lasting. Here is likewise a promise, that God would extend the *glory of the Gentiles to her like a flowing stream*; i. e. that the nations of the world shall become Profelytes to the church, and be brought to the acknowledgement of the truth. Upon the whole, it appears very plain to me, that this passage of scripture contains in it a promise of what is commonly called the latter day glory, when the kingdom of Jesus Christ shall be established through the whole world, and the knowledge of God shall cover the earth as the waters do the sea : A glorious promise which has never yet been accomplished, but which it seems is to begin to take place immediately after Zion's compleat deliverance from her persecution and tribulation spoken of in our text : and that this glorious state of Zion is to be attended with the entire overthrow and destruction of her enemies ; for we are told, that *the hand of the Lord shall be known to all his servants* ; i. e. his power in saving his people from their enemies, and bestowing upon them such peculiar privileges, shall be so conspicuous, that it shall be generally owned and acknowledged ; and so shall his indignation towards his enemies : the terri-

ble manner in which God will execute his judgments upon his enemies, will be so remarkable, that it will strike the minds of men with such conviction, that they will be forced to acknowledge his holy hand, that he hath done all this ; for we are told, that *the Lord will come with fire, and with his charriots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebukes with flames of fire ; for by fire, and by his sword the Lord will plead with all flesh, that have opposed the cause of truth : the consequence of which will be, that the slain of the Lord shall be many.* This terrible destruction of the enemies of God is to take place a little before the establishing the new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, as appears from the 22d verse of the context. This plainly shews, that the great tribulation of Zion, of which our text speaks, does not respect the church under the Jewish, but under the christian dispensation ; and is to take place not long before the establishment of the glorious kingdom of Christ upon earth, commonly called the Millennium State.

I come now to apply the words of our text to the occasion on which we are assembled together at this time, and to shew

that this passage of Scripture has been remarkably fulfilled in the dispensations of Divine Providence towards our fathers, and towards us their posterity, in the present day. For in the *First place*, may we not say, with the utmost propriety, that our forefathers, who first came into this country, were men, who trembled at the word of God? Were they not persons of the most exemplary piety and zeal? Did they not pay a strict regard to the word of God? They were for adhering closely to the sacred Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, as the only rule of christian faith and practice. They durst not teach for doctrines the commandments of men; nor mix any human inventions with the pure worship of God: They were for standing fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free; and for rejecting all human impositions in matters of religion: They were not for being attached to any mere human systems; nor for calling any man father, or master: They reserved to themselves the right of private judgment in searching the Scriptures, and were willing to reform their principles and practices according to the light which from time to time they should

derive from the word of God, without founding their sentiments on the judgment of others, however great or learned. Mr. Prince in his Chronology has preserved to us a memorable testimony to this truth, from the writings of Governor Winflow, who tells us, that “ When
 “ Plymouth people parted from their re-
 “ nowned pastor, Mr. Robinson, with
 “ whom they had always lived in the
 “ most entire affection,”---“ He charged
 “ us (says he) before God and his blessed
 “ Angels, to follow him no further, than
 “ he followed Christ : and if God should
 “ reveal any thing to us by any other in-
 “ strument of his, to be as ready to re-
 “ ceive it, as ever we were to receive any
 “ truth by his ministry : For he was very
 “ confident the Lord had more truth and
 “ light yet to brake forth out of his holy
 “ word. He took occasion also misera-
 “ bly to bewail the state of the reformed
 “ churches, who were come to a period
 “ in religion, and would go no fur-
 “ ther than the instruments of their re-
 “ formation. As for example, the Lu-
 “ therans could not be drawn to go be-
 “ yond what Luther saw ; for whatever
 “ part of Gods word he had further re-

“ vealed to Calvin, they had rather die,
 “ than embrace it : and so, said he, you
 “ see the Calvinists, they stick where he
 “ left them : a misery much to be la-
 “ mented ; for though they were preci-
 “ ous shining lights, in their times ; yet
 “ God had not revealed his whole will
 “ to them : and were they now alive
 “ (says he) they would be as ready to em-
 “ brace further light, as that they had re-
 “ ceived. Here also he put us in mind of
 “ our Church covenant ; whereby we
 “ engaged with God and one another, to
 “ receive whatever light or truth should
 “ be made known to us from his written
 “ word. But whithal exhorted us to
 “ take heed what we receive for truth ;
 “ and well to examine, compare and
 “ weigh it with other Scriptures, before
 “ we receive it. For, said he, it is not
 “ possible the Christian world should
 “ come so lately out of such antichristian
 “ darkness, and that full perfection of
 “ knowledge should break forth at once,
 “ &c.---Words (as Mr. Prince observes)
 “ almost astonishing in that age of low
 “ and universal Bigotry, which then pre-
 “ vailed in the English nation ; wherein
 “ this truly great and learned man, seems

“ to be almost the only Divine, who was
 “ capable of rising into a noble freedom
 “ of thinking and practising in religious
 “ matters, and even of urging such an
 “ equal liberty on his own people. He
 “ labours to take them off from their at-
 “ tachment to *him*, that they might be
 “ more entirely free to search and follow
 “ the Scriptures.” Thus far Mr. Prince.
 And certainly, I think every one must
 own that this great and good man disco-
 vers a most noble and generous spirit of
 true christian freedom. We here see, that
 our fathers were engaged in the most glo-
 rious cause in the world, viz. the cause
 of true Christian liberty ; and as they
 were for maintaining their own freedom
 in matters of pure religion ; so they were
 for allowing the same liberty to others :
 neither were they for condemning men of
 different denominations from themselves,
 nor for seperating from any of the dis-
 ciples of Jesus Christ, nor rejecting from
 their communion any persons, that in a
 judgment of charity, they supposed the
 great head of the Church would own.
 For, says Doctor Mather, “ The New-
 “ England Churches make only the sub-
 “ stantials of religion, or that vital piety

“ wherein all good men are united, the
 “ terms of communion among them ; and
 “ they do with delight see Godly Congre-
 “ gationals and Presbyterians, Episcopa-
 “ lians and Antipedobaptists, and Luthe-
 “ rans, all members of the same Church-
 “ es, and sitting together without of-
 “ fence about their lesser difference, in
 “ the same holy mountain, at the same
 “ holy table.”---Thus have I shewn, that
 our fathers were tremblers at the word of
 God, and strictly adhered to the divine rule.

We may observe in the

Second place, That for being tremblers
 at the word of God, in the sense above ex-
 plained, they were hated by their brethren ;
 i. e. for maintaining these truly christian
 sentiments, and for striving earnestly to
 practise a thorough reformation from all
 antichristian corruption, they were hated
 by their brethren who could not bear their
 attempts to assert and maintain their
 christian freedom from every human im-
 position, respecting the worship and ser-
 vice of God. And their hatred rose to
 such an height, as to occasion them to
 harass and persecute our fathers with so
 much rigor and severity, that they were
 obliged to leave their native land, and to

seek for an assylum in the desarts of America : and all this severity was exercised towards them, because they would not submit to their unscriptural impositions ; even to things, which the imposers themselves acknowledged to be matters of mere indifference. One would have thought, that not only *Christianity*, but even *Humanity* itself, had they been possessed of any degree of it besides the outward form, would have engaged them to condescend to the scruples of those, who might appear to them as weak brethren, especially, seeing that the things which they scrupled, were in the judgment of the imposers, no articles of faith, nor commands of God ; but things of an indifferent nature : yet, strange as it must appear to an impartial mind, so the fact was, that because our fathers conscientiously scrupled to comply with those things which were stiled indifferent, they were treated as if they had been the offscouring of the earth, and the very dregs of human nature ; so that they not only hated these tremblers at the word of God, but we may observe,

Thirdly, That they cast them out as unclean, and unworthy the privileges of christians, and the communion of Saints.

For this reason only, they were fined, and imprisoned, and persecuted, unto death : from these persecutions they fled into this land ; chosing rather to expose themselves to the mercy of Indian savages, and all the intolerable hardships attending the settling and subduing such an uncultivated desert, than to be deprived of their religious freedom ; viz. the liberty of worshipping God according to the dictates of their own consciences. I observe again in the

Fourth place, That their adversaries when they cast them out, said, *Let the Lord be glorified* ;---they pretended that their own impositions were things decent and ornamental in the service of God, tending to promote piety and devotion---that they were enjoined by the authority of their superiors, and that to refuse a compliance with, and submission to their injunctions, was an act of obstinacy and contempt of the authority that God had set over them ; of consequence that God was dishonored by their conduct.---Hence they called them, *Fanaticks*, *Schismaticks*, and, in scorn, *Puritans* ; and they doubtless thought, that God would be glorified by their thus cruelly persecuting their brethren. But the Lord was with our fathers, his providence

protected and defended them to the end of their days, and in many instances very remarkably appeared for their help ; a manifest blessing attended their endeavours, and by the smiles of Heaven, they were enabled, through much tribulation, to lay a foundation for a very flourishing country, where both civil and religious liberty, and every other blessing, might have been enjoyed in the greatest perfection ; and we who inherit the possessions which our fathers so dearly acquired, would have been the happiest of all people in the world, had not our enemies envied our happiness, and beheld with a malevolent eye our prosperous situation : But as their ancestors hated our fathers, and by their cruelties drove them into this land ; so they, imitating the deeds of their fathers, have hated us ; and their vengeance has pursued us across the Atlantic :---For by many unconstitutional acts they have been seeking to rob us of our just rights and privileges : and although they have not openly struck at our religious liberties ; yet from the severe reflections frequently cast upon us as a religious society, there is the utmost reason to conclude, that they have a design to destroy our fa-

ered; as well as civil rights. But when they saw that we would not submit to their unconstitutional laws, but were determined to stand fast in that liberty wherewith heaven had made us free, they took up the sword against us, and have involved us in all the horrors of a calamitous war : so that we may observe in the

Fifth place, That the travail of Zion mentioned in our text has come upon us, and been remarkably fulfilled in our land ; for the sudden and unexpected attack made upon us at the time of Lexington battle, spread consternation through the whole Land : fear and trembling seized us, and we had our hands upon our loins like a woman in travail, and all faces were turned into paleness : But as soon as our Zion travailed she brought forth her children for her protection and defence ; the people immediately gathered themselves together to withstand our foes, and the Lord appeared for our help and to our joy, and our enemies were ashamed, obliged to flee before a number greatly inferior to their own.

So that we may observe in the *Sixth place,* That the earth was made to bring forth in one day, and a nation was

born at once : for we were then immediately severed from Great-Britain, and obliged to consider ourselves as a distinct people from them. And what makes it the more wonderful is, that when the malice of Great-Britain, was levelled almost wholly against the Massachusetts State, the other governments should so readily espouse our cause, and make it their own : this was a thing rather to be wished, than rationally hoped for by us ; and it was unexpected by our enemies ; the union of the Colonies appearing so chimerical to Lord North, that he called it a rope of sand, by way of contempt. Our enemies had no idea, that when they had drawn the sword against us, the whole Continent would immediately rouse up, and come to our assistance ; but so Divine Providence ordered it, that as soon as it was known, that our inveterate foes had commenced hostilities against us, the whole Continent espoused our cause, and engaged in our defence. May we not say, *Who hath heard such a thing ? Who hath seen such a thing ? Shall the Continent be made to bring forth in one day ? or shall a nation be born at once ?* for as soon as we were involved in a war, the several States immediately united in our

defence, and we became a distinct nation from our enemies. This we may observe

Seventhly, was a voice of noise from the City, stirring up the people to engage in the cause of our Zion ; it was a voice from the temple, from the ministers of the word, who animated and encouraged their brethren to quit themselves like men, and to defend their just and injured rights ; and it is to be considered as the voice of the Lord, who has stirred up the people to render a recompence to his, and our enemies.

We may observe in the

Eighth place, That God has, in many instances, appeared to our joy, and our enemies have been ashamed. Even the apparent advantages that at any time they have gained over us, have in the end been turned against them ; so that they have been, as one prettily expresses it, blessings in disguise : To mention one fact which is yet fresh in our minds---the evacuating of Ticonderoga and Mount Independence was an apparent advantage to our enemies, and looked like a very severe blow upon us ; but Divine Providence over-ruled it for our good, and made it the occasion of the overthrow of our enemies ; for the vain-

glorious, haughty Burgoyne, who had proudly boasted that he could march through the country with five thousand men, being elated with his success, boldly pushed so far into the country, that he was surrounded with our troops on every side, and was obliged to surrender himself and his whole army into our hands. Thus hath the Lord appeared in this instance, as well as in several others, remarkably to our joy, and our enemies have been ashamed.

It is worthy to be remarked in the

Ninth place, That before the travail of our Zion came on, she was delivered of a *man-child* :---For as soon as the act for blocking up the harbour of Boston became generally known, the several Colonies, chose Delegates to sit in a General Congress, in order to take the lead in those difficult times, and to direct the people, by advising them to such measures as might tend to the peace and safety of the public : so that long before the travail that took place at Lexington battle, we were possessed of a political head, or ruler ; though we had no design, at that time, of setting up for independency ; it being then our desire to have the unconstitutional acts repealed, and to continue under

the protection of Great-Britain. And here I cannot but remark, how Divine Providence, unbeknown to us, had laid a foundation for our becoming a nation at once : for when by the war, in which our enemies had involved us, we were obliged to act as an independent people ; we found ourselves possessed of a political head in the Continental Congress ; which being the grand center of union for all the States, rendered us capable of proceeding and acting as a regular political body, and without which we should have been in danger of being thrown into the utmost disorder and confusion. My brethren, let us now stop a moment, -and bless God for his goodness to us in granting us a political head before the commencement of the war, without which we can hardly conceive how the union of the States could have been effected, without which union we should have been in the utmost danger of being soon swallowed up by our foes. We may further observe the goodness of God in endowing the members of Congress with such wisdom and prudence, as to enable them to give such general satisfaction to the whole continent ;--It has often been matter of sur-

prize to me, to see how readily the people have acquiesced in the resolves of that illustrious body, even when they seemed to be unhinged from all government, and there was no authority to oblige or enforce any obedience to them. Must we not here acknowledge the hand of God, inspiring the members of Congress with a spirit of wisdom and prudence, and the people with a disposition to comply with, and submit to their resolves? Ought we not to look upon this as a remarkable token, that God intends to save and deliver us from our enemies? Let it be our constant prayer to God, that he would still continue to dispose the hearts of the people to honor, respect, and cheerfully to submit to all the just and reasonable resolves of that grand convention of the United States, and that he would continue to grant to the several members of it, that wisdom and fortitude, that is necessary to enable them to discharge the arduous and important trust reposed in them.

Tenthly, and lastly, we observe, that God does still continue to raise up children for the defence and support of our Zion, according to the encouragement given in the text, that after he had once

caused Zion to bring forth children, he would not shut the womb ; i. e. he would not cause her to stop from bearing any more children, but that she should continue to be a fruitful mother, and bring forth children for her protection and defence, until her deliverance is completed.---From what has been said, we may see how surprizingly the several parts of our text have been accomplished, and even literally fulfilled, in the dispensations of Divine Providence, both towards our fathers, and towards us their posterity in the present day. And can any one suppose, that such a wonderful agreement, in so many particulars, between the prediction and the events, could take place by meer chance, without design ? He that can be so sceptical about such a number of plain facts agreeing so exactly with the prediction, as to imagine this agreement happened meerly by chance, appears to me to have giving up that moral evidence which would be thought sufficient to establish any proposition in philosophy, or any historical matters of fact ; and so must be left to the just reward of his own incredulity. For that this prophecy cannot belong to the

Jewish Church, or to the ancient state of the *Christian Church*, plainly appears, from the impossibility of accommodating the text, in all its parts, to any facts that have taken place in former days : The case of the seven united Provinces or States of Holland, perhaps, in some respects, may, in the opinion of those who have not duly considered the matter, look like an accomplishment of this prophecy ; but let it be remembered, that their persecutors were not their brethren, either by nation or religion ; these Dutch Protestants being persecuted by Spanish Roman Catholics ; but our fathers were persecuted by their Protestant brethren, who were of the same nation and religion with themselves, and even members of the same Church. And what further shews that this prophecy could not be fulfilled by the States of Holland, or by any other fact that has taken place in former days, is, that, as we have already shewn, this prophecy respects events, that are to take place just before the revival of pure religion, and are to be preparatory to the setting up of the glorious kingdom of Jesus Christ upon earth : Hence I conclude, that either the prophecy respects the present

state of America, or else it is to be fulfilled in some future period : But so many particulars of this prophecy have already been so exactly accomplished in America, that I am fully persuaded, in my own mind, that the whole of it, which is contained in our text, does in its fullest and utmost extent respect God's dealings with our fathers, and with us their posterity. However, grant that we should be mistaken, and that this prophecy is to receive a more eminent accomplishment in some future day ; yet the case will be so similar to ours, that we may, with a great deal of propriety apply the gracious promises and encouragements in the text to ourselves, viz. that God will still appear to our joy, and that our enemies shall finally be ashamed,---that as he has began to raise up sons for the defence and support of our Zion, so he will still continue to raise them up, until we obtain a complete deliverance from our enemies : For as there is a surprising uniformity in all the works of God ; so it seems to be the constant method of Divine Providence, that in similar cases, similar events shall take place. Whether then this prophecy does more immediately respect us, or whe-

ther it is to have its fullest accomplishment in some future similar event, the encouragement will be much the same. From our text and context, we have then the utmost reason to put our hope and trust in God, that he will yet shew us his salvation, and grant a final victory over our foes ; and that upon our obtaining a compleat deliverance from our enemies, and establishing our independence, pure religion will revive and flourish among us in a much greater degree of perfection than ever it has done before : That this Country will become the seat of civil and religious liberty ; the place from which christian light and knowledge shall be dispersed to the rest of the world ; so that our Zion shall become the delight and the praise of the whole earth, and foreign nations shall suck of the breasts of her consolations, and be satisfied with the abundant light and knowledge of Gospel truth, which they shall derive from her ; that America shall be the place to which the persecuted in other nations shall flee from the tyranny of their oppressors, where they shall find a safe retreat, and shall be cherished by her like children by a tender mother : and that peace an quiet-

ness shall be established upon a firm and lasting basis, so that the enemy shall have no more power to oppress : and that God will take vengeance on our enemies, and will subject them to the most terrible and desolating judgments, which will end in their entire overthrow and destruction. All these consequences seem fairly to be deduced from our text and context : and indeed the dealings of divine providence towards us have been of so singular a nature, that many judicious persons have concluded that some grand events would soon take place, and a new and remarkable æra commence from this period ; that America would become the seat of Liberty, civil and religious ; and a place to which the persecuted should repair for safety from the malice of their persecutors. How surprizingly do these conjectures of wise men agree with the sacred prophecy under consideration ! Being then, my hearers, animated with the glorious encouragement and promises set before us, let us with holy confidence look to him who has been both our God and our fathers God, and who will never leave nor forsake his covenant people while they put their trust in him : *Our Fathers trusted in*

him, and were delivered ; and will he ~~not~~ deliver us, if we like them firmly rely upon him in the faithful discharge of our duty ? With what chearfulness then may we endure our present calamities, when we have the word of a faithful God ; *that he will appear to our joy, and that our enemies shall be ashamed* ; and that as he has caused our Zion to bring forth children for her defence, so he will continue to raise up sons for her protection, until her deliverance is compleated. Let us then be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, let us quit ourselves like men engaged in the most noble and glorious cause ; let us behave like the true sons of freedom and the faithful sons of Zion ; let us imitate the patience and fortitude of our pious fore-fathers, which they exhibited under all their hardships and terrible sufferings that they endured ; and if at any time we feel depressed or discouraged with the prospect before us, let us for a moment consider their situation, and we shall find enough to stop our mouths, if not to make us ashamed ;--let us behold them landing in an uncultivated wilderness, inhabited by savages, destitute of many of the comforts and even the ne-

cessaries of life, exposed to the inclemencies of the season, one half of them perishing in a few months through the hardships which they endured ; so far distant from any English settlement that they could receive no assistance in case of a sudden invasion from the Indians. A most deplorable situation indeed ;--but through their patience and fortitude they were supported under all these sufferings ; for they committed their cause to God, and were not forsaken. Are there any among us that are ready to murmur because they are deprived of a few luxuries, or because they cannot have all the elegancies which they formerly enjoyed ? Let them consider, that when our fathers for want of the conveniences of life were obliged to live upon ground-nuts and shell-fish, they did not murmur nor repine at their situation, but gratefully acknowledged the goodness of God towards them :----this I have somewhere found an instance recorded, that one of them having dined upon clams, very devoutly gave thanks to God, that he had fed him of the abundance of the seas, and with treasures hid in the sand. What a truly christian temper, is here discovered ? They had learn-

ed the Apostle Paul's lesson, *Whatever state they were in, therewith to be content.* And as they were resigned to the Divine Will, so he appeared for their safety and protection, and the heathen were cast out before them. And as Divine Providence appeared for the protection of our fathers in the first settling of this land, so has he continued to protect both them and us their posterity unto the present day. Thus when that bigotted Papist, James the second, had sent over Sir Edmond Andros, to establish tyranny and popery in this Land, the Lord appeared for the protection, and to the joy of our fathers, and their enemies were ashamed ; for the glorious revolution under King William, put a final period to their schemes for enslaving this land. In like manner when a formidable French fleet had arrived at Halifax, in the year 1746, with a design to conquer and subdue the country, the Lord appeared to our joy, and our enemies were ashamed ; for they were destroyed by the hand of Divine Providence in so wonderful a manner, that none of them were suffered to do us any harm. And in our present tribulations, we may observe a manifest design in providence to

prevent our being subjected by our enemies to the iron rod of slavery. For how often have they been prevented from taking the advantage of our weakness? And Divine Providence has in great kindness so ordered it, that our enemies have increased their army no faster than we have increased in strength to resist them. Can we, my brethren, when we consider the glorious example of our fore-fathers, and how they were protected; when we consider the manifest tokens of the Divine favor towards us in the present day, and the gracious encouragement afforded in our text, once entertain a thought of being discouraged, even though our tribulation should become much greater and severer than it ever yet has been? Surely to be dismayed when we have such glorious encouragements, must discover a great degree of ingratitude, and a criminal want of faith in the promises of God. Ought we not rather in a firm belief of the word of God, with a pleasing and grateful sense of the Divine goodness, reflect upon that happy and glorious state which is to take place when our deliverance is compleated? Most certainly we may, in the midst of our

tribulations anticipate the joy of that happy period, when *our peace shall be extended to us like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream* ; when all the friends of our Jerusalem that mourned for her, shall come to rejoice with her, and to suck of the breasts of her consolations, and to be delighted with the abundance of her glory.

But there is one thing that damps the joy of these delightful contemplations, and is a very sensible alloy to the pleasure that would otherwise arise from such a noble and glorious prospect as we have before us---and that is, my brethren the awful spirit of rapacity and oppression, of profaness and irreligion, that seems so generally diffused through our land ; this is a very alarming consideration indeed, which loudly calls for deep humiliation and a speedy reformation, if we expect to escape the judgment of heaven. Let us remember that the sins of God's covenant people are more aggravated in his sight than the sins of others, and therefore they are exposed to his severest judgments : hence the Lord says to Israel, Amos 3. 2. *You only have I known of all the families of the earth ; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.* And what still increases the

guilt, is, that this spirit of Avarice, oppression and Monopolizing, has taken place in a time of general calamity, when there is a loud call upon every one to exert himself for the publick good, and to relieve those that are sufferers by the times. Oppression at such a time must discover the utmost degree of baseness and depravity. Besides, to harden ourselves in impiety and wickedness, when the judgments of God are abroad in our land, what is it but to fill up the measure of our iniquities, that wrath may come upon us to the uttermost. Let the avaritious and the profane hear these things and tremble!-- Can you dwell with devouring fire? can you inhabit with everlasting burnings? For remember that God will be a consuming fire to all hardened and impenitent sinners.

But I trust that God has reserved to himself a remnant among us, who have kept their garments from being defiled with the sins of the times, and who lament and bewail all the abominations that are done in the Land. These shall be preserved, from the terrible judgments, which shall befall not only our enemies, but also all those, who have been guilty of

the atrocious crimes of the present day, and do not repent of their deeds.

In the next place, while we are considering the pious example of our Fathers, let us remember that they witnessed a good confession ; for they trembled at the word of God ; they made it the only standard of their christian faith and practice. Let us herein imitate them, and never mix any of our own invention with the word of God. Let us ever pay so much reverence to the Divine Oracles, as never in any one instance to depart from the plain and obvious sense of scripture for the sake of indulging any favorite hypothesis ; let us never dare to reject any truths to be believed, or any ordinances that Christ has commanded us to observe. Let us always be ready to receive any new light or truth, which shall at any time be discovered from the word of God. This we have already seen was the sentiments of our Fathers. Let us never be desirous of being denominated from any man as our father and founder, nor ever set up any human systems, or particular expositions of scripture as the standard of truth ; but let us ever be ready to correct any error in doctrine or practice, whenever any proper matter

of conviction is laid before us, or exhibited to us from the word of God,

THERE is no doubt with me, but that we are all of us mistaken about many things contained in the sacred Scriptures ; for I am fully persuaded, that there is no one denomination of christians among us, but what does deviate in many things from the sacred rule. The true Apostolick christianity contained in the New-Testament, does no where shine forth in its meridian lustre and brightness : and there is no way that I know of to revive primitive christianity and to purge it from all corrupt mixtures but only by a close and impartial examination of the Scriptures, and our being ready to reform any error as soon as we discover it. Further, if we have no cause to serve but the cause of Jesus Christ, we shall never be governed by a party spirit ; but shall be ready, as our fathers were, to receive all persons to our communion, that agree with us in the solid points of piety, however they may differ from us in matters of small moment. To require any terms of communion that Jesus Christ has not established ; to sepearate from any society of christians holding to the grand fundamentals of

religion, when they do not impose upon us sinful terms of communion ; or to exclude from our communion any person whom we believe that the great head of the Church will own and receive, is to make ourselves guilty of an antichristian spirit. When we renounce from our communion and fellowship, persons, that in a judgment of charity we believe to be real christians, only because they are of a different persuasion from us, or belong to another denomination of christians, it is plain that we are not seeking, but opposing the interest of Christ's kingdom. Hence the Apostle Jude tells us, that *those who seperate themselves are sensual, having not the spirit.* And the Apostle Paul, has taught us, that *they who cause divisions, serve not our Lord Jesus Christ but their own bellies ; and by good words and fair speeches they deceive the hearts of the simple ;* under pretence of greater purity in religion they draw off from others, though their whole design is to serve their own corrupt purposes : therefore he orders us to avoid them ; Rom. 16. 17, 18. Love and unity are essential marks of a true christian. Were we possessed of true christian candor, by a fair and impartial examination,

on we should find, that many differences in explaining particular articles of faith, are only meer verbal differences, and entirely vanish when we come to define our terms. I have always conversed freely with persons of very different sentiments from each other ; and to my great surprise have often found amongst persons of supposed opposite principles, that a very great part of their difference in sentiment arose from their affixing different ideas to the same words and phrases ; so that when they have been at the pains to explain their own terms, the difference has vanished, and there has remained nothing of any moment to contend about.

To conclude, may God the father of mercies enable us to imitate the virtuous examples of our pious forefathers--- May we strive to cultivate the benevolent spirit of the gospel--May our enemies be confounded-- may a happy and glorious peace be established,--may our just rights be secured upon a firm and unshaken foundation :--But above all, may the glorious kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ be established throughout the world, and all nations be brought to the unity of the faith ; AMEN.

A P P E N D I X.

THERE is one observation which was omitted in the preceeding discourse, that I beg leave to insert in this place ; viz. that the Persecutors in our text were not idolators, or image worshippers. This I collect from the three first verses of the context, in which they are shewn that true religion consists in the temper of the mind, and not in external pomp. *Thus saith the Lord, the heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool : where is the house that ye build unto me ? and where is the place of my rest ? For all those things hath my hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord : but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word.* Here the Lord shews the vanity of confining the residence of the Most High to temples made with hands ; or of the supposition that he could be circumscribed or bounded by any thing that he had made ; that the temples that he would delight to dwell in, were the hearts of the humble and contrite ones. And to shew his abhorrence of those men who pretended to great zeal in attending the ordinances of God, while their hearts were destitute of real piety, the Lord instances in these

things which were held in the greatest abhorrence among the Jews, ver. 3. *He that killeth an ox, is as if he slew a man : he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dogs neck : he that offereth an oblation, as if he offereth swine's blood : he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol : yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations.* Now as the Lord manifestly designs to convince them of his displeasure at them, for their offering sacrifices to him with impure hearts, it is necessary that the examples by which he manifests his displeasure, should be such things, as they themselves abhorred : but *blessing an idol* being one of the things mentioned by way of illustration, it follows that idolatry was one of the things which those persecutors themselves abhorred. But if any one should ask, by what authority I apply this passage of Scripture to the times of Christianity, when there are so many expressions in it that evidently relate to the Jewish worship ? I answer, That the writers of the sacred pages often describe the christian church and worship in terms and expressions taken from the Jewish church and Mosaic dispensation : Thus the nine last chapters of Ezekiel are

generally understood to be a prophecy of the church under the christian and gospel dispensation, though every phrase is taken from the Mosaic and Levitical dispensation. Thus Israel, the seed of David, the seed of Abraham, Zion and Jerusalem, are applied to the church of God under the gospel dispensation : accordingly we find a prophecy in Hosea 1. 10. *that the number of the children of Israel should be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered ; and that in the place where it was said of them, ye are not my people, there it should be said of them, ye are the sons of the living God.* This passage is applied by the the apostle, Rom. 9. 24,---26. to the calling of the Gentiles to the embracing of Christianity. We also find a passage in the Prophet Jeremiah, that in the reign of David's righteous branch, i. e. under the government of Jesus Christ, the son of David ; we find a promise, I say, that the seed of David, and the Levites, God's ministers, should become innumerable, like the sand of the sea, and the stars of heaven ; see Jerem. 33. 15---26. Now here by the seed of David, must evidently be understood the disciples of Jesus Christ the son of David, and by Levites, Gospel

ministers ; inasmuch as the Jews having long since lost their genealogies, it seems impossible, without a miracle, to discover who are the natural offspring of David, from those that are not. In the same sense must be understood Zech. 12. 7 -- 12 where the house of David, and inhabitants of Jerusalem mean true christians : the family of the house of Nathan, I apprehend, mean Deacons ; for *Nathan*, as I take it, is only the singular of *Nethinim*. Now the *Nethinims* were persons, whom David and the Princes of Israel appointed to be over the treasures of all those things, which had been dedicated either by David or any other persons for the maintenance of the house and worship of God ; compare Ezra 8. 20, with 1 Chron. 26. 20---28. *Nethinims*, therefore, answer to the order of Deacons, under the gospel dispensation ; and the family of the house of Levi answer to gospel ministers, or pastors of churches : by the family of *Shimei* I understand those that have been hearers of the word preached, but who have not made an open profession of christianity ; my reasons are *First*, that *Shimei* properly signifies a *bearer* ; and that an appellative, and not a proper name, is here intended,

from the article *he* ; s being affixed to it ; now this article is not commonly placed before *proper* names, but only before appellatives ; so that it ought to have been translated, not the family of *Shimei*, but, the family of the *bearer*. Secondly, we may observe that the word *house* is added to the other families, but omitted here ; thus it is expressed, the family of the house of David, the family of the house of Nathan, the family of the house of Levi ; but with regard to *Shimei*, it is only simply the family of *Shimei*, which omission, as I take it, implies that the persons here signified by the family of *Shimei*, do not belong to the church of Christ ; for that by *house* is sometimes meant the church, see Heb. 3. 6. *but Christ as a son over his own house, whose house are we if we hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end ;* and 1 Tim. 3. 15. *the house of God, which is the church of the living God.* These are the reasons that induce me to believe, that by the family of *Shimei*, is meant the persons that attend the preached word, but are not members of any visible church. We also find in the Epistle to the Heb. Chap. 12. 22, 23, that christians are said to have *come unto Mount*

Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem; i.e. that they were joined to the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven; by which we are to understand, that they were members of the church of Christ, and heirs of eternal life; and the Apostle tells us, Gal. 3. 29. that all that are Christ's, i.e. that are true christians, are Abraham's seed and heirs according to promise.

THESE remarks may serve to shew the propriety of applying the prophecy contained in our text and context to the state of the church under the gospel dispensation: and by these helps we are naturally led to understand the 17th verse of the context, of those who profess christianity, and yet live after the manner of the Gentiles. *They that sanctify themselves and purify themselves in the gardens behind one tree in the midst, eating swines flesh, and the abomination and the mouse, shall be consumed together saith the Lord.* Is here not a prophecy of the destruction of the church of Rome? For do not the members of that church, although they profess christianity, defile themselves with the abominations of the Gentiles? And are they not called Gen-

tiles in the 11th Chap. of Rev. verse 2. We are also told that those who escaped the destruction that should befall the enemies of truth, should spread the knowledge of God among the Gentiles, and that they should bring their Gentile converts to the holy mountain Jerusalem, and there offer them for an offering unto the Lord, and that the Lord would take of these Gentile converts for Priests and Levites, see context, ver. 18---21. Here we see, that those who were not descendants from Israel by natural generation, but who were Gentile converts, are called Priests and Levites ; which is a very strong proof that this prophecy belongs not to the Jewish, but to the christian church. And as Gospel Ministers are here described under the character of Jewish Priests and Levites, so the christian solemnities for public worship are expressed agreeable to the dispensation of Moses, verse 23. *And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord.* New moons and sabbaths, we all know, were Jewish solemnities ; yet they are here used to describe the seasons for public worship

under the Gospel dispensation. What is to me a further and infallible proof, that this prophecy respects the Christian and not the Jewish dispensation is, that it is to receive its full accomplishment at the time when the new heavens and the new earth are established, as we may see from the 22. ver. *For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and name remain.* But the promise of the new heavens and new earth remains yet to be fulfilled, 2 Peter, 3. 13. *Nevertheless we according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.* This glorious and happy state of the church, according to the Apostle John in the Revelation, is to take place after the first resurrection, Rev. 21. 1. *And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away ; and there was no more sea.* In this new heaven and new earth he saw the holy city new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven ; which city he largely describes in the 21st and 22d chapters. In order to understand this description, we are to remember, that almost every thing in the Revelation relat-

ing to the christian church is expressed by figures taken from the dispensation of Moses ; thus the four living creatures, and the 24 elders, are supposed by learned men to be taken from the encampment of the children of Israel in the wilderness under four standards, and from the division of the Priests into 24 courses, which was made by David. In like manner we find that the true Apostolic Christians who receive the seal of the Divine protection, by which they are preserved from the judgments that shall befall the corruptors of the faith, are said to be an hundred and forty four thousand, of all the tribes of the children of Israel, i. e. 12,000 out of every tribe, each of which tribes is here particularly named, one by one, Rev. 7 Chap.

Now as there has been no such remarkable conversion of the natural descendants of Israel to the christian faith ; and as for many ages the ten tribes have been lost, or rather utterly unknown to the rest of the world, we are obliged to have recourse to the mystical sense, and to understand by the twelve tribes of Israel, christians, who are founded upon the covenant promises made to the twelve Pa-

patriarchs, or sons of Jacob. The twelve thousand of any particular tribe, are the thousands that embrace the doctrine of the twelve Apostles, being heirs of the promises made to the twelve Patriarchs; see Acts 26. 6, 7, 8. When therefore we are told that the city New Jerusalem, i. e. the pure church of Christ, had twelve gates, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel, we are naturally led to understand, that we cannot enter into the church of Christ, until we become heirs of the spiritual blessings promised to the twelve tribes of Israel. The twelve Angels at the gates are the Ministers of Christ, whose business it is to admit proper subjects to church fellowship, and to open the gates of the church for the admission of members. These twelve gates are classed in four divisions, each division containing three gates, and facing one of the four cardinal points of the compass: this evidently alludes to the encampment of the children of Israel in the wilderness under four standards, having three tribes to a standard, and each standard fronting one of the four cardinal points of the compass: see the second chapter of

Numbers. This shews that all who belong to the New Jerusalem are to be considered as belonging to some one of the twelve tribes of Israel ; agreeable to this, is that passage in Ezek. 47. 22, 23. *And it shall come to pass that ye shall divide it by lot, for an inheritance unto you, and to the strangers that sojourn among you, which shall beget children among you ; and they shall be unto you as born in the country among the children of Israel : they shall have inheritance with you, among the tribes of Israel ; and it shall come to pass, that in what tribe the stranger sojourneth, there shall ye give him his inheritance, saith the Lord God.* By being grafted into the same stock with the children of Israel, they are considered as being of the same nation with them, and are treated in every respect, as though they were the natural offspring of Jacob. See Rom. 11. 16---27. The wall of the city we are told had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb ; to denote that pure christianity is to be taken from the Apostolic writings, and not from the traditions of fallible men. The wall of the city is also said to be an hundred and forty four cubits, which is 12 multiplied

by 12, to denote that the security and protection of christians consist in their closely adhering to the covenant of grace made with the antient Patriarchs, and to the doctrine of the twelve Apostles. The foundations of the wall of the city are said to be garnished with all manner of precious stones, each one of the twelve foundations being garnished with one particular stone ; a metaphor taken from the law of Moses, where the Jewish High Priest was ordered to wear before the Lord the breast-plate of Judgment, in which were placed twelve precious stones, which had engraven on them the names of the twelve tribes of Israel ; and they were set in four rows, three stones in a row, agreeable to the encampment of the children of Israel in the wilderness under four standards, having three tribes to a standard. Now these twelve foundations being garnished with twelve precious stones, seems to imply that the doctrine of the twelve Apostles shines with the lustre of the precious promises made to the antient fathers of the twelve tribes of Israel. We also find that the sight of the city New Jerusalem is said to be like a *Jasper*, which was the stone that represented the tribe of Benjamin in

the High Priest's breast-plate, a proper figure for the city Jerusalem, which belonged to the tribe of Benjamin.

IN like manner God the father sitting upon his throne of grace and mercy, is said to be like a *Jasper* and a *Sardine Stone* ; a *Jasper* to signify Jerusalem, and a *Sardine stone* to signify Judah : Now Judah and Jerusalem are proper types of the true church of Christ. Here then is a representation of the Deity, considered as the God and father of his church and covenant people. The rainbow round about the throne is a proper token of the covenant. It's being in sight like an emerald, the stone of Ruben, in whose standard was the figure of the face of a man, denotes that this covenant was established by the man Christ Jesus, for the salvation of the Human race. The tree of life, i. e. the covenant of Grace, is said to bear twelve manner of fruits, i. e. fruits for every tribe of Israel ; which implies that the blessings of the covenant of grace belong to all the children of God. This tree yields it's fruit every month ; by which we are to understand, that these blessings are dispensed to the faithful on every sea-

son of public worship. Here is a plain allusion to the Jewish new moons, which were sacred solemnities for public worship, see 2. Kings 4, 23. And Isaiah, 66, 23.

2d. Another reason that induces me to think that this passage of scripture, viz. the 66th chapter of Isaiah, is applicable to the times of christianity, is, that the enemies and corruptors of the truth under the gospel dispensation, are spoken of by the same names with the enemies of the Jewish church, and such who were guilty of gross corruptions under the old Testament dispensation : Thus in the Revelation, *Babylon* is the name of the great enemy and persecutor of the true church of Christ. In like manner we are told, Rev. 11. 8. That the Antichristian church is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt. Does not this imply, that the antient prophets prophesied of this Antichristian church, under the figure of Sodom and Egypt ? And may we not find a prophecy concerning this mystic Sodom ? *Ezekiel*, 16, 46--61. *That her captivity shall be restored, and that Sodom and her daughters shall return to their former estate.* But can this be understood of Sodom in a literal sense ? In the

same prophesy Samaria is called the elder,
 and Sodom the younger sister of Jerusalem :
 But how can this be true in the literal
 sense, when Sodom was destroyed from
 Heaven many years before that Samaria
 was built ? Are we not then naturally led
 to the mystic sense, viz. that before the
 final destruction of Antichrist, many Ro-
 man Catholicks shall be converted, and
 embrace primitive christianity ; which
 seems to be confirmed from, Ezekiel, 47,
 8.---11 ; where we are told that the dead
 sea of Sodom should be healed by the wa-
 ters that proceeded from the sanctuary ;
 i. e. that by the means of grace, multitudes
 of this mystic Sodom shall be brought to
 the acknowledgement of the truth. E-
 gypt is the figure that represents the
 church of Rome in the following prophe-
 cies, Isaiah, 11. 11, 15. Chap. 19, 23.---
 25. and chap. 27. 13. Zechariah, 10.
 10, 11. The Assyria which is mentioned
 with Egypt, in these prophecies, is doubt-
 less the same with the land of Magog in
 Ezekiel, 38. 2. by which is generally sup-
 posed that Turkey is intended, of which
 the antient Assyria is now a part : In the
 same sense, I suppose, is Assyria to be un-
 derstood in Micah, 5, 6.

The reason why the Antichristian church is called Sodom, seems to be this ; that having imitated Sodom in wickedness, the punishment that is to be inflicted on them, will be like the destruction that was brought upon Sodom and Gomorrah.----- Compare Isaiah, 1. chap. verse, 9, 10. and chap. 3. verse 9. Jeremiah, 23, chap. 14, verse. Deut. 29. chap. verse, 23. In the last mentioned text, Moses tells the Israelites, that when God's covenant people should apostatize to idolatry, their punishment should be like that of Sodom, *And that whole Land thereof is brimstone, and salt and burning, that it is not sown nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah.* Now as this was never literally true with respect to the land of Israel is it not a prediction concerning the destruction of that mytic Sodom the church of Rome ? Edom seems another type of the Antichristian Rome, for in the 63d, chap. of Isa. Christ conquering his enemies is represented as coming from Edom as the place where this tragical scene is acted. Now compare this with Rev. 19. chap. verse 13, 15. and it will plainly appear that the church of Rome is mystic Edom ; for in

both places Christ is represented as treading the wine-press of God's wrath, and having his raiment dyed with the blood of his enemies. Compare also Revelation, chap. 14, verse, 18, 20. It is also well known, that the Jewish writers by Edom understand Rome, and Romish christians; we are also told that the genuine editions of the Targum of Jonathan paraphrase the 34th chap. of Isa. verse 9th, thus; *and the Rivers of Rome shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the Land thereof shall become burning pitch; it shall not be quenched night nor day, the smoke thereof shall go up forever.* Now we know, that this Chapter is a prophecy of the destruction of the *Edomites*; but the rivers of Edom literally taken, have never been turned into pitch, nor the dust thereof into brimstone. Are we not then to understand the prophecy as a prediction of the destruction of the Church of Rome, that myst' Edom? I will now close this Appendix, by asking whether the 66th chap. of Isaiah, may not be illustrated by comparing it with the 4th chapter of Micah, the first five verses of which are evidently a prophecy of the glorious state of the Church of Christ in the latter days; in

the 6th verse it is added, *in that day i. e.* at the time when God shall be about to establish the glorious state of the church, *saith the Lord will I assemble her that halteth, and I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted; and I will make her that halted, a remnant, and her that was cast far off, a strong nation; are not these they who in Isa. 66th, verse 5th, were hated and cast out by their brethren, that afterwards were born into a nation at once. In verse 9th, we read, Is there no king in thee? Is thy counsellor perished? Does not this imply such a dissolution of the form of government as took place when our Charter was vacated? there next follows a prediction of the travail of Zion, i. e. as we have shewn above, the calamity of war, in which calamity, it is said in verse 10, that they should go out of the city, and should dwell in the field; and have not our capital towns been seized by the enemy, which has obliged many of the inhabitants to retire into the fields of the country? It is added thou shalt go even to Babylon, there shalt thou be delivered; there the Lord shall redeem thee from the hand of thine enemies. Are not the French and Spaniards a considerable part of mystic*

Babylon ? And does it not appear probable, that they will be the means of our deliverance from our enemies, in consequence of our applying to them ? many nations have also gathered together against us, both Europeans, Africans, and American Savages, according to verse 11th. And farther is it not implied in the 3d verse of the 5th chap. of Micah, which is plainly a continuation of the prophecy, contained in chap. 4th, that the restoration of the Jews to their own Land shall take place soon after the deliverance of Zion is compleated ? for the 2d verse being a prophecy, that Christ should be born at Bethlehem, a city of the Jews, it is added in verse 3d, *Therefore will he give them up, i. e. the Jews, until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth ; then the remnant of his brethren shall return to the children of Israel.* These observations I submit to the judgment of the candid and judicious Reader.

S. W.