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# S E R M O N,

DELIVERED AT

LEBANON, IN CANAAN,

APRIL 13, 1815,

IT BEING

The Day of Public Thanksgiving

ON ACCOUNT OF THE RESTORATION OF

PEACE

BETWEEN THE

*United States of America*

AND

*Great-Britain,*

BY SILAS CHURCHILL, A. M.

PASTOR OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN LEBANON.

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PITTSFIELD :

PRINTED BY PHINEAS ALLEN.

JUNE, 1815.

## PSALM L. 14.

### OFFER UNTO GOD THANKSGIVING.

**T**HAT God, who made the heavens and the earth, governs his vast dominions according to the good pleasure of his will. He fills immensity, and is present with all his works, bringing to pass events according to his eternal purpose. As it is very important that we should have a deep sense of the universal and particular government of God, the holy scriptures abundantly represent him as controlling the smallest as well as the greatest events. Without Him, a sparrow falls not to the ground ; and by Him the very hairs of our head are all numbered. The laws of nature are establishments of the Deity, agreeably to which he governs the natural world. Accordingly, notwithstanding all natural causes, God is represented as sending rain on the just and unjust, as having his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and riding upon the wings of the wind. *The lightning goeth forth at his word : fire and hail, snow and vapour fulfil his word.* When the thunders roll, God utters his voice ; and when the earth quakes, it is God who shaketh the earth and the pillars thereof tremble.

THE providence of God is concerned in the affairs of individuals, of mankind and of whole nations. Is a nation in prosperity or in adversity, still the hand of the supreme ruler is to be acknowledged. If a people be unsuccessful in war, they should consider themselves under the frowns of Heaven ; for *it is God who weakeneth the strength of the mighty.* If a people be successful in war, and obtain a peace on equitable terms, they should consider themselves as highly favored of the Lord ; for *it is God that fighteth for his people.* Every personal deliverance which we receive,

we are taught to ascribe to Him who rules over all. *The Lord killeth and maketh alive, he bringeth down to the grave and bringeth up, the Lord maketh poor and maketh rich, he bringeth low and lifteth up.* Every national deliverance we are to acknowledge to be from the Most High. *God hath made of one blood, all nations of men, for to dwell upon the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation. He is the governor among the nations, and he setteth up one kingdom and putteth down another at his pleasure. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation. The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men and giveth it to whomsoever he will.*

EVERY person has occasion to live a life of gratitude for the personal favors which he hath received from the hand of God ; but it is proper for a whole nation to observe particular days, in order publicly to acknowledge and adore God as the author of all their mercies, and to render him praise and glory. Justly may God say to individuals and to nations, in the words of the text, *Offer unto God thanksgiving.*

Who does not see that we are under the greatest obligations to be thankful to the Most High ? Has he not given us a rational existence, and made us capable of the most exalted enjoyments ? Has he not formed our bodies, and given us immortal souls ? Has he not given us health and strength, food and raiment, and things convenient for us ? Has he not preserved us all our days, and continued us in the world until the present moment ? Has he not given us a good land, where we may enjoy all those rights and privileges, which are calculated to make us a happy people ? Has he not placed us under great advantages for improving our minds in all branches of useful knowledge ? Has he not, also, given us great spiritual blessings ? We have in our hands the precious gospel, which informs us of all the truths necessary for us to believe, and all the duties necessary for us to

perform, in order to obtain the approbation of God here, and his rewards hereafter. This gospel points out to us the way in which we may be reconciled to God, receive pardon of our sins, and be prepared for immortal bliss beyond the grave. We have the privilege of studying this gospel at all times, of worshipping God according to the dictates of our own consciences, and of serving him in all the ways of his appointment, without any to molest us or make us afraid. Surely, with great propriety may it be said to us, *Offer unto God thanksgiving.*

WE are not only under obligations to be thankful, in general ; but we have now a particular occasion for gratitude, on account of which we are this day assembled. This nation has been in calamity, and has felt the heavy hand of divine judgment : but in mercy, God has removed from us the horrors of war, and restored to us the blessings of peace. We are, therefore, now called by the President of the United States of America, and by the Governor of this State, to assemble on this day, in order to unite with one another and with the whole people of this nation, in acknowledging the goodness of God, and in publicly rendering him our sincere gratitude and praise. May the Lord enable us duly to appreciate the blessing of national peace, and to perform the duties of this day in such a manner as to be acceptable to our God. In order that our hearts may be excited to a lively exercise of gratitude on this particular occasion, let us consider

I. WE have been in calamity :

II. GOD hath delivered us :

III. WE are now to offer unto God thanksgiving.

LET us consider I. We have been in calamity.

INDEED, many and various are the trials to which mankind are subject, while in this apostate world.—

*Man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward.* What individual of the human race can be found, who does not, at one time or another, drink of the bitter cup of affliction? Pains and maladies, crosses and disappointments, are allotted to men, in this vale of tears; and happy would it be, if these trials were endured with resignation to the divine will, and improved to the glory of God, and to our own spiritual good. But the calamity of war is that, which we would now more particularly notice, in order that we may lift up our hearts with more lively gratitude for our late deliverance from it.

WAR is a great calamity on several accounts.—One is, it is impoverishing to a nation. It wastes its riches, and exhausts its treasures. In the most successful wars, the conquerors seldom indemnify themselves, in point of property, for their expences. That party in war, which is most successful, experiences great loss of property; and that party which is unsuccessful, meets with a still greater loss. In a time of war, a considerable part of the most able and enterprising men are called off from cultivating the earth, from the pursuits of commerce, or from some other employment which would support themselves and families, and render them prosperous, in point of property. Not only so, but they must be supported from the industry of others, and at a great expence, be provided with all the means of carrying on the work of destruction. In addition to this, many who remain at their homes, are deprived of their accustomed profits, by reason of a stagnation of business. In addition to this, many who live in exposed places, are often deprived of all their worldly substance at a stroke. How often are whole towns ravaged and destroyed! The inhabitants are instantly brought to poverty, and are obliged to flee for their lives, in a condition destitute and wretched. If they look behind them, they behold their all in flames, and if they look forward, want and woe stare them in the face.—Many indeed are the ways in which war impoverishes a nation.

It has been calculated by a late writer, that “in the year preceding September 9th, 1813, the christian world expended in war, the enormous sum of two thousand two hundred and sixty millions of dollars, the annual interest of which, at 6 per cent, would be one hundred and thirty-five millions and six hundred thousand dollars.” The money raised by Great-Britain in that year, is stated to be “one hundred and thirteen millions of pounds sterling.” It is computed, “that the loss of life and productive labor, in consequence of war, during the same year, involved a loss of property equal to nine hundred and seventy-five millions of dollars, at least. The interest on this sum would be fifty-eight millions and five hundred thousand dollars. As to those additional losses which war occasions by the derangement of business, by the sudden depression of landed estate, by the despondency, which, in many places prevents all exertion,” they are beyond our calculation. The author of the above calculations judiciously observes, that “the losses of this kind defy all computation.”\* War then is a great calamity.

WAR appears still more calamitous on account of its hurrying men from this state of probation, and ushering them into the eternal world. What is the loss of property to the loss of life, the loss of probation, the loss of opportunity to prepare to meet our God! In all wars, many fall by the sword, are swept away instantly by thundering engines, or are blown to the four winds by terrible explosions. In addition to this, thousands are swept away by sickness, which more or less attends a camp. Alas! how awfully does war tear asunder the dear connections of human life! It leaves aged parents to weep for the loss of their sons, and to go down in sorrow to the grave. It leaves wives to lament the loss of their husbands, and children the loss of their fathers. They who survive the loss of their friends, are plunged into inexpressible affliction and distress. But still, the calamity is

\* See Panoplist for April, 1814.

the greatest to those who fall in death. They have immortal souls, whose state is irrevocably fixed at the moment when they are hurried from the field of battle to meet their God. If they be prepared for death, still the world loses all the good, which they might have done, if they had lived. If they be unprepared, what an awful loss do they experience ! Who can tell the greatness of the loss of heaven, and the greatness of the misery of hell ! Death is a solemn and important event, in any case ; and surely, to fall suddenly by the hand of fellow-creatures, is a most solemn event.

FURTHER, war is a great calamity, as it is unfavorable to the cause of morality and religion. The fundamental rule of morality, is to do good ; but in war, he that inflicts the most injury upon his enemy, gains the greatest honor. Besides, while the maxims of morality are, to be humble, to refrain from revenge, to be sober, temperate, mild, humane, and reverential in language, a state of war tends to foster those vices which are opposite to these maxims of morality. It tends to take off the minds of the people from the great concern of religion, and leads their minds away from the means of grace and the ordinances of the gospel. It must be allowed that camps are not the places for the increase of morality and religion, and that a state of war is very unfavorable to the spiritual welfare of mankind.

THESE are some of the considerations which lead us to say, war is a great calamity. I do not mean to intimate that war is always unjust, or that it ought never to be proclaimed. It is sometimes necessary. It is, unquestionably, a duty to defend our lives and privileges by war, when we cannot preserve them by peaceable measures. But still war is a calamity. It is a calamity to be in a situation which makes war necessary. If a war be ever so just, still many of its effects are deplorable.

THESE United States have lately been involved

in the calamity of war : and although the war has not been so long, expensive, and bloody, as many wars which have taken place upon the earth, yet we have felt it to be a great calamity. Setting aside the expences of the nation, we may observe that many of our citizens have bled and died. Many have been carried into captivity. Many have been massacred by barbarous savages, who spare neither age nor sex. Many who survive, have lost their worldly substance, and some have to lament the most brutal treatment which they have received from monsters in human shape.

BUT, blessed be God, the voice of peace is again heard in our land. The thunders of the roaring cannon are hushed : armies have ceased to meet in the field of battle, and each one is left to pursue his vocation, without fear or molestation.

THIS leads us to consider as proposed,

II. God hath delivered us. The Almighty, provoked by our sins, might justly have given us a prey into the hands of our enemies. But, in his rich and abundant mercy, he hath delivered us. After a season of adversity, our hearts are filled with joy, by the removal of God's correcting hand. We should seriously consider, that it is owing to the good providence of our heavenly Father, that we are not still left in the horrors of war, and we should feel that his holy arm hath brought us salvation, because he had a favor for us.

BUT how doth it appear that God hath delivered us ? Have we not delivered ourselves ? In ourselves, we are weak and frail. We are perfectly dependant upon God. All our exertions are in vain when God sees fit to order things against us. Every man who believes the word of God, believes that *every good and perfect gift cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.* He believes that the overruling providence

of God extends to all events, and that without him a sparrow falls not to the ground. But still he sees that in some events, divine providence is clearly visible. Of this class, are the events of war. These depend on so many occurrences, which are evidently beyond human foresight and control, that the hand of God is more obvious.

It is true that God works by men and means ; but still, it is God that works. That God who, in righteous judgment for our sins, left us to be involved in war ; also, in the former part of the war, suffered us to experience disaster. This might be one means of our final deliverance. For disaster excites to more wisdom, exertion, and prayer. It is certainly under the good providence of God, that men have been raised up who have done honor to themselves, and boldly withstood their powerful foes. The design of calamity is to make people penitent, humble, and prayerful ; and when it has this effect, God often removes the calamity. We have reason to hope that this effect has been, in some measure, produced by our calamity. When we had seen the disasters of the former part of the war, and found ourselves left single-handed to combat a nation, which was suddenly relieved from other wars, and which was provided with numerous forces ; doubtless, all the pious people in this land felt their dependence on God, and were excited to earnest prayer to God for direction, and for his blessing. They, doubtless, felt their ill-desert, and fell down before God in humility, and cried, *spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach.* The whole nation was called on to fast and pray and seek the Lord, that he would order things in mercy, and deliver us from the distresses of war.— We have reason to believe that thousands of fervent prayers actually did ascend to the throne of God.— Those prayers, God has graciously answered. He, who by his spirit and providence excites a spirit of prayer, is always ready in the best time to give an answer of peace.

BESIDES, many and great have been the exertions of the wise and good, to effect a reformation of morals in our land. Pious people feel that it is on account of prevailing sins, that God suffers nations to be involved in national calamities. In order, therefore, to expect a removal of calamity, they have endeavored to promote a reformation. Moral Societies have been formed in various parts of our land ; and in many places, much has actually been done to prevent those open sins, by which God is dishonored and his judgments deserved. These exertions, unquestionably, have been occasioned by the spirit of God, and by the calamity which God has suffered to come upon us. The God of infinite mercy regards all the humble attempts of his people. Even those attempts for reformation which fail, are viewed by the Lord with approbation. If the prayers and exertions of wise men to promote reformation, have been, in some measure, the means of averting from us calamity, still the glory belongs not to them, but to God who excited them to exertion, and who heard their supplications. Means may be used ; it is God's method to work by means ; yet it is as much God that works as if no means were used. It is God that hath delivered us. In the verse after the text, God says, *Call upon me in the day of trouble : I will deliver thee.*

OTHER means also have been used. God has enabled our countrymen to be valiant for the cause of our country. Notwithstanding the vast superiority of the British navy, our little navy has done wonders.— It has often gained a triumphant victory over a superior force. Upon the ocean, and upon the Lakes, have been performed exploits, which were brilliant and productive of happy effects. On the land, also, many have been the valiant achievements which have been effected. Aroused by the disasters of the first part of the war, and by the cause of their country, our armies have shown that courage and perseverance, which, in some instances, astonished the enemy, and which have placed our name upon a respectable footing. But all this has taken place under the superin-

tendency of the God of armies, who gives strength, wisdom, and courage to whom he pleases. So that, notwithstanding the talents and exertions of the army have been used as means of victory and peace; still the truth remains the same, viz. It is God who hath delivered us. All the success which we have had either by land or sea, is owing to the guardian care of Him, who rules the winds and waves, and who setteth up one kingdom and putteth down another, at his pleasure. How easy would it have been for the Almighty to have prevented success on the water, by one unfavorable blast of wind, in the most critical time of the contest! How easy would it have been with him also to have caused a battle on land to have turned against us, by one unforeseen occurrence! Upon a view of the truth that God governs the world, and that his government extends to small as well as great events, we are ready to say, it is God who hath delivered us.

BUT, in several cases, the providence of God has been remarkably visible in our successes. It appears peculiarly providential that our greatest successes have been when we had the most reason to expect disaster. During the last year of the war, the enemy was in circumstances to send upon us an overwhelming force. Delivered from his European wars, and having numerous armies unemployed, it was to be expected that he would have done us incalculable injury. But our greatest successes have been at the very time, when the enemy was able to employ all his strength against us. It is very remarkable that during the last campaign, the enemy made almost all the attacks, and still was defeated in almost all the battles that were fought. This we would call particularly providential; that is, divine providence is particularly visible.

LET us, for a moment, contemplate some particular instances of success, in which we discover the marks of providence in our favor. If we look back to the victory upon Lake Erie, we shall be ready to acknowledge the hand of God. In that instance,

the enemy made the attack, and therefore we must suppose that he not only considered himself superior in force, but that he was completely prepared. How came it then to pass that our force gained a complete victory, contrary to the sanguine expectations of the enemy? We are ready to say, God hath delivered us. If we look to that night of destruction when the enemy stormed Fort Erie, we shall see that divine providence was particularly visible. After the enemy had pressed on the face of death, and trampled over the dying and the dead, amidst the most awful carnage, they at length gained possession of one of our batteries. This gave them great advantage, and, no doubt, they then were animated with fresh hopes, expecting that a few moments would render them possessors of the whole fort and army. But at that moment, without any design on our part, and by an unknown cause, a magazine exploded, and destroyed the whole of the enemy that were near the battery which they had taken. This providential event decided the battle: the enemy retreated with immense loss. We say, then, God hath delivered us.

If we look to the naval battle on Lake Champlain, we shall there see the enemy coming, in full force, to attack our squadron while at their station.—They, unquestionably, had the most sanguine expectations of gaining a complete victory. It is said that our commander, when he saw them approaching, fell upon his knees in order to spend a few moments in prayer to God; and then rising, gave orders for the battle. What was the event? Under the providence of Him, with whom nothing is accidental, the British commander was slain by the first fire. This, doubtless, put the enemy under a disadvantage, and very soon, notwithstanding their superior numbers of men and guns, they sustained a complete defeat. Here providence was very visible.

AT the same time the enemy made an attack on the adjoining land, with a regular force vastly superior to ours. In all human calculation, they would

have made an easy conquest. But they were gallantly withstood by a small regular force and by some militia, until the enemy, panic struck, made a precipitate retreat, leaving much military apparatus and stores, which soon fell into our hands. This was remarkably in our favor. It is said that the enemy's force, on this occasion, was fourteen thousand veteran troops ; and that our's was only fifteen hundred regular troops, and three thousand militia.

If we look to Baltimore, we see the enemy failing in his attack on that place, notwithstanding his powerful force which was brought against it, both by land and by sea. And, if we look to New-Orleans, we behold the enemy entirely defeated, with an immense number killed and wounded, and on our part with only a very few individuals either killed or wounded. It is said, that in all the attempts of the enemy on that part of the country near New-Orleans, he lost fifty to our one ; and that on the day of the general battle, he lost one hundred and fifty to our one. This cap'd the climax of our successes, and is a mirror in which we may see the hand of Providence in our favor. In view of it, we say, God hath delivered us.

OTHER means have indeed been used for the restoration of peace ; but those also owed their success to divine goodness. Soon after the commencement of the war, our government proposed negotiation for peace ; and, at length ambassadors from both powers met, and had frequent conferences on the business of their mission. But by the demands of the enemy, there appeared no prospect of any good result from the negotiation. Unexpectedly, however, the news arrived, that they had agreed upon terms of peace ; the treaty was immediately brought to us, already ratified by the Prince Regent, and was promptly ratified by our government. We will allow all suitable commendation to our ambassadors, who ably performed their duty ; but we must look further : we must look to that God who enabled them to conduct with wisdom, and who crowned their efforts with his

blessing. God has the hearts of all in his hand ; and to his goodness, it is owing that our enemy should relinquish the demands which were at first made, and that an amicable treaty of peace resulted from the mutual deliberations and discussions of the ambassadors.

THUS, we may consider that various means have been used for the restoration of peace ; but still we should consider that it is God who makes use of means, and causes them to produce desirable effects. In the view of God's general government, and also in the view of several events which render providence peculiarly visible, we may say, God hath delivered us.

THEREFORE III. We are now to offer unto God thanksgiving. This is a duty to which we are now called by civil authority ; and we may add, a duty to which we are called by the providence of that God, who hath delivered us from the calamity of war, and restored to us the blessings of peace. Our hearts should be deeply impressed with a sense of divine goodness, and should be filled with the warmest gratitude to our heavenly benefactor.

WHO that considers the contrast between the horrors of war and the blessings of peace, can refrain from gratitude and praise ? If peace had not taken place, what probably would have been our situation at this time, and in the ensuing summer ? Before this time, the campaign would have been opened, and much might have been already done in the work of destruction. Probably, the ensuing campaign would have been the most bloody of any that have preceded. Imagine to yourselves multitudes of our citizens, and yourselves among the rest, called into the field of battle where is a confused noise, and garments rolled in blood. Imagine thousands on both sides falling in death and entering the eternal world. Imagine the savages rushing upon private families, and massacring old and young of both sexes. Behold villages, towns, and cities plundered, and the inhabitants reduced to want, and many of them brought to an untimely

death. Suppose we had been successful in doing the most injury ; yet we also must, doubtless, have experienced many evils.

ON the other hand, how many and great are the blessings of peace ! Each one is now at liberty to pursue his occupation without danger : the arts may receive due attention, the soil may be cultivated, merchandise may prosper, and our ships may float to every clime. We may enjoy the sweets of domestic life, in tranquillity ; and may perform, without molestation, the duties which we owe to ourselves, to our fellow-men, and to our God. I do not undertake fully to draw the contrast between war and peace ; but in the view of only these suggestions, who does not feel ready to say, praise ye the Lord and bless his holy name ?

To excite us to an acceptable discharge of the duty of thanksgiving this day, let us consider

1. **THIS** is a most fit and reasonable duty. Is not God infinitely the best of beings ? Is he not the glorious source of all our favors ? When we ascribe to him all our successes and all the blessings of peace, we ascribe them to their only true source. We are unworthy of the least of all God's mercies, and we deserve his wrath. How unspeakably great then are our obligations to that beneficent being who, in tender mercy, removes his judgments and strews our path with unnumbered blessings ? Surely the voice of reason calls us to lift up our hearts to God, in the exercise of the most devout gratitude. This is most fit in the nature of things ; for unto him belong the honor and praise. Men, indeed have been instrumental in procuring peace, and as far as they have been voluntary agents in doing good, we would cheerfully allow them all suitable esteem and respect ; but the praise and glory are ultimately due to God, who hath raised up instruments and given them success. Ingratitude to the author of all our mercies is contrary to the dictates of conscience ; it is a robbing God of

his due ; it is a practical contempt of divine goodness ; it is a sin of scarlet dye : It is, therefore, highly displeasing to the Most High, and calculated to procure the tokens of divine wrath. It is written that *Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefits done unto him ; for his heart was lifted up : therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem.* If ingratitude be perfectly unsuitable and highly displeasing to a holy God, let us beware of this horrid sin. Let us be excited to the most lively exercise of praise for the late deliverance vouchsafed to this nation, and for all the numberless instances of divine munificence.

2. **GRATITUDE** is delightful to all pious minds. Nothing can be more pleasing to them than to meditate upon the displays of divine goodness, and to lift up their hearts to God in devout praise. A devotional frame is the glory of man, and in drawing near to God in devotion, the christian experiences that exalted happiness which is far beyond the power of this world to afford. Sincere gratitude is an essential part of genuine devotion ; and it is accompanied with an elevation of soul, and an antepast of heaven. It is delightful to contemplate instances of goodness bestowed upon individuals ; but it is still more delightful to contemplate signal blessings conferred on a whole nation. The benevolent mind feels a peculiar joy and elevation, in praising God for deliverance from great national evils, and for the bestowment of those extensive blessings which bring happiness to a multitude of rational creatures. *Praise ye the Lord*, says the Psalmist, *for it is good to sing praises unto our God ; for it is pleasant, and praise is comely.*

WE may add, that the gratitude of rational creatures is pleasing to the Most High. That God who delights in every thing which is right and suitable, takes pleasure in seeing any of the human race rejoice in his goodness, and praise him for his mercies.—How peculiarly pleasing must it then be to God to see the people of a whole nation at the same time acknowl-

edging him as the author of all their public blessings, and offering him their devout ascriptions of thanksgiving and praise.

3. SINCERE gratitude to God, on this occasion, has a tendency to make us, as a people, more virtuous. If we duly perform the duty of thanksgiving this day, we shall feel our own unworthiness of favors, and our dependence on God; shall feel our obligations to him who is the author of all our mercies; shall feel the importance of obeying his commands, and of being devoted to his service. The more gratitude we have in our hearts, the more engaged we shall be to live answerably to favors which we have received. Of course, the solemnities of this day, if duly attended, have a tendency to strengthen every principle of virtue, to increase every holy affection, to animate us to lead lives of godliness, and to make us, as a people, more moral and religious.

If gratitude be fit and reasonable; if it be delightful in itself, and pleasing to God; if it tend to make us a more virtuous people; and if ingratitude be abominable, and calculated to bring down the wrath of heaven, then let us this day offer unto God sincere gratitude and devout praises.

#### BY WAY OF IMPROVEMENT.

1. LET us seriously enquire how we have been affected by all God's various dealings, and be excited to reform whatever has been amiss in our hearts and lives. God has been dealing with us in a way of judgment, and also in a way of mercy. All his dealings are for wise and important purposes, and they should be improved by us in the wisest manner. By his providence, he has called us to repentance and obedience. Some have, doubtless, hearkened to the voice of God. But how is it with multitudes? How is it with ourselves? Have we duly considered the hand of God in the events which have taken place? Have his frowns led us to humility, reformation, and prayer? Have his mercies led us to gratitude and en-

gagedness in his service? Let us take heed that we do not, after our hardness and impenitent hearts, treasure up to ourselves wrath against the day of wrath, and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God. It is a fearful thing to remain insensible and impenitent under all God's various dealings. O let us be excited to renounce every known sin, speedily enter upon a life of religion, and make suitable returns to our great benefactor.

2. LET us solemnly consider the importance of being at peace with God. A war with God is most unjust, dangerous, and destructive. He has never given us any occasion to complain, but has always treated us with propriety and benevolence. War with God is rebellion against infinite love, against a government which is perfectly good, against a law which is perfectly just; yea, it is rebellion against infinite mercy. It is a rebellion of creatures against their Creator, of children against a kind father and bountiful benefactor. What can be more criminal than this? They who are at war with God, are constantly exposed to eternal death. Yea, certain destruction awaits all who persist in it. We may flee from a human foe, but who can flee from the omnipresent God? We may be delivered from the power of men, but who can deliver from the power of God? *Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.*

THE blessings of national peace are many and great; but the blessings attending peace with God are infinitely greater. These blessings are not merely temporal, but spiritual and eternal. What will it avail us, my brethren, to be at peace with the frail kings of the earth, if still we wage war with the King of kings? Is it not infinitely important to be at peace with the great Jehovah? Behold! the infinite God condescends to propose a treaty of peace; the terms of it are repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. These terms are not only reason-

able, but merciful. The ambassadors of God have come and have proclaimed in your ears the terms of peace. As one of these ambassadors, I now most affectionately intreat you to accept the terms proposed, and to be at peace with God. *Now we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.*

3. LET us be earnestly engaged to glorify God, in our bodies and spirits. We must do this by entertaining exalted apprehensions of his character, and adoring his perfections; by believing his revelation, noticing his operations, and trusting in him for all the blessings we need in this or the future world. We must do it by loving him with all our hearts, and by living to the glory of him who hath surrounded us with numberless favors. We must do it by speaking suitably of his works and ways, and by expressing our gratitude for his mercies. We must do it by exercising all the christian graces, by wisely improving our time and talents, and by conforming our lives to the holy will of God, as revealed in his inspired word. In this way let us endeavor to *adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

4. LET us strive, in all suitable ways, to promote the public good, and the welfare of our fellow-men. May the present peace be continued, and may future generations rejoice in peace and prosperity.—But in order that the public good and the welfare of others be promoted, means must be used, and every one is able to do something for the promotion of these objects. Those political measures, which may be proper, I leave to those to whose province they belong, praying that the Lord would enable the people of this nation, at all times, to choose wise men to conduct our national concerns, and that they might always be directed to those measures which will be for the prosperity of the nation. But I would particularly recommend to all the practice of every moral and

social virtue. We should carefully avoid all injurious treatment of others, all contention, and every thing that has a tendency to promote alienation and ill-will between man and man. We should be careful to practice justice and kindness, moderation and beneficence in our intercourse with others, and should endeavor, by all suitable means, to maintain friendship and harmony among ourselves. This would be an honorable course, and would greatly tend to promote the public welfare. O that God would heal all our unhappy divisions, and cause us to be united in pursuing the path of wisdom, virtue and happiness.

It is of vast importance to possess and encourage a public spirit. This spirit is directly opposed to a selfish, contracted temper, and has the good of community in view. It is a generosity which is the offspring of universal benevolence. It is a noble virtue, and a bright resemblance of the blessed God. The man who has it will rejoice in the welfare of the public, and in the prosperity of his fellow-men. Instead of defrauding others, or filching from the public in order to promote the paltry purposes of ambition and avarice, he will subordinate his private interest to the good of the whole. Instead of making artful excuses for not assisting in the defence of his country in any case, he will open his hand liberally for her support in a time of danger and distress, and will boldly maintain her rights and privileges against unjust encroachments. Animated with genuine patriotism, he will, when occasion requires, be found performing the most generous and heroic acts in his country's cause. A general prevalence of public spirit would greatly promote the strength and prosperity of the nation. We should feel the great importance of possessing such a spirit, and should encourage it in others, by all proper methods.

FURTHER, it would greatly promote the welfare of others and the public good, if all the regular part of community should exert themselves to support the laws of the land, and to promote morality in the pla-

ces where they live. They who use their influence to suppress vice and to promote moral habits among those around them, are rendering a great service to the public. Moral Societies, if judiciously conducted, may, therefore, be exceedingly useful. When we consider that vice and immorality draw down the judgements of heaven upon a people, how engaged should all lovers of their country be to stem the torrent of vice, and to promote good order and morality.

GREAT care should be taken of the education of youth and children. This is necessary for the public good ; for the more knowledge and virtue prevail, the greater is the prospect that the blessings of a free government will be perpetuated, and that the nation will be prosperous and happy. Great care should, therefore, be taken to promote the diffusion of knowledge, and the practice of virtue among all classes of people ; but especially among youth, who will soon fill the place of their fathers, and upon whom, under God, will depend the destinies of the nation. They should be made acquainted with the most useful branches of science, should be led to a veneration of laws both human and divine, should be trained up to industry and to the practice of every moral and social virtue ; so that when they take the place of their fathers, they may be ornaments to society, blessings to their country, benefactors to the world, and candidates for a happy immortality.

5. LET us be excited by the present joyful occasion, to contemplate that state of universal peace and joy which we expect in a future period. It is painful to reflect upon the calamities which mankind have suffered in every age since the fall of man down to the present day. How many wars have prevailed, and spread destruction over the earth ! How awfully have mankind devoured each other, and deluged the earth with human gore ! Alas ! into what miseries have men been plunged by their own ungodly propensities !

MUST man be forever hunted through every lane of life by his fellow-man, and this earth forever be continued a field of blood ? Will the evil passions of men forever drive them on, with infernal fury, to lay waste and destroy, and to fill the world with lamentation and woe ? No, my brethren, the work of destruction will not long be continued. Blessed be God, the happy day is hastening on, when Jesus will triumph, and his cause will prevail over the cause of sin and satan. Christ's kingdom is a kingdom of peace and holiness, and his kingdom will soon be gloriously advanced. The millennial day is almost ready to dawn, the day when Satan shall be bound for a thousand years, when the gospel shall have an universal spread, and when *all shall know the Lord from the least to the greatest*. Then the evil passions of men shall be subdued ; the implements of war shall be beaten into the implements of husbandry, nation shall not rise against nation, for men shall learn war no more. *Then the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion, and the fating together, and a little child shall lead them. There will be none to hurt or destroy in all God's holy mountain.* Savage men will be transformed into the meek and lowly followers of the Lamb. *The meek shall inherit the earth, and delight themselves in the abundance of peace.* Instead of private animosities, public feuds and foreign wars, friendship and love will abound, and universal peace will bless the earth. Let us contemplate that happy period with thankful hearts, and fervently pray to the God of all grace, that the present peace may be continued to our nation 'till the happy day of millennial peace and holiness.

6. LET us, with faith and hope, contemplate the eternal peace and holiness of heaven. Though we may not live to see the millenium upon earth ; yet if we become the followers of Christ, we shall soon enter that blessed world where will be no sin, no war, no calamity, but where will be perfect peace, holiness and joy. *There remaineth a rest to the people of God.*

**BEHOLD !** a little forward is the day of our death. Our bodies must lie low in dust, and our souls must enter the world of spirits. At the resurrection day, we must be assembled at the bar of God to be judged according to the characters which we form in this life. Are we prepared to meet our God in peace ? O, let us all, my brethren, be diligent in our preparation for the heavenly world, and not rest without good evidence that we have peace with God, and that we are heirs of heaven.

**WHILE** we sojourn in houses of clay, let us live in peace, grow in grace and be faithful in every christian duty. Then, when we leave this vale of tears, we shall ascend to those realms of bliss where will be complete purity, perpetual peace, and eternal glory. Then, instead of imperfectly lisping forth the praises of God here below, we shall join the triumphant choir above in shouting forth the rapturous allelujahs of an eternal day.

**THAT** this may be the happy case of us all, may God of his infinite mercy grant, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **AMEN.**