

Sound Repentance the Right way to escape deserved Ruine; OR A Solid and awakening DISCOURSE,

Exhorting the People of God to comply with his Counsel, by a hearty practical turning from Sin to himself and his Service thereby to prevent their being made desolate by his departing from them.

As it was delivered in a SERMON Preached at Hartford on Conecticut in New-England, May 14th: 1685. Being the day of ELECTION there.

By Mr.Samuel Wakeman, Pastor of the Church of Christ in Fairfield.

Ezek. 18. 3, 31.

Repent and turn from all your Transgressions, so iniquity shall not be your Ruine: Cast away from you all your Transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed, and make you a new heart, and a new spirit; for why will ye dy, O house of Israel.

Rev. 2. 5.

Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first work, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy Candlestick out of its place, except thou Repent.

Zach. 1. 2.

Thus saith the Lord of Host, Turn you unto me, saith the Lord of Host, and I will turn unto you, saith the Lord of Host.

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Christian Reader,

The ensuing Discourse shews the great danger of a Peoples departing from God by Sin; it will cause God to depart from them, as here we find threatned. The way to escape this Judgment, is to be instructed Be thou instructed, lest. This word of commination was directed and spoken first to Jerusalem, but reacheth to us now in N. E. who stand in like circumstances before the Lord, as Jerusalem then did. A parallel People with them, both in respect of priviledge and provocation, Profession, and Prevarication. They were highly favoured of God, so have we been; they deeply revolted from God, so have we done. That faithful City became an Harlot; and we in this Land are greatly degenerate. New-England Israel was once Holiness unto the Lord: What are we now? Whence it follows, that (as persons concerned) what was spoken to them, we must take to our selves. If the Lord by the Prophet thus instruct and threaten Jerusalem, he doth the same to us. What then is our duty? O be instructed, reformed, refined, that we may yet be spared, and Gods presence among us continued. O for that Reformation the Lord hath so long lookt for, hath so often been attempted and so much talked of, but not yet attained! What is it more than meer talk? where is the thing? Is not all we have done but as the morning cloud and early dew that goeth away, passeth soon out of sight and vanisheth into nothing? O then be instructed see and consider the great and many Sins so rife and common among us: sigh, mourn, and lament over them, our own and others sins, by all which our God is dishonoured; and then every one to fall to our proper work of repenting, returning, reforming with all speed and seriousness; and that the Judgment threatned may not be executed upon us by Gods departing from us: Let us labour with all our might, and by all means to keep God with us, to hold him and not let him go; ### if we let God go, we are not our own friends, nor will it appear that we counted God our best friend, for such we will hug and hold fast, and if possibly we can, will keep them with us: How loth were they to part with their beloved Paul#O blessed Paul, they desire much his company and presence; but what is the presence of Paul, though an Apostle, to the presence of God himself with his People? And would we then keep God among us? If so,

1. Put a due price upon Divine Presence, as Moses did, Exod. 33. 2, 3, 15. The presence of an Angel will not satisfie him: If God himself will not go with his People, what can an Angel do for them?

2. Plead hard for the continuance of Gods presence with us, as Moses there, and so the Prophet Jer. 14. 8, 9. Let us shew how we value, and esteem of our God, even above all creature-comforts in Heaven or Earth, Psal. 53. 25. Say, Lord, What are all these? They may go their way so thou wilt stay with us, we can do well enough without them, but not without thee.

3. Put away that which would drive God from us, as they did, and retained his presence, Judg. 10. 10. 15. and compassion also: true Repentance, and our returning to God, is the best plea we can make for Gods returning unto us, and continuing with us.

Consider what may encourage, and what should quicken us to labour to keep God with us. 1. To encourage us, the thing is possible, God may be prevailed with if due means be used. The Judgment threatned is not yet executed, nor hath the Lord cast us out of his presence as yet, 2 King. 13 23. yet ith' midst of us, Jer. 14. 9.

2. God is pleased to speak before he smite; yea, to speak and warn us, that he may not smite us; but being penitent and reformed we may be spared, 3. God is inclin'd to Mercy, willing to be reconciled to sinners, and easily intreated by them, when thay sincerely turn unto him. The Son came, the Father ran, Luk. 15. 20. Again, 4. This Commination is under condition (not absolute) that if we repent God will

repent; if we return God will return, as the Promise runs, Zech. 1. 3. This should encourage, 2. What should quicken us? Consider, As 1. If we do not repent, and do not what we do in good earnest, to do to purpose, we shall find God in good earnest in doing as he hath thought and threatned against us, Zech. 8. 14. And 2. Consider what it is ### God to depart from us. When God goes, all goes, he being our All. 1. All God goes, his hearing Ear# his pitying Eye# his shining Face and Countenance, his helping Hand, his loving Heart, tender Affection, yerning Bowels, his glorious Attributes of power, mercy, goodness, which were all for us are now gone from us. When Gods Soul, which is himself, whole God or God thus wholly departs from a People. 2. All good goes, for if God leave us# what good can be leave with us? Doth not his goodness influence all our good things, and make them such unto us? What were Health, Wealth, Friends, all the World to us, if God be not with us? Yea, what were Heaven it self if God were not there? 3. When God goes all evil comes, as Deut: 31. 16. 18. And no other can be expected indeed, but when the Sun •ets# dark night will ensue. Take away the light and nothing but darkness remains. The absence of all good (which is in God only) necessitates succeeding evil, and is an in-let unto it. 4. Whatever evils befall us when God is departed from us, will be turned upon us as the fruit of our own wayes: and what we have procured to our selves, Prov. 1. 31. Jer. 2. 17. and so they laid the pleasant land desolate, Zech. 3. 14. A great aggravation of any affliction when self-sought, or brought upon our selves by our own default, as Joab tells David 2 Sam. 19. 7. If by his so carrying himself, he drew upon himself so great a mischief and misery, as to cause his Associates, Souldiers and helpers to withdraw from him: It will be worse unto thee, saith he, than all the evils that ever be•el thee from thy youth untill now, to be left alone that night destitute of a Guard about him, when danger surrounded him, and this through his own default, would make it a dark and a dismal night indeed unto David: How much more, when by our sinful folly we provoke God to depart from us i• What height of folly is this, and what depth of misery and distress doth it bring poor sinners into? But manum detabula; I may no longer detain thee (gentle Reader) thus standing at the door, but send thee ••to the house to partake of the good things there prepared; that wholesome and good Word of the Lord there opened. I commend it to thee as good in it self, and good at this time, a seasonable word, an awakening Word, a soul-affecting Word, a good help among many other of like sort, to make thee and others serious, which was and is the design of this Sermon. The Reverend and Pious Author having the sense of what he spake upon his own heart, was willing also to affect the hearts of others, and therefore (as you see) he used not only acceptable, but operative words, even words like goads and nails; hearts piercing expressions, that they that hear may feel also. But what will all avail, if the Lord set not in with it? Let our eyes be therefore unto him. And now the Lord bless, let the blessing of Heaven be upon this endeavour, and let One shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ, by the hand of his Holy Spirit, so fasten these awful truths upon all our hearts, that the powerful effects of the same, may be seen in our reformed lives. Amen. So prayes

Thy Servant in Christ J. Bishop.

# At the ELECTION, May 14. 1685.

Jer. 6 8.

Be thou instructed, O Jerusalem, lest my Soul depart from thee, lest I make thee desolate, a land not inhabited.

WHoso shall view over and attentively consider the whole trace and series of Gods dealing with, and dispensations towards his Covenant People (however as to them they have sometimes issued very dreadfully) will find them giving in clear and abundant testimony to the Truth of that of the Psalmist, Psal. 145. 8. The Lord is Gracious, and full of compassion, slow to anger, and of great mercy. Among many other passages in the sacred story to this purpose (purposely kept upon the File for the use of the Church in all Ages, and for ours upon whom the ends of the world are come) (he whose compassions have been ever of old, using the same tenor of tender dispensations towards his People now as then) the Text now read, as also what we find in the foregoing Chapters, make this very evident, and apparent. You may see in the first Chapter Gods calling, instructing, and encouraging the Prophet, as to his Office and Work, or as to his Office-work, he being one of those Messengers of whom you have mention made, 2 Chron. 36. 15. That the Lord God of their Fathers sent unto them, rising up betimes, and sending, because he had compassion on his People, and on his dwelling Place. You may see in the second Chapter Gods earnest and affectionate expostulation with his People by him, as to his antient love and kindness to them, and their notwithstanding causeless Revolt and Apostacy from him: Go cry in the ears of Jerusalem, &c. Vers. 2. &c. God Rings such a peal in Jerusalems ears by the Prophet throughout the Chapter upon this account, as one would have thought, should have reached, and pierced, should have thirl'd and thaw'd their very hearts; you may see in the third Chapter, God inviting and perswading them to Repent and turn to him with Promises of gracious acceptation, vers. 1. 12. Also pleading with them his Covenant-relation, and merciful propention towards them, vers. 14. &c. You may see in the 4. Chapter, God adding further to his former Promises, Promises to Promises, vers. 1, 2. and threatnings to his Promises, as in the sequel of that Chapter, if by any means, fair or foul he might induce or necessitate, draw or drive them to Repentance: You may yet see in the fifth Chapter, Gods lothness to proceed against them to destroy them; his exceeding readiness, his desirousness of pardon and spare them: Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem#and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof if ye can find a man, if there be any, that executeth Judgment, that seeketh the truth, and I •ill pardon it, vers. 1. God speaks as one agrieved to punish them, as one ready to pardon them upon low termes; and earnestly looking about if haply he might find something why he might do it: In this 6. Chapter, while yet there is any hope we have God still pursuing the matter with them, laying close siege unto them, putting home his threatnings, lowdly alarming them with his Judgments, plainly warning them of the worst that was to be expected, and unavoidably coming upon them, if not prevented solemnly, and earnestly admonishing them to bethink themselves, be advised that it might not come to that. This is in general the sense & intendment of the Text and Context, but to take a little more particularly view of it we have here:

1. In the beginning of this Chapter an exceeding lively, sensible, starting and awakening representation made of the siege and sack of Jerusalem, the miserable destruction by the Babylonians, impending them, O ye Children of Benjamin gather your selves to flee out of the midst of Jerusalem; he bids them flee out of Jerusalem to escape the danger, or rather the sense of it seems to be that

they should gather themselves to go out of the City to make good their frontiers, and stand upon their defence against the enemy; as it is said of the Moabites, that when they heard the Kings were come up to fight against them, they gathered all that were able to put on Armour and stood in their borders, 2 King. 3. 21. Blow the Trumpet in Tekoa, that is give the alarm, which as now commonly by the beating of the Drum, was then done by the blowing of the Trumpet, Ezek. 7. 14. And set up a sign of fire in Beth-haccorem, as is wont to be done at this day to give notice of any sudden invasion, for evil appeareth out of the north and great destruction. Under all these terms, rallying of Men, sounding of Trumpets, firing of Beacons, Military usages, in such cases the Prophet notably sets forth what a dreadful alarm the Northern Army should give them. The state of Jerusalem thus invaded, is expressed, vers. 2. I have likened the daughter of Sion to a comely and delicate Woman; as in respect of Gods benign and gentle dealing with her, so in respect of her abuse of Divine goodness, and indulgence to Pride, Luxury, Wantonness, &c. The Shepherds with their Flocks shall come unto her, they shall pitch their tents against her, round about they shall feed every one in his place; the words either plainly shew Jerusalems utter destruction, she should be so destroyed, that sheep should feed in her, *jam seges est ubi Troia fuit*, or under the similitude of the Shepherds, and their Flocks pitching their tents against her, round about the Caldeans with their Armies, the Captains with their Companies which should begirt them round, and besiege and hem them in on every side is set forth and expressed: It followeth, prepare War against her, arise and let us go up at noon; Wo unto us for the day goeth away, for the shadows of the evening are stretched out, arise and let us go up by night, and let us destroy her Palaces, wherein is to be described the zeal and spirit of the enemy to the work their restless industry at it day and night, and their very impatience with themselves that they had not effected it; all tending to set forth the woful destruction that their enemies should work them.

But how doth the Prophet thus speak, Gather, Rally, blow the Trumpet, fire the Beacon, &c. Was there any enemy in sight? Was the Babylonian Army now in their borders? No, they probably enjoyed sundry years patience after this, and before the destruction here spoken of came upon them; but the Prophet thus speaks all along in the present tense, speaks as if the Caldeans were upon them, makes such a presentation of things as if present, and even now in their eyes and ears, that a dead, dull, secure, senseless people might be quickened and awakened indeed. God would and we should make evil present in the threatening that we may put away and avoid it; Noah being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear prepared an Ark.

2. In what followes in the 6. and 7. verses, he layes forth the causes of this sore impending destruction that he had described; it seemed unreasonable to Festus to send a Prisoner and not withal to signify the Crimes laid against him, Act. 25. ult. As God wants not, so he is not wanting to give (the Scripture is full of it) the reason of all the evils that he threatens to do, or doth against any; so here (according to his usual manner elsewhere) he gives the reason of that great destruction brought so near them in the threatening of the former verses, viz. Jerusalems abominable and boundless wickedness. Thus hath the Lord of Hosts said, hew down trees and cast amount against Jerusalem, this is the City to be visited, she is wholly oppression in the midst of her. This is the City to be visited, not a City, but the City above all other Cities, deserving and designed to be visited, but how visited? not in a way of favour, and care, and kindness, as sometimes that term is intending not by Prophets, and the tenders of grace and mercy, Jerusalem had been thus visited, but she had not known the day of her visitation, but in wrath and judgment and by a destroying enemy; but why thus visited? she is wholly oppression, in the midst of her they are called not oppressing but oppression, to shew how superlatively

oppressive they were, and not only oppression, but wholly oppression, implying the general infection, the universal prevailing of this sin, 'tis added in the in the midst of her; not in her suburbs, out-skirts some odd and unobserved corners, was it thus; but it sought no covert, it was visible, evident, and eminent in her; it follows, as a fountain casteth out her waters, so she casteth out her wickedness; a Fountain casteth out her waters naturally, freely, incessantly, constantly, forcibly and abundantly; and thus did Jerusalem sin as those accustomed, habituated, naturalized to sin, as those that could not cease from ###, as those that knew no restraint nor bounds or end of sinning; as is further set forth in the following words, violence and spoil is heard in her before me. Continually is grief and wounds, the cry of Jerusalem went up like that of Sodom; poor Jerusalem, how is the faithfull City become an harlot, it was full of Judgement, Righteousness lodged in it, but now, murderers,

3. In the Text (which makes the third and last part of the Context) (having thus realized to them that sore and certain ruine that was inevitably coming upon them, if not prevented, as also laid before them, those great and wrath-provoking-sins, the causes of so great destruction) he comes earnestly & affectionately to call upon them, to be perswaded, cautioned and advised for the preventing of it: Be thou instructed, O Jerusalem, lest my soul depart from thee, lest I make thee desolate, a land not inhabited. This application made to them in the Text, is the use of the whole Context, the drift and scope, and design and tendency, & issue of all, is O that Jerusalem would be instructed, lest her God leave, and leaving lay her desolate. To give you in the sense and importance of the words we have in them: Two things to be considered, 1. Who is here spoken to, 2. What is spoken.

1. Who is here spoken to, and that is Jerusalem; Jerusalem to say nothing of its situation and outward strength and greatness) was the City of God, the City of the great King# the Holy City, the perfection of beauty, Israels Glory, and the joy of the whole Earth, loved of God in a special manner, and chosen to set his Name there: There was his Presence, his Worship, his Ordinances, his Oracles, his Prophets; there God shined and was known in her Palaces. At the first the Lord chose Israel from all the Nations of the World to be his People; and after, when Israel•ell and made defection from God he reserved Judah to be the upholder of his true Religion; and in Judah chose Jerusalem as the place of his Worship; so that as Israel was Gods peculiar People of all the World, so Judah was the best part of Israel, and Jerusalem the chief place of Judah: Jerusalem then was Gods special• peculiar People under that notion as appropriate to God, as ne•r to God as near might he. This Jerusalem God here speaks to. And what saith he to them? That's the

2. Thing to be considered, be thou instructed, &c. The words are Hortatory and Monitory, and Minatory; the Text in the run of it is mixed and made up of these, it is an Exhortation, or if you will an Admonition rather, and that under the severest commination. Note in it three things, 1. The Exhortation, or Admonition it self, 2. The manner of expressing it, and putting it home to the Persons concerned, 3. The Motives inforcing. 1. The Exhortation and admonition it self, the subject matter of it, be instructed [it] The Word signifies to be corrected, to to be instructed, to be amended in, and by being corrected, to be instructed is to know, and yet more than barely, meerly to know, to know (as the use of the term in Scripture language commonly signifies) so as to be affected and acted accordingly, to know not speculatively, notionally only, with a cold, dry, barren, unpractical knowledge, but to know with a consciencious feeling heart-affecting, operative knowledge to be instructed, is so to know and understand, take in and lay to ### the reason of things, as to be convinced, affected, cautioned, advised, counselled, perswaded, and in every respect accordingly concerned, and suitably wrought upon by it. We may fully take it up in these three things.

1. It implies conviction, which is a right, true apprehension of things, as indeed they are; a real understanding; how matters stand with us, or between God and us, to know things with application to our selves, or for our selves; as the phrase is, Job 5. ult. which is, indeed, our wisdom, therefore it is called the instruction of Wisdom, Prov. 15. 33. And we are called upon to hear instruction, and be wise, Prov. 8. 33.

2. It infers Contrition, in case all is not well with us, or seeing our selves (as it is said of Israel, Exod. 5. 19.) to be in evil case, Conviction works, Contrition and Repentance; a true sight of things infers and draws after it a due sense of things; hence that of Ephraim, after I was instructed I smote upon my thigh, Jer. 31. 19.

3. It includes and takes in Conversion, Conviction, working Contrition, Repentance works by #...# in the ### of it unto Conversion, in respect of which #...# of instruction (i. e. the Conviction and Contrition it works tending to and ending in Conversion) are said to be the way of Life, Prov. 6. 23. This is to be instructed, which is the matter of the Exhortation.

2. The manner of expressing it; Thou, O Jerusalem, be thou instructed; the terms are very Pathetical and full of affection: 'tis a passionate, quick, powerful and very moving mode of expression, putting home what is spoken to the Persons concerned; Be thou instructed, there is an emphasis upon this [Thou] thou that art in a special manner appropriated to God, thou that art eminently privileged above others, thou whom I have chosen, loved, set my heart, laid out my care and kindness upon, &c. Be ### instructed, O Jerusalem: Depth of sorrow, and height of ###, when our affections and passions are up, bring us in with our [###] our interjections and exclamations, as here, O Jerusalem, which carries in it great affection, and earnestness of expression.

3. The Motives enforcing it; Lest my soul depart from thee, lest I make thee desolate, a land not inhabited The Words hold forth ### first and second, or a double dreadful commination, in case the admonition given were not taken, were not attended to, lest my Soul depart from thee: The Soul of God is God himself, Job 23. 13. What the Soul desireth, even that he doth, i. e. What himself desireth. So#Judg. 10. 16. His Soul was grieved for the miseries of Israel, i. e. He was grieved, so that to say, lest my Soul depart from thee, is as much as to say, lest I depart from thee; and yet it is more than so to say, for though that be the meaning of it# yet this manner of speaking carries more in it; God so speaks as to affect them with a due apprehension of his deep concernment in what he so speaks, as a matter that his Soul, his Spirit was much in, when the soul is mentioned, a thing said to be done with the Soul, it implies our spirits to be much in it, as Isa 26. 9. With my Soul have I desired thee in the night, and with my Spirit within me will I seek thee early. So also God thus speaks to set forth and signifie to ### the with ### of his love and affection from them, lest #...# thee, or as the Original, according to your Marginal reading, •e loosed or disjoyned from thee, that is, lest I withdraw my love from thee, lest my mind be alienated; so it is rendred, Ezek. 23. 18. My mind was alienated from her, my mind or soul was loosed or disjoyned from her; the expression is the same with this of the Text cleaving or knitting of Soul to or with any is expressive of love and affection: It is said of Shechem, his Soul clave unto Dinah the Daughter of Jacob, and he loved the Damsel, Gen. 34. 3. So of Jonathan, that his soul was knit with the soul of David, and he loved him as his own-soul, 1 Sam. 18. 1. Now I say, as cleaving and knitting of Soul# to and with any, imports that we intirely and inwardly love and affect them, so for the soul to depart from any, be loosed or disjoyned from then implies disaffection, and an altogether alienation and estrang•• of mind from them, l•st my Soul depart from thee; then is,

much as to say, lest I utterly leave thee, lest I wholly withdraw my affections, and totally and finally take off my heart from thee.

And as is further threatned, lest I make thee desolate, a land not inhabited. The words are plain, and as plainly signifie not those gentler and corrective, but those consumptive, ruining, destroying, desolating, Judgments, that God taking off his heart from them, would bring upon them many afflictions; much of correction may possibly consist with the love and favour of God towards a People, or however, certain it is, that a People may severely smart under the effects of his displeasure, while yet his heart may be towards them, at least not wholly taken off from them; but when once it comes to this, that Gods Soul departs from a People, he puts himself in to ways of destruction towards them; when once his heart is taken off from them, his destroying hand is turned-upon them: He first casts off, and then cuts off a People; casts them first out of his heart, and then out of his sight.

It remains only to tell you that the [###] here prefixed, Lest my Soul depart from thee, lest I make thee desolate: This twofold lest hath a twofold look with it, as to either and both parts of the threatning; it looks both ways. 1. Upon the prevention of it, that by their being instructed what is here threatned, might be obviated and prevented. 2. Upon the unavoidableness of it, if they be not instructed, if they hearken not to counsel, no other is to be hoped or expected but that it will certainly come upon them. This manner of speaking, according to the common usage of it, see, Exod. 19. 22. Job 42. 8. implies as on the one hand a possibility of escaping what is so threatned, so be it that due use of means be attended to; so on the other hand, the impossibility of avoiding it in case of neglect: it holds forth not a probability, a danger only, but a certainty, that it means for prevention be not attended, the evil threatned will be inflicted, if Jerusalem be not instructed, Gods Soul will depart from her, &c. From the words thus opened, let me commend to you this great, considerable and concerning point of Doctrine, so, in it self, tho it fall (the more the pity) to so inconsiderable and feeble a hand to manage and improve it; namely.

DOCT. God so threatens to leave and lay waste, to take off his heart from, and turn his destroying hand upon his own People, as that it may, and that it may be prevented; yet so that if it be not, it will come to that: It concerns them therefore to be instructed, to be advised, to hearken to counsel, to bethink themselves, to be convinced, affected, repent, amend, convert and turn to God, lest they bring it to that woful pass.

We have three things in the Doctrine (and the Text is very full of them all) 1. That God so threatens to leave and lay waste, to take off his heart from, and turn his destroying hand upon his own People, as that it may, and that it may be prevented. 2. Yet God so threatens it, that if it be not prevented, it will come to that, he will certainly leave and lay them waste; take off his heart from them, and turn his destroying hand upon them. 3. It concerns them therefore, or these things considered things thus standing, to be instructed, to be advised, to hearken to counsel, to bethink themselves, to be convinced, affected, repent, amend, convert and turn to God, lest they bring it to that woful pass.

1. God so threatens to leave and lay waste to take off his heart from and turn his destroying hand upon his own People: i. e. His visible Covenant People, as that it may, and that it may be prevented. The manner of God in his threatnings, is to leave room for remedy; his end being that (if it may be) the threatned evil may be prevented: God doth not take a silent leave of his People (Jacob like from Laban) upon displeasure, steal away from them and say nothing, get him out of hearing before they hear any thing of it: He doth not break away from them suddenly and remedylesly, nor yet break in



upon them suddenly, surprise them (tho a sinful People) fall foul upon them in his wrath, cast them off, cut them off; no this is not the manner of God, whose delight is in mercy. But God threatens to leave his People, so that it may, and that it may be prevented: God never leaves his People but he first threatens, warns, advises, admonishes them; but he first bespeaks them as his People here; O be instructed: Our Bible so abounds with this, that it were endless and to men acquainted with Scripture, 'tis needless to give particular instances, God long and often threatned, and warned Israel and Judah of old, before he alienated his heart from them; called them Loammi, and gave them a Bill of Divorce, nor yet had Ephesus, and those other New-Testament Churches (tho now God makes quicker work than then) their Candlestick's removed, but after solemn & signal warning, for the prevention of it. And the reasons of it are,

Reas. 1. From Gods lothness to leave his People, his own, his Covenant People; the tender and indeared affection that he bears unto a People taken near unto himself; Gods affections are stronger, and he stands in closer relation to his Covenant People, than that he easily cast off and forsake them: The Lord will not forsake his People, 1 Sam. 12. 22. And in very deed, their being his People is founded upon such a bottom, even that of his free Grace, that is not easily slighted, as the reason there added shews; the Lord will not forsake his People, Because it hath pleased the Lord to make you his People. God having made any his People, and that of meer good pleasure, is not forward to cast off and forsake them: God not willingly afflicts, Lam. 3. 33. but much more loathly rejects his Covenant-people, as is notably set forth, Hos. 11. 8. How shall I give thee up Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee Israel? How shall I make thee as Adma, and set thee as Zeboim? My heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together. The great God who here (as commonly in Scripture) speaks of himself after the manner of men, to our understanding; gives us to understand in this strange, passionate and Rhetorical language; how hardly he brings his heart to it, to give up as to any more room in his affection, to deliver over unto destruction his own People: God (as I may say#) is at a set when it comes to this, it casts him into a deep deliberation & a sorely exercising conflict in his own thoughts about it; how doth he turn it with himself, and deeply, and inwardly, revolving the matter, question with himself about it? What give up Ephraim, deliver Israel, make Ephraim, make Israel as Adma and Zeboim? how can I do it? what deal thus by thee Ephraim, by thee Israel, by thee discard, destroy my own People as I have done? Sodom# how can I find in my heart to do it? how doth God roule this bitter pill in his mouth (with holy reverence be it spoken) and as unable to swallow it, at last spit it out? I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim; so exceeding loth is God to give up, to give over his People to destruction and therefore layes his threatning of it# so, as to leave room for remedy.

Reas. 2. That he might hereby try the love and affection of his People, whether they will let him go: God intimates to a People his leaving of them, threatens with it before he doth, that he may feel how their pulse beats towards him, what affections they have for him; how their love will strive and work upon such an occasion before God quite leaves a People, wholly takes off his heart from them; he is willing to sound theirs whether they have any affections left for him. You may read, Exod. 33. (the People having committed that great sin in making them Gods of gold) God tells them he will leave them, he will go no more in the midst of them; and to make them the more sensible of it, Moses takes the Tabernacle (the visible signe and token of Gods presence) and pitches it without the camp afar off; and now God looks and listens what they say to it, how they take it that he may accordingly deal with them: When God is about to leave his People because they provoke and set light by him, he

is yet willing to try them to the utmost whether they will so part with him; whether they will indeed let him go, or whether they will stir up themselves to take hold of him. You may see in, Ezek. 9. 10, 11. Chapters, God so signaling •his departure from his People in those several, gradual, visible, and observable removes of his Glory there mentioned, as if he had said, let them see me going, that I may see if they have any love or regard for me; God stands at every step, looks back, listens if there were any that minded or regarded.

Reas. 3. That they might have opportunity of striving to keep God with them, and be quickned and stirred up to the improvement of it; that they might, as the Prophet speaks, Isa. 55. 6. Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near. God makes offer to go from his People, threatens to be gone, speakes of leaving them that they may be effectually awakened to enquire what's the matter, to reform what's amiss, to repent of and part with those sins that are the causes of Gods threatned departure from them; by such intimations also, lest I leave you, lest my Soul depart from you: God would stir up his People, not to let him go, shake them up from their loose sitting to him, and quicken them to lay faster hold on him.

Reas. 4. and last; That when God hath left a People, and leaving them left them to destruction, they may be lost inexcusable; that when God is gone he hath inded cast off a People, his Soul is departed from them, his heart and hand turned against them (all means of precaution, prevention improved with them proving unavailable) they may not have to complain but of themselves, and their own wilful and remediless self-destroying folly. God goes not from a People but with observation, and after ### and evident premonitions and warnings, they shall not have ### say, alas, how hath God left us? It was sudden, unexpected, unthought of, else what would we not have done to prevent it: But God will have to say, not only you gave me cause to go by your sins, but (as it were) leave to go by your silence, your senselessness; you know, and heard, and saw me going, and yet were no more affected, stirred, no more then as those# wholly unconcerned about it, or well enough contented with it.

2. Yet God so threatens it that if it be not prevented, it will come to that, he will certainly leave and lay them waste, take off his heart from them, and turn his destroying hand upon them. If Jerusalem, Gods own People will not be instructed, let God threaten, warn, call upon, admonish, counsel them, nothing takes with them# they lay nothing to heart, apply themselves to no means of prevention but remain unadmonishable, incorigible irreclaimable under all: God will leave and give over such a People, though his own People: See, Jer. 32. 31, 32, 33. verses. God tells them he will remove them from before his Face, because of all the evil which they did, and because though he taught them rising up early, and teaching them, yet they hearkened not to receive instruction, so 2 Chron 36. 14. &c. God had compassion on his People, and on his dwelling Place: And hence hare with them, forbare them, continued with much patience in the use of abundance of means to wait upon them, but they continued to sin, and slighted all until the wrath of the Lord arose against his People, till there was no remedy. God warns in mercy, and may continue to warn in much mercy; but to sin, to continue to sin against warning, will at last bring wrath without remedy: And the Reasons of it are:

Reas. 1. Because such is the nature of sin, such its contrariety unto God so loathsome it is in his sight, that impenitently, irreclaimably persisted in, it will work any People, even his own People out of his heart. God hates, abhorrs, abominates sin as the Scripture abundantly witnesseth; It is that abominable thing that he hates, Jer. 44. 4. Sin finds so little favour in Gods heart, that he cannot abide the sinner in his sight; he so hates the work that he hates the worker of iniquity: The foolish shall not stand in thy sight, thou hatest the workers of iniquity, Psal. 5. 5. Not only for sin did the Lord

eject, abhorre these heathen nations whom he cast out before his People, for they committed all these things, and therefore I abhorred them, Levit. 20. 23. But even his own Israel they were defiled with their own works, and went a whoring with their own inventions; therefore was the wrath of the Lord kindled against his People, insomuch that he abhorred his own inheritance, and gave them into the hand of the heathen, &c. Psal. 106. 39, 40, 41. And what a fearful word is that from God concerning his own People, the People of his choice and love, Amos 6 8. The Lord hath sworn by himself, saith the Lord God of Hosts, I abhorre the excellency of Jacob, and hate his Palaces, therefore will I deliver up the City and all that is therein: So much was the heart of God alienated from them, so deeply was he disaffected to them by their sinful and unworthy deportments, of which you have mention made in the foregoing Context. God loved Israel, Hos: 11. 1. Yea, but sin (that make-bate sin that separateth chief friends) was of power to expel them both, his heart and house for the wickedness of their doings, I will drive them out of my house, I will love them no more, Hos. 9. 15. Never is God so wedded unto any People but they may sin so as utterly to work themselves out of his affections.

Reas. 2. Because it is not for any worthiness in them more than in any other People that God is taking them to be his People, and setting his love upon them, as God tells Israel, Deut. 7. 7, 8. if they therefore forfeit distinguishing grace and mercy by their unworthiness, they neither were, nor are better than others, nor is there any reason why God should continue them to be his People, continue his love and affection to them; regard-them more, or make any other or better account of them than of any other People: See, Amos 6. 1, 2.

Reas. 3 Because Gods free Promise and Covenant is conditionall, if they will be his People he will be their God, if they will own him he will own them# if they will continue with him he will continue with them, but if they will none of him, he will none of them; if they cast off him he will cast off them, 2 Chron. 15. 2. The Lord is with you while ye be with him, and if ye seek him he will be found of you, but if ye forsake him he will forsake you. God therefore gives this as the reason of his deserting them, their deserting him, 2 Chron. 24. 20. Because ye have forsaken the Lord he hath also forsaken you; So God tells them, breaking with him that he will break with them, Nam, 14. 34. Ye shall know my breach of Promise. Not that God breaks Covenant (never did he yet suffer, nor never will his faithfulness to fail) but they failing forfeited (as is the case in conditional Promises) the obligation on his part God keeps touch with us as we keep touch with him: Not that this is so to be understood, as if there were any thing in us. or doable by us to merit, deserve, or make due in a way of Justice Gods gracious presence with us, nor yet as if an uncertain and undetermined will and purpose in God, respecting his dealings with a People, took its measures from them, were moved, changed, determined according to their carriage towards him, nothing less; all is of him; who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; and of his free Grace (yea, the very condition) whose it is to work in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure: Yet Gods absolute will and purpose in: himself is conditional in the dispensation of it unto us: He takes no conditions from us, but he gives conditions to us, and still reserving to himself according to his own sovereign-pleasure, to work the conditions in us which himself requireth of us, he dealeth with us according to them. And in very de•d in this way God wonderfully glorifies his Wisdom, Goodness, Justice in his dispensations, in propounding the most reasonable, equal conditions as what can be more than to be with them while they are with him; to be found of them seeking him, not to forsake them, but forsaking him, solemnly advising them for the best, and then leaving a People to their own choice and dealing with them according to it.

Reas. 4. Lastly. I might add, because God is most highly dishonoured, most exceedingly provoked by the sins of his own People; a Peoples being Gods own, and the more he is owning of them, is so far from palliating and extenuating, that it greatly aggravates and augments their sin against God, and their Judgment from him. You only have I known of all the Families of the Earth, therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities, Amos 3. 2. There is not that in the sin of others that is in theirs; others may sin better cheap then they may do, whom God hath known and owned above others, they sin against greater Light, and Love, and Grace than do others; the relation they stand in to God, and the mercies that in that relation they stand under from him, exceedingly aggravate their sin: do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish People and unwise? is he not thy Father that hath bought thee, that hath made thee and established thee, Deut. 32. 6. and besides by vertue of this relation, their sin is more against God, and so more to him, more deeply resented by him than the sin of others: God can much better bear the misbehaviours, and undutiful carriages of persons at a greater distance than in his own family, his own Children, this goes near him: When the Lord saw it he abhorred them, because of the provoking of his Sons and of ### Daughters, Deut. 32. 19.

3. It concerns them therefore, or these things considered, things thus standing to be instructed, to be advised, to hearken to counsel, to bethink themselves, to be convinced, affected, repent, amend, convert, and turn to God, lest they bring it to that woful pass, Zeph. 2. 1, 2. Gather your selves together; yea, gather together a •ation not desired, before the decree bring forth, &c. how earnestly doth God call upon them to recollect themselves (for that seems to be the sense of it) so rally their thoughts to bethink themselves; yea, to bethink themselves and be advised, before it be too late. But this is so Consonant with, and evident from the whole current of Scripture: See, Jer. 4. 4, 5, & 26. 2, 3, & 36. 2, 3. That it may suffice to have pointed you to those places, in which, with many more, God manifestly admonishes his People of this duty, and presseth upon them the consideration how nearly it concerns them to be instructed, warned, reclaimed, look about them, bethink themselves before those threatned evils, as yet evitable, unavoidably overtake them: 'Tis also so clear a consequent from, and the grounds and reasons are so obvious in what hath been already said, that I shall not stand further upon it, but proceed to Application.

And, the only use we shall make of it is (according to the intendment and scope, and spirit of the Text) for solemn admonition and awakening: Give me leave (your call hath done it; yea, the call of God necessitates it) to apply my self to you with all possible plainness, and faithfulness in the Name of the great God (whose unworthy spokes-man unto you this day I am) and in his wo•d, according to the tenor (as we have it here) of his awful warning to his People of old. Thus saith the Lord, be thou instructed, O New-England, Be thou instructed, O Connecticut Colony, lest my Soul depart from thee, lest I make thee desolate, a Land not inhabited: Jerusalem was, New-England is, they were, you are Gods own, Gods Covenant People, and what concerned them in that their day, no less concerns you in this your day, this word that the ### to Jacob, and it lighted upon Israel, comes now to be applied to you; change but the persons & the relation is the same, and as to condition it is so much the same, that (as some have observed) never were any people more nearly to be parallel'd with them: put but in New-Englands name instead of that of Jerusalem, and to you belongs, to you is the word of the solemn caution and admonition sent; and O that you would be perswaded to take it home to your selves that it might sink down into your ears, and take hold upon all your hearts; And that it may so do,

1. Consider, it is possible that New-England may sin away God; we may so sin, as to provoke the Lord to leave and lay us desolate: What though we have layen near Gods heart (as I perswade my

self this poor Land hath done) sin and falseness to God may work us out of Gods affections, alienate his mind from us, as it did from his dearest Judah of old; What? though God dearly affecting us, hath been tenderly and carefully protecting us (as is evident he hath done) we may by our sins so provoke, grieve, disoblige him, that he may change both heart and hand towards us: Was it not so with his own People, the subjects of his antient care and kindness: In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the Angel of his presence saved them; in his love, and in his pity he redeemed them, and carried them all the dayes of old; but they rebelled and vexed his holy spirit, therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and fought against them, Isai. 63. 9, 10. Never were any People so deeply fixed in the heart of God, or so eminently priviledged with the effects of his Love, but their sinful wayes, their unworthy and unsuitable deportments towards the God of their mercies hath wrought them out of his favour, and brought them under his •orest displeasure• I have forsaken mine house, I have left mine heritage, I have given the dearly beloved of my soul into the hand of her enemyes, Jer. 12. 7. Gods own People, how much soever he hath owned them, or how tenderly affected soever he hath born himself towards them, may not conclude from thence (while they take no care to carry themselves accordingly) that God will not forsake and destroy them; indeed such a presumptuous confidence men may have, as they had, Jer. 7. 4. &c. But as you may there see God rejects their confidence, beats them off from it, bids them not trust in lying words, but bids them go; go ye now unto my place which was in Shilo, where I set my Name at the first, and see what I did unto it for the iniquity of my People Israel; and how many after examples of a like nature hath God added to that first president# so that (as one saith) we have more places to go to than Shilo. The Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight; there was none left but the Tribe of Judah only, 2 King, 17. 18. And the Lord said, I will remove Judah also out of my •ight, as I have removed Israel, and I will cast off this City Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house of which I have said my Name shall be there, 2 King. 23. 27. And with like severity hath the Lord (in New-Testament times) proceeded against Ephesus, and those other Asian Churches to the utter rejecting and unchurching of them, according to what was threatned, Rev. 2. 5. And are all these things nothing to us? can we look upon what befel them and not be concerned, to think what may come upon our selves? the Lord grant that by all these instructing examples we may be instructed, lest it befall us as it hath done them; be we awakenedly apprehensive that it may so do, believe we that Gods Soul may depart from us, he may make us desolate as he hath done them.

2.#Consider it looks very threateningly lest it come to this; it is not only possible that it may, but too too probable, exceeding tremendously suspicious that it will come to it; to be plain with you (I dare be no other) according to the present face, and frame, and posture of things amongst us, we are in a very fair way (or more fitly to express a matter of that nature in a very formidable way to bring it to that woful pass, this is of sad, of very sad but of very sensible consideration, to those whose thoughts are exercised about, and have any discerning in matters of this nature, who sees not (& who that is awake doth not tremble to see?) that things are going, yea every day more than other growing towards that fatal issue; Gods people are not wont to fall off from him at once, nor he to take his farewell all at once; there are many dark, and crooked, and winding, and downward steps before it comes to the bottom of this break-neck hill, with a Godfor•aking and forsaken people; is it of no less c•ertain than solemn observation that Gods New-England People sit looser unto God than they have sometimes done, and that he also sits looser unto them: it looks alas, it looks as if those dear and ancient Friends were about to part, and were even standing upon parting termes one with another. Consider we our wayes towards God and his wayes towards us, and the one and the other, and both together will present us with an aspect of a very threatenning tendency towards his utter-leaving of us.

1. Consider we our wayes and our doings towards God, and see if we have not cause, much cause to fear that God will leave us, take off his heart from us, and turn his destroying hand upon us. And here,

1. More generally Consider, Do not our sinful wayes and evil doings give us cause to fear lest the Lord leave us; the evilness, sinfulness of our wayes and doings is so evident and apparent that there needs no secret search: how many above-board instances might be given you, of which we may say, it is found upon all these; our iniquities testifie against us, our pride, and many other sins testifie to our faces the truth of this, beyond all denial, and being so, how threatningly doth it look, that God will leave us, taken off his love from us, and lay a wrathful hand upon us ### indeed sinners are prone to have slight thoughts of God too as to his making so great a matter of it that he should thus do; but if you will take up true Scriptural notions of it, and such as God himself puts upon it, verily you will find that in it that will tell you that it is a righteous thing with God thus to deal by a people so demeaning towards him, and that they therein receive that recompence of their wayes, that it meet. What is sin (I mean not inevitable, unwilling and lamented weakness and infirmities, but sin purposely committed, and impenitently persisted in) I say, what is sin, such manner of sinning, in the true Scripture notion of it in the judgment of God, which is according to truth? is it not a forsaking God? and have we not cause to fear forsaking God, he will forsake us? is it not a departing, a going away from God? and we leaving God, may we not expect he will leave us? is it not a casting off God? and we casting off him? have we not reason to think he will cast off us? is it not a revolting from God? a revolting from under the Lord? a casting off his Government? a rebelling against him? and what can we count upon or look for thus doing, but that God should turn his back upon us, cast us out of his favour and protection, deal with us as Rebels, become our enemy, and fight against us? yea, is it not a hating God, an abhorring him in your souls. (whatsoever you call or count if God calls and counts it so) and can you thus dealing by the blessed God hope other or better than that his Soul should loath them whose soul abhors him, that he should repay them that hate him to their face, to destroy them? in a word, sin is a heart departing from God in the root of it, and a li•e departing from God in the fruit of it: men having first withdrawn their love and affections from God as the consequent of it withdraw their duty and allegiance, and being thus revolted and gone from God in heart and life, in affection and action, in spirit and conversation; have we not just cause to fear lest Gods soul depart from us, and he withdraw all the outward effects of his care and goodness towards us, and so make us desolate?

2. Consider further, and somewhat more particularly; are not those •ins to be found, yea, do they not abound and grow ### amongst us, that are very gravamenous, nautious distastful unto God that eminently te•d to disaffect God, disjoynt his soul from us# and provoke his sorest Displeasure against us.

First, Let me lay my hand upon that that lies at the bottom of all our other sins, and which of all our unkindnesses towards a good God he takes most tenderly, and layes deepest to heart, and that is our unworthy entertainments of the glorious Gospel of the blessed God; our receiving of the grace of God in vain, the neglect of that great salvation, to continue impenitent, unconverted; unbelieving under the Gospel is to sin to the outmost, being the outstanding of uttermost grace and mercy, and brings wrath to the uttermost indeed; if uttermost love, be slighted, uttermost grace rejected, what but uttermost wrath is to be expected? in the Gospel God hath made a way for his mercy, he hath poured forth all his grace, he has no more, he hath drawn forth his soul, his tenderest Bowels mercys to the other end to poor needy sinners, and for them to set at naught and slight all this; this if any thing will make God forget to be gracious: nothing wins upon the heart of God more than the hearty entertainment

of the Gospel, but nothing wounds God more, weans his Soul from a people more than a regardless contempt of it: for a company of poor, miserable, wretched, abject, undone, damned sinners to put a slight upon the strange, wonderful, a•tonishing grace of the great God in Jesus Christ towards them, bid him keep his Christ, his Pardon, his Grace, his Peace, his Life, his Salvation to himself, as in effect they do that repent not, nor believe the Gospel; I must leave you to imagine how God takes this; is not this the Salvation that is by Jesus Christ? the thing that God hath set his heart upon? is it not the most pleasing, contentful design (to the utmost that we know) that ever he engaged in? hath not God laid out of the greatest Skill and Cost upon it? and hath he not projected and promised to himself the greatest revenue of glory from it? and for us to slight and set at naught, and what in us lies wholly frustrate it, will God, can God take this well? we worms can take it grievously enough to have our design frustrated, that we have beaten our heads about, laid out our selves for, set our heart upon, and promised our selves much from, think then what a corrosive it is to the heart of God to be so dealt by in that which he hath set his mind upon, never any thing more: O sirs, would you study to thwart, to cross God, to do him the greatest despight; there is no way like this, and will God bear it to have the deep counsels of his Wisdom derided, the great purpose, the pleasure of his will opposed, the wonder of his love slighted, the riches of his grace despised, his Son the darling of his Soul contemned and rejected, yea himself in all that he is, and has, and can do for poor creatures (all his gracious and merciful overtures to them notwithstanding) utterly set at naught; will not God visit for these things? will not his Soul be disjoynted from, and avenged upon such a people as this?

Again, Are we not guilty of great Apostacy from God? a### greatly distastful to him; If any man draw back my soul shall have no pleasure in him, Heb. 10. 38. and are not we of those that draw back in such degree (the Lord grant it may not be unto perdition) that we have much cause to fear lest his soul depart from us? is there not with too many of us too evident a defection from God and the good wayes of the Lord in their very judgments and opinions? in their judgments they are not the men they were, they are not in their judgments such fast friends to the power of godliness, as sometimes; they do not lay that weight, that necessity upon a close walking with God, and serious diligence in a way of duty upon Closet, Family or more publick performances, as sometimes, so that if men do not begin to cavil against, or question about these things, where is the rule for daily secret Prayer, meditation, self-examination? or where is the rule that a man must every day read a Chapter or two in his Family? yet their Judgments are secretly, insensibly wrought off from laying the weight and stress upon these things, as to the constant, diligent, accurate, thorough attendance of them, as that they can go out with many neglects, and many remiss, slight, hasty, hal• performances, and their Consciences not much reprove them; the working out their salvation with fear and trembling, utmost care and diligence the striving to enter, and taking the Kingdom of Heaven by violence, begins to look more than needs; and the exercise of self-denial in the holding their senses under restraint, and government and constant watchfulness over their hearts and wayes, seems a kind of overstrictness: Men are gone off in their judgments, stand not so clearly and fixedly perswaded in their own minds of the necessity and importance of such attendancies, and begin to take up an opinion that there needs not so much ado that all this is not of that absolute necessity, but that it will be a tolerable thing, at least to abate somewhat of it. And too evident it is that we are much backsliden from God in our affections and conversations; we have lost our first love and left our first works; if the love of New-Englands espousals be now sought for, it will not be found, and if the footsteps of those that first followed the Lord into this, as then unsowen Land, be enquired after how dim and almost worn out will they appear? where is that ancient love, desire, delight to and in the Ordinances of God, and all the means

of Communion with him, and that careful and exact walking with God in all those wayes of duty, both towards God and Man now become? Verily, we are gone backward, backward and not forward; and verily these backward retrograde God forsaking Motions carry such hateful unthankfulness unto God, such to be abominated falseness, perfidiousness to him; yea, they cast such reproach and contempt upon God, put such a publick slight upon him, put him to such open shame in the eye of the world, for a People after some tryal made of him and of his service, thus to decline, shrink back from and forsake him, that we have cause to fear God, will take himself in honour bound to right himself in the ruine of such a People. I tremble to think (the truth of the charge there made considered) how wishly that threatning looks upon us, Jer. 15. 6. Thou hast forsaken me, saith the Lord, thou art gone backward, therefore will I stretch out my hand against thee and destroy thee.

Again, Is there not amongst us that hypocrisie, formality, overlyness, outsidness in the matters of God and Godliness? That God that searcheth the heart, and desireth truth in the inward parts, cannot but see and hate a form of godliness, the upper Garment of Saintship (though even that now with many grows thin, and threed-bare, is in fashion, and a great wear amongst us; but inside Christianity, the power of godliness is but here and there found: there is an outside godliness, an external show still with us, we read, we hear, we pray, we receive Sacraments, we have our Conference Meetings, our Lectures, Fasts, and other Solemnities; we are conversant in external acts of Worship but inside godliness, and that in which indeed the life and soul of it lies, the loving God, •earing God, trusting in God, delighting in and living upon God in the wayes and means of communion with him; these internal, vital acts of worship, where almost are they to be found? of us may God revive the old complaint, and say, this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips, do honour me# but have removed their heart far from me, Isai. 29. 13. and have we not cause to fear that God's soul, his affections, his Salvations will be far from those whose hearts are •ar from him# those that having a form of godliness, but denying the power of it, God hath bidden his own from such turn away, and may we not expect that himself will much more do it; how can we say we love him, when our hearts are not with him, or if we do so say, will God be mockt? will he accept us? yea will he not detest us for a dissembled profession of what is not, methinks destruction from God should be a terrour to us when we read what near neighbours a hypocritical nation,& the people of Gods wrath are as we do? in that Isal. 10. 6. Again, a cold, dead, indeed indifferent luke-warm spirit, a temper greatly nautious unto God, Rev. 3. 16. many may their portion be made fat, and their meat plenteous, as to temporals little mind or matter which end goes forward as to spirituals, or as to civils, in order thereunto, methinks men seem to have spent (alas lamentably to have mispent) their zeal about matters of Religion I cannot but remember what sad and breaking contentions we have had not many years since about Church-priviledges, and that earnest stickling that hath been with men for the obtainment of them, for themselves and theirs: A charitable heart would sure have thought that mens souls had longed for those wayes and means of communion with God, and that a zeal for the enjoyment of God in all his Ordinances had influenced those contendings for and about them: But alas, who can but be sad upon it to see the end obtained, and a door set open to those enjoyments,& such a dull spirit of indifferency as to these things, at least as to making any real and answerable improvement of them: is this our zeal for God, his Ordinances, the good things of his house, that chills and dyes if it have not a spirit of contention to cherish and keep it warm? this fire withdrawn, we discover our selves, as indeed we are a cold, lukewarm people; verily it must be some more kindly heat that must keep us warm upon the heart of God, or we shall wamble upon his stomack and be in eminent danger to be spued out of his mouth.



Again, Are we not guilty of great ingratitude unto God, of unworthy unthankful slighting and undervaluing the great things he hath done for us, the blessings of the upper and nether springs, Spiritual, Temporal Mercies, with a liberal hand bestowed upon us? Verily, I think we have run deep into Divine displeasure upon this account; and that if ever People, New-England hath cause to fear, lest wrath be upon them for their not rendring again according to the benefits done unto them. Men have known too well how to be discontent, and repine and murmur; but how to be thankful they have not known: If things have not gone exactly according to their humor; if they have been ever so little crossed, or pinched, or charged, the Magistracy hath been discontentful, the Ministry discontentful, they could even wish a change like pettish Israel, Let us make a Captain and return into Egypt: Much alas, too much of the spirit of that unthankful, untoward, froward, discontented murmuring generation that was so grievous to God hath been amongst us, and hath given us cause to fear that partaking of their sins; we shall partake of their plagues: Alas for the day it looks, as if a provoked God were about to bring it upon an unthankful People, when we shall know the worth of those mercies in their want, which we have not known in their enjoyment, when Justice shall be turned into Gall, and the fruit of Righteousness into Hemlock; when as Mic. 7. 3, 4. The Judge asketh for a reward, and the great man uttereth his mischievous desire; so they wrap it up the best of them, and as a brier, and the most upright of them sharper than a thorn hedg, In that day will unthankful New-England be moved to know the worth of their precious, but low pris'd liberties; as sensible as were the men of Succoth under Gideons severer discipline.

Again, Our great pride prognosticates sadly; I do not mean only or mainly those toys and unmanly vanities that the minds of younger, and too many older persons are set upon, though sad and bad enough it be, that the hearts of Men and Women, made for a better place, are got into their sleeves, but that haughtiness of spirit that predominates amongst us, every no body would be some body, & persons of a commoner rank, look but too earnestly towards the upper end of the World: men know not their places, The Child behaves himself proudly against the antient, and the base against the honourable: Mens conditions sit uneasie, and their callings suit them not, and they are cast upon many occasions of temptation, and more especially that stout-heartedness that transports men to an awlness, not only of man, as vested with his authority, they will bear no yoke in any relation; but even of God himself; they fear not him in his Word nor Works; and what shall we think of this pride? Is not pride amongst those things; put first amongst those things that God hates? that are abomination to him? Prov. 6. 16, 17. And will God (think we) love or loath a proud People? Hath God respect to the lowly? but doth he know the proud afar off? Psal 138. 6. And may not our hearts ake to think how far we are from the favourable and respectful knowledge of God? and how superciliously, and at what a distance God holds us? Hath God said, That to this Man will I lock, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my words? Isa. 66. 2. How are persons of a proud and contemptuous spirit, that are so far from trembling at the Word of God# that they can freely, and fearlesly despise both it and them that bring it resented by him; and to conclude, If pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall, Pro. 16. 18. we have cause from the consideration of what of it hath been amongst us to fear what will follow.

Again, Our great worldliness looks woefully upon us; the World, the love of the world, the zeal of the World is so deeply gotten into the hearts and lives of men, and hath so thoroughly possessed them, that there is no room for any thing else; their eyes and their heart are not but for their covetousness: There was a Generation that first sought the Kingdom of God, but now with many it is the world, the

world that is first and last sought, or if the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness have any thing from them, it is but the leaving of the world they are put off with: Is covetousness, so Paul, Col. 3. 5. is the love of the world spiritual adultery; so Jam. chap. 4. 4. And doth God hate these sins as much as in dayes of old? Can we think that such an Idolatrous, whorish spirit that is found in the midst of us will not alienate the mind of God from us, is the friendship of the world Enmity with God, whosoever will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God, Lam. 4. 4. is the love of the world and the things of the world, exclusive of the love of God, If any man love the World, the love of the Father is not in him, 1 Joh. 3. 15. We may well fear, and not without a cause, that the love of the world will leave us as little room in Gods heart as it hath done him in ours.

Again, That great sensuality that is amongst us, and the therein high abuse of Divine bounty: How can it but be very evilly resented by God, when (as one aptly, and upon like solemn occasion exprest it to you, as indeed the matter is) men fight against God with his own goodness, turn the edge to his kindness against himself; not serving him with joyfulness and with gladness of heart in the abundance of all things (but as much as in them lyes) make his Power and Providence, his bounty and care, to serve with their iniquities, when men grow •at and kick# instead of having their hearts lift up in the wayes of God, who hath made them to prosper; they lift up the heel against him, when Gods Corn and Wine is made provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts of it: the better God is to them, the more wanton, sensual, unclean, intemperate they are: O this galls, this provokes; How shall I pardon thee for this, when I fed them so to the full, then they committed adultery, &c. shall I not visit for these things, &c. Jer. 5. 7, 9.

Other things might be mentioned (but the time would •ail to insist upon particulars) the want of love and peace (alas for the great decay of a spirit of love amongst Christians) may make us fear that the God of love and peace will not take up his abode with us; the want of Righteousness (who sees not great unrighteousness amongst us) may make us doubt that the Righteous Lord who loves Righteousness, and whose countenance doth behold the upright will remove his gracious presence farr from us; so want of Truth, unfaithfulness, mens words, their promises, they are but like the hypocrites hope, they have no hold in them, and do but deceive them that depend upon them; a great and common sin, and we may well think greatly provoking and distastful unto him whose stile is the God of Truth; but I must not follow these things any further, enough hath been said to tell us that their is much of that of those sins found amongst us that eminently tend to disaffect God towards us.

3. Consider yet again, as those are sins greatly nautious and distastful unto God, eminently tending to disaffect him towards, and to take off his heart from a People, so as they are found amongst us, they fall under such considerations, such circumstances, such aggravations as cannot but render them exceeding grievous to the very soul of God, and superlatively provoking; but to intimate, in the Land of uprightness we have dealt thus wickedly: 'Tis the noble Vine that God planted so lately that hath brought forth such degenerate fruits, such wild grapes as these: Can this but be greatly provoking?

Again, so have these roots of bitterness sprung up, that there by many are defiled; these are not the sins of some few, but we are many that have transgressed in these things: The evils mentioned (at least as to many of them) are such as the body of this People are deeply leaven'd and tainted with, and certainly when such sins grow common, we have cause to think what is coming.

But again above all, The impenitent persistance in these evils, a•ter all that God hath said and done to reclaim us, looks dreadfully upon us: God hath tryed us with enterchangeable dispensations,

mercies and corrections, afflictions and salvations have had their turns and returns upon us, yet we sin still, he hath smitten; yea, he hath consumed us but we have not received correction; he hath knock us off with many a hard blow; yea, with blow upon blow, and breach upon breach, but we hold fast deceit and refuse to return: What shall God do with such a People? what may they expect from him? Because I have purged thee and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee, Ezek. 24. 13. Our wayes towards God then give us much cause to fear lest God leave and lay us desolate.

2. Let us consider Gods wayes towards us, and see if they also do not give us ground of jealousie that the Lord is about to leave us: Evident it is that the countenance of God is not towards us as heretofore; the face of Divine Providence is full of awful indiciums that God is taking off his heart, and withdrawing his gracious presence from us: What said poor Gideon, If the Lord be with us why then is all this befallen us? and where are all his miracles that our fathers told us of? May not we so say, if the Lord be with us, if he be not about to leave us, have not begun to disaffect us and estrange himself from us, why then is all this befallen us? and where are those signal tokens of his presence, and all his wonder-working providences that our fathers have told us of? Is he with us as he was with them? Alas for the solemn and certain symptoms that he is leaving and forsaking of us: Is God with us in his Ordinances, or is he with us in the wayes of his Providences as sometimes? Let us a little consider of either.

1. Is God with us in his Ordinances as sometimes. Two Things here.

1. Is God hearing and answering our Prayers as sometimes; our former times have afforded us many evident answers of prayers; some memorable instances of which are upon publick record, to which more might be added; but how hath it been with us of latter dayes? have not our most solemn addresses unto God greatly failed us of those signal and speedy answers? hath not God shut out; yea seemed angry against the prayers of his People in the time of the Indian War? and since have we not had matter of sorrowful observation as to this? To omit other instances, that second and sorer flood that was upon this River, not two years since, falling out presently upon a day of publick fasting and prayer, as it is published to the world amongst remarkable Providences, so cannot but be to us of awful remembrance and remark as to what we are speaking; God hath been nigh unto us in all things that we have called upon him for; yea, mercy hath prevented us; before we have called, God hath answered, and while we have been yet speaking he hath heard; but now, alas, what cause to complain, we fast and he seeth not, we afflict our souls and he taketh no knowledg.

2. Is God owning and influencing his Ordinances the means of his Grace as sometimes? Was it once a truth (which that Reverend Person who Preached to you now eleven years since, upon this occasion told you) that our Sion had multitudes converted to Christ? Hartford had so, New-haven had so, Windsor had so, and many other Churches in this Land, multitudes converted to Christ: How is it now? are not our Converts comparatively few the grape-grainings of the vintage, now and then one comes popping in. And methinks also the word Sacraments and other Ordinances are deformed as to what they have been; God hath unclothed them, left them in a degree forsaken of his sometimes working power and vertue towards the souls of his own, they are not affected, humbled, quickened, raised, warmed, comforted by them, as sometimes they do not prosper, thrive, flourish and bring forth fruit under them as heretofore; they do not find them such a feast of fat things, and so full of marrow as in former dayes; and can we have sadder token of Gods withdrawing and estranging himself from

us than his failing his Ordinances of the wonted influences of his spirit, both as to Conversion and Edification.

2. Is God with us in the wayes of his Providence as sometimes? How many wayes, and for how long a time hath God manifested his displeasure against us, his dis-favour towards us: 'tis evident by the operations of his hand that the affections of his heart are not to us as heretofore, for though it be a truth that afflictions upon particular persons may have other causes, yet it generally concluded that publick calamities are certain tokens of Divine displeasure: when God smites a Nation, a People, a Country with War, Sicknesse, Famine, &c. They are undoubted testimonies of his anger: And how hath God done by us? hath he not multiplied his witnesses# against us? hath not the sword gone through our Land? hath not sore diseases had their annual returns upon us; yea, of late both Summer and Winter abode with us to the taking of many from us? and how sadly hath God of late years smitten us in all the labours of our hands by blastings, mildews, catterpillars, worms, tares, floods and droughts? And truly not only for all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still; but in all this God seems to be making a way for his anger, that he may pour forth all his wrath. Observable is the way and manner of Gods dealing with his People of old, and the method of his gradual proceeding against them, till at last he utterly rejected and destroyed them: 'tis said, 2 King. 13. 23. God would not destroy them, neither cast them from his presence as yet: He had not yet done it, neither would he yet do it, but how even then he was making way for it; you may see, 2 King, 12. 1•. He began to cut them short. And 2 Chron. 28, 19. He brought them low; and hath not God begun to cut us short? and doth he not go on to cut •s shorter and shorter? hath he not brought us low? & is he not still bringing us lower and lower? how many wayes hath God been, and still is short-cutting, and low-bringing of us? He hath cut us short of our numbers, brought us low by taking away many, and many Righteous Ones from us: hath he not (of late years especially) bereft us of many Magistrates, Ministers, and other useful Persons, and added that late sore breach, and causefully bitterly lamented loss to the rest? And hath he not cut us short in our comforts, brought us low by depriving us by one means and other of so much of the fruits of the earth? We have sown much and brought in little; sowe• Wheat, Barley, good seed, but reaped Tares, Cockle and such like trash: The antient curse for sin is revived, and heightened upon us. Under the rain that hath come oft upon us, and all the husbandry God hath been at with us, we have not brought forth fruit meet for him, by whom we have been dressed, and what measure we have meated, it hath been measured to us again: under much means, and a promising, flourishing profession, little real fruit hath been brought forth to God; and how like to this have we found in that little good grain under goodly appearances, and a great burden that the earth hath brought forth to us? and doth not the hand of God upon this account grow very awful towards us? is not the meat cut off before our eyes? do we not see mens crops fail them (at least in many places) year after year, and every year more than other? should God go on to do by us a few years more as he hath done for some years past, it would look apace towards cleanness of teeth. And hath not God cut us short of our credit and estimation? brought us low upon that account also: New-Englands name hath been much set by, much more than now New-Englands credit and repute is brought many pegs lower than sometimes; when we were precious in Gods sight, we were honourable; but when he makes no such account of a People, they soon grow out of credit; God hath made us to know the truth of that, 1 Sam. 2. 30. (the subject that was insisted upon by that eminently holy man of God this time three year) them that honour me, I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed; we have found the truth of that, that them that honour God he will honour, and now God is verifying upon us the truth of that also, that those that despise him shall be lightly esteemed: Righteousnesse exalteth a Nation, but sin is a reproach to

any People, Prov. 14. 24. And New-Englands former & latter experiences may seal to both parts of the truth of that Text. Under all these short cutting, lowreing, afflicting dispensations, may we not say in this day, as 'twas said, Israel should do in that, when many evils and troubles should befall them? Deut. 31. 17. Are not these evils come upon us because our God is not amongst us? is not with us as he hath been, nor favours us as he hath done, But I must pursue these things no further which I have been drawn forth to follow thus far, if possible to make you sensible, both from the consideration of our wayes towards God and his wayes towards us, that according to the present frame and posture of things with us, it looks very exceeding threatningly upon us, least God leave us and lay us desolate.

3. Consider, How sad would it be, should it come to this: it is evident from the considerations mentioned, that it may be so, and also that it looks exceeding threatningly, lest it be so: but what a dismal thing would it be, should it be so indeed? to lose Gods love, his favour, his good-will; to have his soul depart from us, what a dreadful thing will it be? how emphatically doth God shut up sundry sore threatnings with this as the most miserable complement of all? Yea, w• also unto them when I depart from them, Hos. 9. 12. that burden, Jer. 23. 33. (so it is there called) I will even forsake you saith the Lord: it is the most intollerable, crushing, back-breaking Burden that ever was laid upon any people, for God to disaffect, reject, forsake a people, it is the most formidable thing that can befall them; In his favour is life, his loving-kindness is better than Life: it is the foundation, fountain and well-head of all our good; all that good is, is originally, virtually and eminently contained in it, founded upon, and flowing from it; but to be rejected of God, cast out of his affections, it is in it self the forest judgment; it hath in it all that evil is, and it is the source of all that doth, or may, or can fall out sadly or unhappily to us: if we have Gods heart we cannot want his hand; if he be with us, if he be for us, who or what shall be against us? if he cause his Face to shine upon us, we shall be saved; but if he take off his heart, forsake, hide his Face from us, we shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles will befall us, all kind of calamities will cloud in; mischiefs will be heaped upon us if God take his presence (and consequently his peace) from us, even loving-kindness and mercies: what will follow but that he will vex us with all adversity; our wise-men will be infatuated, our men of courage and activity dispirited, our peaceable and guidable men froward and headlong, nothing will prosper with us, but all things will conspire and work together ruineward; counsel, strength, protection, sustenance, all will fail us; Sword, Sickness, Famine, evils of all sorts grow in upon, pursue and cleave unto us till they have consumed us.

And Further, let me here add that consideration, that should it come to this with us, God should take off his heart from us, turn his hand against us, it will certainly fall exceeding aggravatedly heavy upon us. It will so eminently, in a two fold respect:

1. It will be a sad and a sorrowful thing indeed, when as it threatned, Josh. 24. 20. God shall turn and do us hurt, and consume us after that he hath done us good; Miserum est fuisse. There is no greater misery than to have been happy; it is more to be brought than to be born low, to be degraded than never to have been exalted; worse is so much the worse by how much we have known better; Thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down, saith the Psalmist, aggravating his affliction, Psal, 10# 2. 10. How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer, Son of the Morning? was the cutting question to the King of Babylon, in the day of his ruine. Isai. 14. 12. and it was the depth of Jerusalem's wo, that she came down wonderfully, Lam. 1. 9. know, if you lose God you will be miserable above many, that never knew what it was to enjoy him as you have done: when you have lost God, his love, his favour, and lost your all in that loss, then to look back, and bemoan your selves, O that we were as in moneths

past, when the Almighty was yet with us: then to remember in the dayes of your affliction and misery all the pleasant things that you had in the dayes of old, then to lament that once you had a God, what a bitter, bitter and heart-breaking thing will it be.

2. When God turns to do a People hurt after he hath done them good, they may expect he will do them hurt according as he hath done them good, Deut. 28. 63. And it shall come to pass that as the Lord rejoyced over you to do you good and to multiply you so the Lord will rejoyce over you to destroy you, and to bring you to nought; of whom God saith, you only have I known: God hath an evil, an only evil for them, Ezek. 7. 5. For whom God hath done# that which he hath not done, against them will God do that which he hath not done, and whereunto he will not do any more the like, Ezek. 5. 9. The punishment of the iniquity of the Daughter of my People is greater than the punishment of Sodom, Lam. 4 6. Under the whole heaven hath not been done as# hath been done upon Jerusalem, Da. 9. 12# There was no sorrow like that# of Sion, wherewith the Lord afflicted her in the day of his fierce anger, Lam. 1. 12. Wo unto us when God (turning to do us hurt) shall come to measure us by the same Rule that he hath done us good by: Will not New-England then he made one of the blackest spots of earth under the heavens of God?

4. Consider, It may yet be prevented; and what mercy it is that it may so be that things come not to this woful pass? will we yet be perswaded to hearken to the counsel in the Text? will we yet be instructed, bethink our selves, repent, amend, convert, turn to God, he will not leave us, he will not cause his anger to fall upon us: and wherein he hath so done, we returning unto him he will return unto us: Doubtless God is spirited and acted towards us by the same Rule that himself gives us, Pro. 37. 10. Thine own friend and thy fathers friend forsake not: God hath been our friend, and our fathers friend, we have had (as I may say) his favour by inheritance; because he loved our fathers, he hath chosen their seed after them, and loth he is both for our own and their sakes (his grace and mercy having thus descended upon us) to disinherit us, nor will he do it, if after all we yet prove not utterly uncounselable and incorrigible: The love and kindness of New-Englands first times stick by him; all our backslidings, unworthy carriages, evil requitals have not so wholly razed out the remembrance of it, but that God hath sensibly manifested even in the way of his judgments, many relentings of heart towards us, and would we yet be perswaded to recede our pursuit of vain things that cannot profit not deliver, for they are vain, and unfainedly, and with our whole heart return to him, how would his bowels be moved for us? his compassions stirred up to meet us at our coming# and his heart be knit unto us? And think also what an act of grace it is that God will thus accept of, and re-entertain repenting and returning sinners; it is a great act of grace for God to take any to be his People; but it is a much greater to fall in again with those that have deeply revolted from him: O methinks such peerless, unpattern'd, unparrallel'd mercy, as such it is proposed in the third Chapter of this prophesie, vers. 1. should melt, overcome, win upon the hearts of poor sinners; though we have plaid the harlot with many lovers will God yet receive us. O will he methinks, as persons overcome of mercy, our very souls, should say, behold we come unto thee; for thou art the Lord our God.

5. And lastly Consider, That if we be not instructed, continue incorrigible, irreclaimable, God will certainly leave us, his soul will depart from us# and he will make us desolate. We may flatter our selves in our own way untill our iniquity be found to be hateful; bless our selves in our hearts while Gods anger smokes against us; cry peace, peace, until remediless ruine come upon us, and there be no escaping: but assuredly, what God threatens, unless Repentance intervene, he will accomplish: Methinks it fares between God and his New-England People, as between a tender hearted Parent, and

an untoward, stouborn and incorigible Child; the poor afflicted Father, with many yerning bowels bespeaks; yea, begs, beseeches him, O my son be instructed, be perswaded, bethink thy self, hearken to counsel; and in the issue begins to tell him, well son, look to it, if thou goest on thus, and nothing will do with thee, thou wilt lose thy Fathers heart at last, as well as I have loved thee, my affections will be wholly weaned off from thee; I will disown, dis-inherit; turn thee out of doors; and shall it come to this between God and us, if we continue uninstructed it will come to this, we shall lose Gods love, leave our selves no more room in his affections, utterly harden his heart against us, work it to that issue, that God will thoroughly disaffect us; and what then? Why, when God thoroughly disaffects a People, then as in Chap. 15. of this prophesie, vers. 1, 2. though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be towards this People, cast them out of my sight, and let them go forth: such as are for death to death and such as are for sword to the sword, and such as are for famine to famine, and such as are for captivity to captivity: As if God should say, I cannot abide them, they have quite lost my heart, I can no more affect them; let who will intercede for them, away with them, let them ###, be slain, famished, captivated, no matter how many wayes, so they be any wayes destroyed: This, even this will be the fatal upshot that our sins and rebellions will bring it to between God and us if we be not instructed. And now I beseech you reflect upon what hath been said, lay together the considerations that have been laid before you, and think whether it be not high time to hearken to that awful, yet compassionate admonition in the Text, Be thou instructed, O New-England, lest Gods Soul depart from thee, lest he make thee desolate, a l•nd not inhabited: Methinks we should find our selves concern'd, and that all sorts of persons, as those that came to John Baptist, should be, asking what shall we do? and what shall we do; Magistrates, Ministers and Masters of Families, men of all ranks and conditions, should be earnestly enquiring what shall we do, and what shall we do as to the retaining and regaining the good will of God, and keeping his gracious presence with us? And possibly it is expected (according to the ordinary use upon these occasions) that by way of answer I should apply my self to these and those, but the time takes me off.

Much Honoured; I know much lyes upon you (and although my haste be great, let me call at your door with that of the Psalmist, Psal. 2. 10, 12. Be instructed ye Judges of the Earth, kiss the Son; professedly and actually own Jesus Christ, signalize your love and affection, your homage and subjection to him, even in such a day as this; what difficulties or hazards this may cast you upon, or what dis-favour it may work you, or with whom it is besides my business to say, and I hope# will be besides yours to consider, suffice it me to say, and you to think, that this is the way to the heart of God; the way to get and keep in with him, which is the thing we are upon: O shew your love to Jesus Christ, your zeal for him, his cause, interest, wayes, People, all his concerns, and set your selves against whatsoever is contrary thereunto, suppress sin, promote holiness to your utmost power. And let me only in general further say, both to you Right Honourable, and to the Honourable Deputies with you, that make up the grand Counsel of this poor Colony (I know you have not been without deep thoughts of heart upon the account) if there be any thing yet do-able as to these things, either by Law making, or Law executing, that may conduce to keep God with us, let it be diligently done.

Nextly, I should have applyed my self to you, my dear and reverent Brethren in the Ministry you are set for the instruction of others, but it is not too much to be said to you (however it may seem too much for me to say it) be you also instructed. O look about you, it eminently concerns you, think what is yours to do, that it may not come to the parting pull between God and this poor People: I doubt not Brethren, could I lay my hand so near your hearts, I should find them in old Ely's posture trembling

for the Ark of God, the God of the Ark, God and his Ark; his taking his presence from us, and the signal tokens of the same: but what is ours to do that it may not be so, I know my self (though too little) too well to take upon me to direct you; let me only say as the eyes of that Cripple, of whom you read, Acts 3. were upon Peter and John, the poor man looked wishfully upon them, hoping to receive somewhat from them; so my eyes, and the eyes of this poor people are (under God) upon you earnestly, expecting that you should do something for us, as the poor man in the Gospel, Mark 9. once so cited your great Lord and Master in his day upon earth for his •oful Son; let me bemoan to you the lamentable condition o• this miserable people, thus and thus it is with us, and these and those means have been used with, and improved for us, but to no purpose: if you can do any thing have compassion on us, and help us; I know you are not in Gods stead, but as I was saying, under God our eyes are uyon you; and I beseech you remember that they are so.

Again# give me leave in passage to drop a word to the Freeman; be you also instructed as to the work of this day, as you would not have God depart from us, disregard us, do not disregard him in these grand motions# do not leave him out in your Elections: surely it is not the ing••ating way with God to give him cause to complain, as Hos. 8. 4. They have set up Kings but not •y me and have made Princes and I know it not: have a respect to God in your Elections in having a respect to godliness: not that every godly man is fit to make a Magistrate, or every one that hath grace is not qualified to Govern, you may read, Exod. 18. 21. That they must be able men, as well as fearing God, not only good, honest, well-minded, well-meaning men, but such as sit chief (that you set# in that place) had need to be able to chuse out the way of a People for them, Job. 29. 25. yea, and then when it comes to a Day of Difficulty, it is not only integrity of heart but skilfulness #...# that is requisite to the well management of the reins #...#, Psal. 78. ult. yet surely Godliness is an essential #...#, nor can you disregard it without disregarding God in your Elections, would you have Gods heart with you? chuse men of David's character, Act. 13. 22. Men after Gods own heart; it may be in such a day as this there are many & great thoughts of heart, such a man is in favour, and such a man is so and so: I have nothing to say against all prudential considerations (provided alwayes they be pious) upon these accounts, if policy were unlawful Christ would never have bidden his Disciples to be wise as Serpents, Mat. 10 16. Policy and Piety, the Serpent and the Dove, do as well together as they do ill asunder: but what I have to say, and what the Doctrine under hand loads me to say, is chuse Men in favour with the King of Kings, who hath Kings hearts in his hand to turn as he will, and can if mens wayes please him, make even their enemies to be at peace with them.

Heads of Families would have been next spoken to; there is more than a little for them to do upon the great account we are speaking.

I would also have adres• my self to Gods own dear ones amongst us (those few names comparatively that are yet left us) that are great and gracious with him, that they would have improved their outmost interest for ### who can do great things with God; that they would desire mercies of the God of Heaven concerning this great matter of his still abode with us. Moreover, I would have begg'd the very sinners of the times, that at lest they would not thrust away God from us: but the time bids me have done.

I shall conclude all with two or three more general words of Instruction and Direction.

1. Let us make work unto a thorough Conversion unto God; surely the want of this is our great wound, the core and root of all ou• maladies; our not complying with the #...# grace to a thorough,



entire, irreserved closure with himself: hence, •ence have grown those estrangements between God and us, that now begin to look threateningly as to an utter parting; and it is a #...# conversion unto God that must lay the foundation of #...# I must confess the sense of this hath been so much with me #...# the call to this dayes work was undoubtedly laid upon me, that I have had many thoughts to say neither of this nor that, but to turn the whole stream of my Discourse into this channel; O that you were but to be prevail'd with as to this, our work were done at once; and is there no perswading you? though not only God's gracious presence with you in this world, but your everlasting enjoyment of him in glory in that other World lies upon it; what shall I say to you sirs? I beseech you shew your selves men, act but the part of reasonable creatures (which looks like a reasonable request) set but your understandings and thoughts seriously to work, and I profess to you, it is beyond my conceiving (so doing) that you can be other than thorow, down right Christians: a thinking man cannot but be a serious man; 'tis the want of this that ruins men, Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider, Isai. 1. 3. in-consideration is the undoing of men under means of knowledg; men know enough, would they but consider of what they know, to make them in good earnest about matters of greatest moment. I have a great request (to the unconverted, I especially intend it, knowing some will do much more than I say) to make to this great Congregation, and every person, I am under the present opportunity of speaking to, which I am never like to be more in this world; I have a great request to you; indeed, as to the thing desired, it is but a small matter, but my heart is much in it; and I shall verily hope that this poor Sermon will not be utterly lost, if you will but grant it; I beseech you deny me not, and 'tis this that you would take some time to bethink your selves of your greatest concernments; and I would fain beg some time every day, but I will bring my request very low that I may not be #...# shall I obtain of you that you will constantly set apart one half hour in a week; be it on the the Saturday night, or sometime, and getting alone, set your selves to think with utmost seriousness about the matters of your souls and your future and eternal states; would Persons be perswaded thus to do, I #...# it would be impossible for them to stand before their own #...#; I doubt not but if men would give themselves leave to think what it will be to be in Heaven of Hell, for ever, it would bring them to themselves: And, O were we thorough here as to the work of Conversion, were the as yet utterly unconverted, but converted; were the half converted, the almost perswaded, but altogether, but thoroughly converted: were the slight and formal, and such as have a name to live, the professionally converted, but sincerely converted: were the converted, but so back-slidden, fallen, that they stand in need of renewed conversions, but reconverted; this would lay a foundation for the return, and still continuance of Gods gracious presence with us.

2. Let us mightily stir up our selves to lay hold upon a departing God: It is a very lamentable complaint the Prophet makes, Isa. 64. 7. that at such a time when God hid his Face from them, and consumed them because of their iniquities; yet there was none that called upon his Name, that stirred up themselves to take hold of him. Shall God go, and shall we be silent? shall we see him going, and shall nothing be said to invite him back again? Methinks our hearts should be at our mouths, our very souls should sit upon our trembling lips, and we should even dissolve into sighs and supplications. O that we may humble our selves, greatly mourning over all the provoking causes of Divine displeasure: We may bemoan our selves, sensibly lamenting after the Lord under all the hidings of his Face, and the estrangements of himself from us; we may awaken our selves exceedingly, call up all our# powers, put to our utmost strength, plead with God; yet thou Lord art in the midst of us, and we are called by thy Name, leave us not; wrestle it out with God, and resolve we will not let him go: thus do, and

though you have gone far from him, return yet again to the Lord, cleave to him with purpose of heart, and you shall find (though he hath made many offers that way) yet God will not leave you#

3. And lastly, Be on Gods side, espouse his interest, be you ingaged in every cause that is his, own what God owns, and whom God owns; be not afraid nor ashamed to appear #...# his wayes, worship, people, however it may befall; what #...# the world turn a back-side upon these things (you know Moses his choice) let us cast in our lot here: when the Persian Emperor favoured the Church, the Samaritans would help build the Temple, and when Mordecai was great at Court, many of the people of the Land became Jews; but God knows such fair-weatherfriends, & makes reckoning of them accordingly; but that's the Man that God will own, that Jesus Christ will own, that is not ashamed of him nor of his words before a froward and adulterous generation; that I say is the man that Christ will own at that day when to be owned by him, will be found worth of now owning of him at dearest rates: Be it that the tempest-tost, weatherbeaten, and well-nigh-shipwrack state of the Church of Christ in an angry world, be as the Ship wherein himself with his Disciples were imbarcked, when in that mighty storm that came down upon the lake, they were even filled with water, and now ready to sink. My mite shall be cast in here, as the Lord shall help me, my interest, my title, all what it is, sink or swim shall be ventured in this bottom; and I beseech you, let us all put in here; have we not much greater and better assurances than the trembling Mariner that was told he carried Cesar in his Barge? Wo to us if an hour of temptation discover another spirit in us; but if the Lord shall help us, owning, cleaving to and abiding with him, to approve our selves in the day of tryal; and though we have sate too loose to him, and grown •light and wanton in our prosperous times, nevertheless in an evil day there shall be good things found in us, there will yet be hope in our end.

FINIS.