A DISCOURSE,
DELIVERED IN THE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
IN ALBANY,
The Fourth of July, 1801.
AT THE
CELEBRATION OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH
ANNIVERSARY
OF
AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE.

BY
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THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD,

TOWARDS AMERICAN ISRAEL.

The celebration of events, which have been replete with consequences beneficial to mankind, has long been practised among the nations of the world. A sacred festival, annually solemnized, kept alive in Israel the recollection of their deliverance from Egyptian thraldom, and an altar erected upon the banks of Jordan perpetuated the remembrance of the joyful day, when passing that river, they entered in triumph the promised land.

Hence probably arose the commemorating statues, festivals and anniversaries of the east. But however this may be, such memorials are doubtless rational, when instituted to preserve unanimity in a nation, and hand down the knowledge of important eras in its history.
Impressed with the truth of this sentiment, and led
by the impulse of their own feelings, the citizens of
America celebrate the day that gave birth to their in-
dependence.

At the recollection of this event, the pulse of joy
beats high in a thousand hearts, and the song of joy
sounds loud from a thousand tongues.

The hoary veteran is now ruminating the toils he
has endured, and the battles he has fought for his
country; and the matron of seventy-six is rehearsing
the long tale of American independence.

The return of this auspicious day brings back the
scenes and revives the emotions of former times.

Influenced by one common ardor, the patriots of
America are assembling on the east and on the west,
on the north and on the south, to review the perils
and hardships through which they have struggled,
and to celebrate the happiness and glory to which they
have attained.

Called to lead your meditations on an occasion like
the present, I should do violence to my own feelings,
as well as insult the dignity of a Christian assembly,
should I attempt to act the partisan, and thus lead you
into the uncertain field of political discussion.

So obvious is the design of this anniversary, that
methinks my audience must have already anticipated
me in the choice of my subject, and assembled with
minds prepared to review the wonders which God
hath wrought for our fathers and for us:

With a view to this, I have chosen for my text the
8th verse of the 3rd chapter of Exodus.

"And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand
of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that
land, unto a good land and a large; unto a land flow-
ing with milk and honey."

These words were spoken to Moses, at Horeb,
out of the midst of the burning bush; and they con-
tain a declaration of the designs of Providence re-
relative to his suffering people, then in Egypt, and a
gracious promise of speedy deliverance. They ad-
mist, however, of an application to American Zion.
For "all these things happened unto them for exam-
ple; and they are written for our admonition, upon
whom the ends of the world are come."

Our deliverance from foreign domination may be
not ineptly compared to the deliverance of Israel from
Egyptian bondage—In the view of which, we may
reiterate the sentiment of the text and say, surely the
Lord hath been down, and delivered us out of the hand
of the Egyptians, and brought us up out of that land, into
a good land and a large; into a land flowing with milk
and honey.

See thus, my hearers, the subject and scope of the
present discourse, subjects interesting to every Amer-
ican and correspondent to the purposes for which we
are assembled.

In retracing the history of our fathers, from the
first settlement of our country down to the revolu-
tion, we find little else but details of hardship and suf-
ferring.

Few in number, and scattered over an immense ter-
ritory, the greatest part of which was a howling wil-
derness, swarming with inhospitable savages, their
wants, their perils and their enemies were many.

United to a foreign nation, they were necessarily
entangled in her politics, disturbed by her broils,
hated by her enemies and distressed by her wars.

Goshen soon became an object of contention.....
France coveted the place assigned for Joseph's bre-
thren to feed their flocks. For more than half a
century she strove to obtain it. On the west she
encompassed us with a chain of fortresses, and on
the east our shores lay defenceless to her carnage.
Nothing less was contemplated than the complete
extermination of the protestants in America, and the
establishment of the spiritual jurisdiction of the Ro-
man see.

To accomplish the more effectually this nefarious
purpose, she excited the jealousy of the natives
against us, put into the hand of their warriors the
instruments of death, designated the families to be
butchered, and even rewarded their cruelty, when
they had butchered them.

Thus hunted down on the one hand, by herds
of barbarous savages, and pressed on the other by
the more barbarous troops of a sanguinary despot,
every man's heart fainted, and every man's hand be-
came weak.

Danger encircled every dwelling, and death lurked
in every path! Neither age nor sex furnished the
least protection. The groans of the widow sadly
echoed from the cottage, and the sighs of the infant
floated on the breeze. The labourer was mur-
dered in the field, the slumberer was massacred on
his pillow, and the worshipper was slain at the Altar
of his God.

These calamities, tho' great, were but the begin-
ning of sorrow. Hitherto we had received some pro-
tection from our parent country.

George the second was a father to his colonies.
How different the character of his successor! May
we not say, in the language of scripture, that now
"there arose a new king in Egypt that knew not Jo-
seph."

After the accession of George the third to the
throne, Great-Britain adopted a policy towards Ame-
rica cruel and oppressive—A policy which, had it
been submitted to, must have enslaved these colonies,
and put an end to all their chartered privileges.

The colonists were not insensible of this fell de-
sign. They saw with indignation the first encroach-
ment on their liberties. The alarm was instantly
sounded. Every citizen awoke to a sense of the
common danger, and measures were immediately
adopted to ward off the impending blow.

Desirous of peace, and loyal to the British crown,
they first addressed his majesty in language of hum-
bale petitioners.
But their petitions, like the groanings of Israel in Egypt, only provoked new grievances and drew down heavier burdens upon them. One exorbitant claim was followed by another. A more numerous herd of task-masters were appointed to superintend our labours, tax our industry, and fleece us of our earnings.

Despairing of redress in this way, and finding that insult was only added to injury, and injury to insult, the colonists altered the tone of their address and assumed the attitude of bold and manly resistance. This, however, instead of discouraging, only strengthened Britain in her resolution to enslave her colonies. To this object all her measures were directed, till at length they terminated in open war.

The first blood was shed at Lexington. Never did an event give a more general shock. A sudden thrill passed through the heart of every American. In what manner this contest was to be decided remained no longer uncertain. Then the brave New-Englanders, while the blood streamed from the wounds of their slaughtered brethren, grasped every man his arms and flew to their relief. Then the patriots of America unsheathed their swords, and appealing to Heaven for the justice of their cause, pledged themselves to each other by every thing dear and sacred, never to sheathe them till their country's wrongs were redressed, and her violated rights restored. Thus the veins which Britain opened, nerved the arm of resistance, and quickened the pulse of independence; and the first blood she drew from the hearts of freemen proved the powerful cement of an extensive and indissoluble union.

Forced into war, vast were the difficulties these infant colonies had to encounter; hard and of long duration were their struggles of liberty. The host of our enemies was numerous, their resources great; they were skilled in military discipline, distinguished for prowess, and led by experienced generals. To this mighty phalanx we were able to oppose only a rustic band collected on the spur of the occasion from the yeomanry of our country, destitute of arms and ammunition, unaccustomed to war and “having no resources but their valour, and no general but their God.”

During the first years of this unequal contest, how gloomy and ill-boding was the aspect of our affairs! Our embarrassments were numerous; our sufferings immense. Our cities were burnt or plundered, our fields covered with dead bodies, and our valleys soaked in blood. Of the flower of our country many fell in battle, many perished in prison-ships, and many became the victims of desolating pestilence. Our frontiers lay naked to the stroke of the tomahawk, and our sea-ports were open to the thunder of British cannon. Surrounded by enemies, alarm succeeded to alarm, and disaster to disaster. In the mean time a paper currency, daily depreciating in its value, excited mutual distrust, suspended in a great measure private intercourse, and even paused the very energies of government. At this awful crisis! when solicitude sat on every countenance, and anxie-
ty wrung every heart; when America, like Israel upon the brink of the sea, stood trembling, unable to withstand, and having no refuge from her enemies; then the Almighty appeared for the deliverance of his suffering people. The arm of Omnipotence stretched down from heaven, smote the wave that was overwhelming us: it divided; and we passed through into a new world, from which our feet were to return no more into the land of oppression.

Now commenced a new era in the history of America. Her independence was acknowledged by Britain; her triumphs celebrated through the world. This event, tho' it gave a new aspect to our affairs, did not put an end to our trials or embarrassments. The war left us exhausted by exertion, and oppressed with debt. The insufficiency of the old confederation, "formed in moments of political enthusiasm, whose bonds were a parchment, and whose commands a request,"* now became manifest. A dark cloud again overspread the horizon of liberty, and every thing boded evil. Discontent under heavy taxation prevailed among individuals. One state was distracted by insurrection, and each pursued a policy peculiar to itself. On every side were jarring interests and clashing claims. The energies of government, already too feeble, were evidently relaxing, the bonds of the union bursting asunder and the whole system tending to dissolution. But he who had led us through the sea did not forsake us in the wilderness. The pillar of divine glory still rested on his tabernacle, and the finger of Providence again pointed out the way of safety. The patriots of our country once more assembled, when, guided in their counsels by wisdom from above, they originated and matured the American Constitution, that magnum opus, which hath proved a rock of safety. On which as yet unshaken stands the temple of our liberties.

The framing and adoption of the constitution were events, than which nothing could be more happy in its consequences to us—to man; nor anything more expressive of the benevolence of Heaven and the superintending Providence of God. This was the consummation of our wishes; this the answer of our prayers; this put us in a situation to maintain our independence and defend our liberties.

Thus have we been borne as on eagles' wings and sheltered as in the hollow of the Almighty's hand.

From this land of bondage, from which you have escaped; this sea of affliction, through which you have waded; this gloomy desert, where once you wandered, and where many of your fathers and brethren perished turn your eyes—to fields of plenty and a land of peace. For the Lord came down and delivered us up to a good land, and a large; a land similar to that which he gave to his people of old.

The Canaan which the Israelites inherited was distinguished for the healthfulness of its climate, the pleasantness of its situation and the fertility of
its soil. *It was a goodly land, a land flowing with milk and honey.* Such also is the land which God hath given to our fathers and unto us. It partakes of whatever is excellent, both with respect to soil and climate. Its surface, like Judea, is beautifully variegated with hills and vallies, watered with numerous rivers fertilizing as Jordan, and in point of luxuriance and capability of culture it is not inferior to the so much celebrated Canaan of the east.

All the vegetable productions of Europe flourish in some parts of the United States. Here the labours of the husbandman are richly rewarded. The fields now bend beneath their annual tribute. The very cottage overflows with plenty, and the peasant’s board is covered with variety.

From our grammaries the islands of the sea are supplied; by our harvests the hungry of many nations are fed.

The land which the Israelites inherited was not only good, but large, including the places of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. So is united America large, extending from the Atlantic to the Mississippi; from the Iroquois to the St. Mary’s. A territory greater in extent than Britain, Ireland, France, Portugal, Spain, Germany, Holland, Italy, European Turkey, Hungary, Bohemia, Switzerland, and Lithuania. Thousands of townships have been peopled, and millions of acres cleared, since the revolution. Multitudes are still penetrating the regions of the west, and converting the forest into the fruitful field, and yet there is room—room for our own increasing population, and also for the numerous emigrants flocking hither from distant nations.

Was the land of Judea divided amongst its inhabitants? So in this favored country—the cultivator is the proprietor of the soil. “No usurping despot here fixes his standard and awes Americans into a state of vassalage. No haughty nobility engrosses the soil, and reduces the people to the necessity of starving or submitting to the drudgery of slaves.” No; “each man is his own master, walks on his own ground,”* tills his own field, eats the fruit of his own labour, and rests beneath the shade of his own fig-tree.

Did the Israelites enjoy, in the land whither they were brought, the inestimable privilege of worshipping God according to the dictates of their consciences and the precepts of his word? So do Americans.

In defence of religious liberty many of our ancestors suffered martyrdom. In pursuit of this they left their native country, and fled to the wilderness, where after many struggles they obtained it.

In these United States no civil code binds the conscience; no assuming pontiff dictates to us our faith. Happy, thrice happy land, where religion

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* Mazey’s Oration.
stands upon its own basis, where truth is vindicated by its own weapons, and conquers by its own evidence. Here light without a veil emanates from the sun of righteousness, and salvation, without a mixture, flows pure and unrestrained from its sacred source—the gospel.

Such is our situation, and such our privilege. "This is indeed the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes."

Is our present situation marvellous? It will appear more so, if we consider the means by which we have been exalted to it.

The manner in which these colonies have been preserved from savage barbarity, from French usurpation, and finally delivered from British tyranny, is little less than miraculous.

While it was in the power of the natives to have swallowed us up, they were mercifully restrained: afterwards, when they attempted it, they were delivered into our hand.

Against the French, God fought for America. In this warfare he enlisted the elements, marshalled the thunder, and commissioned the pestilence.

The fleet which was fitted out in 1746, at vast expense, for the sanguinary purpose of conquering Nova-Scotia, destroying Boston, and ravaging the whole extent of our defenceless coasts, was providentially defeated in its object. After this mighty armament was ready to put to sea, it was shut up for weeks in the ports of France, by an embargo from heaven. When crossing the Atlantic, its ships were so tossed by the waves and shattered by the tempests, that like the chariots of Pharaoh, when the Lord looked upon them through the pillar of fire, they moved heavily. A part only of this fleet ever reached our shores. The admiral, to whom this work of death was committed, disheartened by those disasters, fell into an apoplexy, or drank poison and died. The second in command, struck with sudden terror from the Almighty, put an end to his own life. The third accomplished a landing at Chebeuto. But no sooner had he pitched his camp than the Angel of the Lord smote it with pestilence, and it became, like the camp of Assyria, full of dead men. Thus the Almighty laid his veto upon their arms, and compelled them to return by the way they came, without so much as lifting a spear or shooting an arrow against the cities they were destined to destroy. Our fathers stood still and saw the salvation of God.*

The same providential care was extended to these colonies during the revolutionary war.

An event so great as the dismemberment of this country from Britain, was not to be accomplished without struggles and contests. The issue was awfully dubious. Human probability declared against the attempt. The decree, however, was passed in

* For a more particular account of these disasters, see Trumbull's history of the last century.
heaven. In the eighteenth century, America was to shake off the yoke and become free and independent; and already had God prepared the instrument by which this was to be accomplished. Was Moses formed to rescue ancient Israel from bondage? So was Washington, to rescue this western and modern Israel of the Lord.

The glory of furnishing protectors belongs to God; and who does not see his wisdom and goodness in raising such a character at such a crisis? His equal had not existed for ages, and probably will not for ages to come. Like the celebrated leader of Israel, he was great in the sight of all his people and all their enemies. Great with respect to the energies of his mind, the resources of his genius, and great with respect to that divine efficacy which stamped victory on his arms, and crowned his exertions with success.

He was providentially fitted for the part he was called to act, and providentially introduced upon the theatre of action.

"His education was such as favored the production of a sound mind and a vigorous body."* The early habits of his youth prepared him to endure the toils and fatigues of after life.

The part he acted when the unfortunate Braddock fell, brought his character into view, made him known to his country, and was justly considered as a passage of his future greatness.† Thus God prepared his ser-

vant, and at length when matured by age, and furnished with experience, a vast scene opened before him, where all his talents might be displayed, and all his energies exerted.

Already was America invaded. The roar of British cannon was heard from our harbors, and a martial band was parading on our shores. Every thing was in jeopardy. A secret sigh now escaped from the patriot's bosom.* The sage worn out with toil, and bending upon his staff shook his hoary locks and said, "my sons, your cause is good, I wish you success, but I fear your undisciplined valour will be over-come in the unequal contest." The hearts of many fainted within them, and many said, "Who is able to go up and fight against this people? for they be mightier than we." At this eventful period the guardians of our liberty looked round with trembling hopes, to find a man who was able to bear his country's shield and who might be trusted to wield her sword. Every eye fixed on Washington. The exploits of his youth now rose in grateful recollection. Their choice was unanimous, and the event proved that it was decided by Heaven. He obeyed the mandate of his country, submitted himself to her disposal, and looking up to God for guidance and protection, went forth and stood in the very front of her dangers. Awful was his responsibility—immense

* See Ramsay's account of the doubts entertained in 1775, by many of the truest friends of America, concerning the war with Britain.

† See Davies' sermon, delivered soon after Braddock's defeat.
his duty; in the discharge of which, no one, since
the leader who went before Israel through the wilder-
ness, ever had greater difficulties to encounter, or met
them with greater magnanimity.

For every event he was prepared. In battle he was
terrible; skilful in retreat. In prosperity he was
humble; in adversity unshaken. Not like Saul who
slew himself on mount Gilboa. When he was un-
successful he submitted to the decree of Heaven, and
still trusted in the God of battles.

He knew how to brook disappointment. He could
bear with the murmurings and jealousy of the igno-
ant. Opposition only increased his firmness, danger
strengthened his fortitude, and amid all the perils and
disasters of the revolution his steady eye never once
lost sight of its object—his country’s welfare. At
length Heaven interposed, lent him the aids of a for-
eign army, and led him to victory and glory.

Such an instrument of good to mankind, bears on
itself the divine impression.

In the achievements of Washington if nothing was
miraculous, every thing was providential. The winds
and the sea contributed to his victories,* and the
lingering night covered his retreat.†

In the midst of danger, and in the face of death, his
life was protracted to a good old age, “and yet his eye
was not dim, nor his natural force abated.” He led

* When Cornwallis was captured. † From Long-Island.

his brethren not only to the borders, but entered with
them into the land of peace; and having once saved
his country from ruin by his sword, he again saved it
by his counsels and influence.

These were the objects for which this illustrious
personage was raised up. And when these objects
were accomplished, God laid this instrument in all its
majesty aside, to teach the world, that though he had
made use of it he needed it not.

Washington is no more. This day reminds us of
our loss and mingles anguish with its joy. Ah much
loved patriot, while we reap the fruit of thy agony and
toil, we remember thy name and thy virtues. Thy
name is embalmed in our bosoms, and thy virtues are
recorded on the living tablets of our hearts.

Look to the sepulchre where he lies and weep.
Weep ye hoary veterans who once marched under his
banner, and fought by his side. Weep ye mothers,
for he shielded your babes by his valour, he watched
your dwellings while you slept. Weep, Americans,
for Washington the father of your country, the de-
fender of your liberties, is no more.

Let succeeding generations sigh o’er his ashes, and
the infants of posterity, lisping his virtues, drop tears
of gratitude round his tomb.

In the view of these things, while you contemplate the
former sufferings, the present glory and happiness of
your country, and the means by which it has been ex-
alted to that happiness and glory, can you hesitate to
apply to American Israel the sentiment of my text? Who is the author of these mercies? and whence hath this salvation come? Who preserved your fathers from the tomahawk of the savage, and yourselves from the vengeance of Britain? Who raised up Washington to fight your battles and preside over your councils? Who hath driven out the heathen before you, and set your feet in a broad place? Who hath established your independence on a sure foundation, and given you peace from all your enemies round about? Who hath done all this, yea more than this, who hath shed upon you the light of celestial day, and disclosed to your view the realities of the world to come?

Manifestly the Lord God of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel.

This is God’s kindness to his people. Your fathers leaned on God’s promises, and walked in the sunshine of his word. And now while they rest from their labors, we their children are reaping the fruits of their piety and receiving the answer to their prayers.

Do you enquire how you may still prosper, and in what way your inheritance may be rendered permanent and secure? I answer, “Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe in his prophets so shall ye prosper.” Is God the author of your independence? Has he established you in this land of plenty and of peace? Then have you nothing to seek but his favor; nothing to dread but his displeasure. Walk then before him and be ye perfect. Let your conversation be such as becometh godliness. Adorn the doctrine of God our savior.

Attend to the education of your children as a matter of the first importance. If you wish them to be governed by motives, and not by stripes; as free men and not as slaves; you must be at pains to furnish their minds with necessary knowledge, especially with the knowledge of religion. You may leave them liberty; but it is a blessing which they cannot long enjoy, unless their understandings are enlightened by science, and their hearts sanctified by grace.

Imitate then the example of your pious ancestors; nurture your sons and your daughters in piety; train up your household in the admonition of the Lord. Early teach them subordination. Let their habits of thinking and acting be formed, not from the camellion pages of a newspaper, whose morality is the interest of a party, and whose precepts change with the result of an election; but from the oracles of God. These teach the truest politics; these the purest morals. Hence let them learn to pay tribute cheerfully unto Cesar, and that to speak evil unjustly of the ruler of God’s people is sin.

Guard them against, and guard yourselves against visionary notions of government, founded on mistaken ideas of human nature. Consider that man an enemy who endeavours to make you believe mankind are not depraved, when God and conscience both
teach you a contrary doctrine. Such insinuations are at once an incitement to your vanity, and an insult to your understanding.

The scriptures contain the only true philosophy on this subject. They teach, that the heart of man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.

From this source arises your greatest danger. If you lose your virtue, liberty will be a curse. You feel secure, because the people govern. But if the people become corrupt, where is your security? The officers of government are taken from among yourselves. And do you believe an impure fountain will send forth pure streams? The only way to have virtuous rulers is to be virtuous yourselves. If you make yourselves vile, you must expect they will be vile also. You say public officers are your servants, and that you will watch their conduct. But can you believe there will be peace or safety when corruption only is left to watch corruption, and satan to reprove sin?

The government of our country is a government of opinion, rather than of force. More is therefore to be feared from the depravity of ourselves than of our rulers. If they become corrupt, the people can displace them; but if the people themselves become corrupt, it is an evil without a remedy. While the will of the people is on the side of virtue, we shall remain happy; but whenever it preponderates to the side of vice, we must be miserable.

Act then at all times a decided part in favour of religion. On this the safety of your country, as well as the salvation of your souls, depends. Without this no people can long be prosperous and happy. "This is the cement of society; this the tie that binds man to man, and man to God." Without religion the sanctions of an oath have no validity; contracts cannot be supported; crimes cannot be investigated; and courts of justice must cease. Without this, how is your reputation to be secured from the slanderer's tongue, your property from the robber's grasp, or your life from the assassin's dagger? Imperfect indeed must be that security which results only from the civil law.

Revere therefore public worship, and sanctify the sabbaths of the Lord. When the public institutions of the gospel are brought into disgrace, private virtue will cease. It is in the churches of Christ that men are taught to dread the judgments of heaven, and believe in the providence of God.

Avoid the pollutions, and resist the influence of infidelity. Yield not to its flatteries; be not deceived by its smiles. It never approaches virtue, but that it may pollute her; it never takes liberty by the hand, but when it designs her as its victim. Its doctrines are, that all future responsibility is a chimera; that death is an eternal sleep; and that the end sanctifies the means. Doctrines, which put in practice, must revive the pollutions of Sodom, and the abominations of Gomorrah. Thus by corrupting the heart, de-
praying the morals, and taking off all restraint from the wicked, infidelity sundereth the very bonds, and undermines the very foundations of society.

Infidelity has already converted Europe into one vast Golgotha. Around its seat the earth is covered with bones and soaked in blood. Still hungry as at the grave it shakes its bloody sceptre, and growls destruction to the world.

A departure from the pure principles of religion has been, in all ages, and in every country, the sad prelude to destruction. When the Jews became hardened in sin, when they rejected the Saviour who died for them, judgment came upon them to the uttermost. Their city was raised to its foundations, their land given unto strangers, and they were driven out from Judea and scattered abroad over the face of the whole world. In like manner God is now scourging the nations of Europe, who have lost their first love, and provoked him to anger by their disobedience.

With these examples before your eyes, can you madly act over the part which they have acted, and rush to that destruction to which they have rushed?

Your fathers were pious. When they landed on these shores, they made a covenant with God, and solemnly dedicated themselves and their offspring to the Almighty. For their sakes hitherto, you have been blessed. But can you imagine if you deny the God they worshipped, if you blaspheme the Savior they trusted, and turn aside from the paths in which they walked, that you will enjoy the protection they enjoyed, and hand down to your posterity the blessings they handed down to you? No; if there be any truth in God, ye shall not prosper. For he who holds your country’s destiny in his hand, hath sworn by himself, that if ye do these things, wrath shall fall upon you, and judgment from the Almighty shall overtake you. And ye shall be cursed in the city and cursed in the field. Cursed shall be your basket and your store. Cursed the fruit of your body and the fruit of your land, the increase of your kine and the flocks of your sheep. Cursed when ye come and cursed when ye go out. “For, saith the Lord, I lift mine hand to heaven, and I live for ever. If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment, I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me.”

God is not a disinterested spectator of the conduct of men. With holy indignation he looks down and beholds the abominations of the earth. He has already come forth out of his place to punish the nations for their sins. A fire is kindling in his anger, that shall burn to the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains. Hitherto he hath borne with us; but there is something fearful even in this forbearance. For the longer his mercy spares us, unless we repent, the fuller will be the vials of his wrath, and the more dreadful the day of our visitation.

Turn therefore from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel.
Choose you this day whom you will serve. This is no time to hesitate. Your country is in jeopardy; your all is at stake. If immorality, impiety and infidelity prevail, they will plunder you of happiness here, and rob you of Heaven hereafter. Patriots, I adjure you by the love of your country; Christians, I adjure you by the love of Emanuel, to unite in your exertions to oppose the common enemies of your peace, your liberty and your salvation. Why will you weaken each other’s influence by division? Are you not all brethren? Is not your interest one? Are not your dangers the same? A portion, rich and immense, is put in your possession. Will you cast it from you? Will you despise the bounty of Heaven and sport with an inheritance purchased with the toils of your ancestors and the blood of your brethren? No party interests governed your fathers; no foreign influence divided them. No; they were united; united in the love of their country; united in the duties of religion; united in the worship of their God. They have obtained the victory; they have received the crown; they have entered into Heaven. And now, bending from yonder skies, they address you, saying, “Children of our pilgrimage below, imitate the example we have left you; be virtuous, be united, be happy. Act worthy of yourselves. Hand down to posterity unimpaired the portion which we left you, and persevering through faith to the end come up hither.”

Ye spirits of our fathers, we hear your voice; we reverence your counsel. We will obey it. We will honor the Saviour you honored, revere the religion you revered, defend the liberties you defended, and press toward the glory you have attained. Already do our souls aspire to Heaven, and our hearts pant after immortality; and we trust that the God who led you through this vale of tears will not forsake us; but that through the grace which hath made you perfect, we shall be made perfect also. WHEREFORE OUR HEARTS ARE GLAD, OUR GLORY REJOICETH, AND OUR FLESH SHALL REST IN HOPE. Amen.