

The Subjection of Kings and Nations to Messiah

A SERMON, PREACHED ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 6,
1819, IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE DISPENSATION OF
THE LORD'S SUPPER, IN THE REFORMED
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, IN THE CITY OF NEW-
YORK.

James R. Willson

"The Kings of the earth shall bring their glory and honour into it.—Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth: serve the LORD with fear; and rejoice in trembling. Kiss the SON, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little."

"All kings shall bow down before him: all nations shall serve him." Psalm 72:11.

THE person, offices and administration of Messiah receive, even at the present time, much illustration from typical exhibitions of them under the law. To apprehensions so slow and imperfect as ours, the dignity of the Mediatorial person, and the importance of his mission, are displayed with wonderful emphasis in the sacrifices, sprinklings, holy places, and priestly and royal functions of the Mosaic economy. How illustrious must he be, in whom all these unite!

Wherein one type failed, another came in to its aid. Of this we have a striking example, in the reigns of David and Solomon; of whom the former "was a man of war from his youth," typically representing Jesus in the character of the lion of the tribe of Judah, crushing all his enemies; while the latter, as his name imports, sways a peaceful sceptre over all the surrounding nations, voluntarily subjecting themselves to his dominion, and thus representing Emmanuel as king of peace, reigning over all nations, cheerfully submitting to his royal authority, during a thousand years of universal repose. To this event our text refers. The aged monarch indeed refers to his son Solomon in this psalm, but he has in view a greater than Solomon. When David intended to build a house unto the Lord, and was forbidden, God promised that a son should be born to him, who should build the house, and gave him this promise—"I will be his father;" (1 Chron. 22:10) which Paul applies to Christ (Heb. 1:5)—"I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son."

With such authority, we are in no danger of misinterpretation, in applying our text to the subjection of all kings and of all nations to the dominion of Messiah. Leaving Solomon out of the question, it is perfectly safe to proceed in the discussion, as if the psalm had been indited with a view to Christ Jesus only. In relation to him, the declaration—"all kings shall bow down before him; all nations shall serve him," may be interpreted:—

1. As a promise for the consolation of those devout followers of Jesus, who are interested for the honor of his crown, while they, at the same time, grieve to see attempts made to trample it in the dust.
2. As a prediction of a state of things which shall certainly be brought to pass in the providence of God, who will cause the kingdoms to bow down before his Son.
3. As a duty commanded. In this view of the text, it would be translated,—"*Let* all kings bow down before him: *Let* all nations serve him."

As the discussion in this discourse shall be limited to the third view of the text, it becomes necessary to verify it. David says of Judas, (Ps. 109:8) "another shall take (*Hqy*) his office." The verb is in the future tense, as in our text. Peter renders (Acts 1:20) *Hqy by laboi*, equivalent to an imperative, "let him take." Again, David says, (Ps. 69:25) "let their habitation be desolate." *Let (yht)* is the future tense, in the original. By the same apostle it is rendered, *Gevhqhtw*, the imperative mood. We have a similar instance in the same verse, "let another dwell therein." *bwy*, the future tense, rendered by the apostle *estw o katoikwv*, the imperative mood. It is true, that every Hebrew future is not necessarily an imperative, does not necessarily command; but in the description of Messiah's reign, given in this psalm, the whole aspect of the composition evinces, that such parts as the 11th verse are commands issued by the Eternal Father enjoining obedience to his Son.

We shall explain the duty—enquire how it is performed—and apply the subject. You have our plan.

I. Explain the duty.

The command is given to kings, in their official capacities, and not in their private characters only. The title given them, (*Myklm*) kings, is a title of office, denoting the heads of commonwealths, whether denominated presidents, kings, or emperors. It is also a generic word, embracing all who are in civil authority, in the legislative, judiciary, and executive departments of government. The type illustrates and enforces this extensive import of the title. Kings, as such, were tributary to Solomon, and bowed down before him in homage to his authority over them. It is not merely then that the men who are kings ought to do homage personally to Messiah, as their Lord, but that with their crowns on their heads and their sceptres in their hands, they must acknowledge Jesus, "by whom kings reign, and princes decree justice, even all the nobles of the earth."

The latter clause of the verse illustrates this interpretation. "All nations shall serve him," not merely a majority of the individuals who compose all nations, but all kingdoms in their organized and national capacities, shall obey the Lord Jesus; who, sitting on the throne of his holiness, rules the nations. The original word, *Myvg*, translated here nations, properly signifies a body, such as the human body, "fitly compacted by that which every joint supplieth." The *Myvg* then are organized national bodies; moral persons, compacted by civil bonds; bodies, of which kings are the heads. As there is nothing in the context to limit either the word kings or nations, to

the private persons who are kings, and those that compose nations, we are not only warranted but bound to extend their signification to all that they properly embrace.

The command is to all—to states, republics, kingdoms, and empires, in whatever quarter of the world they may be found, from whatever branch of the human family they may be descended, and whatever may be their local peculiarities and pursuits—let all bow down before the Mediator and serve him. But we must be more particular.

1. It is their duty to bind themselves to him by covenant engagement, consecrating themselves to him, swearing allegiance to him as their King and Lord, binding themselves to one another, and, as united together in social compact, to seek the protection and the blessings of Messiah, Heaven's Almighty Vicegerent.

If it be true, that "by him kings reign and princes decree justice, princes rule, and nobles, *even* all the judges of the earth" (Prov. 8:15, 16)—that, "all power in heaven and on earth is given to him, by the Father" (Mat. 28:18)—that "God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, of things on earth, and of things under the earth" (Phil. 2:9,10)—that "he is made head over all things to his body, the church"—"that he alone (the Father) is excepted, who did put all things under him" (1 Cor. 15:27)—that "he hath set him far above all principality and power, and might and dominion, and every name that is named"—and that he is "to rule in the midst of his enemies"—that "kings and judges of the earth are commanded to kiss the Son, whom God hath anointed;" (Psalm 2:12) then assuredly it is the duty of every civil commonwealth, of every potentate, to swear allegiance to him who possesses, as Mediator, such a title to absolute and universal lordship over the nations. King and subject are correlates. When the Father, as a reward of the sufferings of his Son, gave into his hand the government of all principalities and powers, of all magistrates and kingdoms, he imposed upon them an obligation to acknowledge him explicitly as their sovereign. Such explicit acknowledgment is what we call national covenanting. On the supposition that Jesus is indeed their king, who can offer any reason that they should not so recognize him?

Parents are the natural governors of their children—masters have a right from God to govern their servants—husbands their wives—magistrates their subjects—and ministers their people. Who will say, that, children may refuse to recognize the government of their parents—servants their masters—wives their husbands—subjects their lawful magistrates—and people their ministers? All admit that those inferiors are bound to submit to their respective governors, and to act under the influence of a principle of voluntary obedience in all things. The reason is plain, and will be understood. The superiors have a right to rule them, to demand and enforce obedience—and the right is from God, the ultimate fountain of all law, all right, all government. No earthly ruler in any of all the relations of life, can plead so absolute, so explicit, and so immediate a title to dominion, as that which Jesus possesses to govern the nations. Every possible reason then, that can be plead for voluntary and explicit subjection and obedience to earthly power, applies with tenfold emphasis to the duty of the nations' bowing before Emmanuel. "Let not men deceive themselves, God is not mocked." He regards the honor of his Son's government and the prerogatives of his crown, and he will assert them.

We have not only the exaltation of Jesus by the Father, to rule the nations, his call upon them to submit to his sceptre, and prophetic declarations that they will do so, but we have also the principle and the manner exemplified most perspicuously, in the history of his peculiar people. Abraham had a promise that "his posterity should become a great nation, as the stars of heaven for multitude." After the departure of the patriarch's descendants from Egypt, at the foot of Mount Sinai, they put on a complete national and ecclesiastical organization, with a body of laws for the regulation of all their national concerns. The whole of this organization is not only formed under the immediate inspection, but according to the express laws of Jesus Christ, who came down upon the mount amidst thousands of his angels, to direct so momentous an affair. The whole Sinai transaction is called a covenant. When the law is proclaimed, the people repeatedly promise, "all that the Lord hath said, we will do." As a people, they stand trembling in the presence of an array of the divine glory, to receive a civil constitution and organization from the hands of Messiah. They accept it, solemnly promise obedience to him who gives it, and adherence to its forms. Under this covenant subjection to the Son of God, as Mediator, they vanquish the Canaanitish nations, take possession of the promised land, manage their polity, and continue their national existence, until the destruction of their city by the Romans. This very destruction of the last remains of their national organization, was on account of their rejection of Messiah. No principle is more distinctly visible—none could be rendered more so in the Sinai constitution than the covenant subjection of the nation to the Mediator.

Now, consider the state of the world, and especially the age of the nations at the time of this transaction. The patriarchal power was everywhere yielding to a different and more extended plan of civil government, in which kings, not claiming parental authority, were beginning to exercise regal authority over associated provinces. At that period, God selects one people, forms them into a kingdom under his immediate superintendence, and gives them possession of a wealthy and ample territory in the very centre of the population of the world, and surrounded by the rising empires of the east; such empires as Phoenicia, Egypt and Babylon. Is it conceivable, that the whole organization of that nation, and the laws by which they were to be governed, would not be the best and wisest, and that they were not designed as a model for contemporary and future nations? Was not human nature the same in the Israelites, and in other nations? Was it not the same then as it is now? Had not men then the same faculties, the same social powers, the same passions, the same rights, that men have now? What was adapted to promote national prosperity then, is so now. The obligation to know, acknowledge: worship and glorify God, was not greater in that age, than it is in ours; in Judea, or at the foot of Mount Sinai, than in England or America. God did not say to Israel only, "obey the angel that I send before you, for my name is in him." He does not say to the nations now, "though Israel was commanded to obey my Son, yet I release you from all obligation to obey and serve him. He has not now any claims upon your homage."

The subjection of Israel to the government of God, was to him in the mediatorial person and character; for the relation in which he stood to them, and they to him, was a gracious covenant relation—a relation which God, absolutely considered, cannot sustain to any of the guilty race of Adam, either individually or nationally. Whatever may be said of their national polity, of the connexion, or rather as some ignorantly assert, of the perfect sameness of their church and civil state, still it is abundantly evident, that they had a civil government, a national

territory and property, and civil relations and rights; and that all these were completely subjected to the government of the Son of God, in his character of Mediator.

Is there any intimation in the whole volume of inspiration, that other nations should not copy after the example set them in Judea? Any hint that the honors there claimed by Messiah, and conceded to him, were peculiar to that territory, and that he does not demand them in other quarters of the world? Nothing like it; but quite the reverse. "The uttermost parts of the earth are given to him for inheritance;" "he is the governor among the nations;" "Sheba's and Seba's kings shall offer gifts, yea all kings shall fall down before him;" "the isles shall wait for his law;" "the gathering of the people shall be to him." The lion of the tribe of Judah has the volume of providence committed to him, and he prevails to open the seals of the book in which the destiny of the nations is recorded: "he is prince of the kings of the earth;" and "hath on his vesture and on his thigh written, King of kings, and Lord of lords." Indeed, is not easy to conceive, how God could have expressed his will more plainly, or have more fully and distinctly asserted the claims of his Son to universal dominion, and the duty of nations to acknowledge him.

That such was his will relative to the Jews, and that they acted upon it, has never been called in question by any Bible believer. But we are called upon to produce some example from the New Testament. This demand is not only unfair, hut it is absurd. When the apostles of Jesus organized the New Testament church, and began to preach the gospel among Gentile nations, the whole civilized world was under the dominion of the Romans—an empire, hostile in its whole spirit, to the pure religion of Christ Jesus. There was not, during the ministry of the apostles nor for several generations after them, a majority of any one nation converted to Christianity; and if there had been, the Romans would not have permitted them to model their government in their own way. Hence, as things were, it was impossible that we should be furnished with an example of any nation entering into covenant with God, and subjecting itself to the sceptre of Messiah. It may be said, why then, if God intended that nations should be bound to this, as a duty under the new dispensation, did he not convert at least one nation? To this it were enough to reply, that God giveth account of none of his matters. So, to have converted the Roman empire, during the days of Messiah's incarnation, would have prevented his crucifixion; and to have done this work in the days of his apostles, would have been contrary to that manner of operation, which characterizes all his doings. Both in nature and in grace, his works are progressive. The spread of the gospel was gradual, and the influence which it gained over the nations, was accomplished by progressive steps, like all the other works of God.

Before it could have been possible to give an example of the application of the principle contained in our text, the majority of the whole Roman empire must have been proselyted to the gospel of Christ; by a miraculous interposition of the providence of God, the whole fabric of Roman superstition, idolatry and tyranny, must have been laid in ruins. The manner in which this was effected by the triumphant power of divine truth, gave a much more illustrious display of the efficiency of the gospel, and of the patience and heroism of the disciples of Jesus, than could have been given by a miraculous and instantaneous subversion of that great system of iniquity.

But though we cannot give such an example, yet is not the God of the Old Testament, the God of the New? Is not the Redeemer of the Old Testament, and of the New, the same Redeemer? Are his claims to love, admiration and homage, diminished by the fact of his actual

incarnation? by the fact of his introducing a more glorious dispensation of truth? by the fact of his ascending far above all heavens, and of his session at the right hand of the majesty on high? It is sufficient for our purpose, that as extensive claims on the part of Messiah are exhibited in the New Testament, as we find anywhere in the Old—that there is a promise that "the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ;" (Rev. 11:15) and that the Lamb is represented as making war upon the nations, filling the world with judgments, laying waste in his wrath the nations, and overturning thrones, because they refuse to obey him.

If more evidence is wanting, we have more—the declarations of Old Testament prophets, relative to New Testament times. "In that day, five cities in the land of Egypt shall speak the language of Canaan, and swear to the Lord of Hosts." (Isaiah 19:18) Again, "and the Lord shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day, and shall do sacrifice and oblation; yea, they shall vow a vow unto the Lord, and shall perform it." (Isaiah 19:21) What is the language of Canaan? It is the language of national subjection, of covenant obedience to Christ Jesus—the language of national swearing to obey the Lord of Hosts, in the mediatorial person of his Son. In whose name are "sacrifice and oblation" presented to God? In whom, are the vows, that we vow, accepted of Jehovah? In Jesus Christ, and through him alone.

Still more—"Thou shalt no more be termed forsaken, neither shall thy land any more be termed desolate; but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married." (Isaiah 62:4) How shall her *land* be married? Civil rulers have the land, with all the wealth dug from its bowels, and all the produce of its soil, under their management. It must be through the civil governments, or by men in their civil capacities, that lands shall be married to God, or voluntarily surrendered to him, by national covenant. It is in civil institutions, that men "shall consecrate their gains to the Lord of the whole earth." In whom can men enter into covenant with God, in a way accepted and approved by him, but through the Lord Jesus Christ?

"Doth not even nature itself teach you?" The duty of national subjection to God, is deeply engraven on the moral constitution of man. "Have the nations changed their gods, which yet are no gods?" The nations, then, have gods. Yes, all heathen nations have had their gods. "The city of Ephesus was a worshipper of their great goddess Diana." Rome was founded with rites of consecration to Jupiter Stator; and to Jupiter Stator, their orator ascribes its preservation from conspiracy. Ashtaroth was the goddess of the Zidonians. Here are specimens. Every reader of history knows, that all the nations of antiquity acknowledged subjection, and looked for protection to some god or goddess, and that it has been reserved for modern times, and a people professing Christianity to form a constitution, and organize a civil community, without recognizing even the fact of the existence of any God. But why do I reason? The voice of nature speaking from the bosom of human society; the voice of God speaking the volume of inspiration; in the institutions of his chosen people speaks aloud; "let Jesus be crowned Lord of all." To this the voice of piety in the bosom of every lover of the Lord Jesus Christ, will joyfully and spontaneously accord—"let the nations crown Jesus Lord of all."

2. The nations are bound to recognize the Bible as the supreme law of the land; as the standard of civil legislation. God's law as recorded in the Bible, reaches all the possible relations of humanity; extends to every duty that can be performed, and fastens its claims on associated

bodies of men, as well as upon individual persons. Were this not true, we should have this monstrous anomaly in Jehovah's government, that while men, as individuals, are bound by the laws recorded in the Bible, in their congregated capacities, they may set these laws at defiance, and even contemn as citizens, what as Christians they are bound to honor and obey. If we admit that kings, as such, are not bound by the laws contained in the Bible, they commit no sin in acting contrary to them, while they act in their official capacity. The moral laws recorded in the Holy Scriptures, are but a fairer copy, and more full and explicit declaration of the eternal and immutable principles of righteousness, which are contained in the law of nature.

When God proclaimed, on the summit of Mount Sinai, his law, in the hearing of the congregation of Israel, it surely could not have entered into the heart of any pious or intelligent man among that people to believe, that while the private individual was bound by the law, the nation as such, the heads of the tribes, and all the civil rulers, were not to listen to it as directed to them. Everyone knows, that the influence of the public laws of a nation, is powerful over all the interests of the citizens, in relation to temporal prosperity, morality and religion. Who could believe, then, that the less important matters were contemplated in the laws of Jehovah, while the more important were utterly neglected? But why should we reason, when the declarations of Scripture are express on the point? The whole code of civil and criminal law is directed to civil rulers, from their very nature and tenor; as to them alone properly belonged the right to take cognizance of offences, acquit, or condemn, and inflict punishment, as the nature, of the action and the law required. Who could compel the restitution ordered? The magistrate. Who could pass the decree of death upon the murderer? The magistrate; and so of other laws. When Moses draws near his death, "he delivers a written copy to the priests, the sons Levi, and unto all the elders of Israel." (Deut. 26:9) The elders or civil rulers have a copy delivered to them, that they may act agreeably to it, in the discharge of all their civil functions. God commands Joshua, as the chief magistrate of the nation—"Be strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do all the law which Moses my servant commanded thee; turn not from it, to the right, or to the left, that thou mayest prosper, whithersoever thou goest. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein." (Joshua 1:7, 8) The same command again and again reiterated to the kings and judges of Israel. When a good king is commended, it is said of him, that "he clave to the Lord, and departed not from following him, but kept his commandments which the Lord commanded Moses." (2 Kings 18:6) When a bad king is censured, it is said, "he forsook the Lord God of his fathers, and walked not in the way of the Lord." An excellent ruler is, in the vocabulary of the Bible, one who follows the Lord, and obeys the Lord and keeps his commandments—an evil ruler, one who forsakes the Lord and disobeys his law.

Perhaps no reader and believer of the Bible ever doubted, that the civil ruler of Israel was bound to obey the law of God, revealed in the Scriptures; but we are told that all this is done away under the New Testament—the laws now bind only individuals; nations are not now bound to regard the Bible. But how was this discovery made? Not in the volume of inspiration. There we have no hint of the kind. If the prince and citizen are set free from the obligations of the divine law, we may safely infer that the Christian is so too. The whole word of God, then, as it stands at present, will be of no other value—no other use, than to give us notice of the fact, that we are released from all obligations to obey the precepts which it contains. We know, however, that kings and private persons were once bound to act agreeably to the revealed will of God; that

God has not set them free; that they are still bound by the law, and that however kings of the earth and princes may combine to burst asunder the bonds of moral obligation, and cast from them the cords of law that bind them to the throne of the Eternal, He that sits in heaven will laugh their attempts, and hold them in utter derision.

Paul (1 Tim. 1:9, 10) instructs us to consider the penal laws of the Old Testament still binding. "The law is not made for the righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient—for the ungodly and for sinners—for unholy and profane—for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers—for, manslayers—for whoremongers—for them that defile themselves with mankind—for menstealers—for liars—for perjured persons," &c. What law is this? The law of Moses. It can be none other. The same apostle, in this connexion, says of this law, "it is good if a man use it lawfully." Who can inflict the penalties to which the great apostle alludes? The civil magistrate only; "who is a terror, not to good works, but to evil." (Rom. 13) What are good works? Those that fulfil God's law. What are evil works? Those that violate God's law.

God's law is directed to every relation in life. Who can make a wiser law? "Shall man be more wise than his Maker?" It is true, that some of the laws given by Moses, were peculiar to the Jews. Such were all the types, and all that immediately referred to them. Such were some laws adapted to the peculiar state of that people. But even these latter (as that relative to reaping the corners of the field) were founded on some principle of justice or benevolence; and by ascertaining this principle, we shall be enabled to apply it, and we are bound to do so. Nations, where the Holy Scriptures are known, have not yet arrived at such a degree of hardihood, as utterly to refuse the application of the principle here contended for. The Sabbath breaker and profane swearer are punished with civil pains. How did legislators know that these are crimes? By the revealed will of God, and by that only. Some, indeed, have wonderfully refined on the principle of the laws against vice and immorality. They say, it is not because these are laws of God, that we are bound to enforce them, but because they are offensive to a majority of our citizens. It is thus that some professing Christians, honor man and respect his feelings, while they dishonor God, and degrade his law. Were this, indeed, the principle of this branch of human legislation, then legislators would be bound to enforce the violation of the Sabbath and profane swearing, should public feeling ever become so depraved as to approve them.

But let us call upon you to consider this subject, in view of the general judgment. When Jesus, "to whom the Father hath committed all judgment," shall erect his great white throne in the air, shall assemble all nations before him, open the books, and enter upon a solemn and final canvass of every man's character—what king, what potentate, will dare to set up as a plea for royal misdeeds, immunity from obligation to those laws which God has published in the Scriptures? Nimrod, Ahab, Jeroboam, Herod, Phocas, Louis and Napoleon, will be arraigned at the bar of Jesus, and tried by "the law and the testimony." Those who have sinned against the written law, shall perish by a sentence Issued according to that law. Many will then learn, but too late, that the wisest policy would have been, to consult the Holy Scriptures in their cabinets and halls of legislation, and to derive their maxims of government from its infinitely wise and salutary precepts. "O ye kings, ye judges of the earth, be wise, be taught out of the laws of Heaven; kiss the Son, revere and practise his precepts, lest when his wrath is kindled but a little, ye perish speedily and utterly."

3. The nations are bound to evince their subjection to the Son of God, by filling all their official stations with upright, godly and able men.

When the venerable priest of Midian came to Moses, his son-in-law, near Mount Horeb, and saw the labor to which he was subjected in judging the people, from morning until evening, he advised him to relieve himself from a part of the burden, by "providing out of all the people, able men, such as feared God, men of truth, and hating covetousness, to be rulers over thousands," &c. (Ex. 18:21) adding, "if thou do this thing, and God command thee so." "Moses hearkened unto his father-in-law, and did all that he had said." These wise maxims of the Midianitish priest, are worthy of being copied into the constitution of every nation, to the end of the world. Let the rulers be able men, no idiots, no ignorant or weak men, but men of mind, information and firmness. Fearers of God; no infidels, no heretics, no profligate despisers of religion and righteousness; but men who have the fear of God before their eyes; who avoid the paths of iniquity; make a profession of the true religion, and walk in the commandments of the Lord, blameless. "Men of truth;" not public deceivers; not men who rise into elevated stations by calumniating their rivals, and who obtain the public favor by false and delusive professions of patriotism; not men who despise the truth of God, and patronize errors and lies; but men who speak the truth as they think in their heart, truly seek the public good, and who value the truth of God more than all earthly honors, and use all their influence derived from personal worth and official eminence for promoting integrity among the citizens, and the love and practice of the truths of the gospel. Finally, "hating covetousness"—not men who seek for offices, that by getting the public coffers, they may enrich and render themselves opulent by the oppression of the poor; but men who wish for no more than a competent remuneration for their labors, and who would rather sacrifice their own property for the advancement of the national prosperity, than grow rich upon the spoils of the community. How admirable an enumeration of magistratical qualifications! It has too the sanction of God himself; for God commanded Moses, otherwise he could not have done all things that Jethro advised, as the obtaining of the divine approbation was a part of the advice.

The value of these precepts, is illustrated in the whole history of the Israelitish commonwealth. When a wicked ruler was over the people, they found a wicked king to be "a roaring lion and a ranging bear." (Prov. 28:15) The idolatrous kings of Israel were what our modern infidel, swearing, gaming, Sabbath breaking, and adulterous modern magistrates and statesmen are. When such a king ascended the throne, the whole nation, with the exception of a few devout men, sunk into idolatry and general profaneness; the worship of the true God was neglected, and divine judgments, like the rushing tornado, wasted their territory; pollution and abomination issued in torrents from the palace, and spread ruin over the land. "For the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin," the armies of Assyria under Shalmanezer, wasted the land with fire and sword, and carried away the people captive into a strange land. "Wasting and destruction were in all their borders." When Ahab reigns, and introduces the worship of Ashtaroth, the goddess of the Zidonians, there is a famine in the land. When the faithless Zedekiah reigns, the city is sacked, the men of war fly, terror fills every heart, and the people whom the sword spares go into captivity.

This is the history of a section of God's government of the world, and a specimen of the whole. Who, indeed, can believe that God will permit men—men with the word of God in, their

hands—men professing the religion of Jesus, to bestow their first honors and highest favors, on his open and avowed enemies; and see them again, with all their vileness, in high places, encouraging "the wicked to walk on each side." I say, who can believe that he will permit men to do all this unpunished? Much less, who can believe that he will approve of such insults offered to him, in the elevation of his hardened enemies? What more preposterous than to place men on high as the guardians of public and private right—of public and private virtue, men who are themselves notorious violators of both the former, and despisers of both the latter! Never was there a more solemn mockery. Let every minister of Jesus—every friend of man, raise his warning voice to the highest pitch of remonstrance, against "this deep and deadly sin"—this general scourge and curse of the nations.

It is not enough, that in the few countries where men have the high and responsible duty to perform of filling, by the exercise of the elective franchise, the public offices—that they are careful to select good men, and good men only; constitutional barriers must be erected around the chair of state, the bench of judgment, and the legislative hall, "to save them from such pollution." Vicious men are impudent, forward, and intriguing, and will thrust themselves into the sanctuaries of law and justice, unless they are surrounded by ramparts that they cannot scale. Lucifer-like, did they believe the achievement practicable, they would attempt to scale the battlements of heaven, and ascend to the throne of God. Let the nations cut off all their hopes—blast all their intrigues, and paralyze all their energies—by constitutional bulwarks, bidding defiance to all the prowess of the ungodly. Let them pass a decree, "like the laws of the Medes and Persians, that altereth not;" and, let them record it among the fundamental laws of the land, that they will "set over them none but able men, men fearing God, men of truth and hating covetousness."

4. In all their political institutions the nations are bound to subserve the interests of the church of God, and promote, truth and godliness.

It is a general law of the government of God, that the material universe shall be rendered subservient to the interests of his moral empire. At first, there were two branches of God's providential government, the angelic branch and the human; both of which became deranged, by the introduction of moral evil. God determined to form one consolidated government out of that part of the angelic province which had not revolted, and a part of the fallen race of men, to be redeemed by the blood of his Son, and sanctified by the operations of his Holy Spirit. At the head of this consolidated empire he decreed to place his Son; that it might forever be secured against all disorder, according to the declaration of the apostle (Eph. 1:10)—"that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one, all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him." To promote the interests of this kingdom, "Jesus Christ was made head over all things to his body, which is the church." That he should render the whole administration of providence subservient to the erection, progress and final perfection of his special kingdom, was the primary object of that universal dominion conferred on him by the Father. Hence the church becomes the meridian line, to which all events refer, in the vast and thronged map, of providence. "All is yours." "All things work together for good to them that love God." We have an excellent illustration of this principle in Edwards' History of Redemption. To illustrate it, was the professed object of the writer—an object which he has accomplished with his usual success.

However adverse ungodly men, ungodly notions, and ungodly kings may be to advance the interest of the church, Messiah in his administration, effectually overrules all their plans and operations for accomplishing the objects which he has in view. But, how guilty nations are, in not governing themselves by such views as accord with the declared plans and purposes of God; how greatly they err, in attempting to counteract his plans, let wise men judge. God has given us ample intimations of his will on this point, in the structure of the Jewish commonwealth. It has often been remarked, as a wonderful peculiarity of that system of civil government, that every part of it was so modelled, as to subserve the welfare of the ecclesiastical establishment. The remark is undoubtedly correct, but very incorrect inferences have been drawn from the fact. Some have thought the civil and religious institutions entirely blended. So utterly incorrect is this inference, that these institutions were then for the first time separated from each other; and the office of the civil magistrate rendered completely distinct from the spiritual ruler. Each officer had his own particular duties assigned him, and might not interfere with those of the other, as is abundantly evident in the instances of Saul's (1 Sam. 13:9-13) offering a sacrifice, and of Uzziah's (2 Chron. 26:16-18) burning incense. The case of Uzziah is very striking. "*It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense, but to the priests, the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense.*" This never could have been said, had there been no distinction preserved between the church and state. For his transgression, in this affair, the king was smitten with a leprosy, and dwelt in a separate house unto the day of his death.

Until the time of Moses, the government of the world had been generally patriarchal. The patriarch was king and priest, exercising a species of extended family government, in which, among the godly, as in godly families now, all temporal affairs are, or ought to be managed, in subserviency to religion. Civil government, indeed, is only a more extended plan of administering that part of family government which refers chiefly to temporal things. What an ancient patriarch, and his patriarchate or family, were bound to do, for advancing among themselves the interests of godliness, every nation, as a body, is bound to do. The patriarchal government was of divine authority; and by divine authority, the civil government of the Jews succeeded that primitive institution. Where else than in these two, are we to look for a divine exemplar? Where else to seek for light from heaven, shed upon our dark world, on a subject so momentous? And are we in danger of error, when we copy the example set us by the God of heaven?

That the subserviency of the Jewish civil polity to the religion of the Son of God, was not designed to be limited to that dispensation, is evident, from the consideration that it was founded in reason—in the immutable principles of Christian philosophy. Every man, individually, is bound to make religion his primary concern—to consider himself as a pilgrim and foreigner in a strange land, travelling towards an eternal residence, and to use all his earthly comforts with reference to futurity. He is here but for a short period—his being only begins to dawn—all his pursuits should look towards another world. As a member of a family—as a merchant, a mechanic, a farmer, &c. he is to keep his future destiny steadily in view; and is he to lose sight of it utterly, the moment he acts as a member of the civil community? Let him who can, believe it! Religion is vitally connected with all that should be done by him in this life, and it lies at the foundation of all that regards his prospects of future blessedness and glory. Its magnitude and importance swallows up every other consideration; and must he, as a magistrate, disregard all its

claims? To do so, is to set at defiance right reason and sound philosophy. An immortal being should act everywhere, with reference to his immortality.

This view of the subject is rendered still more luminous, from the fact that national prosperity, glory and happiness, are essentially connected with the purity of the church of God, relative to doctrine, discipline and government. Well does the Christian poet sing—

"When nations are to perish in their sins,
'Tis in the church, the leprosy begins."

Well does the present governor of Pennsylvania say, in an address to his legislature—
"There is no security for national prosperity or morality, but in the Christian religion." Heresy, gross idolatry, and blasphemy, provoke the wrath of God, and call down his vengeance. By opening the flood-gates of vice and immorality, they render divine judgments indispensable to assert the honor of God's government. Let Israel and modern Europe witness. Even a heathen poet could say—

—————"Neque
Per nostrum patimur scelus
Iracunda Jovem ponere fulmina."

"Nor by our wickedness do we suffer Jove to lay aside his vengeful thunderbolts." If, then, national prosperity is important, a nation, in its civil capacity, should watch over the interests of the religion of Jesus.

The permanent morality of this principle of heaven ordained polity, is settled by Old Testament prophecy, and New Testament declaration. "The saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever." (Dan. 7:18) And, "the kingdom and dominion—the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High." (Dan. 7:27) All this was to take place after the destruction of the Babylonian, Persian, Grecian and Roman empires. Rome papal is included. When all these are destroyed, Christians shall take the reins of civil government into their hands, and direct them on Christian principles. Again, to the church it is promised—"kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers." How? By chartering heresy, idolatry and blasphemy? This were to nurse the child by rocking in its cradle, the bear and the tiger. No; but by ruling for the Lord Jesus—promoting the glory of his church—restraining the boar that cometh from the forest to waste his heritage.

Hear the language of the New Testament. "The nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it (the church): the kings of the earth do bring their glory and their honour into it—and they shall bring the glory and the honour of the nations into it." (Rev. 21:24-26) Here are glorious blessings promised—the kings of the earth in the church—the nations walking in the light of Zion, and the kings of the earth promoting the prosperity of the church, by consecrating the wealth and glory of their empires to the Son of God, to beautify the place of his sanctuary.

That such are the views of the Confessions of Faith of the protestant churches, see the Westminster Confession of Faith (Chaps. XXIII., XXXI)—see them even as mutilated by the General assembly of the Presbyterian church, and by the Associated Reformed Synod. The whole fabric of that imperishable digest of religious truth must be demolished, before this glorious principle can be obliterated.

Let me now add, how do men degrade the heaven-born ordinance of magistracy, by representing it as only conversant about the paltry affairs of animal gratification? This ordinance has descended from the throne of God, for the express purpose of preserving moral order among men, and yet are we to be told, that it shall not bow to that throne whence it has descended? Shall we be told that it is to have no aspect of friendship to that religion, without which, all efforts for the preservation of moral order, "are forever vain and impotent?" That it regards man merely as the creature of a day? Were man born for no higher end, and of no longer duration than to eat, drink, flutter a few moments like the insect of an hour, and then sink, into the arms of entire and perpetual oblivion, all this might be true.

5. In all their civil, criminal, and international concerns, the kingdoms should have a supreme regard to the glory of God. We are commanded, "whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, to do all to the glory of God." If we are not to be moved to the ordinary actions of eating and drinking, by a motive less than the glory of God, much less should we, in a business of so much consequence, as legislating for the happiness of a nation. God in his providence raised Nebuchadnezzar to the throne, but he did not give the glory to him in whose hand was his life and being. He glorified himself, saying—"is not this great Babylon that I have built for the house of my kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?" (Dan. 4:30) The decree of judgment immediately went forth—he was "driven from among men, and made to eat grass like oxen." Daniel, in that memorable sermon which he preached the night that the city was taken, before the impious Belshazzar, upbraids him with disregarding the voice of providence. "When his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened with pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him. And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this, but hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou and thy lords, thy wives and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver and gold, of brass, iron, wood and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know, and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified—"Tekel; thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. Peres; thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians." (Dan. 5:20, 23, 26, 27) In this, let all kings and kingdoms, who refuse to glorify God, by bowing before the throne of his Son, read their fate.

Ambassadors consult the honor of their sovereigns, and shall not magistrates consult the honor of him, "by whom kings reign, and princes decree justice?" Nations should place before them high, glorious and holy objects; and what more illustrious objects could they aim at, than the honor of the glorious and mighty Lord, who rides in heaven for the help of Israel, "and in his excellency, on the sky?"

II. We proceed to examine the state of the nations, relative to the performance of the duty enjoined in our text.

1. They are all in a state of open rebellion against God. The mere neglect to acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ, in Christian countries, is rebellion on the part of the nation guilty of such neglect. When Jeroboam was made king of the ten tribes, we are not told that there was any direct act of declared rebellion against the God of Israel; indeed, we may assure ourselves, that the people would not have borne such a declaration from Jeroboam. There were many devout people among them, whose affection for the worship of God at Jerusalem, Jeroboam feared, would draw them back to the house of David. In order to prevent this event, he set up his calves at Dan and Bethel. But in the constitution of their government, the God of Israel was not acknowledged; and hence, God says of them, "they have set up kings, but not by me; and princes, and I knew it not." (Hos. 8:4) Thus God did not acknowledge the kings that they set up as his vicegerents—they did not rule by his authority. Their whole civil establishment was erected without regard to God, and hence in a state of rebellion against him.

When the Israelites asked Samuel the prophet for a king, they did not formally reject God, yet God says to him, "they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them." (1 Sam. 8:7) As direct a charge of rebellion as could have been preferred against them, is here exhibited.

The principle here stated, is recognized by all civil governments, in relation to their own authority. Were any portion of their dominions to erect a government, without any reference to their authority, they would speedily demolish the fabric, and compel subjection at the point of the sword. This has lately been tried in the United States. A small colony of Frenchmen, a few years ago, attempted to establish themselves in the wilderness, west of the Mississippi, without obtaining permission from the general government, and formed a constitution for the regulation of the little commonwealth. The United States' government was not acknowledged; and it issued orders to employ, if necessary, a military force, to crush the infant republic. Were any state of the confederation to form a constitution on the same principle, it would interpret the act to be rebellion; and if negotiation should fail to bring it back to allegiance, its citizens would be treated as rebels.

Britain and the United States are colonies within Jehovah's government; and if they refuse to acknowledge the authority of Messiah, he will treat them as rebel provinces of his empire. In the United States, the refusal to acknowledge God, has probably been more explicit than it ever was in any other nation. Soon after we had obtained, through the beneficent providence of God, liberation from the dominion of a foreign power; soon after the most eminent displays of Jehovah's goodness to our land; the convention, elected to form articles of fundamental law for the commonwealth, rejected the government of God, and with a degree of ingratitude, perhaps without a parallel, formed a constitution in which there is not the slightest hint of homage to the God of heaven; in which God receives no more honor than the devil. They force all within their territories to bow before them, but they refuse to bow before the throne of God. This is a species of national atheism, almost as enormous as that of the French republic, whose representatives voted, that there is no God. It is to all intents practical atheism; and we

cannot doubt that those who planned such rebellion against the King of kings and Lord of lords, were practical atheists and professed infidels.¹

In relation to this fact, we are more guilty than any nation of the Old World, for they all make some acknowledgments of God; and though those acknowledgments may be as hollow and hypocritical as those of Jehu, yet they are in themselves good. In other points, however, they are as much more guilty before God than we, as they are older. No European kingdom legislates agreeably to the Holy Scriptures, for the honor of God, in subjection to Messiah, and for the interests of his kingdom. The kings of Europe, and their subordinate officers, are generally notorious for the abandoned profligacy of their lives, for a disregard to the principles of justice, for merciless tyranny, and for dark superstition. They pollute, by their impure hands, every sacred thing which they touch; and impiously prostitute the religion of Jesus, for the purpose of binding the yoke of bondage upon the necks of their wretched subjects. Who, among them all, "departs from the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin?" The thrones of the Old World are filled with Ahabs, and they have filled the temples with the priests of Baal. We speak things known to all the world, and which no intelligent Christian will dare to deny.

However far the rulers of our own country are from the practice of the tyranny of European princes, and however decent many of them may be in their personal characters, and however devout some of them may be—do they generally possess the evidence of more genuine godliness, than even the present Regent of England? Are they, generally, "men fearing God; and hating covetousness?" Such rulers, both in the Old World and in the New, are the genuine fruits of the constitutions which bring them forth. A tree is known by its fruits:—Diseased and almost rotten, must be the systems which habitually produce such bitter fruits. The constitution of the kingdom of the ten tribes was radically defective; and consequently never was there even one good king produced under its operation. Ungodly men rise from the bosom of civil society in every land, as the result of vitiated and habitually diseased constitutional action. "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint."

Sores there may be, and, occasionally, violent attacks of diseases, in the healthiest bodies, as there were bad kings in the kingdom of Judah. But, that constitutions such as God approves, and administered on sound principles of moral order, should be always in the hands of the ungodly, is utterly incredible. Not only the rulers, but the majority of the citizens of those nations, which thus rebel against God, are ungodly. The example of men in high stations is copied by the lower orders, even down to the beggar. When you ask in vain for the king, president or governor who sanctifies the Sabbath, worships God in his family, devoutly receives the sacrament of the Lord's Supper—you also took in vain for the performance of these duties among the majority of the citizens. Hence, as the nations are in a state of constitutional rebellion against God, personal rebellion and contempt of the ordinances of the gospel, and of Christian duty generally, are prevalent. Will anyone say, that a majority of the citizens of the United States are devout disciples of Jesus? Even clarity frowns at such a declaration.

¹ Nor does it appear that the lapse of nearly half a century has produced any reformation; as even now, a decision has passed the Senate, in favor of the abhorrent practice of slavery; an evil repugnant to the finest feelings of humanity. and acknowledged, by themselves. to the contrary to the claims of religion and morality; but irrevocable, because agreeable to, and sanctioned by, the constitution of the United States.—

2. The nations of Christendom have given their power to Antichrist, "the man of sin and son of perdition," and thus do homage to God's enemy. The decrees of Phocas and of Justinian, sanctioning the pretended head-ship of the Roman pontiff over the church, are known. To them all the other princes of Europe accorded; all together uniting with the head of the ecclesiastical tyranny in solemn covenant, to advance the cause of idolatry and superstition, and constituting a great mystery of iniquity. This combination of the civil and ecclesiastical despotisms, fortifies both; produces an extraordinary depression of the human species and imparts vast force to the power of oppression. "The civil rulers are found by the poor people to be 'roaring lions and ranging bears.'" Such a tremendous power, in which iniquity and tyranny should be systematized, for the violation of human right and for making war upon every sacred thing, we have been taught by many ancient prophecies to expect. Daniel saw it in the "visions of his head, upon his bed." "After this I saw, in the night, visions—and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: and it devoured and brake in pieces and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns." (Dan. 7:7)

The first of the preceding beasts, that arose out of the sea agitated by the striving of the four winds of heaven—the great family of nations, rendered tempestuous by the rage of evil passions—was the lion representing, in prophetic symbol, the Assyrian empire; the second, a bear—representing the Persian; and the third, a leopard—the Macedonian. This fourth beast, for which it would seem, there was not among all beasts of prey any one adequate to represent its terrible fierceness, is the Roman empire; and its ten horns are the ten kingdoms of modern, antichristian Europe. To this interpretation we have the assent of all Protestant commentators.² The little horn springing up among them, growing out of the head of the same dreadful beast of prey, is the pope of Rome. Though this little horn does not harmonize with all the others, yet they are all united in the head of the same Beast. They have a common origin and support. So far is this beast from being in a state of subjection to the God of heaven; so far is God from acknowledging the power of the horns, as of him, that a fiery flame issues and comes forth from before the Ancient of days, by which the body of the beast is consumed; the thrones are cast clown, to prepare the way for the everlasting dominion of "one like unto the Son of man." These thrones have joined his enemies and made war upon the Lamb. The Lamb makes war upon them and overcomes them.

The apostle John exhibits the same views of the modern governments of Europe. "I saw a beast rise out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his head the names of blasphemy and the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion. And it was given to him to make war upon the saints and to over-come them." (Rev. 13:1,2,7) Thus we find this beast arising out of the sea, like that in Daniel; and like it too, incapable of being symbolized by any one furious beast, but combining the ferocity of all the most fierce. The kings, who are the ten horns of this beast, are represented as committing fornication with "the great whore that sitteth on many waters." Such is the metaphor, exhibiting the connexion between the civil and spiritual

² See Durham, Henry, Gill, the Newtons, Stephen, Grotius, Calvin, Luther, Johnston, Reader, Frazer. Faber, Mason, and M'Leod. It is passing strange, that all these, except the last two—who clearly perceived this application of the prophecy and of the parallel passages in the book of Revelation—do notwithstanding, consider those governments as the ordinance of God; and entitled, as such, to the obedience and full support of all God's people.

despots of antichristian Europe. "And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her" (the church of Rome) &c. (Rev. 18:9) The connexion of the kingdoms of the earth with the popish church, is an impure, loathsome and abominable connexion, as the metaphor here employed forcibly indicates.

That the civil governments of Europe have given themselves up to the support of the Roman apostacy, instead of bowing down before Emmanuel, is expressly declared by this prophet. "For God hath put into their hearts to fulfil his will, to agree and give their kingdom to the beast." (Rev. 17:17) Instead of consecrating their kingdoms to the Son of God, by a solemn covenant, they have given them to the beast out of the bottomless pit. That the facts recorded by Daniel and John, in their prospective histories of the church, are a faithful representation of the truth, is most amply demonstrated by the state of things, which has existed for many centuries in Europe. The policy of the nations has been so shaped since the early part of the seventh century, as to subserve the grand Roman apostacy, as every intelligent reader of history knows. Truly, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with "the mother of harlots and abominations."

After all, facts laid up in the archives of history, however important, are known to comparatively few, especially when they are the facts of remote ages. Such, of late years, has been the remarkable providence of God, that the crowned heads of Europe have given, simultaneously, and most formally, with the eyes of the whole universe fixed upon them, their kingdoms to the beast. The potentates of Europe confederated together, and concentrated their policies—their energies—their armies—to crush revolutionary France. A dark cloud collected in the north, and threatened to break over her in thunder and tempest, overwhelming her with a flood of desolation; but that God who rides in the whirlwind, had decreed otherwise. The republican armies of France are everywhere victorious, and as an overflowing scourge, pass through the surrounding nations, wasting with fire and sword, the very capitals and palaces of those monarchs, who had threatened them with destruction. God made them instrumental "in removing the diadem and taking away the crown"—in shaking the empires of the world to their foundations—in filling the world with carnage, and in spreading sackcloth over the nations. The thrones of kings that had stood firm for ages, tottered; the crowns of princes fell from their heads, and they fled as exiles from their palaces, and from the borders of their kingdoms. Beggared in their resources, they were supported on the charity of others. Napoleon arose out of this stormy sea, and by his powers of mind and military prowess, became the terror of the world. Even those kings that were permitted to enjoy the thrones of their ancestors, held their sceptres only by his courtesy. The Roman Catholic church—her pontiff—the inferior orders of her clergy, and all her devotees, felt for awhile the, desolating power of the conqueror. The pope became an exile: but Napoleon, like those who were before him, became the protector of the mother of harlots; allied himself to the head of the ancient dynasties, and from that time he gradually sunk, until his power was finally destroyed, and himself banished to a remote island. This mighty conflict fixed the attention of the world upon the contending powers.

The ancient kings, restored to their thrones, by formal and general consent, reinstated the spiritual tyrant, the Roman pontiff, in his ghostly dominion; re-clothe him in his ancient honors, and raise from the tomb his inquisitorial courts. The Roman Catholic church casts off her sackcloth; arrays herself in purple and scarlet, and the kings again "live deliciously with her." This restoration of the pope by the powers of Europe, thus effected by solemn treaty and mutual

stipulation, was accomplished before the eyes of all nations, is recorded and laid up in the archives of the kingdoms, and cannot be forgotten.

All this is the more remarkable, as it has been done at a period near the close of Antichrist's reign. When the little stone cut out of the mountains without hands, shall break in pieces the great image; when the body of the beast is given to the burning flame; all this iniquity will be fresh in the memory of man, and shall cause all people to exclaim, in the language of the angel out of the altar—"even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments."

3. The kingdoms of the world have disregarded the laws of God revealed in the Holy Scriptures. This is a fruitful and painful topic. In their constitutions, legislative details, and international regulations, they refer not to the will of God; they burst asunder the cords of moral obligation.

In their constitutions.—In the election of their kings, the voice of the people is not heard, or if it is ever heard, it is utterly disregarded. The people are considered as made for the sovereigns, and not the sovereigns for the people. Their parliaments, states general, and legislative assemblies, are not elected by the majority of the people. The elective franchise in European monarchies, is the shadow without the substance. The most powerful branches of their legislatures—their houses of lords and nobles, are appointed by the kings, and utterly independent of the people. In many of them, as in Russia and Prussia, the will of the sovereign is the supreme law of the land. Bishops are admitted through right of office, as they pretend, to membership in their civil legislatures.

All these are in open and notorious violations of the laws of God and rights of men. In Israel, the judges were elected by the people. "And the men of Israel said unto Gideon, rule thou over us, thou and thy son, and thy son's son also, for thou hast delivered us from the hand of Midian." (Jdgs. 8:22) Saul and David were raised to the throne by the suffrage of the people, though they had been previously chosen and anointed by divine authority. "And all the people went to Gilgal; and there they made Saul king before the Lord in Gilgal." (1 Sam. 11:15) "Then came all the tribes of Israel to David unto Hebron, and spake, saying, behold we *are* thy bone and thy flesh. Also in time past, when Saul was king over us, thou wast he that leddest out, and broughtest in Israel: and the Lord said to thee, 'thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be a captain over Israel.' So all the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron and king David made a league with them in Hebron before the Lord: *and they anointed David king over Israel.*" (2 Sam. 5:1-3) Solomon was elected with acclamation.—"And all the people said, God save king Solomon. And all the people came up after him, and all the people piped with pipes, and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth rent with the sound of them." (1 Kings 1:39,40)

Christ himself did not exercise worldly authority in the days of his flesh, as the European bishops do, and that even by usurpation. He forbid his disciples to exercise lordship.

In their legislative details—Witness their establishing the worship of idols, and all the superstitious, impious mummeries of the church of Rome, when both the command of God, and the approved example of his kings, enjoin them to destroy idols out of the land; and which, by solemn national covenant they are bound to do. Their unhallowed interference with the rights of

conscience, in attempting to force men to become idolaters; in the enforcement of the wicked decrees of idolatrous ecclesiastical councils and profligate pontiffs; in their support of diabolical inquisitions into the sanctuary of private opinion; in the abridgment of the civil privileges of the faithful disciples of Jesus; and in their persecuting with fire and sword, those who dare to worship God according to the dictates of his word; their impositions of enormous burdens of taxes upon their subjects, for the support of their own prodigality, profusion, extravagance and profligacy, and those of idle bishops; their supporting large armies to protect their thrones and palaces—the sanctuaries of tyranny; their appointment of ungodly men to offices in their armies, navies, judiciaries, and diplomatic corps, and enjoining the ministers of religion, to prostitute the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, in administering it to those impure men to qualify them for their offices; and finally, for where shall we end this dark catalogue? their imposing restraints upon the freedom of the press, by which all these evils might be unmasked, prove but too amply the wickedness of their legislative details.

Our own land is not guiltless.—Witness their guaranteeing by the constitution, the right to hold men in involuntary bondage; their numerous laws fortifying this outrage on the rights of man; their declarations that men have a right to worship God in whatever manner they think proper, though that worship should blaspheme God, and offer every indignity to his word; and their profanation of the Sabbath, by authorizing their mail stages to travel on the day of sacred rest.

Their international regulations.—The unrighteous wars which they wage with each other; wasting the human species, and depopulating kingdoms to gratify pride, ambition, or passion; the commissions given to privateers, to legalize the plunder of private property on the high seas; the conquest and oppression of unoffending nations, as those of southern Asia, and of the East India Islands; their grasping at, and seizing the provinces of neighboring commonwealths, to which they have no title, as in the instances of Poland and Norway; and their chicanery and deception in the formation of treaties, and faithless disregard of them when formed and solemnly ratified.

Even when they do enact laws, formally good, it is not out of respect to the authority of God's commanding, and with a view to his honor and the good of his church, but because it suits their own convenience; as is manifest from their annulling of them at pleasure, and from their legislating in open defiance of them, in so many instances. "The Lord is not in all their ways." They decree laws by iniquity.

4. All their authority and power is by usurpation. They obtained originally their power by conquest—a power transmitted to them from those northern chieftains, who, with their predatory bands, desolated the Roman empire, or from imperial and royal conquerors. In no kingdom has the majority of the people established the existing government. Such a right to establish government is not, indeed, recognized on behalf of the people—it is not admitted that they possess it. Kings impiously profess to derive their authority from God, and not through the medium of the people. That they act on this principle is plain, from the doctrines which they avow, and from recent events in France, which has had a government forced upon her at the point of the sword, and contrary to the known will of the citizens. Let them show their commission—it will be the sword only. Let them produce their title—it will be the sword only. Let them show their charter—if will be the sword only. "Whence," says the apostle James, "came

wars and fightings among you? come they not hence even from your lusts that war in your members?" (Jas. 4:1) They proceed from passions that "are earthly, sensual, devilish." (Jas. 3:15) It is partly owing to this, but chiefly from their subjecting their crowns, and professing to hold their commissions from Antichrist, that they are represented by the writer of the Apocalypse, as holding their power from the Devil. "And the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority." (Rev. 13:2) The dragon is "that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan." He to whom he gave authority is the fourth beast, whose head bears the horns. Now, as all protestant commentators consider these ten horns, the modern kingdoms of Europe, the conclusion is absolutely irresistible, that those governments do not derive their authority from God, but from "the old serpent, the Devil and Satan." As they have received their power from the Devil, so they rule for him, and do homage to him. Their subjects who acknowledge and support them: are represented as worshipping the Devil. "And all the world wondered after the beast, and they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast, and they worshipped the beast." (Rev. 5:3, 4)

Truly this is a great mystery of iniquity.—The interests of the kings of the earth, and of the "mystery Babylon the great, the mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth," and of the Devil, are the same. This stupendous system of moral abomination, "is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." "For all nations have drunk of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her." (Rev. 18:2, 3) Satan has organized this system of ecclesiastical and civil iniquity, and all the impure spirits from hell make it their home. Thus it is an earthly pandemonium. As it is the work of the old serpent, the Devil and Satan, so it is all a usurpation; for all the power which he exercises in this world is by usurpation. The Son of man shall cast him out.

5. These governments are encouraged by the countenance which they receive from the church. I do not now allude to the church of Rome—that point has been already discussed: I mean the protestant church. A great majority of the protestant churches have in all times, since the reformation, honored the civil governments as the ordinance of God to them for good. While they have applied, and have triumphantly established their application of the epithet, mother of harlots, to the church of Rome, they have honored the beast on which the woman sitteth; and instead of deriving the power of the beast from the old serpent, they have derived it from the God of heaven, contrary to the express declarations of Scripture. This has been "a dead fly in the ointment." Their connexion with the beast, has given the woman an opportunity of making them in part drunk with the potions of her cup of intoxication. For more than a century and a half, they have been gradually declining. The protestant churches in France, in Germany, in Prussia, in Swisserland, in Hungary, in Poland, in Britain, and in America, have been intoxicated with the Arminian, Arian and Socinian heresies; and strange to tell, many protestants, even protestant clergy, in Europe, are infidels. The large protestant bodies have all lost their tone. What might have been foreseen, they have seen the connexion between the temporal and spiritual powers, and have in a great measure ceased to testify against the abominations of both. In many countries especially France, Germany, Prussia and Swisserland, we can hardly distinguish between the protestants and papists, except in name. With the departure of soundness in the faith, the power of religion and vital godliness have departed. There are some consoling exceptions; but we exhibit the general aspect of protestantism.

It was long customary for the minister of religions in their public prayers, to offer petitions for the destruction of the kingdom of Antichrist; but at the same time, they prayed for the perpetuity, prosperity and glory of the beast, by praying for the prosperity of those engaged in its support. They either did not see, or would not see, that the interests of popery and those of the beast, were so closely connected in the same web, that they must stand and fall together. Since the dethronement of Napoleon, and the re-establishment of the Bourbons, this has become so abundantly conspicuous, that all must not only know, but admit it. Hence, among the established clergy even in Scotland, they have ceased of late to pray for the downfall of the pope.

6. They are fast ripening for destruction.—I shall not here enter into calculations respecting the date of Antichrist's rise—the duration of his reign—and the period of termination,³ though all these would strengthen the position—they are fast ripening for destruction. We are told by Daniel, that "the beast shall be slain, and his body given to the burning flame;" so that the deadly wound cannot again be healed. God will destroy Antichrist, the man of sin and son of perdition, with the breath of his mouth, and with the brightness of his coming. The vials of God's wrath shall be poured out upon the seat of the beast. "The beast and the false prophet, shall be taken and cast alive into a lake burning with fire and brimstone." (Rev. 19:20) Those governments, then, which are the horns of the beast, are destined to destruction, to make way for the bowing of the kingdoms to Messiah. During the reformation, they were made to shake to their foundations. The kingdom of the beast was filled with darkness. The times in which we live have a most striking resemblance to those that preceded the reformation.

Immediately preceding that wonderful event, the kings of Europe were leagued together, and seemed to be firmly seated on their thrones—so they are now. United in what they call a "holy league," they are all solemnly bound to support one another in their respective dominions; and relying upon the power of this confederacy, they think themselves perfectly secure. Each says, I sit as a queen, and shall see no sorrow.

The Roman pontiff and his minions thought their power was on a most secure and immoveable foundation, during the fifteenth century. Fortified by their alliances with all the princes of Europe, and relying on the ignorant and superstitious attachment of the people to the popish religion, they imagined they might practise their tyrannies, and enforce their exactions, without danger to their power. They relied upon the beast, and said, "who can make war upon the beast: and overcome him?" So they say and act now.

But there were causes in operation, which soon checked the career of both, and threatened them with destruction. The arts of printing and paper-making had been invented, and were in operation, by which there was a prodigious multiplication of intelligence. Copies of the Scriptures—of historical works—of fugitive essays on subjects of religion and literature, could be, and actually were multiplied, with a facility utterly unknown to former ages. As men had access to the means of information, the mummeries of the popish church became subjects of scorn and derision; and when the people became better acquainted with their own rights as human beings, they regarded the oppression of their civil and spiritual rulers as intolerable tyranny. They were thus prepared for breaking off their necks the yoke of bondage, and embracing the truth, presented to them in the preaching of the apostles of the reformation. The

³ For an excellent illustration of these points, see M'Leod's *Lectures on the Revelations*.

Roman pontiff himself, Leo X. contributed not a little to promote this growing spirit of inquiry, by seeking after, procuring and publishing copies of the ancient Greek and Roman poets, historians, philosophers and orators. A taste for letters and philosophy was cultivated, which are always hostile to superstition and tyranny.

In our times, the Bible societies, amply supplied with stereotype plates, and large and increasing funds, are multiplying copies of the Scriptures, beyond all former example; and with unparalleled activity, finding out or forcing open channels for their circulation, to an indefinite extent through the papal territories. In relation to the multiplication of Bibles, the invention of the arts of printing and papermaking, were not more efficient beyond former times, than Bible societies and stereotype plates are beyond the means of the three last centuries. There is an additional and powerful consideration; it is not an obscure monk that is preaching the value of this divine book, and recommending it to notice, but kings, princes, nobles, learned and wealthy, and influential men. We see "a great angel flying through the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue and people." (Rev. 14:6) If the preaching of one monk was so efficacious, what will be the effect produced by the means now employed for the diffusion of gospel truth? If that shook the throne of Antichrist, will not this destroy it? If that filled the kingdom of the beast with darkness, will not this demolish it utterly?

There is, too, a much more active spirit of inquiry, than even that which characterized the latter part of the fifteenth, and beginning of the sixteenth centuries. "Men run to and fro and knowledge is increased." Every corner of the world is explored—the bowels of the earth are laid open—scientific researches are pushed forward with amazing activity. Magazines, and other sources of public intelligence, are sought after with unusual avidity. In this time of general peace, religious intelligence is everywhere sought after, and affords topics of general conversation. Men are becoming better acquainted with their civil and religious rights, and more disposed to assert them. The attention of men, no longer fixed upon wars and battles, has been called home to inspect the machine of government, and ask why all this oppression? Why all these exactions? Why all this draining off our resources? By what right are we governed? Why are we excluded from electing our own rulers? Shall those whom we have not appointed to govern us, thus empty our coffers, and beggar our wives and children? Are we born their slaves? There has been more investigation of all these important points, since the peace, consequent on the late re-establishment of the old dynasties, than there had been in many ages before. God, in his providence, seems to have given repose to the world, that men might have leisure to prosecute those inquiries, and become acquainted with the real state of the civil and religious world. The appropriate effects are beginning to result from these causes, in the popular commotions which are agitating Spain, Germany, Prussia and England.

The two witnesses of Jesus issuing from the valleys of the Alps, spread over Europe and multiplied greatly, just before the reformation—a people who had always testified against the usurpations and corruptions of the spiritual tyrants. God has multiplied greatly his witnesses, both in Europe and America, and enables them to maintain, publish and defend in the pulpit, and from the press, their testimony against all these evils, and in behalf of the rights of their Lord and Redeemer's crown. They have published, both in the Old World and the New, numerous works,

which even their enemies respect. He for whom they bear witness, gives them learning and makes them known.

Thus, as before the reformation, causes apparently quite disconnected, are tending to the production of the same effect. Men who know not God are seeking after their rights as men; and philosophy is holding to them her torch, while the circulation of the Bible presents to the eyes of men, the means of becoming acquainted with their spiritual wretchedness, and the means of deliverance from all the evils of sin, through the blood of Jesus and the sanctification of the Spirit; at the same time, the witnesses of Jesus are unmasking the abominations of the whole mystery of civil and ecclesiastical iniquity. The Lord prosper his work.

One other point of resemblance between those periods, deserves notice. Both the priests and the civil powers seemed, in the fifteenth century, to be blinded and hardened, so as either not to discover, or not to regard, the causes that were in active operation to shake their power. They regarded neither the voice of Providence, nor the warnings of men. Instead of taking any measures to reform the gross abuses that were unmasking, they grasped at still greater power—became more tyrannical, and were more profligate in their lives. God hardened their hearts as he did the heart of Pharaoh. The measures which they adopted exasperated the popular indignation, and the wickedness of their lives excited public odium and contempt.

Is not all this remarkably characteristic of our own times? The crowned heads of Europe and the popish clergy, have refused to listen to the warning voice of Providence. Lately Messiah made his appearance among them in garments died in blood, travelling in the greatness of his strength—he trod down both kings and subjects in his anger—trampled upon them in his fury—and their blood stained all his raiment. The plains of Europe groaned under the heaps of the slain; the crowns of potentates he cast down and trampled in the dust. The blood of the priests stained the altars which they had polluted with their idolatries.—Thrones and temples were made to shake, and were ready to be swallowed by the earthquakes of revolutions—but they hardened their hearts and refused to hear—they have not been affrighted, nor have they given glory to God. "Who hath hardened himself against God and prospered?" "He that being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed and that without remedy." Was there ever a more striking instance of men hardening themselves after many reproofs, than we have at present among the powers of Europe? Immediately after God permits the old dynasties to return to their thrones, they unite in giving their kingdoms to the beast—the very sin for which wrath had gone forth from the Lord against them. Pharaoh's obstinacy in refusing to let the people go, after many judgments, was not more striking, than that of the kings of Europe in their late measures. They are rushing forward upon destruction.

They see not—regard not, the progress of light and knowledge. It is true, the pontiff cannot close his eyes upon the circulation of the Scriptures, nor on the fatal influence which it is likely to have in the destruction of his power—that he has forbidden it by his bull—and that the emperor of Germany has employed the civil power to render the pope's bull effectual in his hereditary dominions, the circle of Austria—but this is a part of their ancient policy, and falls in with their ancient habits of endeavoring to keep the people in ignorance: this was attempted too at the time of the reformation, but in vain. The very attempt, in this age of inquiry, when intelligence on all subjects circulates so rapidly through every vein of society, is calculated to

render them universally odious. An attempt to check the progress of inquiry, is as vain as an effort would be to stay the course of nature, and command the sun not to rise. But numerous potentates are exerting their influence to promote the diffusion of the Scriptures, as Leo X. did to revive ancient learning, not perceiving that they must undermine their usurped power and oppressive tyranny; not that they value the word of life, and rejoice in the light of its living truth, but that God, in whose hand is the king's heart, has caused them to bow to popular opinion. While they are doing so, they are rendering their yoke more oppressive and galling.

The increased knowledge of the rights of men and their clamors for freedom, have not produced any relaxation from the yoke of oppression, but the contrary. It is true, they are brought into a net. Were they to yield, in the least, to the claims of the people, they are aware that these claims would be increased, and that the spirit of disaffection would be cherished and invigorated. On the other hand, a recurrence to violence and murder, to repress investigation and complaint, must exasperate popular feeling in a tenfold degree. On one thing, however, they all seem to be resolved—not to reform their ungodly lives—to retrench their extravagant expenditures—to seek after the truth in the love and practice of it—nor to rule in the fear of the Lord, and for the good of their subjects. Finally, on this particular, the nations are angry and irritated. They have sinned—they do sin—and sin with a high hand, and they must be miserable. Even in these times of general peace and plenty, they feel the curse of God, in their basket and in their store—in their cattle, and in the products of their soil—producing, it may be safely affirmed, even more actual misery than was felt at any period when war raged with its greatest violence. Hence, the nations are angry, because of the wrath of the Lamb, and they will vent their rage against royal and priestly tyrants, who have had so much instrumentality in producing their miseries.

All these considerations, like the man's hand upon the wall of Belshazzar's palace, write upon the anti-christian kingdoms of the earth, "MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN." Messiah is on his march, the armies of heaven following after him, to remove finally the diadem and take away the crown—to make war upon the dragon and cast him out—and "to consume and to destroy the kingdom and dominion of the fourth beast, and to give the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, to the people of the saints of the Most High."

III. I now proceed to apply the subject.

1. In the words of inspiration—"Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues: for her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities." (Rev. 18:4, 5) "For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind." (Hos. 8:7) You on yesterday renewed your covenant with God [*i.e.*, in the taking of the Lord's supper], and solemnly swore allegiance to the prince of the kings of the earth. Him you are bound to honor, whatever the nations may do. You cannot serve two masters. Has "the dragon, the old serpent, which is called the Devil and Satan," "given to the beast," the kings of the earth, "their power, and seat, and great authority," and you have the word of your God that he has, then you are bound to renounce them, and "say not a confederacy" with them, "Can a man take fire into his bosom, and not be burnt?" Can you unite with those who are in a state of open rebellion against your Lord and Master; who not only refuse to acknowledge his law, but rule for the prince of darkness? You know that during the whole of the reign of

Antichrist, for 1260 years, the two witnesses must prophesy in sackcloth—that sackcloth you profess to wear. You know, too, that the beast makes war upon these two witnesses—that he persecutes them, and even slays them. Hence, you may expect, that while you stand at a distance from them, there will be many to speak evil of you, and to revile your testimony. Hence, you may look for, and be prepared to endure privations and sufferings. While you refuse to swear oaths to support what God has said he will destroy, others who consult their ease, will despise the robes of mourning that you wear.

But is not Jesus worthy that you should make all these sacrifices for his name's sake; for the honor of his kingdom, and for the glory of his crown? He died to save you from your sins, and from hell—he watches over you by day and night—he supplies all your wants—he sends his spirit to regenerate—to enlighten—to sanctify—to comfort you; he makes intercession for you within the veil; he is your "Interpreter—one among a thousand;" he promises to be with you in death; to give you an unfading crown of righteousness, and to be your portion and unspeakable joy forever and ever. He is worthy then of all, and infinitely more than all the sacrifices that you can make for him. Choose then, "rather to suffer afflictions with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, and have respect unto the recompense of reward." Be you're followers of them who through faith and patience, inherit the promises. "Ye have not resisted unto blood striving against sin," as many of your brethren have done before you.

Be not ashamed of your sackcloth; it will be found at last to have been a badge of honor. Those who enjoy all the civil privileges which the beast has to bestow, cannot be in sackcloth; but these very privileges are the badges of their shame. The Lord be merciful to the weak and deluded of the flock, who are led into a connexion in which they dishonor his name.

2. We are bound to testify against all these evils. If we gain no other point, we have the consolation of performing our duty to the captain of our salvation. We should imitate the example of the inspired writer, who said, "I will speak thy word to kings, and will not be moved with shame." Did you, like many other professors, incorporate yourselves with those kingdoms "that have given their power to the beast;" did you swear oaths of allegiance to those governments that are organized on principles of rebellion against Messiah, there would be a gross inconsistency in raising your warning voice against the very evils which you would be sworn to maintain. This has been perceived, by nearly all those who have entangled themselves in the toils which their own hands have fabricated; and hence, from a regard to carnal ease, whatever they may think, they are usually silent on the great topic of national subjection to the Mediator. You are free; for you have not said a confederacy, with those with whom they have said a confederacy. You will not see the nations attempt to trample your Saviour's crown in the dust, and be silent, nor tamely hold your peace, when they disregard his laws and his church, and confer their choicest favors on his most open and daring enemies. You will tell them as Elijah did Ahab; ye are troublers of the nations. Such declarations many avoid through fear of reproach. To do so, is unworthy of the magnanimity of the Christian character, and offers indignity to the memory of our ecclesiastical ancestors, who laid down their lives for the testimony of Jesus. Their example stimulates to decision and boldness. "They wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins, destitute, afflicted and tormented; of whom the world was not worthy." They are hunted like partridges on the mountains. They are taken—imprisoned—arraigned before merciless tribunals—condemned unheard—dragged to the stake, or the scaffold, and their blood

streams, or the flame consumes their bodies. But in death they triumph—their blood cries for vengeance. From their graves a voice issues, warning us to be faithful.

In following their example, we shall, as they were, be supported. Jesus says, "I will give power to my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy." (Rev. 11:3) Those who have been "faithful *even* unto death," have received "a crown of life," as all shall do who are faithful unto death.

Our testimony shall be victorious, for God will make his people conquerors. "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony." (Rev. 12:11) This is a most consolatory declaration. Michael and his angels fought with the dragon and his angels, and the great dragon was cast out. A voice is heard from heaven declaring, "now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ." This glorious victory over the dragon and all his auxiliary forces—this splendid triumph, in which heaven and earth rejoice—this utter subversion of the empire of darkness, which paves the way for ushering in the kingdom of God in glorious majesty, is ascribed to the prevalency of the witnesses, who hold the testimony of Jesus, as connected with the efficacy of the blood of the Lamb. This is like the work of God—it is the work of God. The man of sorrows—the despised Jesus, who had nowhere to lay his head, gained a triumph over principalities and powers, and made a shew of them openly, even in his cross. In and by a few poor fishermen, God triumphed over the power of idolatry and impiety, consolidated in the Roman empire. By the testimony of his two witnesses, in poverty and sackcloth, he triumphs over the dragon, who marches at the head of all the confederated forces of earth and hell.

It is not of God to save by many or by few. "God chooses the weak things of the world to confound those that are mighty." We are few and feeble in ourselves, but by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of our testimony, we shall prevail. If we do not, our sons will see "Jesus crowned Lord of all."

This duty of bearing testimony devolves, in a very emphatic manner, on the ministers of religion. He has set them as sentinels to warn the people of the approaches of the enemy, and it is at their peril, if they do not sound an alarm when the foe advances. They are commanded to shew unto the people their sins, "whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear." (Ezek. 2:5) They are especially enjoined to put the faithful in mind of the evils of the antichristian apostacy. After the apostle Paul has given a rapid, bold and characteristic sketch of the features of the man of sin, he says to Timothy, and to every minister of Jesus—"If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in faith and good doctrine." (1 Tim. 4:6) Thus we see faith and good doctrine are at stake in this testimony, and that to maintain it is characteristic of a good minister.

3. We are bound to mourn over these national evils. Sackcloth is a badge of mourning. We are not to mourn that the honors of the world are not heaped upon us, and that we cannot with a good conscience enjoy them; but because God is dishonored by the nations. We have not less cause for lamentation than the good Jeremiah had, when he said "Oh that my head were a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!" (Jer. 9:1) God will put our tears into his bottle. "And behold there came six men from the way of the higher gate; and one man among them was cloathed with linen, with a writer's ink-horn by

his side; and the Lord said unto him, go through the midst of the city; through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof." (Ezek. 9:2-4) We have every encouragement too, to hope that the time of our redemption draweth nigh—that God will ere long appoint "to them that mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes; the oil of joy for mourning; the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." (Isa. 61:3)

4. We are bound to observe the signs of the times. We must watch the movements of the nations, and the condition of particular sections of them; and mark the character of the church of God, as exhibited in our own times, that we may shape our testimony so as to direct it against the perpetually changing aspects of error and iniquity. The public magazines and journals present abundant means of becoming acquainted with the measures taken by the dragon, the beast, and the mother of harlots; and also of ascertaining the actual state and present prospects of the church, and the measures taken by the friends of godliness, in the various sections of the church, for advancing the cause of religion, and diffusing a knowledge of the Holy Scriptures. These sources of intelligence lie open to all, and we should avail ourselves of the facilities of information which they present. Here we have need to be wise as serpents, lest we enter into the passions which agitate contending political factions. Where these take strong hold of the mind, they operate as poison to the meek and quiet spirit of vital piety, which, in the sight of God, is of great price. We should have two objects to learn—what men intend to do, and what God is actually doing; these are generally directly opposed to each other. Ungodly men intend only to gratify their own sinful desires, while God, "who bringeth light out of darkness, and order out of confusion," over-rules all for his own glory and the good of Zion. Here too, there is a special obligation imposed upon the watchmen, that when any one asks, "what of the night?" they may be able to give an intelligent answer. They should see every cloud that rises out of the sea, though but "the size of a man's hand." Christ will upbraid the drowsy watchmen—"O, ye hypocrites, can ye not discern the signs of the times?"

5. We must evince that our testimony is maintained, not "for strife and debate," but out of a sincere regard for the glory of God, and for the honor of him "who washes us in his own blood from all our sins," and out of an honest and enlightened zeal for the truth. We are bound "to lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty," regulating the whole course of our lives as good citizens. God over-rules the movements and deeds of governments, bad as they are, for the preservation of some degree of social order. "He has the hearts of kings in his hand, and turns them as the rivers of waters, whithersoever he will." He imposes restraints upon their ambition, and says to it, "hitherto shalt thou come and no further." We should not then "fret ourselves unquietly," but in patience possess our souls.

In all our efforts for advancing the glory of Emmanuel, and in all our attempts to induce men to place the crown of dominion on the head of Messiah, we should remember that "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but spiritual, and mighty through God to the pulling down or strong holds." We are to rely upon the agency of the Spirit of God accompanying his word, for accomplishing a glorious work. We have his promise "that his word shall not return unto him void, but shall accomplish that whereunto he has sent it." (Isa. 55:11) While exercising faith on this and similar promises, we must commit the word of our testimony to him, for whose honor

we are concerned, and by a patient perseverance in "well-doing, put to silence the ignorance of foolish men." (1 Peter 2:15)

6. We must pray fervently and effectually, "thy kingdom come." We have great encouragement—much to strengthen our faith in the performance of this duty. The most consolatory promises are scattered in the whole firmament of Revelation. God, who cannot lie, has declared that "the gathering of the people shall be unto Shiloh"—that "in the seed of Abraham all nations shall be blessed"—"that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be exalted above the mountains, and established above the hills, and that all nations shall flow unto it"—"that the little stone cut out of the mountains, shall become a great mountain, and fill the whole earth"—"that the saints shall take the kingdom"—"that the martyrs of Jesus shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years"—that "the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ"—that—but when should we be done with the enumeration? "For all these things God will be enquired of by the house of Israel, that he may do for them."

In relation to this, as well as all things that relate to our own personal sanctification and glorification, he has said, "ask and ye shall receive; seek and ye shall find." It is true, that this involves a prayer for the destruction of Antichrist, and that this will be effected by great judgments—"signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring." At the tremendous calamities which are impending, human nature revolts—men's faces turn pale, and "men's hearts are ready to fail them for fear." But it is long since the saints were taught to sing—

"By fearful works unto our prayers,
Thine answer dost express."

The vials of God's wrath poured out for the destruction of the beast, are put into the hands of the angels, who are employed in this work of judgement, by one of the four beasts. These are by the most judicious commentators, understood to be the ministers of the church below, and the agency of one of them in delivering the vials, is understood to mean the prayers of the saints. Messiah does inflict punishment on his enemies, in answer to the prayers of his people. "And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints, upon the golden altar that was before the throne. And the angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake." Immediately after the presenting of the prayers of the saints on the golden altar, the same censer that contained them is filled with coals; and in answer to the prayers of the saints, they are cast into the earth, producing tempest, thunders, lightnings, and desolating earthquakes, to overturn, swallow up and destroy iniquitous thrones.

The prayers that you offer up for the removal of usurped diadems, and the prostration of blood-stained thrones, are heard in heaven, harmonizing with those of the souls under the altar. "And I saw under the altar, the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a loud voice, saying, how long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" (Rev. 6:9, 10) If

our hearts are in unison with those of the glorified martyrs of Jesus, we need not fear that they are unholy.

The blood of Jesus, which gives efficacy to our testimony, will give efficacy to our prayers.

We have encouragement in the signs of the times. Is not God uniting—nay, has he not united nearly all the energies of the protestant world, in sending abroad the Word of God? Are not the prayers of all the good, going with these copies of the Scriptures that are travelling to the remotest corners of the earth? The prevalence of Bible truth and Bible precepts, over all the imaginations of depraved man, is the very thing we wait to see. This is the sum of all our wishes. To effect this, the world is put in motion. In this we begin to see even now, an answer to our prayers. The day begins to dawn. We see the first rays of the millennial morning streaming over the mountains of future years. Our Redeemer is on his march, and the brightness of light is before him. The mountains will flow down at his presence. "Who art thou, O great mountain! Before Zerubbabel, thou shalt become a plain." "Hosannah in the highest! blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!" "All kings shall bow down before him: all nations shall serve him."—AMEN.

[HOME PAGE](#)