

*The Watchman's Answer to the Question,  
What of the Night, &c.*

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# S E R M O N

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ZECHA. xiv. 6, 7. And it shall come to pass, in that Day, that the Light shall not be clear, nor dark; but it shall be one Day which shall be known to the Lord; not Day, nor Night: But it shall come to pass, that at Evening Time, it shall be Light.

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## The Watchman's Answer, &c.

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I S A I A H xxi. 11, 12.

*The Burden of DUMAH. He calleth to me out of SEIR, Watchman, What of the Night? Watchman, What of the Night? The Watchman said, The Morning cometh, and also the Night: if ye will enquire; enquire, ye; return; come.*

**I**T may doubtless, at first View, appear strange to my Brethren, that I have chosen this *obscure Passage* of sacred Writ for your Entertainment; when it might be expected, that the *Dignity & Duties*; the *Comforts & Trials* of the ministerial Office should be explained, or the best Method of securing good Discipline and sound Doctrine in the Church, laid open. These Subjects, I confess, are highly proper to be insisted on, and should generally be the Topics of our Discourse, on such Occasions as these. But, some dark Apprehensions, as to the *Times* into which we are fallen, turned my Mind to this Subject: And as it will lead our Thoughts to the present *Dangers & Trials*; to the farther *Prospects* and *Hopes* relating to the Church of CHRIST; it will, I imagine, when properly explained and applied, be tho't not unfuitable for those, who are assembled to consult its Welfare and Prosperity.

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WHAT I shall attempt, is,

4. *The Watchman's Answer to the Question,*

I. *To explain the Words, and illustrate the Prophecy, by such historical Events, as seem to point out the Fulfilment of it, in its primary View.*

II. *Apply it to the State of the Church in general, and to the Times into which we are fallen, in particular.*

THIS *enigmatical Prophecy*, seems in its primary View, to denote some further Calamity on the *Idumeans*, after the *Jews* should be delivered from the *Darkness* they were then under; that while the *Morning* arose to the one, the *Night* should be continued to the other. It is called the *Burden of Dumah*, because it brings sad and dark Tidings, what would prove an heavy Burden, hard to be born. *Dumah* here, by a Contraction not unusual in the sacred Writings, seems evidently to be put for *Edom*; and so for the Country *Idumea*, where the *Edomites* dwelt. This appears plain, by *Seir's* being mentioned as the Place from whence the *Voice* came, which was that mountainous Part of *Idumea*, that lay next to the Land of *Canaan*. The *Septuagint* therefore well translate it, *To' Horamatees Idumais*, i.e. the *Vision of Idumea*. In this *prophetic Scene*, there is one from that Country introduced, as addressing the Prophet in great Earnestness, about the State of the *Night*, or that State of Affliction and Oppression, which both the *Jews* and *Idumeans* were under. He calleth (or there is one that calleth, or crieth) to me out of *Seir*. The Word must be taken *collectively*, not denoting a particular Person, q.d. *there is a Cry, or the Voice of those that cry from that Country*; this appears from the Answer of the Prophet, *If ye will enquire, &c.* 'Tis observed that the original Word *Karah*, has an *Emphasis* in it, & denotes the *Cry* of Men in Anguish and Distress, impatiently waiting to see the End of their *Calamity*, and the *Dawn* of the *Morning* of their Deliverance, This shews a *Beauty* in the *scenical Representation*; as the Prophet is on the *Watch-Tower* among the *Jews*, at a great Distance from *Mount Seir*, the *Voice* must be loud, in order to be heard. The Question follows, "*Watchman, What*

“*What of the Night, or from, or concerning the Night?*”  
 The Conjecture of Cocceius, and some other learned Commentators, that the *Voice* is directed to GOD the Father, under the Character of a *Watchman*, because he is stiled the *Keeper of Israel*; or to the SON, who is represented as the *Shepard of his People*; I think groundless. It is not supposable, that the *Idumeans* had any such distinct Notion of the *Father* or the *Son*, as to address *one* or the *other* by this Title.—To apply it to the *Prophet himself*, seems much more natural; the *Prophets* being well known by the Character of *Watchmen*, as pointing out the *Design* and *Duties* of their Office: And thus they are frequently stiled in *sacred Writ*, \* *I have set Watchmen on thy Walls, O Jerusalem*, “*I have made thee*, says GOD to *Ezekiel, a Watchman to the House of Israel.*” † The Character is taken from those that are set to guard a *City*, or on a *Watch-Tower* to descry approaching Danger, and give the Signal: And they ought to be Men of *Courage*, that will not be frightened at the Shaking of a Leaf; *faithful*, who will not betray their Trust; *vigilant*, that will not suffer the Enemy to come by Surprize while they are asleep; *quick sighted*, to spy the Danger; *constant* and *unwearied* in their Attendance on the *Duties* of their Station; and being continually awake, it might be expected could readily give the *Hour of the Night*. 'Tis easy to see how applicable this is, not only to the *Prophets*, but to all the *Ministers* of the Gospel, who are set as *Watchmen, on the Walls of GOD's Jerusalem*; whose *Duty* and *Business* it is, to watch over the Heritage of the Lord; to give seasonable, plain & faithful Warning to Saints & Sinners. The various remarkable *Dispensations* of GOD to his *Church*, were revealed to the *Prophets*; they foretold the *desolating Judgments* that were bro't not only on the *Jews*, but the neighbouring *Nations*; knew something of the *Time, Manner & Duration* of the *dark Night* they had to pass thro'; and so might properly

\* *Isai, lxii, 6.*

† *Ezek. iii, 17.*

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properly be inquired of as to this Matter— *Watchman, What of the Night?* What have you discovered as to the State of the *Night?* How far is it advanced? What remains? Do you discern any Signs of the *Morning?* Any Signs that the present Scene of *Darkness* will soon be over? The Question is undoubtedly not about a *natural* but *metaphysical* Night, — that State of *Calamity & Distress* the *Jews & Idumeans* were under by the *Affyrians* or *Babylonians*; or, that *dark Dispensation* of the *Law*, the End of which was then expected, and earnestly desired. The *Repetition* of it, represents the *Panic* they were in; their *Distress*, or rather their *Impatience*. for an Answer.

It may perhaps seem strange at *first View*, that the *Idumeans* should make this Inquiry. What had they to do with the *Prophets* or the *divine Oracles*? † Who were *Aliens from the Common-Wealth* of *Israel*, & *Strangers from the Covenant of Promise*.---But, the Difficulty will vanish, if we consider that the Scheme of this Prophecy is *emblematical* and *figurative*. The *Idumeans* are introduced here by the *Prophet*, as breathing after Deliverance under their *Calamities*, and making such anxious Inquiries as it is natural to suppose a People in their *Situation* would; and hearing that Deliverance was expected by the *Jewish Nation*, it was natural for them to desire to know the *Time* and *Manner* of it, in Hopes they also might Share in its Favour.---To this may be added--- That the eastern Nations had a Veneration for the *Prophets of the GOD* of *Israel*, whose Fame was spread among them. And if we apply it to the then *dark State* of the *Church*, an Enquiry respecting a more glorious Dispensation, in which themselves, & all the *Gentile World* were concerned, comes from them with singular Propriety. Some suppose the Question put by way of *Derision*, but I think without Foundation; had that been the Case, the *Prophet* would have given them a very different Answer. They seem to have a Degree of *Earnestness* about the Matter,

† Eph. ii, 12.

Matter, and yet do not enquire with that *Faith*, and such *religious Views* as they ought. This is evident from the *Prophets* reply. *The Morning cometh, and also the Night, if ye will enquire; enquire, ye; return; come.* i. e. *The Morning* will be as dangerous as the *Night*, say some. Others translate it, the *Morning* cometh, & yet it is *Night*. i. e. Tho' there be a Deliverance from present *Calamities*, yet it will be but *partial*; *Light* comes, but *Darkness* will be intermixed with it; or according to our Translation, *The Morning cometh, but the Night will soon succeed.* It may mean, That tho' the *Morning* is coming to the *People of GOD*, it would still be *Night* with the *Idumeans*. 'Tis easy to see, that as *Night* is put for a State of *Affliction*, *Day* is a proper Emblem of *Joy* and *Comfort*. *If ye will enquire; enquire, ye; return; come.* The old *English* Translation under *Henry the VIIIth*, has it thus, " *If ye will enquire indeed, and ask Questions in Earnest, enquire of GOD; first ask his Mercy, and then come again, and you shall have a more favourable Answer:*" which seems not far from the true Meaning.

As the Question, tho' not put with that *Seriousness* and *Sincerity* as it ought, implied a *Desire* to know the *Purpose* of *GOD* relating to their *present* dark & dismal *Situation*; the *Answer* seems to be to this *Purpose*, *viz.* Since you *Idumeans*, in your distressed *Condition*, seem to come to your selves; express a *Desire* of returning to *GOD*, and knowing his *Will* concerning you, be in earnest in the *Matter*, enquire with *Hearts* suitably affected, with the *Dispensations* of *divine Providence*, with sincere *Desires* to *know* and *comply* with your *Duty*. Return to the *God of Israel*, come into the *Bosom* & *Communion* of the *Church*; since you are descended from *Abraham*, shew your selves to be his *Children* indeed; come with *Sincerity* & *Faith*, to me and the other *Prophets*, to know the *Mind* & *Will* of *GOD*, and be suitably prepared to meet him, when he shall come forth against you. The Sum of what I have said is this: *The neighbouring Nations*, groaning under the

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the same Oppression from the *Assyrian and Babylonish Princes*, as the *Jews* were, tho' the peculiar People of God, and favoured with his true *Prophets*; the *Idumeans* are introduced, enquiring after the *Duration*, and End of this common Calamity, in too careless a Manner, with too little Reverence or religious Sense of the Divine Dispensation. They have for Answer, That the *Morning* was coming, i. e. *Light and Liberty* to the *Jews*; but that the *Night* still awaited them; i. e. their present Afflictions and spiritual Darknes, would continue, while they maintain'd their present *Temper* of Mind, towards God, and remained *Strangers to the Common-Wealth of Israel*. He therefore exhorts them to return to God; and enquire with a religious Disposition, and right *Views* about this Matter.

THIS Interpretation may be illustrated by *historical Events*; either by referring it to the common Calamities that besel the *Jews* and *Idumeans*, with other neighbouring Nations, under *Senacherib* King of *Assyria*; or to that which afterwards besel them under the Kings of *Babylon*. If to the former, the *Morning* that arose to the *Jews*, must be the *miraculous Deliverance* granted them, by the terrible Destruction of the *Assyrian Army* by an Angel. || The like Deliverance not being granted to the *Idumeans*, with them it remained *Night*. But, I rather suppose it may refer to the *Babylonish Captivity*, which involved the *Jews* and *Idumeans* in one common *Night* of Calamity and Distress, after which *long Night*, wherein the Church seemed as it were buried, a *glorious Morning* arose to the *Jews*, from the Deliverance granted by *Cyrus*; while the *Idumeans* continued in *Darknes*; as appears by *Malachi*, who lived after the Return of the *Jews* from the *Babylonish Captivity*; and describes the *Idumeans* as impoverished, unable to return and rebuild their waste Places; being under the peculiar Displeasure of Heaven. \* We come now,

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|| 2 Kin. xix. 35. \* Mal. i. 1, 2, 3, 4.

II. To another View in which this prophetic Description may be taken, and with Propriety applied to some remarkable Events in the Church.

As the *Prophets* were set as *Watchmen*, on the *Walls* of *God's Jerusalem*, to publish his *Designs* of *Mercy* and *Judgment* to the *Church* and the *World*; such as were concerned to know the *Times & Seasons* of *God's* favour in his *Zion*, would naturally enquire at *their Mouths*, and as the *Idumeans* sprang originally from the *same Family* with the *Jews*, and bordered upon them, they had doubtless some Acquaintance with their *sacred Writings*. Some *Prophecies* had a particular Reference to them. It was foretold, that *Edom should be a Possession, and Seir a Possession of their Enemies*.\* It is natural therefore to suppose, that the more tho'tful among them, were looking for this Period, and being oppressed with Difficulties, were excited to enquire after the *Time* when they should be delivered from their *spiritual Darknes*s, and united to the *People of God*. This Prophecy of *Edom's being a Possession of their Enemies*, was in Part accomplished under the *Assyrianean Family*, when the *Edomites* were subdued by the *Jews*, many of them bro't to embrace their *Religion*, and their Country became their *Possession*. To this *Time*, the *Prophet* may have a View, when 'tis supposed they would not neglect the *sacred Writings*, but get some Acquaintance with those Prophecies, wherein *glorious Things* were spoken of *Zion*, when the present dark and gloomy Dispensation should be at an *end*, and the *Gentiles* partake of the *same Privileges* with the *Jews*. This must excite in all who had any due Esteem for *spiritual Blessings*, a Desire to be informed when the happy *Era* would arrive. In this View, the *Question*, the *Answer* of the *Watchman*, his *Admonition*, to return and continue their Enquiries with more Seriousness and better Views, all appear *natural* and *proper*.

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Num. xxiv, 18.

By the *Night*, we may understand the obscure Dispensation they were then under, which was ushered in with *Blackness, Darkness, and a thick Tempest*. It is therefore called a *Ministration of Death and Condemnation*, and proved so to the carnal *Jews*, who rested in the *Law graven on Stones*, not looking to *him* who was the *End of it for Righteousness to all that believe*.

THAT *Ministration* was indeed *glorious*, as it referred to, and pointed out the *Glories* of the *Gospel*; but how divinely glorious soever it was in itself, yet in Respect to the transcending *Glory* of that Dispensation of *Light and Grace*, which it shadowed forth, it might be said to have *no Glory*; the Lustre of it was swallowed up by the surpassing *Glory* of the *Gospel*, as the dim *Light* of the *Moon* and *twinkling Stars*, vanishes before the *rising Sun*. This Dispensation was not only *gloomy* and *dark*, when compared to the *superior Light* of the *Christian Revelation*, but was in a peculiar Manner so, by Reason of the *Blindness, Prejudices* and *Unbelief*, of those to whom it was given; which is fitly represented by the *Vail* *Moses* put on his *Face* while he delivered them the *Law*, to cover its *dazzling Brightness*, which they could not behold. This *Vail* the *Apostle* expressly tells us, was on their *Hearts*,\* *so that they could not look to the End of that which was to be abolished*. They were as unable to behold the *Mind of Moses* in that *Æconomy*, as they were his *Face*; when he turned to the *Lord* he took off the *Vail*; which implies, that that *Dispensation*, as it came from *God*, and was revealed to him, was full of *Grace*, and shone with a divine Lustre; but when he conversed with the *People* he had it on, for the internal *Glories* of his *Ministration* which were delivered in *Types* and *Figures of good Things to come*, were render'd obscure and dark, by the *Blindness & Prejudices* of their carnal *Hearts*. When they shall turn to the *Lord*, at the *blessed Period* of their general *Conversion*, this *Vail* shall

\* 2 Cor. iii. 13, 14.

shall be taken away, and they shall clearly see how the *glorious Grace* of the *Gospel* was revealed under all the *Types* and *Shadows* of the *Law*. But, by Reason of the *Darkness* of their *Minds*, and the *obscure Manner* in which *Christ*, and the *Blessings* of his *Kingdom*, were then typified, the *Church* continued in a dark & benighted State. There was indeed a Mixture of Light with that *Darkness*; the *Prophets* were like so many *shining Stars* in the *Church*, and they had many *sure Words of Prophecy*, to which they might give *Heed*; but it was only as to a *Light shining in a dark Place*, 'till the *Day-star* appeared, and the *glorious Sun of Righteousness* arose.

AND 'tis worthy Observation, that the *Night* was peculiarly *gloomy*, towards the *Close* of this *Dispensation*; when the *Darkness* was much increased, by almost continual *Persecutions* and *Oppressions*, from the *Kings* of *Syria* without; while the *internal Glories* of it were greatly obscured, and almost wholly lost, by those dangerous *Corruptions* in *Doctrine*, *Discipline* and *Worship*, which then over-spread the *Jewish Church*, and those scandalous *Divisions* into which it fell.

IT was also eminently *Night*, with the *Gentile World*, who being sunk into deplorable *Darkness*, were given up to the most abominable *Idolatry* and vile *Affections*. But as an *Expectation* of the *Coming* of the *Messiah*, the promised *Deliverer*; began now to prevail and become general, 'tis not strange, that some among the *Gentles*; as well as the *Jews*, are represented, crying to the *Watchman*, *What of the Night?* When will the *Darkness* of the present *Dispensation* be over, and a *Deliverer* come out of *Zion*, to turn away *Iniquity* from *Jacob*? When will those *Times* of *Ignorance* which *God* has hitherto winked at in the *Gentile World*, be at an *End*, and *Light* arise to those that now sit in the *Region* of the *Shadow* of *Death*? How much of this dark *Season* is past? What yet remains? When will the *Day* break by the *Appearance* of that *glorious Person*, who is to be a *Light* to the *Gentiles*

*Gentiles, and a Glory to God's People Israel?* It might be supposed, that the *Watchmen* who were enquiring and searching diligently, what Manner of Time the Spirit in them did signify, when it testified before Hand, the Sufferings of Christ, and the Glory that should follow, could give an Answer to such a Question, as the Time and Manner of his Appearance were so clearly pointed out. They might see, that the Scepter was about to depart from Judah, according to *Jacob's Prophecy* \*. That *Daniel's 70 Weeks*, or 490 Years, were near expiring. And as it must be during the Standing of the second Temple, to which he was suddenly to come, and fill with his Glory, according to *Malachi* †, it could not be long delayed. By these Hints, the *Watchmen* might know the *Night was far spent*, and answer as in the Text, *The Morning cometh*, the long expected Day is at Hand. In this View of the Words, the *Watchman's* Answer, that *the Morning cometh*, may point out the *Light and Joy* brought to the World by the Appearance of the *Son of God*. The Day began to dawn under the Ministry of *John the Baptist*. He was indeed a *burning and a shining Light*; compared with the other *Prophets*; but was not the *true Light*, tho' like the *Morning Star* he ushered in the *Day*. But when the *Sun of Righteousness* arose with *Healing* under his *Wings*, he diffused *Light, Life, and Joy*, thro' a dark, dead, and cheerless World; The *Shadows* of the former Dispensation, and the thick *Clouds* of *heathenish Ignorance* and *Superstition*, fled before him, as the *Darkness* of the *Night* before the rising *Sun*. It was prophesied of him, that his *going forth, should be prepared as the Morning*. † As the natural *Sun* in the *Morning* spreads *Joy and Gladness*, thro' the wide *Creation*, so did *CHRIST* thro' a lost and ruined World. The *Angel* brings the *News* of his *Birth*, as *Tidings of great Joy to all People*. The *Gospel* preached in his Name was a *ravishing Sound* to all that heard

\* Gen. xlix. 10. † Mal. iii. 1. † Hof. vi. 3. Luke ii. 11.

heard and received it : Like the Morning Light, it spread far and wide ; grew brighter and brighter, towards a perfect Day. It had *free Course and was glorified* ; triumphing over all the Opposition of *Earth and Hell*.

WITH what divine Lustre and Beauty did the Church shine, in this *Morning* of her Days, when the pure *Doctrines* of the *Gospel*, were taught without that corrupt Mixture, which the Pride & Ignorance of Men have since introduced. She was as a *City set on a Hill*, and Multitudes both *Jews and Gentiles* rejoiced in her Light. She seemed to answer the Description given of her by *St. John*, in his prophetic Vision ; || where she is represented as *clothed with the Sun, having the Moon under her Feet, and a Crown of twelve Stars on her Head* ; a beautiful Image, expressing, in a lively Manner, the *Glory, Honour, and Dignity* of the Church. There appeared in her Members, in this *early Age*, such genuine *Piety*, and fervent *Devotion* ; such lively *Hope*, & strong *Faith* ; such warm and unfeigned *Love* to one another ; such *Meekness*, and undissembled *Humility* ; such *Heavenly-mindedness* and *Deadness* to the World ; such universal *Holiness*, and *Purity* of Life ; and made them *shine like Lights in the World*. Religion then appear'd *amiable and alluring*, as exemplified in the Lives of Professors ; which tended greatly to the propagating the *Gospel*. The Brightness of this Morning was soon obscured. Many Errors of pernicious Influence crept into the Church, even while under the Conduct of inspired Men : But after the *Apostles Decese*, *Men of corrupt Minds*, began with more Freedom, to propagate their dangerous *Doctrines*, and licentious Practices, bringing *swift Destruction on themselves*, and their Followers. Towards the Close of the *first*, and during the *second and third Centuries*, the Church was greatly infested with Persons, who advanced the most absurd and dangerous Opinions, tending to the Destruction of all natural and

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and *revealed Religion*;— the *Nicolaitans*, various Sects of the *Gnostics, Corinthians, Valentinians, Marcionites*, and *Manicheans*, with a Train of other *Heretics*, who appeared in the *early Ages* of the Church; venting many impious Notions about *God and Christ*; the *Origin of Good and Evil*; the *sacred Writings*; and the *Way of Salvation by Christ*; to the great Reproach and Hindrance of the Gospel.—Some making *GOD* the *Author of Sin*; others denying the *Unity of the Godhead*; some the *Divinity*, and many the *Humanity of CHRIST*; while others even blasphemously pretended to be the *Saviour of the World* themselves. What added to the Scandal of their Errors, the vilest *Debaucheries*,— the most abominable *Crimes* were countenanced & practised, under the *Cloke of Religion*; which the *Enemies of Christianity*, were malicious enough to impute, however unjustly, to all its Professors. While the Church was thus darkened, corrupted, and exceedingly scandalised by *Heresies within*; she was almost continually harrassed with violent Oppressions and cruel Persecutions, under the *heathen Emperors* from *without*; which continued with but little Intervals of *Peace and Rest*, during the three first Centuries. Tho' there was, in those *early Ages* of Christianity, much spiritual Light, and plentiful Communications of Divine Grace; yet during the ten *general Persecutions*, which so quickly succeeded one another, it might well be called *Night*; when compared to that State of *external Peace & Prosperity*, which the Church shall enjoy in the *latter Days*, &c. with Respect to the glorious Diffusion of *Gospel Light*, which may then be expected.

At the Close of the *third*, & Beginning of the *fourth Century*, the Church was reduced to the last *Extremity*, by a Number of cruel Persecutors, who seemed to combine together, for the utter Destruction of the *Christian Name and Cause*. *Galerius, Diocletian, Maximin, and Maxentius*, acted as if they vied with one another, in the

unheard

unheard of *Cruelties*, and monstrous *Barbarities*, exercised towards the *innocent Disciples* of CHRIST: But the Churches *Extremity*, is GOD's *Opportunity*; He begins to make *bare his Arm*; visibly to espouse the *Cause* of his distressed People; and to *recompence Vengeance to those that afflicted them*. *Galerius*, being seized with an incurable and intolerable Disease, expires in the Midst of most bitter Anguish and Torment. *Diocletian*, forced to resign his Authority, oppressed with a *Load of Guilt*, groans and sighs away his miserable Life. *Maximin*, after being defeated by *Licinius*, attempts to put an End to his own Life; but dies a lingering Death, amidst the most amazing Torments, acknowledging his *Guilt*, in having persecuted the *Christians*. In this *dark Period*, GOD also raises up that great *Deliverer* and *Defender* of his Church, *Constantine*; who, *A. D.* 312, gains a compleat Victory over that cruel *Tyrant* and grand *Persecutor*, *Maxentius*; which gave rest to the Church in the *West*: And the Death of *Licinius*, which happened soon after, who was first a *Favourer*, but afterwards a cruel *Persecutor* of the Christians, seemed to put an End to all their Troubles: They enjoyed free Liberty every where. *Constantine* ascribes the Glory of all his Victories, to the *God and Father of our Lord, JESUS CHRIST*. And as a Token of Gratitude, gives public Countenance to the *Christian Religion*; secures it by *Edicts* and *Laws*; erects *Schools*; builds and endows *Churches*; bestows many *Immunities* and *Privileges* on the Clergy, and distinguishes them with many public *Marks* of Honour and Respect. Thus the *Darkness* which had overspread the *Church*, began to scatter, and the *Morning* to appear. The Gospel had *free Course* and was *glorified*; there was opened an *effectual Door*, which no Man was allowed to shut. A delightful Scene seemed now to open on the *Church*, and looked like the Beginning of a bright and *glorious Day*. Many had raised Expectations, that the happy Period was now come, when the *Kingdoms of*  
*this*

*this World, would become the Kingdoms of our Lord, and his Christ: But alas! how different did the Event prove. This Morning was soon overcast, & succeeded by a dark and dismal Night. The Honours, Dignities and Riches conferred on the Clergy, and the Church, introduced Luxury, Pride and Ignorance, with a long Train of dangerous Consequences. About this Time, the Arian Heresy sprung up, and spreading itself over a great Part of the Christian Church, proved destructive to the Faith: delivered to the Saints; threw the Church into great Confusions, and produced very sore Persecutions: The Emperors favouring sometimes the Arian, & sometimes the orthodox Party; which brought infinite Scandal on the Christian Name, & caused the Enemy to blaspheme.*

Soon after Christianity had spread over a great Part of the Roman Empire, under Protection of the Government; the most terrible Desolation, was brought on the Western Empire, by the northern barbarous Nations, viz. the Goths, Vandals, Alains, Sarmatians, Picts and Scots; who seemed to conspire together for its utter Ruin, and for a long Time continued wasting, burning, & destroying all before them. About A. D. 410, Alaricus the Goth, sacked and plundered Rome; about Fifty-five Years after which, it was again plundered, and burnt by Gensericus, the Vandal. Soon after, it met with the same Fate from Ricimerus 472; twice by Totila; and again by Attila, King of the Huns, who was above all the Rest, a sore Scourge, in the Hand of Providence, to the degenerate Christians of that Day.

While the Empire was in this dreadful Confusion, by those barbarous Nations, gross Ignorance began to overspread the Christian World; for, by the Ravages they committed, Schools were dissipated, Ministers banished, and Learning buried. Those who were then on the Stage, being soon wasted with the Sword and Age; the rising Generation grew up in lamentable Ignorance. The most indeed of the Rulers of those barbarous Nations

tions embraced Christianity ; but being very Ignorant, became an easy Prey to the *Pride & Policy* of the corrupt and degenerate *Clergy* of the Day. This Opportunity the *Bishop of Rome* improved, to set himself up as the *Head of the Church* ; the *Succeſſor of St. PETER* ; *CHRIST'S Vicar on Earth* ; and found it but too easy a Matter to impoſe on thoſe weak *Princes*, and an ignorant *People*, and thus to introduce thoſe groſs *Corruptions, Superſtitions, and falſe Doctrines*, which have ſince proved ſo fatal to the Church : Thus *Anti-chriſt* began to be revealed, and gradually grew up to that *Height of Wickedneſs*, which he afterwards diſcovered ; *exalting himſelf above all that is called God*. The Darkneſs of this *Night*, brought on the Church, by Ignorance, Superſtition, and the abominable *Corruptions of Popery*, were greatly increaſed by the *Riſe* of that falſe Prophet and great Impoſtor *Mahomet*, who made his Appearance, *A. D. 606* ; and notwithstanding the People of *Mecca*, attempted to cruſh the *Impoſtor* in the Bud, yet, *A. D. 615*, it began to ſpread ; for having by an apoſtate *Jew*, and *Nestorian Monk* ; compoſed his *Alcoran*, and deluded his Followers, with a Notion of his being raiſed up by God, to inſtitute a *new Religion* ; he teaches them, that it is to be propagated by the *Sword*, and that it is meritorious to die for it.---By this Means, he ſoon brought all *Arabia* into his Power ; and his Followers (who, from their pretended Deſcent from *Sarah, Abraham's Wife*, were called *Saracens*) ſoon over-run the greateſt Part of *Asia*, and began to ſpread themſelves exceeding faſt in *Europe*, till their memorable Deſeat by *Charles Martel, A. D. 734*.

THE Miſeries brought on the *Chriſtian Church*, by the Spread of this Impoſtor, were exceeding great. The glorious Light of the *Gospel*, which began to be obſcured, with the *Errors and Corruptions* of the *Church of Rome*, ſeemed as if it would have been wholly extinguished. By this they brought ſuch Ignorance & Error, Deceit, Violence

lence and Slavery, where ever they came, that it seemed as if the bottomless Pit had been opened, and Satan at the Head of the Powers of Darkneſs, come forth, according to the prophetic Deſcription of the *Riſe* of this *Impoſtor*, *Rev. ix. 2.* *And he opened the bottomleſs Pit, and there aroſe a Smoke out of the Pit, as the Smoke of a great Furnace, and the Sun and Air were darkened by Reaſon of the Smoke of the Pit, and out of the Smoke Locuſts came,* which fitly enough deſcribes the Miſery and Woe, ſtupid Ignorance and Superſtition, which every where attended the Progreſs of the *Mahometan Religion*. The coming up of the *Locuſts*, and Deſtruction they make where ever they go, *emphatically repreſents* the amazing and deſtructive Progreſs of the *Saracens*.

THIS dark and diſmal *Night*, brought on the Church, by the *Riſe of Papery*, on the one Hand, and the *Mahometan Impoſtor* on the other, continued for a long Time with but a little glimmering of *Gospel Light*, among a few that kept the Faith: Religion and Learning ſeemed likely to be baniſhed from the World. But at the Cloſe of the 15th, and Beginning of the 16th Centuries, the Day began to dawn, by a glorious *Reformation*, which had been attempted, and ſtruggled for, by *Wickliff*, in *England*; the *Waldenſes* and *Albigenſes*, in *France*; and *John Huſs*, in *Germany*, long before: But was now carried on by *Luther*, under the Protection of the *Electoꝛ of Saxony*, with ſurprizing Succeſs, in many Parts of *Germany*; who was joined by *Melancton*, and other noble *Reformers*; whiſt *Calvin*, at *Geneva*, *Zwinglius* and *Farellus*, with a Train of faithful Witneſſes for the Truth who appeared about this Time, were ſtrenuouſly ſupporting, and vigorouſly carrying on, (tho' with ſome ſmall Difference, in leſſer Matters) the ſame glorious Cauſe. The Light of the *Gospel* ſeemed for a Season to ſhine brighter and brighter, ſpread far & wide in Spite of all the Methods the *Popiſh Party* made uſe of, by *Bulls*, *Decrees of Councils*, and the moſt unheard

of Cruelties; to stop and suppress it. The Pope's Authority began very fast to decline. The Nations of England, Scotland, & Ireland, the northern Kingdoms of Denmark and Sweden, with great Numbers in France, Hungary & Bohemia; all received the Reformation, and disclaimed any Subjection to the Kingdom of the Beast.

THESE Things appeared like the Beginning of a joyful Day, and many were ready to think, the glorious Things spoken of Zion; in the latter Days; were now at Hand. There appeared in many of the first Reformers, such a Love to the Truth, and Zeal for practical Godliness; as gave a fair Prospect of a thorough Reformation; from all the Corruptions in Doctrine, Discipline and Worship, which had crept into the Church: But the Event fell far short of the raised Hopes of Zion's Friends. In many Places it was carried on chiefly by the civil Magistrate, who went no farther than to answer their political Schemes, and in most it was too much a formal, nominal Thing, conducted by the Wisdom of this World. So that it soon came to a Stand, and has been for many Years past on the Decline, as to the Principles and Practice of real Religion; and this sad Declension is growing fast on the present Generation.

SOME may be ready perhaps by this Time, to put to Me the Question in the Text, *Watchman, what of the Night?* Whereabouts are We? Is it *Night*, or *Day*? What are the Signs of the *Times*, in which we are fallen? What may we look for? To which I answer, I am very far from pretending to a Spirit of Prophecy, or any such Insight into the prophetic Writings; as precisely to fix the Dates of those *Times* and *Seasons*; about which learned and pious Men have so widely differed; I may venture however, to affirm, some Things that appear evident and plain, and modestly offer my Thoughts about others, more doubtful and uncertain.

It is, I think, very evident, that the *Night* brought on the Church; by the Delusions and Superstitions of

*Mahomet*, and the *Pope* still continues. Notwithstanding the frequent Appearances of the *Morning*, the *Darkness* still remains, and at present seems to increase. *Popery* did indeed receive a great Wound at the *Reformation*, and the *Pope* considered as a temporal Prince, has, as to his *secular Power*, been ever since, very much on the Decline, very little Regard being paid him to what formerly was; but this in many, arises more from Contempt of the *Gospel*, & all revealed *Religion*, than a Dislike to the Corruptions of *Popery*, or Regard to the Truth; and however, he be declined in *secular Power*, the *Popish Religion*, still greatly prevails. The greatest Part of *Christendom* are *professedly* of that Communion, and *acknowledge* Subjection to the *Pope*, as their spiritual Head; and the corrupt Doctrines of *that Church*, have of late Years very much prevailed in Protestant Coutries.

THE *Turks*, who when they defeated the *Saracens*, adopted their *Religion* and *Manners*, which they have ever since been propagating, by their victorious Arms, (tho' they have been something weakened by their late Wars with the *Germans*) are yet in Possession of a considerable Part of *Asia*, *Europe*, and *Africa*, where the Christian Religion formerly flourished. The *Mahometans* have ever been professed Enemies to Christianity, and endeavour to root it out wherever they come, and are at present, the greatest *Obstacle* in the Way of spreading the *Gospel*. And how great a Part of the World is yet involved in *heathenish Darkness* and *Idolatry*? When with these Things, we consider the sad Declensions, Corruptions and Divisions of the *Reformed Churches*, we are constrained to pronounce it *Night*. The Light of the *Gospel* does indeed shine, but tis like twinkling Stars in the Midst of *Darkness*, and *Error*.

SHOULD it now be enquired, What of this *Night*? How far is it advanced? And how much is yet to come? I answer, it appears to me, that we are in the *Close* of this dark *Night*, & that the *Morning* cometh. Could we de-  
termine

termine when this *Night* began, it would be easy to fix on the *Time* of it's *End*; the *Duration* of it being plainly pointed out in prophetic Writings. The *Beast* to whom the *Dragon* (the *Roman Emperor*) gave his *Seat*, *Authority*, and *Power*, was to continue *speaking great Things & Blasphemies*, 42 *Months*, Rev. xiii. 2. & 5; which is just equal to the *Time, Times and half Time*; while the *Woman*, i. e. the *Church* is *drove into the Wilderness*, and there *nourished*, Rev. xii. 14. During this *Period*, the *Witnesses* are to *prophecy in Sackcloth*, or the faithful Messengers of CHRIST, are to Labour under Discouragements and Opposition, which was to continue 1260 *Days*, Rev. xi. 3. These several Numbers in prophetic Stile, taking a *Day* for a *Year*, make the same *Period* 1260 *Years*. So long the persecuting Power of the *Beast* will continue; and while it does, the *Church* will be in a *Wilderness State*, and the faithful Ministers of CHRIST will Prophecy in Sackcloth. This persecuted, oppressed, benighted State of the *Church*, will be succeeded by those glorious Times, when *Satan* will be confined to the *bottomless Pit*, that he may no longer deceive the Nations, and when there shall be nothing to offend in all *God's holy Mount*. But when this *dark State* of the Church shall End, or where to fix it's Beginning, is a Matter of Uncertainty, as it seems to have come gradually on. ST. PAUL, indeed tells us, *That the wicked one, whose coming was to be after the Workings of Satan, with all Power, Signs, and lying Wonders, should be revealed, when he that then let or hindered, was taken out of the Way*. By him, that *Let*, the ancient, as well as modern Expositors, understand, the *Roman Emperor*, who, as long as he held his *Seat* and *Power*, prevented the *Pope* of *Rome* from deceiving the Nations, with his *lying Wonders*. The ancient *Christians*, therefore used to pray for the Continuance of the *Roman Empire*, that the coming of *Antichrist* might be delayed. If the Downfal of the *Roman Empire*,

*Empire*, may be reckoned from *Rome's* being sacked, and taken by the Irruptions of the *Northern Nations*, when almost the whole *Empire*, was over-run and divided among them; when the *ten Horns*, or Kingdoms arose, and gave their Power and Strength to the *Beast*; \* the Destruction of *Antichrist*, and the End of this *Night* of *Papish* Darkness, is near at Hand; *when he shall be destroyed, by the Breath of CHRIST's Mouth, and the Brightness of his Coming.* But, tho' this *Night* is evidently far spent, and the *Day* draws nigh, yet it appears to me not improbable, that the darkest Part of the *Night* yet remains, and that the *glorious Times*, the Church will enjoy in the *latter Day*, will be preceded with a Season of the sorest Calamity & Distress. It is the Opinion of many learned Divines, that there will be a general Slaughter of the *Witnesses*, who have thro' all the dark Ages of *Pöpery*, born a faithful Testimony to the *Truth* and *Ways of Christ*, a little before the *seventh Angel* sounds his Trumpet, for the utter Destruction of *Antichrist's* Kingdom, just when they are about finishing their Testimony, and consequently that this Event is future. But as some eminent Divines, and *One*, for whose Judgment I have the highest Veneration, are of a different Opinion, and think it is already past, I shall offer what I have to say on this Head, with all *Humility*, & much *Diffidence* on my own Sentiments, about so dark an Event: The Account we have of it is, *Rev. xi. 7---13.* *And when they shall have finished their Testimony, the Beast that ascends out of the bottomless Pit, shall make War against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them; and their dead Bodies shall lie in the Street of the great City, which spiritually is called Sodom & Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the People, and Kindreds & Tongues, and Nations, shall see their dead Bodies three Days and an Half, and shall not suffer their dead Bodies to be put in Graves. And they*

*that*

\* *Rev. xvii. 12, 13.*

that dwell upon the Earth, shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send Gifts one to another ; because these two Prophets tormented them that dwelt on the Earth. And after three Days and an Half, the Spirit of Life from God entered into them : And they stood upon their Feet, and great Fear fell upon them, which saw them. And they heard a great Voice from Heaven, saying unto them, " Come up hither " : And they ascended up to Heaven in a Cloud, and their Enemies beheld them.

THE Sum. of which Passage seems to be this, viz. That when these faithful Witnesses who have so long prophesied in Sackcloth, are about concluding their Testimony, there will be a severe Persecution raised by the antichristian Party ; whereby all the faithful Ministers of the Gospel, will appear to be silenced or slain, and that in the most public, open, and ignominious Manner, so that their Enemies shall triumph as tho' the Day were their own ; but this will continue only for a short Time, three Days and an Half ; which, if it does not mean three Years and an Half, taking according to prophetic Stile, a Day for a Year ; yet it doubtless means, that this Time of their Suffering will be but short, compared to the Time of their prophesying in Sackcloth ; it will be but as a Day to a Year, as that is a Time, Times & half a Time, 1260 Years. After this they shall not only be restored to their former Liberty, but exalted to such a State of Dignity and Security, as they never before enjoyed, and that in the Presence, and to the Confusion of their Enemies ; and the Reasons which have made it appear to me not improbable that the Church has this distressing Scene yet to pass thro', are such as these :

1<sup>st</sup>. IT is to be at the Conclusion of their prophesying in Sackcloth, when they have just finished their Testimony. *When they shall have finished their Testimony.* Thus we translate it, which indeed seems the most natural, genuine Construction of *botan telestisi, cum persecerint,* when

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when they have about *compleated* or *finished off* their Testimony, as the original Word properly signifies; at the Close of 1260 Days, when the Period of *Antichrist's Reign* will be just at an End. But, as yet, this Period evidently continues, the faithful Ministers of Christ may, on many Accounts, be said, still to *prophecy* in *Sackcloth*, as the *Mahometan* and *Antichristian* Darknes yet remains, and they are carrying on their Work under great Discouragements.

2d. HISTORY affords no past Events to which the *slaying* and *Resurrection* of the Witnesses, can well be applied. Some learned Men have, I know, endeavoured to find the Accomplishment of it, in sundry *Persecutions*, bro't on the faithful Witnesses for the Truth, none of which seem fully to answer the *prophetic* Description given of that Event. The *Waldenses* (Followers of *Peter Waldo* a Merchant of *Lyons*, in *France*) A. D. 1160, were persecuted with great Severity: 'Tis computed, that not less than 80,000 sealed their Testimony to the *Truths of God* with their Blood. Above a Million of the *Albigenses* (so called from their native Country in *Languedoc*) fell a Sacrifice in the same glorious Cause; but these were of too early a Date to answer the Description; of too long Continuance, and confined to a particular Country; whereas the *slaying of the Witnesses* will be a general Thing; and it is worthy of Remark, that this was in a Country where the Witnesses have almost ever since, prophesied in *Sackcloth*, as all acquainted with the *History of France*, well know. If they were slain in that Place, it is hard to say, when they rose, or were exalted. Much less can we find this Event accomplished, in the short Persecutions by *Queen MARY*, in *England*, or under the *Duke of Savoy*, in *Piedmont*, which were confined to so small a Part of the Church, however exactly they may seem to answer as to the Duration. Many severe Persecutions have been carried on by the *Papists*, against the *Protestants*, in *Hungary*, *Bobemia*,

*Bohemia, many Parts of Germany, and repeatedly in France; but all these were only partial slaying of the Witnesses. They were never so universally cut off, as the Prophecy seems to represent.*

3d. It would be difficult to show, that there ever has been that *Resurrection, and glorious Exaltation* of the Witnesses, which is to follow immediately after their *lying dead three Days and an Half*. What like this has happened upon any of the Persecutions that have yet been on the Protestant Churches? They are not only to be restored to *Life*, but to *ascend up into Heaven*, i. e. to be exalted to an higher State of *Dignity and Power*, than they have ever yet enjoyed; and this is to be in a public, open Manner, in the Presence, and to the Confusion of their Enemies. They are to put off their *Sackcloth*, & put it on no more. The Reproach of their former suffering State, will be wiped away: But the faithful Witnesses of Christ don't seem ever yet to have enjoyed any such State of *Honour, Power, Influence and Security*, as is here represented. Something indeed, like this, seemed to have happened at the *Reformation*, when many of the first *Reformers* were protected and encouraged in their Work, against the Attempts, of their *Papish* Adversaries; but when we consider the Opposition they met with, the frequent Persecutions in many Parts of the *Protestant Countries*, the great Discouragements one Way or another, under which the faithful Witnesses of Christ have laboured; we cannot but conclude, that the Time of their *prophesying in Sackcloth yet continues*.

4th. *This second Woe*, does not appear yet to have passed away, nor any such Destruction and Consternation to be brought on the *Seat of the Beast*, as is to be at the same Time with the *Slaughter and Resurrection of the Witnesses*.

If the *second Woe, or Plague of the Sixth Trumpet*, was brought on the Church, by the pouring out of the *5th Vial*, when a Way was prepared for the *Kings of*

*the East*; or, *the Turks* distressed: no longer run a considerable Part of *Europe*; nor is disturbed referred to the Destruction and Darkness brought on many Parts of Christendom, by the *Saracens* of *India*, to whichsoever of these Events it is referred, 'tis evident, this *Woe* bro't by the *Mahometan* *Imposture*, is not yet passed away, great Part of the World still groaning under it; and it is probable, this *Woe* is to End with the total Destruction and Abolition of the *Turkish Empire*. Neither does there appear to have been any such *Destruction* and *Revolution* in the *Antichristian* Dominions, as is represented by the *great Earthquake*; the Destruction of the *Tenth Part of the City*, and Slaughter of 7000 Men of Name; especially the Time never has yet been, when the *Rest* were affrighted, and gave *Glory to God*. They have been grieved, vexed, and tormented, at the Progress of the *Reformation*; the Liberty granted to the faithful Witnesses; but so far have they been from repenting, and giving *Glory to God*, that, on the Contrary, they have been continually venting their Spite and Malice against the *Reformed Churches*, and labouring, by all their hellish Arts, and *popish* Rage, to ruin and destroy them.

5th, It has been *God's* usual Method to prepare his Church and People for extraordinary Favours, by extraordinary Trials, and in the present corrupt State of Things, it seems highly proper that it should be so.

THE Affairs of *Jacob's Family*, are in the most distressed Situation, before he hears that *Joseph* was yet alive, and that by him a Door was open for their Relief. The Children of *Israel* were reduced to the last Extremity, in their *Egyptian Bondage*, just before their remarkable Deliverance. When was *David* in a greater Strait than at the Burning of *Zikkag*, a little before he was exalted to the Throne of *Israel*? The Persecution of the Church under the *Emperors of Rome*, was by far the most extreme and dangerous under *Dioclesian*, when her Deliverance drew nigh, and she was ready to be

be

be exhibited under *any* *circumstances*. The Experience of many Christians can testify, that those *Sessions* in which they have been most highly favoured, with special Communion of *Light* and *Love*, have been preceded by remarkable *Darkness* and *Perplexity*. That he should therefore prepare his Church, for those *glorious Things* spoken of, in the latter Days, by some *extraordinary Trials*, is no improbable Supposition; but his Observations will be much strengthened, by considering the present degenerate State of the *Protestant Churches*, which is such, that it can hardly be expected God should pass by, without some *special Effects* of his Displeasure.

And if the *Slaying of the Witnesses* is not yet past, it is probable it may be near at Hand. But however it may be as to other particular *Events*, about which I would be far from making any positive Conclusions, many Things may make us suspect that *difficult and trying Times* are coming on the *Church* and the *World*. The dark Cloud that gathers so fast over our *Nation* and *Land*, seems to forebode *Distress* and *Calamity*, to the *Protestant Churches* in general. The *British Nation* has been for a long Time the great *Butwark* of the *Reformation*, and should it be subdued, the other *Protestant Powers* in *Europe* could, by no Means, be a Match for their *antichristian Enemies*, when united together, and

The Reasons for supposing this *Event* already past, are set in a strong and clear Light, in that excellent Treatise, *A humble Attempt to promote extraordinary Prayer for the Revival of Religion*; which I had not by me, when I wrote this Discourse, but on a Review of it since, find that such a Season of *Trials*, as I suppose the present degenerate State of the *Church* requires, may be expected on the Author's Scheme, that the *Witnesses* are slain; for he says, Pag. 125, "True there is abundant Evidence in Scripture, that there is yet remaining a mighty Conflict between the Church and her Enemies, the most violent Struggle of *Satan* and his Adherents, in Opposition to true Religion, &c. And some Parts of the Church may suffer hard Things in this Conflict."

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a Door would open for a distressing Scene of Persecution; throughout all the reformed Churches. It gives me no Pleasure to be a Messenger of evil Tidings, nor would I make positive Assertions about future Events; yet I must say, our publick Affairs wear a dark Aspect. The Nation we are engaged with in War, is numerous, powerful and politic. *France* abounds with Men; and the *King* commands as many as he pleases into the Field; on every Occasion shows himself superior to our Expectations; and his being an absolute Monarch gives great Advantage in Point of Secrecy and Dispatch.

OUR old Friend and Ally, the *Queen of Hungary*, has joined the *King of France*, and so far as we can judge from her Conduct, designs to forsake us, whatever plausible Pretences she may make to the contrary. No other Construction can be put on her joining our sworn Enemy, when at open War with us, in the Manner she has done; No Power in *Europe*, under greater Obligations to the *British* Nation; almost all the Wars we have been engaged in, since the Accession of *King William*, have been undertaken in Favour of the *House of Austria*. *Louisbourg*, that important Fortress; was given up, that the Places the *King of France* had taken from her in *Flanders*, might be restored; yet now she has forsaken us at a critical Juncture; and what may we then expect from other *Popish* Powers. *Spain* appears waiting for nothing but a favourable Opportunity of declaring against us. The *King of Poland*, (Electör of *Saxony*) by a strange Turn of Politics, seems inclined to espouse the Interest of *France*. The Connections of the *King of the two Sicilies* are such, that he will readily join their Confederacy: And perhaps the *King of Sardinia*, will be obliged to join or stand neuter, in his own Defence. When to this, we add the Coldness, to say no worse with which we are treated by some of our *Protestant Allies*; it gives the Situation of our publick Affairs a dangerous and threatening Aspect.

And

And if we cast our Eyes on the *British Colonies* in *America*, Things look still darker. All our Schemes hitherto prove unsuccessful; our *Enemies* so small and contemptible as their Numbers appeared to us, every where get the Advantage. *Braddock's* mournful Defeat last Year, has been attended with a *Train* of destructive Consequences. 'Tis not easy to conceive, what we have suffered from the *barbarous Natives*, under the *Influence*, and by the Assistance of the *French*; scarce a Paper from the *Southward* but brings Accounts of new *Depletions & Murders*. What ruinous Consequences may we expect from the *Loss of Oswego*? What an Advantage is hereby put into the Enemy's Hand; the *Lake* wholly at their Command, where we have expended such Sums. Our *Shipping, Artillery*, with the other Warlike *Stores* and *Provisions*, which we had conveyed there with great Cost and Labour; all fallen into the Hands of the Enemy; to be employed against us. All the *fine Country* adjacent, lost; and the few *Indians* that have hitherto continued in our *Friendship*, will probably forsake us; and those that have remained neuter, join in with the Enemy; for now seems verified the Observation they made in a late Treaty, at *Albany*. "The *French* act like *Men*, build Forts and defend them; but the *English* act like *Women*."

DARK Tidings of late, like *Job's* Messengers, come in thick Succession, one after another. In the Midst of our Lamentations for the sad Fate of *Oswego*, comes the melancholly News, of *Port Mahon's* being taken. The Loss of a *Fortress* so important, of such Consequence to the *British Trade*, in the *Mediterranean*, and which gives so much Advantage to the Enemy, must be exceeding great, highly aggravated by the disgraceful Circumstances which attended it; the Ferment into which it has thrown the Nation; and the lasting Dishonour done to the *British Flag*. I shall leave it to the *Politicians* of the Day, to point out the Cause of those fore Calamities,

ties, and make but one Remark, which must be obvious to all serious and thinking Persons.

THAT our Misfortunes have come upon us, in such a Manner, as plainly to point out the *Hand of God* therein; and shows us, that our Dependance on our own *Wisdom & Strength*, while by our Sins, we engage Heaven against us, is as vain as it is *sinful*. We have been greatly disposed to boast of our superior Strength, by *Sea*, and glory in our *Fleets*, as a sure *Refuge* in a Time of Danger; but even *they* have failed us, and at a Season, when we most needed their Help, and seem'd to have the highest Reason of Dependance upon them. This might serve to cure us of our *Infidelity* and vain *Confidence*; and teach us our entire Dependance on *God*, and how great our Danger is, while his *Hand* is so evidently stretched forth against us. Our Expedition to *Crown-Point*, will probably again, like the Rest of our Schemes, prove abortive. These Things, together with our *divided Councils*, and *dilatory Methods* of Proceeding, make the Situation of public Affairs, look exceeding dangerous, and may well alarm our Fears, as to what is coming on our *Nation*, and *Country*.---And if we consider the present State of the *Protestant Churches*, will it not tend to increase our dark Apprehensions on this Head? What mournful Declensions, as to *Doxtrine*, *Discipline*, and *practical Godliness*! God has evidently withdrawn his Spirit;---a sad Decay, as to *vital Piety*, is almost every where lamentably visible;---A *Midnight Security* seems to have fallen on the Churches;---Both *Ministers* and *People*, *Saints* and *Sinners*, *slumber* and *sleep*. *Iniquity* abounds; *the Love* of many *waxes cold*.---*Lukewarmness* and *Indifference*, in spiritual and divine Things; *Want of Affection* to *God* and *Christ*, to the *Truths* and *Ordinances* of the *Gospel*, are growing fast on the *Professors* of this *Age*. *The Things* that remain are just ready to die, and our *Works* are not found perfect before *God*.---*The Gospel*, and  
all

all its Glories, grow more and more contemptible in the Eyes of Sinners, and less precious in the Eyes of Saints.---The Lord's-Day, public Worship, and Ordinances of his House, disregarded and slighted;---The Ministers of the Gospel treated with Contempt by many, with too much Neglect and Disregard by all; their Persons and Families poorly supported, their Character and Office little revered, and the important Messages they bring, undervalued and rejected.---How widely different are Things in this Respect, from what they were in the Memory of many now alive! How little of that Reverence and Esteem for the ministerial Character, which was so remarkable among our Forefathers, is to be seen in our Day; and these Things are waxing worse and worse. Whether this arises from Declensions among Ministers or People, or both, it must be esteemed a dark Symptom on the Church. Time would fail me, to speak of the mournful Growth of Infidelity, Profaneness, and all kind of abominable Immoralities: And when we consider these Things, have we not Reason to fear, that God will purify his Churches in the Furnace, that they may come forth as Gold tried and refined? Can we expect, that so much Dross and Corruption, as is now found among us, will be purged off any other Way? The Popish Powers may be suffered to unite their Strength, to prevail, and carry all before them for a Season; to stay, or silence the faithful Witnesses of Christ; to rejoice, and send Gifts, as if the Day was their own, and to imagine they have Nothing to fear from them, who used to torment them Day and Night. This, as it will be the last Effort of the Man of Sin, and his Adherents, may, probably, be one of the most desperate Attacks, he has ever made on the Reformed Churches. Satan will seem to be dooted from the bottomless Pit, and will come in great Wrath, because his Time is short. But, blessed be God, tho' this will be a Time of great Darkness & Distress, yet it will soon be over.

over. The triumphing of the Enemies of Christ, will be short. When they think themselves most secure, and that there are none to oppose their Designs, sudden Destruction shall come upon them, as on a Woman in Travail, and they shall not escape. When the Whore of Babylon, or mystical Rome, shall say, *I sit as a Queen, am no Widow, and shall see no Sorrow*; then her Doom draws nigh; her Plagues shall come in one Day; *Death, Mourning & Famine*; and she shall be utterly burnt with Fire\*. Happy shall they then be, who have come out from her, and are not Partakers of her Sin, that they may not receive of her Plagues. The Destruction of Antichrist, will not be at once; yet on the Resurrection and Exaltation of the Witnesses, he shall receive a deadly Wound, of which he shall never be healed, but consume away by the Breath of Christ's Mouth, and Brightness of his Coming. Such sudden and awful Judgments will then be brought upon him, as shall affrighten the Rest of the World, and cause them to give Glory to God. This, with the passing away of the second Woe, in the Overthrow of the Turkish Empire, will open a Door for that glorious Spread of the Gospel promised in the latter Days. The third Woe under the sounding of the seventh Angel, which cometh quickly, will issue in the final and complete Destruction of Antichrist, and Confusion of all the implacable Enemies of the Church. Then shall be heard great Voices in Heaven, and the joyful Sound will spread far and wide on the Earth, saying, *The Kingdoms of this World are become the Kingdoms of our Lord, and his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever*†. Then, My Brethren, tho' we may be entering on the darkest, and most gloomy Part of the Night, which has continued so long, we may lift up our Heads with Joy, our Salvation draws near. The Night is far spent, and the Day is at Hand. The Morning cometh, and will usher in a glorious Day, when the Sun of Righteousness

\* Rev. xviii. 7, 8.

† Rev. xi. 14, 15.

ousness shall arise, and dispel the dark Clouds which now hang over his Church, become a *Light to the Gentiles*, and a *Glory to God's People Israel*; when the *Light of the Moon shall be as the Light of the Sun, and the Light of the Sun sevenfold as the Light of seven Days* \*. This Day of the Churches Prosperity, is to continue for a *Thousand Years*; some suppose, prophetically taken, 360,000 Years, that Christ may have a longer *Reign*, and greater *Number of Subjects*, than the *Prince of Darkness* has had; but this may be accomplished in the Space of 1000 Years, (literally taken) of such *Peace and Prosperity* as the Church will then enjoy, when the *Increase of Mankind* will be so much greater, and their *Destruction* so much less than at other *Times* †. Some suppose Christ will reign personally here on Earth, during these 1000 Years, and that his *bodily Presence* will be the *Glory* of his Church; that the *Saints*, or, at least, the *Martyrs*, will be raised from the *Dead*, and reign with him. But such perplexing Questions and Difficulties, are started on this Head, as I have never yet seen answered; and since it is represented as a greater Blessing to the Church, to have Christ *interceding in Heaven*, and the *Presence of his Spirit on Earth*; I see no Reason, either to desire or expect it. 'Tis expedient (says Christ ‡) *That I go away; for, unless I go, the Comforter will not come unto you.* Without pronouncing any Thing decisively, about the *exact Circumstances* of these *glorious Times*, and the *Manner* in which they will be brought on, I will only say, That it seems evident, by the prophetic Description given of *those Times*, that their *Glory* will consist in the universal Promotion of *true Christianity* and *real Religion*, in the Gospel's having its *genuine Effect* on the Hearts and Lives of Men; such as were before *hateful*, and *hating one another*, will then have Hearts glowing with Love to God,

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\* Isai. xxx. 26. † See this particularly illustrated in the Treatise above mentioned, Page 47 & 48. ‡ John xvi. 7.

and one another; such as were before the Plagues and Pests of Society, will then become its Ornament, Delight and Defence; such as were before fierce and savage, malicious and revengeful, barbarous and cruel, will then become kind and gentle, courteous and forgiving, meek and humble. The *Lyon* will be turned into the *Lamb*; and *there shall be Nothing to offend in God's holy Mount*. When supreme Love to God, and undissembled Affection to one another, reign, it will produce universal Harmony and Peace. Wars & Contentions, angry Jars and Disputes, will cease; *the Lamb shall lie down with the Wolf, and the Nations of the Earth will learn War no more*. Such a glorious Change, in such a corrupt & apostate World, can be brought about by Nothing short of a plentiful, out-pouring of the Spirit of all Grace, who has immediate Access to the *Hearts* of the Children of Men, by his enlightning, purifying, and all-conquering Influences. That the Change will begin *here*; that without *this*, all Means must prove ineffectual; and that *this* is sufficient to effect it, might be easily proved. Such abundant Effusion of the divine Spirit, will open an effectual Door for the Gospel, to have free Course and be glorified, which no Man shall be able to shut. A preached Gospel will be attended with such *Life* and *Power*, as will subdue and soften the *hardest Heart*; it will shine with such *Light & Glory*, as that the Remainder of *Pagan, Popish & Mahometan* Darkness, will flee before it, as the Shadows of the Night before the *rising Sun*. The Inhabitants of the Earth shall be filled with the *spiritual Knowledge* of God and Christ, as the *Waters cover the Sea* †; Conversions will be greatly multiplied; Sinners will flock to Christ, as *Clouds*, and as *Doves to their Windows*; ---it will seem as if *Nations were born in a Day*: Then will God remember Mercy for his ancient People, the *Jews*. They shall be brought in with *the Fullness of the Gentile*

† *Isai. xi. 9.*

the *World*, which will be *Life from the Dead* \*. This is expressly promised ||, *The Children of Israel shall abide many Days without a King, and a Prince, without a Sacrifice, Image, Ephod, &c.* Afterwards shall they return, and seek the Lord their God, and David, their King. Then may it be said to the Church, *Arise; shine forth; for thy Light is come, and the Glory of the Lord risen is upon thee; his Glory shall be seen upon thee; and the Gentiles shall come to thy Light, and Kings to the Brightness of thy Rising* \*.

*PRINCES* and *Potentates*, will, I imagine, partake of this plentiful Effusion of divine Grace, whereby *Kings* shall be made *nursing Fathers*, & *Queens nursing Mothers* to the Church †, disposed to cast their *Crowns* at the Feet of *Jesus*, and employ all their superior Advantages for the Honour of his Name, and Advancement of his Cause; and with what striking Beauty and Force will *Religion* then shine, when recommended by such distinguished Examples!

*MINISTERS* of the *Gospel*, will doubtless have a double Portion of the Spirit, when it is so remarkably poured forth. They will then be like the *Angel* spoken of in *Revelations*, who flew through Heaven, having the everlasting *Gospel*. They will fly on the Wings of *Zeal* and *Love*, to publish the Wonders of divine Grace to a lost and ruined *World*. And their Meekness, Humility and Wisdom, will be equal to their Zeal. How different in that Day, will be the *Preaching*, *Conversation* and *Examples* of Ministers, from what we now behold? And what *glorious Effects* may be expected from the *Gospel*, when it is published by those whose Hearts are full of a Sense of its *Excellency*, *Truth* and *Importance*; and when this shines forth in their Lives. Alas! how little do we know of this in the present Day? what a mournful withdrawalment of the divine Spirit!

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\* Rom. xi. 15. || Hosea iii. 4, 5. \* Isai. lx. 1, 2, 3.

† Isai. lx. 16.

our Words freeze between our Lips ; the divine Art of reaching the *Heart*, and alluring Souls to Christ is departed from us. Long experienced Unsuccessfulness damps our Spirits ; we speak as those that expect to labour in vain, and spend our Strength for Nought.

CHRISTIANS, in general, will be favoured with unusual Communications of divine Grace, and shine as Lights in the World. There will be something convincing and alluring in their Example : That mean, low, sordid Temper, that contentious, jangling, quarrelsome Spirit ; which now appears in most Professors, obscures the Beauty of our holy Religion in the Eyes of Strangers, and is one of the greatest Obstacles to the Spread of the Gospel. But when true Religion comes to be properly exemplified in the Lives of Christians, there will appear such a Charm, and Excellency in it, as will strike and allure the Beholders, and have a peculiar Tendency to propagate it throughout the World.

FAMILIES will then, 'tis probable, be as remarkable for being Nurseries of Piety, as they now are for being Scenes of Disorder, Corruption, and Vice ; when Children will indeed be trained up for God, and come on the Stage of Action with Hearts animated with Love to him, and to all Mankind, and glowing Desires of being distinguished Blessings in their Day.

PUBLICK SCHOOLS, and Seminaries of Learning, will probably become Seats remarkable for Virtue, and true Religion ; where it shall shine with divine Lustre, and diffuse its benign Influence far and wide : From those Fountains thus purified, will issue Streams that shall make glad the City of our God. I hint at these Things, as probable Means whereby the glorious Designs of God's Grace will be carried on, in the latter Day, that with our fervent Prayer, we may unite our earnest Endeavours for their Accomplishment.

WHAT a glorious Change will soon be produced, when God shall visit these dark Abodes, with such plentiful

tiful Effusions of his Spirit ! What a new Face of Things must then appear in the *moral World*. Behold I create a new Heaven, and a new Earth ; be ye glad, and rejoice, for ever, in what I create, for I create Jerusalem a Rejoicing, and her People a Joy\*. My Heart is enlarged on this delightful Subject, but having greatly transgressed my Bounds, I must conclude with a very brief Address, to My Reverend and dear Brethren, in the Gospel, who are convened on the present Occasion.

1<sup>st</sup>. LET us prepare for *dark and distressing Times*, if God should see fit to bring them on the Church in our Day.

THO' it be not for us to know the *Times and Seasons* which God has reserved in his own Power ; yet when he is both by his *Word and Providence*, giving Intimations of approaching Judgments, we ought, like *Noah*, to be moved with Fear, and prepare to meet them. This may especially be expected of us, who are appointed as *Watchmen*, to give warning to others. Tho' we can't pretend to penetrate into the *Council of Heaven*, as to future Events, yet *he that runs, may read* the present threatening *Aspect* of divine Providence ; the *loud Calls* God is giving to the *World*, and to his *Churches*, to prepare to meet him : He speaks once ; yea, twice ; and that in a most solemn & moving Manner ; tho' few regard him. The *Cloud* gathers thick and dark upon us ; our *Nation and Land*, filled with Sin against the *holy one of Israel* ; challenging God to vindicate the Honour of his Majesty ;---engaged in War with an *ambitious, politic & warlike Nation*, strengthened by a powerful Confederacy,---a Nation that has long been *drunk with the Blood of the Saints* ;---our *Councils* and divided Schemes, turned into *Foolishness* ; our vain Boastings and groundless Expectations, repeatedly disappointed. Have we not then Reason to tremble, for Fear of those Things that are coming upon us ?

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\* *Isai. lv. 17, 18.*

38 *The Watchman's Answer to the Question,*  
 Should our *Enemies*, enraged as they have been, and flush'd with *Victory* as they now are, be suffered to prevail, and put in Execution their wicked Designs, to fill with *Desolation* and *Woe*, with the direful Effects of *popish Bigotry*, & *lawless Tyranny*, this once happy *Land*, which has so long been distinguished with *Peace* and *Plenty*, with *Gospel Light and Liberty*; what a *lamentable Scene* would it open! and what can we expect, but that *Judgment will begin at the House of God*. The *Watchmen* will doubtless first be attacked; --- the *Shepherd smitten, that the Sheep may be scattered*. What are we better than our *Fathers*? than the glorious *Train of Martyrs*, who have sealed their *Testimony with their Blood*; and why should we expect to die quietly in our *Nests*? And are we, *My Brethren*, prepared for such *trying Times* as may soon come upon us? Is *Christ*, his *Truths*, and *Ways*, dearer to us, than our *Lives*? And can we freely sacrifice the latter in Defence of the former? Should we who are *Leaders* in *Christ's Army*, give back, and cowardly *desert the glorious Cause* wherewith we are entrusted, our *Guilt and Condemnation* would be exceeding great. This would be to *crucify the Lord afresh*, and *put him to open Shame*, and for such there remains *no more Sacrifice for Sin*, but a certain looking for of *Judgment*, and *fiery Indignation*.

WE may, perhaps, in a warm Mood, like *Peter* say, *Tho' all Men forsake thee, yet will not we*. But have we that *Self-denial*, *Faith* and *Love*, that would carry us thro' the *fiery Trial*, bear us up under all the Variety of *Tortures*, which the *Wit* and *Malice* of our *Enemies* may invent? It must be *Love, stronger than Death*, such as *many Waters cannot quench*. We are loudly called in this *Day*, to *stand with our Loins girt*, and *Lamps burning*; to have all our *Graces*, in a lively vigorous Exercise; our *Evidences for Heaven* clear, that we may be ready, if the *Lord* should come as a

*Refiner's*

*Refiner's Fire, and Fuller's Soap, to purify the Sons of Levi* \*. Let us continually look to the Author & Finisher of our Faith, and be animated cheerfully to suffer with him here, under the glorious Prospect that we shall reign with him for ever.

2d. WITH what Pleasure should we look forward to the joyful Period, when *the Kingdoms of this World shall become the Kingdoms of our Lord, & of his Christ*; and how ardently should we long and pray, for the Approach of it?

THO' many *Trials* may yet await us, and we should be call'd off from the Stage, before the *Darkness* of the present *Night* be past; yet it must be a delightful Tho't, that the *Morning cometh*, and will usher in a *glorious Day* to the Church, when the *Cause* of Truth and Holiness, Peace and Purity, shall universally prevail, in Opposition to all the Heresy and Wickedness, Tumults and Corruptions, which have hitherto overspread the Earth; when the Prayers of the Saints in all Ages, for the *Prosperity* of Zion, shall be answered, and the *glorious Things* spoken of her in the sacred Oracles, be fully accomplished.

WE, indeed, may be laid in the silent Dust, before this *blessed Day* appears; but we can now behold it, as *Abraham* saw the *Day* of Christ; and if we are possessed of the same *excellent Spirit*, shall rejoice and be exceeding glad. An Heart touch'd with a dutiful Sense of God's Honour and Interest, can't but be pleas'd, that he will be highly glorified in this *apostate World*, where he has been insolently affronted, and provok'd, for so long a Time: Such must feel some peculiar Emotions of Joy. While some say with the *Psalmist*, in Faith, *be thou exalted, O! God, above the Heavens, and thy Glory above all the Earth* †. To a Soul animated with unfeigned Love to, and zealous Concern for, the *Cause* and *Kingdom* of the dear Redeemer,

\* Mal. iii: 2, 3.

† Psalm cviii. 5.

deemèr, how delightful the Prospect!--that he will *one Day*, have the greatest Interest in the Hearts of Men; *take to himself Power, and Reign from Land to Land, and Sea to Sea*; that his *blessed Gospel*, which is now treated with Scorn and Contempt, by lost and perishing Sinners, shall triumph over all the Opposition of Earth and Hell, have free *Course and be glorified, throughout the World.*

O! WHAT a refreshing, what a reviving Thought! that these *Regions* of Darkness, Guilt and Misery, shall be filled with spiritual Light, Life and Joy. The present *languishing State* of true Religion, is, indeed, distressing; and the more so, when we consider, that it may possibly continue to the End of our Lives: But how pleasing the Contemplation, that it will certainly be *revived, and flourish*, tho' among future Generations; that God shall be served and glorified, by our *Posterity*, in a far better Manner than he has ever been by us. And *that a People which shall be created, shall praise the Lord* §. This may solace us, under the *near Views* of approaching Death, if, with good old *Jacob*, we can say to our Children, *We die, but the Lord will be with you* †. As a believing View of *Zion's* further *Prosperity and Glory*, should support and comfort us, under our present *Labours and Trials*; so it should enlarge our Hearts, in constant, fervent Supplications to the Throne of Grace, that it may be accomplished. The Representation I have given, of the *exceeding* corrupt and degenerate State of the Church, with other dark Prospects in the *present Day*, should be so far from discouraging, that it should greatly enliven and animate our Prayers; partly, as it tends to give us an affecting *Sense* of our entire *Dependance* on God, for so great a Mercy; and the utter *Insufficiency* of all Means for the Revival, and general Spread of *true Religion* in the World, without a plentiful Effusion of the divine Spirit: And,

And, partly, because Infidelity and Wickedness have arrived to so great an *Height*, and Religion is brought to so low an *Ebb*, that it seems as if Things were come to the *last Extremity*, and that it was a fit *Time* for God to appear, and display the Greatness of his Power, Love and Faithfulness, to his Church, to convince the World, that the *Gates of Hell shall not prevail against her*. Instead therefore of desponding, under the present *gloomy Appearance* of Things, let us be awakned to greater *Fervency* in Prayer, and look forward with more earnest Expectations, for the *Dawn* of that *glorious Day*, when *the whole Earth shall be filled with the Knowledge of the Lord*. And tho' he should come as a *Refiner's Fire*, to purge and purify his Churches, in the Furnace of Affliction, yet let us, with united Hearts, say, *Come Lord Jesus; come quickly*.

FINALLY, Let us be awakned in this dark and difficult Day, to a faithful zealous *Discharge* of the Duties of our Stations. It would be sad indeed, if, at such a time, we should *do the Work of the Lord carelessly and deceitfully*; if by our *Sloth and Negligence*, we should increase the deplorable *Darkness and Deadness*, which is already on the *Churches*, and suffer the Cause of God to *die* in our Hands. We have every Motive to awaken our *Zeal*, and quicken our *Diligence*, in our great Work. What we find to do for God, the Souls of our Hearers, and our bleeding Country, we should, in such a Day as this, *do with all our Might*. Allow me in Particular, to press the *Necessity and Importance* of uniting our most vigorous Attempts for a thorough and general *Reformation*. This is what we proposed in our *Judicatory*, and to which we *unanimously agreed*, viz. That we would not only *explain, and warmly press in our public Discourses, the Necessity of a Reformation, but exert ourselves in our several Spheres of Influence, to bring it about*. This is what God is most evidently and loudly calling us to, in the present

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present Day. He has of late been giving extraordinary *Warnings*, of impending Judgments, by mighty *Winds*, præternatural *Inundations*, and terrible *Earthquakes in divers Places*. The Frame of Nature seems to have been cast into a trembling Disorder, at the Approach of an *angry God*, and as it were in Astonishment, solemnly to call on the Inhabitants of a guilty World, to *repent*, and *return*, before his Wrath comes upon them to the utmost. The Displeasure of Heaven has been once and again testified against our *Nation and Land*. We have felt the *Rebukes* of an incensed Deity. The *Cause* of all which Calamities, is notorious and evident to all, who have any due *Sense* of God on their Minds, or believe that he *rules among the Children of Men*. God is openly and publicly *affronted*; --- his *Name* used and prophaned, in the most *atheistical* Manner; --- his *Laws* violated; --- his *Authority* despised; --- the loud *Calls* of his *Word* and *Providence* disregarded; --- and all the *Riches* of his *Grace*, in the Gospel, slighted; --- while *Profanity* and *Infidelity*, *Luxury* & *Debauchery*, *Pride* and *Oppression*, reign without Controul, among those that make no Pretensions to Religion. *Decays* in Faith, Love and Zeal, a *Conformity* to the World, and *Deadness* to spiritual and divine Things, are visible, and lamentable, among its *Professors*. These Things have kindled the *Anger* of Heaven against us, and it is *not turned away*; but his avenging *Hand* is *stretched out still*. *And shall not God punish for these Things? Will he not be avenged on such a People as this? Can we expect, that all the public Contempt* thrown on his Authority and Government, will be passed by without Tokens of his *angry Resentment*, unless Repentance and Reformation prevent.

It is well known, that I have not been backward in using the little Influence I have, in animating my *Country-men*, to a vigorous Defence of their *Lives* and *Liberties*, in the use of all proper Means; and I wish it were

in my Power, to awake in them a greater *Sense* of the Necessity of being alive, and thoroughly engaged in this *Matter*. But I must freely declare, I have no Expectations of Safety to the *Nation* or *Land*, from any of our *Preparations*, till a *Sense* of our *Dependance* on God, and a *Disposition* to return to him by *Repentance* and *Reformation*, prevails. The *Judgments* of Heaven are manifestly on us; but who lays it to *Heart*? Who suitably regards the *Works of the Lord*, and the *Operations of his Hand*? We can discern, or imagine we discern, the Cause of our *Calamities*, in the *Weakness of one*, the *Cowardice* of another, and the *Treachery* of a third, whilst the *procuring Cause* of all is *overlooked* and *forgot*. That our *Danger* is *great*, and *near*, is acknowledged by all; but where do we look for *Deliverance*? Is it not to our victorious *Fleets*?--the *Wisdom* of our *Commanders*?--the *Number* and *Bravery* of our *Men*? Our mournful *Disappointments*, instead of *curing*, do but *increase* our *Infidelity* and *Folly*. We can see the *Error* of our *last Scheme*, and determine to rectify it in the next; almost every one imagines, he could conduct *Matters* better, and point out a *Way of Safety*, if he was at the *Head of Affairs*; but forgets, that *the Race is not to the Swift*, nor *the Battle to the Strong*. The *Hand of God* is disregarded;--no suitable *Pains* taken, to remove the Cause of his awful *Displeasure* against us. But till there be some public, visible *Humiliation* for, and *Reformation* of, those open *Abominations*, which cry to Heaven for *Vengeance*; we need not think it strange, if God should send such a *Spirit of Confusion* into all our *Councils*;--suffer, such cross *Interests*, mutual *Jealousies* & *Distrust*; such *Divisions* & *Perplexities*, to prevail in our *Schemes*, as naturally tend to *defeat* all our *Attempts*, and bring about our *Ruin*. Should this, I say, befall us, it would be no strange Thing; 'tis no more than what has frequently

44 *The Watchman's Answer to the Question,*

quently happened to a *sinful, impenitent* People;----no more than what we have Reason to expect, if *Repentance* prevent not §. We, *My Brethren*, who are set on the *Walls of God's Jerusalem*, to give *Warning* of approaching Danger, can't but see the Necessity of *Repentance* and *Reformation*, to avert impending Judgments; and surely it concerns us, to join in with the *alarming Calls* of divine Providence, and endeavour to awaken in all around us, a Sense of these Things. The *Eyes of God, Angels and Men*, are upon us, to observe our Conduct in this *Day* of publick Calamity and Distress. From us, the beginning and carrying on, this so *necessary a Work*, is justly expected, whose Obligations to, and Advantages for it, are great and distinguishing.

THE *Glory of God*; the *Interest* of Religion; the *Welfare* of our bleeding Country, and the *solemn Account* we must soon give to our *Judge*, call for our diligent *Activity & Zeal*, in this Matter, as well as our own *public voluntary Agreement*, that we would unite our *Endeavours*, & exert our *Influence* in our several Stations, for this Purpose; in which we humbly hope, & earnestly desire, that we may be joined by our *Brethren* of every Denomination throughout the *Land*. The Example and Advice of those of the *sacred Character*, we might reasonably expect, would animate *Magistrates*, and *Heads of Families*, to engage in the same *laudable Design*, prove the Means of bringing about the so much needed, and wish'd for *Reformation*, and so of saving a sinning *Land*, from deserved impending *Ruin*. Let our Attempts for this Purpose, according to our *Proposal*\*, be accompanied with extraordinary *Prayer* to God, who has

§. *Isai. ix. 12.*

\* The Synod agreed to recommend it to their Congregations, to spend a Part of the last Thursday of every Month, in extraordinary Prayer to God, on Account of the distressed Situation of our public Affairs,

has the *Hearts* of all Men in his Hand; and to this we may be excited and encouraged, by a Variety of Motives; and in particular, from a Prospect of being joined by many in several Parts of the Land. Our *Brethren*, in some Parts of *New-England*, have set us a laudable Example, in this Respect, and I hope their Zeal and *Forwardness*, will provoke very many; and now God begins to pour out a *Spirit of Prayer* and *Supplication*, of *Repentance* and *Reformation*, on Ministers and People \*, we ought to esteem it a *Token for Good*;---it should animate our Prayers;---*enliven* our Hopes;---and *enliven* all our Attempts for the safety and Deliverance of our Country. And while we are opening to our People a *dark Scene*, from the crying *Sins*, and distressing *Calamities* of the Day, to alarm and arouse them from their Security and vain Confidence; I trust we shall not fail to animate them to a *vigorous Defence* of their Lives and Properties, by setting before them all the Horrors of *Popery*, *Slavery* and *Death*, which may follow the *victorious Arms* of our antichristian Foes, on the *one Hand*; and on the other, all the invaluable *Priviledges* of unadulterated *Christianity*; *British Liberty* and *Property*, in a delightful and fruitful Country, which may be the happy Consequences of our *vigorously exerting* our selves to bring them to *honourable Terms of Peace*.---*Priviledges* of infinite Value! for which we should bravely resolve, to spend our last *Breath*, in Prayer; the last *Penny* of our Estates, and the last *Drop* of our Blood. The Face of our public Affairs has indeed hitherto looked *dark*, from a Spirit of *Animosity* and *Division*, which has spread thro' the Country;---divided our Councils;---confused and greatly weakened all our Schemes. But, *blessed be God*, there is now a *Foundation laid*, for our happy Union under a *noble Commander*, a *Branch* of that

\* While I was transcribing this Part of my Discourse, received some encouraging Accounts of this Kind.

46 *The Watchman's Answer to the Question,*  
that illustrious Family which has so long been distinguish-  
ed for their warm Attachment to, and Zeal for, the Re-  
ligion and Liberties of their Country. The signal  
Proofs he has already given, of his good Conduct, un-  
shaken Loyalty, and steady Attachment to our excel-  
lent Constitution; his generous disinterested Love to  
the British American Colonies, which induced him to  
submit to all the Fatigues and Dangers of his impor-  
tant Station; for their Relief, joined with all the amiable  
Qualities he has discovered; conspire to raise him high  
in our Esteem and Regard; and must naturally tend to  
raise our drooping Spirits, and enkindle in every Breast,  
a noble Ardor to distinguish themselves in the Service  
of their Country.

And should the several Colonies harmoniously unite,  
to strengthen his Hands, and nobly exert themselves in  
the common Cause, he might be, under God, a happy  
Instrument of retrieving our shameful Losses, of hum-  
bling our ambitious triumphing Foes, and restoring Peace  
and Tranquility to this bleeding Land. Which, may  
GOD, of his infinite Mercy, grant, thro' JESUS  
CHRIST, our LORD, AMEN.

F I N I S.

E R R A T A.

Page 31. Line 4. of the Sermon, for *your*, read *their*.