

Faithful Ministers the Fathers of the
C H U R C H.

A
S E R M O N

P R E A C H E D

A T

F O G S - M A N N O R.

O N O C C A S I O N

Of the Death of the Reverend Mr SAMUEL
BLAIR, who departed this Life July 5.
1752.

By SAMUEL FINLEY, A. M. Minister of
the Gospel at *Nottingham in Pennsylvania.*

Pfal. CXII. 6. *The Righteous shall be in everlasting
Remembrance.*


P H I L A D E L P H I,
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MDCCLII.



2 KINGS ii. 12.

And Elisha saw it, and he cried, my Father, my Father, the Chariot of Israel, and the Horsemen thereof.

 H E S E Words are the Encomium of *Elijab*, one of the greatest Prophets; the History of whose Life is full of Wonders, and shines in the antient Annals of *Israel*. He was remarkable for burning Zeal, undaunted Courage, and miraculous Gifts: The Terror of boldest Transgressors, and favourite of godly Men. As he *was very jealous for the Lord God of Hosts*, and sought not his own Glory, so God eminently honour'd him while he liv'd on Earth, but still more in his Departure hence, having *translated him that he shou'd not see Death*. Of this God gave him previous Notice: And when the Time drew near, in which he was to be taken up to Heaven, he visited the Schools of the Prophets, as one tenderly concern'd for the Prosperity of the Church Militant. He was accompany'd by his faithful Attendant *Elisha*, who, full of Affection to his honoured Master, absolutely refused to leave him.

The intended Visitation being perform'd, the venerable Sages walk'd along, conversing, doubtless, with an heavenly Relish, of the important Concerns of Religion; when all of a sudden *appeared a Chariot of Fire, and Horses of Fire*. Holy Angels are employ'd

ploy'd in carrying departed Saints into *Abraham's Bosom*; and we may justly conclude that it was they who assum'd the Figure of a Chariot, and Horses, † that in Brightness, not in Heat, resembled Fire. They carry invisibly the departed Souls of the righteous to Glory, but as *Elijah* was to be taken to Heaven with his Body, there was the greatest Propriety in their appearing visible; and as he had acted the noble Hero in the Cause of God, it was fit and condecant, that he shou'd be carryed in State, like a glorious Conqueror in his triumphal Chariot.

The Chariot, most probably, appeared running along upon the ground to meet them, and *parting them asunder* caught up *Elijah* and ascended retulgent to Heaven. Here we are brought to an unvoiadable Pause: Our Tho'ts plunge and are lost, attempting to follow him further. Fancy cannot realize the vigorous, yet calm and peaceful raptures that elevated his Soul. We cannot conceive the Excess of Blessedness which necessarily sprang from the open Vision of uncreated Glory, and the Health and Purity of his own Spirit. Yea it never *enter'd into his own Heart*, what he now felt and saw, upon the sudden Change of his Condition from mortal and sinful, to immortal and holy.

But *Elijah's* Situation is more level to our Apprehensions; behold the Astonishment with which he views this surprizing Phœnomenon! He stands in the same Spot motionless as a Statue, his Eyes fixed, eagerly pursuing the shining Chariot, until he cou'd see it no more,—nor cou'd refrain from gazing up into Heaven

† Angels are called Seraphim, i. e. The Burners. In *Hai*, 6. 2. And Cherubim, which some considerable Critics judge has Affinity with Rechubim Chariots. Angels are called the Chariots of God, in *Psalms* 68. 17. And in *Psalms* 18. 10. He is expressly said to ride upon a Cherub. These Considerations, I presume, will fully justify my Conclusion that the fiery Chariots and Horses were Angels, and nothing else.

for a long Time after. One may almost feel the conflict of various Passions in his Soul; the quick Alterations of Admiration, Joy, and Grief. But upon deep Recollection Grief prevails: His own Loss, and that of the publick, affect his Heart; so that he rent his Cloaths as one bereft of Comfort, and cry'd, *my Father, my Father, the Chariot of Israel, and the Horsemen thereof.* He consider'd himself as a destitute Orphan, and the Publick as having lost it's Strength and Beauty. *Elijah's* Departure is like the routing of an Army: Now the Chariots of *Israel*, and the Horsemen thereof are no more. Nothing greater cou'd be said than this, nor said more greatly on the Occasion. And no doubt, all of you see at first view whether they tend, and how applicable the Words are to that dear and Reverend Man, whose lamented Death affords the sad Occasion of my present Discourse from them. But that their Pertinency to our present design may appear, let it be observed, that Gospel Ministers succeed in the Room of the Old Testament Prophets. If then these Words cou'd be said of a Prophet, they can also of a faithful Minister of the New Testament. *

Should any one argue, that they are applicable to none, but such as are eminent above the ordinary Rank, because only spoken of *Elijah* and *Elisha*, I am under

* That Ministers of the New, are properly Successors of the Prophets of the Old Testament, may be argu'd, not only from the Sameness of their Employment as to the Substance thereof, but also from their common Appellations. Ministers are called Prophets 1 Cor. 14. 2. 3. 4. 29. 32. and often elsewhere. A Prophet is called a Man of God. 2 Kings 1. 9. 11. 13, and 4. 7. 16. 22. &c. So also Ministers 1 Tim 6. 11. 2 Tim. 3. 17. Prophets are Messengers. Job. 33. 23. and so are Ministers. 2 Cor. 8. 23. and frequently Angels, a Word of the same Import.

under no Necessity to dispute against him ; seeing on that Supposition, they are the more apposite and suitable on the present Occasion.

On the whole, the Text teaches us to consider faithful Ministers, at least those that excell, as Fathers, the Chariots of *Israel*, and the Horsemen thereof.

All that seems necessary to be done, in Order to the intended Improvement, is to explain the Import of these Phrases ; and shew their Applicableness to faithful and eminent Gospel Ministers.

First, I am to explain the Import of these Phrases, *Father, the Chariot of Israel, and Horsemen thereof.*

1. The Term *Father*, sometimes denotes one invested with Power and Authority. Thus when *Isaiab* predicts that *Eleakim* shall have the Government committed into his Hands, it is added, *and he shall be a Father to the Inhabitants of Jerusalem.* The Antient Romans rightly judg'd, that *Father of his Country* was the most honourable Title they cou'd give their best and greatest Consuls, and Emperors. The Original and first Authority among Men is that of Parents ; and hence, in the Fifth Commandment, *Father and Mother* are mentioned, rather than Magistrates or Ministers.

Sometimes *Father* denotes the Master of a Profession, a Teacher or Instructor. In this Sense *Jabal* is call'd *the Father of such as dwell in Tents* : And *Jubal* of such as handle the Harp and Organ. § And with the same view, the Eldest and Chief of the Prophets were call'd *Fathers*, and the younger *Sons of the Prophets.* †

Again, *Father* is a Term of Respect and Reverence. Accordingly we find them connected in *Mal.* 1. 6. *If I be a Father, were is mine Honour.*

So *Naaman's* Servants, approaching to him, call him *Father* : and the King of *Israel* addresses *Elisha* with the same respectful and affectionate Appellation.

Aged

Aged Men are commonly honour'd with the Title of *Father*. So when the Apostle directs us, not to *rebuke an Elder, but intreat him as a Father*. He does not design an Elder in Office, but in Years; as is manifest from the following Clause, where *younger Men* are opposed to him. It is still presumed, that *Multitude of Years shou'd teach Wisdom*: And hence this honourable Title denotes one that is wise by long Experience.

Again one of exemplary Faith and Conversation is call'd a Father. In this view *Abraham* is stil'd the *Father of Believers*: * He was worthy of Imitation, both as to the Temper of his Heart, and Conduct of his Life. So when God is set forth under the Relation of a *Father*, *Imitation* of him is recommended: Whereby we are taught, that as Children are prone to Copy, after their Fathers, so Fathers are, or ought to be proper Patterns for their Imitation.

Besides all these, we find *Tenderness* and *Affection* connected with the Idea of *Father*; as also Care to provide for, direct, reprove and correct his Children. It is so confessedly the Part of the Father to *lay up for Children, that if any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own House, he has deny'd the Faith, and is worse than an Infidel*. And the Language of every dutiful Child is, *my Father, thou art the Guide of my Youth. The Fathers of our Flesh correct us, and we give them Reverence—for what Son is he whom the Father chasteneth not*.

Lastly, they are called Fathers who have been the Instruments of Conversion. On this ground the Apostle claims the Title of *Father* from the *Corinthian* Christians, when he says, *tho' you have ten Thousand Instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many Fathers: For in Christ Jesus I have begotten you thro' the Gospel*.

2. The

2. The other Phrases, viz. Chariot and Horsemen, may be consider'd conjunctly. In General they signify military Strength, Protection, or Defence, and Ornament:

1. That Chariots and Horsemen were esteem'd the chief military Strength of a Kingdom, the Psalmist intimates, when he tells us, that *some Trust in Chariots, and some in Horses. Jabin* thought himself Safe, and was terrible to his Neighbours, because *he had nine Hundred Chariots of Iron.* * And many other Instances might be produc'd to the same Purpose.

2. As a Consequence of the Former, they were consider'd as a Defence and Protection. Hence, when God so remarkably appear'd for the Protection of his People from the Egyptians at the Red-Sea, he is said to have *rode upon his Horse and Chariots of Salvation.* † And when the Syrian Moab had encircled the City of *Dotan*, in order to take *Elisha*; and his Servant being struck with great Terror, he pray'd that God wou'd discover the powerful Guard they had against their Enemies. *And the Lord opened the Eyes of the young Man, and he saw the whole Mountain full of Horses, and Chariots of Fire round about Elisha.* *

3. Chariots are for Ornament, having commonly been used for the Conveyance of honourable Personages. Accordingly, when the Grandeur and Majesty of *Jehovah* is expressed, he is represented as *making the Clouds his Chariot.* And it is promised as a Blessing to the Jews, on Condition of their Obedience, that there shou'd enter into the Gates of *Jerusalem*, Kings and Princes—*riding in Chariots, and on Horses.* † And when the Stateliness and Beauty of the spouse of Christ is designedly set forth, she is compared to a *Company of Horses in Pharaoh's Chariots.*

On the whole, we may conceive the Text as tho'
Elisha

* Judges 4. 3. † Hab. 3. 8. * 2 Kings 6. 17. † Jer. 47. 25.

Elisha had said, that, “ however *Elijah* was vilify’d by
 “ many, and look’d upon as a common Pest, yet he
 “ was in Reality the most important, most useful, and
 “ honourable Person in the Nation; who by his pious
 “ Example, seasonable Instructions, and fervent Prayers,
 “ did more for the Defence and Safety of Israel
 “ than all their Chariots and Horsemen.”

We are now to manifest secondly, that these Characters are applicable to faithful Ministers of the New Testament. This will be evident from the following Observations.

1. God has invested them with Authority, and order’d that they be honour’d as Rulers in his Church. Hence the Apostle exhorts the *Hebrews* in these remarkable Expressions, *remember them which have the Rule over you, who have spoken to you the Word of God, ---obey them---and submit your selves: for they Watch for your Souls.* * ---It is confessedly the Duty of Ministers to speak the Word of God, and watch for their Peoples Souls; and it’s plain that the same Persons have also the Rule over them. It is true, their Authority is not Legislative, but Ministerial: they are not to be Lords over God’s Heritage, being only appointed to put in Execution the Laws of Christ: But even this is great Authority, and an high Trust. Accordingly God commands his People to *Count those who Rule well and labour in the Word and Doctrine, worthy of double Honour.* † ---And to esteem them very highly in love for their Work’s sake. In these Directions it is supposed, that faithful Ministers will behave themselves, in the Discharge of their Office, with such Discretion, Gravity, and Impartiality as will command Esteem and Reverence; and will manage their Power with such Propriety as tends to secure the End of it, viz, Edification.

B

They

* Heb. 13. 7. † 1 Tim. 5. 17. 1 Thes. 5. 12. 17.

2. They are *Examples to Believers in Word, in Conversation, in Charity, in Spirit, in Faith, in Purity.*

* The Gravity of their common Discourse Decency, of their Deportment, their Benovolence to Men and Zeal for the Glory of God, the Soundness of their Doctrine and Holiness of their Lives, are to be such as Believers may safely imitate. They must preach and live the same Thing. Then can they exhort their Audience to *do what they have heard and seen in them.* § Inconsistency is the Disgrace of Gospel Ministers, and will ever make them despicable and base in the Eyes of the People; nor will the greatest Parts, and finest Accomplishments protect their Character, or Screen them from Censure.

3. Faithful Ministers are careful, and affectionately tender, of their Peoples best Interests. They reprove the guilty, Censure the scandalous, instruct the Ignorant, and comfort the dejected, with the Bowels of a Father. Hence they can appeal to their Hearers in the strain of blessed Paul; *you know, how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a Father doth his Children.* † They do not perform the Circle of Ministerial Duties for selfish Ends, but are excited thereto by a genuine, and *natural* Care, †† for the Souls of the People. And there is good Reason why they are thus affected, for,

4. They are the *Fathers of the Church*, in an higher, and more proper Sense than any of the forementioned Respects, being ordinarily the Instruments of Regeneration. By them Sinners are *begotten thro' the Gospel to a lively hope.* ** It is the Constitution of God, that *Faith sh^d come by hearing*: † Hence the Apostle's Query is Argumentative; *How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a Preacher?* § It is remarkable, that thro' God

• 1 Tim. 4. 12. § Phil. 4. 9. † 2 Thes. 2. 11. †† Phil. 2. 20. ** 2 Cor. 4. 15. 1 Pet. 1. 2. † Rom. 10. 17. § v. 14.

God sent an Angel to *Cornelius* the Centurion, § It was not to instruct him in the Doctrines of the Gospel, but only to direct him to *Peter*, a Minister of Christ. So great Honour does God put on the Ordinance of preaching.

5. Faithful Ministers are the Defence, the Strength, and Ornament of the Church.

The Apostle considers himself as one *set for the Defence of the Gospel*. And to manifest that this is the Province of every Minister, it is requir'd as a Qualification for the Office, *that they may be able, by sound Speech, both to exhort, and convince Gain-sayers.* * It is expected in a peculiar Manner from them, that they shou'd endeavour *to make up the Hedge and Stand in the Gate.* † To interpose between an offended God, and a sinful People; and interceed for them as *Moses* often did for *Israel*.

They are in a secondary Way, the Support and Strength of the Church. Their Prayers, instructions, and exemplary Steadyness, are the Means of Courage and Strength to other Christians: Hence they are compar'd to *Pillars*, †† the known Supports of Buildings.

Lastly they are the Church's Ornament. This is design'd by the Appellation of *Stars* § frequently given them; and when the Church is represented as a *Woman* admirably and gloriously apparell'd, these *Stars* compose her *Crown*.** The Apostle expresses this in Terms, that seem still Stronger, while he calls them the *Angels of the Churches, and the Glory of Christ.* §§ Thus, with a special Emphasis, faithful Ministers may be called the *Chariots of Israel, and the Horsemen thereof.*

From this Doctrine we may take Occasion to observe.

1. That

§ Act. 10. 3. † Tit. 1. 9. * Ezek. 22. 30. ** Gal. 2. 9
§ Rev. 1. 20. †† chap. 12. 1. §§ 2 Cor. 3. 23,

1 That however much the Ministerial Office is vilify'd by the Proud and Impious, yet it is and will appear to be, a most important, and honourable Office. It must be acknowledg'd a great Matter to bear a Commission under the King of Kings, to be cloathed with his Authority and entrusted with the vast Concerns of his Peoples Souls; a People so dearly bought, and so infinitely beloved. But when Sinners reject the Lord of Glory himself, it is not marvellous that they disdain his Servants. *If they call the Master of the House Beelzebub, how much more may they of his Household expect such Treatment?* § *Elijah* was a most eminent Man of God, the Ornament of his Nation and Age, and very serviceable to *Israel*; yet he was consider'd as a Blemish to the World, a *Troubler of Israel*, * and so treated as a Miscreant. But following Generations commonly see the Mistakes of their Ancestors; they *Garnish the Sepulchers of the righteous*, † whom their Fathers persecuted to the Death, and disclaim their impious and cruel Conduct. This comes to pass by the over-ruling Providence of God, who has determined that excellent Men shall have an everlasting Name. The Character of an *Elijah* shall blossom in the Dust, tho' it seem wither'd and dead while he is alive. The most unblemish'd Life may for a Time, be obscur'd by the Clouds of Obloquy and Repeach; but like the Sun, it will break thro' all and Shine as the Noon-Day: § For God has undertaken to Honour those who Honour him. †† Faithful Ministers may therefore contentedly be counted vile, whilst they approve themselves to God, and their own Consciences; being assured that they shall appear in true Colours, and *be glorious in the Eyes of the Lord*, §§ notwithstanding the Envy of all the World. We may,

2. Inferred, that such as are destitute of the Characters already mentioned, are utterly unworthy of the Ministerial

§ Mat. 10. 25. * 1 King. 18. 17. † Mat. 23. 29. § Psal. 57. 5. †† 1 Sam. 2. 30. §§ Mat. 47. 5.

Ministerial Office. They who are ignorant of Experimental Piety are but *blind Guides*, § they who are not of exemplary Conversation, are *Stumbling blocks before the Blind*; they who are erroneous and profane are the Teachers and Promoters of open Rebellion against the Lord. They who seek their own Glory betray their Trust, and act a most perfidious Part. *H, and only he, who seeketh his Glory that sendeth him, is true.* §§ Therefore the Minister who seeks his own Honour, in Strictness of Speech, degrades himself; and God will *make him base before all the People.* * It cannot be supposed, that they who are destitute of Paternal Tenderness and Care will *watch for their People's Souls, or travail in Birth till Christ be formed in them*: §§§ And unless Severity be temper'd with Love and Gentleness, they may perhaps maintain the Authority of Bullies, but not of Gospel Ministers. It is therefore just Matter of Lamentation, that the sensual, the selfish, the frothy, the ignorant, and the proud, shou'd strive for the Ministry; and having obtained it, become the Peests of the Church, ruin Sinners, distress the godly, and aggravate their own Sins and Torments.

3. The loss of an eminent and faithful Minister is just Cause of Sorrow. How naturally do Children bewail the Loss of a dear Father? And a Kingdom that of their military Strength? If the Army is routed, both Horse and Foot broken, what sag'ning Damps does the Report thereof spread? Every Lover of his Country feels a genuine Grief, and will naturally express his Sensations in such an abrupt, pathetick, and Sententious strain as *Elisba* in our Text. And who in this Assembly, that loves the Interests of Religion, does not feel his Heart oppress'd with undimble'd Woe? Who laments not our common Loss? Who knows not that a *great Man is fallen in Israel*? †
 Yea,

§ Mat. 23. 24. §§ Joh. 7. 18. §§§ Mal. 2. 9. • Gal. 4. 19.
 † 2 Sam. 3. 28.

Yea, we know that *Blair* the holy, the upright, and the Wise, is now no more.---The Lover of Religion, and the Love of religious Persons, has departed hence ---the Husband, the Father, and the Friend, is gone, ---O! *My Father, my Father, the Chariots of Israel, and the Horsemen thereof.* Of whom can these Words be better spoken? To whom more justly apply'd, than to this faithful and wise Servant of Jesus Christ? He had the Temper and Deportment of Father of the Church; and was eminently qualify'd for the sacred Office.

He was blest with early Piety; on his dying bed he cou'd recollect, with delight, various Evidences of gracious Influences in his tender Years. by this Means he was happily preserv'd from being ever engag'd in vicious Courses, and at once grew in Stature and in Grace. Religion, far from being a fleshy Thing with him, was rational and solid; manifesting itself in an unreserved Obedience to all God's Commandments.

To an holy Disposition was added a great Genius, capable of the highest Improvements. He had a deep and penetrating Judgment, a clear and regular Way of conceiving Things, and a retentive Memory. He was an indefatigable Student, a calm and impartial Searcher for Truth; he *thought for himself*, and was determin'd in his Conclusions only by Evidence.

He had a very considerable Store of critical Learning; and was especially conversant in studying the Scriptures in their Original Languages. How great his Attainments in Philosophy were, was known by few: For in his last Years his Thirst for Knowledge did sensibly encrease; and he greatly improved himself therein. He studyed several Branches of the Mathematicks, and especially Geometry and Astronomy: Nor will these seem tasteless Studies to one who had such a Savour of living Piety, when it is consider'd, that he saw the Glory of God in all his Works, admir'd

admir'd and ador'd him in all : He delighted to see *the invisible Things of him, even his eternal Power and Godhead, manifested by the Things that are made.* † It was edifying to him to trace the Footsteps of divine Wisdom in particulars, and the infinite reach of Projection in the Frame and Contexture of the Whole.

But his critical and Philosophical Learning, and his large Acquaintance with Geography and History, were all exceeded by his Knowledge in Divinity. This was the Business of his Life ; and herein he made such Proficiency as few, of his standing in the Ministry, have attained unto. Herein he found what perfectly answer'd his refined spiritual Taste. The Contemplation of redeeming Love, did much more elevate his Soul, than that of the Works of Creation : For therein he saw the Wisdom, the Power, the Justice, and the Love of God, more clearly display'd. On every Subject he had a set of most accurately study'd Thoughts : He had often weigh'd in impartial Ballance every Theological Controversy, was a solid Disputant, and able to defend all necessary Truth. He was a judicious Casuist, and cou'd very satisfyingly resolve dubious and perplexed Cases of Conscience. He was not only a proficient in Systematick Divinity, which is comparatively a small Attainment, but a great Textuary. He studied the sacred Oracles above all other Things, and that it was not in vain, manifestly appeared from his great Ability in *dividing the Words of Truth.* § He cou'd *bring out of his Treasures, Things new and old.* * How clearly and fully wou'd he have explained his Subject ! With what irresistible Arguments confirm the Truth ! With what admirable Dexterity accommodate it to his Audience ! And with what Solemn Pungence did he impress the Conscience ! He spoke like one who
knew

† Rom. 1. 20. § 2 Tim. 2. 15. * Mat. 13. 52.

knew the Worth of Souls, and felt in himself the sweet constraints of Love to God and Man.

As he was diligent in the Exercise of his Office to the utmost of his bodily Strength, not *sparing himself*: so God did very remarkably succeed his faithful Ministrations to the Conversion of many Souls. He was the spiritual Father of great Numbers: I have had acquaintance with several Christians, in different Places, where he only preach'd occasionally, who gave all hopeful Evidences of a sound Conversion, and acknowledg'd him to be the Instrument of it.

As to his religious Principles, he was of noble and generous Sentiments. He had *not so learned Christ*, † as to be furious in his Zeal for meer circumstantial or indifferent Points. He understood the Nature of Religion better than to Place it in Things wherein it does not consist; and was too much in the Exercise of the *greater Matters of the Law*, †† to be equally zealous for *Mint, Anise, and Cummin*. Tho' *Sacrifice* be good, and ought to be practis'd, and contended for in it's Place, yet had he *learned that Mercy is better*. * He believ'd, and that agreeable to the sacred Scriptures, that the Communion of Saints is of much greater Importance than many of those Things, wherein Christians differ in Judgment, and was therefore far from such narrowness of Spirit, as to make every Principle and Practise, which he tho't to be true and good, a Term of Communion, and as far from the contrary extreme, a criminal Indifferency and Laxness.

He was strict in Discipline so as to be still candid; and so severely just as to be still compassionate and tender. And with how great Wisdom and Circumspection he judg'd in difficult Cases, his *Brethren* of this Presbytry well know. We waited for Sage Remarks, and heard attentive his prudent Reasonings:

After-

† Eph. 4. 20 †† Mat. 23. 23. * Mat. 9. 13.

After his Words, how seldom had any one Occasion to speak again? His Speech dropped upon us, and we waited for him, as for the Rain. †

He has also been eminently serviceable to the Church, by assisting several promising youths in their Studies for the Ministry; who, becoming learned by his Instructions, and formed by his Example, are now wise, and faithful, and useful Ministers.

He was remarkably grave and solemn in his Aspect and Deportment; yet of a chearful, even, and pleasant Temper: In convers with his Friends, tacetious and witty, when the Season and concurring Circumstances wou'd properly allow him to indulge himself that Way; in Respect of which his Prudence cou'd well direct him.

He was of a generous and liberal Disposition, far from being niggardly and covetous: Was forward in Acts of Charity to the indigent, according to his Ability; and in all his Conduct plainly discover'd a noble indifferency towards earthly Things.

It we consider him as a Friend, he was as firm and stedfast, and might be depended on as much as any I ever knew. He was remote from precarious and fickle Humours: His Approbation was not easily obtained, nor easily lost. Nor was he a Friend only in Complement, but wou'd cheerfully undergo Hardships, and suffer Disadvantages, in order to do a friendly Office.

He was conscienciously punctual in attending ecclesiastical Judicatures, Presbyteries or Synods. His Presence might be depended on, if nothing extraordinary interveened, as certainly as the appointed Day. He was not absent upon every trifling Inconvenience: His Conduct herein was truly exemplary; and demonstrated his constant Care for the publick Interests of Religion. So great was his Attention to Matters of common Concern, as to incline him rather to expose himself, than balk an Opportunity of doing good. It is well known, that his going, upon an urgent

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† Job. 29. 11. 22. 23.

Call

Call, in a weakly State of Body, and in an unsettled Season, to a Convention of the Trustees of *New-Jersey* College, gave Occasion to that fatal Sickness of which he never fully recover'd.

He was worthy of Imitation in social Life: As an Husband, he was affectionate and kind; as a Father, tender and indulgent. In him Condescensions and Authority were duly temper'd. There was *that* in him that cou'd engage Love, and command Reverence at the same Time. Who, that was acquainted with him, wou'd not be ready to say, happy was the Family of which he was Head; and happy the Congregation that enjoy'd his Ministry; Happy the Judicature of which he was a Member; and happy the Person who was favour'd with his intimate Friendship? He was a publick Blessing to the Church, an Honour to his People, an Ornament to his Profession, and magnify'd his Office. He spoke as he believ'd, he practic'd as he preach'd, he liv'd holy, and dy'd joyful.

He had, for a long Course of Years, an habitual, unwavering Assurance of his Interest in the Favour of God, and that a *blessed and glorious Eternity wou'd one Day open upon him*; which were his own emphatical Words on his dying Bed. This his Assurance was Solid and Scriptural, arising from the many and clear Experiences he had of gracious Communications to his Soul. He was made sensible, in early Years, of his guilty State by Nature as well as Practice; felt his absolute Inability to deliver himself; saw plainly that he lay at Mercy, and that it was entirely at God's good Pleasure to save or reject him. This view of the Case created in him a restless Concern, until the Way of Life 'thro' Jesus Christ was graciously discover'd to him: Then he saw, that God cou'd save him in consistency with all the Honours of governing Justice; for that the Obedience and Sufferings of Christ, in the Room of Sinners, have made a sufficient Attonement for Sin. He saw that Christ was a Saviour, every Way compleat, and

suitable

suitable for him: His Soul approved the Divine and glorious Plan, and freely disclaiming all Dependence on his own Righteousness, Wisdom, and Strength, most gladly accepted the Offer of the Gospel, that Christ shou'd be his *Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption.* * Strict Holiness was his Choice; and it was the delightful Business of his Life to *do always those Things that pleased his heavenly Father.* § And on his dying Bed he had the full Approbation and Testimony of his Conscience, as to the general Bent and Tenor of his Life. These particulars are the Heads of what he himself told me, in his last Sickness; and are deliver'd in the same Order as near as I can possibly recollect; tho' destitute of those lively Empases he then gave them.

When he approach'd near to his End, he express'd most ardent Desires *to depart and be with Christ*; and especially the three last Days of his Life were taken up in this Exercise. Many gracious Words he spoke, gave an affectionate Farewel to his most beloved, sorrowful Consort, and dear Children; tenderly committed them to the divine Mercy and Faithfulness; and fervently prayed, that the Blessings of the most High might be vouchsafed to them, and rest upon them: which Prayer, I trust, will be answer'd. His last Words, a Minute or two before his Departure, were these, *The Bridgroom is come, and we shall now have all Things.* “ And Thus under a Gleam of Heaven he breath'd out his Last.”

I have now set before you, *Brethren*, in brief Sketches, the excellent Character of your dear and worthy Pastor, in which I have determin'd to be scrupulously just, and impartial. I am, indeed, aware, the Encomiums on the Dead by their surviving Friends, are by many look'd upon as feign'd Characters, or at best, as far exceeding the Life. For they hear all good Things spoken of the deceased and no evil at all. Doubtless many notorious Instances of Partiality have given
Occasion

* 1 Cor. 1. 39. § Job 8. 29.

Occasion to such a Prejudice. But in the present Instance I speak freely, secure from Censure, because I speak to you, who know that this Character, in all the particulars which come within your Reach, is strictly true, and rather less than the **Life**. I have not told you his evil Things, because I have not known them. It is true, we all know that he had a Remainder of Moral Depravity, and was not perfect, while with us; but I could venture to appeal to all judicious and sober Persons that knew him, that they knew of no remarkable habitual Blemish in his whole Life.

I cannot allow myself to conclude this Subject without a short Address to the Parties more immediately concerned in the present Dispensation.

And first to the mournful relict, and Children of the deceased. My dear Friends, I know your Grief is very great, the Wound is deep, and an Attempt to heal it, will seem rather to irritate, and make it bleed more fresh. The very Proposal of Arguments to allwage your ~~sorrow~~ fits the sad Occasion of it a new before you. But nevertheless, since supporting Considerations, on deep Reflection, may have their proper Influence, I wou'd offer a few tho'ts with all the Sympathy of a Friend. *Madam*, you have lost one of the best of earthly Husbands: But these very Words contain something supporting; for they say, he was *only* on earthly Husband whom you lost. Now this loss does not make void the strong Consolation of this Text, *thy maker is thy Husband*. § You have lost one who was eminently useful, and respected; who lived beloved, and dyed lamented. Well, it is an Honour to you, and shou'd be a Comfort, that you have been so nearly related to so worthy a Person. You have lost one whose wife and holy Converse was instructive and edifying to you: This is a most refreshing Consideration as it affords a solid Argument of his eternal Happiness: So that you cannot think of him, but at the same Time your Thoughts ascend

to Heaven. It is pleasant to think, that tho' you suffer **Loss,** yet he, whom you so much loved, has thereby got the great **Gain,** consider further, that God, who has taken him away, is absolute Sovereign and it is meet that he do what seems good to himself. He hereby designs to exercise your Submission and Patience. Resignation to his Will has more Sweetness in it, than the Enjoyment of the best created Comforts. He can make even this Affliction, Work together for good; whilst hereby he reduces you to the happy Necessity of more immediate Dependance on himself, and you know that he has undertaken the Widows Cause; and is their Patron in a special Manner. Therefore, since God lives, the source of your Happiness still remains, and will be sufficient for you.

And to you, his dear Children, here present, I w^d observe; that your honoured Father dedicated you to the Lord his God, from whom he receiv'd you, while in your Infant-State; as long as he liv'd with you, it was his Desire and Endeavour that you shou'd *avouch the Lord for your God, and Father;* and when he departed hence he tenderly and believingly committed you to divine Mercy and Faithfulness. He set before you an Example worthy of your Imitation in the Course of his Life, and you saw him die with great Pleasure. Hence you are under inviolable Obligations, have strong and affecting Motives, and sweet Encouragements, to *yield yourselves to God,* in so doing you may expect, that he, who is *a Father, to the Fatherless.* † will be your Father; will protect you, and provide for you; guide you thro' the dangerous Mazes of this Life; and bring you to Glory at last.

Secondly to you the People who were under his Ministerial Charge. I cannot but express my high Approbation of your Conduct towards your Reverend Pastor, under his long Indisposition. Ye manifested a sincere Concern for the Continuance of his Life, and Restoration of his Health, and tho' he was incapable

to perform Ministerial Duties, as formerly; yet your Care for his and his Family's, temporal Support was not less'n'd, but rather increased. Ye were so far from murmuring, that he did not more frequently Visit and Catechise, in his weak State, that (as himself inform'd me) ye rather urg'd him to spare himself. Herein ye gave Evidence of true Respect and Love to him; and shew'd a generous Temper. In a Word, ye have the Satisfaction of having done all that a dutiful People cou'd do for the Comfort of their beloved Minister. But it has pleas'd God to call home his Ambassador; and now ye grieve most of all, because ye shall see his Face no more---ye will never hear him speak to you the Words of eternal Life---no more will he plead with Sinners to be reconciled to God,---and Comfort the dejected Christian no more.---Yet it may be edifying to you to recollect his past Labours among you; and I doubt not but some of you will have everlasting Reason to bless God for them. Ye know what earnest Desires he express'd, when sick in *Philadelphia*, that he might once more have Opportunity to treat with you about your everlasting Concerns; and especially with the unconverted. When God seem'd by his Providence, to order, that the *Barren Fig-Tree*, [the fruitless Professor] shou'd be cut down; he interceded, that the Lord wou'd let it alone one Year more, and suffer him to dig about it and dung it. † His Request was granted; he was restor'd to a Measure of Health and Strength beyond Expectation: He came and for the Space of a Year laboured to alarm the Secure and Carnal, and bring them to accept of *Jesus Christ*. But not observing his Endeavours to be Successful with those, he appeared discourag'd, and alter'd his Strain of preaching. Only he publickly reminded them, of a certain Day, the 25th of *March* 1744. when he was enabled to set eternal Things before them, with more than ordinary Solemnity and Pungency. He then enter'd upon a new Course of Sermons, for the

Edification and Establishment of the People of God; wherein he clearly explained, and satisfyingly confirm'd, the whole System of Gospel Doctrine : from the State of Innocency to the Consummation of all Things. He concluded this Course with a Sermon on 1 Cor. 15. 24, with which he may be said to have concluded his publick Ministry: For tho' he afterwards preached twice, it was with so little Strength and Efficacy, that he himself call'd them, *two Supernumary Sermons.*

But tho' bodily Infirmity oblig'd him to cease from preaching, he did not therefore cease from his Care of you. A memorable Instance of his paternal Tenderness, was his sending for as many of you as he tho't cou'd hear him speak, and giving you his last Advice, with much Solemnity; which doubtless, ye will remember with Affection.

But tho' he *was a burning and a shining Light*, yet may it not be judg'd, and that consistent with a Scriptural Charity, that some of you *rejoiced in his Light only for a Season?* § It is a shocking Thought, yet supposable enough, that a Number of you continue till this Day in a carnal State. He found you in the Way of Death, at his first settling among you; and after many Years earnest Endeavours to turn you to the living God, has been forc'd to leave as he found you. The Word of God, *like a Fire and an Hammer*. §§ has melted and broken others, but the same old *stony Heart is yet in your Flesh* † and perhaps, harder than at the first. A bright Gospel Day has been shining around you. yet you have not seen the attractive Beauty of Religion, nor the *Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ.* * is not this a very deplorable Case? Can you think of it, and your *Hearts not meditate Terror?* † He's gone, who so solemnly, and so frequently, warn'd and exhorted you; who spent himself for you, but prevailed nothing. And have your Souls withstood so persuasive, so instructive, and so successful

§ Joh. 5. 35. §§ Jer. 23. 29. † Ezek. 11. 19. * 2 Cor. 4. 6.
 † Hag. 2. 18.

a Messenger of Heaven? What think ye, then, is like to be the issue? Can you hope for one, more sincere, more skilful, or more desirous to bring you to *Jesus*? or rather, do you not fear lest your Corruptions continue Proof against all the Means of subduing them? You have already experienc'd their Power to be such, as may give you real ground of Fear. I do not intend so much as to think that Case is hopeless, yet I cannot but think it peculiarly dangerous. Nor do I mean to discourage, but only to alarm you: Not to weaken your Endeavours, but to excite winged Fear, that you may be engaged with greater vehemence to *flee from the Wrath to come*. Therefore, whilst there is any Hope; whilst the Door of Salvation is open; O strive, as in an Agony, to enter in. Seek to cast your Souls by Faith into the Arms of infinite Mercy, whilst they are expanded wide to embrace you. *Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call upon him whilst he is near.*

On the other Hand, I doubt not but a Number of you have got saving Benefit by the Ministry of your deceased Pastor. Your Hearts have often glow'd with divine Love, and your Faith has been confirm'd, while he spoke to you the Words of eternal Life. As his Life was very serviceable to you, in spiritual Respects, so may his Death also be: For therein you have had opportunity to see the Power of that Religion which he practic'd himself, which he preach'd to you, and which ye have embrac'd. Behold that Religion can stand the Test of Death it self; and Support the Soul when all other Comforts fail! From hence, then, you may receive additional Courage in the exercise of it, and be engaged to adhere to it. *Be ye Followers of him, as he was of Christ.* § And tho' you have now a sorrowful parting, yet e'er long you will have a joyful Meeting in those blisful Regions, where Death and Sorrow never enter. Be ye faithful to Death, and the King of Zion will give you a Crown of Life. *Amen, Amen.*



ELEGIAC VERSES on the lamented
Death of the

Rev. Mr. SAMUEL BLAIR,

Who made his triumphant *Excite* from this mortal
Stage *July 5. 1751*, with the deserved Character
of a good *Scholar*, a masterly genius, a sincere *Christian*,
and successful *Minister* of the Gospel.

HARK! a long doleful *Eccbo* round me groans,
Heard by deaf Rocks, and felt by senseless Stones.
The sympathizing Hills of *Zion* toss,
The mournful *Eccbo*, and lament the loss.
Ten Thousand Bosoms feel a sudden Wound,
And Crowds grow pale, and shudder at the Sound:
From Heart to Heart with quick Contagion spreads
Th' infectious Grief, and half the Land invades.
To this far Clime the dismal Tidings flies,
And Deluges of Sorrow drown mine Eyes.
Now hardy Souls, that never wept before,
Dilolve;---nor is it strange, since BLAIR IS NOW,
NO MORE,

BLAIR IS NO MORE!--Then this poor World
has lost.

As rich a Jewel as her Stores could boast.
Heav'n in just Vengeance has recall'd again,
Its faithful Envoy from the Sons of Men:
Advanc'd him from his pious Toils below,
In Raptures there with kindred-Flames to glow:

While hov'ring on the verge of Life he lay,
Eager for Flight, and yet resign'd to stay;

D

How

did we, in Agonies of Pray'r,
Wrestle with Heav'n his sacred Breath to spare!
Upon our rising Prophet fix our Sight,
And anxious cry, "good Lord! delay his Flight"!

But ah! his Worth but cherish'd our despair,
And threaten'd the Denial of our Pray'r.
So great, so heav'nly, so mature a Mind,
Requir'd Employment of a nobler Kind.
What Earth could teach, he learned; and now must rise
To a superior Class above the Skies.
Too much refin'd in this dark World to bear,
The humble Place of *Zion's* Minister,
Heav'n call'd him to sustain some nobler Function there:
With *Gabriel* to perform the Orders giv'n,
And bear *JEHOVAH'S* Errands thro' the vast of Heav'n
Prompt as his Fellow-Angels to obey,
Zealous and bright and vigorous as they!
Heav'n kind to him, would not consent to hear,
Nor curse him with the Answer of our Pray'r.

Oh! could the Muse's languid colour's paint,
The *Man*, the *Scholar*, *Student*, *Preacher*, *Saint*;
I'd Place his Image full in public view;
His Friends should know more than before they knew.
His Foes astonish'd at his Virtues gaze,
Or shrink confounded from th' oppressive Blaz.
To trace his bright Example all should turn,
And with the bravest Emulation burn.
His Name should my poor Lays immortalize,
'Till he attest his Character arise,
And the Great Judge th' *Encomium* ratifies.

Propitious Heav'n endow'd the Man it lov'd,
With Gifts to adorn each Sphere in which he mov'd.

An Intellect clear as the Blaze of Day;
Sedate as Midnight, boundless as the Sea;

Free as the Wind, yet steady as the Post,
 Passive to Truth, impatient of controul
 From vulgar Error; regular and smooth
 As genuine Reason and harmonious Truth,
 Truth link'd to Truth, and Tho't to Tho't conjoin'd
 Spontaneous rose in his harmonious Mind,
 His rude unstudy'd Tho'ts in Order sprung,
 Exprest in equal Order by his Tongue;
 Clusters of ripen'd Sense on each young Period hung. }
 His Passions vigo'rous, yet by Reason rul'd;
 By calmest Reason kindled, temper'd, cool'd.
 His Heart reserv'd as Prudence and confin'd;
 And yet as Truth sincere, as weeping Friendship kind.

My Muse, now paint him in his studious Hours,
 In search of Truth exerting all his Pow'rs.
 To him familiar, Truths beyond the Reach
 Of vulgar Minds strain'd to the highest Stretch;
 His daring genius with exalted scorn,
 Forsakes the Path by hoary Custom worn:
 Eager to find a Treasure of his own,
 He tries new Paths and Regions yet unknown:
 Into th' Abyss of Science darts his Eye,
 Where the rude Elements of Knowledge lie:
 Where Truths with Errors wage eternal War,
 And Doubts with Embryo-Demonstrations jarr:
 A wasteful Chaos with wild Tempest tost,
 Whence cowards shrink, and where bold Wits are lost.
 Serene his plastic Mind digests the Mass,
 Assigns the blended El'ments each its Place;
 Ripens the Embryo-Notions into Truth,
 And gives to infant-Demonstration Growth.
 At length, behold! new Worlds of Knowledge rise,
 And sudden Light flash round the new-form'd Skies:
 Harmonious all the finish'd Systems roll,
 And Noon-Day Evidence illuminates the whole,
 Doubts disappear, and Error flies away,
 As Midnight Gloom before the rising Day.

the new-found Stores around dispense,
Enlarge the petty Stock of *common Sense*.
So yonder Sun, th' exhaustless Source of Day,
To Earth's dark Caverns darts his vital Ray;
Transforms to Gold what was but Dross before,
And ripens useless Stones to precious Ore:
Transmits his radiant Influence thro' the Seas,
To make the Ruby glow, the Di'mond blaze:
These Secret Stores, collected and refin'd,
Enrich the World, and polish Human Kind.

Now with great NEWTON'S Eyes he dares to look,
On the wide Pages of deep Nature's Book.
Reads the great Maker's Name in every Line;
Above, below, around, his glories shine;
Imprest on all in Characters divine. }
'Till cold Philosophy, at length refin'd,
Kindles to warm Devotion in his Mind.
Adoring Transport, Pleasure, Love, Surprise,
In sweet Confusion in his Bosom rise:
So Boyle his Maker's Works explor'd;
The more he knew, the humbler he ador'd.

Now in the sacred Desk I see him rise,
And well he acts the Herald of the Skies.
Graceful Solemnity and striking Awe,
Sit in his Locks, and deep Attention draw.
His speaking Aspect (in the Bloom of Youth
Rev'rend) declares unutterable Truth.
Unthinking Crowds grow solemn as they gaze,
And read his awful Message in his Face.
Solemn, and conscious of the present God,
As tho' before th' eternal Throne he stood:
Solemn, as when some Angel lifts on high,
His awful Hand with God-like Majesty,
And swears by the UNUTTERABLE NAME;
While trembling Rev'rence spreads thro' Nature's Frame.

Thro' various Mazes now his Lips
 Intricate Truths, and bring them full to view.
 Celestial Mystries, hid from human Sense,
 Shine forth in their Almighty Evidence.
 Bright Demonstration every doubt controuls,
 And forces the Assent of sceptic Souls.
 Glaring Conviction with resistless Light,
 Flashes on Minds wrapt in eternal Night.
 Dull Ignorance starts at th' unwelcome glare,
 And coward Error dreads th' unequal War.
 Triumphant Truth assumes her native State,
 And trusts her Rights to such an Advocate.

So when the Splendour of the Morn appears,
 Deformity its native Horrors wear:
 Beauty puts on her charms; Confusion flies,
 And well-distinguish'd, Objects round us rise.
 Conscious of Guilt the Ravagers of Night
 Abscond from the ungrateful glare of Light.
 Thick Glooms, obscure as Error, disappear;
 And Day succeeds, as Demonstration clear.

Now to secure Impenitents he turns;
 And from his Tongue Almighty Vengeance burns.
 The vengeful Flames and Thunders of the Law,
 Equal the Terrors trembling Moses saw.
 He sets incens'd Omnipotence in Arms,
 And sounds the final Trumpet's dread Alarms.
 The Charmer Sin with hideous Aspect glares,
 And see! in naked Horrors Hell appears!
 The wasteful Deeps lie open to our Eyes,
 And Flames and Groans and Curses blended rise.
 JEHOVAH frowns; the Sword of Justice drawn
 Above; below the Gulphs of Tipheth yawn!
 See! The great Judge his burning Throne ascend,
 Death and Destruction on his Nod attend.
 Hark! A dread Clangor! Death's old Prisons burst,
 And sudden Life inspires the rising Dust.

Expectation Millions stand,
 To hear their Sentence at the King's left Hand:
 Confounded with the Sound "DEPART," they shrink,
 Screaming away, and down to Hell they sink.
 The Elements dissolve; Earth, Skies and Seas,
 Vanish in one fierce universal Blaze.

The hardy Sinner, happily deceiv'd,
 Now feels the Pains he ne'er before believ'd:
 With Bright Description dazzled, knows not where
 He is, but feels the Vengeance now to bear.
 Internal Twinges thro' his Bosom dart,
 And Hell's dire Pangs already rend his Heart:
 He thinks the Miseries describ'd, his own;
 Sinks in Despair, and Cries, Undone! Undone!

"Lift up (says BLAIR) lift up thy dying Eyes:
 "Say, who hangs yonder rack'd in Agonies?
 "Pity and Torture, Love commixt with Pain,
 "Throbs in his Heart, and pants in every Vein.
 "See! from his Hands and Feet his Head and Side,
 "Rivers of Blood and Mercy mingled glide!
 "JESUS! THE SAVIOUR!--Yes! 'Tis He!--Forbear,
 "Thou dying Sinner, to indulge Despair.
 "BELIEVE and LIVE, there wash thy foulest Stains,
 "In this dear deluge from his bleeding Veins.
 "Now Justice smiles; thy Guilt appears no more;
 "And Sinai's Thunders cease to flash and roar.
 "Of Calvary's Balm receive a cordial Drop,
 "And black despair will brighten into Hope:
 "The tortur'd Conscience no more agonize;
 "But hellish Fears to heav'nly Transports rise."

Oh! here the raptur'd Muse could ever dwell;
 And still with unremitting Wonder tell,
 How oft' has BLAIR allur'd our Minds to rove,
 Thro' all the Myll'ries of redeeming Love;
 JESUS display'd in his Almighty Charms,

To draw reluctant Sinners to his
 With JESUS' charming Name cold Ethics
 And every Theme with Gospel-Sweets inspir'd.
 His darling Subject this; A heav'nly Flame
 Sublim'd his Language when he touch'd the Themes,
 This Cord of Love around our Hearts he threw,
 And backward Souls with pleasing Violence drew.
 Reluctant and with pitying Fears, he shew'd,
 The vengeful Terrors of an angry God;
 But Oh! With Joy proclaim'd a Saviour's peaceful
 Blood.

Conscious of all the Sorrows others feel,
 He kill'd to cure, and wounded but to heal.

But in what nobler Language shall I paint,
 The pure, Seraphic Ardors of the *Saint*!
 His Life a fixt unerring walk with God;
 A constant Progress in the heav'nly Road.
 His Heart the Seat of constant Peace and Love;
 There glow'd the Passions Seraphs feel above;
 There pleas'd and unmolested dwelt the heav'nly Dove.
 His Breath like grateful Incense, to the Skies,
 Did daily in refin'd Devotion rise,
 His Soul exerted with his praying Breath,
 Th' Almighty Importunity of Faith.
 Hence guilty Heads escape the falling Blow,
 And Blessings to unworthy Millions flow,
 Nations partook the bounty of his Pray'r;
 And future Times the Benefit shall share.
 This gen'rous Legacy he left Mankind,
 Which, while he sleeps in Death, Heav'n will remind.
 So while great *Moses* rais'd his praying Hands, *
 Vict'ry and Triumph wait on Isra'l's Bands.
 Each warm Petition slays a haughty Foe;
 And Am'lek Falls, but *Moses* strikes the Blow.

But

† Morality.

* Exod. 11. 12.

When the melancholy Hour appears,
 When BLAIR must rise, and leave the World in Tears.
 With zeal consum'd, with pious Labour spent,
 Too much refin'd for this gross Element,
 Mature for Heav'n, he breaks the Pris'n of Clay ;
 Soars, and expatiates in eternal Day :
 Enjoys the Glories he describ'd unseen,
 And ev'n his Views immense Improvements gain.
 Heav'n smil'd upon his Life ; but then most kind
 When friendly Death releas'd th' imprison'd Mind : }
 But oh! The Loss to those condemn'd to stay behind! }

Extensive as the Loss, Oh! be the Grief ;
 And in a hopeless Case, despair Relief.
 Sinners, lament ! that animating Breath
 By which Heav'n Life inspir'd, is stopt in Death.
 Saints join your Tears ! no more shall ye rejoice,
 Beneath the cheering Influence of his Voice.
 Ye doubting Souls, lament ! now you may rove,
 Perplex and doubtful since our BLAIR'S remove.

Surviving Remnant of the sacred Tribe,
 Who knew the Worth these plaintive Lays describe ;
 Tommet's, three Worthies of immortal Fame,
 Brethren by Office, Birth, in Heart and Name :
 Finley, who full enjoy'd th' unbosom'd Friend ;
 Rodgers, whose Soul he like his own refin'd,
 When all Attention, eager to admit
 The flowing Knowledge, at his rev'rend Feet
 Raptur'd we sat ; and thou above the Rest,
 Brother and Image of the dear deceas'd,
 Surviving BLAIR ! Oh ! let spontaneous flow
 The Floods of tributary Grief you owe.
 And (in your Number if so mean a Name,
 May the sad Honour of chief Mourner claim)
 Oh ! may my filial Tears more copious flow,
 And swell the Tide of universal Woe.

O BLAIR! whom all the tend're
 My Father, Tutor, Pastor, Brother,
 While Distance the sad Privilege denies,
 O'er thy dear Tomb to vent my burbling Eyes,
 The Muse erects (the sole return allow'd)
 This humble Monument of Gratitude.
 Faint are her Lays; the mournful Theme she sings,
 Extinguishes her Fire, and cloggs her Wings.
 Affected Sorrow in a loftier strain,
 May flourish, and with nicer Art complain.
 These elegiac Numbers would appear,
 More warm and noble, were they less sincere.
 "Grief unaffected suits but ill with Art,
 "Or flowing Numbers with a bleeding Heart." †

But tho' eternal Silence seize my Tongue,
 And the Dumb Muse no more attempt a Song;
 Yet to Life's close, my grateful Soul shall feel,
 The secret Sorrow Language fails to tell:
 In all my gay or studious Moments prove
 The pining Anguish of bereaved Love,
 'Till our Reunion heal th' invit'rate Wound above. }

Lamented Shade! tho' rais'd beyond the Reach
 Of mortal Sense, my Tho'ts their Pinions Stretch
 In quest of thee; thro' unknown Regions rove,
 To find thee 'mong the shining Hells above.
 But ah! insufferable Light furrounds,
 Thy Mansion, and my feeble Sight confounds.

How dark the Views benighted Mortals have,
 Of that strange neighb'ring World beyond the Grave!
 O! Where in the unbounded Realms of Space,
 Has Heav'n allotted thee thy blissful Place?
 What glorious Novelties rush full to View,
 Which not before ev'n they vast Geniuses knew?
 Dost thou with Seraphs hymn th' eternal Throne,
 E in

Scraps would not blush to own?
 O how generous Tho't, as usual, rove,
 To ro' all the Mazes of redeeming Love?
 Or still the gen'rous Labour undergo,
 As Guardian-Angel to the Church below—
 But this wild License, raving Muse! Refrain;
 Nor pry to Things hid from the Sons of Men:
 Ere long Eternity's amazing Light,
 Will shew these Myst'ries naked to my Sight.

Blest Shade! Adieu!—When a few Days have run,
 Their tedious Rounds, my painful Labour done,
 Ripen'd for Heav'n, may I resign my Breath,
 And smile like thee at the grim Face of Death!
 Foll'wing the Path thy Feet unerring trod,
 May I like thee ascend the heav'nly Road.
 And ever dwell with thee beneath the Smiles of
 God!

There in divinest Intimacy spend,
 Eternal Years in Bliss and Friendship ne'er to End!

Hanover in Virginia,
November 10th 1751. }

Sic cecinit mærens!
S. DAVIES.