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A SERMON

DELIVERED BY APPOINTMENT

OF

THE COMMITTEE OF MISSIONS

OF THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OF

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

IN THE UNITED STATES,

IN THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN PHILADELPHIA;

May 23, 1808.

BY JOHN B. ROMEYN, A. M.

PASTOR OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN ALBANY.

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1808.



At a meeting of the corporation of the First Presbyterian Church in the city of Philadelphia,

Resolved, unanimously,

That the thanks of this board be presented to the Rev. John B. Romeyn, for his Missionary Sermon delivered in this church on Monday, the 23d of May, 1808, and that he be requested to furnish a copy thereof for publication.

By order of the corporation,

DAVID JACKSON, Secretary.

A SERMON.

Isaiah lii. 7.

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth.

WHEN Jacob heard that Joseph his dear son, whom he thought had long since been dead, was alive, his heart fainted within him. The joyful news was too unexpected to be believed; it at first only renewed his past griefs. But when he saw the wagons, he revived. This circumstance convinced him that his fears were groundless. 'Tis enough, said the good old man; he was satisfied. The cup of his temporal happiness now ran over. He had upbraided his sons when they returned the first time from Egypt without Simeon and demanded Benjamin. "Ye have bereaved of my children," cried he, in the bitterness of his soul: "Simeon is not; Joseph is not; and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me." His sons were then the messengers of bad news. Now, however, they communicated the most pleasing intelligence to the venerable patriarch. "Joseph is yet alive and is governor over Egypt." This truth more than compensates for all his former sorrows. It sheds a glad-

some influence over his mind, "around a pleasant calm diffusing." Joseph is yet alive. The thought new-nerves his infirm sinews. He forgets his age; he forgets the distance which separates them. He exclaims, "I will go and see him before I die."*

Were the messengers of this good news thus acceptable to the patriarch? How much more acceptable to poor perishing sinners, as we all are by nature, ought to be the messengers of better news, even the ministers of the everlasting gospel! We publish to you, not that a Joseph lives and is governor over Egypt, but that Jesus Christ, a greater than Joseph, lives and reigns King of kings and Lord of lords; not that the father and brethren of Joseph may have bread from his granaries and live in plenty; but what is infinitely more important, interesting and glorious, that all sinners who will, may from Christ's fulness, receive every necessary grace. "How beautiful then upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, thy God reigneth."

Such is the language of evangelic Isaiah, when filled with the Spirit, his eye darted into futurity, and saw at one glance the value and efficacy of a gospel ministry. The volume of time was before him, and as he unrolled its ample pages, he saw apostles, evangelists, prophets and teachers going forth in the strength of the Lord to proclaim the glad

* Genesis xlv. 25—28.

tidings of great joy. He saw pagan idols fall before them abandoned by their followers. He saw kingdoms and nations subdued to the faith, and the banner of the cross waving throughout the world. The wilderness blossomed as the rose; and the habitations of cruelty became the peaceable seats of righteousness. Hence he proclaims aloud the acceptable nature of that ministry by which such great things were effected. To them was committed the mystery hid for ages from the world: and though we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of man, yet our weakness does not and ought not to derogate from the incalculable preciousness, the infinite importanœ of the gospel we preach. Commissioned by Jehovah, we bring good tidings, publishing peace; good tidings of good, publishing salvation. We say unto Zion, thy God reigneth. As the heralds of our exalted Master, we thus proclaim his kingdom to the children of men; as his ambassadors, we pray you in Christ's stead, accept of that peace and salvation, the privileges of this kingdom, which he has purchased with his blood and freely offers to wretched, rebel man. Imagination cannot conceive of a grander subject for proclamation; the grasping desires of our souls cannot call for more interesting, more comprehensive offers. We unfold to your view a kingdom which cannot be moved, which will forever flourish, when earthly kingdoms shall have perished in the wane of years, and the world itself be crumbled into ruins. We bring within your reach privileges, the enjoyment of which makes the wilderness an Eden, and will af-

ford increasing, enlarging delight to man when time shall be no more. This kingdom and these privileges summarily explained, whilst they prove the value and efficacy of a gospel ministry, by which alone they are brought nigh unto men, will naturally require an application suitable to the object of our present meeting.

I. Zion's God is the Lord Jesus. He is Jehovah essentially considered, and as such his kingdom ruleth over universal nature. He directs the movements of the vast machine according to his own pleasure. Having made all things, he still upholds them by his power, and directs them to those ends for which his infinite wisdom designed them. He guides the planets in their orbs and affords the seasons in their courses. He grants rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling the hearts of his creatures with food and gladness. He withholds those blessings, occasioning famine, disease, sorrow. At his will the sky is darkened with clouds; we hear the thunder; we see the lightning; the earth is swept with a tempest; nature is convulsed. He speaks; the sun looks forth with joy; the tempest is over; nature is calmed. He holds the destiny of empires in his hands, and controls every event in the history of man. One, he raises up; another, he destroys. With him are the issues of life and death; the dispensations of prosperity and adversity. To him nothing is too little, because nothing is too great. He, therefore, superintends the lesser concerns of nature; he takes care of what is in the earth and what springs from it, as also of the ocean and its inhabitants; nay, the very dust which flies along the road is under his guidance. In short, he modifies,

convulses, creates, destroys as he pleases. None can stay his hand or say unto him, What doest thou?

Though the Lord Jesus thus reigns over universal nature as Jehovah essentially considered, yet is he emphatically and peculiarly king over Zion by appointment of the Father. Zion is his church, his chosen, so called from Mount Zion in Jerusalem on which the temple stood. There Jehovah Jesus the God of Israel appeared in visible glory between the cherubims, and there he answered the prayers of his people. This kingdom is the gospel dispensation, under which he, as Mediator, God manifest in the flesh, goes forth conquering and to conquer, making willing subjects in the day of his power. He erects it in the hearts of all those, who, called by his Spirit through his word, are translated from darkness into light. It will survive the ruins of time and flourish in eternity: for they, who are made subjects of grace on earth, shall triumph in glory in the heavens. It is not of this world, neither cometh it by observation, for it is a spiritual kingdom, over which Christ reigns to the exclusion of any visible head. To him it was given in the councils of eternity by the Father; and by his obedience, sufferings and death, it was purchased in the fulness of time. Yes, brethren, it was purchased by the blood of the Son of God! Amazing, inconceivably amazing price! Hear O heavens and be astonished O earth! To ransom a guilty world, the eternal God becomes an infant of days: the Lord of glory is covered with shame, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief: the Author of life expired on Calvary! But death had

no power over him; the grave could not retain him. He liveth, and though he was dead yet is he alive for evermore. His enemies seemed victorious when he hung on the cross, and was buried in the earth. His friends gave up all for lost, and mourned a kingdom that was departed and a glory that was ended. When lo! the tidings arrive that he is risen; he hath burst the bands of death. Then Satan like lightning fell from heaven, and thrones, principalities, powers were spoiled. Jesus ascended on high. He led captivity captive. To his triumphant chariot wheels he bound those bitter foes of God and man, who had so long excited and fomented rebellion in the latter, against the former. He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, advanced as God and man, far above every name that is named, either in this world or in that which is to come, and constituted head over all things to his church, which he governs and defends by his word, his spirit and his providence. This mediatorial kingdom of Christ does not differ in fact from the essential kingdom of Jehovah; for such is its nature that none but the true God can be its sovereign.* The administration of the affairs of universal nature is thus committed to the glorious, the adorable God-man, Jesus Christ. He is prince of the kings of the earth, who in their official capacity are bound to honour and obey him as their Lord and master.† He bends every event to the aggrandizement of his kingdom, causing the

* Witsii exercit: in Symbol: p. 391.

† In the second psalm, kings and judges are commanded to kiss the son.

wrath of man to praise him, and restraining the remainder of wrath: taking the crafty in their wiles and baffling the schemes of earthly politicians. The Nebuchadnezzars, the Alexanders, the Cesars, the Bonapartes, those thunderbolts of war, though they mean not so, neither do their hearts think so, are merely the rods of his anger, the instruments of his pleasure, the promoters of his interest. He is the author of their greatness; and when his purposes are answered, he removes them out of the way with the utmost facility. To him every knee must bow; his praise every tongue must confess. Every power that puts itself in opposition to him shall be overturned, overturned, overturned, that he may reign from the rising to the setting sun, the glorious Redeemer of sinners. To Jesus, mediatorial King of Zion, the powers of darkness are made subservient by his power. Having triumphed over them openly at his ascension, he still triumphs over them, confounding their schemes and controlling their exertions. To his kingdom continual accessions of converted sinners are made; its splendours will increase with its years. From its lowest state it will ever rise to greater glory. All things will work together for its perfection; even the destruction of the universe, which will bury in its tomb all things human, will mature this kingdom, purify it of its dross and make it the perfection of beauty in the heavens.

2. The privileges of this kingdom of Christ which are offered to man by the ministers of the everlasting gospel, unfold more fully its glorious nature. They are peace, or internal as well as external tranquillity,

and salvation or deliverance from bondage as well as ruin, together with real liberty and inestimable blessings. These privileges are inseparably connected together and mutually explain and strengthen each other.

The first is peace or internal as well as external tranquillity. This presupposes a state of great disorder, hostility and enmity in the world. Once it was not so, for at the creation God pronounced all things to be good. They then glorified their Maker and were obedient to his will, fulfilling all his pleasure. Man was made in his image and after his likeness, an innocent perfect being, whose understanding, will and affections were all exerted in the service of Jehovah. Between him and the creatures of God, and also between those creatures themselves, there existed a close friendship, a complete harmony. Angels were the companions of man, and all things in this lower world were subjected to his authority. There was peace between heaven and earth, and peace on earth in the strictest sense. Soon, however, the scene was changed. The arch fiend Satan, who had excited rebellion in heaven, being cast down from thence, found his way into the garden of God upon earth, and in the form of a serpent tempted Eve to rebellion also. She listened to his voice—ate of the forbidden fruit, and gave to Adam who did likewise eat. The scene just sketched was now reversed. The connexion between heaven and earth was broken; inasmuch as holy angels could no longer associate with guilty man, and guilty man was fearful of holy angels. On earth all was confusion

and disorder; the very ground was cursed for the sake of the transgressor, that in sorrow he might eat of it all the days of his life. The whole creation groaned and travailed in pain together. God looked on the scene with indignation and abhorrence. He found variance between heaven and earth had taken place—all things in the one hostile to all things in the other—and man his enemy by evil works. When he came down to visit paradise, Adam fled from his presence and hid himself. Conscious guilt filled him with alarm and dictated the answer he made to the Lord God, who called to him, saying, ‘Where art thou?’ ‘I heard thy voice in the garden,’ replied Adam, ‘and I was afraid because I was naked, and I hid myself.’ Here commenced the war, if I may so speak, between God and the sinner. On the side of God, his opposition to the sinner is his righteous abhorrence of rebellion, his supreme hatred of pollution. On the side of the sinner, his opposition to God is the enmity of a carnal mind against him and his law—hatred of his adorable perfections, and disaffection towards his government. How unnatural, how awful this conduct! Is a child who insults his affectionate father guilty of an enormous crime? or a subject who breaks the just laws of a lawful sovereign? Here is a child who daily insults his heavenly father—here is a subject who every moment breaks the laws of his Almighty Sovereign!

Thus revolted from God, separated from the company of holy angels, man is become miserable. His comforts fail him in the hour of trial, and his very pleasures at such times prove only so many torments.

As God is the giver of every good and perfect gift, a rebellion against him must necessarily produce distress and sorrow. They who forsake him, the fountain of living waters, hew out unto themselves broken cisterns which can hold no water. 'There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked,' but tribulation, wrath and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil. A consciousness of this awful state alarms those who are strangers to the power of divine mercy. They fly when no man pursueth, and are affrighted when no mortal eye is witness to their misdeeds. A wounded spirit who can bear? Even the possession of affluence and royalty cannot pacify its tumults; no, nor the enchantments of sensual pleasure. Herod, amidst his guards and flatterers, when he heard of Christ's miracles, cries out, This is John the Baptist: he is risen from the dead. Belshazzar, while rioting and feasting with his nobles, sees the hand-writing on the wall. His countenance falls; his lips quiver; his frame shakes; his knees strike one against another.

Not more happy or at ease is sinful man in his social relations. His selfish passions make him an enemy to his fellow man. Conflicting interests perpetually agitate them like the waves of a raging sea, and prevent the exercise of steady and universal benevolence. Unrol the volume of history, and what do you find but a narrative of human infamy? Brother armed against brother—children against parents, and parents against children—prince against people, and people against prince. Surely on a review we must conclude,

There is no flesh in man's obdurate heart,
 It does not feel for man: the natural bond
 Of brotherhood is severed as the flax
 That falls asunder at the touch of fire.*

All this discord—these disorders—this misery are remedied in the kingdom of Christ. They who by grace are made subjects of it enjoy

1. Peace with God. They are reconciled to him through the blood of the cross. They cordially approve of his moral character as exhibited in the scriptures: they cheerfully acquiesce in all the dispensations of his providence: they universally and with delight obey his commandments as far as they are known. His will is their will in all things; for they feel his will to be perfect and as such that it ought universally to prevail, on earth, as well as in heaven. Thus from enemies they are made friends, even the friends of Jehovah, who beholds them in love and grants them his favour, protection and guidance. Hence they experience

2. Peace of conscience or an inward tranquillity of mind. They look up to heaven with humble confidence in its benignity, and a cheerful hope of its approbation. No grim spectres of guilt harass their imaginations, nor does remorse harrow up their souls. Instead of the thunders of Sinai which once broke their repose, they now hear the melodies of Zion which announce peace and presage joy. The prevailing temper of their souls is thus a happy one; which as it is

* Cowper.

not produced by external circumstances, cannot be destroyed by them.

3. They who are reconciled to God and enjoy peace of conscience, feel an enlarged benevolence towards all mankind. The selfishness of their natures is paralyzed. The wild misrule of sin in their souls, where each lust strove for the mastery, is destroyed. They carefully avoid strife, hatred and discord, together with the causes which generate these effects; and studiously follow peace with all men. Similar dispositions and pursuits bind them especially to each other in brotherly affection. Born again to a lively hope in Christ Jesus, having escaped the same awful danger, animated by one spirit, they embrace each other in the arms of christian fellowship, and "heart springs to heart."

4. They enjoy the friendship of holy angels who are "ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them."

Such, briefly detailed in some of its most important particulars, is that peace which the subjects of Christ's mediatorial kingdom enjoy. If it be generally known and felt in society, it produces the happiest effects on nations as well as individuals. It softens the hearts, tames the passions, and regulates the conduct of men. It diffuses a benignant influence through the different relations of life, which introduces civilization with all its blessings, and promotes, in the highest degree, social happiness.

In close connexion with this peace, is salvation or deliverance from bondage and ruin, together with real liberty and inestimable blessings. This is the

Second privilege of the kingdom of Christ here mentioned, which lays the foundation for the first, and establishes it beyond the hazard of destruction. The bondage meant is spiritual; a bondage of corruption, under which all men, without exception, are born. Sin, whilst they remain in a state of nature, reigns in their mortal bodies, and they obey it, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and the mind. View our sinful race in all the varieties of character they exhibit, and you will see undoubted evidences of this truth. He who spends his time in acquiring worldly wisdom is the slave of fame; of an imaginary reputation; of a vain curiosity. He who seeks after riches or honours is the slave of covetousness, of vanity, of pride, of ambition. He who loves his pleasures is the slave of unhallowed appetites, of unbridled desires. Thus it is that men, affecting by their rebellion independence of God, are the vassals of their own passions. These call for gratification, and lead them about captive in their train, sad spectacles of moral infamy and depravity. They are not free to obey what they know to be good, but forced to obey that which is evil. How dreadful is their servitude! how debasing its effects! It blinds their understandings, perverts their wills, pollutes their imaginations, disorders their affections and corrupts their hearts, whilst it makes of their bodies vessels of dishonour, and of their members servants of unrighteousness; and yet they hug their chains, glory in their servitude, and are willing slaves of sin. They are also subject to Satan the god of this world, whose image they bear, whose principles they cherish and whose will they obey. By his

vile suggestions he excites in them continual disgust against the strictness of God's law: and thus increasing the enmity of their carnal minds against God, keeps them the bondmen of corruption, living according to the course of this world which lieth in sin. As such they are under the rigour and curse of the divine law. Sin, though it has disqualified them from obeying this law, has not destroyed their obligation so to do, nor screened them from its penalties. It requires perfect holiness and denounces a curse on the least transgression. It makes no allowance for human frailties, and will not mitigate its rigour in any instance, or in any degree. Seizing every sinner as it were by the throat, with severity it says, pay what thou owest. All their attempts to do this are ineffectual; nay they only increase their debt and riyet more firmly the chains of their bondage. They labour like slaves, unwillingly, but forced by the goadings of an alarmed conscience. They strive to perform their duty, but it is with lameness, with defects, with apprehension. They become more guilty, more polluted; their transgressions rise one above another and call for the exercise of divine justice. The curse, pronounced in paradise upon all transgressors, mars their felicities in this world, and fills their souls with dark forebodings of woe in the world to come. Death stares them in the face as the king of terrors, and through fear of him they are subject to bondage.

From this servitude, thus complicated and burdensome, all the subjects of Christ's kingdom are delivered. They are bought with a price, not with corrup-

tible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. This mode of deliverance by ransom,* which is the only one that suits our case as sinners, is inscribed in indelible characters on the page of inspiration, is strikingly taught us in the sacramental rites of baptism and the Lord's supper, and approves itself to the feelings of all real penitents. They see no help in themselves, realize the accursed nature of sin, and with unutterable emotions of gratitude embrace a crucified Christ as all their salvation. In him and in him alone they have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace. They are delivered

1. From their sins, receiving by grace, for their guilt, pardon; and for their pollution, cleansing. They are regenerated by the Holy Spirit who testifies of Christ, created anew, translated from the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Faith is implanted in them, by which they apprehend the righteousness of Christ as their's, and trust to it solely for justification of their persons in the sight of God. They are accordingly acquitted from all the charges of a condemning law and adjudged to everlasting life. Their natures are also sanctified, being washed in the blood of the Son of God. The power of sin in their hearts is destroyed, their inclinations are directed to the truth, their bodies are temples of the Holy Ghost, and their whole desire and pursuit are after holiness.

* Vitringa on Isaiah.

They bring forth fruits worthy of repentance; they adorn the doctrines of God their Saviour with unblemished lives. The change is great; it is marvellous! From being condemnable, vile and filthy, they have become the reverse, being washed, being sanctified, being justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

2. They are delivered from the power of Satan. This grand adversary can no longer deceive them, for his charms are dissolved, his spell is broken, under his yoke they will never again be brought by craft, or power. Through grace they resist him and cover him with confusion. The blood of the covenant quenches his fiery darts, and the promises of the covenant dispel his doubts and suggestions. Even they who once were his most devoted slaves and confirmed dupes, when subdued by the Prince of peace, trample him under their feet.

3. They are delivered from this present evil world. They use it as not abusing it, being crucified to it and it to them by the cross of Christ. They live above its delusions, looking to a better country, even an heavenly. Whosoever is born of God overcometh the world, and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth Jesus is the Son of God?

4. The subjects of Christ's kingdom are delivered from death as a punishment. He died that he might conquer death, and entered into the grave that he might sanctify it as a place of rest for the bodies of his redeemed. By virtue of his triumph also, I am the

resurrection and the life, saith he. He that believeth in me though he were dead yet shall he live, and he that liveth and believeth on me shall never die. Hence for all his subjects to die is gain. They drop the earthly house of this tabernacle without regret, nay with satisfaction, under the certain expectation of being clothed upon with the house which is from heaven. By death their spirits are introduced into the immediate presence of their father, while their flesh rests in peace till the morn arise when they shall behold God's face in righteousness; they shall be satisfied when they awake with his likeness. Hence,

5. They are delivered from future misery. When Christ comes to take vengeance on his adversaries, he will reward his people. Heaven is their portion, their everlasting inheritance. In their lot they shall stand, enjoying the fulness of Jehovah's house above. Every tear shall be wiped from their eyes and they shall be happy; happy in soul and body; happy in the perpetual absence of sin, pain and Satan; happy in the perpetual presence and blessings of God and his Christ.

Thus this salvation includes every thing requisite for human happiness. The reign of sin is terminated, that of grace begun, and steadily progressing in its power and extent. Light shines on eternity and unveils to mortal view glorious scenes; present enjoyments are made more agreeable, and future ones in another state are contemplated with hope.

Such are the privileges of Christ's mediatorial kingdom, which all his subjects enjoy through the powerful operations of the Holy Ghost. They are offered to all who will accept of them, freely, without money and

without price, by the ministers of the everlasting gospel. What an important station do these characters then fill, in a world like ours which lieth in wickedness! How peculiarly acceptable are they in their official capacity, proclaiming glad tidings of great joy to ruined sinners! Even though their appearance be mean and offensive, yet the message they bring is so pleasant as to make that appearance beautiful.* The alacrity, the zeal, the fidelity with which they discharge their duty, spite of every trial and discouragement, renders them doubly estimable and beloved. In genuine wisdom, in extensive usefulness, in unaffected benevolence, in disinterested exertions, in true moral excellence, how far below them fall the Humes, Voltaires and Godwins of the age!

These characters, though light hath come into the world, love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil. Their systems, where they do not support universal skepticism, contain theories contradicted by facts and rejected by right reason. They strip the Almighty of his moral perfections, and picture him as an indolent, unconcerned spectator of the universe. They inculcate a morality in which gratitude is a crime and adultery a justifiable advantage of life. They deny the criminality of sin, and fritter away our responsibility to a mere trifle. They talk of benevolence; but it is a benevolence of word and of tongue, not in deed and in truth. They intertwine around the head an olive wreath, whilst they arm the hand with a bloody dagger. They arrogate

* Campbell on the Gospels, vol. 1. dissert. 5. p. 2. § 4.

merit to themselves for actions imperfectly performed and stained with actual defects. They inflame the passions, make them rebellious, and give them unconquerable power. They confine their hopes and views to this life, casting over the grave a veil to hide eternity beyond it from mortal eyes. Corresponding with these principles are the fruits arising from them. The result of their labours for years back you see in the present state of the world. Not that I believe they formed a regular conspiracy to effect their object; but the natural tendency of their principles, where they are generally adopted, is to eradicate social affection from the mind by the unbounded gratification of selfish feelings, and to scatter social order to the four winds of heaven, by mining the foundations of all regular subordination. He, who now scourges the world, who mocks the rights of nations, who barter away the thrones of princes, who impoverishes whole countries, and spreads rapine and devastation in his course, was nursed in the schools of these philosophers; and he displays in his conduct what each would be, did God permit. They make no sacrifices but from necessity; curb no desires, save when it promotes their views; regard no barrier if interest says, rase it. Their views are ever directed to the highest places and the most affluent stations. They will assemble round the throne, not from friendship, but to undermine it, that they may rise on its ruins and glut themselves with its splendid spoils. The spirit which animates each of them is that which prompted our first parents to transgress, and still continues that transgression in our

world among their posterity. It is a spirit which affects independence of God, which aspires to the throne of the Almighty, and which constitutes its will as paramount to all authority and law. Fatal spirit, which, though it "brought death into the world and all our wo," these persons cherish and strengthen by all their exertions.

How different the spirit which the Brainards, Elliotts and Schwartzes of christianity possess. They teach a system of religion which accords with facts, and approves itself to our understandings and consciences. They inculcate a pure morality, in which virtue and vice are accurately distinguished, and according to which the passions administer to reason and are governed by it. They unfold the true character of man, and his awful responsibility as a sinner. They exhibit a crucified, dying Saviour as the great propitiation for sin, through whom we may have everlasting life. They look beyond time to eternity, and prepare dying mortals for leaving this world without fear, and entering on the next with the strongest hopes. Surprising are the changes, they have been instrumental in effecting in the tempers and habits of men. With the most ardent benevolence they have left the enjoyments of civilized life with its endearments, that they might publish to the heathen the truth as it is in Jesus. At the risk of their lives, with the greatest temporal inconvenience and hardship, they have by perseverance collected together in bodies the rovers of the wilderness, and introduced among them civilization with its blessings. To such men, to missionaries of

the cross, christendom owes its vast superiority over pagan nations. Under God they have been the true fathers of a country, its greatest benefactors. Of them it may be said, in a christian sense, as an Athenian statesman* did over the bodies of his deceased fellow soldiers, "You are like to the divinities above us; you are no longer with us; you are known only by the benefits you have conferred."

By such men, in the present day, the doctrines of revelation are published among the heathen with the most flattering success. It is wonderful, it is delightful to hear the triumphs of grace over the stupid Hottentot, the credulous simple Hindoo and other idolaters, through the instrumentality of Vanderkemp, Kicherer, Carey, with their fellow missionaries. The peace and salvation they proclaim, as they suit the wants, so they touch the hearts of their hearers, and excite in them the most ardent desires after the enjoyment of such blessings. The weapons of rebellion fall from their hands. Weeping they confess their sins, and with unutterable emotions of gratitude embrace a precious, precious Christ.

Such are the men whom we desire to send to the heathen on our borders, and the destitute christian settlements in different parts of our country. Both these descriptions of men need a gospel ministry; that ministry which publishes the unsearchable riches of Christ, and exhorts sinners to be reconciled to God, assuring them of pardon and acceptance through the blood of the cross.

* Pericles.

Such a ministry, my hearers, you enjoy; and from your sense of its value and efficacy, as experienced by yourselves, you may judge of its necessity to others who do not enjoy it. Do you consider it a privilege to be permitted to go up to the house of the Lord for public worship? and does it gladden your hearts to hear the ministers of the altar proclaim to you, in God's name, peace and salvation? Does the presence of your pastors cheer you in distresses of body and mind? Are you, through their instrumentality, strengthened above the fears of death and enabled to rejoice in the hope of everlasting life? Are they acceptable in your eyes and to your feelings as ambassadors of God, beseeching you in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God?

Think then, brethren, of the heathen who are afar off, estranged from the divine life, sunk in deplorable ignorance, and guilty of abominable vices. Reason cannot teach them whether sin with which conscience charges them, can be pardoned consistently with the divine perfections; and if it can, what that method is. They have confused ideas of the existence of the soul in a future state after death; but of the resurrection of the body they do not dream. Their heaven, like the elysium of ancient mythology, is a place of melancholy sameness, to which the active scenes of this life are far preferable.* Among them are no messengers of glad tidings; none who offer them peace and salvation; none who unfold to them life and immortality as

* Such is the language Homer puts in the mouth of Achilles in Elysium. *Odyss.* lib. xi.

brought to light in the gospel, save they who are sent from christian countries. When they sicken and die, who is there to administer to their spiritual wants, or to lead them to the good Shepherd who laid down his life for the sheep? Their state has been, on former occasions, pictured to your view once and again in glowing colours and with powerful eloquence. It is awful; it is deplorable. They are without Christ, strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. Who then, in this christian assembly, can withhold his commiseration for them; who refuse his aid to ameliorate their condition? I am a man and cannot but feel whatever relates to a fellow man, was a sentiment once delivered by a pagan on the theatre at Rome, and received with bursts of applause by his auditors. May such a sentiment prevail in every heart at this time, and constrain you to assist us in sending forth to the untutored Indian the messengers of the blessed gospel.

But are our efforts only to be directed to the heathen? Do they alone need our aid? From different parts of our country cries reach us in the language of the man of Macedonia, Come over and help us. They are the cries of your christian brethren, who once like you enjoyed the benefits of a gospel ministry, but in the course of providence have been deprived of them. They feel their wants the more sensibly, because they know from past experience the value of divine ordinances. Their case is painful; their necessities urgent. Removed from the fellowship of saints and the sound of the blessed gospel, what is left to protect them from

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the craft of Satan and from the delusions of this world? A tree planted in a fertile soil may flourish, whilst in a barren soil it will decay. So a christian among christians, and with the cultivation of the word preached, will grow in grace and every virtuous principle; whilst among those who know not God and his Christ, he is in danger of fearful declension, if not apostasy. If our destitute brethren, who solicit with earnestness our aid, do not degenerate into unbelief and open ungodliness, there is reason to apprehend they will be insnared into one or other of the thousand nets of error which the god of this world spreads to increase his kingdom. My hearers, they have a claim on you which you may not, cannot deny; to which you are bound to attend. They supplicate that aid of you, which your pious ancestors obtained in the infancy of this city and country from Europe. Your gold and your silver, fellow christians, as well as your bodies and souls, are consecrated to the Lord. These blessings of his providence, as well as ye yourselves, are no longer your own; they belong to your Master, and he requires you to give liberally of his good things for the promotion of his cause. No attempt in the primitive church ever failed for want of such aid, from those who professed to believe in Christ. The spirit of the gospel is a spirit of benevolence; it disdains contraction; it delights in expanding itself and communicating all the blessings it can bestow upon those who need them. If you feel its power, our object is gained and success will crown our endeavours, whilst your reward will be great. The voice of praise

and thanksgiving from churches supplied by your liberality will ascend as a memorial before God.

And whilst I am urging you, my hearers, to discharge your duty to your brethren banished from ordinances, would to God that I could excite the attention of my brethren in the ministry, to the establishment of some grand plan, for constantly supplying every part of the gospel vineyard, not only with a faithful, but a learned ministry. Piety, indeed, is indispensable; but alone it is not sufficient in him who proclaims peace and salvation to the children of men. The ambassadors of the Great King of heaven ought to be furnished with every qualification which can render them respectable and useful. The fathers of our Israel realized this, and exerted themselves to establish a seminary of learning as a fountain from whence streams should flow to gladden her borders. Oh that the mantle of Tennent and Davies, those Elijahs of their day, might descend on some Elishas of our age, that thus in stead of the fathers should be the children! Sure I am that the liberality of our fellow christians is not so exhausted by other efforts as to preclude a strong hope that they would enable us to establish an institution from whence master workmen might be obtained to build up the waste places of Zion.

We who are ministers of the word would indeed, with Moses, wish that all the Lord's people were prophets like Eldad and Medad, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them; but since God hath seen fit in his wisdom to establish the ministry of reconciliation for the benefit of a guilty world, the labours of

that ministry ought to be extended far and wide, that far and wide Christ might be glorified and his kingdom enlarged. For how shall men call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent? as it is written "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of great joy."*

What christian then must not say, God grant that the number of these messengers may increase, until the knowledge of Christ cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus; establish thy kingdom and glorify thy name. Amen.

* Romans x.

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