



SERMON
AT THE
ORDINATION
OF THE
REVEREND WALES TILESTON.

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A

SERMON

DELIVERED AT THE

ORDINATION

OF THE

REVEREND WALES TILESTON,

TO THE PASTORAL CARE

OF THE

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

IN CHARLEMONT,

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SERMON.



ISALAH lxiii. 1.

TRAVELLING IN THE GREATNESS OF HIS STRENGTH.

The whole verse reads thus :—WHO IS THIS, THAT COMETH FROM EDMO, WITH DYED GARMENTS FROM BOZRAH ? THIS, THAT IS GLORIOUS IN HIS APPAREL, TRAVELLING IN THE GREATNESS OF HIS STRENGTH ? I, THAT SPEAK IN RIGHTEOUSNESS, MIGHTY TO SAVE.

IN the prophecy of which these words are a part, we have a minute description of the character, offices, and kingdom of Messiah. That holy man, who is here constituted the organ of divine communication, seems to have caught the very spirit of evangelical times. From the mount of prophetic vision, to which he was elevated by the Spirit of God, his eye wandered down the tract of ages, kindling with rapture, as it surveyed the unfolding glories of Messiah's reign. In some parts of the prophecy, he is scarcely less explicit in predicting the events, than the Apostles are in recording them after their accomplishment ; and from a comparison of the prophecy with the history, there results an amount of testimony to the divinity of the gospel, sufficient, on the one hand, triumphantly to establish the reasonableness of the christian's faith, and on the other, to confound the most unblushing infidelity.

In our text, and the following verses, the prophet, by an allusion to the destruction of the Edomites, describes the victory of Messiah over the enemies of

his people. It is usual for the prophets to point out the enemies of the church in general, by the name of some country, which was remarkable for its hostility to the Jewish nation : and this prophet seems here to take occasion, from some signal calamity, which befell the Edomites, the enemies of the Jews, to describe some more general judgment upon the enemies of the church. The words *Edom* and *Bozrah* may the rather be used here, on account of their signification ;—*Edom* signifying *red as blood*, and *Bozrah*, a *vintage* ; which, in prophetic style, imports God's vengeance upon his enemies : and hence, in the following words, Messiah is described as *red in his apparel*, and *treading the wine press*, and *having his raiment stained with blood*.

The text is an abrupt introduction to a conference between the church, or the prophet in behalf of the church, and Messiah, who is here represented as a mighty conqueror. The prophet, looking towards Edom, and seeing one come up thence sprinkled with blood, as if he had just been spreading desolation with his victorious arms, asks in a sort of surprise—“ *Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah ; this that is glorious in his apparel, TRAVELLING IN THE GREATNESS OF HIS STRENGTH ?*” The Saviour answers, “ *I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.*”

The description here given of Messiah, supposes the existence of a mighty contest, on one side of which he is himself engaged. This contest commenced in the third heavens ;—it was renewed in the garden of Eden ;—it has been propagated through the world ; and has enlisted, on one side of it, every human heart. It is a contest between sin and holiness ;—between

the god of this world, and the God of heaven ;— between Messiah, as Head of the church, and all her enemies.

It was the eternal purpose of God that this contest should result in a complete destruction of the kingdom of darkness ; and that, in the progress of those means by which this victory should be achieved, there should be a constantly increasing exhibition of the divine glory. To this great end, as its ultimate consummation, points the whole scheme of Christ's mediation. All that splendid preparation, which, through a succession of ages, was made for his appearance in the flesh ;—his birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension, were all necessary, in the economy of providence, to qualify him for the office, which he sustains, as head of the church. It was after he had made his soul an offering for sin, thus becoming a ransom for his people ; it was after he had risen from the dead, thus demonstrating his claim to the Messiahship, that he became *head over all things to the church*, taking the management of this mighty contest formally into his own hands, and *travelling in the greatness of his strength* for the salvation of his people.

The sentiment contained in the text, then, seems to be, that **THERE IS NOW IN OPERATION, UNDER THE DIRECTION OF MESSIAH, A GRAND SYSTEM OF MEASURES, WHICH WILL RESULT IN A COMPLETE TRIUMPH OF THE CHURCH, AND IN AN ENTIRE DISCOMFITURE OF HER ENEMIES.**

To illustrate and apply this thought, is the design of the present discourse.

I. In the first place, Jesus Christ is marching onward to the accomplishment of this high purpose, *in the arrangements of his providence.*

To him belongs the office of directing and controlling all events ; and as Head of the church, he makes every thing subservient to a successful issue of the contest between himself and her enemies. To us, who are but of yesterday, the progress of events may seem little less than a scene of confusion ; but He, whose right it is to rule, with an eye steadily fixed upon the triumph of his church, marches forward with resistless energy, approximating, at every step, the accomplishment of his ultimate purpose. What, though her enemies may lay their plans deep for her destruction, and for a season, triumph in the confidence of success ;—what, though the kings of the earth may set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed ; they will accomplish nothing for themselves, but an ignominious defeat. Though they mean not so, neither do their hearts think so, yet they are actually the instruments of extending the glory, and hastening the triumph of the church.

It is not always, as I have already intimated, that we can discern the manner in which the actions of wicked men are overruled for the advantage of Christ's kingdom ; for the influence is often remote, and is concealed from us in a long train of causes and effects. But in many cases, it is within the legitimate range of our observation. How manifestly, for instance, was the opposition which was made to the gospel, at its first introduction, rendered subservient to its progress ; and how much does it contribute, even now, to the evidence, which proves its divinity. How almost uniformly have those great moral convulsions recorded in history, which seemed to shake the church to her very foundations, been the

occasion of enlarging her borders, and increasing her stability. And who of us has not seen how the almost frantic opposition, which has sometimes been made to a revival of religion, has resulted in the extension of its triumphs ; and that too, in respect to the very persons, who had dared to stand forth its enemies. So true is it that Jehovah brings light out of darkness, and causes the wrath of man to praise him.

But, if the efforts of its enemies are overruled for the glory of the church, so also are all those events, which, in their nature, are indifferent ; and which, so far as human design is concerned, have no direct bearing upon its interests. Thus, the arts and sciences have, in various ways, been pressed into the service of the King of Zion : commerce too has paid her tribute ; and even the curiosity, the ambition, the luxury of man, has been taxed for the same purpose. What an extensive influence has been exerted, in relation to this subject, by the arts of printing and navigation ; both of which were discovered without any design to enlist them in the cause of Christ ; and yet the one has served for increasing a million fold the copies of the word of life, while the other furnishes the medium of distributing them to every nation, and kindred, and people under heaven. How much has been done towards illustrating the sacred record, by the researches of travellers, and the efforts of naturalists ; who have prosecuted their pursuits with no higher aim than to gratify curiosity, or increase the stock of human learning. So too, have the relations of states, in which rulers and great men have thought of nothing beyond political strife, or national aggrandizement, been found, in some of their results, to have a most benign influence upon the kingdom of

Immanuel. While the wisdom of the world has been thus manifested in maturing and accomplishing the schemes of its own policy, the wisdom of the Highest has been employed in making them all tributary to the grand purposes of his mediatorial reign.

And I may add, that Messiah still more directly accomplishes the same grand object, by raising up and qualifying agents to engage immediately in the contest with the powers of darkness. With all power in his hands, and with an ever watchful eye upon the movements of the enemy, and the interests of the church, he commands into his service whomsoever he will ; by once putting forth the energies of his almighty spirit, he can sanctify the most splendid genius, and bring all its powers to operate for the advancement of his kingdom. In the history of Paul, and Luther, and others, we see how skilfully they were trained by the discipline of the great master, before they were actually brought into his service ;—how manifestly the events of their lives were all ordered in reference to the part they were to act in the cause of Jesus Christ ;—and how, finally, when they addressed themselves to their work, they did it under every advantage, and exerted an influence, which was felt at the very heart of Satan's empire.

Let it be remembered that not insulated events merely, but the whole system ;—not those only, which, to human view, are auspicious, but those in which Jehovah wraps himself in the mantle of night, really *have* a propitious bearing upon the result of that contest, which he is carrying on with his enemies. No, it is not too much to say that the whole chain of events is arranged, in reference to this very object. In each, and in all of them, however mysterious, or

however complicated, there is a presiding spirit, directing with infinite skill, and operating with infinite energy. It is Messiah *travelling in the greatness of his strength.*

II. Secondly ; Jesus Christ is accomplishing the same grand purpose *in the extension of his gospel.*

The gospel is the grand instrument, by which this contest, on the part of Messiah, is carried forward : and it is admirably accommodated to its object ;—for while it reveals a system of truth adapted to the intellectual and moral nature of man, there is an all conquering influence, that comes along with it, which renders it mighty to the pulling down of strong holds. The victories, which it gains, are victories of grace. It brings down the haughtiness of pride ; and breaks up the dominion of selfishness, and changes the heart of stone into a heart of flesh. And while it operates thus benignly upon those, who yield to its power, it weakens, in the same proportion, the empire of sin, and prepares those, who persevere in their enmity, for a more aggravated destruction.

But, though the gospel possesses this inherent and mighty energy, it could never accomplish the purpose for which it was designed, without being sent abroad into the world ; and hence the institution of the christian ministry. “ *Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature,*” was the direction of our Lord to his disciples, just as he was on the eve of returning to heaven ; and it is in the gradual fulfilment of this commission that we have witnessed the increasing splendour of his kingdom. And so important is this institution, that if it had been blotted out at the time of our Lord’s ascension, or even when the canon of scripture was completed, there is every

reason to believe that nothing but a special divine interposition could have saved christianity from utter extinction.

The history of our religion from its commencement, furnishes ample proof that the gospel, and especially the preached gospel, is the grand means by which Messiah pushes his victories into the empire of darkness. What the state of the world was, when the light of christianity first dawned upon it;—how the noblest intellects were enslaved by error, and sunk in debasement, are facts too familiar to require repetition. But no sooner was Jesus exalted as Head of the Church, than he commenced his victorious march into the territories of Satan. What a wonderful victory was achieved on the day of Pentecost, in which three thousand were converted, as it were, by a single impulse of the Holy Spirit: and when viewed in all its connections, an event, perhaps, of still deeper interest, was the conversion of the Apostle Paul, who was almost instantly changed from a violent persecutor to an humble disciple. And this same converted Paul, and a few others, who were miraculously qualified for the work, went forth in the strength of their ascended master, and with no other weapon than the gospel, broke up the very strong holds of pagan idolatry. Though its enemies were all upon the alert, and the king on his throne, and the peasant in his cottage, were alike busy, and intrigue and violence were employed to arrest the progress of its triumphs, yet all their opposition was as vain, as though it had been directed against the sun in his march through the heavens. True, they butchered those, who dared to appear as its advocates; but they soon learned that the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the church.

They looked with astonishment upon the progress of the gospel, for they recognized no higher agency than that of a few humble men ; but the truth was, that these men were only instruments in the hands of Omnipotence : there was a lofty and mysterious agency there, which they completely overlooked ; they were opposing Messiah *travelling in the greatness of his strength.*

I know there was a long season of moral midnight, which succeeded this early triumph of the church ;— a season in which the Prince of darkness seemed to have renewed his strength ; and through the influence of a perverted gospel, the immense fabric of antichrist was reared. But though, like Babel, this monument of superstition and iniquity towered towards the heavens, yet as soon as the genuine gospel was brought to act upon it, its glory departed. Here again, you discover a few men, under an impulse scarcely less than miraculous, aiming a blow at the kingdom of darkness, which was felt at its very centre. The effect seemed almost like the renovation of the world. It was like the cheering radiance of the sun, after a desolating, wintry tempest. The human intellect, by one mighty effort, broke forth from the confinement of ages. Piety, which had gone disgusted from temples and altars, to seek a retreat in the desert, came back into the world with a countenance relumed with returning smiles. It required the unbending spirit of a Luther to begin this work ; but when once begun, its progress was as irresistible as the mountain torrent. But was Luther the agent, who conducted these mighty operations ? No, he was but an instrument. He acted his part well, and his name is deservedly embalmed in the gratitude of the church :

but it was Messiah who raised him up, and poured upon him the spirit of might, and brought him to the contest, and made him victorious. Then was He *travelling in the greatness of his strength*, when that first shock was given to the papal power, so ominous of its final overthrow ;—when a few noble spirits were seen resisting the tyranny of antichrist, and in place of a gaudy and unmeaning ritual of ceremonies, bringing back the very spirit, and life, and power of godliness.

But, though Messiah has been gradually extending his victories since the commencement of the Reformation, it has been reserved for us of the present age to witness the more illustrious of his triumphs. Never, since the days of the Apostles, has the kingdom of Satan sustained a heavier assault, or made a mightier effort at resistance.

To delineate, minutely, all the features of the present age, which indicate the progress of Messiah's victories, would, on this occasion, be impracticable. I shall, therefore, only call your attention, for a moment, to the general fact, that the present age is pre-eminently distinguished by *revivals of religion*, and by a *spirit of christian and missionary enterprise*.

It is our lot, Brethren, to live in a day, which may be emphatically styled *the era of revivals*. You cannot, I think, have intelligently consulted the ancient prophecies, without perceiving that it was the purpose of Messiah, in the latter and better days of the church, to vary, in some respects, the mode of his administration ; to cause the energies of his Spirit to operate, not only more extensively, but with increased rapidity and power : and it is in reference to this state of things that the evangelical prophet asks, with mingled aston-

ishment and transport, “ *Who are these, that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?*” And I am sure you cannot have contemplated the revivals of religion, which now so extensively prevail, without recognizing, at least, a partial fulfilment of this very prediction. In this favoured country, and in this favoured section of it, especially, I might almost ask, who is there, that has not seen a congregation listening to the word of life with as much apparent earnestness, as if they were sitting in full view of the judgment seat; and who, that has not seen the fruits of the Spirit abounding, and the borders of the church enlarging, when one of these seasons of refreshing has gone by? Instead of here and there a solitary convert, there have been seen, at such a period, hundreds, beginning, as it were, by a simultaneous impulse, to celebrate the immortal song; and the church on earth has kept a jubilee in reference to the triumphs of redeeming love; and the arch of heaven has rung with acclamations to that grace, which has been manifested for the salvation of so many immortals.

Think, Brethren, what it is for a single soul, from being a subject of the kingdom of darkness, to become a subject of the kingdom of light. And when you have estimated, so far as you can, the importance of this change, in all its bearings, in relation to one soul, then extend the calculation to as many souls as are converted during an extensive revival of religion; and thence to the aggregate number in all the revivals, which occur in our own country, during a single year; and recollect that many of these are *rich* men, who will bring large gifts to the treasury of the Lord; and many of them are *young* men, to whom God has given the talents and the disposition to become heralds of the

cross ;—and then say, whether in all this, Messiah is not *travelling in the greatness of his strength* ;—say, whether here are not decisive indications, that the contest between him and his enemies is rapidly advancing to its consummation.

But, if the number and extent of revivals, at the present day, indicate the approaching triumph of the church, so also does *the increasing spirit of benevolent enterprise* : and it is not strange that the spirit of revivals, and the spirit of missions should keep pace together ; as they are not only parts of the same great system, but have a direct influence upon each other ;—for it happens, in every genuine conversion, as in the case of Paul, that the first question of the renewed soul is, “ *Lord what wilt thou have me to do ?*” and the christian, whose heart is touched with sympathy for the spiritual miseries of his fellow-creatures abroad, will, of course, find his compassion increased, and his desires enlarged for the salvation of sinners at home.

I say, then, that the great system of benevolent operation, which is now sustained and carried forward by Immanuel, while it looks ominous to the kingdom of darkness, marks the advancing glory of the church ; and this will appear, whether we consider the *extent*, the *harmony*, or the *energy* of its operations.

Its extent.—It originated in the prayers and exertions of a few individuals, who, though full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost, probably never dreamed of the glorious results they were to witness. But it was like the grain of mustard seed, or like the hidden leaven : it gradually drew forth the prayers, and awakened the exertions of God’s people, till it became what we now witness—an extended, organized system of benevolent effort. Nor could this heaven-born

spirit be confined to that "island of the blessed," which witnessed its first operations : there was that in it, which defied every barrier ; it was diffusive as the light of heaven ; and with the rapidity of light, it darted, as from a luminous centre, into almost every part of the christian world. And now, you can hardly place your finger upon that spot on the map of Christendom, where there is not the stirring of this actively benevolent spirit ;—where some preparation is not going forward for an assault upon the empire of darkness. And there are not only enlisted in this work the foolishness of preaching, and the efforts of ministers, but rulers, and the great men of the world, have avowed themselves its friends, and are making the whole amount of their influence tributary to its interests.

Nor is the great system of which I am speaking, less distinguished by its *harmony*. Before it was completely organized, the church had much wisdom to gain by the slow lessons of experience. A few years, however, taught her that, in order to accomplish the greatest amount of good, her efforts must be directed into various channels ; and hence have arisen the numerous institutions with reference to this object, which constitute the glory of protestant Christendom. Each of these has its distinct object ; and while each acts with its own independent energy, it receives an additional impulse, from being part of a mighty system, between whose parts there is not only no interference, but a universal attraction. Hence, you know, we have our societies for qualifying labourers, and others for sending them forth to the harvest ;—our societies for circulating divine truth in every form, from the living word itself down to the farthing tract.

And while the different parts of this grand system are harmoniously adapted to each other, it is the tendency of the system itself to harmonize the feelings of christians of different name, and to kill the spirit of sectarian crimination. For when they come together to negotiate in regard to so momentous an object as the kingdom of Christ, they occupy ground from which they might well blush to descend to the jealousies of party; and they feel themselves called upon to ground all their weapons, except those, which are needed to encounter the common enemy. So it *has* been to a great extent; and so, we confidently predict, it will continue to be, till all Christians shall acknowledge their relation as brethren.

But, if the benevolent efforts of the present day constitute a system, which extends itself over almost the whole of Christendom;—a system, too, perfectly harmonious in its operations and results, equally true is it that it acts upon the empire of sin with prodigious *energy*. What has it done already? It has demolished heathen temples; it has burned idol gods; it has tamed the ferocity of the savage; it has raised the song of salvation in the bosom of the wilderness, and lifted the banner of the cross on the battlements of Satan's empire. It has accomplished the almost literal fulfilment of the prediction, that a nation should be born in a day;—has reduced to order, as by a word, an extensive moral chaos, combining the separate elements, and causing the shapeless mass to stand forth in the beauty of a new creation. If any one ask, "what is the proposed limit of this great system of operation?" We answer, that its field is the world; and there is not a dwelling on earth, to which it does not aspire to carry, and we say with confidence, *will* carry the news of

salvation. There is no delusion here, Brethren; there *can* be none. The revolutions of the earth are not more certain, or more regular, than is the march of Messiah in this system of benevolent effort, towards the accomplishment of that object, for which he fills the mediatorial throne.

III. But thirdly; the grand purpose, which Messiah is accomplishing in the arrangements of his providence, and the extension of his gospel, will be consummated *in the decisions of the judgment day.*

Notwithstanding the signs of the times all seem to indicate that the ultimate triumph of the church draweth nigh, there is reason to believe that she will have to sustain some severe conflicts with the empire of sin, before the accomplishment of its final overthrow. She may alternately have her seasons of depression and prosperity, now rising in the glory of her Head, and now putting on the garments of sackcloth, for centuries to come; but the judgment of the great day will decide the contest between her and her enemies, forever. The gospel will then have achieved its last triumphs; and nothing will remain but the winding up of the mediatorial dispensation, in the close of the contest between Messiah and his enemies.

Then shall the church stand forth in the glory of a complete triumph. Having been sustained and defended hitherto by her Almighty Head, she is now permitted to see the last of her enemies put under his feet. From the heights of Mount Zion to which she is exalted, as she casts an eye backward upon the scene of her trials, and conflicts, and triumphs, she will lift up the shout of thanksgiving and victory to Him, who has not only redeemed her by his blood,

but has defended her by his power, and caused her to triumph in his grace.

Then, too, will the enemies of the church be covered with the mortification of a final defeat. They, who would not yield to the power of his grace, will not be able to resist his righteous displeasure. And when, in the light of that day, they shall review the whole scene of their opposition ;—all their dark designs, and malicious attacks upon the church, they will be astonished to find how there were concealed, amid these hostile movements, the elements of their own destruction. And while the ransomed of the Lord are lifting up their heads with joy, that the day of their redemption has come, upon *them* shall be fulfilled that tremendous threatening of Messiah, "*I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury, and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.*"

Oh, how gloriously triumphant will Messiah appear, when he shall preside amid the scenes of that eventful day ; when he shall be seen *travelling in the greatness of his strength*, to close the contest with his enemies. What inconceivable majesty will surround him, as he occupies the judgment seat, and goes forward with the final trial ; as he develops the plan of his providence in relation to the whole progress of this mighty contest ; as he pronounces the sentence of acquittal on the church, and the sentence of condemnation on her enemies ; and finally, as he pours everlasting benedictions on the one, and the woes of eternity on the other. As this will be the last act of his mediatorial office, it will be one, which shall stamp that dispensation forever with the grandeur of Jehovah's attributes.

1. The first and most obvious inference, which the subject suggests, is, that *the church has nothing to fear from her enemies*. There have been various periods in her history, in which her prospects have seemed dark ; and some, in which, while her enemies have triumphed in the hope of her speedy downfall, nothing, but the promises of her Head, could have sustained her own confidence of an ultimate triumph. There has been a time, when nearly the whole world lay under the curse of pagan idolatry ; and another time, when all that was simple and venerable in the religion of Jesus, had seemed to wither under the hand of papal superstition ; and another, in which atheism was permitted to raise *her* bloody standard, and march in impious triumph over the cross of Immanuel. And amidst all the animating considerations, which throng upon us, at the *present* day, there are some things, which, at first view, might seem fitted to damp the ardour of hope. The very magnitude of the work to be done, may sometimes press heavily upon our spirits. But, Brethren, it were criminal unbelief to indulge a single fear on this subject. It is indeed a mighty contest, which is going forward, and a formidable enemy with which the church has to contend ; and if her interests were in the hands of a less skilful, or a less powerful Head, she might well tremble for the result : but greater is He that is *for* her, than all that *can* be against her. She has a right, therefore, to exult even now ;—for Jehovah is the Captain of her salvation ; and the stability of his throne is pledged for her final and complete triumph.

And while the church, as a body, has nothing to fear from opposition, so every member of it may lift

up his head and rejoice, in view of his own personal safety. Conflicts, indeed, you may have, Christian : the warfare with indwelling corruption may be sharp, and the world may assail you with its frowns and its smiles ; and the fiery darts of the adversary may circulate poison in your soul ; but, as one of that ransomed company for which Jesus *travels in the greatness of his strength*, you are safe ;—for you are as truly the object of his watchful care, and preserving grace, and he has his heart as intensely fixed on your final salvation, as though it were the one only object of his mediatorial work.

2. But, secondly ; while our subject shews us the perfect safety of the church, it shews also, that *there is nothing safe BUT the church ; and that every interest, which is not associated with it, will, finally, come to nought*. We have seen that it is in reference to the church, that the whole system of Providence is arranged ; and that every event has some bearing upon its final triumph. It is this, which Messiah has continually in his eye, in the various parts of his mediatorial work. Woe then to those, who dare to oppose its interests. Woe to that man, who regards the gospel as a cunningly devised fable ;—or, who impiously charges that to the account of fanaticism, which bears the genuine signature of God's Holy Spirit ;—or, who can see nothing in the benevolent efforts of the present day, but a waste of time, and labour, and money ; and who would, if it were in his power, put forth his hand, and arrest the operations of that great moral machine, by which the blessings of the gospel are to be scattered through the nations :—for in every one of these cases, it is a feeble mortal lifting his arm against

Jehovah; and that too, when he is *travelling in the greatness of his strength* for the very purpose of taking vengeance on his enemies.

Let it be remembered, moreover, that there is here no neutrality;—that all, who are not on the side of the church, are its enemies, and will be treated as such in the issue of the contest. Let no man, then, imagine that he is safe, merely because he is not found in the ranks of open opposition. You may have never appeared to lift a hand against that little flock, to which it is the Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom;—you may have even been nursed at the bosom of the church, and set under the shadow of its ordinances; and may have seemed sometimes to have your regards lifted up towards its Head: and yet, amidst all your external decency, and all your church-going regularity, there may lurk a spirit of settled opposition to the kingdom of Christ; and in the eye of heaven, you may stand charged with all the guilt of rebellion. Let every one, then, who is not sincerely and actively devoted to its interests;—who is not willing to make sacrifices for its prosperity;—who cannot say with the prophet, "*If I forget thee O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning,*" beware, lest he should have his final portion among the enemies of the church.

3. Thirdly; *How blessed are our eyes, Brethren, that they see, and our ears that they hear of those wonderful operations of the present day, in which Messiah is travelling in the greatness of his strength.* Is the advancement of the church, Christian, an object, of all others, the most dear to your heart; and in every new triumph that she gains, do you recognize the faithfulness and the glory of her Head? Lift up your eyes, then, and rejoice, while you behold the progress

of her victories. I ask you, Brethren, what mean these revivals of religion so extensive, so powerful ;— what mean these mighty exertions of christian benevolence, this readiness to encounter the perils of the wilderness, this stirring in the valley of vision, if they do not indicate an approaching jubilee for the church ;— I had almost said, if they are not among the rising glories of the millennial morning? Blessing, and honor, and glory, and thanksgiving be unto him, who has cast our lot in a day, when the church looks forth, terrible to her enemies, as an army with banners.

But we have something more to do than rejoice. If it is a privilege to live at the present day, it is one that involves high responsibility ;—for we have seen that it is in the instrumentality of his servants, rather than by the direct exertion of his almighty energies, that Messiah *travels in the greatness of his strength*. And *is* it so, Brethren, that to us are committed, in an important sense, the interests of Christ's kingdom? Is it so, that we have at this moment resting upon us the responsibility of a work, towards which all the regards of heaven are drawn by a most powerful attraction? Then, let us crucify every indolent disposition. Let our influence, our possessions, our all, be tributary to this glorious cause. Let our hands be strung with new vigor, and our hearts burn with new zeal, and our prayers ascend with new ardour, till Zion shall arise and shine, her light being come, and the glory of the Lord being risen upon her.

The subject, which has now been discussed, is fitted, if I mistake not, to impress you, my Brother, with the importance of the work to which you are this day to be inducted ; and at the same time, to yield the most animating encouragement to fulfil its duties with fidelity

and alacrity. And permit me to say that this office, which, in its very nature, involves a fearful responsibility, acquires, in some respects, a peculiar interest, from the present state, both of the church and the world. There are, on every side, indications of no dubious character, that the great contest between Messiah and his enemies is rapidly drawing to a close ; and even now, the Lord's hosts seem to be marshalling themselves for the decisive conflict. Bring to your work, then, my Brother, a large portion of christian humility, and christian heroism. Endeavour to catch the spirit, which glowed in the bosom of Paul, and Swartz, and Martyn ; the same spirit of zeal, and resolution, and self-denial ; and then, if you should be called to tread the path of conflict and suffering, it will prove to be the path of safety and glory. Take large views of your work : consider it not only in relation to your own retribution, and the retributions of your people, but to the great cause of truth and righteousness. Remember that you are an authorized ambassador of the King of heaven ; and as such, are bound to do all that you can for the promotion of his glory. Keep this object singly in view, and you cannot fail to be a devoted minister. Keep this object in view, and it cannot be that you will preach or live in vain. God grant that by the light of your example and ministrations, multitudes may be conducted to heaven ; that in your faithful efforts to advance the cause of religion, the Redeemer may *travel in the greatness of his strength* ; and that when you come to retire from the field of labour, you may be able to exclaim with an animating confidence, "*I have fought a good fight ; I have finished my course ; I have kept the faith : Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of right-*

eousness which the Lord, the righteous judge will give me at that day."

Brethren of this church and society ;—while we bless God for the pleasant prospects, which open before you in the resettlement of the christian ministry, and for all that harmony, which has so honourably distinguished the measures, which have resulted in this happy consummation ; you will permit me to remind you, that it depends much on yourselves, whether the events of this day, will, ultimately, be to you an occasion of joy or sorrow. We believe that your minister brings to his work an honest purpose to be faithfully devoted to your immortal interests ; and it becomes you to take heed, that you do not defeat that purpose, so far as respects yourselves, by receiving the grace of God in vain. We exhort you then, in one word, to do all that you can, in publick and in private, by your influence, your example, and your prayers, to subserve the great purposes of this ministry, which is now established among you. Above all, receive the truth in the love of it ; and let your lives furnish a perpetual exhibition of its purifying power ; that thus, the virtues and graces of the spirit may be in you and abound ; and ye may claim the honourable distinction of a **PECULIAR PEOPLE, ZEALOUS OF GOOD WORKS.**

24 JU 68

