

SERMONS
ON
IMPORTANT SUBJECTS,

BY THE LATE REVEREND AND PIOUS

SAMUEL DAVIES, A.M.,

Sometime President of the College in New-Jersey.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

THE FIFTH EDITION.

TO WHICH ARE NOW ADDED,

THREE OCCASIONAL SERMONS,

NOT INCLUDED IN THE FORMER EDITIONS;

MEMOIRS AND CHARACTER OF THE AUTHOR;

AND

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SERMON LXIII.

THE CURSE OF COWARDICE.*

JER. xlviii. 10. *Cursed be he that doth the work of the Lord deceitfully; and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood.*

NOTHING can be more agreeable to the God of Peace, than to see universal harmony and benevolence prevail among his creatures, and he has laid them under the strongest obligations to cultivate a pacific temper towards one another, both as individuals and as nations. *Follow peace with all men*, is one of the principal precepts of our holy religion. And the great Prince of Peace has solemnly pronounced, *Blessed are the peacemakers*.

But when, in this corrupt, disordered state of things, where the lusts of men are perpetually embroiling the world with wars and fightings, throwing all into confusion; when ambition and avarice would rob us of our property, for which we have toiled, and on which we subsist; when they would enslave the free-born mind, and compel us meanly to cringe to usurpation and arbitrary power; when they would tear from our eager grasp the most valuable blessing of heaven, I mean our religion; when they invade our country, formerly the region of tranquillity, ravage our frontiers, butcher our fellow-subjects, or confine them in a barbarous captivity in the dens of savages; when our earthly all is ready to be seized by rapacious hands, and even our eternal all is in danger by the loss of our religion: when this is the case, what is then the will of God? Must peace then be maintained, maintained with our perfidious and cruel invaders? maintained at the expense of property, liberty, life, and everything dear and valuable? maintained, when it is in our power to vindicate our right, and do ourselves justice? Is the work of peace then our only business? No; in such a time, even the God of Peace proclaims by his Providence, “To arms!” Then the sword is, as it were, consecrated to God; and the art of war becomes a part of our religion. Then happy is he that shall reward our enemies as they have served us. Psalm cxxxvii. 8. Blessed is the brave soldier: blessed is the defender of his country, and the destroyer of its enemies. Blessed are they who offer themselves willingly in this service, and who faithfully discharge it. But on the other hand *Cursed is he that doth the work of the Lord deceitfully; and cursed is he that keepeth back his sword from blood.*

As to the original reference and meaning of these words, it is sufficient

* Preached to the militia of Hanover county, in Virginia, at a general muster, May 8, 1758, with a view to raise a company for Captain Samuel Meredith.

to my purpose to observe, that the Moabites, against whom this prophecy was immediately denounced, were a troublesome and restless nation in the neighbourhood of the Jews, who, though often subdued by them, yet upon every occasion struggled to recover their power, and renewed their hostilities. By this, and various other steps, they were arrived to the highest pitch of national guilt, and ripe for execution. The Babylonians were commissioned for this work of vengeance: and they were bound to execute the commission faithfully, under penalty of a curse. To them this denunciation was immediately directed, *Cursed be he that doth the work of the Lord deceitfully, or negligently;** *and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood.* This is expressed in the form of an imprecation, or an authoritative denunciation of a curse: and in this form it might be used consistently with benevolence, by a prophet speaking as the mouth of God. But this is not a pattern for our imitation, who are peculiarly obliged, under the gospel, to *bless, and curse not*, and to *pray for all men*. However, it may be pronounced even by our lips as a declaration of the righteous curse of God against a dastardly refusal to engage in war, when it is our duty; or a deceitful, negligent discharge of that duty, after we have engaged in it. These are the crimes that seem intended in my text; and against each of these the tremendous curse of Jehovah is still in full force in all ages, even under the mild and gentle dispensation of the gospel. Cowardice and treachery are now as execrable as ever.

Cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood.—This denunciation, like the artillery of heaven, is levelled against the coward, who, when God, in the course of his providence, calls him to arms, refuses to obey, and consults his own ease and safety more than his duty to God and his country.

Cursed be he that doth the work of the Lord deceitfully.—This seems to be levelled against another species of cowards; sly, hypocritical cowards, who undertake the work of the Lord, that is, take up arms; but they do the work of the Lord deceitfully; that is, they do not faithfully use their arms for the purposes they were taken up. They commence soldiers, not that they may serve their country, and do their duty to God, but that they may live in ease, idleness, and pleasure, and enrich themselves at the public expense. *Cursed is he that doth the work of the Lord deceitfully*, and serves himself under pretence of serving his country.

You, gentlemen, and others, whom I this day behold with peculiar pleasure engaged in the cause of your neglected country, and who have done me the honour of inviting me to this service; a service which I am sure I should perform to your satisfaction if my preparations and abilities were proportioned to my benevolence for you, and my concern for your success: you are

* *amelos*, Septuag.

peculiarly interested in the remarks I have made upon the text. And that I may contribute all in my power both to increase your number, and direct you to a proper conduct in the honourable character you sustain, I shall lay before you a brief view of the present circumstances of our country; from which it will appear, that the war in which we are engaged, is a duty, or the work of the Lord; and consequently, that we are all obliged, according to our respective characters, to carry it on with vigour, under penalty of falling under the curse of God. And then I shall show you what is the deceitful performance of the Lord's work, or unseasonably keeping back of the sword from blood, which exposes to the curse.

I. I am to lay before you a brief view of the present circumstances of our country, which render the war in which we are engaged the work of the Lord, which consecrate swords as instruments of righteousness, and call us to the dreadful but important duty of shedding human blood, upon penalty of falling under the tremendous curse of God.

Need I inform you what barbarities and depredations a mongrel race of Indian savages and French papists have perpetrated upon our frontiers? How many deserted or demolished houses and plantations! How wide an extent of country abandoned? How many poor families obliged to fly in consternation, and leave their all behind them? What breaches and separations between the nearest relations? What painful ruptures of heart from heart? What shocking dispersions of those once united by the strongest and most endearing ties? Some lie dead, mangled with savage wounds, consumed to ashes with outrageous flames, or torn and devoured by the beasts of the wilderness, while their bones lie whitening in the sun, and serve as tragical memorials of the fatal spot where they fell. Others have been dragged away captives, and made the slaves of imperious and cruel savages: others have made their escape, and live to lament their butchered or captivated friends and relations. In short, our frontiers have been drenched with the blood of our fellow subjects, through the length of a thousand miles: and new wounds are still opening. We, in these inland parts of the country, are as yet unmolested, through the unmerited mercy of Heaven. But let us only glance a thought to the western extremities of our body politic; and what melancholy scenes open to our view! Now, perhaps, while I am speaking; now, while you are secure and unmolested, our fellow-subjects there may be feeling the calamities I am describing. Now, perhaps, the savage shouts and whoops of Indians, and the screams and groans of some butchered family, may be mingling their horrors, and circulating their tremendous echoes through the wilderness of rocks and mountains! Now, perhaps, some tender, delicate creature may be suffering an involuntary prostitution to savage lust; and perhaps debauched and murdered by the same hand! Now, perhaps, some miserable Briton or Virginian may be passing through a tedious process of experiments in the infernal art

of torture! Now, some helpless children may be torn from the arms of their murdered parents, and dragged away, weeping, and wringing their hands, to receive their education among barbarians, and to be formed upon the model of a ferocious Indian soul!

And will these violences cease without a vigorous and timely resistance from us? Can Indian revenge and thirst for blood be glutted? or can French ambition and avarice be satisfied? No, we have no method left, but to repel force with force, and to give them blood to drink in their turn, who have drank ours. If we sit still and do nothing, or content ourselves, as, alas! we have hitherto, with feeble, dilatory efforts, we may expect these barbarities will not only continue, but that the Indians, headed by the French, will carry their inroads still farther into the country, and reach even unto us. By the desertion of our remote settlements, the frontiers are approaching every day nearer and nearer to us: and if we cannot stand our ground now, when we have above a hundred miles of a thick-settled country between us and the enemy, much less shall we be able, when our strength is weakened by so vast a loss of men, arms and riches, and we lie exposed to their immediate incursions. Some cry “let the enemy come down to us, and then we will fight them.” But this is the trifling excuse of cowardice or security, and not the language of prudence and fortitude. Those who make this plea, if the enemy should take them at their word, and make them so near a visit, would be as forward in flight as they are now backward to take up arms.

Such, my brethren, such, alas! is the present state of our country: it bleeds in a thousand veins; and without timely remedy, the wound will prove mortal. And in such circumstances is it not our duty in the sight of God; is it not a work to which the Lord loudly calls us, to take up arms for the defence of our country? Certainly it is: and *cursed is he* who, having no ties sufficiently strong to confine him at home, *keepeth his sword from blood*. The man that can desert the cause of his country in such an exigency; his country, in the blessings of which he shared while in peace and prosperity; and which is therefore entitled to his sympathy and assistance in the day of its distress; that cowardly, ungrateful man sins against God and his country, and deserves the curse of both. Such a conduct in such a conjuncture, is a moral evil, a gross wickedness; and exposes the wretch to the heavy curse of God both in this and the eternal world.

And here I cannot but observe, that among the various and numberless sins under which the country groans, and which must be looked upon as the cause of our public calamities, by every one that believes a divine Providence: a doctrine so comfortable, and so essential both in natural and revealed religion; an article in the creed of heathens and Mahometans, (as well as Jews and Christians;) I say, among these various sins, cowardice and se-

curity are none of the least. He that hath determined the bounds of our habitations, hath planted us in a land of liberty and plenty; a land, till lately, unalarmed with the terrors of war, and unstained with human blood; indeed, all things considered, there are but few such happy spots on our globe. And must it not highly provoke our divine Benefactor, to, see a people thus distinguished with blessings, so insensible of their worth, so ungrateful for them, and so unacquainted with their own unworthiness to receive them? What can be more evidential of their undue apprehensions of the worth of these blessings, than their being so little concerned to secure and recover them? The generality among us have acted as if their interests at stake were so trifling, that it would not be worthwhile to take pains, or encounter dangers, to preserve them. What greater evidence can be given of ingratitude than a supine neglect of these blessings, and such a stupidly tame and unresisting resignation of them into bloody and rapacious hands? And what can be more evidential of a proud insensibility of our unworthiness of such blessings, than our being so inapprehensive of losing them, even in the most threatening and dangerous circumstances? Our countrymen in general have acted, as if beings of their importance and merit might certainly rest in the quiet, unmolested possession of their liberty and property, without any one daring to disturb them, and without their doing anything for their own defence; or as if neither God nor man could strip them of their enjoyments. What vain, self-confident presumption, what intolerable insolence is this, in a sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, who have forfeited every blessing, even the ground they tread upon, and the air they breathe in; and who live, merely by the unmerited grace and bounty of God! Is not cowardice and security, or an unwillingness to engage with all our might in defence of our country, in such a situation, an enormous wickedness in the sight of God, and worthy of his curse, as well as a scandalous meanness in the sight of men, and worthy of public shame and indignation? Is it not fit that those who so contemptuously depreciate the rich and undeserved bounties of heaven, and who swell so insolently with a vain conceit of their own importance and worth, should be punished with the loss of these blessings! What discipline can be more seasonable or congruous? May we not suppose, that divine Providence has permitted our body politic to suffer wound after wound, and baffled all our languid efforts, in order to give it sensibility, and rouse us to exert our strength in more vigorous efforts? Has not the curse of God lain heavy upon our country, because we have “done the work of the Lord deceitfully, and kept back our swords from blood?”

And shall this guilt increase from year to year, till we are entirely crushed with the enormous load? Shall neither the fear of Jehovah’s curse, nor the love of our country, nor even the love of ourselves, and our own personal interest, constrain us at length to relieve our ravaged country, and defend the

blessings which God has intrusted to our custody, as well as lent us to enjoy?—Blessed be God, and thanks to you, brave soldiers, for what I now see. I see you engaged in this good cause: and may the effectual blessing of Heaven be upon you, instead of the curse entailed upon cowardice and treachery! But are there no more to join with you? what! none more in this crowd? None more in Hanover? which I think should show itself worthy of precedence, and exhibit a brave example to other counties: this is what may reasonably be expected, from the number of our militia, the high price of our staple commodity, the frequency and variety of our religious instructions; and, I may add, from our own former good conduct in such an emergency. Hanover had the honour of sending out the first company of volunteers that were raised in the colony.* And are we degenerated so soon? Or is our danger less now than immediately after Braddock’s defeat? Or are we now inured and hardened to bad news, so that the calamities of our frontiers, which have been growing every year, have now ceased to be objects of our compassion?

I am sorry to tell you, that the company now forming is not yet completed, though under officers from among yourselves, from whom you may expect good usage; and the encouragement is so unusually great, and the time of service is so short.† May I not reasonably insist upon it, that the company be made up this very day before we leave this place? Methinks your king, your country, nay, your own interests, command me: and therefore I must insist upon it. Oh! for the all-prevailing force of Demosthenes’ oratory—but I recall my wish that I may correct it. Oh! for the influence of the Lord of armies, the God of battles, the Author of true courage, and every heroic virtue, to fire you into patriots and soldiers this moment! Ye young and hardy men, whose very faces seem to speak that God and nature formed you for soldiers, who are free from the incumbrance of families depending upon you for subsistence, and who perhaps are of but little service to society while at home, may I not speak for you and declare as your mouth, “Here we are, all ready to abandon our case, and rush into the glorious dangers of the field, in defence of our country?” Ye that love your country enlist; for honour will follow you in life or death in such a cause. You that love your religion, enlist; for your religion is in danger. Can Protestant Christianity expect quarters from heathen savages and French papists? Sure, in such an alliance, the powers of hell make a third party. Ye that love your friends and relations, enlist; lest ye see them enslaved or butchered before your eyes. Ye that would catch at money, here is a proper bait for you: ten pounds for a few months’ service, besides the usual pay of soldiers. I seriously make the proposal to you, not only as a subject of the best of kings, and a friend to your country, but as *a*

* Under Captain Averton, immediately after General Braddock’s defeat.

† Only till the first of December next.

servant of the Most High God: for I am fully persuaded, what I am recommending is his will; and disobedience to it may expose you to his curse.

This proposal is not liable to the objections that have been urged against former measures for raising men. You cannot any longer object, “that you are dragged away like slaves against your wills, while others are without reason exempted for now it is left to your own honour, and you may act as free men. Nor can you object “that you are arbitrarily thrust under the command of foreign, unknown, or disagreeable officers for the gentleman that has the immediate command of this company, and his subordinate officers, are of yourselves, your neighbours, children, and perhaps your old companions. And I hope I may add, you need not object, that you shall be badly used: for, Gentlemen-Officers, may I not promise for you, that not one man in your company shall be treated with cruelty or injustice as far as your authority or influence can prevent? May I not be your security, that none but the guilty shall be punished, and they only according to the nature of the offence? Perhaps some may object, that should they enter the army, their morals would be in danger of infection, and their virtue would be perpetually shocked with horrid scenes of vice. This may also be a discouragement to parents to consent to their children’s engaging in so good a cause. I am glad to hear this objection, when it is sincere, and not an empty excuse: and I wish I could remove it, by giving you an universal assurance that the army is a school of religion; and that soldiers, as they are more exposed to death than other men, are proportionably better prepared for it than others. But alas! the reverse of this is too true; and the contagion of vice and irreligion is perhaps nowhere stronger than in the army; where one would think the supreme tribunal should be always in view, and it should be their chief care to prepare for eternity, on the slippery brink of which they stand every moment. But, Gentlemen-Officers, I must again appeal to you, that as for this company, you will not willingly allow any form of vice to be practised in it with impunity: but will always endeavour to recommend and enforce religion and good morals by your example and authority, and to suppress the contrary. May I not give the public the satisfaction of such an assurance concerning you, that whatever others do, as for you and your company you will serve the Lord? Do you not own yourselves bound to this in honour and duty? Such a conduct, I can assure you, will render you popular among the wise and good; though perhaps it may expose you to the senseless contempt of fools, who make a mock at sin, and who esteem it bravery to insult that God, “in whose hand their breath is, and whose are all their ways.” Such a conduct will afford you pleasure in the review, when the terrors of the bloody field are spread around you, and death starts up before you in a thousand shocking forms. Such a conduct will be a source of true courage, and render you nobly indifferent about life or death in a good cause. And let me honestly warn you, that if you do not

maintain such a conduct, you will bitterly repent it, either in time or eternity.

But I return to invite others to join with you in this important expedition. What a crowd of important arguments press you on every hand! What can our legislature do more than they have done to engage you? If such an unusual encouragement does not prevail upon you to enlist as volunteers, what remains but that you must be forced to it by authority? For our country must be defended: and if nothing but force can constrain you to take up arms in its defence, then force must be used: persons of such a sordid, unmanly spirit, are not to expect the usage of freemen. Think what the paternal care of our sovereign has done for us: and how many millions of money, and thousands of men, our mother-country has furnished for our defence. And shall we do nothing for ourselves? Great Britain, I own, is interested in our protection: but can she be as much interested as ourselves? Consider what the brave New-England men have done, after so many mortifications and disappointments, and their treasury so much exhausted. By the best accounts I have had, the little colony of Massachusetts-Bay has raised no less than 7000 men, though not larger perhaps than fifteen or twenty of those fifty-three counties contained in Virginia. And since we have the same interests at stake, shall we not cheerfully furnish our quota for the public service? We all admire the bravery and success of the King of Prussia: but his success must be greatly owing to the bravery of his subjects, as well as his own: he has almost as many soldiers as subjects. And while he has almost miraculously stood his ground against such superior numbers, shall we, with the advantage of numbers on our side, be perpetually flying before a pitiful enemy, and tamely give up our country to their ravages? Let us strenuously exert that superior force which a gracious providence has put into our hands: and we may soon expect, through the concurrence of Heaven, that we shall again enjoy the blessings of peace. Whatever intelligence our artful enemies may send, or the cowardly among ourselves may believe, there is no reason to conclude that the French regulars upon this continent are half so many as ours: and as to the *coloni*, or country-militia, we are certainly twenty, perhaps forty to one. Let us then, in the name of the Lord of Hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, let us collect our whole strength, and give one decisive blow; and we may humbly hope victory will be ours.

Everyone can complain of the bad management of our public undertakings, and lament the general security and inactivity that prevails: everyone can wish that something were effectually done, and that this and that person would enlist: everyone can tell what great achievements he would perform, were it not for this and that, a hundred obstructions in his way. But all this idle complaining, wishing, lamenting, and boasting, will answer no end. Something must be done! must be done by you! Therefore, instead of assuming the state of patriots and heroes at home—to arms! away to the field, and

prove your pretensions sincere. Let the thunder of this imprecation rouse you out of your ease and security, *Cursed be he that doth the work of the Lord deceitfully; and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood.* God sent an angel from heaven to curse the dastardly inhabitants of Meroz, who refused to take up arms for the defence of their country. (Judges v. 23.) *Curse ye Meroz,* said the angel of the Lord, *curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof: because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.* And shall this curse fall upon Virginia? No, fly from it by venturing your lives for your country: for this curse is far more terrible than anything that can befall you in the field of battle. But it is not enough for you to undertake this work: you are also obliged faithfully to perform it, as the work of the Lord. And this leads me,

II. To show you what is that deceitful performance of the Lord's work, or unseasonably keeping back the sword from blood, which exposes to his curse.

If soldiers, instead of abandoning their ease and pleasure, and risking their lives in defence of their country, should unman themselves with sensual pleasures and debauchery; if, instead of searching out the enemy, they keep out of their way, lest they should search out and find them; if they lie sleeping or rioting in forts and places of safety, while their country is ravaged, perhaps in their very neighbourhood: when they waste their courage in broils and duels among themselves, or in tyrannizing over those that are under their command: when they lay themselves open to false alarms, by being credulous to every account that magnifies the force of the enemy: when they are tedious or divided in their consultations, and slow and faint in the execution: when they consult rather what may be most safe for themselves than most beneficial for their country: when they keep skirmishing at a distance, instead of making a bold push, and bringing the war to a speedy issue by a decisive stroke: when they are fond of prolonging the war, that they may live and riot the longer at the public expense: when they sell themselves and their country to the enemy for a bribe: in short, when they do not conscientiously exert all their power to repel the enemy, and protect the state that employs them, but only seek to serve themselves, then they do the work of the Lord deceitfully; and his curse lights upon them as their heavy doom. I leave others to judge, whether the original of this ugly picture is to be found anywhere in the universe. But as for you of this company, may I not presume that you will behave in a nobler manner? Shall not sobriety, public spirit, courage, fidelity, and good discipline, be maintained among you? This I humbly recommend to you; and may God enable you to act accordingly!

Thus far have I addressed you as soldiers, or at least as persons concerned in your stations to do all in your power to save your country. But we must not part thus. It is possible we may never meet more, till we mingle with the

assembled universe before the supreme tribunal: therefore, before I dismiss you, I must address myself to you as sinners, and as candidates for eternity. You are concerned to save your souls, as well as your country; and should you save or gain a kingdom, or even the whole world, and lose your souls, your loss will be irreparable.

None of you I hope will reply, "I am now a soldier, and have nothing more to do with religion." What! has a soldier nothing to do with religion? Is a soldier under no obligations to the God that made him, and that furnishes him with every blessing? Is not a soldier as much exposed to death as other men? May not a soldier be damned for sin as well as other sinners? And will he be able to dwell with devouring fire and everlasting burnings? Are these things so? Can any of you be so stupid as to think them so? If not, you must own that even a soldier has as much concern with religion as another. Therefore, hear me seriously upon this head.

You are about entering into the school of vice: for such the army has generally been. And are any of you already initiated into any of the mysteries of iniquity there practised? Must I so much as suppose that some of you, who have bravely espoused the cause of your country, are addicted to drunkenness, swearing, whoredom, or any gross vice? I cannot now take time to reason with you for your conviction: it may suffice to appeal to your own reason and conscience, Do you act well in indulging these vices? Will you approve of it in the honest hour of death? Will this conduct prove a source of courage to you when the arrows of death are flying thick around you, and scores are falling on every side? No, you are self-condemned; and may I not reasonably hope you will endeavour to reform what you cannot but condemn? Soldiers, indeed, are too commonly addicted to such immoralities; but are they the better soldiers on that account? Can an oath or a debauch inspire them with a rational fortitude against the fears of death? Would not prayer and a life of holiness better answer this purpose? Their courage, if they have any, must be the effect, not of thought, but of the want of thought; it must be a brutal stupidity, or ferocity; but not the rational courage of a man or a Christian.

Some of you, I doubt not, are happily free from these gross vices: and long may you continue so! But I must tell you, this *negative* goodness is not enough to prepare you for death, or to constitute you true Christians. The temper of your minds must be changed by the power of divine grace: and you must be turned from the love and practice of all sin, to the love and practice of universal holiness. You must become humble, broken-hearted penitents, and true believers in Jesus Christ. You must be enabled to live righteously, soberly, and godly, in this present evil world. This is religion: this is religion that will keep you uncorrupted in the midst of vice and debauchery: this is religion, that will befriend you when cannons roar, and swords gleam around you, and you are every moment expecting the deadly

wound: this is religion that will support you in the agonies of death, and assure you of a happy immortality.

But are not some of you conscious that you are destitute of such a religion as this? Then it is high time for you to think on your condition in sober sadness. Pray to that powerful and gracious Being, who can form your hearts and lives after this sacred model. Oh! pray earnestly, pray frequently, for this blessing: and use all the means of grace in that manner which your circumstances will permit. Remember, also, that if you try to prolong your life by a dastardly conduct, your life will lie under the curse of heaven: and you have little reason to hope you will ever improve it as a space for repentance. Remember also to put your confidence in God; who keeps the thread of your life, and the event of war, in his own hand. Devoutly acknowledge his providence in all your ways, and be sensible of your dependence upon it.

And now, to conclude my address to you, as the mouth of this multitude, and of you, countrymen in general, I heartily bid you farewell. Farewell, my dear friends, my brave fellow-subjects, the guardians of your ravaged country. God grant you may return in safety and honour, and that we may yet welcome you home, crowned with laurels of victory! Or if any of you should lose your lives in so good a cause, may you enjoy a glorious and blessed immortality in the region of everlasting peace and tranquillity! Methinks I may take upon me to promise you the prayers and good wishes of thousands. Thousands, whom you leave behind, will think of you with affectionate anxiety, will wish you success, and congratulate your return, or lament your death. Once more I pour out all my heart in another affectionate farewell. May the Lord preserve your going out, and your coming in, from this time forth, and even for evermore. Amen.

Here I thought to have concluded. But I must take up a few minutes more to ask this crowd, Is there nothing to be done by us who stay at home, towards the defence of our country, and to promote the success of the expedition now in hand? Shall we sin on still impenitent and incorrigible? Shall we live as if we and our country were self-dependent, and had nothing to do with the Supreme Ruler of the universe? Can an army of saints or of heroes defend an obnoxious people, ripe for destruction, from the righteous judgment of God? The cause in which these brave men, and our army in general, are engaged, is not so much their own as ours: divine Providence considers them not so much in their private personal character, as in their public character, as the representatives and guardians of their country; and therefore they will stand or fall, not so much according to their own personal character, as according to the public character of the people, whose cause they have undertaken. Be it known to you, then, their success depends upon us, even more than upon themselves. Therefore let us all turn everyone from his evil ways. *Let the*

wicked forsake his way, &c Let us humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, which is lifted up over our guilty heads, that we may be exalted in due time. I could venture the reputation *oi* my judgment and veracity, that it will never be well with our country till there be more of the fear and love of God in it, and till the name of Jesus be of more importance among us. I could prescribe a method for our deliverance, which is at once infallible, and also cheap and safe, and so far from endangering the life of any, that it would secure the everlasting life of all that comply with it. Ye that complain of the burden of our public taxes; ye that love ease, and shrink from the dangers of war; ye that wish to see peace restored once more; ye that would be happy beyond the grave, and live forever, attend to my proposal: it is this, a thorough, national reformation. This will do what millions of money and thousands of men, with guns and swords, and all the dreadful artillery of death, could not do; it will procure us peace again; a lasting, well- established peace. We have tried other expedients without this long enough: let us now try this new expedient, the success of which I dare to warrant. And do not object that such a general reformation is beyond your power; for a general reformation must begin with individuals: therefore do you, through the grace of God, act your part; begin at home, and endeavour to reform yourselves, and those under your influence.

It is a natural inference from what has been said, that if the defence of our country, in which we can stay but a few years at most, and from which we must ere long take our flight, be so important a duty, then how much more are we obliged to seek a better country, i.e. a “heavenly;” and to carry on a vigorous war against our spiritual enemies, that would rob us of our heavenly inheritance! therefore, in the name of Jesus, the Captain of our salvation, I invite you all to enlist in the spiritual warfare. Now proclaim eternal war against all sin. Now *take to you the whole armour of God; quit you like men, be strong* and, for your encouragement, remember, *He that overcometh shall inherit all things*; he shall enter into a kingdom that cannot be shaken—cannot be shaken with those storms of public calamities which toss and agitate this restless ocean of a world. In that blessed harbour may we all rest at last!