

George Whitefield

Sermon 6

Britain's Mercies, and Britain's Duty.

(Preached at Philadelphia, on Sunday, August 14, 1746 and occasioned by the suppression of the late unnatural rebellion.) p. 1, par. 1, [SERMON6]

Psalm 55:45 "That they might observe his statutes and keep his laws." p. 1, par. 2, [SERMON6]

Men, brethren, and fathers, and all ye to whom I am about to preach the kingdom of God, I suppose you need not be informed, that being indispensably obliged to be absent on your late thanksgiving day, I could not show my obedience to the governor's proclamation, as my own inclination led me, or as might justly be expected from, and demanded of me. But as the occasion of that day's thanksgiving is yet, and I trust ever will be, fresh in our memory, I cannot think that a discourse on that subject can even now be altogether unseasonable. I take it for granted, further, that you need not be informed, that among the various motives which are generally urged to enforce obedience to the divine commands, that of love is the most powerful and cogent. The terrors of the law may affright and awe, but love dissolves and melts the heart. "The love of Christ," says the great apostle of the Gentiles, "constraineth us." Nay, love is so absolutely necessary for those that name the name of Christ, that without it, their obedience cannot truly be stiled evangelical, or be acceptable in the sight of God. "Although, (says the apostle) I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burnt, and have not charity," (i.e. unless unfeigned love to God, and to mankind for his great name's sake, be the principle of such actions, howsoever it may benefit others) it profiteth me nothing." This is the constant language of the lively oracles of God. And, from them it is equally plain, that nothing has a greater tendency to beget and excite such an obediential love in us, than a serious and frequent consideration of the manifold mercies we receive time after time from the hands of our heavenly Father. The royal psalmist, who had the honor of being stiled, "the man after God's own heart," had an abundant experience of this. Hence it is, that whilst he is musing on the divine goodness, the fire of divine love kindles in his soul; and, out of the abundance of his heart, his mouth speaketh such grateful and ecstatic language as this, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his mercies? Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name." And why? "who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases, who redeemeth thy life from destruction, who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies." And when the same holy man of God had a mind to stir up the people of the Jews to set about a national reformation, as the most weighty and prevailing argument he could make use of for that purpose, he lays before them, as it were, in a draught, many national mercies, and distinguishing deliverances, which have been conferred upon and wrought out for them, by the most high God. The psalm to which the words of our text belong, is a pregnant proof of this; it being a kind of epitome or compendium of the whole Jewish history: at least it contains an enumeration of many signal and extraordinary blessings the Israelites had received from God, and also the improvement they were in duty bound to make of them, "Observe his statutes and keep his laws." p. 1, par. 3, [SERMON6]

To run through all the particulars of the psalm, or draw a parallel (which might with great ease and justice be done) between God's dealings with us and the Israelites of old; To enumerate all the national mercies bestowed upon, and remarkable deliverances wrought out for the king-

doms of Great Britain and Ireland, from the infant state of William the Norman to their present manhood, and more than Augustan ____ [unreadable even on micor-fiche!], under the auspicious reign of our rightful Sovereign King George the second; howsoever pleasing and profitable it might be at any other time, would, at this juncture, prove, if not an irksome, yet an unreasonable undertaking. p. 1, par. 4, [SERMON6]

The occasion of the late solemnity, I mean the suppression of a most horrid and unnatural rebellion, will afford more than sufficient matter for a discourse of this nature, and furnish us with abundant motives to love and obey that glorious Jehovah, who giveth salvation unto kings, and delivers his people from the hurtful sword. p. 2, par. 1, [SERMON6]

Need I make an apology, before this auditory, if, in order to see the greatness of our late deliverance, I should remind you of the many unspeakable blessings which we have for a course of years enjoyed, during the reign of his present Majesty, and the gentle, mild administration under which we live? Without justly incurring the censure of giving flattering titles, I believe all who have eyes to see, and ears to hear, and are but a little acquainted with our public affairs, must acknowledge, that we have one of the best of Kings. It is now above nineteen years since he began to reign over us. And yet, was he seated on a royal throne, and were all his subjects placed before him, was he to address them as Samuel once addressed the Israelites, "Behold here I am, old and gray-headed, witness against me before the Lord, whose ox have I taken? Or whose ass have I taken? Or whom have I defrauded? Whom have I oppressed?" They must, if they would do him justice, make the same answer as was given to Samuel, "Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us." What Tertulius, by way of flattery, said to Felix, may with the strictest justice be applied to our sovereign, "By thee we enjoy great quietness, and very worthy deeds have been done unto our nation by thy providence." He has been indeed Peter Patria, a father to our country, and though old and gray-headed, has jeopardized his precious life for us in the high places of the field. Nor has he less deserved the great and glorious title, which the Lord promises, that kings should sustain in the latter days, I mean, "a nursing father of the church." For not only the Church of England, as by law established, but all denominations of Christians whatsoever, have enjoyed their religious as well as civil liberties. As there has been no authorized oppression in the state, so there has been no publicly allowed persecution in the church. We breathe indeed in free air? As free (if not better) both as to temporals and spirituals, as any nation under heaven. Nor is the prospect likely to terminate in his majesty's death, which I pray God to defer. Our princesses are disposed of to Protestant powers. And we have great reason to be assured, that the present heir apparent, and his consort, are like minded with their royal father. And I cannot help thinking, that it is a peculiar blessing vouchsafed us by the King of kings, that his present Majesty has been continued so long among us. For now, his immediate successor (though his present situation obliges him, as it were, to lie dormant) has great and glorious opportunities, which we have reason to think he daily improves, of observing and weighing the national affairs, considering the various steps and turns of government, and consequently of laying in a large fund of experience, to make him a wise and great prince, if ever God should call him to sway the British scepter. Happy art thou, O England! Happy art thou, O America, who on every side art thus highly favored! p. 2, par. 2, [SERMON6]

But, alas! How soon would this happy scene have shifted, and a melancholy gloomy prospect have succeeded in its room, had the revels gained their point, and a popish abjured pretender been forced upon the British throne! For, supposing his birth not to be spurious, (as we have great reason to think it really was) what could we expect from one, descended from a father, who, when Duke of York, put all Scotland into confusion; and afterwards, when crowned King

of England, for his arbitrary and tyrannical government, both in church and state, was justly obliged to abdicate the throne, by the assertors of British liberty? Or, supposing the horrid plot, first hatched in hell, and afterwards nursed at Rome, had taken place? Supposing, I say, the old Pretender should have obtained the triple crown, and have transferred his pretended title (as it is reported he has done) to his eldest son, what was all this for, but that, by being advanced to the popedom, he might rule both son and subjects with less control, and by their united interest, keep the three kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland, in greater vassalage to the see of Rome? Ever since this unnatural rebellion broke out, I have looked upon the young Pretender as the phaeton (vehicle) of the present age. He is ambitiously and presumptuously aiming to seat himself in the throne of our rightful sovereign King George, which he is no more capable of keeping, than Phaeton was to guide the chariot of the sun; and had he succeeded in his attempt, like him, would only have set the world on fire. It is true, to do him justice, he has deserved well of the Church of Rome, and, in all probability, will hereafter be canonized amongst the noble order of their fictitious saints. But, with what an iron rod we might expect to have been bruised, had his troops been victorious, may easily be gathered from these cruel orders said to be found in the pockets of some of his officers, "Give no quarters to the Elector's troops." Add to this, that there was great reason to suspect, that, upon the first news of the success of the rebels, a general massacre was intended. So that if the Lord had not been on our side, Great Britain, not to say America, would, in a few weeks or months, have been an Akeldama, a field of blood. p. 2, par. 3, [SERMON6]

Besides, was a Popish pretender to rule over us, instead of being represented by a free parliament, and governed by laws made by their consent, as we now are; we should shortly have had only the shadow of one, and it may be no parliament at all. This is the native product of a Popish government, and what the unhappy family, from which this young adventurer pretends he descended, has always aimed at. Arbitrary principles he has sucked in with his mother's milk, and if he had been so honest, instead of that immature motto upon his standard, Tandem triumphant, only to have put, Sret pro ratient Vahmitat, he had given us a short, but true portrait of the nature of his intended, but blessed be God, now defeated reign. And why should I mention, that the sinking of the national debt, or rending away the funded property of the people, and the dissolution of the present happy union between the two kingdoms, would have been the immediate consequences of his success, as he himself declares in his second manifesto, dated from Holy-read House? These are evils, and great ones too; but then they are only evils of a temporary nature. They chiefly concern the body, and must necessarily terminate in the grave. p. 3, par. 1, [SERMON6]

But, alas! What an inundation of spiritual mischiefs, would soon have overflowed the Church, and what unspeakable danger should we and our posterity have been reduced to in respect to our better parts, our precious and immortal souls? How soon would whole swarms of monks, dominicans and friars, like so many locusts, have overspread and plagued the nation; with what winged speed would foreign titular bishops have posted over, in order to take possession of their respective fees? How quickly would our universities have been filled with youths who have been sent abroad by their Popish parents, in order to drink in all the superstitions of the church of Rome? What a speedy period would have been put to societies of all kinds, for promoting Christian knowledge, and propagating the gospel in foreign parts? How soon would have our pulpits have every where been filled with these old antichristian doctrines, free-will, meriting by works, transubstantiation, purgatory, works of supererogation, passive-obedience, non-resistance, and all the other abominations of the whore of Babylon? How soon would our Prot-

estant charity schools in England, Scotland and Ireland, have been pulled down, our Bibles forcibly taken from us, and ignorance every where set up as the mother of devotion? How soon should we have been deprived of that invaluable blessing, liberty of conscience, and been obliged to commence (what they falsely call) catholics, or submit to all the tortures which a bigoted zeal, guided by the most cruel principles, could possibly invent? How soon would that mother of harlots have made herself once more drunk with the blood of the saints? And the whole tribe even of free-thinkers themselves, been brought to this dilemma, either to die martyrs for (although I never yet heard of one that did so) or, contrary to all their most avowed principles, renounce their great Diana, unassisted, unenlightened reason? But I must have done, lest while I am speaking against antichrist, I should unawares fall myself, and lead my hearers into an antichristian spirit. True and undefiled religion will regulate our zeal, and teach us to treat even the man of sin with no harsher language than that which the angel gave to his grand employer Satan, "The Lord rebuke thee." p. 3, par. 2, [SERMON6]

Glory be to God's great name! The Lord has rebuked him; and that too at a time when we had little reason to expect such a blessing at God's hands. My dear hearers, neither the present frame of my heart, nor the occasion of your late solemn meeting, lead me to give you a detail of our public vices. Though, alas! They are so many, so notorious, and withal of such a crimson-dye, that a gospel minister would not be altogether inexcusable, was he, even on such a joyful occasion, to lift up his voice like a trumpet, to show the British nation their transgression, and the people of America their sin. However, though I would not cast a dismal shade upon the pleasing picture the cause of our late rejoicings set before us; yet thus much may, and ought to be said, that as God has not dealt so bountifully with any people as with us, so no nation under heaven has dealt more ungratefully with Him. We have been like Capernaum, lifted up to heaven in privileges, and for the abuse of them, like her, have deserved to be thrust down into hell. How well soever it may be with us, in respect to our civil and ecclesiastical constitution, yet in regard to our morals, Isaiah's description of the Jewish polity is too applicable, "The whole head is sick, the whole heart is faint; from the crown of the head to the sole of our feet, we are full of wounds and bruises, and putrefying sores." We have, Jeshurun-like, waxed fat and kicked. WE have played the harlot against God, both in regard to principles and practices. "Our gold is become dim, and our fine gold changed." We have crucified the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. Nay, Christ has been wounded in the house of his friends. And every thing long ago seemed to threaten an immediate storm. But, O the long-suffering and goodness of God to us-ward! When all things seemed ripe for destruction, and matters were come to such a crisis, that God's praying people began to think, that though Noah, Daniel and Job, were living, they would only deliver their own souls; yet then in the midst of judgment the Most High remembered mercy, and when a popish enemy was breaking in upon us like a flood, the Lord himself graciously lifted up a standard. p. 4, par. 1, [SERMON6]

This to me does not seem to be one of the most unfavorable circumstances which have attended this mighty deliverance; nor do I think you will look upon it as a circumstance altogether unworthy your observation. Had this cockatrice indeed been crushed in the egg, and the young Pretender driven back upon his first arrival, it would undoubtedly have been a great blessing. But not so great as that for which you lately assembled to give God thanks; for then his Majesty would not have had so good an opportunity of knowing his enemies, or trying his friends. The British subjects would in a manner have lost the fairest occasion that ever offered to express their loyalty and gratitude to the rightful sovereign. France would not have been so greatly humbled; nor such an effectual stop have been put, as we trust there now is, to any such further Popish

plot, to rob us of all that is near and dear to us. "Out of the eater therefore hath come forth meat, and out of the strong hath come forth sweetness." The Pretender's eldest son is suffered not only to land in the North-West Highlands in Scotland, but in a little while he becomes a great band. This for a time is not believed, but treated as a thing altogether incredible. The friends of the government in those parts, not for want of loyalty, but of sufficient authority to take up arms, could not resist him. He is permitted to pass on with his terrible banditti, and, like the comet that was lately seen, spreads his baleful influences all around him. He is likewise permitted to gain a short-lived triumph by a victory over a body of our troops at Prestan-Pans, and to take a temporary possession of the metropolis of Scotland. Of this he makes his boast, and informs the public, that "Providence had hitherto favored him with wonderful success, led him in the way to victory, and to the capital of the ancient kingdom, though he came without foreign aid." Nay, he is further permitted to press into the very heart of England. But now the Almighty interposes. Hitherto he was to go, and no further. Here were his malicious designs to be staid. His troops of a sudden are driven back. Away they post to the Highlands, and there they are suffered not only to increase, but also to collect themselves into a large body, that having, as it were, what Caligula once wished Rome had, but one neck, they might be cut off with one blow. p. 4, par. 2, [SERMON6]

This time, manner, and instruments of this victory, deserves our notice. It was on a general fast-day, when the clergy and good people of Scotland were lamenting the disloyalty of their perfidious countrymen, and, like Moses, lifting up their hands, that Amalek might not prevail. The victory was total and decisive. Little blood was spilt on the side of the Royalists. And, to crown all, Duke William, his Majesty's youngest son, has the honor of first driving back, and then defeating the rebel-army. A prince, who in his infancy and youth, gave early proofs of an uncommon bravery and nobleness of mind; a prince, whose courage has increased with his years. Who returned wounded from the battle of Dettingen, behaved with surprising bravery at Fontenoy, and now, by a conduct and magnanimity becoming the high office he sustains, like his glorious predecessor the Prince of Orange, has delivered three kingdoms from the dread of popish cruelty, and arbitrary power. What renders it still more remarkable is, The day on which his Highness gained this victory, was the day after his birthday, when he was entering on the 26th year of his age; and when Sullivan, one of the Pretender's privy-council, like another Abitaphel, advised the rebels to give our soldiers battle, presuming they were surfeited and over-charged with their yesterday's rejoicings, and consequently unfit to make any great stand against them. But, glory be to God, who catches the wise in their own craftiness! His counsel, like Ahitaphel's, proves abortive. Both General and soldiers were prepared to meet them. "God taught their hands to war, and their fingers to fight," and brought the Duke, after a deserved slaughter of some thousands of the rebels, with most of his brave soldiers, victorious from the field. p. 5, par. 1, [SERMON6]

If we then take a distinct view of this notable transaction, and trace it in all the particular circumstances that have attended it, I believe we must with one heart and voice confess, that if it be a mercy for a state to be delivered from a worse than a Catiline's conspiracy, or a church to be rescued from a hotter than a Diocletian persecution; if it be a mercy to be delivered from a religion that turns plough-shares into swords, and pruning-hooks into spears, and makes it meritorious to shed Protestant blood; if it be a mercy to have all our present invaluable privileges, both in church and state secured to us more than ever; if it be a mercy to have these great things done for us, at a season, when for our crying sins, both church and state justly deserved to be overturned; and if it be a mercy to have all this brought about for us, under God, by one of the blood-royal, a prince acting with an experience far above his years; if any, or all of these are mercies, then have

you lately commemorated one of the greatest mercies that ever the glorious God vouchsafed to the British nation. p. 5, par. 2, [SERMON6]

And shall we not rejoice and give thanks? Should we refuse, would not the stones cry out against us? Rejoice then we may and ought: but, O let our rejoicing be in the Lord, and run in a religious channel. This, we find, has been the practice of God's people in all ages. When he was pleased, with a mighty hand, and out-stretched arm to lead the Israelites through the Red Sea, as on dry ground, "Then sang Moses and the children of Israel; and Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women went out after her. And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the Lord; for he hath triumphed gloriously." When God subdued Jabin, the King of Canaan, before the children of Israel, "then sang Deborah and Barak on that day, saying, "Praise ye the Lord for the avenging of Israel." When the ark was brought back out of the hands of the Philistines, David, though a king, danced before it. And, to mention but one instance more, which may serve as a general directory to us on this and such-like occasions: when the great Head of the church had rescued his people from the general massacre intended to be executed upon them by a cruel and ambitious Haman, "Mordecai sent letters unto all the Jews that were in all the provinces of the King Ahaserus, both nigh and far, to establish among them, that they should keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar, and the fifteenth day of the same yearly, as the days wherein the Jews rested from their enemies, and the month which was turned unto them from sorrow unto joy, and from mourning into a good day: that they should make them days of feasting and joy, and of sending portions one to another, and gifts to the poor." And why should we not to and do likewise? p. 6, par. 1, [SERMON6]

And shall we not also, on such an occasion, express our gratitude to, and make honorable mention of, those worthies who have signalized themselves, and been ready to sacrifice both lives and fortunes at this critical juncture? p. 6, par. 2, [SERMON6]

This would be to act the part of those ungrateful Israelites, who are branded in the book of God, for not showing kindness to the house of "Jerub-Baal, namely Gideon, according to all the goodness which he showed unto Israel." Even a Pharaoh could prefer a deserving Joseph, Ahasuerus a Mordecai, and Nebuchadnezzar a Daniel, when made instruments of signal service to themselves and people. "My heart, says Deborah, is towards (i.e. I have a particular veneration and regard for) the Governors of Israel that offered themselves willingly. And blessed above women shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be; for she put her hand to the nail, and her right hand to the workman's hammer, and with the hammer she smote Sisera, she smote off his head, when she had pierced and stricken through his temples." And shall we not say, "Blessed above men let his Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland be; for through his instrumentality, the great and glorious Jehovah hath brought mighty things to pass?" Should not our hearts be towards the worthy Archbishop of Tirk, the Royal Hunters, and those other English heroes who offered themselves so willingly? Let the names of Blakeney, Bland and Rea, and all those who waxed valiant in fight on this important occasion, live for ever in the British annals. And let the name of that great, that incomparable brave soldier of the King, and a good soldier of Jesus Christ, Colonel Gardiner, (excuse me if I here drop a tear; he was my intimate friend) let his name, I say, be had in everlasting remembrance. p. 6, par. 3, [SERMON6]

But, after all, is there not an infinitely greater debt of gratitude and praise due from us, on this occasion, to Him that is higher than the highest, even the King of kings and Lord of Lords, the blessed and only Potentate? Is not his arm, his strong and mighty arm, (what instruments soever may have been made use of) that hath brought us this salvation? And may I not therefore address you, in the exulting language of the beginning of this psalm, from which we have taken

our text? "O give thanks unto the Lord, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people. Sing unto Him; sing psalms unto him; talk ye of all his wondrous works; glory ye in his holy name; remember his marvelous work which he hath done." p. 6, par. 4, [SERMON6]

But shall we put off our good and gracious benefactor with mere lip-service? God forbid. Your worthy Governor has honored God in his late excellent proclamation, and God will honor him. But shall our thanks terminate with the day? No, in no wise. Our text reminds us of a more noble sacrifice, and points out to us the great end the Almighty Jehovah proposes, in bestowing such signal favors upon a people, "That they should observe his statutes, and keep his laws." p. 7, par. 1, [SERMON6]

This is the return we are all taught to pray, that we may make to the Most High God, the Father of mercies, in the daily office or our church, "That our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful, and that we may show forth his praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up ourselves to his service, and by walking before him in holiness and righteousness all our days." O that these words were the real language of all the use them! O that these were in us such a mind! How soon would our enemies then flee before us? And God, even our own God, would yet give us more abundant blessings! p. 7, par. 2, [SERMON6]

And why should not we "observe God's statutes, and keep his laws?" Dare we say, that any of his commands are grievous? Is not Christ's yoke, to a renewed soul, as far as renewed, easy; and his burden comparatively light? May I not appeal to the most refined reasoner whether the religion of Jesus Christ be not a social religion? Whether the Moral Law, as explained by the Lord Jesus in the gospel, has not a natural tendency to promote the present good and happiness of a whole commonwealth, supposing they were obedient to them, as well as the happiness of every individual? From when come wars and fighting amongst us? From what fountain do all those evil, which the present and past ages have groaned under, flow, but from a neglect of the laws and statutes of our great and all-wise law-giver Jesus of Nazareth? Tell me, ye men of letters, whether Lycurgus or Solon, Pythagoras or Plato, Aristotle, Seneca, Cicero, or all the ancient lawgivers and heathen moralists, put them all together, ever published a system of ethics, any way worthy to be compared with the glorious system laid down in that much despised book, (to use Sir Richard Steel's expression) emphatically called, the Scriptures? Is not the divine image and superscription written upon every precept of the gospel? Do they not shine with a native intrinsic luster? And, though many things in them are above, yet, is there any thing contrary to the strictest laws of right reason? Is not Jesus Christ, in scripture, stiled the Word, the Logos, the Reason? And is not his service a reasonable service? What if there be mysteries in his religion? Are they not without all controversy great and glorious? Are they not mysteries of godliness, and worthy of that God who reveals them? Nay, is it not the greatest mystery, that men, who pretend to reason, and call themselves philosophers, who search into the arcana natura, and consequently find a mystery in every blade of grass, should yet be so irrational as to decry all mysteries in religion? Where is the scribe? Where is the wise? Where is the disputer against the Christian revelation? Does not every thing without and within us, conspire to prove its divine original? And would not self-interest, if there was no other motive, excite us to observe God's statutes, and keep his laws? p. 7, par. 3, [SERMON6]

Besides, considered as a Protestant people, do we not lie under the greatest obligations of any nation under heaven, to pay a cheerful, unanimous, universal, persevering obedience to the divine commands. p. 7, par. 4, [SERMON6]

The wonderful and surprising manner of God's bringing about a Reformation, in the reign of King Henry the Eighth; his carrying it on in the blessed reign of King Edward the Sixth; his de-

livering us out of the bloody hands of Queen Mary, and destroying the Spanish invincible armada, under her immediate Protestant successor Queen Elizabeth, his discovery of the popish plot under King James; the glorious revolution by King William, and, to come nearer to our own times, his driving away four thousand five hundred Spaniards, from a weak (though important) frontier colony, when they had, in a manner, actually taken possession of it; his giving us Louisbourg, one of the strongest fortresses of our enemies, contrary to all human probability, but the other day, into our hands: these, I say, with the victory which you have lately been commemorating, are such national mercies, not to mention any more, as will render us utterly inexcusable, if they do not produce a national Reformation, and incite us all, with one heart, to keep God's statutes, and observe his laws. p. 7, par. 5, [SERMON6]

Need I remind you further, in order to excite in you a greater diligence to comply with the intent of the text, that though the storm, in a great measure, is abated by his Royal Highness's late success, yet we dare not say, it is altogether blown over? p. 8, par. 1, [SERMON6]

The clouds may again return after the rain; and the few surviving rebels (which I pray God avert) may yet be suffered to make head against us. We are still engaged in a bloody, and, in all probability, a tedious war, with two of the most inveterate enemies to the interests of Great-Britain. And, though I cannot help thinking, that their present intentions are so iniquitous, their conduct so persidious, and their schemes so directly derogatory to the honor of the Most High God, that he will certainly humble them in the end, yet, as all things in this life happen alike to all, they may for a time, be dreadful instruments of scourging us. If not, God has other arrows in his quiver to smite us with, besides the French King, his Catholic Majesty, or an abjured Pretender. Not only the sword, but plague, pestilence, and famine, are under the divine command. Who knows but he may say to them all, "Pass through these lands?" A fatal murrain has lately swept away abundance of cattle at home and abroad. A like epidemical disease may have a commission to seize our persons as well as our beasts. Thus God dealt with the Egyptians: who dare say, he will not deal so with us? Has he not already given some symptoms of it? What great numbers upon the continent have been lately taken off by the bloody-flux, small-pox, and yellow-fever? Who can tell what further judgments are yet in store? However, this is certain, the rod is yet hanging over us: and I believe it will be granted on all sides, that if such various dispensations of mercy and judgment do not teach the inhabitants of any land to learn righteousness, they will only ripen them for a greater ruin. Give my leave, therefore, to dismiss you at this time with that solemn awful warning and exhortation, with which the venerable Samuel, on a public occasion, took leave of the people of Israel: "Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth, with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you. But if ye shall still do wickedly, [I will not say as the Prophet did, You shall be consumed; but] ye know not but you may provoke the Lord Almighty to consume both you and your king." Which God of his infinite mercy prevent, for the sake of Jesus Christ: to whom, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, three persons, but one God, be all honor and glory, now and for evermore. Amen, Amen. p. 8, par. 2, [SERMON6]