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**SERMON XVII.\***  
**SEASONABLE WORDS**  
**FOR**  
**ENGLISH PROTESTANTS.**

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\* This sermon was preached at a Fast, Dec. 22. 1681.

## P R E F A C E.

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TO THE READER,

UPON the desire of some, interested in the publication of this sermon, I have perused it, and do communicate these my thoughts concerning it.

There appears unto me in it those two things, which do above all others commend any sermon, or any other book; namely, most weighty and seasonable argument, with very judicious and methodical management.

If I am able to judge, the management speaks, 'arma virumque,' the man and his furniture. And it is like its great author, well known to this age, and like to be so unto future ones, by his writings in more than one language. There is a favour due unto all posthumous pieces, of which sort this is; but there is little need that this piece seems to have of it.

As for its argument, it is very salvation; and that not merely personal, or domestical, but national. This, if any thing, will be acknowledged momentous; and now, if ever, it must be acknowledged seasonable. Now, in this our day, 'known only to the Lord.' Nay now, that it is neither day nor night, as the prophet speaks. Now that city and country are crying, 'watchman, what of the night? watchman, what of the night?' Now, that the three frightful signs of approaching night are so upon us; I mean, shadows growing long, labourers going apace home, and wild beasts going boldly abroad. 'Quis talia fando temperet à lachrymis?'

In a word, here is that which will sufficiently recommend itself to all serious readers. It is the com-

plaint of many, that our booksellers' shops are become heaps of dry sand, in which many a rich stone is lost. But it is known to all, that diamonds will be found out by their own lustre. And I make no great question but so this sermon will be. That it may be so, and may go much abroad, and do good wherever it comes, is the prayer of

Thy servant in Christ Jesus,  
D. BURGESS.

From my house in Bridges Street, in  
Covent Garden, Aug. 7, 1690.

## SERMON XVII.

*For Israel hath not been forsaken, nor Judah of his God, of the Lord of hosts, though their land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel.—Jer. li. 5.*

THIS chapter, and the foregoing, are an eminent prophecy and prediction of the destruction of Babylon, and of the land of the Chaldeans, of the metropolitical city of the empire, and of the nation itself. There is a double occasion for the inserting of these words. The first is to declare the grounds and reasons, why God would bring that destruction upon Babylon, and upon the land of the Chaldeans. The words of ver. 4. are, ‘The slain shall fall in the land of the Chaldeans, and they that are thrust through in her streets.’ Why so? For, saith he, ‘Israel hath not been forsaken.’ The reason why God will destroy the empire of Babylon is, because he will remember Israel, and what they have done against him. This lies in store for another Babylon in God’s appointed time. The second reason is, that it may be for the comfort, for the supportment of Israel and Judah, under that distress which was then befalling them, upon the entrance of this Babylon in the land of the Chaldeans. Notwithstanding all, saith he, yet ‘Israel is not forsaken, nor Judah of his God.’

We are called this day to join our cries with the nation in the behalf of the land of our nativity. And though it hath been, as most of you know, my constant course on such solemn days as these are, to treat in particular about our own sins, our own decays, our own means of recovery; yet, upon this occasion I shall, as God shall help me, from these words, represent unto you the state of the nation wherein we live, and the only way and means for our deliverance from universal destruction. To declare our interest herein, some things must be observed concerning this Babylon, whose destruction is so solemnly prophesied of in this and the foregoing chapter; and I must observe three things concerning it.

1. That Babylon was the original of apostacy from the natural worship of God unto idolatry in the whole world

There was great iniquity before the flood, but no mention of any idolatry. There was a natural worship of God throughout the world, that was not corrupted with idolatry. There is no mention of it until the building of Babel. There it began: the tower which they built, they turned into a temple of Belus, whom they had made a god, and laid his image in the top of it. There was the original. You shall see immediately how we are concerned. There was the original of apostacy from natural worship unto idolatry.

2. Their idolatry. The idolatry that there began, consisted in image worship, in the worshipping of graven images, which was their idolatry, that they set up with respect unto men departed, whom they worshipped by them. Four times in this prophecy doth God say, he will 'take vengeance on their graven images.' And from Isa. xl. to the end of xlvii. you have a description of the idolatry of Babylon, that it all consisted in making carved idols, and graven images. The rest of the world, especially of the eastern nations, fell into the worshipping of the sun, which they called Baal, and Moloch, and Kemosh, all names of the sun; and the worship of the moon, which they called Ashtaroth, and the queen of heaven; but the idolatry of Babylon was by graven images and idols.

3. They were, so far as appears upon record, the first state in the world, that ever persecuted for religion, that oppressed the true worshippers of God, as such, as being 'mad upon their idols,' as the prophet saith they were, they were inflamed upon them. They were the first that oppressed the church, because of its worshipping of God, and destroyed that worship among them. Hence the church prays in this chapter, 'The vengeance of the Lord, and of his temple be upon Babylon:' not only the vengeance of the Lord, for destroying of his people; but the vengeance of his temple, for destroying of his worship, be upon Babylon, shall Zion say. 'Others have afflicted me,' saith he in the same chapter, 'but this Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon hath broken my bones.' They were the great oppressors of the church.

Upon these three accounts, which is that I would observe, the name of Babylon, and all that is spoken of it in the Old Testament, is transferred to the apostate church of

Rome in the New, and all applied unto it in the Book of the Revelation, and that upon this great analogy, which I shall now briefly shew.

Why doth God call the apostate state of the church under the New Testament, 'Babylon, Babylon, the Mystery?' For these three reasons :

(1.) As old Babylon was the rise and spring of apostacy from natural worship in the world unto idolatry, so this new Babylon was the rise and spring of apostacy from evangelical worship in the world unto idolatry. Mark the analogy. Hence she is called, 'the mother of harlots:' that is, she that had brought forth all the idolatrous churches and worship that were in the world. Did Babylon begin to apostatize into idolatry from natural worship? so Rome began to apostatize into idolatry from spiritual evangelical worship. Therefore the Holy Ghost calls her Babylon.

(2.) The peculiar idolatry of Babylon consisted in image worship, the worshipping of men departed under images made to their likeness. And the peculiar idolatry of Rome consists in image worship, the worshipping saints departed, which is a great part of their idolatry. And therein they are Babylon also.

(3.) As Babylon was the spring of all persecution against, and oppression of, the church of God, under the Old Testament; so Rome hath been the spring of all persecution, and oppression of the church of God since the apostacy, under the New Testament.

On these accounts hath the Holy Ghost in infinite wisdom transferred over the name, and state, and other things spoken of Babylon from the old unto the new.

I have mentioned this, that you may see the interest of England in this text of Scripture. So far as the truth of religion is owned in this nation, so far as there is a testimony given against idolatry, we are to God as Israel and Judah, though the land be filled with sin. At the time of this prophecy Israel and Judah were in danger of present destruction and desolation from the old Babylon; and if we do not mock God in all we do, we are under apprehensions that England and the church of God in England, is under danger of the same desolation and destruction from new Babylon.

upon the same account and principle. If we do not mock God, that is that we profess at this day. Wherefore the parallel runs thus far equal. Such as was Babylon of old, such is that at present: such as was the danger of Israel and Judah from them at that day, such is the danger of England from the new at this present. This is spoken in general.

For the opening of the words observe these three things:

First, That there is in them a reduplication of the names or titles of God. He is in this verse called by the name of 'the Lord of hosts,' and by the name of 'the Holy One of Israel.' Where there are such reduplications of the name of God, or any of his titles, the Holy Ghost would have us take notice, that it is a matter of great importance whereof he speaks.

Secondly, There is a distribution and application of these names of God unto distinct occasions suitable unto them.

1. There is in it mentioned an intimation of a surprisal with some protection or deliverance. Who shall it be done by? 'The Lord of hosts,' saith he, 'the Lord his God.' And he doth not in vain add immediately, 'The Lord of hosts,' that title of God. He who hath the host above, and the host below in his sovereign disposal. God's host above are all the holy angels, and all the heavenly bodies in their influences. The stars in their courses fought against Sisera; and he hath lately hung forth among us a flag or ensign of his host above, intimating that he is arising in his indignation, as 'the Lord of hosts,' and hath hung forth an ensign before his coming, full of dread and terror. And he is 'the Lord of hosts' here below, of all men, and of all creatures, disposing of them as seems good unto him. The prophet adds this name of God, because of the unspeakable greatness of the thing he mentions, namely, that Israel should not be forsaken, nor Judah, while the land was so filled with sin, and the whole interest of Babylon so coming upon them.

2. The other title of God is, 'The Holy One of Israel.' This is applied peculiarly unto their sin: 'The land is filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel.' It is the greatest, it is the highest aggravation of sin, that it is against the holiness of God, 'who is a God of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.' So hath the wisdom of the Holy Ghost applied

these two distinct titles of God unto the two distinct considerations of the people; first, of their protection, that he is 'the Lord of hosts;' secondly, as of their sin, that he is 'the Holy One of Israel.'

Thirdly, The third thing is this: that in this woful state there is yet an intimation made of a covenant interest of Judah in God, and that God did yet own them as his in covenant. 'Israel hath not been forsaken, nor Judah of his God.' Brethren, no man, I think, hath less of faith than I; no man doth more despond. But if I could see these two things in concurrence, 'his God,' and 'the Lord of hosts,' that is, sovereign grace, according to his covenant; and sovereign power, according to his providence; there is ground for any man's faith to build upon: 'his God, the Lord of hosts.' Nothing but sovereign grace and sovereign power can preserve a people, when their land is full of sin against the Holy One of Israel, and destruction seems to encompass them from the interest of Babylon.

I shall speak yet a little more particularly. You may consider in the words,

1. That which is mentioned in the last place; the state of the people at this time: 'Their land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel.'

2. An intimation of approaching deserved destruction on that account: 'Though the land:' it is in that condition that it ought to look for nothing but destruction.

3. A strange and wonderful surprisal, notwithstanding this, in sovereign grace and power: 'Israel hath not been forsaken, nor Judah of his God, the Lord of hosts.'

What shall I speak to is this.

*Observation.* When a land is filled with sin against the Lord, let men's hopes and expectations be what they will, they are in danger of utter destruction, and cannot be saved, but by the actings of sovereign grace and power.

I shall, for the handling hereof, at least I design to do these three things:

I. Shew when a land is filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel.

II. Gather up what evidences we have, that England is not yet utterly forsaken of God.

III. Manifest what is indispensably required of us, that



we may not be given up unto that utter desolation and destruction, that lieth at the door.

I do believe that I am not in my thoughts far from your case, far from the case of the nation. I do not search for things to speak to, I shall speak only those, that are compliant with the common reason and understanding of all sober persons.

I. There are three ways whereby a land may be said to be filled with sin.

1. When the sins of a land or nation are come to the full, to the utmost measure that God hath allotted to them in his patience. There is such an allotment of patience to every nation under heaven, and when it comes to its appointed issue, no means under heaven can defer or delay their destruction one day. Thus saith God before the flood, 'The land is filled with sin, the whole earth with violence; a flood shall take them away:' the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah came up to God; they had filled up their measure; God sent fire and brimstone to destroy them. 'You shall not yet go into Canaan.' Why? 'The iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.' There is a time appointed, wherein the iniquity of the Amorites shall come up to its full measure, beyond which their destruction shall not be delayed. This was not now the case of Israel and Judah. It proved afterward to be their case, as the apostle describes it, 1 Thess. ii. 15, 16. 'Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary unto all men: forbidding us to preach to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins away: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.' How come? They have filled their measure, reached to their bounds: 'wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.' I hope, I pray that this is not, that this may not be the state of England; that our land is not so filled with sin, as that God's decree of absolute and universal desolation should be gone forth against us.

2. A land may be said to be filled with sin, when it is come to that degree and measure, as that God will not pass it by without some severe desolating judgment. He will not utterly forsake it, he will not utterly destroy it; but let all mankind do what they will, he will not pass it by without

some severe desolating judgment. Such was their case even at this time. You may see in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16. 'But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy.' It was impossible that the judgment of God should be turned away from them. In this state God saith, 'Pray not for this people; my heart shall not be towards them:' until he had brought his judgment upon them. 'Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, I will not hear them.' Ay, but what if reformation come in? Nay, nay, saith he, it is determined against them: reformation shall not save them. See 2 Kings xxiii. 25, 26. where there is an account given of the greatest reformation that ever was wrought in Judah, by Josiah. So it is said, 'Like unto him there was no king before him, that turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him:' having reformed the whole nation. Then sure all will be well. See the next words: 'Notwithstanding the Lord turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah; and the Lord said, I will remove Judah also out of my sight.' There is a time and season when God, although he will not utterly destroy and forsake a nation for ever, yet he will not pass them by, until he hath brought a severe destructive scourge upon them. Whether this be the state of England at this day, or no, God only knows, and of mankind not one. Whether we are come to that state, wherein there is no remedy, wherein nothing we do shall prevent desolating judgments, I say, God only knows, and of men not one.

3. A land is filled with sin, when it is come to such a degree and measure, as that there is no rule of the word, nor any prognostic from providence, nor any conjecture from the state of things, that can give any determination what will be the issue. Judgment is deserved, and there is nothing remains but to look upon the balance, as it is held in the hand of sovereignty; which way it will turn, God only knows. The decree is not yet gone forth. In this your state God doth not say, 'Pray not for this people:'

God doth not say, 'Though you reform, I will not turn from the fierceness of my wrath:' but God saith, 'Who knows if God will return and leave a blessing? Who knows if God will be entreated and have mercy?' He leaves it upon the absolute pleasure of sovereignty to give us encouragement to wait upon him. Because I take this, yea, and I take it in the best of my hopes, to be that wherein we are concerned, pray take these two things along with you, before I go to shew it in particular. The first is, that in this state, if God gives time and space, there is encouragement enough left to make our applications to him for the removal of impending judgments. Methinks sometimes I see by faith the Lord high lift up upon his throne, and his train filling the temple with his glory, and holding the balance of this nation in his hand, and can turn it to mercy or judgment as seems good unto him. While it is so, while though 'the woman be put into the epha, yet the talent of lead is not laid upon her,' there is time for intercession, yet time for the interposition of God. And secondly, I say, and do you take it as you see good, but I will tell you my persuasion, that if there be not a compliance with the calls of God unto this nation, upon this suspension and arrest of judgment that we are under, we shall as certainly perish, as if we were in either of the two former conditions. If the Chaldeans were all wounded men, if there was no hope, no strength, no relief in the papal cause, they shall rise up and smite as in the day wherein 'Shalman spoiled Beth-arbel, and the mother was dashed in pieces upon her children;' Hos. x. 14. Unless there be a compliance with the calls of God in the days wherein we live.

Let us then a little, as God will give strength, inquire when a nation is so filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel, as certainly to put the balance into the hands of sovereignty, and to take off all rules and prognostics (which with great grief I have heard sometimes insisted upon), and reduce us merely to the hand of sovereignty. When is it that a land is so filled with sin?

(1.) A land is so filled with sin, when all sorts of provoking sins do abound in it; when there is no exception to be put into the indictment; when there is no provoking sin that can be thought on, that is not in the nation. For if

there be but one provoking sin absolutely excluded, there is room for mercy to dwell. Who now shall plead for England? Who shall put in an exception for England into this indictment? Oh poor England, among all thy lovers, thou hast not one to plead for thee this day! From the height of profaneness and atheism through the filthiness of sensuality and uncleanness, down to the lowest oppression and cheating, the land is filled with all sorts of sin. If there be any that can put in an exception, as to any provoking sin that is not among us, let them stand forth and plead the cause of this nation. I profess my mouth is stopped. 'The land is filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel.' It is to no purpose to enumerate our sins; the roll is too long to be read at this time; and I am sorry it hath been cut, and thrown into the fire; when it hath been spoken of, condemned and despised, as Jeremiah's was by Jehoiakim. But so it is.

(2.) A land is so filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel, when all sorts of persons in a land are guilty of provoking sins. Pray mistake me not; I do not say, all persons of all sorts: God forbid. If it had been so, we had long since been like unto Sodom and Gomorrah. 'If the Lord of hosts had not left us a small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah;' Isa. i. 9. But whereas there are many sorts of persons, rulers, and them that are ruled; high and low, rich and poor; in court, in city, in country; I say, all sorts of persons have been guilty of these provoking sins: 'We, and our princes,' as Daniel speaks, and our rulers, and the people, the inhabitants of the land of all sorts. Who shall plead here for England? Who shall bring forth a sort of persons? nay, it is not so in the throne; nay, it is not so at court; nay, it is not so among the clergy; nay, it is not so in the city; nay, it is not so in the country; it is not so with the rich; it is not so with the poor. Let any one, that can, bring in a plea for this poor nation, that we may not conclude the land is filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel.

But you will say, Here lies an exception: there are many persons, many churches free from these flagitious and provoking sins: there is a sort of persons, churches,

and professors, who walk in the fear of God, and are free from all these sins; and therefore it doth not extend to all sorts.

Brethren, you know my mind full well in this matter. I have been for these three last years upon all occasions inculcating it upon you. I acknowledge the churches in this nation are not guilty of those sins, whereby God is provoked against the nation to bring on national judgments: but I do say, that churches and professors in this nation are guilty of those sins, for which Christ will bring correcting judgments upon churches and professors; so that we are all in the same way and bottom, though not all upon the same account: 'The land is filled with sin.' How are your thoughts concerned in these things, brethren? I confess to you I speak my heart, my conscience, as in the presence of God, and as that which you are concerned to consider.

I have given you two evidences that this land is so filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel. I will give you two more.

(3.) When the sins of a land have upon them the greatest aggravations that national sins are capable of. What are they? They are plain; they are against warnings, and against mercies; all sorts of sins in all sorts of persons; against all sorts of warnings, and against all sorts of mercies. God hath not left this land without warnings in heaven above, and in earth beneath. Was there no warning given us in the wasting, desolating plague? No warning in the consuming, raging fire? No warning in the bloody war that ensued thereon? No warning in all the prodigious appearances in heaven above, that we have had? None in that which at present hangs over us, as an ensign of God's supernal host? I acknowledge there hath been, I fear a weakness in one kind of warning by the public dispensation of the word. But God hath not left himself without witness: he hath multiplied warnings, and they have not been complied withal. Have they, brethren? 'Were they at all afraid,' saith Jeremiah, when the roll was read? Or, 'did they rent their clothes?' Jer. xxxvi. 24. No, not at all. Have these warnings of God been complied withal? Hath the voice of God in them been heard? Hath the nation been afraid? Have they rent their clothes and returned to

the Lord? They have not. We yet continue, God help us, in a state of sin against warnings. And as for mercies, the mercies of peace and plenty have been the food of lust, of covetousness and sensuality, and have pampered us in wantonness, to the rending and tearing one another.

(4.) When in the secret workings of God's providence there is an inclination in a sinful people unto a compliance with them, from whom their destruction is like to proceed; it is a sign that God is withdrawn from them, and that the land is so filled with sin. When Israel was to be destroyed by the Assyrian, when Israel saw his sickness, he sent to the king of Assyria, applied himself to the king of Assyria, by whom he was to be destroyed; Hos. v. 13. When Judah saw his sickness, all his inclinations and applications were unto the Babylonians and Chaldeans, by whom he was to be destroyed. The prophet Ezekiel hath a whole chapter to tell you of the fondness of that people upon the Babylonians before their destruction; Ezek. xxiii. 'They were all like princes and mighty men, and thou wast in love with them, and committed adultery with them;' that is, partook and complied with their idolatry. When it is so, it is evident that God is greatly withdrawn from such a people, and that they are nigh unto their desolation.

What shall we plead for England in this matter? Is it not known what wretched and vile compliances we have had with a neighbour nation, the French, following their manners, imitating their customs, promoting their interest, advancing their reputation, when every man almost among us talked of nothing but that we should be destroyed by the French? An eminent token of the hand of God upon us, and that the land is so filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel. Nay, go farther, whence is it (for we bear ourselves herein not only upon the truth of the thing itself, but also upon the proclamation inviting us upon this day), whence is it, that we fear the judgments of God? Whence do we fear desolation, confusion, destruction upon this nation, to our religion, to our liberties, to our lives? Is it not from the papal interest? There is it stated by our rulers, and in the thoughts of all sober persons. And had we been wise, we might have seen it many years ago. But what have we been doing for some ages? Deserting our princi-

ples, forsaking the foundation we stood upon against the papacy, foregoing those avowed principles of the first reformers, pleading for compliance, pleading for a possibility of reconciliation, avowing them to be a true church. And in one word, if the power of the Protestant religion had not been preserved in the body of the people, it had by some been long ago given up to the papal interest, and this at a time working effectually among us when we were in dread, all that were wise and considerative, that there would from thence arise the desolation and destruction of this church.

I have given you these evidences, that this land of ours is so filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel. And if they can answer it, and disprove it, no man shall more rejoice in it than myself.

I should in the next place shew the danger that land is in, when things lie in this equal balance. For I pray observe, I have not given these things to prove the land hath filled up its measure of iniquity, and must certainly be destroyed; I have not given them to prove absolutely that there is a decreed judgment that cannot be diverted, that there is no remedy, that notwithstanding reformation, God will say, 'I will not turn away the fierceness of mine anger:' but I have given them only to prove, that we are in that state and condition, wherein there is no certain rule of the word, no indication of providence, no rational consideration of the state of things, that can give us any security of protection, or deliverance; but that we are absolutely resolved upon sovereign grace and mercy, and without relief from thence, I shall only say, as to the proof of the proposition, what the prophet saith, Isa. xxxiv. 16. 'Seek ye out of the book of the Lord and read, not one of these things shall fail.'

To omit all the considerations, and all the proof I intended, that sovereign grace and mercy must be our relief, if ever we be relieved; I proceed unto the second thing, which is,

II. To give in evidences, that England is not yet utterly forsaken of the Lord its God, the Lord of hosts, though the land be thus filled with sin.

So that there is ground of encouragement yet remaining to apply ourselves to God. And in truth I will tell you the best I can think of.

1. The large and wonderful discovery of the horrible plot, of the horrible popish plot, laid for the ruin, destruction, and desolation of this nation, is an evidence that England is not yet, I say, utterly forsaken of the Lord its God. It was not discovered by our rulers, from whom it was hid. It was not discovered by the severe indagation and watchfulness of ministers of state from foreign intelligence, the usual way of discovering such plots. It was not discovered by persons of authority and interest, to warrant the discovery. It was not so in a time when the nation was awake, and looked about them, and were jealous of such things; but in the deepest security. It hath admitted, it hath met with all the endeavours of hell and men for the covering of it; yet through the conduct of the holy providence of God, it hath broke forth to that discovery, as that it is publicly proclaimed to all the nation. I say with the wife of **Ma-  
noah**: ‘If God would have destroyed us, he would not have shewed us this thing.’ If he had utterly forsaken us, he would have left us to have been swallowed up, when we should not have had leisure to have cried, alas! To me, I say, it is an evidence that England is not yet utterly forsaken.

2. That God hath stirred up some, at least, of the nobles, and our rulers, to follow on this discovery, to bring it forth to light, and to pursue them to condign punishment, who were the contrivers, authors, abettors, and carriers on of that bloody design. I will not speak one word or syllable to their dishonour or disrespect, who deserve both honour and respect from us: but this I will say, that if I know them, or any thing of them, this is not from themselves; this is from the clothing of the Spirit of God, and anointing to this very work, and is not from themselves, nor their own principles, nor their own inclinations, but the hand of God in them and upon them. Add hereunto the strange and wonderful quiet disposeure of the magistracy of this city into the hand of persons, prudent, diligent, and watchful, whom we have reason to pray for, and bless God for. And it is strengthened by the stirring up of a spirit in the common people, unto an unheard-of heat and earnestness in bearing witness and testimony against popery and all their abominations, in such a manner as hath not fallen out in



any nation under heaven, and this acted above and beyond their spirits and principles. These things to me are some evidences, that England is not yet utterly forsaken of the Lord its God, though the land be full of sin.

3. I could instance in the embroilments of foreign nations abroad. At this time they are all quiet; but who is there that doth not know that they all stand as it were on the tiptoe, looking who shall first begin to cut throats, and kill men? Even all the nations in Europe are in this posture at this day. Though they are quiet this cold weather, yet who shall begin first, who shall make the attack, and who shall defend, is the talk of all Europe, whereby some of them may have been hindered from a public contributing to the ruin of this poor nation.

4. It is an evidence that England is not yet forsaken, in that a secret, efficacious influence of divine providence hath preserved the body politic of the nation in its being and union, when all the ligaments of law and mutual trust have been broken. There hath been such a dissolution of mutual trust, and all ordinary ligaments of the politic union of a nation, that if God had not powerfully grasped the whole in his hand, we had long since been in confusion, and every man's sword had been in the side of his brother and his neighbour. But to this day we are preserved in peace by a secret, influential power of divine wisdom and providence, whose footsteps I would adore more and more; which is so much the more excellent, in that it is not visible, and by outward force, but merely upon the minds of men. This is to me another evidence that England is not yet forsaken of its God, the Lord of hosts.

5. My last is this: that after God hath by so many ways, and so many means, declared unto us his displeasure against our sin, having declared the sentence in his word, yet he hath visibly granted an arrest of judgment. The sentence shall not be put in execution, saith God, while I give this people a time, and space, and season of repentance and reformation. Alas! if God had utterly forsaken us, he would have taken us off in the midst of our security; evil would have risen, and we should have known the morning of it; destruction would presently have overtaken us. But now God hath given us various calls, various warnings, and

leaves us a space as yet, to see what we will do, and what will become of us. I will give them a trial, saith God, the decree shall not yet go forth, judgment shall not yet come forth to execution, I will give them a space for repentance. And this consideration hath a double corroboration of this blessed space and season God hath given us for to apply ourselves so far to his call, as to remove his judgments that are impending over us.

(1.) The first is, that he hath reserved a remnant among us, that do make use of this space and season to apply themselves unto the throne of grace, and to cry mightily for mercy. God hath not taken his Holy Spirit from us. God hath not said by any open work, or secret intimation of providence, 'Pray no more for this people; my heart shall not be toward them.' He hath not said so; and therefore, there are yet among us precious souls, who do lift up prayers to God night and day, not only for themselves and families, not only for the church of God, but for this poor land of our nativity, that, if it were the will of God, we may not see it soaked in blood; that God would not come forth to destroy it with a curse; that God would pity, and spare, and have mercy upon it; that he would not make it an 'acedama,' 'a field of blood.' There are many cries to God to this purpose. So that there are some, by whom this space and season God hath given us, is made use of.

(2.) It hath strength from this, that there is an invitation and encouragement given to the whole nation, to join together in their cries to God this day for the same end and purpose. I confess to you, give me leave to speak it, I am afraid the body of the nation, considering their conduct in this sort of duty, will make no great work of it, towards the averting of judgments in such a day as this is. And I am afraid also, that the approaching carnival, or time of feasting, will quickly blot out all impressions that ought to be in the minds of men from such a day as this is. This is all I can say, God is publicly acknowledged, and what influence that may have in a farther suspension of judgment, till the nation be better prepared to seek unto him, I know not.

Methinks these are evidences (to me they are) that England is not yet utterly forsaken of the Lord its God: the miraculous discovery of the plot for our destruction: the

pursuit of it by some of our rulers, and the body of the nation: the embroilment of foreign nations in their own concerns: the preservation of the political interest and body, when all the ligaments of law, and love, and trust were dissolved: the space and season that God gives us, that we are not immediately hurried into blood and confusion, attended with a spirit of prayer in some of God's own people: and with a public acknowledgment of God in this day in the nation.

III. I should now proceed to my last thing, to shew you, that in this state, wherein a land is so filled with sin, as absolutely to put the determination of all things into the hand of sovereignty, and where yet there remains some evidences that God hath not utterly forsaken us, what is required of us, what is expected from us, that may be a means to turn away the wrath and displeasure of God from this poor land and nation.

I should have spoken to the following things:

1. That whatsoever be the language of God's calls, unless there be a general compliance with them, this land cannot be saved.

2. I should have shewn you, that all the diligence, and the courage, and the watchfulness of the rulers, shall not be able to preserve us from that destruction which we have deserved; unless something else be done ere long, their hearts will faint, and their hands fail, and their thoughts be divided. For that alone will not do.

3. Prayer will not do in this case, though that be necessary and required, it will not do it. God doth not cry to us merely that we should cry to him. 'Why criest thou,' said God to Joshua, 'there is an accursed thing.' Why dost thou lie upon thy face, and cry, and pray, when judgment is coming upon you? There is an accursed thing got among you. It is so with us.

To speak very plain in a plain case; the state of this nation is such, let our expectation and our hopes be what they will, and prognostics be multiplied, God can multiply upon another hand: the case of this nation is such, that without repentance evidenced, and universal reformation sincerely endeavoured, England cannot be saved, will not be saved; God will forsake it, destruction from the Lord will overtake us.

5. I should have told you also what I judge indispensably necessary that any such reformation may be obtained in this nation. As,

(1.) That there be, through the providence of God, provided another manner of administration of the word throughout the nation, than at present there is, which is the only means of conviction, and conversion unto God. Signs, and wonders, and judgments terrify; it is the word that must reform and turn to God. And if the state of things continue so, that some who are able and wise for the work are forbid, and others, that engross all to themselves, are either unable, or negligent in it; I have no great hopes of seeing reformation in this land.

(2.) Unless the generality of magistrates be better principled for, and better instructed in, their office, than as yet they seem to be, a reformation will not be carried through this nation. And,

(3.) Which is the principal; that those who have been examples in sinning, and in drawing others to sin, become examples in repenting, and reforming, and turning to God.

(4.) Lastly, that the whole nation be stirred up, and do not faint in the pursuit of it.

I have scarce been able to speak the heads of these things unto you. I wish I had strength to speak all that is in my thoughts and heart upon this matter, unto this whole nation; for hereon, and not on any think else, depends the deliverance and safety of it.