

A Sermon,
DELIVERED
AT EPSOM, NEW HAMPSHIRE,
November 12, 1813,

AT
The Funeral

Of the
Reverend Ebenezer Haseltine,
Who departed this life,
November 10, 1813.
In the 59th year of his age, and 30th year of his ministry.

—
By Isaac Smith, A.M.
Pastor of the Congregational Church of Christ in Gilmanton.

*Dangers stand thick through all the ground,
To push us to the tomb;
And fierce diseases wait around,
To hurry mortals home..... Watts.*

Concord:
Printed by George Hough.

Rev. John Smith

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FUNERAL SERMON,

Why do we mourn departing friends,
Or shake at death's alarms?
'Tis but the voice that Jesus sends,
To call them to his arms.—————Watts.

ZECHARIAH I.5

Your fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live forever?

AMONG all the motives made use of to awaken mankind to repentance, there is none more powerful than Death. When men seriously consider, that in the course of sixty, seventy, or eighty years, or it may be much less, they must die, and appear before an impartial Judge, to give an account for all the deeds done in the body, and be treated according to their moral characters for an endless *Eternity*; this consideration, this solemn reflection, becomes a very powerful motive to alarm the minds of men; to check them against sin; to lead them to repentance, and a religious life.

Under this view, it was, that the hold penman puts the solemn question in our text—"Your fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live forever?" Are they not all dead, and gone? Though some of them lived to a great age; yet where are they now? Have they not gone the way of all the earth? And the places which once knew them, will know them no more forever. Are not their bodies gone down to the silent grave, to mix with their original dust? Are not their souls ushered into a vast eternity, and fixed for an endless state, either in consummate bliss, or consummate woe, according as they lived and conducted in this state of probation? And will not this be your case soon? Must not you, their children, travel in the same path? Must not you be treated in the same manner? Must not you die, as well as your fathers, and be happy or miserable, according to the character you sustain in this life? Most surely this must be your doom. Therefore now turn to the Lord with all your heart, by a sincere repentance; and he will turn to you, in great mercy, and make you happy. – And as to the prophets, and ministers, that spake to your fathers in the name of the Lord, where are they? Did they, or could they, live forever? Nay, they have also departed—they have quit this mortal stage of action—their bodies entombed in the earth—their souls have joined the world of spirits—The true and faithful prophets have received the approbation of the Lord of hosts, and the rewards of paradise. But the false prophets who run before they were sent, and prophesied lies unto your fathers, they have also received their doom. Therefore seriously consider the deaths and future state of the former prophets, both good and bad, and prepare for your own. If you comply with the messages, and follow the example, of the good prophets, now dead and gone, you shall be happy both here and hereafter. But if you shut your eyes and harden your hearts against the truth, and choose to hear and comply with the lying suggestions and evil example of the false prophets, with them you must have your final dreadful doom. This seems to be the purport of the reasoning of the divine penman, in our text and context, with the Jews, soon after their return from the Babylonish captivity, to awaken them to repentance. And for the same important purpose, we shall draw the following doctrinal observations from the words.

First. That all men, of every age and character, must die.

Secondly. That after death, there is a future state, wherein all men shall be either happy or miserable, according to their moral tempers, and conduct in this life.

My design is to illustrate these two points of doctrine; and then close with some improvement, and application to the present mournful occasion.

First. I am to show, that all men, of every age and character, must die.—This is proved by many arguments. The first sentence upon man, after the apostacy from God, proves it—*Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return.* This shows that as the body of man was taken out of the earth at first, in his original make; so the bodies of all men shall die, and return back again to mingle with the dust. It is not spoken as a matter of

doubt or uncertainty; but with the utmost assurance—*To dust shalt thou, and all thy race, return.* This is the word of an omnipotent God, a God of inflexible justice and irresistible truth; and therefore must be accomplished.

This point is proved by many other passages of Scripture. That of the woman of Tekoa, recorded in the book of Samuel, *For we must all die, and be like water split on the ground, that cannot be gathered up again*—That David, *What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?*—That of Solomon is of the same import, *There is no man hath power over the spirit, to retain the spirit, neither hath he power, in the day of death; and there is no discharge in that war; neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it*—That of the apostle Paul is very forcible to this purpose, *It is appointed to man, that is, to men indefinitely considered, that is, to all men, one to die, and after that the judgment.*

I add, that the constant experience of all ages proves universal mortality. All the generations of men have passed away, in continued succession, one after another, without any cessation, from Adam to the present day.

Our text abundantly proves the same point—*The fathers, where are they?* By the *fathers* we understand the aged part of mankind, such as are in the last and closing period of human life. And if those who live the longest of any, whose years are protracted to the greatest extreme of old age, *must die, must finally die;* then it follows, that the whole human race must make their exit. Death, as a cruel enemy, and might conqueror, ravages all the other stages of life. Millions, in the infantile age, are hurried from the womb to the tomb, and never see the light. Thousands, in childhood and youth, are swept off by one disorder and another, and never arrive at maturity; so that one half of the whole human species, it is supposed, die before the twentieth year of their age. And of those who arrive to maturity, what vast multitudes depart in the strength of manhood, while their breasts are full of milk, and their bones moistened with marrow! So that, when an average is made, there is but a few, very few, in comparison of the whole, that ever arrive to bear the denomination of aged fathers and mothers; and if these also must shoot the gulf, and bid adieu to every sublunary object; then all must inevitably die—there is no remedy. *No man can by any means redeem his brother, or give to God a ransom for him.*

But although this may be the case with the common fathers of mankind; yet may not some particular great and useful men escape? Such as great and celebrated statesmen? Such as great and learned doctors and prophets of the church?—I answer, No—*The prophets, where are they?* They are dead, and dying, in the common course of nature and providence, as well as other men—Learning and science, the honorary degrees of bachelor or master of arts, the high founding titles of doctor of laws or doctor of divinity, will not screen men from the shafts of death. The great and wise Solomon died, as well as the most rude and ignorant of his subjects—And in the most celebrated prophet Elisha, who in his most useful ministry was the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof; yet at last bowed his venerable head, and gave up the ghost. So that men of the highest rank and character must die, as well as the meanest and most abject.

But will not *religion*, will not piety and virtue, save from the arrest of death, and protect us from the jaws of that devouring lion? I answer, No—The prophets were holy and pious men; they feared God, and kept his commandments: but where are they? Did they, or could they, live forever? No—They are dead; notwithstanding their zeal and piety, their goodness and righteousness, they died, as well as the most impious and wicked men who despised and rejected their messages. So that, with respect to this law, this inexorable law of mortality, there is one event, to the righteous and the wicked; to the clean and unclean; to him that feareth God, and to him that feareth him not; as is the good, so is the sinner' and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath. All men must die, both good and bad; and none can protract the span of life a single moment beyond the decrees of God; the number of our months are with him; our days are determined; he hath appointed our bounds, that we cannot pass.—Job xiv.5.

Having thus illustrated the *first* point of doctrine, we proceed to the consideration of the *second*, to prove there is a future state of existence, after this, wherein all men shall be treated according to their different moral characters.—This is indeed a dictate of common sense. It is very unreasonable to suppose, that so noble a creature as man, possessed of such exalted natural faculties, and talents, capable of such cast improvements, in all kinds of useful knowledge, and of everlasting happiness, should perish like the beasts, or have his whole existence limited within the narrow circle of fifty or an hundred years, which bear no more proportion to his capacity, than a drop to the ocean, or a grain of sand to the universe. Hence it is reasonable to suppose and believe, that there is a state of being after this, commensurate to the immense capacity of rational, intelligent creatures, where the soul of men shall exist, and be happy or miserable according to the difference of their moral characters in this start of probation.—Thus far the light of nature suggested a future state to the sages of antiquity; it was their opinion, that the souls of men existed after the death of the body: they imagined there was a heaven and a hell; their heaven they called Elysium, or fields of delight and pleasure, where they supposed all virtuous and good people went at death, and enjoyed the most consummate felicity: their hell they called Tartarus, a place of horror and despair, where the wicked were banished after death, and were punished with the most exquisite torments.

But notwithstanding these dictates of nature's light, or some ancient tradition, they were still left at great uncertainty with respect to the reality of these things. But it is not so with us. Blessed be God, we have a written revelation from heaven, wherein life and immortality have been clearly brought to light by Jesus Christ. Therein we are taught, not only that we must all die, but also that the soul shall survive the body, and live forever in another world; that there is an infinitely great and essential difference between a brute and a man; that the spirit of the one goeth downward to the earth, and the spirit of the other ascends to God who gave it—That there is a heaven of inconceivable happiness provided for the righteous; eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hat it entered into the heart of man to conceive, the glorious things God hath laid up in heaven for them that love him—into this happy, this consummate happy place, all that truly love God shall enter immediately after the death of the body—*The righteous perisheth, or dieth, (faith the prophet Isaiah) and shall enter into peace, each one walking in his uprightness—This day, faith the dying Savior to the penitent and expiring thief, shalt thou be with me in paradise—and the apostle Paul says, I know that when this earthly house of my tabernacle shall be dissolved, I have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens:* that is, he knew, by an eye of faith, and was assured, that whenever he should drop the body of clay, his soul would enter immediately into a state of eternal happiness in heaven. And this will undoubtedly be the case with all other good ministers, and pious Christians, at the moment of their dissolution—a convoy of angels will carry their departing spirits safely to Abraham's bosom.

The sacred Oracles also with equal certainty assure us that there is a future state of misery for the wicked, and finally impenitent; a hell of inconceivable, inexpressible torment, into which they shall enter at the death of their bodies. Thus it is said in the 9th Psalm, The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God. Our Savior often speaks of hell, and describes it, in the most explicit and striking language, to be a place of utter darkness, and fire unquenchable; of weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth. In this place, he tells us, the *rich man*, immediately after death, lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and begged for a drop of water to cool his inflamed tongue. To this place it was that Judas, the traitor, went, directly after he hung himself—*emphatically stiled, by the sacred penman, his own place, that place which properly belonged to him, and for which he had prepared himself by his own wicked conduct, which could be no other than hell—*And to this horrible place, the souls of all the finally impenitent and wicked men will be banished immediately after the death of their bodies, *where the smoke of their torment will ascend up forever and ever.*

The Oracles of God further teach and assure us, that there will be a resurrection of the bodies of all men, both of the just and unjust. Thus Daniel asserts, that they that sleep in the dust, shall awake and arise, some

to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And the great Redeemer informs us, that the hour is coming, or shall come, when *all that are in their graves* shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, to the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, to the resurrection of damnation. Thus, according to the Scriptures, there will be a resurrection state of the bodies, as well as the souls, of all men.

We are taught still further in the sacred volume, that there will be an universal judgment of all men, at the last day; that they shall stand before the judgment seat of Christ, to be judged if all the deeds done in the body, whether they be good, or evil; and Christ will separate them one from the other, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats—*And he shall set the sheep on his right hand; but the goats on his left.* And then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, *Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world*—And then shall he say also unto them on his left hand, *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. And these, viz. the wicked, shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal.* Thus closes the probationary state of all mankind, and no alteration can take place in their moral condition to eternity; it is now fixed by the Supreme Judge, with whom is no variableness nor shadow or turning; *that he that is unjust shall be unjust still; and he that is filthy shall be filthy still; And he that is righteous shall be righteous still; and he that is holy shall be holy still.* Rev. xxii, II

Thus we have illustrated the *second* point of doctrine; and shown, from the unerring Oracles of Divine truth, that there is a future state after death, wherein all men shall be either happy or miserable, according to the difference of their moral characters in life.

I now remains to make some improvement.

I. Is it true, that all men, of every age and condition, must die? Then learn, that all men are sinners, in some sense or the other.—From this universal natural effect, we argue the universal moral cause—the effect we see is universal; *therefore the cause must be so also.* Were there one man, woman, or child, without sin, they could not die; for who of the human race ever perished, being innocent? None ever did. They are all considered in a state of sin, and treated as such in the moral government of God. This is clearly the Apostle's account of the matter, Rom. V. 12. *Wherefore, by one man (viz. Adam) sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death has passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.*

That awful monster sin, by means of satan that old serpent, made its first entrance into the garden of Eden, into this once happy and innocent world, and paved the way for universal death and ruin to follow; and not only the death of the body, but the death of the soul, the better and more noble part of man; deprived it of spiritual life and infused a deadly moral poison, which will prove its utter and eternal undoing; without that precious antidote, the sovereign grace of God, expel the poison, and make a spiritual cure.—*The wages of sin*, say the Apostle in another place, *is death*; by which we may understand a threefold death; spiritual, temporal, and eternal. What a dreadful monster is sin, that has brought with it such a long train of evils, extending through all times, and to eternity! There is more evil in sin, than there is in any thing else in the universe. Natural death is the most striking of all visible evils. When we see it coming on one of our fellow creatures in the most distressing circumstances of pain, and a raging delirium, it is indeed enough to overwhelm the feeling mind.

But what is this to the full demerit of sin? It is nothing—it is less than nothing—it is lighter than vanity. When we see death spreading into all the families of the earth, and breaking asunder the most tender ties of nature; severing the husband from the wife, and the wife from the husband; parents from children, and children from parents; and destroying all their earthly hopes forever; turning the whole world, as it were, into a great house of mourning; in this view, death appears to be a great and complicated evil.

But what is this to the evil of sin? It is no more, comparatively, than the small dust of the balance to immensity. Nothing is a match for the evil of sin, but endless punishment. This is what a holy God has threatened sinners with, in his holy word; and what he may justly inflict upon them.

We therefore learn from this subject,

2 That all the provision God has made for the salvation of mankind from the great and infinite evil of sin and death, is of free sovereign grace—not of merit. God the Father was wholly self-moved, in the unspeakable and precious gift of his dear Son Jesus Christ, to be the Savior of the world. Christ came from heaven for this express purpose, to seek and to save, in consistency with the divine glory, that which was lost; to redeem us from sin and death; and that in such a wonderful way, by his own death, as astonished all the angelic world: he came to destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; to make an end of transgressions and sins for all his people, and to bring in an everlasting righteousness, in all things well ordered and sure: upon this foundation, to build up a church from the ruins of satan's kingdom, by the special agency of his Holy Spirit, and the instrumentality of his word; and furnish her with all those means of instruction, requisite for her edification here, and preparation for eternal glory: yea, to furnish his church with a Gospel ministry down to the end of the world. These gracious designs Christ has and will certainly carry into effect.

Under the Old Testament dispensation, Christ raised up a succession of holy prophets, one after another, for the instruction of his people. So it has been, and so it will be, under the New Testament dispensation, till the end of time: Christ will raise up a succession of Gospel ministers, to carry into effect the glorious purposes of his grace, with respect to the comfort and salvation of his chosen people; and he will be with them agreeably to his promise, till the end of the world. This is a most consoling and supporting consideration to the church, that when her pastors are removed by death, her great, faithful, and tender Shepherd still lives, to provide others to take their places, and carry on the same glorious work. Be not discouraged then, my mourning friends; *Christ has been—Christ still is—Christ still will be All and in All to his afflicted people, in time and to eternity*, to make all things work together for their spiritual and everlasting good.

3 We learn from this subject how infinitely interesting and important it is to have a saving interest in Christ, and so to be prepared for death and heaven. To be truly prepared for death, is the same thing as to be prepared for heaven. That person who is not fit for heaven, is not fit to die. To be fit for heaven, it is to be born again. *Except a man be born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God*; he cannot enjoy God in his kingdom. Therefore, to be prepared for death according to our Savior's express declaration to Nicodemus, John iii.3. is, to be born again; to have a new and divine nature; to be raised up to an hold and heavenly life.

But what are the peculiar evidences of this state of mind? Evangelical repentance is infallible evidence. The impenitent have a certain evidence that they are not born again, and consequently are in no preparation for death or heaven. The truly humble and penitent have a good evidence. *But to this man will I look, faith the Almighty, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word*. Genuine faith in Christ is a most sure evidence of a state of grace. *He that believeth shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned*. Supreme love to Christ is an infallible mark of the new birth. *If a man, faith the Apostle, be in Christ, or have the true love of Christ, he is a new creature; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new*. Complacential love to the cause and people of God, is also an infallible mark of a saving change of heart. *We know, faith the Apostle John, that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren*. An universal hold obedience to all the commands of Christ, and a cordial subjection to all his institutions and moral government, is indeed the cap stone of all the evidences of a gracious estate; a mere outward profession of all the rest will be of no avail without this. Matt. vii. 21. *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven*.

Now it is the immediate duty of every one of us, to see to it, that we are really possessed of these evidences of regeneration, and so are prepared for death and heaven. Delays are dangerous, extremely dangerous, where the everlasting welfare of our souls is at stake. Will you not, my dying friends, look about you? Will you not consider what moral, what religious garments you have on? Whose livery do you wear? Whose

banner do you fight under? What weapons do you make use of, carnal, or spiritual? What captain do you follow? What conquests do you gain? Are you now prepared to die? If death should come this moment, and take you out of the world, would you go to heaven? Are the angels ready to bear you on their celestial wings to glory? Are the mansions, are the feats ready to receive you? Can you join in the song of Moses and the Lamb? Have you a temper of heart prepared to fall prostrate and adoring before Jehovah's burning throne?

4 Is it so, as we have heard, that there is in reality a future state of perfect felicity prepared for all the righteous? Then learn how happy those are, who have left these mortal shores, and have cast anchor in that haven of eternal rest. The Apostle John was directed to write, *Blessed are the dead, which die in the Lord; yea, saith the Spirit, from henceforth they rest from their labors, and their works do follow them.* They rest from all those toilsome and fatiguing labors with which they were burdened here below—from all those storms and tempests of affliction—from all those pains and disquietudes—from all those fears and alarms—from all those distressing clouds of doubts and darkness—from all those noisome lusts and corruptions.—from all those carking cares and anxieties—from all those snares and temptations that worried and perplexed them on their journey through this world—In a word, they are completely delivered from all sin and sorrow—from every evil and enemy: and their works do follow them—their graces and virtues, their goodness and charity, their prayers and alms, their beneficence and good works, go with them to heaven, where they receive the cordial and universal approbation of their Lord and Master, Well done, good and faithful servants, enter ye into the joy of your Lord; the joy he has purchased and provided for them by his death—therefore of grace, not of debt. This joy is pure and unadulterated; no mixture of tears; all tears are wiped from their eyes forever. This joy is adequate to their most enlarged desires; every vessel will be full. This joy is everlasting, and therefore fully commensurate to their endless being.

This may administer consolation to those who have been bereaved of their pious friends and relations by death. They are infinitely better off than to be here, in this troublesome and sinful world; they would not return back to their former state and habitations, on any consideration whatever. You cannot, upon the principles of friendship, desire them to come back, to mingle with your sorrows, and partake of your trials. And could they look down from the lofty arch of heaven upon mortals below, their language would be, *Prepare for death*—get ready to follow us and partake of our joys—*We shall never return to you*, but you must come to us.

5 This subject may be applied to the present mournful occasion. God, in his holy providence, has made this temple of worship an house of mourning this day. He has removed your venerable worthy Pastor, by a sudden death, to the world of spirits. We are convened to perform his funeral obsequies, to convey his last remains to the silent grave. We all heartily sympathize with you, in this sorrowful bereavement. In him we see our text verified. He was a father in the church—a father in his family. But where is he now? Numbered with the congregation of the dead. But he, being dead, yet speaketh to all the living, Be ye also ready! He was a prophet, an evangelical prophet, a good minister of the Lord Jesus Christ, called and qualified by him to preach his Gospel.*

**He did not run before he was sent, as is the case with too many of all denominations; but waited till he got satisfaction in his own mind, of his gracious state; and came into the ministry by the regular door, with proper credentials. Mr. Haseltine was born at Methuen, in Massachusetts, October 28, 1744; entered Dartmouth College in 1773; took his degree in 1777; was examined, with respect to his qualifications for the Gospel ministry, by the Grafton presbytery; was approved, and took license to preach July 24, 1779; and was settled in the work of the ministry at Epsom January 21, 1784. The following sketch of the experimental and religious exercises of mind, which he had previous to his making a public profession, I had from one of his most intimate friends—he observes, that in free conversation, Mr. Haseltine gave him the following relation: that he had been under serious impressions, at times, from his youth; but he had no abiding or effectual convictions, until he was a member of College. At that time, he was under very powerful impressions, which he termed a law work, and believed that he then experienced regenerating grace. He spoke of the deep and solemn sense he had of the entire depravity of the human heart, his utter dependence on the mercy of God for salvation, and his only hope being in and through the merit of the Lord Jesus Christ. That his*

evidence of a change of heart, which he considered essential to future happiness, were so clear, that he was induced to make an open profession of religion, and joined the church at Hanover. By this it appears that Mr. Haseltine viewed satisfactory evidence of the new birth, as essentially necessary in order to church membership, or the work of the ministry.

He was found in the faith; a thorough Calvinist in sentiment. He distinguished clearly the doctrines of grace, from those errors which prevail in the present day, and solemnly warned the people against them. The Bible was the man of his counsel; he drew his sermons from that pure Source of Devine Truth. His discourses were correct, substantial, instructive and evangelical, calculated to edify, strengthen, and comfort the real Christian; and at the same time to detect and expose the hollow hearted, hypocritical professor, and lay before him the danger and certainty of his perishing in that state; also to awaken the careless and secure sinner, to a sense of his sin and misery, and to point out to him the necessity of immediate repentance, and faith in the blood of Christ, as the only way of escape from the wrath to come. He not only preached sound doctrine, but insisted on the necessity of experimental and practical religion, as essential in the Christian character; and was himself a bright example of those moral and religious duties he inculcated upon others. He was not a man for this world, but for the other. His heart seemed to be bound up in divine things, and to fulfill the ministry which he had received of the Lord Jesus.

He was a man of great modesty and diffidence, unassuming in his carriage among his own people and others; a man of strict integrity, and uprightness in all his dealings; a man of a quiet spirit; a promoter of peace and love among all; a man of hospitality and charity, so far as his ability permitted; kind and friendly to all mankind; and in consequence of his virtues, was respected by all his acquaintance, and esteemed as an excellent preacher, not only among his own people, but I believe by the pious and judicious in all the churches. But this good prophet could not live forever; the sable hearse, placed before our eyes, gives us the striking evidence that he is gone—gone from us forever; he has done all his work—he has finished his course—and we are left to mourn: But we do not mourn without hope; he has left behind him the credentials of a heavenly hope. We charitably believe, that he has fought the good fight, that he has kept the faith even to the end.*

A few days before his last sickness, he was remarkably stirred up, and impressed with an idea that something uncommon was about to take place. His mind was under a gloomy cloud of darkness, and distressing fears lest he had been unfaithful, and lacking in discharging his ministerial duty. But God, who is rich in mercy, was pleased soon to dispel the darkness, and lift upon him the light of his reconciled countenance. He became very joyful, and uncommonly engaged in conversation on divine things, with his own family and others. In prayer, and in his public performances, especially the last Sabbath, preaching upon Heb. iii. 1. and administering the holy Sacrament, he was remarkably animated; and so particular and solemn in his addresses to all classes, as left the impression upon their minds, that he had taken his final leave of them, and finished his work; and so it proved—he never entered the desk again.

Although through the violence of his last sickness, he was much deranged, yet at some lucid intervals, his reason returned, and some expressions dropped from his dying lips, intimating his willingness to venture his soul's eternal salvation upon the glorious Rock of Ages, even upon that very system of doctrines he had preached during his ministry; so that we have abundant reason to think he has gone to receive the crown of righteousness from his Lord and Master.

Nevertheless, his death must be considered as a sore bereavement to his dear family and people. For this reason I would drop a few words of condolence and advice to the several classes of mourners. First, to the widow of our departed brother.

Dear Madam, You have lost your head—the husband of your youth, with whom you have lived many years, in great love and harmony—he sleeps in death—the tender tie is broken—he has bid you and your dear children, farewell, never more to return—you are left in a lonesome condition. But be not dismayed; your Savior lives—He stiles himself, in his holy word, *The Judge of the widow, and the Father of the*

fatherless, in his holy habitation. Put your trust in him; he will never leave nor forsake you; though clouds and darkness are round about him, in this sore dispensation of his providence, yet firmly believe, that justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne. Be resigned to his sovereign will; and cordially confide in his gracious promise, that all things shall work together for good to them that love God: commit all your concerns to him, and he will give them a favorable issue: commit your fatherless children to him, and he will take care of them: discharge your duty faithfully, and leave all events to his providence: pray without ceasing, and he will give you the desires of your heart; and be always ready to meet the pale messenger; and to give up your account with joy.

To you, the dear children of our deceased friend, I would give a word of advice. You have lost your kind earthly father, who affectionately tendered your welfare—who dandled you on his knees, and carried you in his bosom: and how often did he carry you in the arms of his faith to the mercy seat, and earnestly implore *for you* the blessings of the everlasting covenant! How often did he warn you against the slippery and dangerous paths of vice and wickedness, and direct you to the narrow path that leadeth to life! But now he has done praying for you; he has done giving you advice; he has done all his work for you in this world. And now, dear youth, look up to God, to be your spiritual Father: Ask of him to give you a *new heart*; to direct you in the paths of piety and virtue; to protect you from all evil, especially from the evil of sin; to enable you, by his grace, to *seek first the kingdom of heaven and the righteousness thereof*—and then all needful temporal blessings shall be added:— see that you fall not out by the way; behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren and sisters to dwell together in unity, especially those who have been bereaved of pious parents; and to follow the good examples they have set before them. Hear the conclusion of the whole matter—fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man; for God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil.

I would not address this church. God has come very near to you in his holy providence; removed by death your under shepherd, who has for many years led you into green pastures, and beside the still waters of his holy institutions. He has finished his testimony; he has gone home to give an account of his stewardship, and to receive, as we charitably hope, the blessed *Euge* of his Lord and Master, *Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.*—This is a loud call to you to arise and trim your lamps, and *be also ready* for the coming of the heavenly Bridegroom; *they that were ready, went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut*—See then that you have on the wedding garment; that you stand fast in the faith; not tossed about with every wind of doctrine, or led astray by the cunning craftiness of men, who lie in wait to deceive. Remember him who has so long spoken to you in the name of the Lord; whose faith and example follow, so far as he followed Christ. Be you, at all times, like an army with banners, in your testimony against all sin, in your own body, and elsewhere; and also, like a band of brothers, in your unity and love: and let your light so shine before all men, that they, feeling your good works, may glorify God. Remember also, that though the prophets and ministers of the church are dead, and dying in constant succession, yet Jesus the great Prophet lives, to raise up others in their stead—Become, then, wrestling Jacobs with him, to supply you with another Pastor after his own heart, who may go in and out, and feed you with the bread of life; and we pray, that you might prevailing Israels, and obtain the blessings for yourselves and children.

My dear friends of this town and congregation, The sudden death of your respectable Pastor is a solemn call to you, to prepare to meet your God in judgment. He has gone before the burning throne, to give an account of the messages he has delivered to you from Sabbath to Sabbath, and time to time, *in his Master's name*; and it will be but a little while before you must appear before the same tribunal, to give a solemn account how you have heard and improved these messages of love. If you have cordially received and faithfully improved them, they will be a favor of life unto life: but if it be otherwise—if you have turned a deaf ear to the blessed Gospel, and go on still rejecting the overtures of divine mercy till death, they will



surely be a favor of death unto death to your precious and immortal souls. How dreadful will be your doom! Consider, I beseech you, before it be too late; and fly to Christ, the blessed Ark of safety.

A word to my brethren in the sacred office. The sudden and unexpected death of our worthy brother, in the same ministry and connection, is a very serious admonition to us, *to be also ready*, to go forth, and the midnight cry, to meet the heavenly Bridegroom at his coming, and give up our account to him with joy, and not with grief. Let this be a powerful motive to engage us to greater fidelity in our ministerial work; to be instant, in season, and out of season; to reprove and rebuke, with all long-suffering and doctrine; to watch for souls as those who must give account; with our loins girded about with truth, and our lights burning; and we ourselves, like to men who wait for our Lord when he will return from the wedding, that when he cometh, and knocketh, we may open to him immediately. Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find watching; if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.

I shall close this discourse with a few serious words to this numerous assembly. It is not likely that we shall all meet together again, on this side of eternity; I would therefore beseech you all to consider these four last things, *Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell*; and examine yourselves as in the presence of God, whether you are prepared for the first. Are you new creatures? And do you live as becometh of the Gospel? Then you are fit for heaven; and death will be a welcome messenger, to convey you from this abode of sin and misery, to the mansions of eternal glory. But if not—if you are still in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity, and continue to till the end of life, you must be eternally miserable—you must make your bed in that dreadful place, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. How awful is the end of the finally impenitent. Methinks it is one of the most solemn things on this side eternity, to behold a coffin and a grave—But there is one much more solemn and dreadful beyond the grave; that is, to behold a Christless sinner stand before the bar of God, to give an account for all the deeds done in the body, and hear the Supreme Judge pronounce the sound, *Depart, depart, ye cursed*, into everlasting fire! O then,

Sinners, awake betimes; ye fools, be wise;
Awake, before this dreadful morning rise;
Change your vain thoughts, your crooked ways amend;
Fly to the Savior, make the Judge your friend;
Then join, ye saints; wake every cheerful passion;
When Christ returns, he comes for your salvation.