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A Memorial of the Fire of the Lord,

I N A

# S E R M O N

Preach'd Sept. 2d. 1713.

Being the Day of the Commemoration  
O F T H E

Burning of LONDON, in 1666.

At Mr. Reynolds's Meeting-place  
near the Monument.

By MATTHEW HENRY, Minister  
of the Gospel.

*Publish'd at the Request of some Ministers  
that heard it.*

L O N D O N.

Printed, for John Lawrence at the Angel in the Poultry  
Em. Matthews, at the Bible in Pater-Noster-Row  
R. Robinson, at the Golden Lion in St. Paul's Church-  
yard; N. Cliff, and D. Jackson, at the Bible and  
Three Crowns in Cheapside. MDCCXII. Price 3d.

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**MEMORIAL**  
 OF

*The FIRE of the LORD.*

*Numb. xi. 3. And he called the Name of the Place, Taberah, Because the Fire of the Lord burnt among them.*

**W**E have here an Account of the prudent and pious Care which *Moses* took, to preserve the Memorial of a *Fire* which happen'd in the Camp of *Israel*, by giving a new Name of suitable Significancy to the Place where it happen'd; which being left upon Record here, in the Book of God, is a Monument of the *Fire*, further visible and more durable than this *Pillar of Stone*, the Monument hard by, and will outlast even a *Pillar of Salt*; For, wherever in any Age, the Books of *Moses* are read (and they shall be read in every Age, to the End of Time) there shall this be told for a Memorial; that the Fire of the Lord burnt among the *Israelites*, and in Remembrance of it, *Moses* called the Place, *Taberah*.

And thus it suits the Occasion of our meeting here to Day (in Communion with many Religious Assemblies in this City) to put ourselves and one another in Mind of that *Fire of the Lord*, which in the Memory of many of you, burnt among you, to that Degree, as to make of this City a *Heap*, this flourishing City a *Ruin*; a Judgment which it was then thought fit, by the annual

usual Observation of this Day, to transmit the Remembrance of to Posterity.

Now observe in the Text,

1. What the Judgment of God upon the Camp of Israel was. *The Fire of the Lord burnt among them.* 'Tis call'd the *Fire of the Lord*, because it fell from Heaven, it came immediately from the Hand of God: As that Fire did, which sometimes consum'd the Sacrifices, in Token of God's Acceptance of them, when justly it might have consum'd the Sinners, and taken Vengeance on them. Here it did consume the Sinners, to signify,
  - 1 Sam. 3. 14. that their Iniquity was such, as should not be purged with Sacrifice or Offering for ever; as another Time it Lev. 10. consum'd the Sacrificers, when they offer'd strange Fires.
  2. Lightning is the *Fire of the Lord*, as Thunder is the Voice of the Lord; with that Fire Job's Sheep, and the Servants that attended them, were burnt up; 'tis Heaven's *Fire-Arms*, with which sometimes dreadful Execution has been done. Fire and Water (we say) are good Servants, but bad Masters; The old World was master'd and destroy'd by Water, and this is reserv'd unto Fire; God has Treasures of both in his Magazines, which he has laid up against the Time of Trouble, the Day of Battle and War.

2 Pet. 3. 6, 7. Job 38. 23. This Fire of the Lord burnt among them, among that People whom God peculiarly favour'd, when by Sin they displeas'd him, and his Anger was kindled against them. Tho' the Pillar of Cloud and Fire was over them to protect them, while they kept themselves in the Love of God, that shou'd be no Security to them, when they rebell'd against him. — It burnt the Bodies of many of them to Death, they were kill'd with Lightning; or, perhaps it burnt their Tents and Goods; It consumed (so the Original is, v. 1.) in the uttermost Parts of the Camp, not saying whether Persons or Dwellings; our Translation determines it to Persons, *them that dwelt there*; But the Quenching of the Fire, v. 2. seems rather to intimate that it was the Tents that were burnt. It kindled in the utmost Parts of the Camp, where the inferior Sort were, the mixt Multitude, who were generally the Ring-Leaders in every Mutiny; the Judgment began where the Sin began. Or, it intimates that God came upon them by Degrees, seizing those first that were of lower Rank, that others might take Warning. Or, This

This Fire began in the *utmost Parts of the Camp*, as if it would take all before it.

Now this among other things *happen'd to them for* 1 Cor. 10. Example, and was intended to be a Warning to us; that we sin not, after the Similitude of their Transgression. The People complain'd; that was it that provok'd God to kindle this Fire among them. Let those that are of a fretful, discontented Spirit, that are always complaining of *their Lot*, complaining of every Event, quarreling with God and his Providence, *diminishing every Mercy*, and *doubling every Cross*, see in this Instance, what an exceeding sinful Sin this is, and how provoking to God. Those who are always complaining for *Trifles*, must expect to have *something* given them to complain of. As on the one Hand nothing is more acceptable to God, than our humble Acceptance of all he saith and doth (*Quis Deus placuit? Cui Deus placuerit.* Aug.) so on the other Hand, nothing is more displeasing to God, than our being *displeas'd* at his Disposals.

2. The Memorial of this Judgment, to transmit a Traditional Knowledge of it to Posterity, *Moses* call'd that Place, *Taberah, Incendium, Combustio, A Burning*. The Seventy translate the Hebrew Name *Εμπύριος*. *Moses* knew too well how apt the People were, soon to forget the Works of God, both his Mercies and his Judgments, and therefore was very industrious to fix in their Minds the Remembrance of them, and contriv'd Means to revive the Remembrance of them, when it shou'd begin to dwindle and die. This Fire of the Lord, tho' it burn'd but in the *utmost Part of the Camp*, and was soon quench'd, yet must not be forgotten; he therefore calls the Place *Taberah*. Here the *Burning* was. And if Posterity ask, *What Burning?* It will be answer'd, the Burning of a Part of the Camp of the *Israelites*, with the *Fire of the Lord*, for their Discontent and Murmuring. And we find *Moses* himself, near Forty Years after, putting the next Generation in Mind of *this very thing*, purely by the Mention of *this Name*, as he did of other the like Sins and Judgments, by the Names he had given to other Places for the same Purpose, *And at Taberah, and at Massah, and at Kibroth-Hattaavah ye provoked the Lord to Wrath.* Deut. 9. 22.

But

But by recording those things in his sacred Writings, he has more effectually preserv'd the Memorial of them, and transmitted it even to us, whose Lot is cast in the Ends of the Earth, and upon whom the Ends of the World are come. And this is one of those Passages of Story, which the Psalmist would have the Fathers to make known to their Children, that they may tell them to theirs; that God heard their Murmurings and was wroth, So a Fire was kindled against Jacob.

1 Cor. 10. 11.  
Psal. 78. 6, 21.

So that from hence we may gather this Lesson,

*That a lasting Memorial ought to be kept of the Fire of the Lord, when it has at any Time burn'd among a People.*

As the Mercies of God ought to have their Memorials, and us'd to have in the Church of God, Names of Remembrance, Stones of Remembrance, Songs of Remembrance, Days of Remembrance, of which it were easie to give numerous Instances in Scripture; so the Judgments of God too, shou'd be remember'd, for they are improveable as well as his Mercies, improvable not only by the Sufferers themselves, and by their Neighbours at the same Time, but by their Successors afterwards, as Shiloh's Ruins were Jerusalem's Instructions, many Ages afterwards. Care must therefore be taken, not only to preserve the Remembrance of them in our own Bosoms, but to transmit it to the Generations to come, for their Benefit.

Jer. 7. 12.

For it is not enough to remember these Works of God, but we must consider them, must wisely consider them, so as to understand them, and make a good Use of our Remembrance of them. As we must Remember God's Commandments to do them, else we remember them to no Purpose; so we must remember God's Providences, not meerly as Matter of Discourse among ourselves, or Information to our Children, but but with suitable Affections working in our Spirits, and suitable Impressions made upon them. Lo this, we have searched it, (saith Eliphaz) so it is, Hear it, and know thou it for thy Good.

Eccl. 7. 13.  
Psal. 64. 9.  
Psal. 103. 18.  
Job 5. 6.

1. We must often call to Mind the Personal and Private Rebukes of Providence, which we ourselves and our Families

Families have been under. The History of a Man's own Life is as useful a Piece of History, as any he can study; and here a Man must be his own Historian, and his own Reader; and therefore under both Characters 'tis to be hoped he will be careful, and faithful to himself. God's Counsel to Israel, is good Counsel to every Israelite, *Thou shalt remember all the Way, in which the Lord thy God has led thee in this Wilderness, how He humbled thee, and suffer'd thee to hunger, and chasten'd thee, as a Man chasteneth his Son.* Deut. 8. 2, 3, 5.

We should remember what God hath spoken to us, not only by his Word, giving earnest Heed, lest at any Time we let that slip, but by his Rod, for that also hath a Voice, an articulate, intelligible Voice, and is sent to us on an Errand, and waits for an Answer; and the Voice of both we shou'd now both hear for the Time to come, and hear from the Time past; and the repeating of the Lessons we have been taught by both, is confessedly necessary, to our learning of them perfectly. Heb. 2. 1.

Apt enough we are to complain of our former Afflictions, too apt to remember them, with pievish Reflections upon the Divine Providence, and the Instruments of it, and vain Boastings what Hardships we have gone through. But we should remember them to renew our Repentance for the Sins that procur'd them, our Thankfulness for the Mercy that supported us under them, our patient Submissions to the Will of God in them, our Improvements in Knowledge and Grace by them, and the good Resolutions of better Obedience, we made under them; 'tis for this End that we are to preserve Memorials of our Troubles; As the lamenting Church remember'd the Affliction and the Misery, the Wormwood and the Gall, My Soul (saith she) hath them still in Remembrance, and is humbled within me. And as David pen'd many of his Psalms, to keep in Remembrance, and to bring to Remembrance the Distresses he was in, that at the same Time he might recollect for his present Benefit, the Frame of his Spirit, and the Workings of his Heart under them. Lam 3. 19, 20.

You have all found your Days upon Earth to be full of Trouble, tho' not all alike so; Review the Troubles of your Life, that what was ill done by you, in the day of your Affliction, may be undone by Repentance, and what



- what was well done, may be done again; may be better done, and kept always in the Imagination of the Thought of your Heart. Let not your Sickneses and Pains be forgotten; *Hezekiah* took care that his shou'd not, but shou'd be kept in Remembrance by his writing, when he had been sick and was recover'd. Let not your Losses in your Estate, your Crosses and Disappointments in your Affairs, be forgotten. Let not the Death of your dear Relations, and the Breaches thereby made upon your Comforts be forgotten. *Naomi* took care that her complicated Grievs of both those Kinds shou'd not be, when she chang'd her own Name, Call me not *Naomi*, call me *Mara*. *David* took care that his shou'd not, when he pen'd the 39th Psalm (it shou'd seem) upon Occasion of the Death of some Friend that was dear to him, and left upon Record his Prayer under the Affliction, Lord make me to know my End, and his Promise, I will take heed to my Ways.
- Isa. 38. 9.  
Ruth 1. 20.  
Psal. 39. 1. 4.

By remembering your Afflictions in this good Manner, and for these good Purposes, you may not only regain the Benefit you formerly got by them, but may gain more; as having now your Thoughts more cool and sedate, and under Command, than they were in the Hurry of the Affliction. The Chastening for the present is grievous, and perhaps we are under it, as *Job* was, full of Confusion; but it is afterwards, when it comes to be reflected upon and review'd, that it yeilds the peaceable Fruit of Righteousness, Fruit that remains.

Heb. 12. 11.

By a due Remembrance of former Corrections, if we received them aright, like the tender and tractable Child, we shall be kept from returning to Folly, and so prevent another Correction; and like the burnt Child, dread the Fire.

2. We must often call to mind publick Judgments, Judgments upon the Communities we are Members of; upon the Land and Nation God's controversies with that, upon the City, his Voice that has cried to that; for as in the Peace thereof we have Peace, so in the Trouble thereof we have Trouble, and must feel it. Those are unworthy the Honour of *Zion's* Sons, that think not themselves concern'd in *Zion's* Sorrows, her past as well as present Sorrows.

Tho' God by subsequent Providences in Favour of a returning People, may have superceeded *The Fast of the Fourth Month, the Fast of the Fifth, the Fast of the Seventh, the Fast of the Tenth*, so as to turn them into Joy and Gladness, and chearful Feasts: And by the Abundance of our Comforts, may make us to forget our Miseries, and to remember them as Waters that pass away, to forget all our Toil, as Joseph did; yet we must still remember to make a pious Improvement of it; must still be sowing, sowing in the Spirit, tho' the Tears in which we sow'd, be in some Measure wiped away; and to assist you herein, as God enables me, is my Desire and Endeavour at this Time, that our coming together may not be in vain.

Zach. 8:  
19.Job 11:  
16.Gen. 41:  
51.

God has many Ways contended with us of this Nation, with you of this City; as we have been like *Israel* of old, favour'd with many Privileges and Advantages above our Neighbours, both for *Life and Godliness*, from whence it might justly, and with good reason have been infer'd, as it was concerning them, *surely this great Nation is a wise and understanding People*, so being found like them, notwithstanding this, *a foolish People and unwise*, nay, *a rebellious and gain-saying People*, we have like them fallen under severe Judgments: For the more rich a Peoples Privileges are, the more provoking their Sins are, and consequently the heavier are their Punishments; For even in this Life, especially in dealing with Communities (which as such can be dealt with in this Life only) God sometimes observes a Proportion between the Sins and the Plagues.

Deut. 4. 6

Some have observ'd, that God's Judgments upon us in this last Age, have been the *forest in their kind* of any other; like that concerning which the Prophet appeals to the *Old Men*, and to *all the Inhabitants of the Land*, whether there had ever been the like in their Days, or in the Days of their Fathers. Never was there such a Plague in this Nation, as that in London in 1665, never such a Fire as that the Year after, never such a dreadful Storm as that about Ten Years ago, as if God were heating the Furnace *Seven times hotter*; for he will bring greater Judgments, on those who are not wrought upon by lesser; and when he judgeth he will overcome.

Joel 1. 2:

That which I am now to confine my self to, is, *The Fire of the Lord* which was kindled in this City, this Day 47 Years, which in Four Days time laid in Ashes, the richest, the ancientest, and the most considerable Part of this City, that I mean *within the Walls*; and I observe upon the Calculation then made, that there was almost as much consum'd without the Walls as was left standing *within*. [ For thus the Survey stood; 373 Acres burnt within the Walls, and 75 left standing; but there were 63 Acres burnt without the Walls.] You had 89 Parish Churches burnt, besides Chappels; you had your *Exchange*, your *Guild-Hall*, and the Halls of your Companies laid in Ashes; and above Thirteen Thousand Dwelling Houses level'd with the Ground.

r. Some of you can remember it, perhaps by a good Token, a sad Token, you were burnt out of your Houses it may be, and forc'd to lodge in the Fields; It may be some of you were great Losers by it, when you were young, and setting out in the World, and it was a great while before you recover'd it; It broke the Measures you had laid, ruffled your Affairs, and put you upon new Counsels; or perhaps brought you so much to a Loss, that you were at your Wits ends, and at that time *Knew not what to do*; but have since found to your Comfort, that God knew what to do for you, and has graciously help'd you.

Or tho' you were not then so far grown up, or so far engag'd in the World, as to be Sufferers by it, yet you were *Eye-Witnesses* of it. You saw it rage, you saw what Desolations it made, and now you are Old, will say it was the most dreadful Sight you ever saw; the pitious Case of so many ruin'd Families, and their doleful Lamentations cou'd not but be yet more affecting, yet more afflicting; and made you ready to cry with the Prophet in a like Case, *My Bowels, my Bowels, I am pined at my very Heart, because thou hast heard, O my Soul, the Alarm of Fire! Fire! no less terrible than the Alarm of War; Destruction upon Destruction is cried.* The Destruction of the Fire, upon that of the Pestilence the Year before. Many a melancholy Story perhaps some of you have told, upon the Occurrences of that Time, and the Impressions they made upon you. — *Quaque ipse miserrima vidi.*

But

But there is another thing which you must give me leave to enquire, *what you remember of it?* The faithful Ministers of Christ at that Time, no doubt laid out themselves in their Preaching, to improve that Providence, in dealing with you about your Souls. Something came from the Press upon that Occasion, by Mr. Vincent, Mr. Doolittle, and others; and much more we may well conclude by Word of Mouth; now what do you remember of that? What Account can you give of the Sermons you heard upon that Occasion, and of the good Impressions they made upon you when you were young, and your Hearts tender? Can you say thro' Grace that your Consciences were then *convinc'd* and *awaken'd*, and that when you were *chasten'd*, you were *taught out of the Law*, and the Gospel. Happy the Day, and Happy you, if what you then *lost* by the Rod of God was *made up*, and more than made up to you, in what you *gain'd* by the Word of God

2. But the most of you were not then born, or were so young as to remember nothing of it; yet you have been told of it, perhaps you have read of it, and cannot be altogether ignorant of that Event. Blessed be God, there is no Occasion for such *different Sentiments* and *Resentments* between the *Old People* and the *Young*, as there were when the Foundations of the Second Temple were laid, when the young People rejoyc'd to see a Temple begun, but the Aged wept, because it was so far inferior to the old one; no, if the young will joyn with you that are Old, in bewailing the Fall of the *former City*, you will joyn with them in celebrating the Beauty of the *latter*; and let both joyn in endeavouring to improve the Remembrance of that *Fire of the Lord*.

Nine Lessons I shall recommend to you, to be learn'd from that Fire which we are this Day observing the Memorial of.

*First, See how terrible God is in his Judgments, and fear before him.* It was the *Fire of the Lord* that burnt among you; whatever Hand of Man might be in it, 'tis certain this Evil in the City was the Lords doing; it was a *Consumption determin'd by the Lord of Hosts*, and the *Breath of the Almighty* that kindled the Fire, and directed all the *Motions* of it. 'Twas the *Light of Israel*

Isa. 10. (who is and will be a rejoycing Light to his People)  
7. that was then as a Fire, a consuming Fire; for so our  
God is and will be, to those that rebel against him;  
and the Holy One of Israel, that was then as a Flame,  
that devour'd so many Churches and Houses, as if  
they had been Briars and Thorns in one Day.

Exod. 3. See how terrible God's Majesty is; when he came  
2. down upon an Errand of Mercy, to deliver Israel out of  
and 24. Egypt, he appear'd in a Flame of Fire in the Bush; and  
17. at Mount Sinai, the Sight of the Glory of the God of  
Israel, was like devouring Fire in the Eyes of the Chil-  
dren of Israel: But much more terrible is his Justice to  
them that provoke him. If the Glory of his Greatness  
be like Fire, to a People that are entring into Covenant  
with him, much more will the Terror of his Wrath be  
so, to a People that have broken Covenant with  
him.

Pfal. 90. Come, behold what Desolations God has made, and  
11. say with Moses the Man of God, upon the Review of  
the Judgments of God inflicted on Israel in the Wil-  
derness, and this at Taberah, among the rest, Who

1 Sam. 6. knows the Power of thine Anger? Say as the Men of  
20. Bethshemesh said, when there was such a Slaughter made  
among them that look'd into the Ark, Who is able to

Isa. 63. stand before this Holy Lord God? Say as the Sinners in  
14. Zion are forced at length to say, and the Hypocrites,  
when Fearfulness surprizeth them, who among us shall dwell  
with the devouring Flames, (by which some understand

Pfal. 119. God himself) with the everlasting Burning: Say as Da-  
120. vid, My Flesh trembleth for Fear of thee, and I am afraid  
Heb. 10, of thy Judgments: And conclude with the Apostle, it  
7. is a fearful thing to fall into the Hands of the living God.

God has all Creatures at his Command, and all the  
Powers they have are derived from him, and by them  
he designs to keep the World in aw. The Power which  
the Fire has to consume and destroy is from him; when  
he pleaseth he can countermand it, as in the Case of  
the Three Children; and when he pleaseth he can com-  
mission it, and enforce its Operations, and direct it  
Motions. The Voice of the Lord divides the Flames of  
7. Fire, sends one Flame one Way, and another Flame  
another Way, and each on its respective Errand.

Let the Thoughts of the Fire of London, fill us with  
a holy Aw of God, and a filial Fear of his Wrath;  
that

that *Fire of the Lord*, which when it is kindled but a *Psalm. 2.*  
 little, much more when 'tis kindled to such a Degree, *12.*  
 we shall see Cause to say, *Blessed are all they, that put*  
*their Trust in him. Fear ye not me, saith the Lord, that* *Jer. 5. 22.*  
 with a Touch, with a Frown, with a Look, can make  
 the Mountains smoke? that with one Spark of Fire can  
 lay Heaps upon Heaps? Let the Earth tremble at his  
 Presence, much more at his Absence, and his Departure  
 in Anger.

See what Fools they are, who make this God their E-  
 nemy by Sin, and engage his Power against them, and  
 yet when they have done so, bid Defiance to his Jus-  
 tice, challenge him to do his worst, saying, *Let him*  
*make Speed and hasten his Work, that we may see it.*  
 Is this a God to be jested with? *Be not deceived, Isa. 5. 19.*  
*he is not mocked.* Presumptuous Sinners, who play  
 with this Fire, who stretch out their Hands against *Job 15.*  
 God, and strengthen themselves against the Almighty, who *25.*  
 run upon him, even upon his Neck, upon the thick Bosses of  
 his Buckler, will find to their Cost, that none ever hard-  
 ned his Heart against God and prosper'd. God has Access  
 with his Flames to Men's Hearts, as well as to their  
 Houses, can kindle a Fire in their Bones, a Fire in their  
 Consciences, that shall secretly waste and exhaust their  
 Spirits, a Fire not blown, not seen, that shall consume  
 them, a Fire that shall burn to the lowest Hell, and ne-  
 ver be quench'd.

Give all Diligence therefore, to make your Peace with  
 this terrible God: It may be done, it shall be done, if  
 it be not your own Fault. *Fury is not in him, and yet Isa. 27. 4.*  
 it is to no Purpose to think of contending with him; *5.*  
 to make Opposition, is but like putting Briars and  
 Thorns before a consuming Fire, which instead of stop-  
 ping its Progress, doth but make it burn the more fu-  
 riously. Let him therefore take hold on his Strength,  
 that he may make Peace, and he shall make Peace.

And having made your Peace with God, *Keep your*  
*selves always in his Love*, and take heed of turning your-  
 selves out of it; and while you do so solace your selves  
 in his Love, and believe that this God of Power will be  
 your Protector, and a Wall of Fire round about you.

Secondly, See what a mischievous Thing Sin is, which  
 provokes God thus to be our Enemy, and to fight against  
 us; If it was God's Justice that burnt London, it was  
 Man's

Man's Injustice that brought Fuel to the Fire; For a fruitful Land is never turn'd into Barrenness, nor a flourishing City into Ruins, but it is for the Iniquity of them that dwell therein. God never contends with a People, but 'tis Sin, 'tis Sin that is the Core of the Controversy. National Sins bring National Judgments. The Sins of a City bring Misery upon it, *Jerusalem hath greivously sinned, therefore she is removed.* When the Men of Sodom were wicked, and Sinners before the Lord exceedingly, it was not long ere he rain'd Hell from Heaven upon them; and when all Flesh had corrupted their Way, presently they were cut down out of Time, and their Foundation overthrow'n with a Flood. It was the Wickedness of the City, that made it combustible Matter for the Fire of God's Wrath to fasten upon; *Ilicet intra Muros peccatur & extra.* When Sin abounds both within the Walls and without, no wonder if the Fire prevails in both.

London was then told by the Watchmen upon her Walls, what the Sins were, that provoked God to lay it waste; they had then a loud Call to shew this *Jerusalem* her Abominations, which might be read in her Desolations. It was then justly observ'd, how for some time before the Fire, the Power of Vice and Profaness was grown more exorbitant than ever, more daring, more threatening, how it insulted and triumph'd over the Restraints and Checks which for some Years before it had lain under, and now set them at Defiance: It was observ'd (I remember) not long since, by a venerable Body, That at that Time, to avoid Hypocrisie Men ran into open Impiety: And I have heard it complain'd of, by those who liv'd at that Time, That Debauchery was made by many, a Test of Loyalty; and a Man was suspected to be disaffected to his Prince, if he did not profane the Name of his God. Was this the Character of the Times immediately preceding that Desolation? -- And could any other be expected, but that God should visit for these things, and that his Soul should be avenged on such a City, such a Nation as this?

Sabbath-breaking is a Sin for which God has particularly threatend to contend by Fire. *If ye will not hearken to me, to hallow the Sabbath-Day, I will kindle a Fire in the Gates of Jerusalem;* how Sabbaths had been profan'd in those Times of Licentiousness, is easie to con-

conjecture, and, if we may make Remarks upon the Circumstances of a Judgment, in order to the improving of it, it must be taken Notice of, That the Fire *began* between one and two of the Clock on a *Lord's-Day Morning*, as if God wou'd thereby intimate, that it was kindled to *avenge the Quarrel* of his Sabbath.

How shou'd this increase our Hatred of Sin, *that evil and bitter Thing*, by which we have procur'd such things as these *to ourselves*, which has been the Destruction of Souls, Bodies, Families, Cities, Churches, Nations, Worlds; which is not only the *Reproach*, but the *Ruin of any People*. What a dread shou'd we conceive of the fatal Consequences of National Sins, which wou'd fix us among those Holy Mourners, that  *sigh and cry for the Abominations that are committed among us*. Methinks this shou'd put Life into the despised and almost *deserted Cause*, of the *Reformation of Manners* among us, that in the Prosecution of it, we not only consult the Glory of God, the Honour of our Holy Religion, and the good of precious Souls, but the Peace, Safety and Prosperity of the Communities we are Members of. The surest Way to prevent another Fire, is, to discountenance and suppress that Immorality and Profaness, for which the Fire of the Lord has *burnt among you*. Ezek. 9. 4.

Not that this was the only Ground of God's Controversy with the City; even the Professors of Religion, that ran not with others, to an *Excess of Riot*, contributed to the Guilt which kindled those Flames, by their Lukewarmness and Indifferency in Religion, their Pride, and Vanity, and Worldliness, and Neglect of Family Worship, as they were then often told by their faithful Reprovers. Under such publick Calamities, our Business is not to judge and censure others, but each of us to take Blame and Shame to ourselves, and seriously to ask, *What have I done?*

And yet we must be very *regardless* of the *Work of the Lord*, and the *Operation of his Hand*, if we do not observe, that London's Plague and Fire came but three or four Years after the casting out and silencing of a great Number of able, faithful Ministers of Christ, there, and all the Nation over, because they wou'd not sin against their Consciences. *Jerusalem was burnt the first Time, for misusing the Messengers of the Lord;* Jer. 36. 16. and



Luke 21. and the second Time, for *laying Hands* on the Disci-  
 12. ples of Christ, and *persecuting them*; for Christ resented  
 what was done against them, as done against himself.

At least we must be allow'd to observe, That the Fire  
 happen'd not six Months after the commencing of the  
*Five Mile Act*, by which, they who but a little before  
 were turn'd out of *their Churches*, were barbarously  
 turn'd out of *their Houses*, and not suffer'd to live  
 within *five Miles* of any Corporation, or of the Places  
 where they had been Ministers. It was the Observati-  
 on of a wise and good Man at that Time, That as it  
 was in Mercy to many of the Ministers, that they  
 were removed out of the City, before that desolating  
 Judgment came; so it *spoke* aloud to the Government;  
*Let my People go, that they may serve me; and if ye will  
 not, behold thus and thus will I do unto you.* This (he  
 thought) was the *Lord's Voice*, then crying in the City.

Thirdly, See what an uncertain Thing this World is,  
 and all our Possessions and Employments in it. If Men  
 wou'd but believe the Preacher's Text and Doctrine,  
 which is deliver'd to us, not only as the Word of the  
 Eternal God, which therefore we may venture to be-  
 lieve, nay are bound to believe, but in Compassion to  
 our Infirmary, is confirm'd to us by the Observation  
 and Experience of the wisest of Men, That *All is Vani-  
 ty*, that it is *Vanity of Vanities*, and *Vexation of Spirit*;  
 and wou'd live up to their Belief of it, it wou'd *save*  
 them a great deal of *Trouble*: For, how many sore  
 Crosses and Afflictions doth the Worldliness of our  
 Hearts need and call for, to give us a *sensible Demonstra-  
 tion*, that we may come under the *needful Conviction* of  
 the *Vanity of this World*, and its Insufficiency to make  
 us happy.

How plainly may we read this, by the Light of  
 London's Flames; how many well-furnish'd Houses  
 and Shops were then consum'd in a little Time? 'Tis  
 Part of the Lamentation of the Ruin of *Babylon*, that  
 Rev. 18. *in one Hour so great Riches is come to nought.* How ma-  
 17. ny that were worth Thousands over-night, were so im-  
 poverish'd by the Fire, that they were worth nothing,  
 or next nothing, by the next Morning? Like *Job*,  
 whom the rising Sun saw the *richest of all the Men of the  
 East*, and the setting Sun left *poor to a Proverb*. Our  
 Mark 6. Saviour speaks of the Danger we are in, of losing our  
 19. Treasures upon Earth, by the *Moth* that *corrupts*, or  
 Thieves

*Thieves that break through and steal.* But this Loss of Mark 6: it by Fire, is worse than either; what the *Moth* has 19. been in, may yet be good for something, and what the *Thief* hath stollen, may perhaps be recover'd, — But, What the Fire has consum'd, is quite lost, and past Retrieve.

How sudden and surprizing was this Desolation, how little thought of and expected by the Sufferers, who hoped they had Goods laid up for many Years, and Houses that shou'd endure to many Generations, when the Fire comes with a Warrant to seize them *this Night*, and to strip them of all; and thereby to teach you and me not to boast ourselves of to Morrow, since we know not what a Day, what a Night, what an Hour may bring forth. And in how little Time was the Desolation accomplish'd? three or four Days reduc'd to ashes, buildings that had been long in rearing, and Treasures that had been long in gathering: Prov. 27: 1.

This is a good Reason why the Rich Man should not glory in his Riches, for as the Flower of the Grass, which is scorched by the Sun, they pass away and are gone, and their Place knows them no more; a good Reason why we shou'd not be secure in the Enjoyment of our Worldly Possessions, nor flatter ourselves with the Thought, that to Morrow must needs be as this Day, and much more abundant; that we shall die in our Nest, and that our Mountain stands so strong, that it cannot be moved, when we know not what a great Change a very little Time may produce. James 1: 10.

'Tis a good Reason why we shou'd not make these perishing Things our Portion, nor lay up our Treasure in them; and why we shou'd sit loose to them, and take our Affections off from them; for shall we set our Eyes and Hearts upon these things that are not, that make themselves Wings and flee away? that are liable to a Thousand destructive Casualties, and are therefore unworthy of our Esteem and Regard, especially when they stand in Competition with the true and everlasting Riches. It is therefore our Wisdom to be dead to these Things, because if we be, we shall the better bear the Disappointment, if they shou'd be thus taken from us, and we shall easily say, it was what we looked for. Your Houses and Shops and Goods are combustible Things, call them so; and put a Value upon them. Prov. 23: 5.

them accordingly, as you do upon Paper-Buildings; and give all Diligence to *make that sure, which will be made sure.* When *Jerusalem's* Desolation was hastening on, the Inhabitants had this needful Admonition given them, *Arise ye and depart, this is not your Rest, for it is polluted:* 'Tis true of all things here below, they are *polluted* with Sin, and are hastning towards their Ruin, and therefore cannot be the Repose of our Souls. What then shou'd we do, but *arise and depart* from them!

Micha 2.  
10.

*Neighbourhood*, which is the Pleasure of Cities, where Houses joyn so close, may prove of *ill Consequence*, and serve but to spread and propagate the Flames, of that therefore, no more than of other present Comforts, let us not be over-fond.

*Fourthly*, See *How malicious the Enemies of our Peace, and our Holy Religion are, and What need we have to stand upon our Guard against them.*—There is a Day that will bring to light the *bidden Works of Darkness*, and bring into Judgment every secret thing, and to that Day must be *referr'd* the full Discovery of the Cause of the Fire of *London*. There was as full a Demonstration given as cou'd be, by the Master of the House where the Fire began, that it could not possibly be by *Accident*, which gave abundant Cause to think that it was *designedly* set on Fire by *Romish Incendiaries*, for the weakning of the Protestant Interest, which they have all along been, and still are aiming at the Destruction of.

The Parliament met soon after the Fire, and presently, even that House of Commons appointed a Committee to *enquire into the Causes of the late Fire*; before whom abundance of Informations were given in and prov'd, which were afterwards *printed*; but the Parliament was prorogu'd, before any Judgment was given upon them; but it seems very evident upon the concurring Testimonies then given in (to which I refer you) that it was the Execution of a Popish Design. One *Robert Hubert*, a French Papist, being taken up upon Suspicion, confess'd that he was one of those that fir'd the Baker's House that was first set on Fire, with a Fire-Ball; and he was executed for it. Many others were taken throwing Fire-Balls, but by some Means or other made their Escape, as appears by the Report of that Committee. I

I wou'd not be found insinuating any causeless, groundless Jealousies, nor incensing Men with Enmities against the Persons of any, our Religion teacheth us to forgive our Enemies, and to pray to God to forgive them; we may not call for *Fire from Heaven* upon those that are *set on Fire of Hell* against us. James 3. 6.

But if this be true, as we have Reason to think it is, surely it cannot but confirm and increase our *Detestation of Popery*, and fill us with a holy, heavenly Zeal against that *strong Delusion*. Can that be the Religion of the Meek and humble Jesus, which needs and prescribes and uses such Methods for its own Propagation, as not only Christianity abhors, but even Humanity startles at, and is shock'd by? Our Lord Jesus wou'd not force his Way, no not to *Jerusalem*, by a destroying a *poor Village*, and that of *Samaritans* too, that oppos'd him, and gave this Reason for it, that the Son of Man came not to destroy Men's Lives and dwellings, but to save them? How far then are they from, nay how *contrary* to the Spirit of Christ and his Holy Religion, who make no Difficulty of destroying a *great City*, and that of *Christians* too, for the compassing of their Design to reduce a People under the heavy Yoke of their Tyranny, that had happily escap'd from under it. But no wonder they *stumble* not at *Heaps of Ruins*, when they *startle* not at *Seas of Blood*, but to gain their Point, can wade thro' them without Horror. How many Treasons, Murders and Massacres have not only been *justify'd* but *consecrated*, when they have been for the Advancement of the pretended Catholick Cause? *Instruments of Cruelty* are in their Habitation, as in that of *Simeon and Levi*; O my Soul, come not thou into their Secret. Luke 9. 55. Gen. 49. 1, 6.

And as it should increase our Hatred of the *Romish* Religion, so it should increase our Dread of the *Romish* Designs against us, and all that's dear to us. The extirpating of that which they call the *Northern Heresy*, is what they have been aiming at ever since the Reformation; and we have no Reason to think they have *drop'd the Design*, when not many Years agoe it was carry'd so far, that 'twas next Door to an Accomplishment, and no less than a Miracle of Mercy sav'd our darling *Isaac* from being sacrific'd to *Popish Tyranny*, when it lay bound upon the Altar.

Or, have we any Reason to think that Popery has alter'd its Character? I wish we had: But the Methods lately taken to root out the Protestant Religion in France, besides the Persecution we hear of in Poland at this Time, and other Instances, are sufficient to convince us, that Popery is the same bloody, barbarous, inhuman Thing, that ever it was, and therefore its Advances towards us are to be as much dreaded as ever, that we may be quickned in our Prayers to God, to fortify our Bulwarks against that *Complication of Sins and Judgments*, and to lift up a Standard against that Enemy, even when he comes in like a Flood. Cry earnestly to God, Day and Night, that he would turn all the Counsels of Popish *Achitophels* into Foolishness; and I trust he will, as he has done many a Time.

*Fifthly*, See How graciously God often remembers Mercy in the midst of Wrath, and in Compassion takes up his Controversy, when he might in Justice proceed in it. — You have a Monument of the Judgment, here where the Fire began, but in every Place where it stopt, the Houses that escap'd are as so many Monuments of sparing Mercy; you can easily perceive by the different Materials and Structure of the Houses, just how far the Fire proceeded, when you observe this, say, *It is of the Lord's Mercies that we are not consum'd*, that all was not consum'd, that God did not make a full End, but that, when he overthrew some of you, as he overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, yet others of you were as Brands pluck'd out of the Burning. The Quenching of the Fire at Taberah, is here recorded with the Kindling of it, that we might learn to sing of Mercy and Judgment, and sing unto God of both, for in both his Hand is to be ey'd.

Lam. 3.  
22.  
Amos 4.  
11.  
verse 2.

When God had made London as a fiery Oven in the Day of his Wrath, and the Flames went on like a mighty Army, Conquering and to conquer, threatening to leave neither Root nor Branch: Then God repented himself concerning his Servants, His Soul was grieved for the Misery of London, and he said, *How shall I give thee up? How shall I deliver thee? How shall I make thee as Admah, and set thee as Zebaim?* In every Place whither the Fire had spread, much about the same Time, a Check was given to it, and God said to the raging Fire, as he doth to the raging Sea,  
*Hitherto*

*Hitherto shalt thou come and no further, here shall thy proud Waves, thy proud Flames be staid*

Let this be remembered with Thankfulness to God, and to the Praise of that *Mercy* of his, which *rejoyceth against Judgment*, and prevents its *making a full End*; and let us add to this, our own Experience of the like seasonable Interposals of Divine Mercy for our Relief. The 'earthly House of this Tabernacle, has perhaps been on *Fire* with a *Feaver*, or some other wasting, consuming Distemper, ready to reduce it to *Dust and Ashes*, yet God has stay'd the Progress of it, hath said *unto us live, hath said unto us live*, and the *Time was a Time of Love*, not to be forgotten.

It ought to be taken Notice of as an *Answer of Prayer*; we are told here, that when the *Fire* of the Lord burnt in the Camp of *Israel*, *Moses* (that great Intercessor, and as such a Type of Christ) pray'd unto the Lord, and *then the Fire was quenched*. And no doubt when *London* was in burning, there were a Remnant of praying People standing in the Gap, to turn away the Wrath of God, that wept and made Supplication, and in Answer to their Prayer, God spar'd a Part of the City. The Prophet *Amos* tells us how when in his Time, the Lord God called to contend by *Fire*, he pray'd, *O Lord God cease I beseech thee*, and *the Lord repented for this, It shall not be said the Lord God*.

Amo. 7.  
4, 5, 6.

Let this engage us to call upon God, and encourage us to trust in him in all our Straits and Difficulties, be they never so great and threatening: He is a present Help in Time of need, and the Necessity, as it engageth his Mercy, so it magnifies his Power. If we can by Faith depend upon him to save us, then when we think we perish, it shall be made to appear that even the *Winds and the Seas obey him*.

Sixthly, See How wonderfully God can revive what seem'd to be ruin'd. Now we are remembering the Burning this City, we must by no means overlook the Re-building of it, and the raising up of another City, *Phoenix-like*, out of the *Ashes* of the Old one. I am apt to think this seem'd to them who liv'd then, almost impracticable, and there were those that were ready to despair of it. How shou'd they find Money to rebuild their Houses, and to contribute their Share to  
their

the publick Buildings too, who had not only lost their Goods in the Fire, but lost in a Manner their Trades too, by which they and their Families must subsist; and yet the Lord their God being with them, they *built and prosper'd*, and in 2 or 3 Years, there scarce remain'd any Marks or Footsteps of the Fire. You may *easily* imagine how great the Destruction was, and yet you will *hardly* imagine it, when you observe how magnificent the Repair of it is; for surely *the Glory of the latter City, is far greater than the Glory of the former*: I wish it were so upon the Account, that the Glory of the latter Temple, did so far exceed that of the former, which was the *Presence of Christ in it*.

- Isa. 25. 2. When God made of *this City a Heap*, yet he did not make it to be *no City*, nor say concerning it that it should *never be built* again: It was *desolate*, but not as *Babylon, desolate for ever*, no, nor as *Jerusalem*, that had *Seventy Years accomplished in her Desolations*, but in a little Time God had *Mercy on your Dwelling Places*, (as the Prophet speaks) and *the City was built again on her own Heap*, and built again with Advantage, more strong, more beautiful, and more uniform than it had been before, as if it had pass thro' a *refining Fire*, rather than a *consuming* one; and had only been melted down to be cast in a better Mold. *This was the Lord's doing*, for *except he build the House, they labour in vain that build it*, and it may justly be *marvellous in our Eyes*. God hath fulfil'd to you what he said of *Zion and Jerusalem*, Tho' *I was jealous against them with great Fury*, yet *I am return'd unto Zion, and will dwell in the Midst of Jerusalem*, and O that the following Promise to *Jerusalem*, might be made good to *London*, It shall be call'd a *City of Truth, and the Mountain of the Lord of Hosts, the holy Mountain!* How well were it, if the Hearts of the Citizens were as much improv'd by the Fire as their Houses were!

Let this Resurrection of the City out of its Ashes, be to us an Emblem of the State of Christ's Church in the World, 'tis *persecuted but not forsaken, cast down but not destroy'd*; its Desolations may sometimes be said to be *universal*, but they shall not be *perpetual*. The Protestant Interest in many Places is brought ve-

ry low, and its Ruins trampled on, by the same that triumph'd in the Ruins of this City or our Solemnities, yet we have Reason to hope it shall revive, and flourish again, even there where it seems rased to the very Foundations. It is promised concerning the *Tabernacle of David*, which is *fallen down*, that God will build again the Ruins thereof, and will set it up; **Acts 15. 16.** when the Time comes that *Babylon* must fall (and fall it must sooner or later) that Promise shall be fulfil'd. Let this quicken our Prayers to God, for the re-establishing of the Protestant Religion, there where it is *born down* and trampled on, and let us *continue instant* in that Prayer, and *not faint*, tho we be sadly disappointed in the Hands that we thought shou'd have gone forwards in the effecting of it; God will do his own Work in his own Way and Time, if not by *Might and Power*, yet by the Spirit of the Lord of Hosts, **Zech. 4. 6, 7.** for so *Jerusalem* was rebuilt, and before that Spirit, the Mountains of Difficulty that lay in the Way became plain. Our Care must be to retain a sincere Affection for our Holy Religion, how low soever the Profession of it is, or may be brought, and not think the worse of it for its being deserted, and loosing Ground; It is the Character of the Servants of God, that when *Zion* is in Ruins, they take Pleasure even in its broken scatter'd Stones, and favor the very Dust **Psal. 102. 13, 14, 16, 17.** thereof, they love the Ground she stood upon, and let such assure themselves, that the Time to favour *Zion*, *yea the set time will come*. And when the Lord shall build up *Zion*, he shall appear in his Glory, and in doing it, will put this Honour upon the wretling Seed of *Jacob*, that therein he will regard the Prayer of the Destitute, and not despise their Prayer: Let *Daniel's* Prayer therefore be ours, and his Plea, that God wou'd cause his Face to shine upon the Sanctuary that is desolate for the Lord's Sake. **Dan. 9. 17.**

Seventhly, See How dangerous our Condition is, who have not been reform'd by the various Methods God has taken with us. You have long since seen your City rebuilt, and the Effects of the Fire no more remaining, which may supercede the annual Memorial of the Judgment: But if the Ends of it be not answered, there is still Occasion to revive the Remembrance of it; may not God



Amos 4. 11. God justly complain of us as he did of *Israel*, you have sometimes been overthrown by signal Judgments, and at other times sav'd by signal Mercies, yet have ye not return'd unto me saith the Lord: And we may therefore justly fear, that for all this his Anger is not turned away, but his Hand is stretched out still. Is there any less Sinning, or any more praying in London than there was formerly, I wish there were. But we have too much reason to fear, that we come under Jer. 6. 29. *Jerusalem's* sad Character, when the *Founder melted in vain*. Iniquity still abounds and goes barefac'd, Vice is as daring and threatenng as ever, and *What will be in the End thereof?* May we not fear lest God shou'd send greater Judgments among us, since lesser have not done their Work, nor gain'd their Point.

There are Fires of another Nature which we have reason to fear the fatal Effects of, both to the City, and to the Land, I mean our unhappy *Divisions* and *Animosities*, and violent *Heats* one against another: The Sin that is in our Divisions, may be justly punish'd with the Ruin that is commonly the Effect of them, for a *City and Kingdom divided against it self is brought to Desolation*, and becomes an easie Prey to the common Enemy, who warm their Hands at those Flames, and doubt not to find their Account in setting us at Variance one against another.

The *Removal of the Gossel*, and the taking away of our *Candlestick out of its Plate*, wou'd be a much sorer Judgment than the burning of the City, and ought to be dreaded and deprecated accordingly. If *Papal Tyranny* shou'd again take Footing here, if our Bibles shou'd be taken from us, and our Ministers be banish'd or put to Death, if the *Idolatrous Mass* shou'd be set up in our Churches, and the consecrated Host carry'd about our Streets to be ador'd, *London* wou'd look a more melancholy Place, than it did when it was in Ashes; I hope that God who has hitherto by Miracles of Mercy sav'd our Holy Religion, will still, and that that blessed Light shall not die in our Hands; I hope it will never come to that; yet I must say we have no reason to be secure, when we consider the *Desert* of our Sins, and the *Designs* of our *Enemies*, and especially when we consider the *Desolations* of divers *Protestant*

testant Churches abroad, that once thought themselves as safe and as likely to continue as we do. *Go see what God did to Shiloh? What he did to the Seven Churches of Asia? and let us not be high-minded but fear, for are we better than they?*

The Cause of Truth and Godliness shall be victorious at last, but may meet with many a hard Struggle in the mean time. What trying Times may be before us we cannot tell, but I am sure it is our Wisdom to be prepar'd for the worst, by being more and more establish'd in the Truth as it is in Jesus, by sitting loose to the World, and treasuring up such Comforts and Experiences, as will carry us with Courage and Cheerfulness through the most mournful Time, to a most joyful Eternity, and then welcome the Will of God.

The Gospel is not ty'd to Places, its Privileges are moveable Things. The Kingdom of God may be taken from us, and given to another Nation; and what will become of us, if our Glory be departed, and all our pleasant things laid waste. The most effectual Course we can take to prevent it, is to make a good Use of our Privileges, and live up to them; as the most threatenng Step towards it is the corrupting the Nation with the Vices of its Neighbours, which will be as fatal to it as the Idols and Idolatries of the Countries about were to Israel of old.

Mat. 21  
43.

I wou'd not amuze People with causeless Jealousies, but awaken People to a holy Fear and Diligence in their Duty by these Suggestions. There is a startling Passage in Mr. George Herbert's Poem, call'd the *Church Militant*, written I believe about 80 Years ago, which has been much taken Notice of; after he had shew'd how the Church took rise in the Eastern Parts of the World, and so mov'd more and more Westerly, he goes on thus,

*Religion stands on Tiptoe in our Land,  
Ready to pass to the American Strand,  
When Heighth of Malice and prodigious Lusts,  
Impudent Sinning, Witchcrafts and Distrusts*

*(The Marks of future Bane) shall fill our Cup,  
 Unto the Brim and make our Measure up;  
 When Seine shall swallow Tyber, and the Thames  
 By letting in them both pollute her Streams;  
 When Italy of us shall have her Will,  
 And all her Calender of Sins fulfill,  
 Whereby one may foretel what Sins next Year,  
 Shall both in France and England domineer;  
 Then shall Religion to America flee,  
 They have their Times of Gospel ev'n as we.*

I remember I heard Dr. Tillotson (afterwards Arch-  
 bishop) quote these Verses of Mr. Herbert's in a  
 Sermon (at his Tuesday Lecture in 1685) on *Joh. xii.*  
*35. Yet a little While is the Light with you;* (it is since  
 printed in the Second Volume of the Folio Editi-  
 on, of his posthumous Works) and having explain'd  
 the Signs he gave of the Times to be this, "When  
 " the Vices of *Italy* shall pass into *France*, and the  
 " Vices of both shall overspread *England*, then the  
 " Gospel will leave these Parts of the World. —  
 He makes this Remark upon it, "Whether this was  
 " only the prudent Conjecture and Foresight of a wise  
 " Man, or whether there be not something more pro-  
 " phetical in it I cannot tell. But (saith he) we have  
 " too much Cause to apprehend, that if we do not re-  
 " form and grow better, God will find some Way  
 " or other to deprive us of that Light, which is  
 " so abus'd and affronted by our wicked Lives; and  
 " he seems now to say to us as Christ did to the  
 " Jews, *yet a little While is the Light with you.*"

*Eighthly, See what a necessary and constant Dependance  
 we have upon God and his Providence for our Safety.*  
 You have seen how great a Matter a little Fire kindles,  
 and in a little Time, and cannot but think, how  
 much all you have in the World, lies at the Mercy  
 of that merciless Element, if God shou'd give it Com-  
 mission. Tho' you be never so careful of Fire in  
 your own Houses, how many careless People are  
 there in the Houses about you, which if set on Fire,  
 wou'd

wou'd soon set yours on Fire; so that we can be no Night secure, but that we may be either burnt in our Beds, or burnt out of them: There have been frequent Fires in and about the City since this great one, to put you in Mind of what God has done, and what he cou'd do; and many other Accidents we and our Families continually lie expos'd to; the dreadful Wind Ten Years ago, shew'd you that God has more Arrows in his Quiver, and can bring another Judgment without bringing another Fire.

Now this shou'd engage us all to have our Eye towards the Lord, by Faith to dwell in the secret Place of the most high, and abide under the Shadow of the Almighty; and by Prayer every Morning and every Evening, to put our selves, our Houses and Families under Divine Protection, and to beg that the City may be the Care of God's Providence in a particular Manner, and the Charge of his Angels, as Jerusalem of old was. O that this Argument might prevail with you, to set up and keep up the Worship of God in your Families, and to make a Business of it, that tho' I cannot assure you that it will preserve you from your Share in common Calamities, of this Kind, all things come alike to all, yet it is the best Course you can take to be safe and easie; with what a holy Security may you lie down at Night, and go abroad in the Morning, when you have first solemnly recommended yourselves and yours to the Mercy of God, and taken the Way which he hath appointed to engage him for you. Such is the Comfort of doing this, such the Satisfaction of having done it, that we may well call it Work, that is its own Wages. If you make your Houses little Churches for God, he will make them little Sanctuaries to you, and create a Defence upon all your Glory.

You have your Engines, your Watchmen, your Ensurances, but after all, Except the Lord keepeth the City, the Watchman waketh but in vain; it is therefore your great Concern to make him your Friend, and to keep yourselves in his Love; to secure the Favour of the Ruler of Rulers, from whom every Man's Judgment doth proceed. He hath put you in

Psalms 91  
1.

Isa. 4. 5,  
6.

Psal. 127.  
1.

Pro. 29.  
26.

to an easie way of doing this, not by costly Sacrifices and Offerings, but by faithful and fervent Prayer, kept up in its Life, and not sunk into a Formality.

Neither pray ye for your selves alone, and for your Houses, but for *the City*, and Parts adjoining, that in the Safety thereof, you may be safe. Thus approve yourselves true Friends to the City, and seek the Welfare of it. You are for Conscience sake towards God, render'd *uncapable of serving the City* in any Civil Offices, serve it so much the more with your Prayers, serve it in *sacred Offices*, as Intercessors with God for it; and thank God you can't be hinder'd from serving it in *this Way*.

Nor is it enough to keep Prayer up in your Houses, but you must do what you can to keep Sin out of your Houses, least that spoil the Success of your Prayers. If Iniquity be in thine Hand, any ill-got Gain, or any ill Way of getting, put it far away, and let no Wickedness dwell in thy Tabernacles, and then thou shalt take thy Rest in Safety, thou shalt lie down and none shall make thee afraid. — And do what you can, in your Places, to suppress Wickedness in the City, and to promote the Reformation of Manners, that the City may be call'd a *City of Righteousness*, a *faithful City*, which God may delight to dwell in.

Ninthly, See *What a dreadful Day the great Day of the Lord will be, when the World shall be on Fire, and the Earth and all the Works that are therein, shall be burnt up.* If the Burning of London was so terrible, what then will the Burning of the World be, the whole World? When the Heavens being on Fire shall be dissolv'd, and the Element shall melt with fervent Heat, and all these Things shall be dissolv'd. The Volcanos or Burning Mountains in Naples and Sicily, and many other Places, which have been on Fire as long as we have any History of those Countries extant, are sometimes very terrible, and the Eruptions of Fire from them, very threatening; surely Providence has wisely order'd those little Conflagrations of the Earth, to be Earnests of the General Conflagration, and standing, sensible Confirmations of the Scrip-

ture

Job 11.  
14, 18,  
19.

2 Pet. 3.  
12.

2 Pet. 3.  
7, 11, 12.

2 Pet. 3.  
7, 11, 12.

ture Tradition of it; nay, some have thought, that they will be in Part, the Means of the Burning of this World; so Dr. *Tho. Burnet*, in that Part of his *Theory of the Earth*, which treats *De Conflagratione mundi*; *Externus est & visibilis Apparatus ad hoc Incendium, in Montibus Ignivomis, &c.* And he quotes a remarkable Passage of *Pliny*, L. ii. ch. 106, 107. when he had reckon'd up several Burning Mountains, &c. he concludes, *Excedit profecto omnia Miracula, ullum Diem fuisse, in quo non cuncta conflagrarent*; It's a Miracle the World is not on Fire every Day; why should it seem incredible to us then, that it will be on Fire shortly? Believe it Sirs, as sure as you see *this Day*, you shall see *that Day*. And where will all the Wealth and Pride of this World be then? What will become of us, if we have our Portion and Happiness in it?

Think of the Fire in which the Lord Jesus will be revealed in that Day, the flaming Fire, the Fire that will devour before him; he will come with an innumerable Company of Angels, and every one of those Spirits is a Flame of Fire. What Flames then will the Judge be surrounded with? Think how you will look him in the Face in that great and terrible Day, and how your Works will abide that Fire. Those that liv'd and dy'd in Sin, will then call in vain to *Rocks and Mountains to hide them from the Face of him that sits on the Throne, and the Wrath of the Lamb*; but those that liv'd and dy'd in Christ, will see no Terror, no not in that Fire, but will then lift their up Heads with Joy, knowing that their Redemption draws nigh.

Nay, there is a Fire yet more dreadful, which you are concern'd to think of; the Earth and the Works that are therein, will soon be burnt up; but there is a Lake of Fire and Brimstone, which burns eternally; and shall never be quenck'd, prepar'd indeed for the Devil and his Angels, but into which all the wicked and ungodly shall be cast, by the irreversible Sentence of the righteous Judge, and in which they shall be tormented World without End. I am here in God's Name to give you Warning to flee from that Wrath to come, by fleeing from Sin, by fleeing to Christ; and whether you will hear, or whethe

Cap. vii.

<sup>2</sup> Thes. i.  
8.  
Psal. 50.  
3.  
Pf. 104.  
4.

Mat. 3:  
7.

Luk. 16. you will forbear, to testify unto you, *that you come*  
28, 31. *not to that Place of Torment; and if you hear not, if*  
*you heed not Moses and the Prophets, Christ and his*  
*Ministers giving you this Warning, neither would you*  
*be perswaded, tho' one rose from the Dead,*

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**FINIS.**