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THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST,  
IN PLACES OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP:

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T W O S E R M O N S,  
PREACHED AT THE  
CONSECRATION  
OF  
*St. ANDREW'S CHAPEL,*  
IN  
A B E R D E E N,  
On Sunday the 13th of September, 1795.

WITH SOME  
P R A Y E R S,  
*Used on the Occasion.*

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AND NOW RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED TO THE  
CONGREGATION OF THAT CHAPEL,  
BY THEIR FAITHFUL AND AFFECTIONATE  
BISHOP AND PASTOR,  
*J O H N S K I N N E R.*

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A B E R D E E N:  
PRINTED BY J. CHALMERS AND CO:  
1795.



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E X O D U S XX. 24.

IN ALL PLACES WHERE I RECORD MY NAME, I WILL COME  
UNTO THEE, AND I WILL BLESS THEE.

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AMONG the many proofs which are daily exhibited, of a watchful Providence superintending all things here below, there is none so worthy of the attention of Christians, as that gracious care and protection of his Church, which its glorious Head, our Lord and Saviour, has so often and so wonderfully displayed. Great and manifold are the blessings which the Christian World has derived from this exertion of the power, wisdom, and goodness of its Almighty Redeemer. To this is owing the regular transmission of that sacred trust committed to his Apostles, and handed down in continual succession from age to age, for the benefit and instruction of the nations. Perhaps no people on earth have more reason to admire the blessed effects of this divine interposition, than the nation to which we belong—a nation in which the Church of Christ, though often sharing in the

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various and violent convulsions of the State still subsisted, and kept its ground, in a greater degree of purity, according to the spirit of the times, and the regard which has been shewn to the real design of the Christian institution. In the midst of that endless variety of religious sects and parties, into which our country is so strangely divided, it is some comfort to reflect, that the remaining remains of the old national Church are distinguished by a steady adherence to principles of Truth and Order, and at last happily delivered from that depressed and disagreeable situation which political causes had for a long time involved the very name of Episcopacy in this part of our Island. Thankful should we be to the all-mighty disposer of human affairs, that the cloud of suspicion, which so long hung over us, is removed, and better days begin to dawn upon us. No longer restrained in the exercise of their spiritual powers, our Clergy are allowed to perform their sacred functions, with all that outward decency which our ritual prescribes. No longer frightened from our communion by legal pretences, or the danger of giving offence to the power and authority, the laity of all ranks are given full liberty to join in our public worship, and to avow their attachment to a Church so friendly

order and regularity, and to all those wise and salutary principles which it is the interest of Government to promote. Thus happy in the confidence of our King and our Country, with fervent wishes for the prosperity of both, we look up to the throne of our heavenly Sovereign, and addressing our supplications to Him who “reigns for ever,” and whose “kingdom ruleth over all,” we do not fail to “seek the peace, and pray for the happiness of the land in which we live, that in the peace thereof we may have peace\*.”—Such, I presume, are the pious sentiments which accompany us to the house of prayer, more especially on the present joyful occasion, when, by the good providence of our gracious Lord, we are assembled, for the first time, in this newly erected CHAPEL, which, in a solemn manner, we have now been dedicating to the glory of God on high, and to the service of his Church on Earth.—From the habitation of his Holiness may He look down in mercy on us his unworthy servants, when here falling prostrate at his footstool, we humbly implore his favour and protection to this House; which having built to the honour of his Name, and peculiarly set apart for his appointed worship, we invoke his blessing on it, in the words of the devout

\* Jer. xxix. 7.

devout Psalmist, "The glorious Majesty of  
 " Lord our God be upon us; prosper thou  
 " work of our hands upon us: O prosper thou  
 " our handy work †." In using this earnest  
 petition as a proper expression of our pious wishes  
 this day, we are sufficiently justified by that  
 encouraging promise of the God of Israel, which  
 we have read before you, as the subject of my  
 discourse on this occasion. "In all places where I  
 " record my name, I will come unto thee, and  
 " will bless thee." Here, you see, we have a  
 particular description of every place which is  
 properly set apart for the worship of God. It is  
 a place, "where God records his Name," and  
 where, in consequence of that mark of distinction,  
 "he comes unto men, to bless them." Such is the  
 comfortable information held out to us in the words  
 of my text, in applying which to the present  
 solemnity, two very important inquiries present  
 themselves to our minds: How can God be said to  
 record his name? and, In what manner he comes  
 unto men to bless them, in every place where his  
 name is so recorded? To obtain a satisfactory  
 answer to the first of these inquiries, we must  
 begin with observing what occasion the declaration  
 was made, when he said, "I will record my name  
 in the temple, and will say unto the people, This  
 is my temple, and ye shall worship me here." The  
 occasion was, that the temple was to be built, and  
 that the people were to be gathered together to  
 worship God in that place. The declaration was  
 made, that the people might know, that God would  
 be present in that place, and that he would  
 bless the people who worshipped him there.

† Psal. xc. 17.



gives rise to it. It was, when the law was delivered from Mount Sinai, to the children of Israel, to preserve them from the idolatrous practices of their heathen neighbours, and fix in their minds a due respect and veneration for “the Name of the Lord their God,” which they were warned not “to take in vain,” or treat with any sort of irreverence or contempt. When we speak of a man’s *name*, we generally mean the title or appellation by which he is known, or the fame or reputation which he may have attained. But from the language of Scripture, it would appear that something more is implied in that significant expression, *the Name Jehovah*, which we read, *the Name of the Lord*. When this Jehovah promises, in the book of Exodus, “to send his angel before his people, to keep them in the way, and to bring them into the place which he had prepared,” he tells them, “Beware of him, and obey his voice; provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions; for *my Name* is in him\*.” In like manner, when the Psalmist says, “the *Name* of the God of Jacob defend thee†,” and Zechariah declares that, “Jehovah shall be one, and his *Name* one‡,” these, with a great number of passages, where the *Name* of

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\* Exod. xxiii. 21. † Psal. xx. 1. ‡ Zech. xiv. 9.

Jehovah is said to “ be placed, to dwell, and “ act,” all plainly shew, that by the *Name of Jehovah*, a person, and not a title is meant ; and other surely than that person, the eternal *Logos* or Word, by whom the Deity was to be revealed, discovered, and made known to mankind. He in the new Testament, Christ is said to be “ Image of God §,” “ of the invisible God ||,” cause he is the visible representative of the whole adorable Trinity ; and as in one passage of St John's gospel he is described as praying thus, “ Father glorify thy Name\*,” so in another, his words are, “ Father, glorify thy Son †,” and, “ Now O Father, glorify thou me ‡,” to shew that the *Son*, is the very same person, revealed under that Character in the new Testament, who under the old dispensation was distinguished as the *Logos* or Word, the Angel or Messenger, the Name or Representative of Jehovah, and who, according to the plan of the everlasting Covenant entered into among the adorable Three in Deity, was to be, and do, and suffer, whatever the execution of that plan required of him, as the appointed Mediator between God and Man. To communicate the knowledge, and hold out to man the benefits of this powerful mediation, was the design

§ II. Cor. iv. 4. || Col. i. 15. \* St. John, xii. 28.  
 † St. John, xvii. 1. ‡ St. John, xvii. 5.

of what we call divine Revelation, and of all those sacred services which have distinguished the worshippers of the true God in every age of the world: And if we will only keep this great truth always in our eye, we shall be at no loss to discover what is meant by “ recording the Name of the Lord,” and how properly this is mentioned as the ground of the encouraging promise in my text, that, “ in every place where his name is so recorded, he will come unto men, and bless them.”

The purpose for which any thing is recorded, is to keep it in remembrance, and so when Jehovah is said to “ record his name,” it must be with a view to commemorate those mercies and blessings, of which the *name* of a redeeming God puts men in mind, and teaches them how and where to apply for them. Hence it is, that the *name* and *memorial* of God are frequently joined together, the latter as a necessary consequence of the former. “ This is my *name* for ever,” said God to the Children of Israel, when he declared himself to be the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, “ and this is my *memorial* unto all generations\*.” “ Thy *name*, O Lord, endureth for ever,” saith the Psalmist, “ and thy *memorial* throughout all generations†.” From this just and necessary connexion between  
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\* Exod. iii. 15. † Psal. cxxxv. 13.

the *name* and *memorial* of God, it is evident in every place where the name of God was upon, in the way of his divine appointment, was also something done or offered as a memorial of what that name signified, and to shew the humble dependence of every faithful worshipper on the merciful transaction to which it alluded. Hence we discover the divine original of the Law of Sacrifice, which was instituted to preserve among men a grateful remembrance of that perfect all-sufficient sacrifice which was already made in the counsel and foreknowledge of God, from which all the sacrificial commemorations of the faithful derived their efficacy and acceptance with him. But where there was a sacrifice, there must also have been an altar, and a place appointed for that purpose. The sons of Adam, Cain and Abel, "brought their offerings to the Lord," and so there must have been an appointed place where the Lord was to receive them. Noah, no sooner come out of the Ark, than he built an altar, and offered sacrifices thereon, which were graciously accepted. Abraham did the same on several occasions, "built altars, and called on the name of Jehovah†," that name of which David said, at the building of the temple, that "he

† See Gen. xii. 8. xxii. 8.

“ placed his name there.” When the patriarch Jacob was favoured with that prophetic dream or vision, which shewed him “ the angels of God “ ascending and descending,” upon the mystic ladder, as in the fulness of time they were to be seen, “ ascending and descending upon the Son “ of Man,” justly considering that such a place, “ could be no other than the house of God, and “ the gate of Heaven,” when he arose in the morning, he erected a pillar, and poured oil on the top of it, as the dedication of that place, for the future, to God’s peculiar service, and called the name of it *Bethel*, which signifies the “ house “ of God †.” All this while, we have no account in scripture of any public or congregational worship, such as was afterwards to be celebrated in the Church, when her situation would admit of it. But “ when Israel came out of Egypt, and the “ house of Jacob from among the strange people,” their God and Saviour came with them, and did not disdain to sojourn, as they did, in the wilderness. As they were obliged to dwell in tents, he was pleased to dwell with them, in a sacred tent or tabernacle, a moveable house, suited to their state of peregrination. In conformity to his own express direction, was this tabernacle constructed,

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and

† Gen. xxviii. 19.

and furnished in a proper manner, for the reception of its glorious inhabitant. Nothing was to be seen within it, but gold, precious stones, carved work and embroidery; and without, we are told the cloud covered it by day, and the appearance of fire by night. The Mercy-seat was made of pure gold, on each side of which were placed two Cherubims, those emblematical figures which represented the adorable *Three in Jehovah*, with *Man joined to one* of them; and over the Mercy-seat, between the Cherubims, was the peculiar residence of the redeeming Person in Deity, the God of Israel. For, “*there,*” says he to Moses, “I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee, from above the Mercy-seat—between the two Cherubims §.” There, the Psalmist, was the glorious presence of the great King; to whom, we find him, in name of the Church, addressing a beautiful prayer, in the beginning of the 80th Psalm. “Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph a flock, thou that dwellest between the Cherubims! shine forth; (exhibit thy glory) before Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasseh, stir up thy strength, (put on thy manhood) and come to our salvation (to be a *Jesus*) to us.” The la

§ Exod. xxv. 22.

part of this prayer has an evident reference to the manner in which the hosts of Israel were marshalled, round about the tabernacle, which was placed in the middle of the camp, with the tribes of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh immediately behind it. . . . And this circumstance will help to explain those passages in the Psalms, where the congregation of the people are said to *come about* Jehovah, and are therefore addressed in these words: “ Promise unto the Lord your God, and “ keep it, all ye that are *round about* him\* ;” for, “ God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of “ his saints, and to be had in reverence of all “ them that are *round about* him † .” Such was the state, and such the language of the Church, at that period, when Jehovah dwelt between the Cherubims, as the Lord of Hosts, the guide and guardian of the tribes, the armies of Israel, who were thus distinguished as his peculiar people, assembled round about him, to receive his orders, and be ready at his call, for whatever service he should require of them.

But the Church was not to continue always in this travelling condition : Even *then* a rest was prepared for the people of God ; and when they came to the peaceable possession of the promised land, their

\* Psal. lxxvi. 11. † Psal. lxxxix. 7.

their God was pleased to rest with them in the temple of the peaceful Solomon. The dedication of that magnificent building afforded the grand sight that ever was presented to the eyes of mortals. Our imaginations can hardly form any idea suitable to the description given of it : And when all was finished, and the priests were come out of the holy place, then, we are told, “ the cloud “ led the House of Jehovah, so that the priests “ could not stand to minister, because of the “ cloud, for the glory of Jehovah had filled the “ house of Jehovah †.” Thus did the Master take possession of his house, and sanctify it to the purpose for which it was intended ; for so he assured his servant Solomon. “ I have heard thy prayer “ and thy supplication, that thou hast made before me ; I have hallowed this house which thou “ hast built, to put my name there §.” What thou hast dedicated, I have accepted : What thou hast designed for the worship of my name, I will make it for a blessing to my people ; for in that place, I will come unto them, and bless them. Such was the glory of the temple built by Solomon.

We proceed to the history of another temple of which it may truly be said—“ A greater temple “

† I. Kings, viii. 10, 11. § I. Kings, ix. 3.



“ Solomon is here.” When the Lord turned again the captivity of Sion, and brought back his banished people, to rebuild their city and temple, we read in the book of Ezra, that “ many of the  
 “ Priests and Levites, and chief of the Fathers,  
 “ who were ancient men, and had seen the first  
 “ house, wept with a loud voice, when the foundation of the second temple was laid\*,” from an apprehension how far short it would fall of the splendour and magnificence of that glorious edifice, which they had seen destroyed by the Chaldeans, before the captivity. Therefore, to remove their fears, and hold out every encouragement to those who were employed in this pious work, the prophet Haggai was sent by the Lord of Hosts, to address them in these words.—“ The desire of all  
 “ nations shall come, and I will fill this house  
 “ with glory : the glory of this latter house shall  
 “ be greater than of the former ; and in this  
 “ place will I give peace, saith the Lord of Hosts||.” In accomplishment of which promise, we know, that He, who was the desire of all nations, did actually make his appearance in this latter house, and fill it with his glory. When presented there by his parents, in his infancy, he was acknowledged by the devout Simeon, to be the Messiah,  
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\* Ezra, iii. 12. || Haggai, ii. 7, 9.

the promised Saviour, "the light of the Gentiles and the glory of Israel." By the glory of Israel, the Jews were accustomed to understand a particular divine presence, which was afterwards called the *Shechinah* or Habitation of Jehovah, in which he dwelt or tabernacled among the children of Israel, as his peculiar people. It is one of the most amazing privileges, which St. Paul mentions in distinguishing the "Seed of Abraham," which the Israelites, says he, to whom "pertaineth the promise and the glory\*." Accordingly, when the ark of God was taken, "the glory is said to have departed from Israel †;" and when God returned in mercy to his people, and brought salvation with him, then, "glory is said to dwell in that land ‡," which dwelling or inhabitation of divine glory, as exhibited in the most holy person, is always held forth as a symbolical figure or pattern of that great mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh; and when this manifestation of God the Redeemer, typified by the cherubim's glory in the tabernacle and temple, is attentively considered, it will enable us to understand the meaning, and perceive the beauty of that admirable account of our Lord's incarnation, given by St. John.— "The word was made flesh,

\* Rom. ix. 4. † I. Sam. iv. 21. ‡ Psal. lxxxv. 9.

“dwelt among us;” or as it might literally be rendered, *tabernacled* among us, pitched his tent in human nature, as he once did, in the Jewish tabernacle, and then “we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth §.” It was this glorious sight, to which all the divine appearances, in old time, looked forward, all pointing to Him, in whom was to dwell the fulness of the Godhead bodily. His body therefore was “the *true* tabernacle,” as St. Paul says, which “the Lord pitched, and not man ||;” and the Godhead, or divine nature, was the glory, which in the Jewish tabernacle appeared between the Cherubims, and now shone forth from the tabernacle of Christ’s body.

The epistle to the Hebrews explains this beautiful analogy, and shews how the sacrifices, the sanctuary, and the manner of the divine presence under the law, are now answered in things spiritual and heavenly, by the institutions of the gospel. And from both together, we are plainly taught this comfortable truth, that the favour of God, and the blessings of his gracious presence, according to the promises of the everlasting covenant, are to be sought and obtained, by drawing near to him, through the blood of an Atone-

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§ St. John, i. 14. || Heb. viii. 2.

ment, presented by the great High Priest of  
 profession, who is over the whole house of  
 and by whom we must offer our continual  
 fice of praise, that is, the fruit of our lips, g  
 thanks, or confessing to his name. Therefo  
 all places, where such confession is made,  
 sacrifices offered, such grateful acknowledg  
 presented to the name of our redeeming Go  
 all places, where his name is thus recorded  
 mercy and goodness thus commemorated, i  
 way of his own appointment, we need not c  
 but he will fulfil the gracious promise in my  
 he will come unto these his faithful worship  
 and will bless them. For the promise was  
 to the whole church or people of God, in all  
 and is particularly applicable to christians,  
 are assured by their Lord himself, that his  
 fence is not confined within the narrow lim  
 one nation, or one house of prayer, but  
 “ wherever two or three are gathered togeth  
 “ his name, he will be in the midst of the  
 The condition here expressed is much the  
 with that mentioned in the text. The Go  
 Israel, under the old dispensation, promise  
 presence and blessing, in every place wher  
 name was recorded, according to his direc

§ St. Matt. xviii. 20.

and the same God, manifested in the flesh, holds out the same encouragement, in the New Testament, to those who assemble *in his name*, because in every such regular assembly, *his name* will necessarily be *recorded*, or *commemorated*, as “the only name given under heaven, whereby we can be saved;” “that name which is above every name, and in which every knee is commanded to bow,” because it is “through him alone that we have access, by one Spirit, to the Father†.” But besides bowing our knees in his name, and thereby acknowledging it to be the only source and cause of those blessings, which are the subject of our prayers, there is a sacred *memorial* of his name, by which our christian worship is peculiarly distinguished—a mysterious ordinance instituted by our Lord himself, for the express purpose of *commemorating* his love, and shewing forth his death and sacrifice, until his coming again. The Jewish tabernacle was a type of Christ’s body, and a figure of his future incarnation: And when he was actually made flesh, and dwelt among us, he instituted the holy sacrament of the Eucharist, to exhibit his body, the tabernacle of his glory, and continue to be the symbol and pledge of his presence with the Church,

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† Eph. ii. 18.

to the end of the world. "Him, therefore," St. Paul, "has God set forth to be, not merely a propitiation," but the real and true mercy-where Jehovah so often promised to meet his people, and to bless them, with all good things, even with that which is best of all, "the forgiveness of their sins, and grace to help in time of need\*." Such are the blessings, which Christians are encouraged to expect, when devoutly assembled in those holy places, where the name of their God is recorded, in the way of his own appointment, and that is, where they are gathered or duly called together, in the name of Christ; for it is not every place, which men may call a church, nor every meeting which they may suppose religious, that will entitle them to the blessings we have been contemplating. There was a division in the Jewish church, when the twelve tribes broke off from the sanctuary at Jerusalem, and "worshipped they knew not what;" and by no authority, and walking by no rule: there have been many such divisions in the Christian world, which have produced numberless sects and meetings, for the pretended purposes of religion, but sadly subversive of that unity and order which Christ established in his church, as

\* Rom. iii. 25.

means of securing his presence and blessing to it. If we put a just value on these inestimable privileges, we will take care to comply with the terms on which they are held out to us, and not think of coming to God by methods of our own devising, or that he will come to us, but in the way of his own institutions. We have no occasion to seek for new schemes of religion, or to run after those who cry, "See, here is Christ, or see, there."— We have the good old way, which Christ himself marked out for us: Let us walk stedfastly in it, and seek our Lord, where we are sure he will be found, in the ancient paths of truth and holiness. Wherever two or three are thus met together in his holy name, assembled for his holy worship, in the unity of the spirit, and in the bond of peace, it is there that he delights to dwell; there is the Zion which he loves, the temple which he will be graciously pleased to inhabit, to hear the prayers that ascend from it, to sanctify the service performed in it. As often therefore as we assemble here, for this pious purpose, let us remember, that the place, whereon we stand, is *holy ground*, and call to mind the direction which was given, in a similar case. "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet\*," or, as Solomon expresses it, "Keep thy

\* Exod. iii. 5,

“ thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, which, besides enjoining all that outward reverence, cleanliness of person, and decency of behaviour, becoming so sacred a place, may likewise be supposed to have a symbolical allusion to the inward disposition and state of our minds. When therefore we enter this venerable sanctuary and consider it as “ none other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven,” we ought to divest ourselves of all earthly incumbrances, worldly cares and concerns, and bring nothing into it but the bare, humble, heavenly mind of a Christian, that we may go out from it, clothed with the best robe, the wedding garment, and the Redeemer’s righteousness, and have “ our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.” The Son of God would not allow his Father’s house, to be made a house of merchandise;” and the same respect, which he claimed to the Jewish Temple, is certainly due to every christian place of worship, where his name is recorded, and his presence promised, as a blessing to his people. From every such place, we ought to drive out the buyers and the sellers, and to purify our hearts of every thought or imagination which is connected with the business of this world.



house we are now in, ought to be wholly dedicated to the honour of that adorable name, which is recorded in it. No part of its furniture should be allowed to withdraw our attention from this important object, nor a single ornament be introduced, which may serve to put us in mind of our worldly traffick, or any of our secular employments.\* No embellishment should be admitted into the house of God, but what has relation to his service, or may tend to increase our love of, and attention to it. With this view, it is proper that every thing should be decent and comely, and suited to the pious purpose for which we assemble here. Our own houses we wish to be thus convenient, and adapted to our situation in life, and are often at considerable expence to make them decent and comfortable. For God's sake, let us not grudge what is necessary to give a becoming appearance to his house, and to the sacred service performed in it. Now that we are blessed with the full enjoyment of religious as well as civil liberty, if we neglect to provide things decent and honourable for the worship of our God,

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\* I cannot help thinking, that there is more impropriety than is generally supposed, in hanging up *Models of Ships*, or any such emblems of man's worldly business, in the places set apart for the Worship of his God, and the elevation of his thoughts above all earthly concerns.

men will be apt to despise our pretended and laugh at our attachment to a religion, we are unwilling to support. But this, will never be laid to our charge, and the office we have been performing this day, considered as a pledge, that we will continue to uphold the fabric we have raised, and make suitable provision for the worship of God in we be succeeded by a new generation of Christians, equally well disposed to take the charge of it; and those that are yet unborn rise up in their place, to praise the Lord, where we are now assembled.

In the mean time, as the goodness of God's providence has enabled us to renew our house of worship, and to make it much more commodious than heretofore, let our future behaviour shew that our piety and devotion are renewed with us; that our minds are strongly impressed with a grateful sense of this inestimable privilege; that the very sight of this holy place refresh our souls with a pleasing recollection of what we owe to God, and what we expect from it; and let no frivolous pretence be allowed to interfere with either, or interrupt our regular attendance on all the ordinances of this sanctuary.— Want of proper commodation can no longer be pleaded as

cuse for the absence of any member of this congregation. There will now be room for all:—“ young men and maidens, old men and children;” all may meet here, to praise the name of the Lord, and receive the promised blessing from the God of their salvation. It is for a blessing that we all come hither: may none of us be so unwise and unhappy as go away without it! There is a decency to be observed in our coming into, and going out from the divine presence. We ought to enter the house of God with becoming gravity, and a fervent petition for the grace and assistance of him that dwelleth in it; and when we depart from his holy habitation, it ought not to be in a rude, abrupt manner, as if we were tired of the place, and in a hurry to be gone, but with the greatest composure, and after having bowed ourselves to receive the blessing of the church, and to implore the divine acceptance of our humble praises, and imperfect prayers. †— Thus conducting ourselves in the duties of this house

† If people go to Church, *only* to hear a Sermon, they may no doubt leave it with propriety, when the Sermon is ended; but where Christians are taught to consider their place of worship, as the *House of Prayer*, in which God has promised to receive their petitions, and bless them with every good thing—it is absurd, and highly unbecoming, to go from such a place, till the prayers are ended, and the blessing pronounced, which is very properly made the conclusion of the service, to shew that none ought to depart, till all is finished.

house with becoming reverence, and shew  
our life and conversation in the world, how  
fully we improve the blessed privileges of our  
ly profession, we may humbly hope, that our  
will still be pleased to dwell among us, and  
light to do us good; and that, as often as we  
semble here for his worship and service, the  
of our mouths and the meditations of our  
will always be acceptable in his sight, whose  
is here recorded, and to whom we will ever  
up, as our Lord, our Strength, and our Re-  
er. To him, therefore, in unity with the Father  
and the Holy Spirit, three persons in one  
let us ascribe, as is most due, all Glory and  
nour, Thanksgiving and Praise, henceforth  
for evermore. AMEN.

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S. M A T T H E W, XVIII. 20.

FOR WHERE TWO OR THREE ARE GATHERED TOGETHER IN MY  
NAME, THERE AM I IN THE MIDST OF THEM.

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OF all the important truths discovered by divine revelation, the doctrine of God's universal presence has ever been considered as one of the most interesting to man; which it therefore becomes us to be well acquainted with, and to have a just sense of it constantly impressed upon our minds. —By this, we know, that the heaven of heavens cannot contain God; that he is present in all places, and with all persons; that he has a general inspection of the whole creation, and in this sense, is not far from every one of us, since “in him we live, and move, and have our being.” But besides this, which we may call a constant and common presence of God, necessary for the support of his creatures, and the good order and government of the world, he has been pleased to exhibit a more particular manifestation of his mercy and goodness, in those holy places, which  
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are peculiarly dedicated to his name, and in part for his worship and service. Of what is there, he is represented as taking a more especial notice, and from the gracious manner in which he has promised to extend his blessing to the services there performed, the custom of consecrating such places has prevailed in all ages and nations of the world. However mankind may have differed in the mode or object of their religious adoration, they appear to have always agreed in one general persuasion, that their deities required to have certain places appropriated to their worship, and fitted up for that purpose, in a manner suited to the circumstances and ability of the worshippers. Such an universal harmony of opinion could proceed from no other source, than an original command from heaven, handed down by tradition in the early ages of the world, and communicated to the heathen nations by the worshippers of the true God.

When we were assembled here in the forenoon for the solemn dedication of this house to the worship and service of our God and Redeemer, we deavoured to trace this idea of local sanctification connected with the holy places mentioned in scripture, through the various periods of their history, till we come to that grand event, to which a

former exhibitions of the divine presence looked forward, even the manifestation of God in the flesh, by which men were to behold his glory, the glory which in the Jewish tabernacle and temple appeared over the mercy-seat, between the Cherubims, and now shone forth from the tabernacle of Christ's Body, of which he spoke thus to the Jews; "Destroy this temple, and in three days, I will raise it up\*." It was with a view to this gracious manifestation of the divine glory, in the person of Jesus Christ, that the tabernacle was furnished, and the temple built, all the services of which were as "shadows of good things to come, but the body is of Christ†." To point out the coming of these good things, in and through the prepared body of Christ, was the design of all the figurative institutions of the law, and all the exhibitions of the divine presence, with which that shadowy dispensation was honoured. For at the very time when that law was delivered to the children of Israel, to preserve them from Heathen idolatry, and fix in their minds a due respect and veneration for "the name of the Lord their God," they were assured of a more extensive display of the glories of that name, and the blessings which were to accompany it, by that

com-

\* St. John ii. 19. † Col. ii, 17.

comfortable declaration : “ In all places where  
 “ record my name, I will come unto thee,  
 “ will bless thee.”

Having therefore already considered, in  
 last discourse from these words, how the name  
 the God of Israel was recorded, and his blessing  
 communicated to his people, before the incarna-  
 tion of their promised Saviour, the passage of  
 scripture, I have now read before you, will afford  
 me an opportunity of shewing how the case stands  
 with respect to this inestimable privilege, when  
 the long-expected Redeemer appeared upon earth,  
 and, as its incarnate God, blessed his church  
 with this gracious promise : “ Where two or three  
 “ are gathered together in my name, there  
 “ in the midst of them.”

These words have been justly considered as  
 fundamental charter of all christian assemblies.  
 For if Christ will be present with so small a num-  
 ber as two or three only, who are gathered to-  
 gether in his name, and according to his appoint-  
 ment, much more will he be so, when a nu-  
 merous congregation are thus called together, to  
 in the same worship, and offer up the same pray-  
 ers and thanksgivings to God. In every suc-  
 gular assembly of united Christians, their  
 and Master has promised to be present. E



any created being capable to fulfil this promise? Or can he be any other than really and truly God, who is able to extend his presence in such a wide and wonderful manner? Surely, none but the adorable *I Am*, the almighty and omnipresent Jehovah, could say, with truth, "Wherever two or three are gathered together in my name, *I Am* there in the midst of them." The cherubic glory in the Jewish tabernacle and temple, we are certain, was the presence of Jehovah. The Jews, to this day, acknowledge it to have been the marrow of their worship, and the peculiar blessing of their church: And we have good ground to believe, that it was a type or figure of a corresponding privilege to the christian church, the blessing of Jehovah's presence, in the midst of us, when gathered together in the name of Christ. The former indeed was visible, but only to the High Priest once a year, and on the solemn day of expiation. But the great High Priest of our profession, can and does exhibit his real, though invisible presence to his church, without the intervention of those temporary figures and emblems, which were but shadows of the good things to come, under the œconomy of the gospel, that glorious dispensation of grace and truth, which came by Jesus Christ. It is true, we do not behold

hold his glory with our bodily eyes, but we walk by faith, not by sight. “ God is invisible, whom no man hath seen, or can see; that glory, or body of light, which was the Israelitish church, was only a *sign* or token of his presence. And has not the christian church her signs and tokens likewise, even those sacraments, which are outward and visible, of an inward and spiritual grace? In the administration of these, Christ has promised to be with his church, to the end of the world; then, can we doubt of his presence, or that we are less favoured in this respect, than the faithful people of old? The sure ground of our faith was the promise of Jehovah.—“ Where I record my name, I will come unto you, and I will bless you;” and the foundation of our faith is less secure, while this declaration of the promise of Jehovah lies at the bottom of it, “ Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”

It was in consequence of this encouragement, that we read so often of our Lord and Apostles meeting together, as he had directed. When they returned from witnessing his resurrection, “ they went up to an upper room, to

§ St. John, iv. 24. I. Tim. vi. 16.

“ prayer and supplication\* ;” and for the same purpose, “ on the day of Pentecost, they were “ all with one accord, in one place † .” Of this place, a tradition has prevailed, through all ecclesiastical antiquity, that it was the same room, in which our blessed Lord instituted the mystical supper of his Body and Blood ; the same where on the day of his resurrection, he came and stood in the midst of his disciples ; the same, where he appeared again after an interval of eight days, to satisfy the incredulity of Thomas ; where James the brother of our Lord, was created Bishop of Jerusalem ; where the seven Deacons were elected and ordained ; and where the Apostles and Elders of the Church of Jerusalem held the first general council ‡ . But whatever ground there may be for this opinion, it is evident, from many passages in St. Paul’s Epistles, that it was the practice, in all places where the christian faith was then received, to appropriate some particular apartment, in the most convenient houses belonging to the faithful, for the celebration of divine service, and meeting together in the name of Christ ; which gave occasion to the frequent mention of the “ Church  
“ in

\* Acts, i. 13. † Acts, ii. 1.

‡ See Mede’s Works, page 321.

“ in such a person’s house §.” When the apartments were no longer sufficient to the more numerous congregations of christians, are informed that many pious and well disposed persons made over whole houses to the church for the better accommodation of her public assemblies; and it was no uncommon thing of their pulling down their first houses of worship, that they might erect other commodious and elegant in their room. This however would not happen, but when they enjoyed some intervals of peace, from the furious rage of the heathens, by which they were oppressed for the first three centuries after a severe and trying period, in many times assembling, and perhaps typified by the Jewish Church in the wilderness, under a cloud of distress, yet guided by a heavenly light during the night, the long wearisome night of triumphing idolatry and persecuted truth, when it pleased Jehovah to give his new

§ See Rom. xvi. 5. 23. I. Cor. xvi. 19. Col. iv. lem. 2. When St. Paul, reprovng certain abuses, which in among the Corinthians, put this question to them,—“ W  
“ ye not houses to eat and drink in, or despise ye the  
“ God?”—it is evident, from the antithesis he makes use of  
meant to establish the sanctity of the apartment where their  
assemblies were held, though within the walls of an ordin  
ling house.

† I. Cor. x. 1.

“ rest from all her enemies round about, and to  
 “ make her dwell in safety\*,” not by rooting  
 them out, as he did for the preservation of his  
 old people; but by bringing them in to her faith  
 and communion, then began to appear the most  
 splendid efforts of that pious zeal for the worship  
 of their God and Redeemer, which the christians  
 had been hitherto restrained from exhibiting as  
 they would have wished. Enjoying now not only  
 the protection, but the bounty and beneficence  
 of the state, they had both freedom and ability  
 to display their taste in the elegance as well as  
 convenience of their churches: And remembering  
 how they had been accustomed, in the days  
 of persecution, to hold their religious assemblies  
 at the tombs of the martyrs, both for the sake  
 of privacy, and out of respect to their memories,  
 they still continued to shew their regard for the  
 first publishers and zealous confessors of their holy  
 faith, by calling their churches after the names of  
 the Apostles and other eminent saints; a practice  
 which has been handed down, in all parts of the  
 Christian world, to this day.—No sooner had the  
 civil powers become friendly to the Christian  
 faith, than we find the arts, the wealth, and the  
 labours of men, chiefly devoted to the erection,

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sup-

\* Deut. xii. 10.

support and decoration of religious structures. Hence arose those many magnificent fabrics which adorn our own island, and are still to be seen in the southern part of it, with pleasing admiration, tho' among us, alas! contemplated for the most part in their ruins. Our own ancestors, well as the primitive christians, seem to have been at the utmost pains to shew all due regard for their places of divine worship. To beautify and adorn them, nothing was thought too good, or indeed far from good and costly enough for the gracious God and merciful Saviour, who had promised to be present in their religious assemblies, and would kindly accept whatever was intended to do honour to the places of his glory and presence. It was this consideration which excited their liberality, and encouraged their industry, that the God whom they worshipped would bestow his peculiar favour to those who put their value on the blessings of his presence, without which they were well assured, there could be no church, no christian worship, no divine ordinance, no acceptance with God, or of any spiritual benefit or effect to men. All these blessings were expected in consequence of the promise in the text, that Christ would be present in every assembly where even two or three were gathered together.

in his name, to hear their prayers, assist their devotions, sanctify all their services, and follow with his powerful blessing whatever was done there for the glory of God, and the good of their souls.

Such being the blessed design and happy effects of this divine promise, we cannot but see the necessity of attending to the express condition on which the promise is made, “ where two or “ three are gathered together in my name.” When the God of Israel had brought his people to the borders of the promised land, he assured them, that there would be “ a place, and only “ one place, which he would choose out of all “ their tribes, to cause his name to dwell there, “ where they were to offer all their sacrifices, “ and do all that he should command them.” In this chosen place all their males were to appear before the Lord with their appointed offerings, three times in a year; and nowhere else would he receive any gift at their hands\*. But the same God set aside this restriction, when, after announcing the joyful tidings, that the kingdom of heaven, the true land of promise, was accessible to all people, he brake down the partition wall, which had separated between Jew and Gentile,  
and

\* Deut. xii. 11. xvi. 16.

and that all might enter the gate of his fold, gave this extensive commission to his apostles, "Go ye, and profelyte all the nations which are  
 " aliens from the polity of Israel, and strangers  
 " from the dispensations of promise;" by the baptism which I have appointed, bring them  
 into my flock, that they may be my people, and  
 I may dwell among them, by my presence in one place only, as of old, but in every place  
 that shall be dedicated to my name; for *whosoever*  
*two or three*, the smallest number that can be  
 assembled for religious service, are *gathered*  
 together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.  
 —It is not enough, that they meet together,  
 whether few or many, as it were by chance, or  
 of their own heads, without any proper call or  
 order. The original word implies their being  
 called by authority, or convened and brought  
 together by one who has sufficient power for that  
 purpose, and so a regular meeting, con-  
 vocation, or gathering together by the appointment  
 of a proper officer, and with a view to the particu-  
 lar design of that appointment. We find frequent  
 mention made, in scripture, of the great Father  
 and Head of the church exerting this prerogative.  
 "How often would I have gathered together  
 " thy children \*," was his affectionate

\* St. Matt. xxiii. 37.



postulation with his ancient people, and we are assured, that he “ died not for that nation only; “ but that he might gather together, in one, “ the children of God, that were scattered a- “ broad †:” which merciful office, we know, he did not execute himself personally, but by servants and deputies, employed and commissioned for that purpose. Once he sent his prophets, afterwards his apostles and their successors, by virtue of which mission, these servants went out, and gathered together as many as they found disposed to comply with their invitation ‡. At that awful harvest which is to take place at the end of the world, the reapers will be desired to gather the wheat into the barn §. Now the reapers are the angels, whom the son of man will send to *gather together* his elect ||. They are ministring spirits to the heirs of salvation, and under their Michael, (the one Archangel mentioned in scripture) will gather the church to her triumphant state in heaven, just as the prophets and apostles have been, and their successors still are, employed, under Jesus their Jehovah, in gathering and keeping together the same church; in her militant state here on earth.

It

† St. John, xi. 52. ‡ St. Matt. xxii. 10. § St. Matt. xiii. 30.  
|| St. Matt. xxiv. 31.

It is thus, that every religious assembly or congregation of christians, must be regularly convened and called, or gathered together for public worship, by proper authority, and in the *Name*, says Christ, not only by his command and according to his appointment, but for the service, confession and glory of his name. As the temple of Solomon was said to be built for or *unto* the name of Jehovah; and Christians have made the temple of the living God, by being baptized *in the name*, that is, into the faith and service and worship of the blessed and adorable TRINITY. This was the form prescribed by our Lord himself, to shew the necessity of a true faith in the true God, as the foundation of a religious society which was to be called by his name, and preserved as his church to the end of the world. Hence it is, that to “ *name the name* of Christ” and to “ believe on the *name* of the Son of God” are expressions used in scripture, to denote the whole of that religious faith or belief, without which a man can be no true Christian, no true follower, or disciple of the son of God. Therefore should not only two or three, but a thousand such persons meet together, they should never be said to meet in the name of Christ, unless they be constituted to constitute such an assembly as he has pro-

to bless with his presence; they would be only a multitude of people gathered together according to their own fancies, or in the names of those by whose authority and direction they were thus assembled.

Very properly then did the primitive church prescribe, as our own at this day appoints, a repetition of the Creed to be a part of her liturgical service, thereby requiring all her members to make public profession of their faith, in those essential articles which her Creed contains, because of the necessary dependence which every christian church or society must have upon the belief of them, it being impossible, where they are not held and professed, that Jesus Christ should be rightly owned, or that men should be truly gathered together in his name. And to this purpose, it is also requisite, that christians come together in the unity of the spirit, as well as of the faith: For as there is "one Lord, and one faith, and one baptism," so likewise there is "one body, and one spirit, even as we are called, in one hope of our calling\*." From this one hope, we may easily trace the necessity of being united in our addresses to the God of hope, who fills us with all joy and peace in believing, when  
with

\* Eph. iv. 4, 5.

with one mind, and one mouth, we glorify  
 as the author of all our blessings. When the  
 promised Comforter came down on the Apostles  
 at the feast of Pentecost, “they were all with  
 one accord in one place,” and afterward  
 they began to perceive the effects of his  
 operation, they “lifted up their voices with  
 one accord †,” to sound forth in unison the praises  
 of their God; thereby exhibiting a happy  
 instance of that concord and harmony, which  
 distinguishes the worship of christians, con-  
 sidered together, as it were, the piety, the zeal,  
 the importunity, of the whole society  
 presenting it to the Deity, as one undivided  
 offering, the joint devotion of the whole body,  
 the benefit of which, however, is extended  
 to every particular member. It is for this reason  
 that the public service of our church, is called  
*common prayer*: And when, in the words of our  
 venerable father of the church, we beg of our  
 “ Lord, to fulfil the desires and petitions  
 “ of thy servants, as may be most expedient for  
 it is because the same “ almighty God has  
 “ granted us grace to make our *common* supplications  
 “ to him, and has promised, that when  
 “ three are thus gathered together in his

† Acts, iv. 24.

“ he will grant their requests †.” So well does our church put us in mind of the necessity of attending to this part of the condition, prefixed to the promise in my text; and with equal care has she instructed us, that all our addresses to almighty God, whether they be prayers, praises, or thanksgivings, must all be offered up in the name of the blessed Jesus, our only advocate with the Father, the sole mediator between God and Man. Whatsoever, therefore, we ask of God, we must ask it only for his sake, and not rely on our own merits, for an answer to the smallest request. So our Saviour himself assures us.—“ Whatsoever ye shall  
 “ ask the Father in my name, he will give it  
 “ you ‡;” which limitation of the promise, with many other similar restrictions, has justly given rise to that particular form of prayer, made use of in all christian liturgies, whereby we beg of God, to hear, accept, and answer our petitions, not for any worthiness of ours, but for the sake, and through the merits and mediation of his beloved Son, and our only Saviour, Jesus Christ.— According to this pattern, the public worship of our church has been framed with the greatest care, and not only the language of her daily devotions, but the appointment of her annual so-

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lemni-

† Prayer of St. Chryostom. ‡ St. John, xvi. 23.

lemnities, serves to remind us of our dependence on the mediation of Christ, and the acceptance of all our services.

It will not, I hope, be thought an unnecessary conclusion to our present subject, if I attempt to shew with what admirable propriety the institution of these solemnities is contrived, to "preserve the name," and preserve the memory of our redeeming God in all those holy seasons which are duly set apart for that purpose.

When that holy season commences, and begins our ecclesiastical year, we assemble in the house of God, to contemplate the Advent of the promised Redeemer, with all its important and interesting consequences; on which occasion we are invited by the portions of scripture appointed for our public reading, to join with the multitude that went before, and followed this mighty Saviour in his incarnation, in singing "Hosanna to the Son of David: blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord\*." Thus prepared, by the performance of acts of devotion, for beholding, with the eyes of faith, the glory of the Word made flesh, and dwelling among us, full of grace and truth, we are made sensible of the benefits of that incarnation, "the fulness of which we all receive†," by celebrating

\* St. Matt. xxi. 9. † St. John, i. 16.

at the holy altar, the festival of our blessed Lord's nativity : that auspicious festival, which shews the happy accomplishment of the ancient prophecies, leads us to the very birth-place of the infant Saviour, the long expected *Immanuel*, and from that humble station calls upon us to praise the God of our salvation, in the words of that angelic hymn, "glory to God in the highest, " and on earth peace, good will towards men‡." But the infant Saviour was to receive a name expressive of his gracious character, that christians might be gathered together and bow their knees in the precious name of *Jesus*; in commemorating which happy event we are also put in mind, that this "Son of God, made of a woman, " was made under the law, to redeem them that "were under the law, that we might receive " the adoption of sons†." Happy in the glorious privileges of this adoption, by which we are become fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of the divine promises in Christ, we contemplate with joy, the leading of that star, by which an incarnate God was manifested to the Gentiles, and we now acknowledge, that, "in him was life, and the life was the light of " men§," the benefits of which enlightening dispensa-

‡ St. Luke, ii. 14. † Gal. iv. 4, 5. § St. John, i. 4.

penfation are fully displayed in the fervid church during the Sundays after the Epiphany, when the children of light are exhorted to good works, by which their "light is to shine before men, to the glory of their heavenly Father." But the light of the right is of a progressive nature. So says the wise man, "The path of the just is as the shining sun, which shineth more and more, unto the perfect day\*;" and from St. Paul we learn that this perfection is to be attained; for "it is by him," says he, "for whom are all things, by whom are all things, in bringing forth sons unto glory, to make the captain of salvation perfect through sufferings†." It is then it becomes those sons, who are brought unto eternal glory by Christ Jesus, to devote some portion of their sacred time to the contemplation of those mighty sufferings which produce such wonderful effects; that so they may learn to deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow him their all-victorious Captain, the path that leads to endless glory. Now you know, is the pious design of that humane season which exhibits the whole amazing history of the Redeemer's sufferings, from his ten-

\* Prov. iv. 18. † Heb. ii. 10.



in the wilderness, to that agonizing scene of sorrow and anguish, in the garden of Gethsemane, which terminated at last in the death of the cross, and thereby “destroyed death, and him “ that had the power of it\*.” Hence we cannot but see the necessity of dying unto sin, that we may live to him who died for us, and “through “ the grave and gate of death, may pass with him “ to such a joyful resurrection” as the yearly festival of Easter most happily brings to our remembrance. On every return of that grand solemnity, which so peculiarly distinguishes the devotions of the Christian church, her lessons, her hymns, and songs of praise all remind us, that, “since Christ our passover is sacrificed for “ us, we ought therefore to keep the feast;” keep it in the manner appointed by its divine Author, by taking the bread of life, and “the “ cup of salvation, and thereby calling on the “ name of the Lord †.” Thus do we at once commemorate the sacrifice of his death; and the power of his resurrection; that power which gives life and spirit to the services of the sanctuary, till they are directed to the celebration of his glorious ascension, and that astonishing proof of his exaltation, the effusion of the Holy Spirit at  
the

\* Heb. ii. 14. † Psal. cxvi. 13.

the feast of Pentecost, "whereby the a  
 "received both the gift of divers lang  
 "and also boldness with fervent zeal to  
 "the gospel unto all nations." How pr  
 do we then lift up our hearts in songs of  
 to that most gracious Father, who has so  
 "brought us of the once heathen world,  
 "darkness and error, into the clear light an  
 "knowledge of him, and of his son Jesus C  
 And now, after being so happily put in m  
 what we owe to each of these adorable p  
 the Father, the Son, and the holy Ghos  
 blessed festival comes, which "teaches us  
 "confession of a true faith to acknowled  
 "glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the  
 "of the divine majesty to worship the u  
 on which occasion we devoutly pray, that  
 "would keep us steadfast in this faith, and  
 "more defend us from all adversities," esp  
 from that greatest and worst of all calar  
 "denying the Lord that bought us, and  
 "despite to the spirit of grace," either b  
 rupting the truth, or violating the prece  
 our holy religion, and thereby giving oc  
 to the enemies of our faith, to blasphem  
 worthy name by which we are called.  
 powerfully should this consideration oper

our minds, and produce a careful observance and sincere improvement of all those pious solemnities which call us to the sanctuary of God, and will, I hope, be long and devoutly celebrated in the place where we are now assembled.

That diversified succession of delightful exercises in which we are engaged at the solemn and stated periods I have mentioned, must incline us to say, with the devout psalmist, “ Thy testimonies, O Lord, are very sure ;” but we should never forget, what follows, “ holiness becometh thine house for ever\*.” Let us beware of robbing the house of our God of that which is so highly becoming in it, and the greatest ornament we can bestow upon it. It was for want of this decoration, and because the temple of God was defiled by those who frequented it, that a little before the destruction of Jerusalem, that terrible voice was heard at midnight in the holy place, “ Let us go hence †.” For the same reason has God forsaken many of those ancient cathedrals of the Eastern church, in which their pious founders no doubt hoped that the name of Christ would be “ recorded,” and christians blessed with his divine presence, to the end of time. The abounding of error and iniquity has long since provoked

\* Psal. xciii. 5. † See Josephus' History of the Wars of the Jews.

voked their almighty Lord to remove their  
stick out of its place; and the same can  
produce similar effects in every other coun-  
der heaven. We have lived to see a mel-  
proof of it, in the very centre of what is  
the christian world; a whole national  
bleeding under the impious tyranny of a  
despotism, her sanctuaries profaned, her  
overturned, her priests slain with the sword,  
every vestige of her worship defaced, by a  
decree of her infamous oppressors, pret-  
to change the divine calculation of time,  
abolish that sacred institution which was de-  
to preserve the remembrance of the world's  
tion, by a God of infinite power, wisdom,  
goodness.

How ought such a bold and blasphemous  
tempt to strike us with horror and tremor,  
and compel us to think in good earnest of  
alarming progress of irreligion in our own  
try, and the miseries that may yet ensue, from  
imitation of this woful example, this strange  
flowing of ungodliness. Let it be our stren-  
endeavour, as it surely is our interest, to  
this torrent of impiety, as far as our influ-  
reacheth, by a steady attachment to the  
and service of our Redeemer, and a conf

ous regard to those sanctified times and places, which are dedicated to the worship of his name, and the honour of his religion. For he is faithful that promised, and will not withhold his blessing where it is thus humbly sought and reverently expected. God forbid, that ever our unworthiness should provoke this divine promiser to execute upon us his terrible denunciation against his old people. “ Behold your house is left unto you desolate\* ;” — wofully desolate indeed, if deprived of his presence, who is its principal support, its only glory. May He, the great High Priest of our profession, exhibit, in our behalf, before the throne of mercy, his all-sufficient sacrifice, and let the powerful influence of his merits come forth from heaven, to sanctify our devotions, and procure a gracious acceptance to the prayers which we offer up in this holy place, blessing us while here, and when we return to our several occupations in the world, with all those good things which he shall see fit and expedient for us, and thereby preparing us for that happy time, when he will come in glory, and take us to himself, that where he is, there we may be also for ever: Amen, even so, come Lord Jesus!

H

To

\* St. Matt. xxiii. 38.

To Thee, O merciful Saviour, in unity  
the Father and the Holy Spirit, the  
three in one Jehovah, be all honour and  
thanksgiving and praise, now, and for  
more. AMEN.

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*The following Prayers were used at the Consecration  
of St. Andrew's Chapel.*

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*After the Collect for the Day.*

**O** Most holy and eternal Lord God, who dwellest in light inaccessible, to which no mortal eye can approach, yet for the sake of that beloved Son, in whom thou art well pleased, hast graciously promised to be the hearer of prayer, that all flesh may come to thee: Mercifully receive the prayers of thy humble servants, here assembled in thy holy presence, and let thy divine blessing descend and abide upon this house, which by invocation of thy holy name we now humbly consecrate to thy worship and service, most earnestly beseeching thee to preserve it henceforth from all unhallowed and worldly uses, and grant that it may be ever sanctified and set apart for reading thy holy word, for celebrating thy holy sacraments, for offering to thy glorious majesty the sacrifices of prayer and thanksgiving, and holding out to thy faithful people the blessings of peace and salvation. Accept, O Lord, this our bounden duty and service, and prosper thou the work of our hands upon us;— O prosper thou our handywork. Let thy gracious presence, O God, our Redeemer, be ever vouchsafed to this house, and to all who enter into it, as becomes christians, in unity of spirit, and in the bond of peace. Here let thy priests be clothed with righteousness, and let thy saints sing with joyfulness. Here let thy people make their prayers, and perform their vows, and offer thee free-will offerings with a holy worship. Here let the weight of their sins be laid aside, the chains of corruption, and the cords of vanity be broken. Let the fallen be raised; let the weak be strengthened; let the eyes of the blind be enlightened  
by

by thy word, and the broken and contrite hearts be kept by the power of thy Holy Spirit. Here let the power of Satan be destroyed, and all the devices of the enemy of souls be broken and brought to nought. Let thy servants find here a refuge under all their trials, and a refuge in the various visits of distress. May this be our house of thanksgiving in prayer, and our sanctuary of hope in the time of affliction. *Amen.* Because holiness becometh thine house for ever, enable us, by thy gracious assistance, to walk before thee in all holiness of conversation, that we becoming a royal priesthood, a holy generation, a people zealous of good works, thou mayst bless us in all our holy services, according to thy own loving kindness and the desires of our hearts.— Grant this, we beseech thee, O thy unworthy servants, for the sake of Him, who alone sanctifieth us, thy, that gracious and merciful High-priest, who cometh to live to make intercession for us, to whom, even to the Father, the blessed Jesus, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be ascribed all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

*After the General Thanksgiving, instead of the Prayer of St. Chrysoſtom.*

**O** Almighty and eternal Jehovah, who createdst the heaven and the earth, and all things therein: Thou art the most high God, who dwellest not, as we do, in houses made with hands; heaven is thy throne, and earth is thy footstool, and what can we build for thee? Yet thou humblest thyself to see what is done in this world, and thy delight is to be visited of the sons of men. In all ages, thou hast been pleased to meet thy servants, in places set apart for thy worship, and to glorify the name of thy holy name. Our first parents in paradise were instructed how to appear in thy presence. The fathers of the faithful race called on thy name, at the *place of the Altar* which he had built, and thou didst appear to the patriarch Jacob at Bethel, where he consecrated a pillar for thy memorial.



became dreadful and venerable, even the House of God, and the Gate of Heaven. Thou didst also fill the tabernacle with thy presence, and the temple with thy glory, and when the fulness of time was come, for thy appearance upon earth, as God manifested in the flesh, thou didst graciously promise, that wherever two or three are gathered together in thy name, thou wilt be in the midst of them, for thy house shall be called an house of prayer for all people. Therefore, in dependence on thy promises, in expectation of thy favour, in obedience to the manifold declarations of thy pleasure, and in imitation of the piety of thy servants, who in all ages of the world, have separated places and houses for thy service, and left such monuments of their zeal for our comfort and example—We thy unworthy servants, walking in the steps of their most holy faith, partakers of the same hope, fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, have this day met together, in thy fear and love, to dedicate this house to thee, and to the glory of thy name, that we may not neglect the assembling of ourselves together, but meet here, in communion with thy holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, to implore thy mercy, to confess our sins, to deprecate thine anger, to magnify thy goodness, to celebrate thy praises, to administer and receive thy sacraments, to read and hear thy word, and be blessed with thy favour and loving kindness, which is better than life. Be pleased therefore, O most gracious God, to sanctify the services, and accept the devotions and oblations of thy people. Those thy servants, who have been more immediately concerned in promoting this pious undertaking, and providing for the support of that sacred service, which is here to be performed, remember them in thy mercy, and for the temporal benefits which they have bestowed on thy church, reward them, O Lord, with thy eternal good things. Look down on this house, which we have built for thy glory, as a portion of thine own inheritance, and take it under thy divine protection. Let thy holy angels be sent  
forth

forth to minister to thy servants, here assembled, to drive us from the power of the enemy, and drive away whatever is base and unbecoming, from thy holy place. Thine eyes be open, and thine ears attentive, unto the prayer that is made in this place, and when we meet here, raise up our united supplications for ourselves, our Church, our Country, and for all that is near and dear to us, from thy dwelling place in heaven, and fulfil the petitions of the servants, as may be most expedient for us, granting us in this world, knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come life everlasting. Hear us then, O God our Father, our Defender, and look on the face of thine anointed: so we and thy people, and the sheep of thy pasture, will ever be giving thanks, and rejoicing in the God of our Salvation, through the precious name by which alone we can be saved, Jesus Christ, thy Son, the righteous; to whom with thee, O Father, and the Holy Spirit, be ascribed, as is most due, all glory and honour, thanksgiving, and praise, henceforth and for evermore. Amen.

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*In the Pulpit, before Sermon.*

O Holy and merciful JESUS, Son of God, and Saviour of the world, who hast declared by thy prophet, "how shall I send forth into the world, who shall preach the gospel of peace?" are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and shall tread upon serpents' heads, and will not hurt them." Thou hast assured us by thy Apostle, that no man can preach the gospel, unless he be sent: we humbly beseech thee, of thy great goodness, to send forth into thy church, such faithful and true pastors, who may feed thy flock with that sound and salutary doctrine, which thou hast provided for its everlasting support. Those more especially, who shall be duly called and commissioned to preach in this place, let them never be ashamed of thy gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation; but give them courage and strength to speak the truth with all boldness, and teach the people the good and the right way. And grant, O Lord, that all who shall assemble here in thy name, may come with

pose of heart, to be rightly informed in the way of godliness ; for which end, may they ever be disposed, by the influence of thy gracious Spirit, to listen with becoming attention to what is here delivered for their instruction, receiving it, not as the word of man, but as the good word of God, which is able to save their souls. Preserve them from the power of those unruly lusts, by which they may be tempted to heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, and suffer no man to spoil them through philosophy and vain deceit, after the rudiments of the world, and not after thee, its glorious Redeemer. Incline and enable them to be doers of thy word, and not hearers only, that so they may be blessed in their deeds, and in all things adorn thy doctrine, O God our Saviour, who in the day of thy humiliation, when preaching the gospel to the poor, and proclaiming the acceptable year of the Lord, out of compassion to our infirmities taught us thus to pray : Our Father, &c.

*In the Altar, after the Prayer for the whole State of Christ's Church.*

**O** Most gracious and merciful Lord, who hast loved us unto death, laying down thy precious life to atone for our sin, and hast ordained for us holy mysteries as pledges of thy love, by partaking of which we might indeed receive the atonement under the seal of the living God : who hast also taught us by thy holy Apostle, that we have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat, who serve the tabernacle, and hast dignified that altar with the name of the Table of the Lord ; we most humbly beseech thee to hear the petitions which we now present before the throne of thy mercy, and of thy gracious goodness, admit this, which we have prepared under thy protecting providence, to be our altar and thy table. Let the prayers and offerings, which shall be made in this place, come up with acceptance on the altar in heaven, through thy meritorious and prevailing intercession. Be thou ever present to behold with favour, the meat-offering, and the drink-offering, which shall be here set before thee, as  
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the memorials of thy love, and our redemption, and  
 them to us, sanctified by thy heavenly benediction,  
 to us the bread of life, and the cup of salvation.  
 give us access hereto, with hearts ready to obey thee,  
 earnestly desirous to seek thee, where thou mayst be  
 thine own institution, at thine own table. Amen.  
 changes and chances of this mortal life, and under  
 and troubles with which we may be exercised, let  
 a never-failing support, even that peace of God which  
 understanding, that comfort and joy in the Holy Ghost  
 this world can neither give, nor take away. Deliver  
 all rudeness and irreverence, from all pride and presumption,  
 our approaches to this holy place. Let not the hand  
 betrayeth thee be ever on this table, nor let any dare  
 to eat and drink unworthily, or be guilty of the body  
 of the Lord. May we never presume to appear here  
 our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great  
 and pardon, O good Lord, every one that prepareth  
 seek God, the Lord God of his Fathers, though  
 cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary  
 down, we beseech thee, with an eye of pity and  
 on the many wanderings and imperfections which  
 best performances, and devoutest approaches to thee  
 the religious service of this day: that which we have  
 thou vouchsafe to bless: that which we have offered, graciously  
 accept; and now that this house is none other but  
 of God, may it be to us also the Gate of Heaven, that  
 services here performed, and the blessings here received  
 pass, in thy good time and way, to that high and holy place,  
 with all the company of heaven we may laud and magnify  
 glorious name, evermore praising thee, and saying, as  
 day—Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts! Heavens,  
 Earth are full of thy glory—Glory be to thee, O  
 high. Amen.

