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The Voice of God in a Tempest

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The Way of the Glorious GOD in a S T O R M.

February 24. 1722-3. Forenoon.

Nahum I. 3.

The LORD hath His Way in the STORM;

WHEN the Word of Truth, which is the Gospel of our Salvation, arrives unto us, under the Advantage of Lively Colours cast upon it, in sensible Occurrences which we meet withal, the Word becomes very Observable; the Gospel is Reasonably like to have the more Notice taken of it; there are lively strokes given to the Nails that are driven by the Masters of the Assemblies. Good & Great Things are spoken about, *A Word in Season.* Certainly, When we feel the signatures of the Word in the Characters of the Time when it comes unto us, and if there be something in

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the Season, to make a Right Word become Forcible, we shall have, *A Word in Season!* Such a Word is this Morning to be endeavoured. A mighty Storm is the Last Night begun, which this Morning we find so growing upon us, that I have thought it *seasonable*, to make some Effay with a *still Voice*, of which yet, I hope, the Noise about us will not hinder our hearing, that what there is of GOD speaking to us in the Whirlwind may have a due Regard paid unto it.

THERE were *Terrible Things* a coming upon the Greatest City then in the World. The Fate of *Ninive* is here foretold, which was in a most astonishing manner fulfilled, in the days of King *Jesiah*, by *Nabopolassar* & *Astyages* uniting their Forces, that utterly destroyed that Renowned City. It was once called, *A City of GOD*; it may be for the special Care that GOD had of it. It was a City, which had vast & thick Walls, extending Sixty Miles, as *Diodorus Siculus* tells us, in the Circuit of it. But according to the Prophecy, GOD has made an utter End of the place thereof, and, The place is not known where it stood. The most profane Man of all the Pagans confirms this Prophecy, and says, *No Footstep is left of it, neither can any Man living tell where it was.* The Old Geographers, express a Desultory Levity, and strangely contradict themselves, as well as one another, in assigning the Place of it. My incomparable & inquisitive Becharz himself,

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himself, owns 'tis in vain to look for it. We are sure, that *Mosul*, which at this day they show for it, is not so much as on the same side of the River with the celebrated *Ninive*.

THE *Terrible Things*, which were to produce this Destruction, are in the Clause now before us, compared unto a STORM. And the Way of the ETERNAL GOD in the Storm, is particularly proposed unto our Consideration.

THIS therefore is the DOCTRINE of GOD that shall distil as the gentle Rain upon you, while the stormy Wind & Tempest, with the Great Rain of His Strength, is doing the Execution, which anon you will find perhaps done in the Neighbourhood.

WHEN a Stormy Time comes upon us, the WAY of GOD in the STORM, is to be Considered with us.

THE Way of the LORD! That is to say, First, The Work which is done by GOD in the Storm. For a Storm is the Work of that GOD, who flies upon the wings of the Wind. If a Storm rise, we are to consider, That it is GOD who raises it. We read; Psal. 107. 5. He commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind; which lifteth up the waves of the sea. The Winds and the Seas are the Creatures of GOD. In Him they move! — as well as have their Being. All their Motions are under His command. And because our SAVIOUR is the Most High GOD, therefore

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therefore we find the *Winds & the Seas*, even *Miraculously* under the Command of our Blessed JESUS. No *Storm* comes, without *His* commanding of it.

THE *Way of the LORD* ! That may mean, Secondly, The *Work* which GOD would have us to do in the *Storm*. For in a *Storm*, there is a *Work*, wherein GOD enjoins us to pay our *Homage* unto Him, who is now giving a *Shock* unto us. When a *Storm* comes, we are to consider, that there are *Good Things*, which the Lord our GOD now *requires of us*. And in these Things, we do what we read, Psal. XXXVII. 37. *Wait on the Lord, and keep his way*. It may be, we are out of our *Way*, and a *Storm* comes upon us, as upon *Jonah*, to drive us into the *Way of the Lord* ; Or, 'tis to prevent our diverting from the *Way*, wherein we should keep *undefiled*, and seek for the *Rest of our Souls*.

Furnished with such *Præliminary Thoughts*, Let us now hearken to the *Admonitions of GOD*.

I. WHEN we are visited with *Natural STORMS*, [*As we are at this Moment !*] the *Way of the Glorious GOD*, is to be considered in them.

First, THE *Glorious GOD* is to be Adored, as the *Author of the Storms* that beat upon us ; Even that *Glorious GOD* who has gathered the *Wind in his Fist*, and who has bound the *Waters as in a Garment*. We read, Psal. CXLVIII.

8. *Praise*

8. Praise the Lord, O stormy Wind. He is to be praised, as the Maker and sender of the Stormy Wind. Whatever may be the enegy of Evil spirits, in any of our Storms, as well as in Jobs, and whatever the Prince of the power of the Air, may be able to do in Violent Agitations of the Air, 'tis all, By the Divine Permission. He holds all his Power, By the Divine Permission. GOD Limits it, as well as Permits it. Yea, GOD employs the Evil Angels as His Instruments. And it is His Indignation which by them does inflict such Trouble upon us. The Wrath of Hell does Praise and serve Him, and the Remainder of that Wrath does he restrain. My Friends, I beseech you, to see the Glorious GOD at work in such Storms as are battering of us. There is a Flood breaking in upon us, but GOD sits upon the Flood, GOD sitteth King forever : Oh ! Let us thus in His Temple now speak of His Glory ! Of them that were to undergo a Storm, we read ; Psal. LXXXIII. 16. Lord, make them afraid of thy Storm. Truly, Lord, It is Thy Storm that is now upon us !

BUT then, Secondly ; The Glorious GOD is to be Revered in the Way of Duty, which by such Storms we are loudly call'd unto, strongly chas'd unto.

First ; A Contemplation of the Perfections in the Infinite GOD, which are discovered in the Storms, wherein the World is Rebuked, O Lord, at the blast of the Breath of thy Nostrils ; Methinks,
This

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This is what we must be compell'd unto. Our GOD is *Fearful in Praises*; His *Praises* are display'd, are bespoken, in the *Fearful Storms* that we tremble at.

HOW Conspicuous the *Power* of our GOD! when it had been said, *The Lord hath His Way in the Storm*, it soon follows, *Who can stand before His Indignation!* And *who can abide in the Fierceness of His Anger?* The *Rock* is thrown down by Him. How agreeably may we now Entertain such Thoughts as these? 'How Irresistible is the *Power* of the Glorious GOD, 'who can break down whatever stands before 'Him, and at his Pleasure bring in a Roaring 'Ocean to overwhelm whatever He shall be 'displeased at! Oh! Let me not *harden* my 'self against a GOD, who can *tear* me, and all 'about me *to pieces*, and there shall be none to deliver us!

HIS *Justice* is at the same to be confessed, in all the *Hurt*, that the *Storm* shall do unto us. 'LORD, our *Sins* have raised thy *Storms*. 'In all the sad Things that are done unto us, 'when the *Winds* and the *Seas* are made *spoilers* 'unto us, 'tis the Lord against whom we have 'sinned, that gives us and our Substance up 'unto them. Thou art *Holy* in all thy *Ways*, 'and *Righteous* in all thy *Works*; yea, Thou 'dost punish us less than our *Iniquities* have 'deserved.

FOR, Oh! how Illustrious the *Mercy* of our GOD! should He let out but a very little more of
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of the Wrath, whereof there are such *Treasures* with Him, *Lord, what would become of us!* Did not our Merciful GOD stay His *Rough Wind* in the Day of His *East Wind*, LORD, *what would become of us?* Verily, 'Tis from the *Compassion* of our GOD, that we are *not consumed*!

I mind, that this Clause, *The Lord hath His Way in the Storm*, is introduced with such an Acknowledgment as this, *The LORD is slow to Anger, and great in Power*. If the Great GOD be *slow to Anger*, we must know, 'tis not for want of *Great Power* to Revenge Himself upon the Wicked. The *Assyrians* were not presently destroyed upon the Prædiction of what was to come upon them. No, *Ninive* continued a Hundred Years after this. Experience at length told the Jews, who might be discouraged at the *Assyrian Grandeur*, that the *Great Mercy* of GOD unto them, was not from any Defect of *Great Power* in Him. Syrs, 'Tis from the *Great Mercy* of our GOD, this His *Great Power* does not bring upon us, a *Storm* that shall make us very *Desolate*! The Memorable and Unparallel'd *November-Storm* which fill'd the English World, with Horror near Twenty Years ago, was but a very little to what the Omnipotent GOD can do, if He shall come, and it shall be *very tempestuous round about Him*.

Secondly, *Resignation* to the Will of the Sovereign GOD, in all the *Harms* that our *Storms* may do unto us; This is what the *Storms* of our *Foul Weather* may very fairly lead

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lead us to. When the *Perfect & Upright Man* of the East, had his House blown down by a *Storm*, we find him with wondrous patience only saying, *The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken; Blessed be the Name of the LORD.* Storms will bring *Losses* upon us. I know not what *Losses* you may see, when the Tide is at its Height an Hour or two hence. But this I know; It will become us to say, 'Lord, 'Thou takest nothing from me, but what thou 'first gavest to me; And, *Thy Will be done!* 'If my GOD will enable me to glorify Him, 'with a *sweet submission to His Will* in all that 'befalls me; and bestow more of His *CHRIST* 'and His *Grace* upon me, *The Lord gives me* 'much more than all this! A Servant of GOD, meeting with Disasters could say, *Psal. XXXIX.*

9. *Thou didst it.* Behold, The *Epitaph* which is to be written on the *Ship*, the *Wharff*, the *Goods* that are lost in the *Storm!* *LORD, Thou didst it!* Methinks, O *Pious Loser*, [Gaining in *Piety!*] This will be enough to quiet thee.

Thirdly. *Brotherly-kindness and Charity* for those who may be most in danger of perishing by the *Storms*; This now belongs to the *Godly Man*, who is a *Tree bringing forth Fruit in the Season* thereof. It is extremely probable, that in such an Hour as this, we may have some of our *Seafaring Brethren* on the *Coast*, whose *Hazard* may be much greater than ours. Very probably there may be some in that *Condition*; *Matth. VIII. 24. Behold, There arose a great Tempest*

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Tempest in the sea, insomuch that the Ship was covered with the Waves; and either Foundring, or in hazard of being Stranded, and all to be lost. I pray, let us be solicitous for these our Sea-faring Brethren; Full of Concernment, Full of Sympathy. Lift up a Prayer for them. Charitable Soul, Thy GOD may hear thee on the behalf of them, who may never know how much they fare the better for thee. Or, However thy Prayer will return into thine own Bosom!

Fourthly, **SINCE** I have spoken a Good Word for the Sea-faring People, I hope, they will hear me speaking to them. To them I say, My Brethren, Oh! That you would so behave your selves at all other Times, that you may with Courage look up to Heaven when Storms do oblige you to it. The Distressed Mariners, however unmindful they have been before their Distresses come upon them, yet now they come to that, Psal. CVII. 28. *They cry unto the LORD in their Trouble.* You won't be worse than *Jonah's* Mariners! But Ah! with what Confusion must the Devotions of Prayerless Vessels be performed, when Storms are distressing of them! If in Fair Weather there is nothing to be heard aboard, but the Language of Fiends, nothing but Swearing, and Cursing, and Obscene Talk, and Reviling and Slandering of Good Men, in Bad Weather only you betake your selves to your Prayers: what cause will you have to say as he in Ezr.

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IX. 6. O my GOD, I am ashamed, and blush to list my Face unto thee! We read, *The stormy Wind fulfills the Word of GOD.* How justly may He employ the stormy Wind now to destroy them, who never did *Fulfill His Word*, but always *Rebel* against Him. Had I a *Speaking Trumpet*, that would make my Voice reach to all the Tribe of our Zebulon, I would speak this unto them; O our poor Brethren, Our Wishes for you are, That you may Fear the Lord Exceedingly, and get into such Terms with Heaven, and lead such Lives in the sight of GOD, as you may in the Times of the greatest Perils by Sea, with Comfort look back upon.

II. I may now properly Enough go on to say; When we are conflicting with *Figurative Storms*, there is the Way of the Glorious GOD still to be considered in them. We have Storms befalling of us, in all that brings us into *Disturbing & Uneasy Circumstances*. And when do we find, *this present Evil World* without them! Now,

First. THE Glorious GOD is to be acknowledged as the Orderer of all the Storms that incommode us. We are so taught of GOD, Job. IV. 6. *Affliction comes not forth of the Dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the Ground.* All our Storms are of an Higher Original. O Mugian, O Manichee; Dream not of an Evil God, who in spite of the Good One,

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One, may bring the Storms upon thee. With an Eye doubtless to such Fools once abounding in Persia, our Good GOD says, *Isai. XLV. 7. I create Darknes, I create Evil, I the Lord do all these things.* Christians, In every thing that proves an Exercise unto thee; think; *I have to do with the Glorious GOD in what now befalls me. There is no Evil in the City, which that Good One is not the Doer of!*

BUT then, Secondly. The Glorious GOD is to be acknowledged in the Way of Duty which by such Storms we are put upon. When we are tried with Storms, there is a Way of Duty, wherein we are to meet our God, and be able with glad Hearts to say, *Job. XXIII. 10. He knows the way that I take, and when he hath tried me I shall come forth as Gold.*

More particularly,

First, THE Storms of Afflictions, which discompose our Affairs, and which disorder our Spirits; These are Storms that must have the Way of the Lord considered in them. The Afflictions, which we know will abide us, have that Resemblance; *Amos I. 14. A Tempest in the Day of the Whirlwind.* We meet with Humbling Things, wherein we go down the Wind. We meet with Articles of Adversity, wherein it may be said, *The Winds are contrary,* and whereof we too suddenly say, *All these things are against me.* We shall anon find, That we have this day met with Humbling

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bling things, which the last Night we dreamt not of. And we shall shortly find more a coming.

BUT what is, *The Way of the LORD*, that is to be taken in the Storm?

First. LET the *Hand of the Glorious GOD* in the *Adversity*, be discerned. It is demanded; Job XXXIV. 29. *When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? And who can disquiet thee, or, Tempestate thee, O Man, with any Adversity, if GOD will have no Trouble sent upon thee? Be not such a Philistine as to say, It was a Chance that happened unto me!*

Secondly. LET the *End of the Glorious GOD* in the *Adversity*, be answered. It comes upon some Errand, which must be complied withal, some *Intent* which must be attended unto. Be thoughtful on that point; Job. X. 2. *Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me. There is a Repentance, which knowest thou not, O Man, that thy Tempestuous Adversity should scourge thee to? Find out what is to be Reformed, and let it be amended; Find out what is to be performed, and let it be practised.*

Thirdly. *Supplications* are now to be a-bounded in. It was prescribed of old, Jam. V. 13. *Is any among you afflicted, let him pray. GOD allows it; Call on me in the day of Trouble; Expects it, They will pour out a Prayer when my Chastning it upon them. The Adversity that sets us a Praying, the Storm that brings us down on our knees, verily, 'tis a Kindness of GOD unto us.*

Fourthly,

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Fourthly. DON't indulge Frightful Apprehensions, That you shall be Tempted beyond what you shall be able to bear. A Disconsolate Person under the Advance of stormy Adversity may be ready to say, *I am afraid of all my sorrows*; yea, to say, *I shall perish, by what is coming upon me*. But say not so! Particularly; If any of you feel rising in you, a Suspicion, That you shall come to want before you dye; lay aside that Evil Surmise. Rely on the Providence of your Heavenly Father, and be assured, that you shall be provided for. Take the Sixth Chapter of Matthew, and make a Living upon it. Live upon such Words as those; Psal. XXXIV. 10. *They that seek the Lord, shall not want any good thing*.

Secondly. THE Storms of Passions Enraged from the Provocations which in the boisterous Elements here below, we may meet withal; these are Storms that must have the Way of the Lord considered in them. We are liable to Storms of Grief, in that sorrow of this World which works Death. We are liable to Storms of Wrath, when we are, as we often are, Mal-treated by our Neighbours. Alas, the Storms render us too often like those, of whom we read, Isai. LVII. 20. *They are like the troubled sea which cannot rest*.

BUT what is, *The Way of the Lord*, that is to be taken in the Storm?

First. BEHOLD a Just, and a Wise, and a Faithful GOD, Operating in all that is done

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unto you. Stop not at *Second Causes*. Let the *Faith of the Operation of God*, lun the *Storm*. Take that course to silence all the uproar within; *Psal. XXXIX. 9. I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it.* Tho' it be a *Chaldean* that preys on you, say, *The Lord hath taken away.* Tho' it be a *Shimei* that rails at you, say, *The Lord has bidden him.*

Secondly. BELIEVE *Gracious Designs of GOD*, in all that is done unto you. Will it not quell the *Storm*, to hear a Kind GOD saying to you in the midst of it, *I will do you no Hurt!* Tho' you may be somewhat *Sea-sick* with what you are so royl'd withal, yet be confident of this; *Gen. L. 20. God has meant it unto Good.* Child of GOD, Thy *Humiliations* are only to *Do thee Good in the Latter End!*

Thirdly. THE *Storms of the Fears* which a *Guilty Conscience* raises in a Soul, that GOD is not well pleased withal; These are *Storms* that must have, *The Way of the Lord*, considered in them. In the Portion of the Ungodly we find, *Psal. XL. 6. An horrible Tempest;* or, *A spirit full of storm.* A Soul self-condemned for vile Impieties and Impurities; A Soul vexed with the Reflections of a Mind filled with the *Fury of the Lord*; A Soul that sees GOD Angry with it, Hell gaping for it, the Devils ready to seize upon it; and a Devouring Fire and Everlasting Burnings assign'd unto it; surely such a Soul is in an *Horrible Tempest!* Unpardoned Soul, If a *Dead sleep* worle

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worse than *Jonahs* were not on thee, we should hear thy Outcries of the Horrible Tempest. They would be, Lord, Thy wrath lies hard upon me, thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves! They would be, Save me, O God, for the waters come into my soul; the floods overflow me.

BUT, What is, *The Way of the LORD*, that is to be taken in the Storm?

First. BE suitably affected with the Encouraging Invitations of a JESUS, who saves us from our sins; a JESUS who threw himself into the formidable Ocean, when the Wrath of GOD, with swelling and roaring Billows, was ready to swallow us up; and so appeased the Storm: A SAVIOUR, who came into the World, that He might save the Chief of Sinners. That there is a JESUS, who is Able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by Him, and who will cast out none that Come unto Him; This is Gospel. And of this Gospel, there is that Order given, Mar. 16. 15. That it should be preached unto every Creature. Polluted Soul, Be thy Sins never so many, there is a Blood which cleanses from all sin; And this Blood is a Fountain set open for thee. GOD invites thee to it. Thy SAVIOUR invites thee, Look unto me, and be ye saved; tho' thou art at the Ends of the Earth, and tho' thy Sins have carried thee to never so great a Distance from Him. With such a Word thy SAVIOUR now stretches out His Hand unto thee

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thee as unto *Peter*, when he was ready to sink. After this, *Vile Despair, Be still!*

Secondly, DON't imagine your selves *Utterly Forsaken* of GOD, when there is no real Ground for any such Imagination. *Zion* was mistaken, when she said, *The Lord has forsaken me.* And so are her Children too. Say not, *I have committed the Unpardonable Sin.* 'Tis a Sin for any of you to say so! Say not, *The Spirit of GOD will make no more Impressions on me.* Thou art now under His Impressions. It was pleaded, *Psal. CXIX. 8. I will keep thy statutes; O Forsake me not utterly.* Soul, if thou art *Willing* to be helped in *keeping the statutes* of GOD, and sorry that thou hast kept them no more, GOD has not utterly forsaken thee; No, and He never will do so.

Fourthly, THE Storms which threaten the Church of GOD in the World, with a total Desolation, and a woful Extirpation; In these also, Let the *Way of the Lord* be taken with us. The State of the Church, may procure that Compellation for it; *Isai. LIV. 11. O thou afflicted, and tossed with Tempest. Yea, The Floods have lifted up, O Lord, the Floods have lifted up their Voice; the Floods lift up their waves,* at such a rate, that the Church of all that People whom GOD has Redeemed from the Earth, would be utterly swallowed up, if we had not a strong Redeemer, and a SAVIOUR, who is *Mightier than the Mighty waves of the sea.* Yet let not the Floods of the

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*the Ungodly make us afraid. But let our Cry come to our GOD in His Temple. The Way of the Lord, now to be taken, is, by our Cry to call upon a Lord, who waits that He may be Gracious, (waits to hear our Cry !) That He would Awake for the Help of His Church and Cause in the World. The Disciples in the sinking Bark did so! But in doing so, Let us cheerfully depend on the Promise of our SAVIOUR concerning His Church; That tho' as in the Flood of old, the Fountains of the Great Deep were broken up, and the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the Earth, yet the Gates of Hell pouring out a Flood (be it of Persecutions, or of Corruptions, or of Contentions) upon His Church, They shall not prevail against it. A Glorious CHRIST is aboard His Church; And therefore,—*Fluctuat, at nunquam mergitur illa Ratis.**

THE Great GOD has begun a Storm upon upon the Nations; and a Storm that will not go over, till some spacious and specious Buildings, (founded on the sand of *Humane Inventions,*) will fall, and *Great will be the Fall thereof!* There are *Foolish Buildings* which GOD is going to Rend with a stormy wind in His Fury! Our Safety in such a stormy time will be to have as much of a Glorious CHRIST with us as may be; and keep close to Him, and His Institutions; and as for the *Foolish Children*, whom their Mothers here with heavy Hearts behold bringing in a *Lifeless Religion*.

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*ligion and an Irreligious Life among us,—From
such turn away!*

Fifthly and Finally, THERE is a STORM near unto us all; Yea, *It is near, it is near, and it hastens greatly upon us!* A Storm, which will blow down our *Clay-Tabernacle*: The Storm of DEATH; which there will be no standing before: A Storm that carries with it the *Terrors of Death*.

AND, Oh! What is *The Way of the Lord*, which is to be taken, that we may Enjoy a *Calm* within when that *Storm* shall tear down all before it? O Man ready to Dye, Get a Soul full of a CHRIST; Lay hold on Him in His Offers; and let the *precious Thoughts* of Him keep continually filling of thy Soul. Yea, get a CHRIST formed in thy Soul, with a Principle of PIETY there conforming thee to Him, and Quickening thee to Live unto GOD. In the Shipwreck which the *Storm of Death* will bring upon thee, *now* thou art safe: Thy Soul will get safe in the *Fair Haven* of the *Rest that remains for the People of God*.

¶ IN the mean time, Let the *Voice of the Lord* this Day *Crying to the City*, have all due Respect paid unto it.

LET it be Enquired, What *Mischiefs*, a *Storm of Contentious Outrages*, and a *Flood of Intemperate Excesses*, may do unto us; and, Let us *have no more of them!*

LET

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LET the *Distraction* which this Day makes the LORD'S DAY a Day of so little *Rest* unto us, cause us to Examine how poorly we have Sabbathized at other times.

LET the *Uncertain Riches*, on which we see *One Element* this Day make such Depredations, and, GOD knows how soon *Another* may do more!—have no more so large a Room in our Hearts, but let our *Affections* be more set upon the things that are *Above*; where *Tides* can't break thro' & spoil; and where we have a *Better & a Lasting Substance*.

FINIS.
