

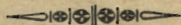
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God's Marvellous Thunder.

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A SERMON

PREACHED IN THE CHURCH AT HACKENSACK.

BY REV. SOLOMON FRÆLIGH, S.S.T.D. & P.

ON OCCASION OF THE LIGHTNING AND THUNDER STRIKING AND RENDING THE
STEEPLE OF SAID CHURCH, ON FRIDAY, JULY 10, 1795.



TRANSLATED FROM THE DUTCH.



NEW-YORK ;
PRINTED BY MELRATH & BANGS,
85 CHATHAM-STREET.

1830.

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TO THE
CONSISTORY AND MEMBERS
OF THE
CHURCH AT HACKENSACK,

The following Discourse
OF THE LATE
REV. SOLOMON FRÆLIGH, S.S.T.D. & P.

Whereby
He, being dead, yet speaketh :
IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED
By the
TRANSLATOR.

NEW-YORK:
PRINTED BY WELSH & BANGS
25 CHATHAM STREET.

1830.

PREFACE.

A great rent took place in the churches of Hackensack and Schraalenburgh in 1755. The opposers of true godliness, violently tore away from the Rev. John H. Goetschius—not being able to endure his faithful and searching ministry. These opposers had several ministers successively settled among them, down to the Rev. Warmoldus Kuypers, predecessor of the present minister, the Rev. James V. C. Romeyn. In the time of the Rev. W. Kuypers, and after the Rev. Messrs. Goetschius and Dirck Romeyn, the Rev. Solomon Frøeligh, in 1786, became the lawful pastor of Hackensack and Schraalenburgh; and succeeded in 1789 in bringing about a sort of union between the people under his care, and the Rev. W. Kuypers and his societies. They united consistory, charters, and funds, (the funds of the opposers was very trifling, and they were also in great arrearage to the Rev. W. Kuypers.) During this union, in 1791, they built the church, which now stands in the plain at Hackensack.

A union formed of such discordant materials as light and darkness, could not long subsist. There was forthwith a mutual struggle—the darkness laboured to overpower and oppress the light—the light struggled to emerge from the darkness; and amidst these contendings, a thunderbolt struck the tower or steeple of the church on Friday, July 10, 1795. This divine and flaming dart was afterwards brandished by the hands of men, and directed against the people of God; of which charge we cannot exculpate the late

Rev. Dr. William Linn, who, by his sermon at Hackensack, before the Commission of Synod, in 1796, pleased the world, and grieved the saints. The unjust charges of men, and the tumult within their breasts, in exciting which unbelief and Satan himself had no small share, made this an alarming and piercing thunderbolt to the people of God for a season.

The Rev. S. Frøeligh and his people were blamed for being contentious—by whom? By those who were taking advantage of the union to consume and waste the funds; and who actually, by an illegal vote, took \$500 out of the common fund, to which they had not contributed as many shillings, to build a parsonage house for the Rev. W. Kuypers; which house was never built, (the Hackensack Court-House now stands on the old parsonage lot,) nor was the money ever returned. A minute, give an account of this proceeding, April 20, 1795, now lies before me, the votes for the appropriation were: Rev. Warmoldus Kuypers; Elders, *Isaac Van Zaan*, Casparus Westervelt, Roelif Terhune; Deacons, Cornelius Ackerman, Henry Berry.

They were blamed by those, who, under the mantle of peace, when they had gathered what they could of the semi-annual subscriptions, paid off the salary of the Rev. Mr. Kuypers; but left the Rev. Mr. Frøeligh unpaid in a measure—appropriating to the former, what friends had intended for the latter; and what, according to the articles of union, should have been equitably distributed. They were blamed by those who endeavoured to fill the united consistories with prayerless men—secret or open opposers of the Rev. S. Frøeligh.

And for what did Mr. Frøeligh and his people contend? For justice and equity—for their civil and religious rights, which were constantly in jeopardy—for the cause of God and of Christ, for the precious things of earth and of heaven, such as: the new birth, experimental piety, humble prayer, a godly conversation, &c. And may there ever be found at Hackensack a goodly remnant conten-

ding against darkness and hate and mockery, for the truth, for prayer, for godliness, for a separation of the precious from the vile, for a religion that inculcates and manifests true humility and self-denial; not fearing, *though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof*—not fearing, though flaming thunderbolts should fall and mighty towers be demolished.

It was a time of fear and alarm when the steeple at Hackensack was first struck. The following sermon was delivered by the late Rev. Dr. Frøeligh on that trembling occasion, in which he piously and sweetly discourses of God's marvellous thunder and great doings, not without benefit; for a great spiritual revival of much genuine piety, about this time, or soon after, took place in his Churches—the first and greatest of the kind ever known in the Dutch churches in America, since the days of the learned and godly, the Rev. Theodore J. Frelinghuysen.

On Wednesday, July 21, 1830, after a lapse of 35 years, during a gust, a thunderbolt struck the same steeple again; the fluid followed nearly the same direction, and produced similar though slighter effects. This occurrence being now the subject of considerable, and perhaps of some vain conversation, it has been thought proper to translate and publish the annexed discourse, for the instruction and comfort of the pious, and as a serious admonition to such as are yet unconverted. Friends of true godliness, compose your differences, cultivate brotherly love, neither forget nor forsake the assembling of yourselves together; be not enticed to seek the company of the *present* enemies of God's truth, and of a godly secession; and be fervent in prayer, that the influences of the Holy Ghost may descend upon you and your children, as was the case among you 35 years ago.

C. T. DEMAREST.

GOD'S MARVELLOUS THUNDER.

"God thundereth marvellously with his voice; great things doeth he, which we cannot comprehend."—Job xxxvii, 5.

CARELESSNESS and pusillanimity are two very dangerous rocks on which many have suffered shipwreck: the one deprives us of all needful circumspection to avoid danger; the other takes away from us that courage and presence of mind, which are necessary when we are in danger, to deliver ourselves out of it. Elihu endeavours, in our text and context, to perform the part of a wise and faithful pilot—he guides his friend Job in safety between both destructive rocks—he labours to instruct him so that he might not commit sin against God, either through weakness and fear, or through carelessness and self-conceit. His design is to demonstrate and illustrate the wisdom and omnipotence of God out of the book of nature: in proof of these he adduces the lightning and thunder, the whirlwind and all storms, as incontrovertible witnesses, saying,—“Hear attentively the noise of his voice, and the sound that goeth out of his mouth. He directeth it under the whole heaven, and his lightning unto the ends of the earth. After it a voice roareth: he thundereth with the voice of his excellency; and he will not stay them when his voice is heard. GOD THUNDERETH MARVELLOUSLY WITH HIS VOICE; GREAT THINGS DOETH HE WHICH WE CANNOT COMPREHEND.”

Elihu presents two subjects for consideration :—

I. Ascribes to God two mighty acts—"God thundereth marvelously with his voice ; great things doeth he."

II. Complains that these were not understood—"which we cannot comprehend."

I. He ascribes to God :—

1. That he thundereth marvellously with his voice,
2. That he doeth great things.

A. GOD THUNDERS MARVELLOUSLY WITH HIS VOICE. It is disputed among Naturalists, what properly causes the thunder.* Some think, although very erroneously, that the sun draws upwards the sulphurous damp of the earth, which, when concentrated in one body, are set on fire by his rays, and produce the flash of lightning that precedes, and the roaring thunder which immediately follows. But how can this explanation be received by those who have searched into the matter, and to whom it plainly and unanswerably appears, that the cause of that astonishing noise in the heavens, which we call thunder, is the result of heavy clouds, charged with the electric fluid, approaching each other, whereby the fluid is discharged, either from cloud to cloud, or from the earth to the clouds, or from the clouds to the earth, in a blaze of lightning, and that terrible commotion, noise, and roaring sound in the air, consequent upon the discharge, is the thunder. The heathens fancied that Vulcan forged the thunderbolts, and that Jupiter wielded and hurled them with his hands. Some among Christians have ascribed to the devil a power to *make* or imitate the heavenly fire and thunder. This we cannot vehemently oppose, provided we subject it to God's permission and limitation. That the evil spirits are called "spiritual wickednesses in high places," and that Satan their prince is denominated "the prince of the power of the air," Eph. ii, 2, and Chap. vi, appears to countenance their assertion. Especially, when we add to this the account given us of that

*Tonitru est fragor editus ex plaga compactorum ignium e nube erumpentium. Thunder is a crashing noise made by the stroke of enclosed fires breaking through clouds.—PLIN.

Tonitru est horridus sonus in nube spissa, qui excitatur ab exhalatione calida et sicca conclusa intra nubem, quæ cum fremitu quærens exitum, magna violentia erumpit et undique nubem concutit. Thunder is a dreadful sound in a thick cloud, caused by the hot and dry exhalation shut up in the bowels of it, which seeking passage out, makes its own way with mighty violence.—GARCE.

disaster which this murderer of our race brought upon the children of Job, when, by his instrumentality "there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house," where they were eating and drinking, so that it fell upon them, and killed them all.

After all, when we reflect that the Pagan notion is groundless, and that the power of the unclean infernal fowls of the air is in this respect limited and over-ruled by God, so Elihu's declaration remains a truth, GOD THUNDERETH ! And although it be an operation of nature, even as the rain, wind, hail, and other changes in the weather, it is nevertheless rightly spoken, GOD THUNDERETH ! As he gives us the rain, the early and the latter rain, so also he gives the THUNDER. By whom else is this thundering attribute bestowed on the air and the clouds ? Who makes it thunder at one particular time, and not at another ? Who commands the thunder in one particular place, and not in another ? At whose word does the lightning with thunder strike this house, that barn, such a steeple, church, or person, when others are spared ?

He thunders, Elihu remarks, WITH HIS VOICE. Not that we must regard the thunder as his proper voice ; for, being a spirit, and thus without organs of speech or sound, no voice belongs to his Essence. Nor can I concur in sentiment with those who understand his voice of thunder, here mentioned, to mean the Gospel, which is indeed called the voice of God, and its ministers, Sons of thunder ; but the thunder is here spoken of as the Lord's voice, because he often speaks in thunder—and with thunder he rebuked the hardened Pharaoh, who also for that reason desired Moses to pray for him,—“Entreat the Lord (for it is enough) that there be no more mighty thunderings and hail”—Exod. ix. 28.

He descended also in a terrible tempest on Sinai, and spoke with loud thunders. The arrows of lightning, which he scattered far and wide, which made the whole host of Israel tremble, so that they cried out with affrighted voices unto Moses,—“Speak thou with us, and we will hear : but let not God speak with us, lest we die.” Exod. xx. 19. He by the voice of his thunder, in the days of Samuel the Prophet, let Israel hear his displeasure in desiring for themselves a king, “Is it not wheat harvest to day ? I will call unto the Lord, and he shall send thunder and rain ; that ye

may perceive and see that your wickedness is great, which ye have done in the sight of the Lord, in asking you a king. So Samuel called unto the Lord ; and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day : and all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel." 1 Sam. xii. 17, 18.

Elihu further remarks, God thundereth MARVELLOUSLY. There is in the thunder, above other natural operations, something wonderful. The incomprehensible velocity of the streams of lightning—their wonderful darting to and fro contrary to the natural motion of flame, which is always upwards, but these chiefly shoot downwards—they have such a wonderful power to rend the stoutest oaks, to demolish the tallest cedars, to beat to pieces the strongest towers and in a moment to cast down to the earth the mightiest men and fiercest beasts. The lightning is also so wonderfully various in its effects—of two lying in one bed, one is struck, the other escapes—a man's buckles are melted from off his shoes, and his body remains uninjured—the money is melted in the purse, but the purse is not affected—yea it is affirmed, that the fruit of the womb is destroyed, and the mother unhurt—the sword is broken, the scabbard untouched—the wine is spoiled, the cask still whole—the bones broken, but the flesh not torn !

B. From this marvellous thunder, he passes on to other mighty acts and wonderful deeds of God, and says, HE DOETH GREAT THINGS. This is a very unusual expression, and includes all the great things which God has ever done, whether we limit the phrase to the great things which God has effected by the thunder alone, to which I cannot immediately assent ; or whether Elihu passes on from the marvellous thundering with his voice to other great and wondrous deeds performed by Jehovah, to which opinion I the rather incline.

Marvellous and majestic things doeth he both in *Nature* and in *Grace*.

He did great things in Creation, when by a simple word of his command he brought into existence to us countless worlds, inhabited by different creatures, gradually surpassing each other in glory and beauty, excellency and dignity, and all their motions and actions subjected to a well appointed order, and of easy observance.

He hath done and still performeth great things by his providence. Great things did he to the old world which was filled with violence, when all flesh had corrupted his way ; for he opened the windows of heaven, he broke open the fountains of the great deep, he deluged the earth with a universal destroying flood, so that every thing which had life died. He did great things to the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah—to Egypt and his Israel—to many people and kingdoms : He breaketh down one kingdom and setteth up another. The four great Monarchies rose and fell by his doings—each one in turn ascended to the culminating point of earthly greatness, power and glory ; and from that lofty pinnacle of grandeur, all of them, one after another were cast down and destroyed.

But he doeth great things in *Grace*.

The coming of the Son of God in the flesh was a great, a marvellous event. Heaven and earth were struck mute with wonder and astonishment to behold a Divine and human nature dwelling in ONE PERSON. This is our IMMANUEL, of whom it was foretold,—“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given : and the government shall be upon his shoulder ; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.” Isaiah ix. 6, 7. And he hath done it. Great things were done when Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God, walked about upon the earth doing good :—“Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard ; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached, and blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.” Luke vii. 22, 23. Great things were accomplished by his sufferings :—an end was made of sin, reconciliation for iniquity, and an everlasting righteousness brought in. Then was the ransom of his captives paid, the head of Satan bruised, the unbelieving world confounded, and his Father well pleased :—“He was delivered for our offences.”—“If God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things ?” Rom.

viii. 32. Great things followed his death :—he arose again from the dead ; he triumphed over death, the grave, and all his foes ; he showed himself alive to his disciples by many and undoubted proofs ; he ascended to heaven, in sight of them all, accompanied by saints and angels ; he poured out the promise of his Father on the day of Pentecost, and by the gift of tongues utterly confounded all the tongues of gainsayers. Great things did he to his enemies—his obstinate and bitter enemies, the Jews :—he destroyed multitudes of them, their City and Temple also, and scattered the remnant into all lands. Great things did he to the spiritual Babylon in the days of the Reformation. A multitude of bloody persecutions could not arrest the progress of gospel truth ; the enemies were obliged to let it have its course. The kingdom of the beast was every where broken to pieces, multitudes delivered from Papal tyranny, the banner of truth raised in many lands, and the church militant contending successfully for her rights and enjoying them under her own vine and fig tree.

God doeth great things in the conversion of sinners,—when he breaketh in pieces the hard and sinful heart of man, enlightens the blind eyes of his understanding, changes his evil nature, and makes him a new creature in Christ Jesus. Then may one say,—“I am a wonder to many—I am a wonder to myself!” And again :—“The Lord hath done great things for me, whereof I am glad.” Or sing like Mary,—“He that is mighty hath done to me great things ; and holy is his name.” Luke i. 49.

If any one prefers to limit these great things to the wonders effected by God’s marvellous thunder, then it may with propriety be said, God, by it, doeth great things, both in judging and punishing the wicked,* and in trying and comforting the godly !

1 What great things he did by it in Egypt ! He terrified the heart of proud Pharaoh, and made his own Israel glad, when they

* Anastasius the Emperor, an Eutyphian persecutor of the orthodox Christians, was slain by thunder. History speaks of a Christian legion or brigade, in the army of Aurelius the Emperor, who earnestly prayed (the whole army being in a great strait) that God would appear for their help, and the defeating of the enemy ; whereupon the Lord sent rain for their relief, as also thunder and lightning, by which the enemy was discomfited and destroyed : whereupon that legion was called, *The Thundering legion*. When Julian the Apostate intended to rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem, in spite of Christ’s prediction to the contrary, Matt. xxiv, brought materials and ordered men to begin the work, the Lord sent a marvellous thunder, earthquake, balls of fire, &c. which terrified the workmen, and put a stop to the rash attempt.

knew for what end he had spared their Goshen, and why he had afflicted the tyrant and his land. Thus Egypt’s bloody persecutors were forced to let God’s children depart.

2. What great things did he by his thunder at mount Sinai ! He convinced the people by that means of their unrighteousness—he awakened in some of them a child-like reverence—he gave them all a sketch of the day of Judgement, when the heavens shall pass away with a great noise and the elements shall melt with fervent heat.

3. Great things did he by the tempest to the enemies of his people in the days of Samuel. By it he defeated and slew Philistia’s hosts,—“And as Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel : but the Lord thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them ; and they were smitten before Israel.” 1 Sam. vii. 10.

4. God doeth great things still by means of his marvellous thunder. By it he purifies the atmosphere and promotes the health of men. By it he punishes the ungodly, when he sets their possessions on fire, and takes away that which is nearer to their hearts than himself. By it he chastises his children for their good, bringing them to examine themselves, whether they have obtained their possessions honestly, and whether they can willingly resign what he has only lent them.

And it has also happened that a clap of thunder has been the commencement of a work of true conversion, when by that means the arrow of conviction hath been driven into the heart and proved a powerful call to turn to the Lord and live. “Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O Most Mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride prosperously, because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness ; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things. Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the King’s enemies ; whereby the people fall under thee.” Ps. xlv. 3-5.

II. These things being so, Elihu complains, that we understand them not,—WHICH WE CANNOT COMPREHEND. How marvellously soever the Most High thundereth ; how terribly he causes

his voice to be heard, what great, what awful things he may perform, *we cannot comprehend them!*

This may be taken in a two-fold sense—either that we cannot form any adequate conception of them, or that we do not pay proper attention to them.

A. I say then, first of all, that we cannot perfectly understand the thunder and other great things done by the Lord our God. We may reason philosophically on the wonders of nature, we may discover many of the peculiarities of the great and various changes in our atmosphere, but how many things are yet secret and unknown to the most eagle-eyed. After we have expended all our philosophical remarks and reasons, we must still acknowledge,—**GOD THUNDERS!** Truly something Divine appears to be mysteriously wrapt up and to lie hidden in the thunder. Else, why is it that men are more terrified at this than any other change in the weather? When this voice is heard in its terribleness and majesty—when the Most High thunders in the heavens—when the dark clouds hide the face of the sun, attract each other, and are ready to strike, break, and burst—when an amazing crash is heard in the heavens, and one stream of lightning follows another, then men are filled with fear and dismay, and each one in silent dread waits to see the end of this commotion—brute creatures, affrighted, run close together, and the feathered race seek to hide themselves. This is incomprehensible.

B. But, secondly, the original word denotes as much as, “not to regard, not to give heed.” It does not make a suitable impression on our mind. The meaning is not, that we must fear and tremble in a slavish manner, when it thunders. What then? Here are two extremes, which we must avoid with equal carefulness—on the one hand, a slavish dread; on the other, a rash inconsiderate disregard.

1. The thunder should lead us to acknowledge God’s righteous wrath against sinners, inasmuch as this appears to be a manifestation of it; and besides, has been often used as a symbol of God’s indignation. The Almighty’s brow is dark with frowns, his voice is as messengers of death. “Because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroke: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee” Job xxxvi, 18.

2. It should lead us to reflect on the goodness of God, reasoning

with ourselves after this manner,—“Why has God with his flaming javelin struck that house, yonder barn, that man, that church, and spared me and mine?” “Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?” Rom. ii, 4.

3. We must behold in the storm of lightning and thunder a display, in some measure, of that dreadful tempest, when God shall cause the heavens to pass away with a great noise—“For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.” Matt. xxiv, 27. But men do not consider thus.

4. We should also take occasion from the thunder to meditate on the dreadful end of the ungodly.—“Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup.” Psal. xi, 6. That we may be warned to flee from the wrath to come, and to lay hold by faith on Jesus Christ for salvation.

APPLICATION.

I. But why need I prolong my discourse in order to convince you of the terrors of the thunder and of the lightning, since you have seen not long ago that God thunders marvellously with his voice? Is not the injury sustained by the steeple of this church—are not the many disasters that have occurred here and there by the same element, sufficient evidences thereof? Your eyes have seen the fire of heaven descend; your ears have heard the dreadful crashing sound; the thunder of God’s power has done to this house, what the thunder of his word has not yet done to many of your hearts. The tower of this church is indeed rent, but the hearts of many who have been accustomed to let themselves be found within this house of prayer, have never been rended!

II. But after all, my friends, the goodness of God appears amidst this disaster. Could he not as well have sent his terrible thunder and devouring fire into our sinful dwellings? Why has he not utterly demolished those houses, where prayer is not offered up—where no one speaks of the works and ways of the Lord? Why

have not his burning arrows smote the tents of ungodliness, where nothing but vanity is found—where nothing but foolish jesting and sinful mirth is heard? Why have not his flaming javelins been hurled at the tabernacles of persecutors, where the new-birth is derided—where the operations of the Spirit and the exercises of grace are ascribed to a heated brain or satanic influence—where saints are mocked as new-lights, or shining hypocrites? Oh! HIS long-suffering!

Behold, thus marvellously hath God thundered with his voice, and done great things thereby; but here we may well

III. Lift up Elihu's lamentation—"We comprehend them not"—we take no notice of them—we lay it not to heart. God demands of us submission to his word and Son, we refuse; he threatens, we hold out; he strikes, and we hear his almighty power undismayed! It is storied of Tamerlane the Great, when he had demanded the surrender of a certain city, and they treated his demands with scorn, that he spread a *white tent*, as a token of grace, if they would yield; after that a *tent of red*, to signify that much blood would flow; and finally a *black tent*, importing dreadful death and utter devastation. May we not say in allusion to the foregoing, that God hath also spread out his dark pavilion in the clouds of heaven, but we regard not the work of the Lord, nor consider the operation of his hands. When God thunders marvellously with his voice, some look around indeed for their prayer-book; but no sooner is the storm over, than their serious thoughts and devotions have all rolled away.

How often have the sons of thunder uttered their voice and displayed their zeal from this seat of godly instruction—but what hath it profited? Who repents and turns from his evil ways? Who, who forsakes the works of satan and of darkness? Who is changed from a careless life to the practice of experimental godliness? Whose heart is smitten and broken? Deeds speak louder than words. Let the Almighty thunder with his voice—let church-towers and dwelling-houses crumble into pieces, or burst into flames—let law and gospel trumpets sound long, and wax louder and louder—yet men will not come to Christ that they may have life.

IV. My hearers, let not this providential event pass by utterly disregarded. It is true: the thunder is not supernatural—still, we must not let it roll unheeded by without a profitable remark, or a spiritual meditation, lest we be like the irrational brutes. Although comets and eclipses have been by Pagans superstitiously regarded as portending some gloomy event; yet signs and wonders have often appeared, and will again appear in the heavens, as the precursors of some signal providential dispensations. Should God, then, think ye, with his terrible and marvellous thunder rend in pieces the steeple of his house here, as he rent in twain the vail of the temple from the top to the bottom, and should we not consider? As for me, I must acknowledge, that I regard it as a Foreboding; and methinks it must convince every one of the truth of certain established principles, which by some among us are spoken against.

Oh may this remarkable event be a preintimation indeed that God with his law and gospel will thunder in this church, to the conviction and conversion of many! Believe it, beloved, like the tower of this building has been rent by a thunderbolt, so must your hearts be rent by the irresistible power of God's word:—"Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" Jer. xxiii. 29.

May but our eyes be permitted to see this! May God do great things in this congregation—awake many poor sinners out of their sinful sleep, and quicken his praying people by his grace; that so there may be a new life among the people here—that towers of ignorance, unbelief, pride, and self righteousness, may be torn in sunder and dashed to the earth—and that many may seek the Lord with broken hearts, with weeping eyes, with praying lips, asking the way to Zion, and keeping their faces thitherwards. "Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?" Isa. lx. 8.

V. And ye, people of God! behold yourselves also in this fiery-glass of God's marvellous lightning and thunder. Put away from you all slavish dread, on the one hand; and on the other hand, guard against that want of consideration, which is so reprehensible. Are you struck in a remarkable manner—consider it not as an evidence of God's wrath, but as a blow of his fatherly chastise-

ment, by which your benefit is intended. Cast your believing eyes on the precious promises of his covenant of grace:—"All things shall work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Rom. viii, 28. This fire has been sent to prove and try you, and through these trials you must pass and become prepared to enter into heaven—the everlasting kingdom of God our Saviour, where the sun shall not smite you, the heat not overcome you, nor the thunder terrify you any more; but where the light of God and of the Lamb shall shine upon you—where unspeakable glory and fulness of joy shall flow into your souls throughout endless ages. Amen.