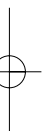


**Aaron's blessing  
the Children  
of Israel**

by

**George  
Whitefield**



# Aaron's blessing the Children of Israel.

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## **FAREWELL SERMON**

**Preached at EDINBURGH, in the ORPHAN-HOSPITAL-PARK, 13th  
September, 1762,**

BY THE REV. Mr. GEORGE WHITEFIELD.

*EDINBURGH:*

**Printed by ARCHIBALD MARTIN, opposite to the Foo of  
Forrester's-wynd, M,DCC,LXII.**

**[Price TWO PENCE.]**

## **Quinta Press**

Quinta Press, Meadow View, Weston Rhyn, Oswestry, Shropshire,  
England, SY10 7RN

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The text of this sermon is taken from a copy of the sermon held in the Bodleian  
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## ADVERTISEMENT

**T**he following notes of Mr. Whitefield's farewel sermon in this place, was taken in short-hand from his mouth. The amanuensis, unwilling to injure the reverend author's character, was against the publication of them, on account either of omissions or mistakes, as to his sense and purposes, he might fall into. Notwithstanding, at the importunity of some hearers, particularly, a poor woman, for whose benefit they are printed, and hoping they may be attended with that blessing of **JEHOVAH** which they treat of, he consented to transcribe them at her request.

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## FAREWEL SERMON, &c.

NUMBERS VI. 25, 26.

*Bless the children of Israel, and say unto them, The LORD bless thee, and keep thee; the LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.*

**T**HESE words was the form of benediction appointed to be used by Aaron and his sons, among the children of Israel, he was thus to bless all ranks among them, high and low, rich and poor, young and old, one with another; none were to look upon themselves as exempted. As there are none too mean for God to regard, so there are none so high

as to put them beyond their needing the blessing, as some falsely imagine, who think, that their high rank in life puts them above the need of the blessing of a poor minister of Christ. As to these forms of expressions, it may admit of some debate, whether Aaron and his sons were always obliged to make use of these very words as a set form, or whether there is a latitude given in the use of words, while they kept by the matter and substance. But it should rather seem to me, that in these words, the Great God, not only gave the church of Israel a pattern of benediction for the public congregation from the Mount, but that the Great God also gave them the words, and that this was a set and prescribed form of benediction, which Aaron and his sons, and all succeeding priests were to make use of, when they convened or dismissed the congregation and church of the Living God. Well, then, let us see what this blessing signifies or imports. And surely, we should all give an

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earnest

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earnest attention to the understanding that blessing which cometh in the name of the Lord, a blessing, my brethren, the first draft and institution whereof came immediately from heaven.

*The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.*

There is the blessing, and a glorious blessing it is; and then it follows; *And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel, and I will bless them,* v. 27. Where shall I begin, or where shall I end in speaking upon such a blessed text? My brethren, give me leave, before we descend to particulars, to tell you, that, if you will read these three verses, you will observe the first word of each of them expressed in large characters. Dr. Watts notices, that where the word Lord is written in large characters in our Bibles, it signifies the same with the word JEHOVAH, which is never applied to any but him who is truly and properly God: you will observe further, that it is not only written in large characters, but it is three times repeated, *The Lord bless thee—The Lord make his face shine upon thee—the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee.* One would imagine it were enough to have, said, *The Lord bless thee, &c. and make his face to shine upon thee, and lift up his countenance upon thee,* mentioning the Lord once. What need is there for repeating the Lord three times? Some commentators skilled in the original language the Old-Testament was written in, take notice, that the word Lord, here, is thrice repeated, and thrice articulated with a

personal pronoun; and hence some very judicious critics, and I think, with abundantly great propriety, have observed, that the manner of expression denotes the three persons of the God-head, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, yet one God, agreeable to the distinction of persons used in the Apostolical benediction. *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God the Father, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all.* There is the Father, there is the Son, and there is the Holy Ghost. This is the blessing of the New Testament; that was the

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form of the blessing to be observed under the Old Testament; blessed be God both of them signify the same things, and agree in one, as we shall see by and by.

I would observe further, that the word bless being repeated so often v. 23. On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel. And v. 27. And they shall put my name on the children of Israel, and I will bless them. The repeating of the word blessing so frequently, I say, points out to us this great truth, and we cannot too often be reminded of it, nor too seriously reflect on it; viz. That all our present, and all our future happiness, let worldly men say what they will; all our comfort in time, and all our happiness to all eternity, all proceed from the blessing of our gracious God. he is the alone fountain of blessings, and therefore, we may well say, that they are blessed whom he blesses, and cursed whom he curses, and if this be the case, if they whom he blesses, are only truly blessed, and his blessing is all and in all to all Christians, surely, my dear hearers, you and I ought to join together this morning, and with one heart, and one soul, put up this blessed prayer, every one for another, The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and O, that we may so put up the same, as to draw down some blessings of grace from this gracious God, this Jehovah!

Perhaps, for orders sake, it may be proper before we come to a word of application, to speak a few things for explaining to you these blessings, as they stand connected.

*The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.*

Now the Lord's blessing any consists, 1. In his being gracious to them. 2. The blessing consists in God's making his face to shine upon them. And, 3. In not only being gracious, &c. but in giving them peace. These,

then, my brethren, are the privileges comprehended in God's blessing and keeping is.—We shall speak of each of these in their order, as God shall enable, and then make application before our parting.

1. My dear hearers, give me leave to observe, that to

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be blessed of God, to be blessed of the Lord Jehovah, to be truly blessed of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is to find him gracious unto us. Gracious unto us! I do not know, but I ought to correct the expression, and say, find him gracious unto me; for observe the blessing runs in the singular number, it is not said, *The Lord bless you, and keep you, the Lord make his face shine upon you, and be gracious unto you*, though that would have been proper, but it is said *The Lord bless thee, and keep thee*, and in the singular number. Why so particular? Why not indefinite? Why not bless them all in general, as we do when we say, before we dismiss the congregation, “The love of God the Father, and the grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with you all?” Would it not have been more proper for Aaron to have said, *The Lord bless you and keep you, &c.*? By no means, the expression is emphatical; *the Lord bless thee and keep thee*; it shews, that God's blessing people in general will do you and me no good, unless he bless every one in particular. I know very well, and I am sorry to hear, a country man of yours has taken a great deal of liberty with some of your best men's writings; and, there is an expression in one of them, affirming the absolute necessity of making particular application of Christ. and his benefits by faith, to our own souls, to our reaping any advantaged by them, which, he takes the ungodly freedom to burlesque and ridicule, but, we dare be bold to affirm, that a non-applied Christ is no Christ at all. To say that this expression ought to be exploded, denies Jesus Christ to be the Saviour of sinners, for, if he is not applied to my soul, I say, if there is not a particular application to my soul, and every one's soul, by the eternal spirit of all that Jesus Christ has done and suffered for sinners, we believe no more than the devil believes, for he gives an assent to all the articles of the Christian faith, as much as any of us. What then makes him a devil? Just because he makes no particular application of a Mediator's blood and purchase unto himself. If Christ is not applied particularly to our own souls, we may be, for all our faith of assent, incarnate devils, and, if we abide so, we shall be damned for ever. To strike out against such

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an assertion as this, is to strike at the foundation of the gospel and Christian experience, which such men ridicule with all superfluity of naughtiness. This might be illustrated from events that fallout in ordinary life. When you hear in the news papers of such and such a person's having a lottery ticket, and his drawing a prize of some hundred or thousand pounds; or that such a one has got such a sum of money, or an estate left him, you all believe that, but you know, this belief what of happens to another, widely differs from one's being able to say, it is for me. So the promises are to all in general, but are, by the assistance of the Holy Ghost, to be applied to every one's own soul, for himself in particular.

*The Lord bless thee, by being gracious unto thee.* I believe the word gracious may as justly be rendered *merciful, the Lord be merciful to thee*; and therefore, in Psalm lxxvii. which it perhaps is a rehearsal, and adopting of this very blessing, it is translated *merciful. The Lord bless us, and lift up the light of his countenance upon us, and be merciful to us*; for my brethren, there is no blessing of us, till once we have obtained the pardon of sin from the Lord Jesus Christ. The apostle Peter, in his first sermon to the Jews, after the ascension of Jesus Christ, tells them, that he was exalted a prince and a Saviour: to what purpose was it? He adds, to give repentance to Israel. What more was he exalted for? It was to give remission of sins. And the same apostle, preaching to the same Jews, concerning the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, says, that God having raised up Christ from the dead, sent him to bless them, in turning away every one of them from their iniquity. God's saying he will be merciful to our unrighteousness, and sins and iniquities he will remember no more, is the great blessing under the New Testament dispensation. I know very well that some, and these not a few, think themselves blessed enough when they grow rich, they place all their happiness in earthly riches, and having obtained their wish as to these, think they need not be any more prayed for, to have the blessing from God; they very seldom pray for themselves, why? because they are become exceeding

rich,

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rich, and so think themselves happy and blessed in this. Some, again think themselves blessed when they have obtained the favour of such or such a great person, or possessing the smiles of an earthly monarch. Others suppose themselves blessed when they have got a great deal of

learning, if they can talk of Pleiades and Orion, and call the stars by a great many fictitious names. But, my dear hearers, there is not a word of all this in our text, it is not said, The Lord bless thee by making thee rich; the Lord bless thee by making thee great, or powerful, or by making thee learned in this world; if this were so, the good Lord help the poor people, what must have become of them, they must have been damned by shoals and multitudes; but the words are, *The Lord bless thee, by being gracious unto thee, by being mercifull unto thee.* And indeed what signifies it to be rich, or great, or learned in the sight of men, if thy sins are not pardoned, and you are not blessed of God. The word blessed signifies happy. *Blessed are the poor in spirit,* that is happy are the poor in spirit. And when it is said, *The Lord bless thee,* it is as much as to say, the Lord make thee happy, make thee happy not outwardly only, but make the happy inwardly; by his being gracious and merciful to thee, by giving thee to know, that thy sins are forgiven thee. Forgiveness of sins is the great blessing purchased by the Mediator's blood, and therefore, of necessity, must be received and applied to us; it must be brought home to all of our souls, before we can be said to be blessed indeed. I mention this article of the forgiveness of sins, because I reckon one grand error and mistake among a thousand of the church of Rome, is this assertion found in the decrees of the council of Trent, published by father Paul of Venice, 'Whosoever shall assert, He is assured his sins are forgiven, let him be Anathema.' Behold here, and notice the craft and policy of the church of Rome, they teach the poor people, they must reject all consolation from the doctrine of the free remission of sin, till, in the first place, they perform the penances they shall think fit to prescribe, any paying the priest for it; upon their performing of which, he pronounces them,

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at least they think themselves, blessed, and in a pardoned state. I knew one of this fraternity, afterwards an eminent convert, in Bristol, who went to a Popish priest, his conscience loaded with the guilt of unpardoned sin, to whom, upon making confession, he still could have no rest. The priest orders him a short penance, and, upon his performing it, he returns, and receives absolution: he said, for a moment or two, while he was with the priest, he had a little peace, but no sooner was he gone out of his company, than all his sins returned again in all their aggravations upon his conscience. And indeed, my brethren, this will continue to be

the case, till once we go to Christ, the great high-priest over the house of God, and receive absolution from him. This is the grand leading blessing from the Lord, the Lord's being gracious to thee, his being merciful to thee, in the pardoning thine iniquities, and forgiving thy sins and in drowning them all in the red-sea of the mediator's blood.

2. But this is not all; for here is secondly something more, not only is it said, *The Lord bless thee, and be gracious unto thee*; but, *the Lord make his face to shine upon thee*. And, again, v. 26, there is a seemingly-synonymous expression, viz. *The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee*. What is the meaning of that? To me it is quite clear, that Aaron and his sons were not only to pray that God might bless the people, and bless them individually, by graciously forgiving them their sins, but that he might also bless every individual person among them, by giving them also to know, that their sins were forgiven them; not only that they might enjoy the pardon of their sins, but enjoy the sense and comfort of it in their hearts, and that, from day to day, from hour to hour, from moment to moment, they might abide under the light and shining of God's blessed countenance lifted up upon them. I remember an expression in a letter I received last year when I was at Glasgow, the person said, 'Pray, Sir, O pray, that I may not only love God, and have my sins forgiven me, but pray, that I may know that my sins are forgiven me, and know that God loves me.'

There

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Now, in those phrases, *The Lord make his face to shine upon thee*, &c. I know not but there is an allusion to the sun, for like as when it shines out upon the world, you will find that your face will shine with its reflected beams, it will leave a splendour and radiance upon your face; and O, how cheering and comfortable it is to see the light in the morning! I mean, such as do not shut their windows to barr out the sun's light for fear it should call them up too soon. But truly, light is sweet, and it is a pleasant thing to behold the sun. I remember, Mr. Mandrel in his travels to that northern climate, where there is darkness for many months in winter, at spring when the sun revisits them; before he appears above the horizon; the inhabitants of these parts ascend the top of an high hill, that they may get one gleam of his light, and, after they see him, they break out in a rapture of joy, so as to be ready to die at the first sight of him. When I read this account of Mr. Mandrel, of the inhabitants of those countries, I thought with myself how much more earnestly doth

a poor convicted, or deserted soul stand waiting upon God, and longing for the Sun of Righteousness to appear and shine upon her heart; with what greater emotions and transports doth he hail and welcome the dawns of that more blessed day of grace in his heart.—*The Lord make his face to shine upon thee.*—Some people love to shine in a ball, or at an assembly; they love to shine in an ale-house; at the court, or at the play; at the walk, but let them have their wish, if you and I can have God's face to shine upon us.—It is added, *The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee.* What is that to say, you are so often speaking and talking about? *The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee?* Why, you that are parents, indulgent parents, tell now if you do not love to see your children, your dear little babes running between your legs, when they come, and with their pretty little eyes look up in your face, as if it were to ask your blessing; don't you smile on the little ones, don't you *lift up your countenance on them*, and

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give them some encouraging word? Or, if any of you, though strangers to the heart of a parent, know the delicacies of friendship, and what it is to have a friend whom you love as your own soul, with such a love as subsisted betwixt David and Jonathan, you can tell from experience how such persons live in an ineffable union of reciprocal regard, they smile on one another when well, and, when afflicted, they sympathize in a fellow-feeling of each other's burdens. Well, so the *Lord lifts up his countenance*, as a father smiles upon his children, or one loving tender hearted friend smiles on another. The sum of it all, my brethren, is this, to be blessed of God, to know that my sins are gorgiven, to know that the Lord Jesus Christ has blotted out as a cloud, the sins, both of my nature, and of my life, and it is to have the smilings of my God, not only knowing him to be no enemy, but to possess the shining of his face as a reconciled Father; it is to have the love of God shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost, and to have my *fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.* To have *the Lord lift up his countenance on me*, is to know, that he dwells in me, and walks in me; to know that he is my Father, my friend; and to see my relation to him, so as I can come to him, and with a holy familiarity, tell him all my concerns, all my wants, and when I cannot speak, ly down before him, and put myself as it were, under his hand. O! my brethren, what think you of this? Is not this a

blessing to have God thus *gracious unto us, to make his face to shine upon us, and lift up his countenance upon us?*

3. As a consequence of all this, it follows; *and give thee peace.* Peace is a consequence of *God's being gracious to us;* for, my brethren, *There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.* Why, but wicked people seem to have most peace; how then have they no peace? say you, they are always most cheerful and merry. Yes, to be sure, they are merry when in a play-house, merry when at their cups; as I heard a story from a certain person, concerning one of his acquaintance, not very long ago, a rich man who wasted his substance prodigally, squandering his fortune in drinking and riotous living, returning one night from a tavern

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where he had spent the day, he happened to meet a poor, but godly person, and says to him, don't you poor people think, that we who live and spend at this rate, and very happy? Yes, says the poor Christian, the world think so. Alas? replies the rich man, but they don't consider the damnable grippings of conscience we are tormented with after our merry-meetings. O! these damnable grippings, if you knew them, you would not call us happy. How is it then, said the poor Christian, that you always want a fresh bowl, and return to the same excess of riot? Why, it is because finding no rest in our leisure hours of reflection, we return to their exercises, that we may divert our painful and gloomy thoughts. The drunkard loves to drink on, that he may drown his sorrows. These are in a dreadful propriety, diversions indeed, they divert from the impertinence of thinking, and from the secret remonstrances of that troublesome thing called *conscience*, clamouring in the heart; conscience! that importunate guest, that will make its way into the closet of a king, or the drawing room of a prince, or minister of state, and say to the most distinguished sinner, the most dignified and elevated wicked person, *though art the man.*—My brethren, there is no peace, but that which comes from God. Rom. v. 1. *Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.* When once we are acquitted, and pardoned, by having the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith, we are at peace with God, at peace with ourselves, and at peace with heaven, when the world is most against us. Hence it is, the Apostle prays, *mercy and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ to be multiplied upon all saints.* When a soul is once freely justified and forgiven, he enjoys the smiles of God's countenance; God

is reconciled to him, and he walks in the comforts of the Holy Ghost. O, my brethren, what a peace is here! O, this blessed peace fills, it fills the heart, so, that a poor creature, tho' so poor, as to have nothing in this world, being possessed of this peace, he possesses all things. This makes a person sweet. What, think you, but this, was it made Mr. Rutherford write so

sweetly

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sweetly from his prison in Aberdeen? How came it about that Paul and Silas, with many others, ministers and Christians, so sang and praised God, and rejoiced in God, when cast into it? What supported them under all the persecutions they met with? It was this peace of God in their hearts; *God lifted up the light of his countenance upon them*. This is a blessing indeed. And then,

4. There is one thing more comprehended in God's blessing us, and that is protection. *The Lord bless thee, and be gracious unto thee*; there is pardon. *The Lord bless thee, and make his face to shine upon thee*; there is comfort. *The Lord bless thee, and give thee peace*, there is joy. And that, as here, *the Lord bless thee, and keep thee*; there is protection. After we have got all the blessings before mentioned yet, if God did not keep us, we should soon become bankrupts. God once trusted a man, one very nearly related to you and me, being our common father, and his name was Adam; God set him up, and gave him a stock to do for himself, and he was a bankrupt in a very short time. Let those consider of this, who talk so much of the power of their free-will. A free will of one kind to be sure you all have. But a free-will to what? To every thing that is wrong. It is free indeed, free enough to do evil. I grant we are rational agents, and have got a will to abstain from a great many things morally evil; but I tell you, we have no such will as can turn unto God, or keep ourselves one moment with God. The first man is an illustrious example of this, and therefore, God will no more trust man with his flock, but has now put the whole stock of all mankind, in the hand of his own Eternal Son, as a second Adam; and hence it is, believers are said to be kept as in a garrison, by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, therefore, she says, *The Lord keep thee*. He does not mean, that the Lord would keep them from afflictions or temptations entirely, or that the Lord Jesus Christ would keep us free from all crosses and calamities, these are things which we feel daily, but it signifies as much as he might keep us in them,

preserve us in the fire, take care of us in the waters, whilst drinking the bitter cup of temptation and trial. The Lord

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lift up and keep thy head above the waters: the Lord keep thee in the day of prosperity, and the in night season of adversity: the Lord keep thee when living and dying: the Lord lock thee fast up in the chambers of his Almighty protection, until all his judgments be overpast.

And now, my dear hearers, what think you of this blessing, when we have thus glanced, its various parts? Do you only think it is something to be mumbled over, as a Popish priest mutters over a pardon from himself, without any word of institution, to be found for it in the Bible? Here is God's express command for this blessing, v. 23. *Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, on this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them, and, v. 27. And they shall put my name on the children of Israel, and I will bless them.* Now the Lord Jesus Christ, his words are spirit, and they are life, and therefore, when you hear of these glorious things with the hearing of the ear, O pray, all of you, that you may experience the power of them in your hearts. And indeed, my dear hearers, if I were to study ten thousand years, how to express my love, in the best manner unto you all, or, if I was now upon my death-bed, as I am in the pulpit, which, I have frequently wished and prayed to God, may be my dying place, as the bed of honour, where I might breathe my last, in the service of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Master, I could not express my love to the tenderest friend I have in the world, not my affectionate concern for the temporal, spiritual and eternal welfare of your precious souls, more emphatically, than in praying to the great God, that this blessing may descend upon you, that is comprehended in this form of blessing. It is to this purpose that I have chosen the words of my text. It is ten thousand to one, if ever many of us that are here present just now, shall ever see each other in this world any more. As for my own part, as long as God is pleased to continue me in this earth, and give me opportunity to preach Christ, I shall always think myself a debtor to Scotland in general, and to Edinburgh in particular. And as it has pleased the ever-blessed God, to restore me thus far, and to give me the honour to preach from

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this blessed text in your hearing. O! may the great God bless you this morning, from the throne of his glory. If you would know whether you

are blessed indeed, do not enquire so much about what gold and silver you have got at home, what place and preferments you have got at court, how easy and comfortable your circumstances are, these are outward blessings, but these are not a Christ, they are not the principal blessings mentioned in our text. Indeed, I do not know, but the word peace, here, may imply God's giving us outward blessings, so far as these are necessary. But do you now ask your consciences, whether our Lord Jesus Christ, our great New-Testament Aaron, has blessed you in this manner. You have many times stood up, and heard the minister pronouncing the blessing, at dismissing the congregation. And indeed, I cannot but commend the Scots people, for the solemnity used by them, when receiving the blessing of the minister;—but did ever God say *Amen* to the minister's blessing? God calls it his blessing; *Wherever I cause my name to be recorded, I will come unto you, and bless you, and ye shall put my name on the children of Israel, and I will bless them.* Have you received this blessing from the Lord? Have you brought it to the bar of the word? Has it been honoured with this testimony from above? Do you know that God has blessed you, because he has been gracious to you? Do you know it by his making *his face* at any time *shine upon you*? Do you know it, by his having *lifted up his countenance on you, and giving you peace*? Do you know it, by his keeping you from evil, and enabling you to guard against sin—I verily believe, from my soul, there are many, many I am just now speaking unto, who know it, and to whom I will say now when going to part, though it is possible, we may never see one another in this world any more, if it should be so, yet, because ye are these whom God has thus blessed, I shall, ere long, see and live with you in the kingdom of heaven, for evermore. As a noble Lady, not many months ago, being in great pain and distress of body, she was crying out, Come, Lord Jesus, come Lord Jesus; says the physician, Madam, why do you so long

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for death, which is so shocking and dreadful to nature; says the lady, 'You blame me for longing thus to be rid of a pained body I am connected with. But no parting with the body, no heaven. As for the dear people of God, united to Jesus Christ, these shall not be long missing, they will follow me, therefore, says she, I long for that happy time, when, not only I myself, but all our dear friends who love Christ, shall meet in heaven, never to part any more.' This blessing will be completed in heaven; there the Lord indeed *will bless us*, there the Lord will *make his*



*face to shine upon us, and be gracious unto us, there the Lord will lift up the light of his countenance upon us, and give us peace, and the Lord God will keep us for ever and ever. O! then, blessed be God, I can part with you for some time, for it is but a little while, and we shall meet never to part any more. Yet a little while, and God will bless us, by sending death to take us all together home to heaven.—But methinks, I hear some poor desponding soul, lamenting thus; I have not had a blink of his countenance. O! that he would lift up his countenance upon me, before we part. O! that he would be gracious unto me, by saying, Son, Daughter, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee. Once a day, I walked under the smiles of his reconciled countenance; my steps were washed with butter; I loved and enjoyed my God from day to day; but, alas! I have not had a smile from my God of a long time. He is reckoned unworthy of friendship, who, when visited with the frowns of a friend, the object of his love, is not put upon enquiring, what offence he has committed, that interrupts and breaks off friendship; and the same, if a son falling under the frowns of a father, if he does not cry out, and is restless, till he learn what are the causes of his anger. How then should I cry out? How should I weep night and day as long as I am under the frowns of a once-smiling God? What Jonah did to the ship, that my sins have done to my soul; they have robbed me of the smiles of my God, they have intercepted the light of God's blessed countenance from me; I seek him in prayer and meditation, and cannot find him there; I look for him in reading and hearing the word, but it is con-*

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trary to what it was once a day, the very minister whose sermons were my greatest comfort, and who spoke to my very case, every time I waited on God in his blessed courts, I now hear him just like other men, the sermon comes not in power, nor assurance, nor joy in the Holy Ghost; and I know not what to do, surely God was never gracious to me, I am not in a gracious state, I am not born of God, I am but deceiving myself, and shall be damned after all. Are any of you thus plunged in the mire, thus sunk in the deep fit of despondency, and are you feet sticking fast in the thick clay? Come, poor saint, cheer up thy drooping heart; though thy locks are cut for the present, thy God shall make them grow again. Come, poor creature, tho', with Sampson, the Philistines are upon thee, and the Lord is departed from thee; yet a little while, and thy God shall return, and thou shalt be avenged for thy two eyes, he will heal thy

backslidings, and love thee freely, and receive thee graciously. Come, poor Peter, thou hast denied thy Lord; yet a little, and Jesus shall look upon thee; then shalt thou go out from a wicked world, and weep bitterly over thy sin, which hath prevented *the light of his countenance from shining upon thee*. May the Lord God, this morning, cause these clouds to fly before *the shining of his countenance*. Get thee to thy God; turn, O backslider, unto a blessing God, as in the text, and say, I cannot live without thy love, I cannot live without thy smiles, I cannot live without sometime crying, Come, Lord Jesus, come. Now, I know you must learn to walk by faith, and not live upon your frames, yet, you are not to think it is no matter whether you have got a good frame or not, because you are ready to make a Christ of them; this is the abuse of them; but it is good to have a good frame; and, if there are any who think, that to live by faith, as opposed to sense, is to be indifferent whether one ever enjoy sensible communion with God, in having *his face to shine upon us, and lifting up his countenance upon us*; if this is living by faith, Lord give me sense to live; let me have Christ in my arms; let me not live without the smiles of God one moment; let me not be one day, one hour deprived of these. It is not said,

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*The Lord bless thee, and make his face to shine upon thee (once a year or once a month,)* but it is said indefinitely, *the Lord bless thee, the Lord make his face shine upon thee*, importing that it is as necessary that God should bless us every day, as that we should every day see the world, or eat and drink for the health of the body. And indeed, my brethren, the light of God's countenance is necessary every day to support us under daily trials, and to quicken our souls, and make them fruitful in every good word or work. O! then, that all of you may be enabled to turn, as in the text, unto a blessing God.—As for such, if there be any of you, that are under convictions, the Lord God carry them forward in your soul, till he make you know the pangs of the new birth. Do not rest in your convictions. The arrows of God, stick fast, I hope, in some of your souls, may the Lord God grant, that your goodness be not like the morning cloud, and like the early dew which soon passeth away. You have thought good to attend here at my poor preaching, and have come forth to hear the word of God this morning, whilst others are yet loitering in their beds. How glad should I be, if this poor weak body would have allowed me to preach to you oftner. Did your necessary business permit your attendance,

I could preach Jesus Christ to precious souls from morning to night. Put, O, God forbid I should rise in judgment against any, to whom I have either just now, or formerly, been preaching the Lord Jesus Christ. How dismal will it be, think you, to hear one minister after another called forth, and each of them saying, Lord, I called, but they would not hear, I stretched out my hands but they did not regard? Alas! what a monstrous heap of gospel sermons will ly at some people's doors! This makes my heart bleed oftentimes when I come out of my chamber, not knowing but the sermon I would be glad to die in preaching, may rise up in judgment against some souls, for whose salvation I would be willing to spend every drop of my blood. O that you would happily disappoint my fears this morning, my brethren and fathers, whoever you are, whatever brought you to this place, to see a poor creature take his leave, be what you will, who

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you will, I would not change states with you, or be one moment in your condition for ten thousand millions of worlds, unless you have got God to be your Father. O! that you would think how soon you must die, and after that, come to judgment, how this world and you must part shortly for ever. O! look up to God then pray don't let me go without my errand;—you who are the children of God, come, strive and wrestle with God, beg of him, that he would give us a parting blessing. Use your interest with Christ, I speak to the dear lambs of the flock. You that are parents, pray that the Lord may bless and keep your dear children; O pray that he may *make his face to shine upon them, and be gracious unto them, and lift up his countenance upon them, and give them peace*; you would do well, to make use of this form of blessing them every night and morning, and likewise learn them it for their prayer. And you dear little ones, you lambs of the flock, that come skipping at your parents sides to hear a poor creature preach, one that loves you dearly, one that weeps in secret in behalf of your souls, while he prays to God for grace to convert you; you dear little babes, come, promise you will learn, and be instructed, to pray over this blessing to God; O! do not break your parent's hearts; remember you have another Father in heaven, another parent in yonder place, and without his blessing you are undone for ever. The devil, the world, and the flesh, all and every one of them, now strive, which shall rob you of this blessing. You few here, one going to a play, another to a ball or assembly, and almost all

this and the other wicked way, but very, very few going to Jesus Christ. O! then, ye parents, pray that God would bless and keep your children, that neither the devil, the world, nor the flesh, may prevail against them, to rob them of the blessing of God. And you that are young people, be not ye indifferent and careless of the blessing. There are a great number of young people present just now; many of you were unborn, I believe, when I preached first in this place, some years ago. I believe, many of you have very good people for your parents; I know not if they be of the trading part of the world, but I see

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the people of Scotland shine and make a figure, in all sorts of employments, in the army, in trade and business. You have got natural parts and geniuses, which enable you to shine; O! may these be employed for God. I know indeed, many of you think me your enemy, and judge me very uncharitable, because I strike out against your sins and vices. But, my dear friends, suppose I was to know that there was a quantity of slow poison brought into your houses, and that some persons that hated you intended to give you a breakfast of it, which, upon your taking it, would work insensibly on you, till you were dead; suppose I should discover this, should I, for this reason, think you, deserve to be accounted your enemy? And yet, my dear brethren, I do no more, in speaking and warning you against the devilish diversions, so much frequented by the people of fashion and gallantry of this age; these, I can assure you, do no less effectually poison the mind and morals, than natural poison destroys the bodies of these who take it; and, I can tell you, if you still cleave to them, without turning to Jesus Christ, by faith and repentance, they will at last damn you for evermore. I would ask any of you, who stand up for these soul-ruining diversions, is there any of you who would wish to see your son or daughter commencing stage-players? I suppose, there is scarce any one of you all, but would be ready to break your hearts if it were so. And do not you think then, that those who go and take up this wicked employment do not likeways break their parents hearts? How then should you support, or justify these things which you would not for the world, have your children to learn, and make a trade of? Glad was I, before I came here from England, upon asking if there were any Scotsmen among the players, who act upon the stage at London, when I was told there was none. And I am sorry and ashamed, that such corrupt and hurtful stuff has been imported from England amongst you, which bring no

profit, but most certain hurt amongst with them; diversions, which though they amuse, at the same time steal away both your hearts and time, your service and attendance upon God, in religious and relative duties whilst, all the pleasures they yield, prepare you for no-

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thing but the bitter herbs of repentance and remorse at your dying day. And therefore, you young ladies and gentlemen, if there be any of you addicted to these abominable diversions here present, do not be angry, you and I shall shortly meet at the judgement seat of Christ. I can freely tell you, if God had not stopped me in my career, instead of dissuading any of you from frequenting these hellish sports, as now, I have been one to invite and incite you to run to them this day. But I will now deliver my soul, and become pure of your blood: let me tell you, these will not make you blessed or happy, for though in seeing and reading them, you may, like the busy-bee, go from flower to flower, you shall extract nothing at the last, but gall and wormwood. Like the dove Noah let go from the ark, while the deluge overflowed the earth, you will, like her, flutter over the face of the great deep, but find no rest for the sole of your feet, till, as she returned unto Noah in the ark, you return to Jesus Christ the only ark, which can save from drowning in the deluge of the wrath of God Almighty.

Let me conclude with earnestly praying God, that this blessing may descend on all ranks and degrees of persons amongst you. When I am gone, my prayer for you all shall be, *The Lord bless you and keep you, and the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you: The Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.* More particularly, I look on myself as bound to put up this petition in behalf of your magistrates, who have, some days by-gone, granted me the free use of their church; I hope, and believe, they will never repent their giving a free opportunity to have Christ preached, though by a poor stranger. My brethren, I pray God, this blessing may descend on every one of your ministers; O! I pray, that the *Lord God may bless them, and keep them, that the Lord God may make his face to shine upon them, and be gracious unto them, that the Lord God may lift up his countenance upon them, and give them peace.* The Lord God cause *his face to shine upon them*, both in public and private life. I pray God this blessing may descend on them and their children. And

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O, when you are near the throne, and have got near God, if any of you have received benefit by more poor labours among you, O turn these words into a prayer for me. If God yet spare my life, or ever give me further opportunity to use my talent, as God shall be pleased to enable, you, the people of Scotland, and you the good people of Edinburgh, shall share in the fruits of my ministerial labour. For I am sure, I am greatly a debtor to you, the people of Scotland. It is, under God, in a great measure owing to the skill of your physicians, by the advice they gave for the recovery of health, that I am able to preach to you from this place. I return them and your magistrates, and all others I am indebted to for their good offices, sincere thanks. All the poor acknowledgement I can make, is to pray, that *God may bless them, and keep them, and shine upon their hearts*, and on all who attend on my ministry, high and low, rich and poor, from the greatest to the least of you all. I pray the Lord God may bless us, when we are parting from one another, the *Lord God lift up his countenance upon us*. Let this be our mutual prayer for one another whilst asunder, that whether I am called off by death, by land, or by sea, before we see each other, (for I am advised to take a voyage, for the recovery of this poor frail carcase,) or, if God be pleased to bring me back again, I may meet you either in heaven, or nearer heaven. O! that God may bless every one of us, and fulfil it in our hearts, to the utmost degree. Even so, Lord Jesus. *Amen*.

**FINIS.**

