

should stimulate all to profitable consideration of their most important interests.

Few things can be more evident than the intention of the righteous Ruler of the Universe, to make the ministration of death particularly useful in the moral government of the World—It was ordained at first, and still continues to be, an awful punishment. In its earliest visit, it bore an awakening warning to the primæval inhabitants of the earth; and every subsequent call has repeated the alarm to all the children of mortality—The value of this notice, when it is duly received, is testimony to the heavenly mercy which is ever mingled with the judgments of the Almighty—That mercy softened the sentence by which Death was first commissioned for its destructive work; and would still mitigate the severity of that sentence in every instance of its execution, if the folly and the depravity of the human heart did not so frequently strive to defeat its purposes.

Where men are crowded together as in populous cities, when the frequency of the instances of mortality is too apt to lessen the effect, which they ought to produce; and every day consigns numbers to the grave, without a proportionable influence upon the living; we frequently find the arm of death supported by the aid of famine, or pestilence, or some other scourge; and God upholds the power which he has delegated to this Messenger; thus raising his voice, and mercifully speaking louder, as the wickedness and insatiation of men close their ears against him.

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