

instance of divine goodness. And, on occasion of great calamities, or where such appeared to threaten them, Nations, as well as Individuals, have set apart, in token of their humiliation before GOD, certain seasons for solemn fasting.

It may not be improper, considering the purpose for which we are assembled, this day, to premise a few words on the nature of a Fast.—The greatest, and warmest, disputes have ever arisen from the merest trifles. Mankind have often been divided about external ceremonies: yet external ceremonies are of very little consequence. Whether a man should sit, or stand, or bend the knee, in the presence of his Maker, when he addresses him in the language of praise and adoration; whether, or not, he should appoint, for periodical and solemn approaches to the throne of Grace, some particular day, the twelfth or fourteenth of the moon; whether he should repeat certain prayers, in white garments or black, with his
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