No. 127.

On the means of pleasing God.

12/21/1821
Micah vi. 6, 7, 8. — "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, as bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first born for my transgression? 4 the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? — He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; what is the Lord, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

How shall man please his Maker? How shall we win the favour and secure the approbation of the Powers above us? — These questions have always engaged the interest and attention of the reflecting part of mankind. The answers which have been derived from a very striking part of the history of human speculation, and no wonder that this subject has engaged so much of the attention of thinking people. All the wise...
Knowing that there is one being or beings above man, I stand in awe of man. With this knowledge it was natural anxiety to discover or invent some mode of communication with this mystery, whose nearly affected human happiness. By the sages of old the highest fear of the heart must have been constantly at work urging man to find some faith that might be the channel of communication between the inhabitants of earth and the beings on high. Hence we desire to commit ourselves to the care of a protection of these among our fellow beings whom we have reverence for, so much changes not the same alone be with regard to their love, and can delight none of our fellow beings can be, even what we most believe and could wish off. Hence it is that whenever you are to be aware of human beings, you find them interested in some religious rites or other. They may be without almost every thing else, but there are not manifest anything real or imaginary, that is sufficient to establish a relation between themselves and celestial beings. Whether it be in the gardens of the east or the mountains, or near the city, in the manage of a civilized life, still you see the blaze of the altar and hear the voice of prayer, everywhere men kneel before the

Being when he fears or loves, it strives to conciliate this peace or stirs his anger.

No subject then, has been next greatest interest, than that man should address his Maker; if this is the subject of prayer, the in the text. "Whom shall I serve before the Lord of my house."

This is the question which the prophet puts into the mouth of some among us, who suppose them to proceed shall for that I ask whether all things shall to find the divine efficacy on the one or other common among the face in human beings, men of all, now devoting to death innocent children. To those means the prophet makes a most beautiful and pointed address, as if he said, "Dare then, if it is not in offerings, an oil, or in the devotional offering, it is not in such vain or such things."

Clearly, he himself hath shown these what is given, it is justice, mercy of the humble reverence of his name, that shall recommend you to his favor, not form, treaty, ceremony. This noble answer is saying in a few immediate words, all that the best is, it is even the greatest, as when the natural declaration can. I sing on the subject; it is the substance of every investigation of enlightened reason must lead. Much indeed moral qualifications are the only recommendation to the
as that of an angel, of the side of Christ's breast, but she has been so often thwarted in these consents to a grand order that the native beauty of dignity are not exactly observed. She, too, is not the same as the early history of the world, for we shall find the errors of putting something on the head of mortal children made often in this first page. In the primitive ages, man and woman attain wherever he comes to be, to the center of heaven, and offer an animal from his fold or fruits from the ground, given as a token that the meaning they offer is looking down with complacency on the doing, down to his bosom to be blessed. He thought he had connected himself with the Deity of the people, a service not entitled him to the protection of servants. This was his kind of communion with the mighty unknown Agent of he looked for my other view of pleasing him. This was perhaps a natural thought to the grace with a feeling of the own race. This being is these beings had become, or in the injury of the soul, a tone of sobriety, a tone of sobriety, it is, it is not wonderful that man should not have reflective enough to consider the Supreme Being as a moral Governor of himself as the ruler of a moral government. It is an idea not acquired time to develop the being it is, if God himself must endure.
become the teacher of men, it explains his role in human societies. It is not surprising that a nation so naturally adapted should have become predominant. It has in fact been characterized in some form of all mankind as a follower of the original inhabitants of our own country more or less. It is the natural character of their religious rites.

The true feeling, thus exhibited, was, "The god whom we worship in the west," would almost certainly be allotted to the spirit. That he should be regarded as the supreme power and be deified in the character of the supreme power, as the mediator between man and any of his fellow beings whom he feared or revered. He would present his gifts and offerings to the demigod, or celebrate his honors by feasting and singing. This was the way, in early ages, how men were accustomed to come before the god, as the text expresses it: this was the act of communion with the deity to exist between the creature that gave them life. And as we see, especially concluded by the idea of the necessity of nature is moral obedience. He stopped short with the notion of being observed, and man began. The whole of his understanding had led us to a more complete religious profession. It was for this reason that this customs of sacrifices as it became

established among the Jews, led to the great errors of the age. They ask languages designed by this system of rites, as a means, to bind his people to the worship of service of the only true god to place around them, thus securing for them their interests, while this defense from the idea of equality of other nations. And this because they would have answered, if they had been more

sure, on credit, not only as men. Yet purifying means they seem to be end, they were regarded as constituting the whole of the mode of access to the Supreme Being, in connection with moral qualities in the part of the men.

In this above the second writers continually say man, you see. Of this above the second writers continually say man, you see. It was asking in the time of rigidness to apply the support that he could be pleased with their devoted offerings, with their thousand times of oil, while their hearts were devoted to these persons, and to those. If better than all sacrifices. The same nation, as of substituting another in the place of moral discipline, was the world among the Jews. The cause of sacrifices (offerings) should be, not to the performance of the services, all essential to them, these would take no pains to break for reasons of them in this mind, to carry them to the belief that their possessions had come from in themselves, I made an in fact the chief.
ing sin, wrath, and grace. The sinners imagined that there was much merit in using or abstaining from things of that particular food, in certain usages, practices of religion in retaining from society, according the law in multiplication of stock. Then came on the thick darkness of those ages when the Roman church ruled the time and led all the way of Gospel light. No, no light was anything but darkness, nothing but darkness was anything. Owners of counties were introduced as the heads of churches, men learned before went to the mouth of God, disapproved of all the practices of thousands of few thousand. I am afraid of the worst that was said of those men. If men were put in for ten cases or pilgrimages of every sort was practiced to appear with moral excellence. If something else in place. They were more undertaken to enter into their part of the fellowship of sin, the way may be set in heart, secured the standard of the law of the land. Salvation was pretended to be purchased with money, as much money as had been all his life, and a high man, I had only to form a convent, before they slept. If it wasn't thought that he should never go to heaven. And even after the same token of pristine doctrine, sin was broken down, for strange

men of God, who brought in the reformation, had success in removing the stench and fed with the spirit of the age, were buried, still the principle of institutions was not destroyed. The fix of the goodness of heart was not constant. It was true to the times in which we lived, that the correctors in doctrine may be reforming, still they will not touch the judgment of God to many practical, if not, false abuses. And even now the same world is not quite into these abuses. There is still no need to reform religion, as consisting in certain performances or a certain faith, rather than in the spirit of the times. The shorts into various forms, though or more people, one as it did in former days. Soons of it are to be found in many of the doctrines of practices of times. The nation of this disposition to lead men to think, that every thing has been as must be done on them, that is what they have nothing to do for themselves, so that the most important of men can become their justification, even while they remain in revolt, that Jesus came to save them in their sins instead of those who by his death do not sin off the charge of their iniquities, satisfied in the vengeance of...
God. We can hardly conceive a doctrine more directly calculated to relieve man from the necessity of being good; yet it is one deeply imprinted on the minds of a considerable portion of the community, especially from the same disposition with we have already noticed, to substitute our personal goodness, true it is, does not mean the act, mean the act, mean the act; mean the act, mean the act; mean the act, mean the act; mean the act, to believe that such acts are often as much as salvation: yet they cherish opinions of a scheme in practices which are every day to be seen from the same source. What is it, that clearly seems to make so much of the scheme? Is it a change of faith or assume to themselves the title of the sect of a distinguishing class, they might it make a merit of believing more than others, as if that alone would secure the favor of God? They are doubtless very sincere in their faith; but do they not forget that more opinions of an act of wrong, more power of means can a man? Believing ever so sincerely and chiefly so built a true substitute for purity of heart and life. There are but a few of the means into the dispersion to make something else, instead of moral excellence displays itself, yet would take too much time to enumerate more. But the principle is, is pretty clearly established, that men and women do anything for religion, than be good.

From this general view of the subject it appears, one that the action suggested by the example in the text has been more or less prevalent in all nations of ages; if it is to illustrate the operation of this principle, that I have made these remarks. I need not any how manifest it is, that mankind have always been despised, and to adopt some artificial modes of pleasing God, of obtaining a communication between themselves and their Maker. The grand objects of all true religion, the improvements of the mind of heart, the application of means to the means of heart. The grand objects of all true religion, the application of moral means to the means of heart. They have been much of time, no in place of these are seen men resorting to certain performances, exercises, in with the soul. The external services of religion may not only be used as means of pleasing God, but through good purposes. Doubtless they are powerful means, by such means, as are like us, must use. We are surrounded by the numerous objects which constantly direct attention of all the minds from...
serious things, it is our duty to make use of all the means with a proper degree of outward ceremonies can furnish to assist in such the fleeting thoughts and feelings, as we shall connect our means with God's; if not, we may become in some measure spiritual beings, we might expect that to our own necessities and duties to subject the work of religion in the end. But, we are not such beings! as such we are open to us, so that in our nature, as well as in that of any sacrifice to keep all the duties, without the application of some forms or ceremonies, of the great cause of which we are charge, so much as the sacred, the divine service of God in one form or another, whether in the purifying mind, is the ordering these services, which includes the whole of religion, professing that all multiply to God in one form or another, whether in the sacraments of God's service, professing that all multiply to the | 1778 |
form us ourselves that our religion is get through with
than to cultivate divinity affecting to improve the heart, it
requires the utmost continuance of every day of life, that
it is hardly to be wondered at, that mankind have been
so prone to go out of religion, of which I have been speaking.
We would rather sacrifice anything else, than our,
free-born passions, so well do we our happiness to be
rather than devote our souls. If we may but keep our
ours, we are well content to sacrifice any thing else, &
we think nothing too good for God, provided we are not
obliged to become better ourselves. This reluctance to
undertake the task of our personal improvement is the cause
of many an evil in the head, as well as of misery in the
heart; if in just the same dedication as we are
exceeding with earnestness of purpose to become confounders, you
shall have your simple repetitions of the nature. I only,
im itself is come to regard it as the moral medicine of
the soul, as intended for the discipline of government of
the heart; we shall think less of its external concerns,
more of its interior life, & shall constantley keep
in mind that it never will accomplish its purpose.

Other who contend in high, who boast much and
brags, no desire to come before thee with the deep con
victor that these art our moral organs would be our pa
nal judge. Then hast made man in thy service, of deal
and judge. Then hast made man in thy service, of deal
with thy glory, if we have [failed] least men of
waste this glory, if we have [failed] least men of
that service & glory. May we remember that we are ac
[regard] ungodly men to ourselves the mutual government. One
as from being deprived by vain imaginations, when we
whore before the Lord, shall, before the most high, may
as aspire after much of spiritual purity of heart & life,
the only means of pleasing, of securing, that peace on is
let ye. O give us all the grace to know our hearts in the
fire, to bend our wills to the supreme will, to bend
ours, to bend our wills to the supreme will, to bend
edge & feel that all we are in share is from thee, to give
edge & feel that all we are in share is from thee, to give
thee the title of thy worth is due to thy name.
with regard to ourselves till it has made us feel, for the state of glory, to which God has permitted the good to aspire, to help them to work he has his Son as their guide.

The remainder of this subject may be considered at leisure. And in the mean time let us bear in mind, that it is by no means a matter of indifference what views we adopt of the nature of religion; our whole condition future eternity may be seriously affected by them.

Nov. 1824.
At home. Dec. 23, 1801. afternoon.