No. 101.

Connexion between religion & the good of the community.

Fast Day Sermon.

1821.
Prov. xiv. 34. "Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people."

The professed purpose for which we are thus gathered, is to humble ourselves before God, to appeal for his blessing, as a community. We have united together; if we would together implore pardon; we all need the same grace to support, the same goodness to bless us. If we would come with united voices to present our petitions to the throne of heav- en. The religious exercises in which we engage on this occasion, have respect not so much to individuals as to society at large, not to man, as he stands alone and accountable to the bar of God, but to the community in which we are deeply connected with our fellow men in
transgressions in want... And though it is not easy
the practice to distinguish between men as individuals
as related in society, so closely is each one necessarily
linked to others, yet in the application of religious
truths, in their application, may be said to be quite
undistinguished simply as human beings, as moral agents,
or others to one condition as we are bound to each other
in the ties of neighborhood, of country. It is to this last
class of truths, that our attention is particularly
directed by Solomon in the words of our text—
"righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach
to any people." This principle is of great im-
portance, 8 and it deserves to well considered, is thoroughly
understood. "Righteousness" in this passage seems to
be taken for religion in general, "sin" for irreligion
in general; so that the hoarder in the text com-
ments on the way that religion is a national bless-
ing, that it promotes the prosperity of the people.
make them fruitful of good works; when it has time
up your children in the way they should go, has
brought them faith in the world to bless upon its
doors to themselves; when it has done all this,
it does not cease its happy influences, it begins
more to do. It stops not within your own breast as
your family circle, but goes abroad, and its effects
most unperceived, takes a wider range: it travels
through society, influences the nation to which you
belong, and produces a force to the politics of
established, under whose rule you live; it defends
of the religious rights, the property, of your enjoyment; it
controls, if it does not extinguish, the passions that
lead to incendia, perfusion, oppression; it raises the
standard of acting through the public, and deepens
social feeling, than would otherwise exist. It acts
when the world, while it acts in the hearts, in that
world, it comes along upon the community at large as
well as on your own dwellings. It is very common
to say that religion is a thing entirely between the in-
dividual and his Maker: yes, it is, so far as the accoun-
tability; yet moral improvements of the individual is re-
concerned. But it is having a certain and clear line of religion

to suppose that this is its only sphere of operation. There
is a sense, in which it is not merely a matter between the
of each individual, but a matter between the members
of society, a matter in which we are connected together.
so far as it respects this life merely. It is important
to you, that citizen, as one of the community, that the
whole of those among whom you live, should feel in some
degree at least, the influence of religious principles.

It is important to that whole circle that you
feel it. Thus religion becomes a thing of common interest,
and public concern.

We then to this important feature in the nature of
our religion, its intimate connections with the public and
have, with the good of the community at large, that
would in this day of incitement of a spirit of
intention. Let us consider some of the reasons and then to
show that righteousness establish a nation, but sin is a
approach to any people.

1. Consider, then, the very nature of the social state of the object for which men unite in society; yea, if religion be not of essential service to secure & strengthen the motives which may be expected from this union. What and in what sense is man to properly propose to himself, by dwelling together in the compact of fellowship of available resources. What brought man from the forest, where he roamed free as the animals, with whom he struggled for subsistence & security, & into the brotherhood of his species & to dwell permanently in that state, where domestic blessings reside, when he receives & imparts bright & warmth? After alluring for that natural propensity in man to associate with his fellow man, independent of any regard to the benefits to be derived from it, we must suppose that the social union has its foundation in the mutual sense of weakness, in that need of countenance by both, the feeling of each other, so strongly in debility, old age, man.

Human beings find that by coming together, they can exp-
In society you have its objects. Now my purpose is to remark that religion is admirably adapted to fulfill the interests of these objects, to guard the blessings of men from such a state of things. In fact, the obligations of the principle and the origin of religion are the same as the maintenance of this social state. Those who dwell together in one community, by that very act, imply that they confide in the virtue & perseverance of each other, & presume that the conduct of each one will be regulated in a considerable degree by a regard not only to their interests, but to the interests in which they stand, & just the same protection as the mutual confidence established, & all the blessings of the social union will be magnified & realized.

When mankind have come together for the purposes of improvement & reciprocal benefit, the piecemeal of every one should operate there should be a more or less amount scattered among the members. Society has attained its best state only when it has become a compound whole, and the greatness of each part depends on the greatness of the whole. 

Points of the several parts have been rendered away, & the benefits of one common good & regular practice of the social virtues influence can come ultimately from religious & moral principles; & this it is, not purely & essentially, but that tone of feeling can operate like the great law of attraction in the natural world, giving each member in his proper place, preventing mutual encroachment & interference, making each one more where he ought to move, & act more obedient to act. By observing the relation, mark, we all stand to the Father of all men, it cleaves persistently to one relation to one another. By observing as that we all equally spring from the same, & are the children of a heavenly parent, it breaks down these false, artificial, oppressive distinctions, or give one part of society a pretence of committing wrongs on another part. 

社會進行之目的，使其利益適切於此社會狀態。事實上，宗教之義務與起源，同此社會狀態之維持無異。凡同在一社區者，以之為共同之行為，即表示相信彼此之維持與堅固，假定各自之行為將受其影響，並受同一之保護，而社會之利益，將因此事而增益與實現。

當人類共同聚居，為改善目的與互相利益，每一部分之行為，應作適當之操作。社會只於當其成其完整之統一時，始達其最佳之狀態。而此部分之利益，乃取決於此整個社會之資質。
some laws rigorously executed, not that the aid of religion
But, before we trust to this refuge, we ought to con-
consider well what it means to be, entirely alone, unpro-
ected by moral feeling. We have never made the experi-
ment; it is doubtful whether in the first place the
general character of the laws could stand. Among a people
destitute of religion would be bound by laws as if they
were so, it is almost certain that their efficacy would
be of short duration. Passing years, interest, interest
would mutually encroach upon them, all the
banks were broken down; the landmarks swept away. But
granting their usefulness as good for their efficacy what
so could be desired. All there is a defect about
them, no motive but religious moral sentiment can
supply. They are much too limited on their execution for
there is a large class of actions, with the do not cannot
reach, but which nevertheless actually affect the interests of
society. These are vices and the laws cannot prohibit
ones, who they cannot enforce, such as murder, lying, etc.
transgression, charity, benevolence. We are taught of mak-
ing men industrious, prudent, kind, virtuous by law. And yet
it is certainly of the highest importance to society that these
virtues should prevail, if these vices be substituted, how
long, do not reach the whole good of a people: they do not
create a nation. Righteousness only can do this. A people
must be called in, that will be something more than
keep men from babies, from gross errors, one that
goes into the toil, and among the thorns of action, of guide the mighty machinery of motives determines
there, one that will train the growth of virtues of
which will grace the whole intellectual moral man in a state
of action which around him a branching for purposes,
place. That of the will be all this must be sought in
religious moral influence, an influence, not who knows
how to act on the great organ of society will make it yield
such results as we desire, because it is built of the
presence of some powerful touch shall be from the rich
fruit of motives.

2. "Righteousness exacts a nation, if we regard the
effects of religious sentiments on the governments of
people, on those who are pleased at the least of
quity, whose heart's frame is in love..." I know that it is

2. "Righteousness exacts a nation, if we regard the
effects of religious sentiments on the governments of
people, on those who are pleased at the least of
quity, whose heart's frame is in love..." I know that it is
not among rulers of men in public stations, that you can look for the best influence of religion. Per
ance in not often found in the cabinet, in the halls of legislation; for it has more to do with the
hearts of men, than with plans of policy. Still, I believe it is true, that when religion pervades the
souls of society, its effects reaches to those, who hold the reins of government. Considered in this light, it
constitutes a social duty, gives it stability, dignity, and happiness. Is it of no consequence, think you, that
those, who stand on the high places of a land, direct the streams that are to flow through society
should fear in some shape or other the obligations of general religious principle? Is it not important
for society, that a sense of responsibility to God, of reverence for the sanctity of eternal truth, should have
a hold on the minds of those who are to make the most
degree the destinies of a people? If for instance, you
would have legislators regard the welfare of happiness
of those for whom they legislate, if you would have them send into their laws, like Noah's dove, with their
branches in their mouths, the signs of peace and plenty,
scattering over the face of the land, that they may
come forth as the sun emits his beams, with healing
under their wings. If you would have the laws take
the so many forms of pleasing it pastures, rise and the high
heads of the people may lead the flocks, that they may
feel security by the refreshing streams of justice, if
such is to be the happy state of things, is it not necessary
by that legislatures should feel as be moved by the
influences of moral or religious obligation? is it at least,
if they do not feel it themselves, that they shall
have respect to the sentiment, as it exists in society?
Not certainly it is. And the same remark may be
made concerning these who judge of execute the
laws, in fact, concerning every order of department
of government. If a sense of responsibility to human,
life, a sense of moral agency in the rights of man, be al-
lowed to gain the hold, with it deserves in the minds,
of orders, if they learn to consider themselves as acting as instruments to convey good to those for whom they act, if in that moral feeling be quickened thereby, it will almost entirely quench that pestilent ambition, and awakens only a Chastisement and sense of duty, which seeks only to raise a triumphal arch to the honor, of scorn not, but maintainable principles are the corner stones that go with it. Such broadly draws its character, though in the midst of absolute disorder. It will do much to crush that spirit, of heads men, the regard of station or rank, only as the means of serving the honor of society, of leveling opinion from false, or hollow grandeur, with bare down simplicity, which is dead in the very essence, or secondly, by the complaint of arrogant innocence. If we would have those, who are entitled with power, exact all their talents, and therein influence for the welfare of the whole, seek the deep roots of deep the foundations of publick happiness; speed them from their stations a strengthening of protecting efficacy.

on all ranks of condition; if we would have this, they must be within the reach of moral and religious considerations, they should feel that they are placed before the scene in a situation where they have much to deserve to answer for; in that, they must have something of that righteousness which can settle a nation.

3. The connection between religion and publick welfare of nations will appear, when we consider the necessity of good of magnanimous principles in the intercourse of nations with one another. Much of the peace and happiness of the world depends on correct and enlarged views of the relation in which different countries stand each other; where two religions keep their influence, though acknowledge it, the but false harmony, but as far as it does extend, it is prejudicing of voluntary, therefore it is the interest of every individual that it should be extended. It must be plain to every thinking man, that whenever two independent nations shall be equally influenced by the principles of justice, unselfishness, and of doing well, will be mutually practiced. Eventually,
proverbs, if therefore in proportion as the spirit of these principles can be spread through the world, carried into governments, the system of international intercourse will be more humbled, more honorable. There will be less of violence, deposition, garrisons, conquests of the world will not deem themselves, at liberty to plunder, outrage, oppress another, partly, because they happen to have different names, is the law under different laws, systems of government. I conceive among people of any race acquainted with the history of the world, such whether the whole body of national laws has not felt the enmity of thoughtful nations of life, whether the terms of principles of intercourse between countries have been in later ages far more humane, harmonious, progressive, than they were in ancient times, whether nations do not pay more respect to each other's rights, honor, whether these broad general principles are relative to the conduct of one people with regard to another, are not held more sacred, the violation of them more infamous. It is not too much to assert, that wisdom, learning, 

If gradually uniting its many acts and facts, the constitution of the ocean a high way for nations, instead of 

only what it once was, preserving any thing else, than a scene of contest for the capacity of one against the capacity of another. War even the battle field has fallen through influence; if war is a great regulator and endless evil there must soon. Though it has not diminished the spirit of contention, she has compelled it to assume a form less savage, of less 

to the dominion of principles less deplorating. She has tended a few of the most bloody features, of barbarian thunder, and the could not remove. To be convinced of these we need but compare the ancients with the modern modes of warfare; if we may indulge the hope, that the time will come when nations shall learn wars unnatural 

they shall visit each other, bringing with them the instruments of conflict or destruction, but the arts of peace, of the enjoyment of comforts of life. When national 
traffic, the ocean, not the transplant. The colonies of the power lies in the command of blood, but to promote the mutual 
advantages and emoluments of navigation improvements, that improve must once more to the influence of the, marching on among the nations 
in majesty and influence.
I have endeavored to suggest to you, mark some of the principles, and tend to illustrate the truth, that might
converse equally a nation, but in is a step towards
people i.e. that religion and morality are deep directly
in their immediate or remote consequences, are essentially
connected with the true welfare, honor, prosperity of
a nation. The field on this subject opens in any number
volumes might be written upon it. I have been able only
to outline at a few leading principles, without going
all into the large inferences, that might be drawn from
them, or the obvious illustrations by which they might be
furthered. In speaking of the connection between religion
and public welfare, of course means are of course means
particularly the state religion, as though many of the
remarks will apply to the sentiment of a relation of account
belonging to, in whatever system it be found. But the
religious are weak of defective compared with the whole.
Diffusion of this in its purity, must look for the highest
influences on national character. The truth of the mass
sitting at I have made might, wherever, be abundantly
supported by an appeal to the history of the world, but
this part of the subject, the reach of time compels me only
to sketch of a view.

The consequences, of course from this view of things,
to be obvious. Religion is essentially connected with
the public welfare, it becomes the duty of every one
living his country, to do all he can, to subject himself
the means of the sentiments of religion. I speak of its
real influence on the welfare of individuals, indeed are of an immeasurable importance, yet why it
is my duty to treat in the common course of instruction
in the Sabbath. But this day calls us to view things
in a different light. to view as a national blessing,
especially to the year of the community. He now comes
carries with his patient to citizens, as friends of liberty
of the public welfare, asks for protection of retaining
these considerations. Its claims in these respects are
never overlooked, because its influence on public respect
are so much mingled with other influences,
that they are distinctly perceived. Let by those who
reflect profitably on the subject, with some attention; for
nor occasions like the present, we should endeavor
to bring these reflections home to our minds. We are
called upon this day to humble ourselves before the
mighty One, to confess our sins, to pray for pardon,
and to receive the blessing of Heaven on our several interests during
this season, on our orders, on our public institutions,
in our civil and natural privileges, and those in any times,
when discharged to cherish religion as a blessing to the
community, it is time. None, who, has the true feelings
of patriotism can utterly shun the places the springs
of religion, through the land. If it would be doing an
injury or it would cost us to hide from God. Two ever
remember that, for the means of preserving religion in
time, among the people, we are each one of us accountable
to a ruler, higher authority than our own breasts, we are ac-
countable to the community in which we live, we are accountable
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At home, Thursday, April 5th, 1821, forenoon.

Mr. Waltham, first day, April 2, 1822 - afternoon.