

*GOD'S CONTROVERSY WITH NEW-ENGLAND**WRITTEN IN THE TIME OF THE GREAT DROUGHT ANNO 1662.*

[GOD SPEAKS AGAINST THE LANGUISHING STATE  
OF NEW-ENGLAND]

. . . .

**A**RE THESE the men that erst at my command  
Forsook their ancient seats and native soile,  
To follow me into a desart land,  
Contemning all the travell and the toile,  
Whose love was such to purest ordinances  
As made them set at nought their fair inheritances?

Are these the men that prized libertee  
To walk with God according to their light,  
To be as good as he would have them bee,  
To serve and worship him with all their might,  
Before the pleasures which a fruitfull field,  
And country flowing-full of all good things, could yield,

Are these the fold whom from the brittish Iles,  
Through the stern billows of the watry main,  
I safely led so many thousand miles,  
As if their journey had been through a plain?  
Whom having from all enemies protected,  
And through so many deaths and dangers well directed,

I brought and planted on the western shore,  
Where nought but bruits and salvage wights did swarm  
(Untaught, untrain'd, untam'd by vertue's lore)  
That sought their blood, yet could not do them harm?  
My fury's flaile them thresht, my fatall broom  
Did sweep them hence, to make my people elbow-room.

Are these the men whose gates with peace I crown'd,  
 To whom for bulwarks I salvation gave,  
 Whilst all things else with rattling tumults sound,  
 And mortall frayes send thousands to the grave?  
 Whilest their own brethren bloody hands embrewed  
 In brothers blood, and fields with carcasses bestrewed?

Is this the people blest with bounteous store,  
 By land and sea full richly clad and fed,  
 Whom plenty's self stands waiting still before,  
 And powreth out their cups well tempered?  
 For whose dear sake an howling wildernes  
 I lately turned into a fruitfull paradeis?

Are these the people in whose hemisphere  
 Such bright-beam'd, glist'ring, sun-like starrs I placed,  
 As by their influence did all things cheere,  
 As by their light blind ignorance defaced,  
 As errours into lurking holes did fray,  
 As turn'd the late dark night into a lightsome day?

Are these the folk to whom I milked out  
 And sweetnes stream'd from consolations brest;  
 Whose soules I fed and strengthened throughout  
 With finest spirituall food most finely drest?  
 On whom I rained living bread from Heaven,  
 Withouten Errour's bane, or Superstition's leaven?

With whom I made a Covenant of peace,  
 And unto whom I did most firmly plight  
 My faithfulness, If whilst I live I cease  
 To be their Guide, their God, their full delight;  
 Since them with cords of love to me I drew,  
 Enwrapping in my grace such as should them ensew.

Are these the men, that now mine eyes behold,  
 Concerning whom I thought, and whilome spake,  
 First Heaven shall pass away together scold,  
 Ere they my lawes and righteous wayes forsake,  
 Or that they slack to runn their heavenly race?  
 Are these the same? or are some others come in place?

If these be they, how is it that I find  
 In stead of holiness Carnality,

In stead of heavenly frames an Earthly mind,  
For burning zeal luke-warm Indifferency,  
For flaming love, key-cold Dead-heartedness,  
For temperance (in meat, and drinke, and cloaths) excess?

Whence cometh it, that Pride, and Luxurie  
Debate, Deceit, Contention, and Strife,  
False-dealing, Covetousness, Hypocrisie  
(With such like Crimes) amongst them are so rife,  
That one of them doth over-reach another?  
And that an honest man can hardly trust his Brother?

How is it, that Security, and Sloth,  
Amongst the best are Common to be found?  
That grosser sins, in stead of Graces growth,  
Amongst the many more and more abound?  
I hate dissembling shews of Holiness.  
Or practise as you talk, or never more profess.

Judge not, vain world, that all are hypocrites  
That do profess more holiness then thou:  
All foster not dissembling, guilefull sprites,  
Nor love their lusts, though very many do.  
Some sin through want of care and constant watch,  
Some with the sick converse, till they the sickness catch.

Some, that maintain a reall root of grace,  
Are overgrown with many noysome weeds,  
Whose heart, that those no longer may take place,  
The benefit of due correction needs.  
And such as these however gone astray  
I shall by stripes reduce into a better way.

Moreover some there be that still retain  
Their ancient vigour and sincerity;  
Whom both their own, and others sins, constrain  
To sigh, and mourn, and weep, and wail, & cry:  
And for their sakes I have forborn to powre  
My wrath upon Revolters to this present houre.

To praying Saints I always have respect,  
And tender love, and pittifull regard:  
Nor will I now in any wise neglect  
Their love and faithfull service to reward;

Although I deal with others for their folly,  
And turn their mirth to tears that have been too jolly.

For thinke not, O Backsliders, in your heart,  
That I shall still your evill manners beare:  
Your sinns me press as sheaves do load a cart,  
And therefore I will plague you for this geare  
Except you seriously, and soon, repent,  
Ile not delay your pain and heavy punishment.

And who be those themselves that yonder shew?  
The seed of such as name my dreadfull Name!  
On whom whilere compassions skirt I threw  
Whilest in their blood they were, to hide their shame!  
Whom my preventing love did neer me take!  
Whom for mine own I mark't, lest they should me forsake!

I look't that such as these to vertue's Lore  
(Though none but they) would have Enclin'd their ear:  
That they at least mine image should have bore,  
And sanctify'd my name with awfull fear.  
Let pagan's Bratts pursue their lusts, whose meed  
Is Death: For christians children are an holy seed.

But hear O Heavens! Let Earth amazed stand;  
Ye Mountaines melt, and Hills come flowing down:  
Let horro<sup>r</sup> seize upon both Sea and Land;  
Let Natures self be cast into a stown.  
I children nourisht, nurtur'd and upheld:  
But they against a tender father have rebell'd.

What could have been by me performed more?  
Or wherein fell I short of your desire?  
Had you but askt, I would have op't my store,  
And given what lawfull wishes could require.  
For all this bounteous cost I lookt to see  
Heaven-reaching-hearts, & thoughts, Meekness, Humility. . . .

One wave another followeth,  
And one disease begins  
Before another cease, becaus  
We turn not from our sins.  
We stopp our ear against reproof,  
And hearken not to God:  
God stops his ear against o<sup>r</sup> prayer,  
And takes not off his rod.

Our fruitful seasons have been turn'd  
Of late to barrenness,  
Sometimes through great & parching drought,  
Sometimes through rain's excess.  
Yea now the pastures & corn fields  
For want of rain do languish:  
The cattell mourn, & hearts of men  
Are fill'd with fear & anguish.

The clouds are often gathered,  
As if we should have rain:  
But for o<sup>r</sup> great unworthiness  
Are scattered again.  
We pray & fast, & make fair shewes,  
As if we meant to turn:  
But whilst we turn not, God goes on  
Our field, & fruits to burn.

And burnt are all things in such sort,  
That nothing now appears,  
But what may wound our hearts with grief,  
And draw foorth floods of teares.  
All things a famine do presage  
In that extremity,  
As if both men, and also beasts,  
Should soon be done to dy.

This O New-England hast thou got  
By riot, & excess:  
This hast thou brought upon thy self  
By pride & wantonness.  
Thus must thy worldlyness be whipt.  
They, that too much do crave,  
Provoke the Lord to take away  
Such blessings as they have.

We have been also threatened  
With worser things then these:  
And God can bring them on us still,  
To morrow if he please.  
For if his mercy be abus'd,  
Which holpe us at our need  
And mov'd his heart to pittie us,  
We shall be plagu'd indeed.

Beware, O sinful Land, beware;  
And do not think it strange  
That sorer judgements are at hand,  
Unless thou quickly change.  
Or God, or thou, must quickly change;  
Or else thou art undone:  
Wrath cannot cease, if sin remain,  
Where judgement is begun.

Ah dear New England! dearest land to me;  
Which unto God hast hitherto been dear,  
And mayst be still more dear than formerlie,  
If to his voice thou wilt incline thine ear.

Consider wel & wisely what the rod,  
Wherewith thou art from yeer to yeer chastized,  
Instructeth thee. Repent, & turn to God,  
Who wil not have his nurture be despized.

Thou still hast in thee many praying saints,  
Of great account, and precious with the Lord,  
Who dayly powre out unto him their plaints,  
And strive to please him both in deed & word.

Cheer on, sweet souls, my heart is with you all,  
And shall be with you, maugre Sathan's might:  
And whereso'ere this body be a Thrall,  
Still in New-England shall be my delight.

[The End]