

gracious God have not been attended to, his fore judgments have, at times, been poured out upon people.

While some rules approved in civil society, and conformable to human policy, so called, are distinguishable from the purity of truth and righteousness: while many professing truth, are declining from that ardent love and heavenly mindedness, which was amongst the primitive followers of Jesus Christ: it is a time for us to attend diligently to the intent of every chastisement, and consider the most deep and inward design of them.

The Most High doth not often speak with an outward voice to our outward ears; but, if we humbly meditate on his perfections, consider that he is perfect wisdom and goodness, and to afflict his creatures to no purpose, would be utterly reverse to his nature, we shall hear and understand his language, both in his gentle and more heavy chastisements; and take heed that we do not, in the wisdom of this world, endeavour to escape his hand by means too powerful for us.

Had he endowed men with understanding to hinder the force of this disease by innocent means, which had never proved mortal nor hurtful to our bodies, such discovery might be considered as the period of chastisement by this distemper, where that knowledge extended: but as life and health are his gifts, and not to be disposed of in our own wills, to take upon us, when in health,