

**THE ACCOMPLISHED TEACHER OF
RELIGION: A SERMON, PREACHED AT
THE NEW MEETING-HOUSE,
BIRMINGHAM, NOVEMBER 22, 1829, ON
OCCASION OF THE DEATH OF THE REV.
THOMAS BELSHAM**

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The accomplished teacher of religion: a sermon, preached at the New Meeting-house, Birmingham, November 22, 1829, on occasion of the death of the Rev. Thomas Belsham by John Kentish

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JOHN KENTISH

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A

SERMON,

PREACHED AT

THE NEW MEETING-HOUSE, BIRMINGHAM,

NOVEMBER 22, 1829,

ON OCCASION OF THE DEATH OF

THE REV. THOMAS BELSHAM,

BY

JOHN KENTISH.

I esteem it as no small felicity of my life, that I have been preserved to give this testimony of gratitude and affection to the memory of my tutor and my friend.

KIPPIS.

BIRMINGHAM :

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SOLD IN LONDON

BY R. HUNTER, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD.

1830.

Παρα ΤΟΥ ΘΕΟΥ, το αγαθός διδασκάλους σchein.

Marc. Anton.

The motives which induced me to prepare and deliver the following Discourse, are stated in the introductory paragraph: the same motives, strongly enforced by a request that I would "print and publish" it, occasion it to appear before the world.

To the Gentlemen who have made this request, and who are "desirous of thus recording their admiration of the public character, and private excellence, of the late Rev. Thomas Belsham, and their grateful recollection, as well of his eminent services in the cause of Christian Truth, as of the interest he uniformly evinced in behalf of the New Meeting Society, in Birmingham," THESE PAGES ARE INSCRIBED WITH UNFEIGNED SYMPATHY, AFFECTION AND ESTEEM.

January 22, 1830.



A
SERMON,

&c. &c.

DANIEL XI. 33.

— **THEY THAT UNDERSTAND AMONG
THE PEOPLE, SHALL INSTRUCT MANY.**

EVEN had the interesting relations, in which I was once placed with the venerable man, whose decease occasions this discourse, failed of calling from me such an expression of the affectionate esteem and gratitude, with which I cherish the remembrance of him, other and more important reasons would, nevertheless, have existed for my thus speaking to you of his character and labours. His intimate friendship with the celebrated Christian philosopher, who formerly was a pastor of your

society, his prompt and able vindication of the motives, and of some of the writings, of that distinguished individual, his uniform sympathy with you as a congregation, the kindness, zeal and talent, with which he engaged in the first services conducted within this house of prayer, the delight and, I trust, the substantial advantage, with which, at different intervals, you have here listened to his instructive voice, and the intercourse which many of you had with him in private life, would not have permitted me to be silent. Still more, when I think on his station and influence, I say not merely in our own churches, but in a yet wider sphere, and on the honourable associations connected with his name by all the friends of learning and inquiry, of civil and religious freedom, and of human improvement, I feel that, arduous as is the undertaking, I am required to attempt a sketch, however feeble, of his life and favourite employments, of his studies, attainments, virtues, and signally useful efforts for the greatest welfare of mankind. Possessed of eminent knowledge and *understanding*, among his contemporaries, he has *instructed many*: nor, I

presume, will he cease to instruct us, by means of those monuments and records of his thoughts, which he has either laid before the world or prepared for publication.

THE REVEREND THOMAS BELSHAM was born, in 1750, at Bedford. Talents and literature, and—a far nobler honour—sincere piety, characterised his family: and, in his earliest years, he received the best impressions under the parental roof.* When suffering, at a very tender age, from the attacks of a malignant disease, he was observed, with inexpressible pleasure, by one of his nearest relatives, to give proof of that profoundly devotional spirit, ever thankful, and ever submissive, which grew with his growth.† After being placed, for his grammar learning, under a teacher of considerable accuracy and elegance, he entered, in 1766, at the Protestant Dissenting Academy at Daventry, then superintended by Dr. Ashworth. Between that judicious and indefatigable tutor and his pupil a warm, reciprocal affection subsisted. Every-branch of academical education

* Appendix. [No. I.]

† Appendix. [No. II.]