

heard of you, till you had committed the Murder for which you
dye this day; but I hear by others, that have known you, how
you have been, and you have your self confessed to the world, that
have been guilty of Drunkenness, guilty of Cursing & Swearing, that
of Sabbath-breaking, guilty of Lying, guilty of secret Unclean-
ness, & of all manner of Wickedness. Solomon said to Shimei, Thou knowest the wickedness which
heart is privy unto: so I say to you. And that which aggravates your
Guiltiness not a little, is, That since you have been in Prison, you
done wickedly; you have made your self drunk several times since your
Imprisonment; yea, and you have bin guilty of Lying since your
demnation. It was said to a dying man, Dost not thou fear God, because
thou art under Condemnation! Oh what a sinner have you bin! for since
you have bin under Condemnation, you have not feared God. And how
have you sinned against the Gospel? What Unbelief, what Impenitency
have you bin guilty of!

Consider 2. What Misery you have brought upon your self, on your
Body, that must dye an accursed death: you must hang between Heaven
and Earth, as it were forsaken of both, and unworthy to be in either.
And what Misery have you brought upon your poor Children! you have
brought an everlasting Reproach upon them. How great will their Shame
be, when it shall be said to them, that their Father was hang'd, not for
his goodness, as many in the world have bin, but for his wickedness.
not as a Martyr, but as a Malefactor, truly so! But that which is Ten
Thousand Thousand times worse than all this, is, That you have (without
Repentance) brought undoing Misery upon your poor yet precious Soul,
not only Death on your Body, but a Second Death on your never-dying
Soul. It is said in the Scripture, That Murderers shall have their part in
the lake, which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the Second
Death. Rev. 21, 8. O tremble at that!

C. THE LAST EXPRESSIONS & SOLEMN WARNING OF JAMES MORGAN

I Pray God that I may be a Warning to you all, and that I may be the
last that ever shall suffer after this manner. in the fear of God I warn
you to have a care of taking the Lords Name in vain. Mind & have a
care of that sin of Drunkenness, for that sin leads to all manner of sins
and Wickedness: (mind & have a care of breaking the sixth Command-
ment, where it is said, Thou shalt do no Murder) for when a man is in
Drink, he is ready to commit all manner of Sin, till he fill up the cup of
the wrath of God, as I have done by committing that sin of Murder. I
beg of God as I am a dying man, and to appear before the Lord within

a few minutes, that you may take notice of what I say to you. Have a
care of drunkenness, & ill Company, and mind all good Instruction, and
don't turn your back upon the Word of God, as I have done. When I
have bin at meeting, I have gone out of the meetinghouse to commit sin
& to please the lust of my flesh. Don't make a mock at any poor object
of pity, but bless God that he has not left you as he has justly done me
to commit that horrid sin of Murder. Another thing that I have to say
to you, is to have a care of that house where that wickedness was com-
mitted, & where I have bin partly ruind by. But here I am, and know
not what will become of my poor soul which is within a few moments
of eternity. I have murder d a poor man, who had but little time to
repent, and I know not what is become of his poor soul; O that I may
make use of this opportunity that I have! O that I may make improve-
ment of this little little time, before I go hence and be no more. O let all
mind what I am saying now I am going out of this world. O take warn-
ing by me, and beg of God to keep you from this sin which has bin my
ruine. [His last words were] O Lord, receive my spirit, I come unto thee
O Lord, I come unto thee O Lord: I come, I come, I come

Source: Increase Mather, *A Sermon Occasioned by the Execution of a Man Found Guilty of Murder* (Boston: R. P., 1687). In Sacvan Bercovitch, ed., *Execution Sermons* (New York: AMS Press, 1994), 11-12, 30-31, 35-36.

DOCUMENT 5: *The Reasons and Design of Public Punishments* (Nathan Strong, 1777)

Nearly a century after Increase Mather's public condemnation of James Morgan (see Document 4), execution sermons that included justifications for the death penalty still were being given in the newly established republic.

Interestingly, however, the nature of the execution sermon was changing to reflect the new focus on government, the common good, and protection of liberty and property that occurred in the decades after the American Revolution (Cohen 1988:154, 156). Many sermons now included legal as well as religious justifications for the execution, as evidenced by the following execution sermon by Nathan Strong, pastor of the First Church of Hartford.

The melancholy spectacle which is soon to be exhibited, hath drawn together a vast concourse of people, who are doubtless influenced by various motives to be spectators of so awful a scene. Some by true s