

# S E R M O N

P R E A C H E D

2.

At the NEW MEETING,

I N

WHITE-ROW SPITAL-FIELDS,

On THURSDAY 29 November 1759.

Being the Day appointed by his MAJESTY

For a GENERAL THANKSGIVING.

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By EDWARD HITCHIN.

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O give thanks to the Lord of lords: For his mercy endureth for ever.

To him who alone doth great wonders: For his mercy endureth for ever.

PSALM CXXXVI. 3, 4.

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L O N D O N

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TO THE  
CHURCH of CHRIST  
MEETING IN  
WHITE-ROW SPITAL-FIELDS,

Dear BRETHREN,

**N**O other apology is needed for the publication of this Sermon to the world, than that it is at your unanimous request. If (in the Spirit's hand) it should prove a mean of exciting thankfulness in your breasts, and of leading any of the congregation worshipping with us, to admire and rejoice in the surprizing way of a sinner's approach to the Father; a most valuable purpose will be answered.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge, that my labours among you in Christ's service, are my highest pleasure on this side the grave; and therefore I think it my duty to dedicate that to you from the press, which was acceptable from the pulpit.

That

# DEDICATION.

That the sacred harmony which breathes among us, may be happily continued; that we thus joined in church-communion, walking in holiness, may be more and more knit together in love, and built up in Christ Jesus; and that we may spend an *eternal* day of thanksgiving together for the *Great Salvation*, is the prayer of,

BRETHREN,

Your affectionate brother,

and chearful servant

in the Gospel;

Bell-Lané, Spital-Fields;  
Decem. 1759.

EDWARD HITCHIN.

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EPHESIANS V. 20.

*Giving thanks always for all things unto God the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

**T**H E S E words declare the duty of thanksgiving to be always suitable, and argue the propriety of our especial attendance to it on this day, which smiles with the wonders God hath wrought for Great-Britain and Ireland.

The text occurred to my mind, as particularly suitable on this occasion, in that it shews us to whom, and by whom, our thanksgivings are to be offered.

The apostle Paul, having explained and enforced the deep truths of the gospel, addresses the Ephesians in the warmest exhortations, founded upon, and deduced from those gospel truths. He was concerned to have their walk correspond with the truths they professed and believed. In the 15th and 16th verses of this chapter, he exhorts them to be very accurate and careful in their walk ; “ see then that ye walk circumspectly,

“ not as fools but as wise, redeeming the  
 “ time, because the days are evil.” It con-  
 tributes very little to the publick good to  
 complain of the evilness of the times (not  
 that there is no ground for such a mournful  
 complaint.) This dreadful peal, *the badness*  
*of the times*, hath been rung in every age ;  
 and while we live, I suppose there will be oc-  
 casion for the same. Now the apostle tells the  
 church, what they were to do in the midst  
 of the badness of the times, viz. *redeem time*,  
 make a double advantage of it, because so  
 very few did ; and especially as they knew  
 not how long their privileges might be con-  
 tinued.

In the 17th verse, the apostle proceeds to  
 shew them of what true wisdom (necessary  
 to such a walk as he is speaking of) consisted,  
 viz. understanding what the will of the Lord  
 is ; “ wherefore be ye not unwise, but un-  
 “ derstanding what the will of the Lord is.”

The knowledge of the divine will, is the  
 summit of understanding ; to do it, is the  
 greatest dignity and pleasure of a believer.  
 The knowledge of God’s will is a defence  
 from error, and guides the feet in the paths  
 of truth :—Therefore observe the connexion,  
 “ wherefore be ye not unwise, but understand-  
 “ ing what the will of the Lord is ; and be  
 “ not

“not drunk with wine, wherein is excess ;  
 “but be filled with the spirit.”

The Heathens, who borrowed their notions of worship from the broken traditions they received of the mosaic œconomy, were horribly profane in their most sacred rites ; some of their highest devotions consisted of obscenity and drunkenness. This is not to be wondered at, because that religion which encourages human pride, and the gratification of sense, is agreeable to the natural bias of the heart of every fallen man.

Thus the Apostle cautions the converted Gentiles against the abuse of wine ; he is not speaking against the lawful and moderate use of the divine bounty, but the excess of it. And indeed nothing degrades human nature more, than this kind of excess. How shocking to see members of *congregational* churches falling often by this temptation ! The sacred opposite is expressed “but be filled  
 “with the spirit.” Here we have presented to our view the excellency of the christian life, and the nature of the christian’s mirth. Outward expressions of joy are lawful ; and this day of thanksgiving is to be looked upon as a day for cheerfulness ; and a moderate enjoyment of the rich plenty our land is crowned with, is far from being unscriptural : But how

important is that concern we should, as believers, have upon our minds! “be filled with  
 “the spirit:”—that is, the influences of the Holy Ghost, applying the Lord Jesus Christ, who with his salvation is the wine of the Gospel, and that alone which can cheer the sinner’s heart. The consequence of this mirth is divine melody, v. 19. “speaking  
 “to yourselves.” This shews the happy design of the ordinance of singing, viz. that in it believers may enjoy communion together, while they excite each other to admire and celebrate the same salvation; of which the inspired psalms are full, “speaking to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual  
 “songs, singing and making melody in your  
 “heart \* to the Lord.”

Thus the words of our text naturally follow; “giving thanks always, for all things,  
 “unto God and the Father, in the name of  
 “our Lord Jesus Christ.”

I shall in my attempts to improve these words consider,

I. To whom our thanksgivings are to be paid—“to God and the Father.”

II. How they become acceptable—  
 “In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

III,

\* The word is singular, to express the church’s unity, agreeable to the idea of being one body.

III. That thanksgivings are to be offered “always, and for all things.”

IV. How this thanksgiving evidences itself.

I. To whom our thanksgivings are to be paid: “To God and the Father.” Giving thanks is the acknowledgment of a favour, or the expression of our obligation for that favour; and the deeper the sense of it is engraved upon the mind, the more eminent will our expressions of gratitude be, not in word only, but in the tenour of our conduct: This idea is easy to be improved in our spiritual view of it.

“Giving thanks to God and the Father.”

The conjunction “and” in the Greek testament, is often rendered “even;” and so I humbly apprehend it should be here, “God “even the Father.”

The Father, or the first person in the Essence, is not styled Father or first person because he is prior in nature; but in the method of our salvation he sustains this covenant relation. In Ephesians, ii. 18. you find the distinct personality in the divine essence expressed, as well as the œconomical parts they have graciously taken in that covenant: “For through him (that is Christ) we both “(that is Jew and Gentile) have an access, “by one Spirit unto the Father.”

Our prayers and praises are offered to the whole Effence ; but in a peculiar manner to God the Father, who is represented as the person to whom they are to be offered, agreeable to my text, and that passage I have just quoted ; though, I say again, not to the exclusion of the other persons, the Son, and the Spirit ; who are, in a variety of places in scripture, particularly invoked and addressed.

God the Father is represented as the person who hath chosen his people ; 1 Pet. i. 2. “ Elect according to the foreknowledge of “ God the Father :” Also he is represented as the person who appointed and sent the Son, 1st epistle of John iv. 10. “ Herein is “ love ; not that we loved God, but that he “ loved us, and *sent* his son to be the propi- “ tiation for our sins.” God the Father is held forth in scripture as taking vengeance on the surety, and accepting the sacrifice offered, as being delighted with, and in, his son. Attend to the import of the following texts to our purpose : Zechariah, xiii. 7. “ Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and “ against the man that is my fellow, saith “ the Lord of Hosts, *smite* the shepherd,” &c. In this passage, you see the Father taking vengeance. Again, Acts, ii. 40, 41. “ Him “ God raised up the third day, and shewed “ him

“ him openly, not unto all the people, but  
 “ unto witnesses chosen before of God,” &c.  
 —His raising him up was the divine evidence  
 of his accepting the sacrifice ; and his shew-  
 ing him openly, a farther proof of the infi-  
 nite satisfaction the Son had given : And this,  
 agreeable to that blessed declaration you read,  
 Matthew xvii. 5. “ While he yet spake, be-  
 “ hold, a bright cloud overshadowed them ;  
 “ and behold a voice out of the cloud, which  
 “ said, this is my beloved Son, in whom I  
 “ am well pleased ; hear ye him.” The  
 consequence of this infinite delight the Fa-  
 ther has in the Son, and the perfection of his  
 sacrifice, is Jesus Christ’s exaltation, his sit-  
 ting at the right hand of the Father making  
 intercession, Romans viii. 34. “ who is even  
 “ at the right hand of God, who also maketh  
 “ intercession for us.” —God even the Fa-  
 ther is represented in scripture, as having  
 provided and promised all covenant blessings  
 in Christ, agreeable to Philippians iv. 19.  
 “ But my God shall supply all your need,  
 “ according to his riches in glory, by Christ  
 “ Jesus.”

Thus you see to whom our thanksgivings  
 are to be paid, and the scripture-reasons why  
 they are to be given to God the Father. I  
 proceed to the second thing proposed, viz.

II. How they become acceptable. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our enlargement on the first head will illucidate this; such is the happy connexion of Gospel truths, they establish each other. The three names by which the adorable mediatur, in his complex person God-man, is stiled in our text, are very expressive; LORD, JESUS, CHRIST. His authority, power, and sovereignty, are expressed by the name LORD: His undertaking, which is to save the sinner, is expressed by the name JESUS, which signifies *Saviour*: His unction to that work, is declared by the name CHRIST, which signifies *anointed*; Acts, ii. 36. “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.” In his person the perfect character appears, in which God can delight; and therefore in him alone, as our representative, can we with our prayers and praises appear with acceptance before God: agreeable to that language of faith, Psalm lxxxiv. 9. “Behold O God our shield, [a covenant God you see is the church’s shield] and look upon the face of thine anointed.”

The Lord Jesus Christ appeared in this world without any sin, but that which was  
im-

imputed to him. As the *Sent* of God he came in our flesh, to fulfil the law, to vindicate God's holiness, to satisfy divine justice, to do away sin, and reconcile the sinner to God; to justify, not the righteous, but the ungodly, and purify a peculiar people to himself.

He accordingly has accomplished the whole, by a perfect obedience, by his atoning death, by becoming the prisoner of the tomb, by his coming forth as the discharged surety, and as conqueror over him that had the power of death; by ascending to his Father, taking his seat in glory; as a priest and king presenting his atonement, his own blood and wounds, as the infinite plea for his church; and sending down the Holy Spirit, by whose omnipotent energy the sinner is enabled to believe, his soul cleansed by the word of truth applied through his sacred influence.

In the name of this perfect Mediatour Jehovah-man, we have full warrant and liberty to offer prayers and thanksgivings. In this view, how glorious does the business of this day appear! Our prayers and thanksgivings are accepted within the veil, and though poured forth from hearts and lips defiled, they make their way to the throne of grace by vir-

tue of this Name, and lose all their imperfection by being presented with the incense of the Intercessor, whose *Name* is as ointment poured forth. In this Name the old-testament-saints went to God through faith ; by this Name Jehovah made known himself, as the hearer of prayer, 2 Chronicles vii. 15, 16. “ Now mine eyes shall be open, and mine ears attent unto the prayer that is made in this place, for now have I chosen and sanctified this house, that my *Name* may be there for ever.” Our blessed Lord establisheth the truth of our text, and points out the glory of the covenant-œconomy, John xiv. 13. “ And whatsoever ye shall ask in my *Name*, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.” To conclude this head, let me add the apostle Paul’s expression Hebrews xiii. 15. “ By *him* (that is Jesus) therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, &c.”

III. That thanksgivings are to be offered “ always and for all things.” This consideration, my Brethren, enters into the very heart of christianity ; and nothing evidences true faith more, than a thankful frame ; there is no time in which we should be strangers to this duty. And yet is it not to be feared, that true thankfulness is a subject too little

attended to by the believer? To be truly thankful, is to acknowledge God's goodness; in the midst of prosperity as sovereign and unmerited; and no less to acknowledge those very mercies that attend us in the depths of adversity.—There is no moment in a believer's life without a mercy. To be thankful, at all times, and for all things, seems a paradox. Is a person to give thanks at a time, when every thing seems to be against him, when every attempt in life is blasted, and the sea of adversity is swelling over him? yea when the glory of Christ's interest in that church, or that neighbourhood, or even that nation he belongs to, seems to be departing; is he then to give thanks? Yes, certainly: For the mind believingly fixed on God, as a covenant-father, knows that what is most contradictory to sense, and painful to human nature, is but a part of the divine plan, the whole of which must be executed. He should feel his affliction, and should tremble with Eli, if the glory is departing from a place where it hath eminently shone; but he is also to give thanks to God for the severest trial of faith, and that the removal of his glory (I mean by *glory* the power of the Gospel) is for the advancement of it elsewhere. Mercy is the spring of every providence;

God's glory, and the church's good, are the end of every providence.—The soul, resting upon the pure word of God by faith, sits thankful in the midst of the wreck of creatures. This agrees with such passages in scripture, as James i. 2. “my brethren count  
 “it all joy when you fall into divers temptations,” or trials, “rejoice always,” &c.—The believer by faith will make use of such a soliloquy as this: “If I have one and but one mercy, it is matter for thankfulness!—If I have a hope of mercy in the blood of the Son of God, I have substantial ground for the highest praises.—Though I beg my bread in this world, in which Jesus Christ walked hungry, with hope of an interest in him, I have sufficient reason why I should not hang my harp on the willows, but on the contrary have it tun'd for his praise.” I believe some of the highest notes in heaven will rise from the deepest trials we have been exercised with on earth; to God the Father, who hath planned the whole scheme of providence and grace; to God the Son, who perfectly executed it; to God the Holy Ghost, whose power enabled us to believe, and patiently to wait for the end of every providence and promise,—“giving thanks  
 “always, and for all things.”

There

There are some special seasons which call for extraordinary expressions of gratitude, from the people collectively, and from the believer as an individual. There are personal and family mercies, both spiritual and temporal, of a peculiar nature, that demand an extraordinary tribute of thanksgiving: And sure this happy day invites the churches and congregations of Christ to “give thanks to God the Father, “in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

We have, as men and christians, the greatest reason to shout aloud to the God of our mercies. How is this reason strengthened, when we consider the provoking sins of the people! While I mention this, I have my eye chiefly upon that leading sin, a contempt of the pure Gospel. The outward gross immoralities, against which we have wholesome laws, will be always the certain consequence of departing from the pure truths of Revelation. But the contempt the Gospel in its purity meets with, from the greatest number of the inhabitants of these kingdoms; the dishonour done to it by the scandalous walk of many who profess it; the coldness also, the carelessness, and legality, found among such who are real believers; make the mercies of this day the more astonishing.

Our

Our national mercies are not to be considered in the same point of view, as those the Lord bestowed on Judah and Israel. They were the Lord's covenant-people, distinguished as such from all the other nations of the world. This is not to be said of Great Britain and Ireland, these islands of the Gentiles. God does not under this dispensation confine his church to this or that people and nation. Blessed be his Name, we, as a people, are favoured with his oracles: He has many churches in these kingdoms, yea we have reason to hope many thousands of his elect are in these islands; for these invaluable blessings we are to be thankful, and particularly at this time, when God is so eminently protecting the cause of Protestants, and mercifully preserving the spiritual liberties of the Redeemer's subjects in our land.

Is there not some reason to believe, that the war in which we are engaged, was set on foot by the instigation of the devil's synod, the Jesuits? Was there no scheme formed to unite the popish force against the protestant interest? to deluge Germany with the superstitious abominations of Rome? and so to bring these happy islands into the same bondage? Have we not great reason to remember with thankfulness, on this day, how  
 early

early the king of Prussia was ready for the field, and how remarkably expeditious we were in our preparations for war, against our most inveterate and perfidious enemies.—The Lord's designs of mercy are not to be prevented by any scheme of the enemy.

Allow me to sum up some of the innumerable mercies that we, in a peculiar manner, should this day give thanks to God for, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. For our *liberty* under the most faithful and merciful king.

2. For the wisdom of our ministry, and the harmony of our senate.

3. For the unanimity of the people.

4. For the successes of the war, and the kindness of that providence that hath kept the enemy from invading us.

5. For the plenty of our provisions.

1. For our *liberty* under the most faithful and merciful king.—It is true, we enjoy no more privileges than what every Briton hath by the law of equitable government a right to. But when we consider how often this privilege has been invaded, how often denied (according to the true account our British annals give), we have great occasion to be thankful for our civil and spiritual liberties. One proof  
among

among many, that Jesus Christ's kingdom is a distinct thing from this world, is, that it is constantly opposed by the world; and the outward tranquillity of Christ's people is seldom known to continue long. If you read over the history of England, I believe you will not find so long a series of liberty and peace to the people of God, as they have had in this, and the late reign of king George the First.

The happy calm we enjoy (under God) is owing to the kindest of princes, by whose clemency we are not affrighted with tremendous star-chambers, nor with any religious pretences to stop the mouths of Non-conformists.—By this blessed providence we enjoy our seasons of public worship, and forms of church government, that in their own nature never clash with, or disturb the civil or religious constitution of this nation. We are not obliged to fly into corners, to appear in disguise, to run into woods, or seek the protection of the night; *we* have no fines for preaching, nor *you* for hearing, but are protected by the just sword of common liberty, while we worship the God of our fathers according to the dictates of our own consciences. In short, what is said Acts ix. 31. “ then had the churches rest throughout all  
I Judea,

“Judea, and Gallilee, and Samaria,” may be justly applied to our churches through Great Britain and Ireland.—I wish the other part of the text might, with the same propriety, be added, “that they are edified, and “walk in the fear of the Lord, and in the “comfort of the Holy Ghost.”

The *Rest* of the churches is disturbed by none but themselves. The Dissenting Interest has at present no deep wounds but what it gives itself; and under this happy reign it seems in no danger of falling by any thing but suicide.—This liberty stands at the head of those mercies we are to give thanks to God the Father for!

2. We are called this day to give thanks for the wisdom of our ministry, and the harmony of our senate. God is to be acknowledged in all his ways of mercy toward us. In this blessing the divine power and goodness appear glorious. God has given us pilots, who have sat steadily at the helm in a rough sea, and, under the direction of Providence, have steer'd the state clear of such rocks and sands, as it was in danger of dashing against.

That we might have extraordinary matter for a divine song this day, our God has called us to admire the harmony of our se-

nate, in connexion with the wisdom of the ministry. Our Gracious Sovereign and his Parliament are one ; and both publickly attribute our late successes to the goodness and power of divine Providence. How befitting the lips of Majesty is such language ! and how pleasant to observe such expressions in the various addresses carried up to the throne ! —The expressions of our king's satisfaction in the duty of his parliament, and theirs in the king's wise measures, call for our thank-givings before the God of heaven. A divided senate, weak ministry, and displeas'd majesty, are circumstances too dismal to think of without trembling ; blessed be God, the reverse of this helps to animate our song of praise. I think in a happy sense Psalm lxxxii. 1. is suitable to conclude this head, as it sheweth all this harmony to be the fruit of divine Providence ; “ He judgeth among the “ Gods—\*.

3. For the unanimity of the people.

Two rebellions have appeared against the glorious house of Hanover ; the last, most of

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\* The word Gods in the original, is אֱלֹהִים, the same word is used in the beginning of the verse, and rendered by our translators in the singular number, God. These great persons are stiled gods, I presume, because they were in their character under the strong obligation of an oath, by which oath they entered upon their office.

us well remember, and cannot forget the consternation the minds of the inhabitants were filled with.—Unnatural as it was, how many befotted people were caught in the treacherous snare, and drank deep into the poison! What stagnation to trade! what confusion in towns and families! were the sad consequences of that commotion, till our illustrious Duke, under the divine direction, humbled the haughty enemy! Now not so much as the shadow of rebellion is seen; now no inward convulsion is permitted to pain the bowels of the nation, but smiling harmony shews her pleasant countenance through all our land!—now no party making head against party; no jacobite mobs and riots in our streets; no discontented murmur utters its disagreeable sound.

This I think stands also in the front of those blessings for which we are now called to give thanks to God the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

4. For the successes of the war, and the kindness of that Providence that hath kept the enemy from invading us.

The wisdom of our ministry would not have availed, had not the God of armies crowned their well concerted schemes with success.

The Lord has given skill, courage, and resolution, to our officers by sea and land; and has filled our common men with an extraordinary spirit, for carrying on the war with the utmost vigour.

This last year, perhaps, is not to be equalled in the history of England for success. Our acquisitions in North America are astonishing! The four quarters of the globe, witness to the blessing the Lord of Hosts has given to the British forces. For these successes our Sovereign the King has called his subjects together this day, to give thanks.

The God of our salvation has enabled those who have been jeoparding their lives for us, to fight, not like men compelled by the force of duty, or excited by mercenary considerations; but like men inspired with loyalty to their king, and eager to secure the liberties of their country. That harmony maintained among our officers in the late eminent conquest obtained at Quebec, is a circumstance as worthy our notice, as it was remarkable in bringing about the success of that enterprise. Both our officers and men have rushed into the mouth of danger, while our enemy, in several instances, have seemed as if they were actually confounded by Providence: To allude to scripture expression, “the men of  
“ might

“ might did not find their hands.” Surely we may well adopt the sublime poetry of the Psalmist, Psalm cvi. 2. “ Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord? Who can shew forth *all* his praise?”

Amongst the crowd of mercies we are called to celebrate this day, the protection and deliverance the king of Prussia has received at the hand of the Lord, is a distinguishing one. How has that monarch been beset, by one of the most subtle commanders in the world on one side, while the Russian cannibals threatened to swallow him up on the other! And shall we, yea can we, forget to sing of Prince Ferdinand’s victory, when God fought for the Protestants, and made the plains of Minden to drink in the blood of our unhappy enemies?

In short, have not our Gazettes been so filled with fresh pieces of important news, that we have looked at one another with a pleasing astonishment! And all this while *we* have known nothing of the desolations of war! Our enemy has not been able to invade our coasts; their power has been so remarkably reduced, that their designs of this nature have proved abortive. What a mercy this! Providence has been our guard. It is to be looked upon as a peculiar mercy, that  
our

our government has been so careful as to make use of all proper means for preventing the enemy's design: But all their precautions and preparations at home, and all the strength of our navy, and vigilance of our officers at sea, would have been ineffectual, had not the Lord been on our side. None of our towns have been set on fire, nor have our fields and orchards been laid waste. We have not been turned out of our houses, or laid under dreadful contributions by the enemy; we have not been terrified with the shrill trumpet's alarm, nor with the roar of cannon and the bursting of bombs; indeed the confused noise of the battle has not been heard in our land: No, no, when our cannon have fired, it has been only to proclaim some joyful news. We indeed sit and converse about war, as tho' we were rather speaking of some entertaining parts of history, in which we have no immediate concern, than about a war we are actually engaged in. Are we not, upon a review of all this, in the most especial manner called upon to give thanks to God the Father, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ?——I add,

5. For our plenty. Was it ever known that such commerce has been carried on in a time of war, as has been ever since this war began?

began? Extravagance and indolence are the chief things that make want. Our manufactures (the grand support of our nation) are open, and the hands of the able and industrious poor may find work.

Our harvest was uncommon: What words can express the riches of Jehovah's goodness to this land, so suitably as the words of scripture, Psalm lxxv. 11, 12, 13. "Thou crownest the year with thy goodness, and thy paths drop fatness. They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness, and the little hills rejoice on every side. The pastures are clothed with flocks," [a strong image to express the largeness of their numbers, as well as the beauty of their appearance] "the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing." Every part of the kingdom was blessed with an extraordinary harvest; and has not our seed-time since been as remarkable? Notwithstanding the large demands for corn, our granaries are full. Now the hoarders of corn, those worst of thieves, as unmoved with the distresses of families, as deaf to cries, as blind to tears, as the senseless stone, can no longer starve the poor, and make a prey of their necessity\*. Walk through  
our

\* There is a text of scripture peculiar to such, Proverbs xi. 26.  
"He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him: But blessing shall be upon the head of him that selleth it."

our shambles in cities and towns, and admire the provision God has made for the inhabitants ; ride over our meadows, and thro' our fields, and behold how the Lord of nature has enriched our land with cattle ! The droves and flocks that crowd the roads to this metropolis, proclaim how kind the hand of Providence has been ; while, by their lowing and bleating sounds, they rebuke our basest ingratitude.— The children of Zion may well cry out, “ who is like unto our God ! ”

I proceed to the last thing,

IV. How this thanksgiving evidences itself.

1. By lying low before God.
2. By generous compassion.
3. By speaking of our mercies to one another, and to our children.
4. By desiring a thankful heart, a sanctified use of these providences, and that God would hasten the kingdom of Christ by the present shakings amongst the nations of the earth.

The consideration of these particulars shall serve as the application of the subject.—

1. By lying low before God. The greatest thanksgiving frames, are the most humble frames ; I mean by frame, the disposition or habit the mind is in ; and this arises from what  
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it views and feels of the Gospel, under the influence of the Eternal Spirit.—David cries out in a divine rapture, 1 Chron. xxix. 14. “But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort !” His mind was influenced by the consideration of the divine sovereignty; and the mode of the expression in the strongest manner shews, that he viewed himself and his people, as being and having nothing wherefore the Lord should bestow the blessings of that day upon them. The other part of the text breathes the very language of faith: “For all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.”

The believer has nothing but what he has received: And therefore the high opinions we indulge concerning ourselves, while we give thanks to God for distinguishing mercies, are as great an absurdity, as if a person with a bucket filled out of the ocean, should imagine he was adding to the treasures of the deep, by emptying it into the sea again.—

The highest trees have the deepest roots; our loftiest praises come deepest from the heart.—We are not to wish destruction to our enemies as men, or because we are a better people than they are. God’s infinite so-

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vereignty

vereignty runs through all the dispensations  
 of his providence. That our cause is just,  
 for which we are contending with the ene-  
 my, is beyond dispute; for breach of treaties  
 and engagements are no strange things to  
 France. But what have the poor subjects,  
 or rather slaves, of that power to do with  
 this? Alas! we shall find Great Britain not  
 less deserving the tokens of the divine dis-  
 pleasure; may be more, if we consider the  
 largeness of our liberties, and that no men  
 can chain our consciences without our leave:  
 And yet the open abuse and sin against the  
 greatest external blessing God has to bestow  
 upon a people, his Revelation, seems to  
 weigh down the scale of our guilt as the  
 heaviest; for 'tis well known, that the peo-  
 ple we are fighting against, are not allowed  
 the privilege of a Bible, nor to read or think  
 for themselves, but must implicitly follow  
 their either ignorant or sophistical guides. I  
 believe no people under the heavens are so  
 privileged as we are. To insult an enemy  
 is tyranny and cowardice; to wish them de-  
 struction as men, is contrary to the nature of  
 a christian. We in our various characters,  
 upon this Day of Thanksgiving, have occasion  
 to be ashamed before the Lord; the greater

our privileges, the greater the aggravations which attend our acts of ingratitude, or our sinful omissions.

*Ministers* in this day of liberty, have reason to complain of their indolence, self-seeking, time-serving, want of zeal for the simplicity of the Gospel; backwardness to promote the life of religion; dishonouring the work of the holy Ghost, who is glorified in glorifying the Son, by taking of his things, and revealing them to his people.

*Professors*, in this sun-shine of national prosperity, have reason with their thank-givings to mourn over their legality of spirit; their not looking more steadily to the only foundation of hope; their looseness of walk, omission or careless performance of the family and closet duties; a want of uprightness and integrity; a yielding to their own spirits; in a word, their bearing so little of the fruits of faith.—

If we are truly touched with the mercies of this day, our song of praise to God cannot be without a heart-humbling sense of sin.—And surely the highest note in our song, if sung in faith, will be to God the Father, for acceptance with, and access to him, in the blessed name of Jesus.—And so shall we with

sweet amazement adopt the language of Jacob, and say, "we are less than the least of all our mercies."

2. This thanksgiving will evidence itself by generous compassion.

Our thankfulness for mercies, upon the plan of my text, will produce generosity to the poor; see Esther ix. 19.—You well remember what weeping eyes were seen, and what meltings of heart were felt in this congregation, when your pity was asked, and no sooner asked for than shewed, to the poor suffering Protestants in Germany. Ah think, sirs! this day might have proved as fatal to you, as 15 August 1758, was to the inhabitants of Custrin!

3. By speaking of our mercies to one another, and to our children.

I look upon this to be a great part of the business of this day. What hath God wrought, should be the animating topic of our conversation. Ye parents, ye masters and mistresses of families, think how quietly you can sit and taste the comforts of life, without being afraid of the sword of a foreign ruffian! Surrounded with your dear children, (who  
might

might have been murdered before your eyes) preach to *them*, and tell them of the striking circumstances that compose the catalogue of this day's blessings:—make them so familiar to their minds, that *they* may tell them hereafter to *their* children; so that the music of this day may be melody in the ears of our childrens children yet unborn. Yea do as Moses commanded the Israelites to do, concerning the revelation of God, Deuteronomy vi. 7.—&c.

4. By desiring a thankful heart, a sanctified use of these providences, and that God would hasten the kingdom of Christ by the present shakings amongst the nations of the earth.

No symptom so dreadful as that of resting in carnal ease. Our case will be dreadful, if the consequence of our mercies should prove to be stupid indolence. To have a mercy sanctified, is to have it so impressed by the Spirit, that hereby we become more separated to the Lord.—Let us pray that our churches may be more purged from spiritual sloth, legality, antinomianism, and every kind of *Idolatry*; that the kingdom of the true David may spread in our nation, and be ha-

F stened

stened in its spread over the world, for the gathering in of all the elect; that he may be glorified who is the desire of all nations, to whom the uttermost parts of the earth are given as his possession; and let the glorious words of the Psalmist be the matter of our prayer, with which I will conclude, "Arise, " O God, judge the earth: For thou shalt " inherit all nations.—Amen, Hallelujah.



**F I N I S**