

A

S E R M O N

P R E A C H ' D at the  
*Cathedral-Church of St. PAUL,*

Before the Right Honourable

*Sir Samuel Garrard, Bar.*

L O R D - M A Y O R

Of the City of L O N D O N.

A N D T H E

C o u r t o f A L D E R M E N.

On T U E S D A Y, *Novemb. 22. 1709.*

Being the Day Appointed by H E R M A -  
J E S T Y ' s Royal Proclamation, for a  
Publick Thanksgiving.

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By *J. ADAMS, D. D.*

Rector of *St. Alban Woodstreet*, and Chaplain in  
Ordinary to Her M A J E S T Y.

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L O N D O N :

Printed for H E N R Y C L E M E N T S , at  
the *Half-Moon* in *St. Paul's Church-yard.*

M D C C I X.

*Garrard Mayor,*

*Martis xxix die Novembris, 1709. Annoq;  
Regni Reginae Annæ, Magnæ Britannia,  
Ec. Octavo.*

**I**T is Ordered, That the Thanks of this Court be given to Dr. *Adams*, for the Sermon by him Preached before this Court at *St. Paul's*, on *Tuesday* last, being the Day appointed by Her Majesty's Royal Proclamation for a Publick Thanksgiving; And that he be desired to Print the same.

GIBSON



## P S A L. V. Ver. 11.

— *Let them also that love thy Name, be joyful in thee.*

**I**F we consider how many *Just* and *Great* Occasions we have had for *Thanksgiving*; and how *often* we have been called upon by Publick Authority, to the Performance of this Delightful Duty: It might Reasonably be suppos'd, that we of this Nation, were more Perfect in it, than any other in the World.

But alas! we shall find it quite otherwise upon the least Reflection: Our Gratitude at best has lasted little longer than the Day of Rejoicing; and *that* Rejoicing consisted too often in the Pride of Success, in Vain-Glorious Boasting, Luxury or Intemperance. And when this was once over, People have returned again to their former Errors and Vices; to the Defaming, Deceiving, or Oppressing one another; To the lessening the Mercies of their Redemption; nay, sometimes, to the questioning the very *Being* of that God, whom they have so lately pretended to Praise: And all this with such Industry and Warmth, as if it were the Particular Business of their several Vocations. I shall endeavour to contribute something towards the Rectifying these dreadful Mistakes; The Regulating our Praise, The Settling and Fixing it upon such Grounds and Principles, as may make it Acceptable to our God, and Beneficial to our Selves. And for this Purpose I have chosen these Words, *Let them that love thy name be joyful in thee.*

The Royal Prophet begins this *Psalms* in the way of a Prayer; but as no Heart was ever so full of Zeal for God's Glory, or of Holy Gratitude for the Mercies which *He* had received from him, he quickly runs into Raptures of Thanksgiving, (*V. 6.*) *Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: The Lord will abhor the bloody and deceitful man.* Is not this a Description of the Enemy that we are concerned withal? And does not the Psalmist set us an excellent Example as to what we are now Doing, in what immediately follows; *But as for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy; and in thy fear, will I worship toward thy holy Temple.* — Yes, says he again, *Let all these that put their Trust in thee rejoice; let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: Let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee.*

The Duty we are exhorted to here, is, *the being joyful in the Lord.* The Qualifications for our being so, are included in the *loving of*

his Name. From which also will arise *Proper Motives* for the exciting those who are so qualified, to the *Performance* of this Duty; and withal, make them do it in *such* a manner as may render it *acceptable to God*, and of substantial and lasting *Advantage to themselves*.

These are the *Chief Subjects*; and this the *Method* of the following Discourse.

I. Let us see in what that Duty does consist, which is contained in those Words; *I will be joyful in thee*. As the Holy Passion of Religious Joy must rise from a *Worthy Cause*, so it must be directed to its *Proper Object only*. That which rises from Success in *Vicious, or Worldly Designs*; from the gratifying of any *Lust or Passion*; from *Covetousness, Intemperance, or Revenge*, is but a short-liv'd Joy, and sadly over-ballanc'd by the guilty Sorrow which quickly follows: That which springs from *Vanity and Pride*, from any false Value that a Man sets upon himself, and makes him attribute any great and unexpected Event to *Human Wisdom or Force*, has but a weak and uncertain Foundation. But when the Blessings that we receive are of the *highest Importance* as to this World; and for our *Eternal Welfare* as to the World to come: When the *ancient Enemies* of our *Country and Religion* are *overthrown*; When *That Torrent of Popery and Arbitrary Power*, which had over-run great Part of the World, and threaten'd all the rest, has been forc'd to retire so far towards its former Bounds, and to prey only upon the servile Supporters of them both; When we have so fair a Prospect of a firm Establishment of the *Just Rights and Liberties* of all *Europe*, as well as *our Own*; *These are Great and Noble Occasions* for a *good Christian's Joy*.

And this Joy will become *Solid and Lasting*, when such Blessings are attributed to *God alone*; not to any *Saint or Angel*, or any of the *Host of Heaven*; not to *Chance or Fatality*; But to *Infinite Wisdom*, prompted by *Infinite Goodness*, and acting by *Almighty Power*. Furthermore, as *David* was the Author of this *Psalms*, who not only believed in the *Messiah*, but wrote frequently of him; so in his chief Hymns of Praise, he must have *Rejoic'd* particularly to *see his Day*: Therefore the *Jews* interpret this Expression here and in other Places, of being *joyful in God*, the being Joyful in *his Word*; and what *that Word* signifies, *St. John* has explain'd at large in the beginning of his Gospel.

Wherefore by being *joyful in God*, is meant the acknowledging with *Humble Gratitude*, that *He* is the *Fountain* of all *Spiritual and Temporal Benefits* thro' *Christ Jesus*; *He alone*, exclusive of all other Beings whatsoever: Exclusive of all those wild Errors, which question his Existence, or *Detract* from his *Providence*; and the *Praising* him accordingly.

From whence it follows, That a *good Christian* is *most capable* of being *Joyful* in the Lord, and *most oblig'd* to be so.

An *Heathen* may be joyful in some God or other, according as his Fancy leads him, (so may a *Papist* too in any Saint or Angel,) as his Deliverer or Benefactor: But as this is founded upon no good Grounds, so it can afford no solid, no lasting Joy.

A *Moder'n Jew* may rejoice in God, as the Giver of the *Mosaical Law*, the Leader of his Forefathers out of the House of Bondage, and in the Hopes of many Temporal Advantages by that *Messiah*, who as they fancy is still to come; but whatever this Joy is, it must be damped by the miserable Circumstances of their Universal Dispersion.

But when a *Christian* comes to consider, that all the Mercies which he receives are thro' the *Merits* and *Intercession* of his Gracious *Redeemer*; when he reflects how many Wonders of Divine Love shone thro' all his Words and Actions, and what Miseries he was expos'd to, in his *Humble Life*, as well as in his *Bloody Death*; When he looks upon the Publick Blessings which we Celebrate, the frequent Defeats of our Enemies, in their Councils and their Armies; and the Happiness that we enjoy in Comparison of other Nations: When he sees all this to be the Effects of the *same Love*, and wholly and entirely due to *that* alone; How must he with all the Powers of a Grateful Soul, and all the Raptures of Sincere and Fervent Praise, be joyful in the Lord!

Moreover, as a Christian is thus most capable of being joyful in God, so in the next Place is he oblig'd to be so accordingly: And as God always supplies the *Means* where he requires the Duty, so he may have,

• II. The Best Qualification for it. The *First* and *Chief* of all which, and from whence the rest will naturally flow, is mentioned here expressly by the Royal Psalmist; *Let them that Love thy Name be Joyful in thee.*

Love is the Foundation of a *Christian's* Praise; and O! how perfect, how delightful will this make it! How pleasing to Men, and Angels! How acceptable to the God of Mercy and Love! *Let Them that Love thy Name be Joyful in thee.*

The Name of God is compos'd of all those several Attributes, by which the Excellencies and Operations of the Divine Nature are set forth to Men; set forth, not according to their Perfection, but according to Man's Capacity.

Yet *this Name* consists sometimes, in the Exerting of some particular Attribute in the behalf of some particular Person or Nation, according to the Nature or Degree of that Benefit, which is at that time bestowed upon them. Thus, *Exod. chap. 6. v. 3. I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the Name of God Almighty; but by my Name JEHOVAH, was I not known to them.*

Which, whoever consults the Context, will find to be to this purpose;

purpose; That God had manifested himself unto the Patriarchs only by the Promises of Future Blessings, but that now he would manifest himself unto Moses by the actual Fulfilling of those Promises, and delivering the Israelites from the Bondage of the Egyptians.

But alas! these were but a small part of those Promises which he made to their Forefathers; He had assured them more than once, That in their Seed all the Ends of the Earth should be Blessed: But this was never made good in any tolerable sense, before the coming of the Messiah; Then it was that God was made known by a more Glorious and Beneficial Name, not only to the Jews but to the Gentiles. And this was the NAME by which he would be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, Jerem. 23. v. 6. For so he became, when by the Expiatory Sacrifice, and most Perfect Obedience of the Blessed Jesus, Divine Justice was fully satisfy'd, and Man thro' Faith and Repentance, was accepted as Righteous in the sight of God. It was then, that the Gentiles as well as the Jews, were instructed how to offer a more Excellent Sacrifice, than under the Law; that they had a more lively Sense of God's Mercies, that their Praises and Thanksgivings grew more Spiritual and Exalted, and were better receiv'd at the Throne of Grace, when offer'd up in the Name of JESUS. And what Creature is there so dull, or so ingrateful, as not to love this Blessed Name, a Name compos'd of Mercy and Salvation; A Name by which alone we can have Access to the Throne of Grace, by which alone we can succeed in our Petitions, or be accepted in our Thanksgivings.

He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is Love, 1 John, c. 4. v. 8. Plainly, Evidently so, as to his Mercies thro' Christ Jesus: And he that knows not God, as the Fountain of those Mercies, as the Father of our Lord Jesus, pretends in vain to know him, or to love him, or his Neighbour, as he ought to do, by the Light of Nature, or the Assistance of Human Reason only; and consequently can never attain to any great degree of Praise and Thanksgiving for Publick Blessings: For the more he detracts from his Redeemer's Glory, by denying him to be God, or any Blasphemy, or Infidelity whatsoever; the more he lessens the Love of that Name. and therefore the more incapable does he grow of being Joyful in the Lord.

But altho' the Love of God's Name, which is kindled in our Hearts by a Lively Faith in Christ Jesus, be the first and chief Qualification for being truly Joyful in him; yet there are others, either springing from this, or highly improv'd by it, which are absolutely necessary for the same Purpose; such as,

2. A Firm and Steady Adherence to the Principles of our Holy Religion, as it is Established by so many Excellent Laws: For, the just Value which we set upon that, and the Sincerity wherewith we profess it, will naturally increase our Joy, and enliven

our Thanksgiving, for every Victory or Advantage over the Enemies of it. Let me not be mistaken ; what I mean is , That we should believe sincerely , what we pretend to do , and that we should act Faithfully according to that Belief, act so, calmly and peaceably in our several Stations. This can never be the Occasion of any Breach of Charity towards our Neighbour, as long as it proceeds from *that Love of God* which I have been speaking of : For *that* will naturally produce a Proportionable Degree of Love towards all Mankind ; and therefore it is impossible that a Good Christian's Integrity, should be any Prejudice to his Moderation.

There are Two great Obstacles to this. One is, the open and confident Attempts that are made , against the very Fundamentals of our Religion, (in which most of those that Dissent from us are equally concern'd) and Undermining the Foundation of all Government : And both these under the Pretence of *Liberty*, and with repeated Reproaches of *Slavery*, and Narrowness of *Spirit*, thrown upon all those who will not joyn with them. But if by *Liberty* be meant , Liberty of Blaspheming the Son of God ; Liberty of running back from Revelation and Government, to the State of Nature ; If by *Liberty* be meant Licentiousness of any kind, no good Christian, or good Subject, need to be afraid to own, that he is against this : But if by *Liberty* be meant, the *Peaceful Enjoyments* of our Civil Rights , secure from any Usurpations or Encroachments whatsoever, under the Protection of those Laws and Privileges which cost our Ancestors so much Blood ; If by *Liberty* be intended the Acting *freely*, according to God's Commands, and the Exercising that Religion which was delivered down to us by the Holy Jesus, *without Invasion or Interruption* ; Let all that love that Name, be ever Joyful in *such Liberty*.

But let not People be frightened or deluded by Words which have lost their Natural Meaning ; or by any vain Shew of Wit, Learning, or Greatness of Mind ; but let every one adhere firmly and faithfully to the Principles of his Holy Religion ; and be contented, tho' an *Englishman*, to be upbraided *with Slavery*, while he acts Conscientiously, according to the Laws of his Country, and under the Protection and Security of them, Rejoices to Worship *that God* with an Upright Heart, *whose Service is perfect Freedom*.

Another great Obstacle to the Steadiness and Fidelity, which I am speaking of, is, that strange *Indifferency* as to Religion, which is so much affected by so many in these Days ; by such as trouble themselves as little about the Practice of it, as the Disputes concerning it ; and are not like to Quarrel for it indeed, because they know little or nothing of the Matter. But few are aware of the ill Consequences of this : For , *Indifferency in Religion* wil bring a Man by degrees to be *indifferent* in every thing

thing else that is Commendable; To be *indifferently True* in his Words, *indifferently Just* in his Actions, *indifferently Honest* in any Trust or Station; And as these Kinds of Indifferency must quickly end in the greatest Wickedness, so the other, when driven by greedy Interest, or pressed by unanswerable Arguments, will run into the most Confident Infidelity. Now, as this proceeds from having no Love of God at all, no Regard to his Name, or Sense of his Glory; so it is impossible that any one in such a State of Indifferency, even before it has run into such Extremes, should upon any Publick or private Success, be truly *Joyful in him*; tho' perhaps he might be Joyful in his Interest or his Pleasure, being so promoted; or in the Gratifying some Lust or Appetite upon that Occasion.

As from hence then it may appear, That the being steady to the Principles of our Holy Religion, (as this is the true and Genuine Effect of the Love of God; as our Redeemer) will increase, rather than diminish a Good Christian's Love to his Neighbour; so it likewise may appear, that the same Steadiness is an Excellent *Qualification*, for his acknowledging with due Gratitude the Mercies of Divine Providence, in the Preservation of *that* Religion from the Treachery and Force of the most Superstitious Enemy of it, and making him truly and acceptably *joyful in the Lord*.

3. Another Qualification for the same Duty, and which springs from the above-mentioned, is, The having a Good Conscience; One that is justly pleased with the Remembrance of its Good Actions, or justly satisfied with the Sincerity of its Repentance: For though Repentance may seem to have little to do with Thanksgiving, yet Confession of our own Weakness, leads most Naturally to Confession of God's Mercies; and the Heart must be cleared from all Corruption, and Filthiness of the Flesh, before it can be raised up to this Spiritual Exercise, and be truly Joyful in its God. What has Hell to do with Joy? And yet something of Hell every ill Man feels within himself, in Rage for what is past, Anguish under present Pain, and Horror for what is to come: No Worldly Enjoyment, nor the Flattery of *Parasites*, nor the Softness of Luxurious Ease, or the Giddy Mirth of Intemperance, can dispel those Sorrows; but he droops at the sight of another's Joy, and trembles at the very mention of Thanksgiving; because that strikes him to the Heart with the Sense of his own Ingratitude: For he well knows that the Blessings which we thank God for, were not intended for him, never were bestowed upon his Account, but serve only for his greater Reproach and Condemnation. Whereas the good Christian lives always in a State of Gratitude; his innocent and happy Soul is an inexhaustible Treasure of Thanksgiving, and all he says, and all he does, upon such Occasions, is sincere, easy, and becoming; and therefore all that know and see

see him will Imitate and Applaud him : So naturally does a good Conscience promote Praise in other People , as well as in our selves.

O *taste and see that the Lord is good*, Psalm 34 v. 8. The Effects of God's Goodness are as plain to the Understanding as what we see and taste is to our Senses ; but *that* Understanding as well as *those* Senses may be vitiated ; and therefore it is necessary that both should be kept in Order, for the quick and true Perception of their several Objects : Now as the Strength and Quickness of the Senses depend upon the good Constitution of the Body, so the Life and Vigor of the Understanding, exerted in the several Passions of Love, Joy, &c. as they relate to God, depend upon a Good Conscience, which is the Right Constitution of the Soul : Wherefore the Soul must be inur'd to Piety and Virtue, long practis'd in habitual Goodness, before it can truly relish God's Mercies ; and when this is so ; good Men will have a more acute and lively, (because a more Spiritual and Intellectual) Sense of Divine Goodness, than the outward Senses can ever be capable of, as to their Objects : From whence it follows, that as *they* are most capable of discerning God's Goodness, so they are best qualified to be *joyful in him*. Add to this, that the Holy Spirit descends upon the Soul , that is so qualify'd ; *the fruits of which Spirit, are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, &c.* all which contribute severally, to the heightning and adorning, of its Praise and Thanksgiving.

Having thus shewn what the Principal Qualifications are, by which a good Christian may be best prepar'd for the Duty of Thanksgiving, I come now to shew,

III. By what Means or Motives he may be most effectually excited to the Performance of it.

1. He ought to consider the great Unworthiness of this Sinful Nation. Alas ! where shall a Man begin, that would represent this, when so many dreadful Errors and Vices offer themselves at once to his View ; Offer themselves, I say, for no care is taken to conceal them ; but all Shame and Modesty is lost, in the Pride and Impudence of Lewdness and Infidelity : Alas ! what little Hope is there to reform our Manners , (after all the honest Pains, of so many well-meaning Men to this purpose) when the chief Articles of our Faith are not only attack'd *openly*, but *expos'd with Insolence and Scorn* ? And when Blasphemy foams out from the Press so often unpunish'd , nay applauded ; can any wonder at the Wildness of People's Actions, or the Looseness of their Conversation ? When once *the fool has said in his heart, that there is no God* ; it is but a small step for him to say next that there is no Virtue ; and then every Passion and Appetite shall be let loose, to act accordingly.

But of all the Vices of this Age, none are more Injurious to the Publick, or more Remarkable, than *that Cruelty, and Oppression, that Barbarous Extortion*, that Ruining of many Sober and Industrious Families, that grow low in the World, only through want of Trade, Business, or Dishonesty. If it be a Sin to extort from the Wealthy, though ever so wicked, what must it be to draw Excessive Sums from the Poor Honest Debtor, and Crush him and Imprison him when he can give no more? Whilst many that are guilty of this, Riot in Luxury and Wantonness, and Feast upon the Widows Tears, and Orphans Cries; nay, throw away more in one Night's Gaming or Intemperance, than would Maintain many Good Subjects, and Unhappy Christians.

On the other side, what Rancor, Malice, and Detraction! what Subdivisions of Parties! what odious Terms of Distinction, invented by the Cunning, and applied by the Ignorant or Malicious; are toss'd about like Firebrands among us! Alas, how well might those Words of the Prophet *Hosea*, Cap. 13. v. 9. be applied to this Nation; *O Israel, thou hast destroyed thy self; but in me is thy help*: Thou hast done all that a wicked, foolish, and ingrateful People could do, for their utter Ruin, for the calling down my Judgments, and forcing me to give thee, thy Religion, and thy Laws, up to thy Implacable Enemies; but notwithstanding all this, *in Me is thy Help*. It is I alone that have maintain'd thee in Peace, and Security at Home. It is I that have Baffled all the Arts and Contrivances of Fraud, or Force, in thy Enemies Abroad; and yet, is it thus that thou returnest Thanks to thy God? Be Instructed at length by my Mercies to thee, if not by my Judgments upon others. *Be instructed, O Jerusalem, lest my Soul depart from thee, lest I make thee desolate, a Land not inhabited*, Jerem. 6. 8.

And for the being so Instructed more Effectually, let us in the next place compare our Condition with that of other Countries; How many have been wasted by Earthquakes, Pestilence, Famine, and the Sword? How many others have been destroyed by being the Seat of War, expos'd to the immediate Necessities of their Friends, as well as the Barbarous Devastations of their Enemies? While we, tho' no less wicked than they, secur'd like the *Israelites* in the Land of *Goshen*, go on confidently in our Sins, and are always giving more Occasions for Days of Humiliation than Thanksgiving. But if we would not have this to be the last, if we would not have the Hypocrisy of our Praise to be added to our other Crimes; let us take an Impartial View of the Wickedness of this Sinful Nation, and with the same Impartiality look inward into our selves; for this will give us a due Sense of our Unworthiness, make every one astonish'd at the Greatness of God's Goodness! and in Holy Transports of Wonder and Thanksgiving, *to be joyful in Him*.

2. Another sort of Means or Motives, whereby we may be excited to the Performance of this Duty, may arise from the considering attentively, *The Nature of those Evils*, which we must have suffered, if our Enemies had prevail'd; and by *what wondrous Events* God himself hath plainly interpos'd, and delivered us hitherto from them. The Chief Evils which we have been delivered from, are the *Religion of Rome*, and the *Power of France*; Evils dreadful enough when single, much more when joined together.

Nor are they very different in themselves; for what is the *Infallibility of Rome*, but *Arbitrary Error*? And what is her *Supremacy*, but *Arbitrary Usurpation* over all other *Bishops*, nay over the most *Arbitrary Princes* themselves; nay, over the *Consciences of all Mankind*? If all Slavery be so justly odious, ought not the Fetters that are forced upon our Reason, our Judgment, and our Senses, to be as much abhorr'd, as the Arbitrary Disposal of our Industry, our Estates, or our Lives? Or what can be left to those Unhappy Men, that are both ways Enslav'd? Yet how very near were we once to have been so? Wherefore, when our Eyes are open'd by these Considerations, let us behold the Wonders which God has wrought, for the Delivering us from such Dreadful Evils.

Before this War, it had been some Ages since our Armies had met with any Signal Course of Victory in Foreign Countries; and we had liv'd a great while upon the Glory which our Fathers got at *Cressy*, *Poitiers*, and *Agincourt*: But those have been Exceeded in our Days, considering the Enemy which we have now to do withal; and the greatest Actions of our most Warlike Princes, surpass'd by a *SUBJECT of Great-Britain*. Indeed, scarce any History can Parallel our Successes, unless it be *that of the Israelites*; yet the Sun stood still but *a few Hours* in the Days of *Joshua*, till they were put into Possession of but *One Victory*; whereas, the fiercest Season was kept back for *many Weeks*, till we by *several Conquests* were avenged of our Enemies. The Current of Success has increas'd for a long Course of Years, and has risen still higher, the further it has flow'd. No Art of Fortification, no Fraud or Force above Ground, or under it; No Advantages of Nature; No Woods, Defiles, Morasses, Retrenchment upon Retrenchment, tho' deep as *their Fears* could make them, could put any Stop to it: While, to *Deceive*, or to *Escape*, has been look'd upon as *sufficient Matter of Triumph*, by our Enemies.

But in vain do they pretend to either: We have Penetrated into *France* already, in too feeling a Sense; Their Academies, those Funds of Flattery, are ready to fail, as much as their others: We have taken their *very Inscriptions*, as well as their *Standards*; and all the *Trophies, Panegyrics, Medals, the Well-carv'd Statues, and Well-penn'd Dedications* of so many Years,

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are become of no Use, no Sense at all. unless they be apply'd anew to their Conqueror. Forgive me, if I am a little warm upon this Occasion : Had this Enemy been truly Humbled, had he acted Openly and Generously, and proceeded with Integrity and Honour ; Silence would have best become his Misery, and our Glory. But who can bear with so much Vanity, Artifice, and Insincerity ? How little has been said, if we consider These ; and how easy is it to say more ? However, let that be the Task of somebody else, in some other Place.

Such Miraculous Events as these, contain so much Good to our Selves, and so much Evil to our Enemies, as might plainly discover the Hand of Providence all along ; and this would be acknowledged more readily, were not People taken up with such Admiration of former Times, and continually Magnifying the Great Actions of the *Greeks* and *Romans*. For these being recorded with all the Advantages of Wit and Eloquence, and so little mention being made of their Gods, or the Gods they mention being so Ridiculous ; the fond Admirer is apt to look upon the Wise and Great Men of those Days, as acting only by Human Prudence or Force ; and that the *Cyrus's*, *Alexander's*, and *Cæsar's*, were carry'd on by their own Impulse, and were the Formers of their own Grandeur : Whereas, they would find it quite otherwise, if they would but Vouchsafe to look into the Holy Scriptures ; they would there see how *Cyrus* was foretold by Name, many Years before he was born, *Isaiab* 44. 28. How *Alexander's* Swift Success, and *Sudden* Empire, and the *Division* of it after his Death : How the several Changes in the Greatest Kingdoms of the World, till the Time of the *Messiah's* Coming, and *that* Time also, were exactly foretold by the Prophet *Daniel*, (*Cap.* 7, and 8.) and be led to acknowledge, That Divine Providence is particularly concern'd in all Great Events ; and look no further for the Noblest Subjects of our Wonder, or our Praise, than into those Holy Writings.

For Instance : What Example can be more illustrious, both as to the being God's own Particular Choice, and as to the Executing faithfully his most Important Commands, than that of *David*, who naturally comes first to my Mind, as the Author of my Text. I by no means design to draw any Exact Parallel between the *Man after God's own Heart*, the *Royal Prophet*, between *Him* whose Great Actions could never have admitted of any Addition, but only from his own Immortal Hymns of Thanksgiving ; and any other Person whatsoever. Yet there are some Parts of his Character, some Circumstances of his Life, which one cannot help reflecting upon, whenever his Name is mentioned. By how many Degrees did God exalt him to so great a Height, to be the Defender, the Deliverer of his Country, and the Conqueror of its Enemies ! How undaunted was his Courage ! How unmoveable his Patience ! How steady was he in  
well,

well-chosen Counsels, how watchful in Difficulties, sedate in Action, merciful in Success! It is Persons *so Qualify'd*, that God makes use of in his Greatest and most Important Designs, and that chiefly deserve our Admiration.

3. Another great Motive to prevail with Those who are qualify'd as above, *to be joyful in the Lord*, is the *Common Good* which may be Obtained, *to so great a Part* of Mankind, as well as Our Selves, by the compleating of these Mercies in a *General and Lasting Peace*.

Nothing can enlarge the Heart more, than the Christian Religion, as founded in the Love of the *Saving Name* of *Jesus*: Therefore this must inspire us with Great and Noble Desires, stretch them beyond the low and contracted Views of Private Self-Interest, and extend our Prayers for the Good of Human Nature. This will teach us to consider chiefly, how to fix the Balance of Power, and by what Means to secure most effectually, the Liberties and Laws of distant Countries, of all *Europe*, as well as of our own; and wish for *such a Peace*, not, as will give us more Leisure and Opportunity to pursue our several Vices; not such a one as the Luxurious and Cowardly sigh after, but such as *Cicero* recommends, when he tells us, *Pax est tranquilla libertas*, (2. Phillippic.) *The Peace* which every *Wise* and *Good* Man desires, is *that* which is the *Happy Effect* of Liberties being *Secure* and at *Ease*; *secure* from the *Encroachment* of Ambition, and at *Perfect* *Ease*, under the *Free* and *Impartial Execution* of *Good* Laws; and as it concerns this Nation in particular, in the *Preservation* of our *Excellent Constitution*, both in *Church* and *State*.

He that has such Generous and Noble Aims, will be always ready to Rejoice at every Step towards so Glorious an End; must have been struck with Delight at the first Dawning of it; and be so much more as he sees it rise, and approach nearer and nearer, upon every Conquest, and every Victory. Wherefore it is one of the great Mistakes of this Age, to suppose that our Holy Religion contracts the Soul, and gives People a Meanness and Narrowness of Spirit: For *that* Soul, which is Naturally and Regularly Great, becomes much more so, by Religion; because this makes it become more and more *like unto God*: And the *Love of Christ* constrains us, as the Apostle expresses it, urges us and presses us by such Motives of Love, Mercy, Compassion and Charity, both from the Example and Commands of our Gracious Redeemer; as cannot possibly be drawn from Human Reason, or the Light of Nature only; and will make the Good *Christian* more steady and constant in the Practice of them, the more steady and constant he is, in that Holy Religion. And what can recommend a Man more to the World than this? What can be so much for every Man's Security and Advantage, as *Integrity when joined with Charity*? These are the chief Motives by which a Good Man so Qualify'd as above mentioned, may be excited to be Joyful in his God. I come now to shew Lastly, IV.

IV. In what manner, they who are thus Qualify'd and Mov'd, may be so Joyful in God, as to be accepted by him.

1. Then; Let this be done without Pride or Envy, without any Aggravation of Vain-Glory, or Detraction from those whom God has employ'd, as the Instruments of those Blessings which we Celebrate this Day: Let *Justice* attend upon our Joy; let us Celebrate the Memory of those Gallant Men, that fell in their Country's, nay, *Europe's* Cause; and Receive those who Survive with Honour and Triumph; till our Gratitude, Admiration, and Joy, center all at last in the Praise of God, and whatever we Rejoice for, be chiefly Attributed to his Infinite Wisdom, and Almighty Power.

2. Let our Praise be attended with Acts of Friendship and Charity, Clemency, and Forgiveness of one another; Let the Sick, the Poor, and the Prisoner be encouraged to assist in our Thanksgiving, and enjoy and partake of those Blessings in some measure, which God designed should be Publick and Universal. Let all Cruelty and Hardheartedness, towards those whom it is any ways in our Power to Ruin or Hurt, be put away; and let not the *Extortioner* and *Oppressor*, Let not the *Merciless Usurer* pretend to be Joyful in God: What has he to do with Gratitude or Justice? How can he be pleas'd with Victory, who dreads Peace as much as he does Restitution?

And though Polite Countries do not use to fetch Examples for their Behaviour from their Armies, yet we may justly do so at present: The Unanimity of so many Nations, different in Language, Customs, and Religion; the *Friendship* of the *Two Generals*, where Consciousness of mutual Worth, and equal Security of Glory, with equal Desire of the Publick Good, damps Envy and Jealousy, deserves our Admiration: Particularly how Remarkable was the Clemency of the Conqueror, never Frighted, and therefore never Cruel? Human and Moderate, in the midst of Bloody Triumph, and Demonstrated most Gloriously in the Care of so many Wounded Enemies! Tho' the Victory be denied, by those who deserted *these* in the *Regularity* of their Flight, (such are the Advantages of Experience) yet these at least, will own themselves doubly Conquer'd. This Proceeding ought to lead us to something of the like Nature at Home, towards those whom the same Providence has any ways made the Objects of our Mercy and Compassion.

3. Our Praise will be most acceptable to God, and most proper to obtain the Increase and Continuation of these Blessings to us, if it be attended with Resolutions of Amendment, and of doing all that we can in a Charitable and Christian way, to promote God's Glory. For this, we have not only his Commands repeated to us over and over, in his Holy Gospel, but he has also raised us up *some* Examples, even in this Wicked Age: One I

am sure, eminently *above all the rest*. Above them *All is Goodness*, more than *in Greatness*; and for whom we may best Praise God, at this Distance: It is *SHE* that is the Foundation of all our Blessings; *SHE*, who us'd to be the bright Example of True and Fervent Praise in this Holy Place, and would have been so now, had not God thought fitting to mingle Afflictions with her Triumphs, to *compleat* Her Character, and make Her the *most Perfect* Example of every Christian Virtue. But more especially is *She* so, for Her Piety and Charity. No Life was ever so equally divided, between the Care of Her People, and the Service of Her God: Never had so much Retirement so vast an Influence; Sovereign Goodness resembles so very much the Divine Nature, that it has a kind of Ubiquity, and prevails at the same time in different Places; Always Beneficial at Home, and always Victorious Abroad. It is Her continual Devotion, Her fervent Prayers that have fought for us; and will always do so (if our Sins do not interpose): No need of any *Aaron* or *Hur* to support those Hands, (Vid. *Exod.* 17. 12.) which have been so accustomed to be lifted up towards Heaven, or (which is equally acceptable to the Father of Mercies) to the distributing of Alms, Comfort, and Support, to so many Thousands. Certainly never did any Prince extend the Bounds of Empire so Gloriously, as *She* has done by the Union of Her Kingdoms, and by Reigning so Universally in the Hearts of all her People, nay, in those of remotest Nations. Alas then! how comes it to pass that *such* an Example is no better followed? Why are there so few good Christians among so many good Subjects? Why are there no more that Imitate, where every one pretends to Love? Little does *She* think how this will rise in Judgment one Day, and against how many of her Subjects; it is well that *She* does not, nay, that *She cannot*: This Reflection would be tormenting to so Tender and Compassionate an Heart, and therefore Happy is *She*, that Her Modesty and Humility make it impossible that it should enter there. Wherefore let us Sum up in *HER* all our Thanksgivings; let us resolve to follow, though at a great distance, that Heavenly Example which *She* sets before us, and let us beg of God for Her, Increase of Days, Happiness and Glory; and Conclude all, by Applying to Her those just Acknowledgments which the Grateful Jews made to *Judith*, tho' she saved *Israel* by a very different way:

*Thou art the Exaltation of Jerusalem, Thou art the Great Glory of Israel, Thou art the Great Rejoicing of our Nation ——— Thou hast done much Good to Israel, and the Lord is pleased therewith: Blessed be thou of the Almighty Lord for evermore, Judith 15. 9, and 10 ver.*