

ed the temple to be cleansed; he made expiation for the sins of the people, and taught them the true and perfect way.

In all things he set them an upright example, and not satisfied with the reformation of his own people, he likewise sought, with compassionate earnestness, that of the corrupted Israelites. For this purpose, he wrote them a most affectionate and pathetic letter, explaining the source of all their misfortunes—exhorting them to return to the worship of the true God, and to present themselves before him in his holy temple at the ensuing solemnity, as the most effectual means of averting future judgments and of obtaining the redemption of their unhappy brethren, whom the kings of Assyria had carried into captivity.

Many of the Israelites laughed him to scorn, and mocked his pious invitation; but divers of Ashur, and Manasseh, and Zebulon, came to Jerusalem, and humbled themselves before the Lord.

The restoration of the worship of the temple gave courage to the people, and as the king continued to do that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father David had done, his temporal success was equal to his piety.

In comparing Hezekiah with king David, the Scripture refers to their zeal for the worship of God and the service of the Sanctuary. It is in this view only that the royal Psalmist is called a man after God's own heart. A glorious title, not bestowed on him on account of the purity of his moral conduct, for he was guilty of many crimes, but for his abhorrence of idolatry, and his faithful adherence to the civil and religious institutions of his country. In like manner, Hezekiah was said to do as his father David had done, because he was equally hostile to idolatry and zealous for the worship of the Lord.

From the history of Hezekiah's eventful reign, and the mercies of God which attended his administration, we are forcibly taught that a truly pious king is of inestimable advantage to a nation, as an instrument of deliverance and prosperity.

We are aware that many pretended friends to revelation are disposed to deny the especial interpositions of Providence. They consider the expressions of God's turning away the prophesied evil from king and people, on their repentance and amendment, if not figurative, as peculiar