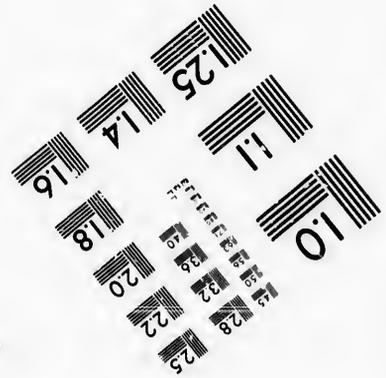
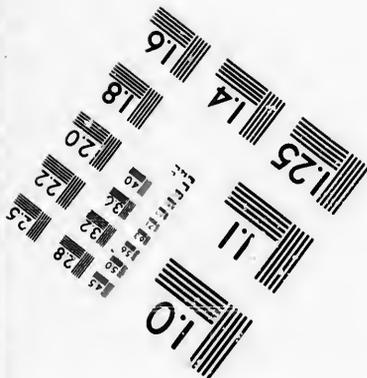
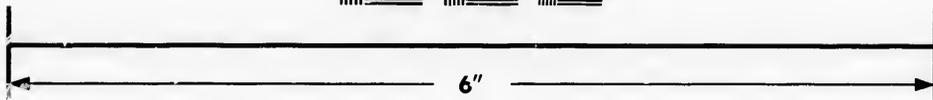
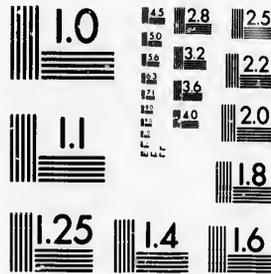


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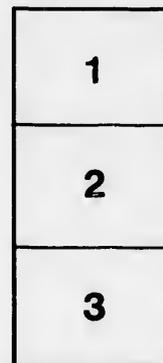
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Mr. Townsend's

Thanksgiving

S E R M O N

October 25th 1759.



S

Being
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B O S

Sorrow turned into Joy.

A

S E R M O N

Deliver'd at *Medfield,*

October 25. 1759.

Being a Day of public Acknowledgement

Of the Smiles of Heaven upon the British Arms

In *A M E R I C A:*

More especially in the Reduction of

Q U E B E C.

By JONATHAN TOWNSEND, A.M.

Pastor of the Church in *Medfield.*

*They that sow in Tears, shall reap in Joy, Psal.cxxvi. 5.
Thou hast turned for me my Mourning into Dancing:
Thou hast put off my Sackcloth, and girded me with
Gladness. Psal. xxxi. 11.*

BOSTON: Printed by S. KNEELAND, in Queen-
Street. M,DCC,LX.



ESTHER ix. 20, 21, 22.

And Mordecai wrote these Things, and sent Letters unto all the Jews that were in all the Provinces of King Ahasuerus, both nigh and far, to stablish this among them, that they should keep the fourteenth Day of the Month Adar, and the fifteenth Day of the same yearly: As Days wherein the Jews rested from their Enemies, and the Month which was turned unto them from Sorrow to Joy, and from Mourning into a good Day: that they should make them Days of Feasting and Joy, and sending of Portions one to another, and Gifts to the Poor.

IF we turn back to the Annals of *Lewis* the XIVth of *France*, and mark the Plan that was formed to environ us in, by the trading Places which were established, but as the Embryo of future Fortresses, even from those Parts of the River of *St. Lawrence*, which they then possessed upon all the Lakes and Rivers, to their Southern Province of *Louisiana*, we may discover a Design deeply laid, and well concerted, in Time to reduce us to the unhappy Condition of Slaves to *France*.

If

If we look no further back than to the Loss of *Oswego* three Years ago, * when our Enemies had the Command of all the Waters from the Mouth of the River of *St. Lawrence* to the Gulf of *Mexico* ; when in almost every Instance they gained the Time of us ; and our Designs and Attempts ended in Disappointment ; we may see what a heavy Cloud, then hung over us, and what a dark Prospect there was before us ; and may remember the deep Concern that prevailed in the Minds of all the Thoughtful in our Land.

Instead of the Reduction of the Enemies Fort on the *Ohio*, a fine Train of Artillery fall into the Hand of our Foes, and a great Number of noble Veterans are ignobly cut off in the Wilderness.

Instead of *Niagara* taken ; *Oswego* lost ! Instead of the Reduction of Fort *Frederic*, Fort *Henry* is burnt, and a Number of our Friends butchered by the inhuman Savages !—In short, Instead of Joy, we were entertained with nothing but Scenes of Sorrow, and fresh Occasions for Mourning were frequently suggested.

Our Enemies flushed with repeated Victories “ laughed among themselves.” Elate with Advantages already gained, they were ripe to pursue our further Ruin : and many feared, not without Reason, that an Invasion was designed against some principal Part of our Country ; which might probably have completed our Distress.

In that Season of Darkness and doubtful Expectation, there were several Days appropriated to public Humiliation, and humble & earnest Prayer to Almighty GOD, to “ remember us in our low Estate,”

* *August* 14. 1756.

Estate," and to "save us from our Enemies." And however heedless many were of the Business of such Days, some, I doubt not, really "humbled themselves & prayed, and sought God's Face & Favour in Sincerity and in Truth?" And were *daily* waiting upon GOD to be favourable to our Land; and that his Mind might be towards this People." And GOD was pleased to lend a gracious Ear to our Requests, and in the Course of his Providence He interposed in our Behalf: And as a Series of calamitous Disappointments had followed one upon another before; so a Train of Successes, have since called for our Notice.

Frontenac was taken, and by the Destruction of the Enemies Stores at that Fort, an Enterprize that was by them designed against the *German Flats*, was happily prevented. The important Fortress of *Louisbourg* was delivered into our Hands, and many of the Enemies Ships of Force were taken or destroyed: Fort *Du Quesne* was evacuated on the Approach of our Troops; and we, in our Turn, have the Command of the valuable Country covered by that Fort.

But the Summer past in particular, will shine distinguished in *American Annals*, on Account of the signal Success which has attended his Majesty's Arms among us.

The powerful Detachment from *Venango*, totally routed: And *Niagara*, after a short Dispute surrendered to us. Fatal *Ticonderoga*, and the dreaded *Crown-Point*, so long the Burden of our Complaint, have been deserted by the Enemy, and possessed by our Forces; and the latter, strongly fortified

tified by us. And to crown all, Remarkable Success has been given to our Forces, who were destined to attempt the Enemy's Capital, and penetrate into the Heart of their Country. — Tho' the Enemy repeatedly, and by well concerted Measures, attempted the Destruction of our Fleet, the Fleet was happily saved from that Destruction: and at length, in a very unequal Fight, our Enemies being much superiour in Number, a Victory was obtained; and in Consequence of it, QUEBEC was surrendered to *British* Troops.

By these Interpositions of divine Providence, the Clouds which were late impending over us, are scattered; our "Sorrow turned into Joy," and "our Mourning into a good Day."

Nor are we a little interested in the Success which has attended the Arms of our KING, and his Allies in *Europe*.

Who, concerned for the Protestant Interest, trembled not at the critical Situation of the *Prussian* Hero; and the valiant *Ferdinand*? The One having the powerful Armies of *Austria* and *Russia*, to encounter; the other obliged to risque a Battle with Fifteen Thousand French, to save our Sovereign's Dominions in *Hanover*. But what a signal Victory did the Prince obtain over the Power of *France*! The Particulars of This, we have received; and it appears a most remarkable Instance of the Smiles of Heaven upon the Protestant Arms. "Thine, O Lord, is the Greatness, and the Power, and the Glory, and the Victory, and the Majesty; and it is nothing with Thee to help, whether with many, or them that have no Power." And we are refreshed, with the Intelligence of the Success
of

A Thanksgiving SERMON. 5

of the inimitable *Prussian*, over his *Russian* Enemies, within eighteen Miles of his Capital: tho' of this we have no Particulars. ||

How effectually have our Enemy's Ships been blocked up in their Ports; and their boasted Design against *England*, hitherto been prevented; and their grand Apparatus rendred as yet useles! Nor is the Advantage gained over the *Toulon* Squadron by the brave *Boscarwen*, to be neglected. It has much lessened the Enemies Strength by Sea, and has added Power to us.

These Things are not to be overlooked or forgotten by us, when we are celebrating the Praises of God, for those Advantages which more immediately relate to our selves: For it is in the Peace of our Nation, and the Success of the Protestant Cause only, that we may expect Peace.

Should Things go ill on our Side in *Europe*, the Advantages here would soon be swallowed up, and Trembling would again take hold upon us. At present, we have Reason to rejoyce in God's Goodness, both to our Nation and our Land, as well as to the Powers in Alliance with us. And we are this Day invited to "enter God's Gates with Thanksgiving, and his Courts with Praise."

Let us summon our most lively and close Attention, to the Business of this joyful Solemnity. So *Deborah* and *Barak* stir up themselves to the warmest Expressions of grateful Joy, when they "praise the Lord for the avenging of Israel, *Judg. 5.*

B

See

|| The News which then obtained among us, appears to have been premature, the Disadvantage sustained by the King in that Battle, was greater than we then had Account of; and yet, I conceive, we have cause of Thankfulness, that in that critical Situation, he was not swallowed up, but is again in a Condition to face the Enemy.

See *ver.* 12. "Awake, awake *Deborah*, awake,
" awake, utter a Song, arise *Barak*, and lead thy
" Captivity captive, thou Son of *Abinoam*."

Thus the Psalmist excites himself to Praise, *Psal.*
57. ult. "Awake up my Glory, awake Psaltery
" and Harp; I my self will awake early. I will
" Praise Thee, O Lord, among the People: I will
" sing unto Thee, among the Nations: For thy
" Mercy is great unto the Heavens; and thy Truth
" unto the Clouds. Be Thou exalted, O GOD,
" above the Heavens: Let thy Glory be above
" all the Earth."

In the Words of our Text, we have the Account
of the Establishment of an Anniversary of special
Rejoycing upon Account of a signal Deliverance
granted to the Jews, of which we have an Account
in the preceding Part of the Book.

Haman the Son of *Hammedatha* the *Agagite*, be-
ing taken into a near Relation to King *Ahasuerus*,
ill resented it, that he had no Reverence shewn
him by *Mordecai*, the Uncle of *Esther*, the Queen.
And this moved him to plot the Destruction of all
the Jews throughout the vast *Persian* Empire; for
which he obtained a Decree of the King. This
affected the Jews with deep Concern, and filled
Shushan with Perplexity.

But on the humble and earnest Request of *Esther*,
Letters were written, and hastened by the same
Authority, countenancing the Jews to stand in their
own Defence; which they did with abundant
Success.

When the Day arrived, wherein the Enemies
of the Jews hoped to have Power over them;
the Scene was changed, as the first Verse of our
Context

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Context informs; "It was turned to the contrary, and the Jews had Rule over those that hated them"; The wicked Device, which *Haman* devised against the Jews "returned upon his own Head," and he and his Sons were hanged on the Gallows, which he prepared for *Mordecai*; and the Jews slew of their Enemies seventy five Thousand.

The thirteenth of *Adar* was the Day destined for their Ruin; and on that Day they made a successful Defence; and at the Instance of the Queen, they were permitted to do the same, in *Shushan* upon the 14th; but this 14th was observed as a Day of Rejoycing for their Success in the other Provinces; as the 15th was in *Shushan*, for the Victory of the two preceeding Days.

And this is the plain Account of the two Days being celebrated as Festival Days of Thanksgiving, of Joy and Melody; or as it is express'd in the 18th Verse; 'a Day of Gladness, and Feasting, and a good Day.'

As † One comments upon the Words; "a Day of Thanksgiving and Praise to God, as well as of Feasting one with another; and of sending Portions one to another, out of their good Cheer; that the meaner Sort might feast and rejoyce also: and that which they had done, at the first voluntarily, *Mordecai* tho't good to turn into a Law, and sent it into the whole Realm." As is related in our Text.

In speaking to which,

I shall take Notice of the Diversity of Scenes in the present State; particularly to our present Purpose.

† Bp Patrick.

8 *A Thanksgiving* SERMON.

I. That the darkeſt Proſpects may ſoon ſcatter, and a ſudden Tranſition be made from Sorrow to Joy.

II. That it is fit and becoming to acknowledge ſuch happy Alteration, with Gratitude to God, and celebrate it with a reaſonable and religious Joy. And

III. That ſuch Thankfulneſs to God, ſhould be attended with Charity to our Fellow-Men? and it ſhould be our Concern, that all may ſhare in the Gladneſs, and join with us in the grateful Exerciſe.

I. I am in the firſt Place: To take Notice of the Diverſity of Scenes in the preſent State; particularly to our preſent Purpose; That the darkeſt Proſpects may ſoon ſcatter, and a ſudden Tranſition be made from Sorrow to Joy.

The 12th Month, even the Month *Adar*, the 13th Day of the ſame, in particular unto the Jews, was turned “from Sorrow into Joy, and from Mourning, into a good Day.” How awful muſt be their Apprehenſions, when there was a Royal Decree for their utter Deſtruction, without the Exemption of Child, or Suckling: and that written in the King’s Name, and ſealed with the King’s Ring, which, according to the Laws of the *Medes* and *Persians*, no Man might reverſe! What hope of Escape could a People ſcattered over 127 Provinces, and all thoſe Provinces engaged by the Authority of the Realm, to deſtroy them? What hope of Escape could ſuch a People entertain! Certainly, their Caſe was very fearful, and they were ſenſible of it: “For in every Province whitherſoever the King’s Commandment and his Decree came, there was great Mourning among the Jews; and faſting, and weeping

weeping and wailing ; and many lay in Sackcloth and Ashes." But *Esther* was "come to the Kingdom for such a Time as This." Providence design'd Enlargement and Deliverance should arise to the Jews thro' *her* Means ; and she obtained what was equivalent to the reversing of the Decree : And then the Scene was greatly changed. *Esth.* 8. ult. "The City of *Shushan* rejoiced, and was glad." "The Jews had Light and Gladness, Joy and Honour ; and in every Province, and in every City, whithersoever this latter Commandment & Decree of the King came, the Jews had Joy and Gladness, a Feast and a good Day : " And this was the Prelude of their Joy, which was compleated in the Victory, they, in Consequence of that Decree, obtained over their Foes, and when they "rested from their Enemies."

"The Day of Prosperity and the Day of Adversity are set one over against the other." 'Tis a checker'd State we live in. "Weeping may endure for a Night, and Joy come in the Morning."

When *Pharaoh*, with the formidable Host of *Egypt* pursued and overtook *Israel* in the Wilderness, they were filled with Consternation, and even provoked to murmur, forgetful of the Wonders of the *Field of Zoan* : They thought of nothing but of falling a Prey to their Pursuers ; and indeed there was no human Prospect of any Thing else. The Red Sea obstructed their further Progress, and an inaccessible Mountain on each Wing, effectually prevented their Flight, as the huge Host of their Pursuers, full in view, entirely cut off their Retreat : What remained, but that the Enemy should overtake, and divide the Spoil !—But Providence interposed ;

posed ; the People are directed to stand still, and see the Salvation of GOD." And truly GOD triumphed gloriously : " *Pharaoh* and his Host were drowned in the Sea." What a sudden Transition was here, from absolute Despair, to exalted Joy and Triumph!

So *Samaria* once was besieged by the *Syrians*, till " an Ass's Head was sold for fourscore Pieces of Silver ; and the tender Mothers, eat the Fruit of their own Bowels " thro' the straitness of the Seige." In this distressing Scarcity, *Elisha* the Prophet foretells them, 2 *Kings* 7. 1. " To Morrow about this Time shall a Measure of fine Flower be sold for a Shekel, and two Measures of Barley for a Shekel in the Gate of *Samaria*." This was so incredible to the King's prime Minister, that he treated it with Ridicule, and seems to insinuate, that he esteemed it a Thing beyond the Power of the Almighty ; " He said, Behold ; If the Lord would make Windows in Heaven, might this Thing be?" Importing, that he thought it could not. But by a special Providence which caused the *Syrians* preceitate Flight, leaving their Tents, and all their Provision ; the Event verified the Prediction. And this was a memorable Change from distressing Sorrow and Concern, to great Joy and Gladness.

When *Sennacherib* invaded *Judah*, in the Reign of *Hezekiah*, and sent Letters and Messengers to rail against the Lord, and against his Servants, and lay with near two Hundred Thousand Men before it ; it was a dark Day in *Judah*. So the godly King represents it, to *Isaiab* the Prophet, to whom he sent *Eliakim*, who was over the Household, and

Shebna

A Thanksgiving SERMON. II

Shebna the Scribe, and the Elders of the Priests covered with Sackcloth, to say unto him, " Thus saith *Hezekiah*, This Day is a Day of Trouble and of Rebuke; and of Blasphemy, for the Children are come to the Birth, and there is not Strength to bring forth : " But the Prophet was directed to answer the Messengers " with good and comfortable Words : " And the Lord sent an Angel, and destroyed One Hundred and eighty five Thousand *Assyrians* in one Night ; upon which they raised the Siege, and the Land had Quiet ; and their " Sorrow was turned into Joy."

Some other Instances of the like Nature might be cited from the sacred Records. And the Church and People of GOD have often since, had Occasion to join in that thankful Acknowledgement, *Psal.* 124: " If it had not been the Lord, who was on our Side, when Men rose up against us, then they had swallowed us up quick &c. Our Soul is escaped, as a Bird out of the Snare of the Fowler ; The Snare is broken, and we are escaped."

All Things here are full of Change ; and constantly upon the Wheel. " The Morning cometh, and also the Evening." The dark and silent Night, succeeds the glad some Day ; and again returns the welcome Dawn : and, tis observed, " The darkest Time is a little before Day " ; so it often is in the Course of God's providential Government : The Clouds are thickest the nearer the Time of their scattering approaches. This we may have seen relative to our own personal and private Circumstances, as well as in the greater Affairs of the Public. And our Nation and Land have often seen such joyful Change, of " Mourning into a good
good

good Day." Thus the popish Plot in the Reign of King *James I.* for blowing up the Principals of the three Estates of *England*, was by good Providence timely discovered, and happily prevented; and the Deliverance is annually celebrated in our Nation to this Day: By the Writing of our King, this is established among them, that they should keep the fifth Day of *November* yearly, as a Day wherein they were delivered from the most wicked Designs of their Enemies; that they should make it a Day of Feasting and of Joy, of Praise and Thanksgiving.

Various Attempts have been made under the Patronage of *France* to set a popish Pretender upon the British Throne: One fresh in our Memories, in the last War, which succeeded to a surprizing Degree, but was effectually and happily crushed by the Battle of *Culloden*.

We have often been delivered from our Fears in this Land; but perhaps scarce ever in a more signal Manner, than by the happy Turn, Things have taken within two Years past, and the several Instances of Success, with which we have been favoured, briefly mention'd in the Introduction to this Discourse.

From all which, it is very plain "That the darkest Prospects may soon scatter; and a sudden Transition be made from Sorrow to Joy." Which was the first Thing noticed from the Words.

I pass now to observe,

II. That it is fit and becoming to acknowledge such happy Alteration, with Gratitude to God; and celebrate it with a reasonable and religious Joy.

Thus

Thus *Mordecai* wrote to establish or perpetuate the Memory of the signal Favours they had received by the solemn Separation of these Days, the 14th & 15th of *Adar*, for the Purposes of Joy and Thanksgiving, "to make them Days of Feasting and Joy." The Truth of this may appear,

If we consider, *First*; God is the Author of all our Favours. Whatever Benefit is conferred upon us; whatever Deliverance we are the Subjects of, they are all derived from the great Fountain of Goodness. There may be various Means and Instruments made use of to bring about the Purposes of his Providence and Grace: But GOD is the great Agent, "who worketh all Things according to the Counsel of his own Will." "He doth his Pleasure in the Armies of Heaven above, and among the Inhabitants of this lower World." There are many Changes, as we have heard, upon the Face of the Earth: and in the Disputes among Men, some appear to prevail against others: But GOD is the great & righteous Arbiter. *Psal. 75. 6, 7.* "For Promotion, cometh neither from the East, nor from the West, nor from the South; but GOD is the Judge; He putteth down one, and setteth up another." The Race is not alway to the Swift, nor the Battle to the Strong." If the Lord be on our Side, One of us may chace a Thousand, and two put ten Thousand to Flight: or Advantage may be obtained at a very great Inequality: But if the Lord be not for us, but for our Adversaries, vain are all our Attempts: The shaking of a Leaf shall be sufficient to make us tremble. Flight shall perish from the Swift, and the Strong shall not strengthen his Force; neither shall the Mighty deliver himself.

In all our Concerns, even civil and secular, as well as sacred, our Dependance is upon the most High. "Except the Lord build the House, they labour in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the City, the Watchman waketh but in vain: God, in and through Christ, vouchsafes to be the Protector of his People, and under his Protection, they are secure; and 'tis in vain to practise Mischief against them.

When *Israel* passed through the Wilderness in their Way to *Canaan*, *Balak* the King of *Moab* called *Balaam* the Son of *Beor* from *Aram*, from the Mountains of the East; saying, "Come, curse me *Jacob*, come, defy *Israel*:" But God turned the Curse into a Blessing; and *Balaam*, notwithstanding the Inclination he had to gratify *Balak*; was constrained to bless them altogether: "How shall I curse, whom God hath not cursed? How shall I defy, whom the Lord hath not defied:—Surely there is no Enchantment against *Jacob*, neither is there any Divination against *Israel*: According to this Time it shall be said of *Jacob*, and of *Israel*, What hath God wrought!" *Numb.* 23.7,23. It is evident beyond Dispute, by the Light of Reason, as well as Revelation, that there is a great Super-intendent of the Affairs of this lower World, and that nothing can occur in Time without his Influence or Permission. "A Sparrow falls not to the Ground, without our heavenly Father: And, the Hairs of our Head, are all numbered." "He giveth us all Things richly to enjoy," and delivereth us from the many Dangers that compass us about. Again,

Nature dictates thankful Acknowledgement to a Benefactor. It is but treating such a Person according to Truth, to thank him for Favours received:

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ceived: This is acknowledging that we have received them from him. Ingratitude has been branded, as one of the worst of Crimes, even in the Heathen World; which shows, that the contrary is dictated by our own Consciences, and is agreeable to Truth, the Reason and Fitness of Things: And to be sure, such a Benefactor as our supreme Lord; "In whom we live, move, and have our Being," should be acknowledged accordingly. The Relation he stands in to us, and that Kindness in which he is constantly passing before us, proclaim, that He is "worthy to be praised."

Moreover,

Some sensible Expression of reasonable Joy, and religious Gratitude, is necessary for our selves; to preserve alive in us a Sense of our Obligations and Dependance. There must be a sensible Manifestation of God's Favour to us, in order to our apprehending that he is favourable to us. And then our Thoughts are such fleeting Things, that we cannot fix or retain them, but by the help of something sensible; Words or Monuments, & Tokens significant. So in order to our retaining in our Minds, a Sense of God's Goodness, and promoting our inward Gratitude; it is necessary that we use some outward Expressions of our Thankfulness: "That we draw nigh unto God with our Mouths, and honour him with our Lips;" tho' this is by no Means acceptable to God, where the Heart is far from him; yet it is necessary to accompany, and express the Actings of a Heart right with God, and enlarged in Gratitude to Him.

Once more,

GOD has directed us thus to express our Gratitude, and celebrate his Praise; and we have many Examples of it in the faithful Servants of God of old, *Psal.* 92. *begin.* "It is a good Thing to give Thanks unto the Lord, and to sing Praises unto thy Name, O most High; to shew forth thy loving Kindness in the Morning, and thy Faithfulness every Night." *1 Thef.* 5. 18. "In every thing give Thanks, for this is the Will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

The Psalmist resolves for himself, "I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live; I will sing Praise unto my God, while I have my Being", *Psal.* 104. 33.

And as the common Mercies which we daily receive, demand our daily Tributes of Praise; so special Favours demand special Returns: And we have many Examples of such Returns recorded in the sacred History. The Interposition of divine Providence in their Behalf, has by the Servants of God, been acknowledged with joyful Praise, particularly, and to our present Purpose, Instances of Success against Enemies.

When *Abraham* returned from the Slaughter of *Chedorlaomer*, and the Kings that were with him, *Melchisedec*, King of *Salem*, and Priest of the most high GOD, met him, and congratulated him, on his Success, as it was a Token of God's Favour to him, and blesses God for such Favour, *Gen.* 15. 18, 19, 20.—"He brought forth Bread and Wine," partly, 'tis probable, to offer as an Acknowledgement to God, and partly to partake of Themselves while they were rejoicing in the divine Bounty: And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be *Abram*

of

of the most high God, Possessor of Heaven and Earth ; and blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine Enemies into thy Hand. "

So *Moses*, and the People of *Israel*, did celebrate God's Glory in a Song, upon the Overthrow of *Pharaoh* and his Host, *Exod. 15.* So *Deborah* and *Barak* upon the Victory obtained over *Sisera*, Captain of the Host of *Jabin* ; " Praised God, for the avenging of *Israel*, *Judg. 5.*

And thus with a religious Joy, *Jehoshaphat* and *Judah* rejoyce in the Success God granted them against the united Forces of *Moab*, *Ammon* and *Edom*, *2 Chron. 20:26,27,28.* " And on the fourth Day they assembled themselves in the Valley of *Barachah* ; for there they blessed the Lord ; therefore the Name of the same Place, was called the Valley of *Barachah*. i. e. of Blessing, unto this Day. Then they returned every Man of *Judah*, and *Jerusalem*, and *Jehoshaphat* in the Fore-front of them, to go again to *Jerusalem* with Joy : For the Lord had made them to rejoyce over their Enemies: And they came to *Jerusalem* with Psalteries, and Harps, and Trumpets, unto the House of the Lord. "

From all which it must appear to be but a reasonable Service, a Thing fitting and suitable, to acknowledge the Favour of Heaven, particularly any special Instances of it, by the Expressions of Joy and Thanksgiving.

It remains to be considered,

III. That such Thankfulness to GOD should be attended with Charity to our Fellow-Men ; and it should be our Concern, that all may share in the Gladness, and be able to join with us in the grateful Exercise. So

So it was ordained by the noble Jew, and recommended by the Authority of his Royal Niece, That those Days they were to celebrate, should be made, not only "Days of Feasting and Joy" for themselves; but also "of sending Portions one to another: and Gifts to the Poor."

The Happiness of a generous Mind is enlarged, by how many the more partake with him in the Felicity; and nothing can more gladden his Soul, than to have "the Blessing of those that are ready to perish come upon him," and to have it in his Power to make "the Widow's Heart to sing for Joy."

Thus speaks a great Master of Thought & Language,

"Nature in Zeal for humane Amity,

"Denies or damps an undivided Joy:

"Joy is an Import; Joy is an Exchange,

"Joy flies Monopolist: It calls for two.

"Rich Fruit! Heaven planted! never pluck'd
"by one,"

YOUNG.

He must be sordid to a great Degree, who can best enjoy himself "eating his Morfel alone, or has a Disposition to engross Felicity. Who among us could have had half the Pleasure in the agreeable Intelligence we lately received, had he been confined to a Desert, and seen no Person since to whom to impart the Joy; or to join with, in mutual Gladness."

"Iron sharpneth Iron," says *Solomon*, *Prov. 27. 17.*
"So a Man sharpneth the Countenance of his Friend." He is hereby quickned in the Performance of any Duty, or in the Enjoyment of any Happiness; to perform the one with greater Vigour,

A Thanksgiving SERMON. 19

gour, and to enjoy the other with the greater
Chearfulness and Satisfaction. One Man is no
Body," says another ancient Proverb. "Society
"sharpens Mens Looks, and by cheering the Spi-
"rits. puts a Briskness, and Liveliness into the
"Countenance, and gives a Man such an Air as
"shews he is pleased himself; and makes him
"pleasing to those about him."† This Fondness
for Society planted in some Measure in our Make,
was no Doubt designed for valuable Purposes;
and may be capable of various Improvement:
and a very suitable Improvement we may make
of it, is to advance Happiness among our Fellow-
Mortals, and make it as diffusive as possible. And
this we should, in some Measure attempt upon
such Occasions as the present: By ministering to
the Wants of the Necessitous, and contributing some-
thing to gladden their Hearts at such a Season of
public Rejoycing. This is the Direction of *Nehe-
miah* on a joyful Occasion, *Neh. 8. 10.*— "Eat the
Fat, and drink the Sweet, and send Portions unto
them, for whom nothing is prepared." Surely, he
is very unworthy the Favour he enjoys, who can
indulge himself in a rich Variety, a splendid Afflu-
ence; and have no Commiseration for a Number
around him, who he knows are unprovided of that
which HE would think necessary Sustenance: He
is a Stranger to that divine Image he should
copy after, the Image of that GOD, "whose
tender Mercies are over all his Works." The
rich Man cloathed in Purple, and fine Linnen,
and who fared sumptuously every Day, must be
a Stranger to true Happiness, and void of all great-
ness of Soul, that he could neglect *Lazarus*, who
lay

† Mr. Henry.

lay forlorn at his Gate, desiring to be fed with the Crumbs that fell from his Table. Reason dictates, and Religion enjoins, a better Temper and Conduct; a Temper of Benevolence, and an Endeavour "to do Good unto all Men, according to Opportunity." They recommend that Charity, which "seeketh not her own;" and which disposeth Men to look "not only at their own Things, but also to have some Respect to the Things of others." This would animate our Desires, that all around us might share with us in the Blessings of divine Goodness; and that others, as well as our selves, might be able to express in a significant Manner, their Sense of the divine Goodness, and celebrate the Display of God's Perfections.

And that such Charity to our Fellow-Men should accompany, and partly express our Gratitude to God, may appear from the Consideration of God's Expectations from us.

The Servant who owed his Lord ten Thousand Talents, upon his humble Remonstrance and Request, was "frankly forgiven the Debt", till he forfeited the Favour by his Severity toward a Fellow Servant, who owed him an hundred Pence: Which Treatment of his Fellow-Servant, is highly resented by their common Lord; *Mat. 18. 23, &c.*

This is "the FAST God hath chosen," and surely a FEAST cannot imply less of this Nature in it—"It is to deal thy Bread to the Hungry, and that thou bring the Poor that are cast out into thy House: When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thy self from thine own Flesh." *Isai. 58. 7.* Thus to impart of the Fruit of God's Bounty, on such Occasions of Joy, is of ancient standing: So when *David* obtained

a compleat Victory over the *Amalekites*, after they had burnt *Ziklag* with Fire. "He sent of the Spoil unto the Elders of *Judah*, even to his Friends, saying, "Behold a Present for you of the Spoil of the Enemies of the Lord." The Sacrifice of Thanksgiving is well pleasing unto the Lord, if it be bro't with a proper Mind: but as all our Things, so this in particular, should "be done with Charity, that Charity, which is evidenced by Acts of Kindness & Benevolence. But enough has been offered in Illustration of our Subject. I shall now attempt some

I M P R O V E M E N T.

From what we have heard, we may infer, There is Room for Hope, even in the darkest Day, and under the most doubtful Circumstances of the present State. For Sorrow may speedily be turned into Joy, and a Day of Mourning, into a good Day; and that by Means unforeseen, and in a Manner unexpected by short-sighted Mortals. We have taken Notice of various Instances, wherein People have been delivered altogether beyond their Expectations, and even when to human View, their Case has appeared desperate. These Instances may serve to convince us, that there are no Circumstances that are really desperate. Light may arise out of Darknes, and Obscurity it self, be changed to Noon Day.

We may also learn, Where our Hope is to be placed at such Times. It is God, we have heard, who makes the Alteration, and is the Author of the happy Change: He formed the Light, and created Darknes: He is the great Disposer of E-

vents, and the Governor of Futurity, and "doeth his Pleasure in all Places of his Dominion." Wherefore our Hope must be placed in God. "When Refuge faileth, when no Man careth for our Soul;" Even then, we may hope in God: He is above all Men: He is above all Means. He is great in Power, and none of his Purposes shall fail. If therefore the Lord be for us, 'tis no Matter who is against us; but if God be not for us, universal Nature cannot protect us: That our Hope & Trust should be in God; and if we would hope in God with any Degree of Confidence, we must do it in a Way of Humility and Obedience, with an humble and penitent Sense of our Sinfulness and Unworthiness; a due Respect to the Favour of God revealed to Man, in and thro' his Son Jesus Christ; and with a Resolution to exert our selves to the utmost in our Observance of the Will of God, "being not without Law to God, but under the Law to Christ."

"Trust in the Lord, and do Good, so shalt thou dwell in the Land, and verily thou shalt be fed." "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the Good of the Land" &c. We may here observe, What Characters may hope in God. Tho' there are no Circumstances of Darkness & Unhappiness, that are sufficient Ground for our Despair; yet there are Characters which entirely cut off from all Hope; and 'tis Presumption in *them* to expect God's Favour: Such as are habitual and resolved Sinners, have no Reason to hope for God's Mercy, while they so continue: For "there is no Peace, saith God, to the Wicked."

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We may conclude, The Evil of Ingratitude. We have observed, and I trust, it is sufficiently apparent, that Instances, special Instances of God's Favour, in particular, are to be acknowledged with Gratitude: They may well inspire us with a reasonable and religious Joy.

But there are, the *Unthankful*, and they may be justly numbered among the *Evil*.

Even the Light of Nature condemns Ingratitude, and it is termed inexcusable in Heathens. So the Apostle in the 1st of *Romans*, speaking of the Gentile World; and the Knowledge they had from the Testimony of natural Things, concludes, "Therefore they are without Excuse, because that when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, *Neither were Thankful.*"

And certainly, if *their* Unthankfulness was inexcusable, *Our's* must be much more so; who are much more privileged than they were: If we despise or neglect the Instances of God's Goodness, we shall greatly provoke Him; and may expect He will hereafter, not do us Good but Evil.

Wherefore, Let us be excited to Thankfulness for all the Favours of God, with which we are indulged; in particular, for those public Mercies, which we this Day celebrate. Since it is "the Will of God in Christ Jesus concerning us," That "in every Thing we give Thanks;" * By Him, let us offer the Sacrifice of Praise to God continually, that is, the Fruit of our Lips, giving Thanks to his Name.† Various are the Instances of divine Goodness to us, which may justly contribute to the Enhancement of our Joy. Tho' such as we are not particularly called upon to celebrate this Day.

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* 1 Thef. 5. 18. † Heb. 13. 15.

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The general Health which we have been favoured with at Home; and which has been granted to our Troops: The Enjoyment of our Privileges, Civil and Sacred, may serve to raise our Notes of Praise: The Season of the Year, and the Remarkable Smiles of Heaven upon us, and the "Goodness with which God hath crowned the Year;" invite us to "Rejoyce, with the Joy of Harvest."

Would you know the Worth of this Blessing? Pass over in your Minds to the Villages of *Canada*! Behold! how the Husbandman, while providing for the Sustainance of himself & Babes, has "stood in Jeopardy every Hour; and how their Labour has been cut off by our Soldiery! And that Threatning has been executed upon them; "Ye shall sow a Field, & another shall eat the Fruit thereof." Behold them under the discouraging Prospects of a severe Winter, without Sufficiency to support them through it, or any Prospect of a Supply! And if we are not blind indeed; we must see it to be a great Favour of God to us, that we have been able to sow and reap in Quiet; and that God has been pleased to crown our Labour with Success, in "Crowning the Year with his Goodness." But the Success of his Majesty's Arms, calls for our special Notice at this Time.

"O give Thanks to the Lord, for he is good, For his Mercy endureth for ever:" To Him, who hath smiled upon the Protestant Cause in *Europe*, "For his Mercy endureth for ever:" To Him, who hath redeemed us from our Enemies; "For his Mercy endureth for ever:" And hath given their Land for an Heritage: "For his Mercy endureth for
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for ever." Even an Heritage to his *British* Israel;
"For his Mercy endureth for ever." But let our
Joy be under a suitable Regulation.

1. Let it be attended with Humility. Sure-
ly, it must blunt the keen Edge of Joy, to con-
sider the Price of our Conquests. If it was no
more than the Distress, and the Blood of our Enc-
mies, it must affect a Mind not divested of Huma-
nity. The generous Mind is touched with a ten-
der Pity towards the most inveterate Enemy, con-
sidered as the Workmanship of the same divine
Hand, when in Circumstances of Distress.

Benevolent Minds are " touch'd with gen'rous Woe,
And in the unhappy Man forget the Foe."

The Distress which ever accompanies Scenes
of War, are such as must fill the Breast, even of the
brave Soldier, with some Regret: As is elegantly
expressed by a great Master of English Poetry, ce-
brating the Victory of the famed Duke of *Marlbo-*
rough, over the united Force of the *French* and *Ba-*
varians: Introducing the Duke as taking the Field,
and extending his Conquests; he speaks,

" In Vengeance rous'd, the Soldier fills his Hand,
" With Sword, and Fire, and ravages the Land.
" A Thousand Villages to Ashes turns,
" In crackling Flames, a Thousand Harvests burns.
" To the thick Woods, the woolly Flocks retreat,
" And mix't with bellowing Herds, confus'dly bleat.
" There trembling Lords the common Shade partake,
" And Cries of Infants found in every Brake.
" The listening Soldier, fix'd in Horror stands,
" Loth to obey his Leader's just Commands:
" The Leader grieves, by generous Pity sway'd,
" To see his just Commands so well obey'd." ||

But

But we have suffered great Loss our selves for this Gain; a worthy, and a valiant General, who in this distant Land has appeared as zealous, active, bold and intrepid, as though the Cause was his own, or that in which he was personally and very deeply interested.— When *Abner* fell Slain by the baseness of *Joab*, *David* is deeply affected with it, even on a joyful Day. “ Know ye not, says he, that there is a Prince, and a great Man, fallen this Day in *Israel*, and I am *this Day* weak, *though appointed KING.*” So we, tho’ we have gotten the Victory, and this Day rejoyce in our Acquisition, can do no less than drop a Tear over the Urn of our great Commander, and the many valiant Men besides, who fell in the Cause. Moreover,

2. Let our Joy be modest. In the religious Exercises of this Day, whether public or private, let us be sincere; let us be upright: And let the Mirth we may indulge, be civil and rational.

Men are prone to run into Extravagancies upon such Occasions: And such, I conceive, is commonly the Case, in the tumultuous Joy, with which Victories are celebrated. And ’tis melancholly to reflect upon it, “ That Men should take Notice of public Mercies in such a Manner as to affront the great Author of them. Thus the Jews at length got to abuse the Feast of *Purim*, ordained in our Text, after the religious Service in their Synagogues. “ It is observed, they have done with Religion and Piety, and spent the two Days, in Idleness, eating and drinking.”

They say in their Books. “ Their Rest is kept “ so sacredly, that they will not so much as set or “ sow any Thing in their Gardens in these Days,
“ but

“ but play at Chess, and such like Games, or spend
“ the Time in Musick and Dancing, till it be
“ Time to Feast ; and then, they indulge them-
“ selves so far, that they think it not unlawful to
“ drink so much as not to be able to distinguish
“ between the Blessing of *Mordicai*, and the Curse
“ of *Haman* : Insomuch that Primate *Usher* calls
“ this Feast, the Bacchanals of the Jews. †

Let us watch against every Thing which
reflects so much Dishonour upon human Nature,
and so utterly inconsistent with the Christian
Character.

3. Let all our Things be done with Charity.
Let us express a Sense of God's Bounty to us, by
imparting of our Share, in the Fruits of that Boun-
ty, to those that are Neecessitous : “ To do Good
and to Communicate, let us not forget, for with
such Sacrifices, God is well pleased.”

To conclude, Let us evidence the Sincerity of
our Gratitude this Day, by the Chearfulness and
Constancy of our future Obedience : Then only
may we expect God's further Smiles upon us. *Exod.*
19.3,4,5. “ Thus shalt thou say to the House of *Jacob*,
and tell the House of *Israel* ; Ye have seen what
I did unto the *Egyptians*, and how I bare you on
Eagles Wings ; and brought you unto my self :
Now therefore, if ye will obey my Voice indeed,
and keep my Covenant ; then ye shall be a pecu-
liar Treasure unto me, above all People ? for all
the Earth is mine.”

Let us be sensible, and express our Sense, not
only of Obligations for past Mercies ; but our De-
pendance

† Bp *Patrick's* Comment. on *Esth.* ix.

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pendance for future Favours : and to our Praises this Day, add our Prayers to God, for his Favour to our Land; his Blessing upon our Nation, and the whole Protestant Interest; that he would "Remember us with the Favour he beareth to his People, and visit us with his Salvation; grant unto us, that we may see the Good of his Chosen, and rejoyce in the Gladness of his Nation, and glory with his Inheritance."

And that the happy Times, we are encouraged to expect, may be hastened, when the "Strivings of the People, and the Tumults of the Nations, shall be at an End: When the Envy of *Ephraim* shall depart, and the Adversaries of *Judah* shall be cut off: When *Ephraim* shall no more envy *Judah*, nor *Judah* vex *Ephraim*." When "Wars shall cease to the Ends of the Earth." The People shall all be Righteous, and inherit the Land for ever.

And the good Lord prepare all of us, and our's, for the various Vicissitudes of Time; for the Times that may pass over us, and our Posterity, till "the God of Heaven shall set up a Kingdom, which shall never be destroyed;" "When the Captain of our Salvation shall triumph over all Opposition; and all his Enemies shall be put under his Feet: When upon Mount Zion shall be Deliverance; and there shall be Holiness; and the House of *Jacob* shall possess their Possessions: And Saviours shall come upon Mount Zion, to judge the Mount of *Esau*. **AND THE KINGDOMS SHALL BE THE LORD'S.** †

F I N I S.

† Obadiah ult.

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