A Peace-Offering to God
A
SERMON
Preached to the Honourable House
of Commons assembled in
PARLIAMENT,
At their publique Thanksgiving,
September 7. 1641. 4
For the PEACE concluded between
ENGLAND and SCOTLAND.

By STEPHEN MARSHALL, Batchelour
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Psalm 147.
Praise the Lord O Jerusalem, praise thy God O Sion: for he hath
strengthened the Bars of thy Gates, and blessed thy children
within thee, He maketh Peace in thy Borders.

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in St. Pauls Church-yard, at the signe
of the Swan. 1641.
TO THE HONORABLE
House of Commons assembled
in Parliament.

The mercies which God hath shewed to
these two Nations of England and Scot-
land, giving us such great cause and
matter of Thanksgiving, causing our
sheafe to arise and stand upright, mak-
ing us with Saul higher by the shoulders then all
our brethren; these mercies (I say) deserve so to be
recorded, that posterity should be compelled to read
and admire them: but who is sufficient for this thing?
It was said of Claudian, that he wanted matter suita-
able to the excellency of his wit: but where is the
head or heart suitable to this matter? Who can utter
these mighty works of the Lord who can shew forth all his
praise? For my own part had I put myself upon this
work to utter these mean conceptions upon this great
subject before so great and honorable Audience, I
might justly have been condemned for abusing both
the one and the other. But you were pleased to com-
mand my service in preaching on the day of your
publique and solemn Thanksgiving; it may be be-
cause I was then neer at hand, and after your Reuerent
attention had testified that you received them as the
countell of God, you were further pleased expressly
to desire me forthwith to print and publish what in
my weaknesse I then delivered; I suppose for the bet-
ter memoriall of these great deliverances; I could

Psal. 106.
2.
have pleaded much, why these poor notes should not be exposed to publike view; Treatises to be read by all, should be long meditated, often reviewed: Excellent pictures should be engraven in brasse; and not cast in clay: the setting forth these mercies, and quickning up answerable Thankfulness are above the Abilities of any man, much more beyond the capacity of my self, the weakest and unworthiest of many thousands; But your Order left me not at liberty to do what I desired, you have thus made them your own, the more facile I shall hope to finde you, and all Ingenious Readers towards my weaknesses, which not presumption but my obedience hath made thus publique. This further encouragement I have, little things have been accepted with God and man in testimonial of Thankfulness; a female, a Turtle, a handful of wheat-floure by God himself, a handful of water, a bunch of grapes, &c. by great Kings and Emperours. And even under this Notion also I humbly present you with this enluing discourse.

I have no more to say for myself, but much I have to beg of God, that you (Noble Senatours) and the Right Honorable Lords, who joyned with you in this peace-offering, may wholly consecrate your selves to advance his glory who hath done these great things for us all, that your faithfull endeavours to do what is behind, joyning with your Thankfulness for what is past, the event may be answerable to your desires, even the glory of God, and the good and safety both of Church and Common-wealth, which is the daily prayer of

Your devoted servant

A SERMON PREACHED
before the Honorable House of Commons
at their publike Thanksgiving.

The Preface to the SERMON

Right Honorable and beloved, It was a priviledge and mercie which the Lord promised by the Prophet Isaiah, That they should reioyce with Jerusalem who had mourned with her. This mercie the Lord hath in great degree vouchsafed to my self this day: the same good hand that cast it to be my lot (though most unfit and unworthie) to help this Honorable Assemblie in the day of their humiliation, to dig pits in the valley of Bachah, hath now desined me to sing with them in the valley of Berochah. That after I had helped to carry out their precious seed with teares, I should come with joy and help to gather in their sheaves, that after our Lamentations we should together sing Canticles and Hallelualiahs unto our God. Thus the Lord in mercie mingles rain and sunshine. Oh that we had hearts suitable to all his administrations!
The duty of this day, is to rejoyce, and to give praises unto God, a service easier to the flesh, than that of fasting and mourning, but harder to the spirituall part. In a day of humiliation even wicked men have affections stirring in them, consciousnesse of evill, guiltiness of minde, sense of wrath, astonishing and oppressing feares arising from the apprehension of neare and unavoidable danger, are naturall meanes to make euen Pharaohs, Ahabs, and Ninevites mourne and humble themselves before God: But in keeping a day of spirituall rejoicing unto God, little or no help is to be expected from the flesh, and that is one reason, why commonly dayes of thanksgiving are translated with much lesse affection, life, and savour then dayes of humiliation. You should therefore have chosen Asaphs Ieduthuns, and Hemans who might skilfully have helped you to lift up the praises of God: but its now no time to complaine of your choice, neither will it be needfull, if the Lord please to be present, who can make the tongue of the dumbe to sing, and can ordain his praise out of the mouthes of babes and sucklings: trusting therefore his assistance, I beseech you attend to his holy Word, as you shall finde it written.

Blessed
Psalm 124, verse 6, 7, 8.

Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth. Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowler, the snare is broken, and we are escaped. Our help is in the Name of the Lord: who made heaven and earth.

Studied to have found out a Text which might every way have been suitable with the mercies which this day we are to celebrate, but I confess I could not do it, and I do greatly question, whether God ever did such a thing for matter and manner, as he hath now done for these two unworthy Nations. This Text which I have chosen comes very near in the matter and way of our deliverance, very home to the duty which this day we are to performe.

The Psalm is stiled a Song of degrees, a title peculiar to fifteen short Psalms set downe together, whether they bee so called because they were to bee sung with an exalted voice, or because they were to be sung upon the staires of the Temple where the Singers were to stand, or whether for the supereminency of the matter contained in them, (they being so full of short, grave, and pithy sentences, all tending to exalt the praises of God) I know not. In this
all Interpreters agree, that for this third and last reason they all deserve to be called Songs of degrees; and therefore any sentence of them will deserve and call for the highest degree of our reverend attention to the unfolding of it. This Psalm (and three or four other of these Songs of degrees) was unquestionably penned by King David, who therefore counted himself the man raised up on high, because he was the anointed of the Lord, and the sweet singer of Israel, esteeming it a greater mercy that the Spirit of God spake by him, then that the Nations were subdued under him: But upon what occasion he penned it, whether historically, speaking of what was already done, or prophetically, foretelling deliverances to come, (either that out of Babylon, or that from Antiochus Epiphanes) Interpreters agree not, but we need not trouble our selves about it, because (whenever the particular storie fell out) without question the Spirit of God intended it to suite the like condition of the Church in all ages: so that even we enjoying the same mercie, and called to performe the same duty, may say for our sakes: no doubt this Psalm was written.

The matter whereof is that, which David usually calls a new song, even praise to our God, yea the most pleasant and comely praise, recording his dealing to his peculiar people, to his own inheritance in such mercies which he dispenses not to other Nations; and may all be reduced to these two heads.

First, an Antecedent or a doctrine. Secondly, a Consequent or the use of that doctrine. The Antecedent or doctrinal part is laid down and explained in the five first verses, the summe whereof is, that God, and
God alone is on his peoples side to deliver them in all
their most deadly and desperate dangers. The Con-
sequent or use of this doctrine is laid down in these
three verses which I have read. Blessed be the Lord,
&c. And it contains 2. branches. 1. Therefore his
people praise him, because he is on his peoples side,
ver. 6. 7. 2. Therefore his people will trust in this migh-
tie God, who is always their help in the time of trouble,
ver. 8.

The first branch or the use of thanksgiving, I have
chosen to speak of this day, wherein (for the more
quickning of their souls to praise God) the Prophet
first repeats and illustrates the danger they were in
before deliverance came; and secondly, the author,
time, manner, and way of their deliverance: and then
thirdly, celebrates this mercy in his return of praises,
Blessed be the Lord, &c. The danger they were in, is in
this verse, and elsewhere in the Psalme set out by 3.
sorts of comparisons, all expressing the strength, ma-
lice, and rage of their enemies, and their own near-
ness to be ruined and destroyed by them. First, they
are compared to men, strong men, proud men, wrath-
full men, whose rage was kindled, cunning men, sub-
till men, unwearable men, like men that go about
to set nets and snares to catch birds, entangling them
before they are aware. Secondly, they are compa-
red to wilde beasts, that go roving and roaring about
to catch their prey, whom there is no pacifying,
they had almost swallowed us up quicke, A prey to their
teeth. Thirdly, they are compared to the most ma-
sterfull and merciless creatures of fire and water, their
wrath was kindled against us, the proud waters had
almost swallowed us. So that look, what potent,

B 2 cruel.
A Sermon at the late Thanksgiving

Introduction.

cruell, cunning men can do; look what ravenous 
wilde beasts, Lions, Tigers, Beares, Dragons, &c. 
are able to do; look what fire and water, raging fire, 
and proud water, look what all these are able to do, 
and then you may judge what the Churches Danger 
was before Deliverance came.

Secondly, The deliverance, the author, time, and 
manner of it, we have expressed in these words, God 
hath not given us a prey to their teeth, our soul is escaped 
as a bird out of the snare, the snare is broken, and we are 
delivered. Then lastly follows the return of their 
praises for Gods needfull helpe in the time of 
trouble.

The 2. first branches, their danger and deliverance 
I shall but briefly touch, taking them in, onely as a 
foundation or groundhill, wherupon the building of 
thanksgiving (which we are this day to reare up) 
may the more firmly and conspicuously stand.

Their danger from these enemies thus described, 
teaches us among what neighbours Gods people live in 
this world, and what they are to expect from them. What 
ever the Lions paw or Foxes skin, open force and se-
cret cunning is able to bring to passe, they must con-
tinually look to be put in practise against them, thus 
it ever hath been, thus it ever shall be till Christ have 
subdued all their enemies under their feet.

The Jews when they dwelt in their own land of 
Canaan were thus compassed, on the East they had 
the Moabites, Ammonites, Assyrians, and Caldeans, on 
the West the Philistines, on the North the Syrians, on 
the South the Arabians and Egyptians, and these 
were all alike maliciously bent against them, and 
when ever God let any of them loose, they presently 
executed
executed all that their wrath, strength, and policie could bring to passe against them. And just so hath it been with the Church of Christ ever since, they dwell among men that are set on fire, even the sons of men, whose teeth are speares and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword. They are hated, and persecuted of all men, so that what Paul said of his own case, the whole Church may say of hers, I know not the things that shall betide me, save that the holy Ghost witnesseth in every Citie that bonds and afflictions abide me.

And would you know the cause of it, It comes partly from the condition and qualitie of Gods people in this world, their lives and conversations are contrary to other men, they dare not runne with them to the same excess of sin, this their neighbours think strange of, and this their holy life gives checke to others, and armes their consciences against them, and therefore they hate them. This you shall see in Revel. 11. 10. to be the cause why all the inhabitants of the earth were so mad against the two witnesses, (that is) the small number of them that bore witness to Christs truth, in the time of Antichrists apostasie, because these two witnesses tormented them that dwelt upon the earth, and partly the outward condition of Gods people is most what meane and contemptible; they have indeed glorious things, but these are hidden from the eyes of the world, their out-side appeares as their Saviours did when he conversed here upon earth without forme or comelinesse, there was no beautie why they should desire him. They have little countenance from men, few of them are wise, noble, or mighty, but they are the foolish, weake, and base ones of the world. Now low stiles are easily troden down, every
every hawke dare flie at pigeon, any wilde beast run at a silly lambe.

2. And partly it comes from that inveterate hatred and enmity which God hath put betwixt the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman, from which enmitie it comes to passe, that the wicked can no more cease to persecute the righteous, then the troubled Sea can cease from casting up mire and dirt.

3. And partly from the devill, who as he reignes in all the children of disobedience, so wher-ever he is, he makes it his great work to make warre with the woman and her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimonie of Jesus Christ. Persecuting men often die, often have been reconciled: persecuting Kings and Princes have become nursing Fathers and nursing Mothers, but Satan never turnses Christian. Non semper saeviunt Nerones, sed nunquam cessat diabolus. The devill ever goes about like a roaring Lion seeking to devour them.

4. Yea God himself hath ordered it to be so for his own glory, because he delightes to rule amongst his enemies, and to make the wrath of man to turn to his praise, that he may shew his wisedome, power, and love in preserving his Lillie among the thornes, and to keep his bush (though burning) from consuming.

Many are the uses which this lesson might teach us, I shall onely name these two as most agreeable to our present businesse. First, to admire, adore, and praise the wisedome, goodness, power, and care of God in the protection and preservation of his Church and people in the midst of so many and mighty malicious and impetuous adversaries. We are prone to wonder why Gods people walking so innocently
innocently and inoffensively should meet with so much hard usage, but alas could we read what is in the heart and purpose of all our ill neighbours, we should rather wonder that there is one godly man left in the world: In stead of thinking it strange concerning their fiery trials, (as though some strange thing happened unto them) we should with thankfull hearts daily sing this Psalme, were not the Lord himself on our side, we should instantly be swallowed up quick, the waters would overwhelm us, the proud waters would go even over our soul.

Secondly, this may teach us all never to be secure, if we have escaped one danger, if we be come out of six troubles, and the seventh hath not been able to hurt us, if whole armies of our enemies be overthrowne, let us not hang up our armour upon the wall, grow not careless because the rod of him that smote us is broken, for out of the Serpents root will come forth a Cockatrice, and the fruit will be a fiery flying Serpent. God hath lately done great things for these two unworthy Nations, great enemies are quelled, great yokes are broken, blessed be his Name for it: but our enemies are not all dead, our adversary the devill who rules in all the children of disobedience, compasseth the earth, and goes about like a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may devour. Be sober therefore and watchfull, and keep on the whole armour of God, that we may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand.

But though there be cause of watchfulness, yet you will see there is no cause of distrustfull fear by that time I have briefly opened the next branch which is the author, manner, and way of their deliverance. God hath
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The Churches deliverance. hath not given us a prey to their teeth, &c. (Where among many considerable things) I shall only commend to you these 2. observations.

First, That they were not made a prey, because God would not give them as a prey to their teeth.

Secondly, when they were as birds caught in the net and snared, God chose that for his time to break their snares asunder.

1. Doth not spoil of the Church, till God give her to be a spoil.

The first affords us this comfortable lesson. That how potent soever, how cunning or malicious soever, the enemies of God's Church are, how great, imminent, or unavoidable the dangers of God's people are, yet they never can be made a prey, unless God will give them for a prey. All things seeme to meet that might make them a prey, yet because God would not give them to be a prey, therefore they were not made a prey.

This is abundantly proved out of the Scripture, when ever God told his people they should be spoiled, it was added, he would deliver them up: When at any time they were spoiled, God is said to spoil them.

Ged 4.2. God fold his people into the hand of Jabin King of Canaan. The Lord delivered them into the hand of Midian. God fold his people for nought, he made them a reproach, a scorn, and derision, he made them turn their backs from their enemie. So likewise when they desired deliverance from their enemies, they used to beg in these termes, that God would not deliver the soul of his turtle unto the multitude of their enemies, accounting all to depend upon God's act, if God refused to deliver up his turtle, they feared none others catching or looting his turtle.

Most remarkable is that place in Deut. 32. 30. The Lord did there in that song tell the people what would
of the Commons house of Parliament.

would beside them for their rebellion afterward, they should be scattered into corners, and be made a spoil to all their enemies round about them, in so much that two or three of their enemies should chase a thousand of them, and a handful of their enemies should put ten thousand of them to flight. Now whereas they might object and say, Is this according to thy promise, that thou madest in the 26. Levit. That thy people should chase their enemies, that five of them should chase an hundred, and an hundred of them should put ten thousand to flight, how comes it then, that one should chase a thousand of thy people? Mark what answer God makes them in that 30. verse. This could never have been, unless their Rock had sold them, and the Lord had shut them up. If God say to one, Spoile them, shut them up, it is done presently. If God will not do it, all the world cannot do it.

And the ground of it is plain, because God not only is a wall of fire about them, keeps a watchfull eye upon them, carries them under his wings, and in his bosome, but even all creatures, all things which might hurt them, all their enemies who would hurt them, have such a dependance upon God, that (not only in him they live, and move, and have their being, but) all their motions and operations are but as Tools in Gods hands. That although they seem to work from principles of their own, yet the truth is, they are but meerly as the ax and the sawe in the hand of God who useth them. This the Scripture speaks an hundred times. The great King of Assyria was but the rod of Gods anger, though his heart thought not so. And when he thought to do more against Gods people then God intended, God told him the Ax did but boast.

Levit. 26, 7, 8.

And Reason.
1. Their interest in God.
2. Their enemies dependence upon God, being onely his instruments.

Isa. 10, 5.

Ver. 15.
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boast itself against him that heaved with it, and he sawe magnified itself against him that shaked it, and the staffe lifted up itself as if it forgot itself to be a piece of wood.

And it must needs be so, else God were not onely and wholly to be trusted in, nor onely and wholly to be sought and prayed to, and consequently not onely and wholly to be acknowledged as God: Could any hurt his servants against his will, his servants must fear some others besides him, finde out any creature reasonable or unreasonable, Angels or devils, good or bad, who do or can do any thing otherwise then as second causes which are wholly carried by the first cause, and for my part I should acknowledge a Deitie in it, the creature should pant for a God, and Gods absolute soveraigntie would be denied. Whereas the Scripture teaches us that not onely the hearts and wayes of ordinary men, but even the hearts of Kings which are most soveraigne and independant, and lots which are most casuall, are all disposed of by God, who works all in all. I note this for these two ends. First, to teach all that are in covenant with God in all the evils that betide them, to look further then the rod that smites them. Some cunning enemy undermines thy peace; some soule mouth reproaches thy good name, some powerfull and malicious enemies spoil thy cattell, some fire burns up thy sheep and servants, some winde from the wildernesse smites the fourie corners of thy house, and makes it fall upon thy children, some devil afflicteth thy body with sore boyles, and thy soul with invenomed arrows. What shouldst thou now do contend with the instrument bite the stone (like a dog) that stroue thee? Oh no! Remember Shimei could never curse David till God bade him. Asbur could
could never smite Israel till God used him as a staffe in his own hand. Satan could touch nothing that Job had, till God delivered it into his hand. No not enter into an herd of swine till Christ sent him. Look not therefore to the creature, but with Job acknowledge it is God's hand only. The not having learned this lesson, is the cause of most of that sinfulness that is found in our ill bearing of crosses, and makes us exceedingly wrong the creature, ourselves, and our God most of all.

1. We wrong the creature, which is but God's instrument in over-fearing it, or over-grieving it; as if our weale or wo did come from it and so make an Idol of it, attributing somewhat to the creature which is peculiar to God.

Secondly, we wrong ourselves, for (beside a great deal of lost care, and grieve, and pains which increaseth our sinne, and sorrow in fretting at the Instrument, and gnawing the chain which tyes us, in knocking at a wrong doore, seeking help where it cannot be had) we lose the good which God intends; God never sends a cross, but it is upon some arr and for our good. God's rod alwayes hath a voice. Hear the Rod and who hath appointed it. Now would we hear God speaking by his rod, lie down at his foot, and say with Job, Shew me why thou contentest with me, we should then finde, that God's correction would seal our instruction, to try us, to withdraw us from some sinfull way, and to keep back our soul from the pit which by not looking at God's hand we deprive ourselves of.

Thirdly, we wrong God most of all, when with our sinfull communicating to the creature a great part
part of that griefe, care, fear, desire, &c. which should be onely bestowed upon him, we do also hereby deny his providence, as if there could be any evil in the City, which the Lord hath not done.

Secondly, since we never can be a prey till God will give us to be a prey, keep in with God, and you are safe enough; none shall arrest you, till God's hand be to the warrant. We observe, since the beginning of the Parliament, many walk confidently abroad in the very face of Creditours, Bayliffes, and Sergeants, when they have got a lawfull Parliament Protection, who before durst not shew their heads; they know they cannot be arrested till their master puts them out of his protection. O how much more boldly may they walk who abide under the protection of the Almighty, who being called to great services for God, and endeavouring to walk faithfully in their work, may conclude that no Writ can be served on them on earth, till their masters hand have signed it in heaven. See how our blessed Saviour encouraged himself and his disciples by this argument in the 11. Joh. ver. 7. Christ told his disciples they must go again into Judea, why Master, say his disciples, the Jews of late sought to stone thee there, and goest thou thither again? Now mark Christ's answer, v. 9. Are there not twelve hours in the day, if a man walk in the day he stumbles not, because he sees the light of this world. The meaning is this; That as they who travel by day, travel in safety, so they that walk in the light of God's call in any business, walk safe from danger: go about a business without a call, and we walk as at midnight. Men that have letters of publike faith, letters of safe conduct, dare go any where through troops of
of enemies, from one end of an enemies countrey to another: Go on therefore boldly, (ye Worthies of the Lord) do his work faithfully, there shall no evil befal you, nor any plague come nigh your dwelling, a thousand shall fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand, but till God put your Name in, till God say to plague, or pox, or fever, or Traitors, or death, seize upon such a Nobleman, take such a Parliament-man, they never can touch you. And I should expect Gods delivering you in displeasure to any evil anywhere sooner, then when your hearts and hands are employed in his service.

The second observation is from the manner and time of their deliverance, God let them alone, until they were almost in the teeth of the wilde beast, until the bird was even caught in the Fowlers snare, and then he comes and snatches them as a prey from their teeth, then he breaks the Fowlers snare, and the bird escapes; And that affords us this lesson.

When Gods people are come to the greatest extremities of danger, that is the time which God chuses for their deliverance.

There are 2 branches in this lesson. First, God uses to let evils go on against the Church, till they come to extremities. Secondly, when the extremities come, then Gods help comes in. First, God lets evils run on till they come to extremity. I do not say God lets them always come to extremities, for then the Church should ever be in extremities, her enemies are always devising mischief against her: sometimes God crushes their intentions while they are in the shell: Thus Jeroboams hand withered, when he said against the Prophet, Lay hold of him. Thus the Emperor.


1 King. 13. 4.
Emperor Valens could not write when he should confirm Basil's banishment. Sometimes God meets them in the midst of their enterprise, and thus he put his bridle in the jaws, and his book in the nostrils of Sennacherib, when he was coming against Hezekiah.

But oftentimes he lets his people come into great extremity; Joseph's feet are hurt in the stocks, the iron enters into his soul. The Israelites tale of brick shall be doubled. David shall be hunted like a Patridge in the mountains. The 3. Children shall be thrown into the fiery furnace. Daniel cast into the Lions den. The Decree for rooting out of the Jews established by the Law of the Medes and Persians, before any hope of deliverance comes.

But then when extremity is come, the Lord never fails to be a help in the needful time of trouble. All the former examples prove it. Abundance of promises allure us of it. Our own experience can abundantly testify it: Yea, I think, were all the examples in the world lost of Gods helping his people at a pinch, they might be all revived in the experience of Gods dealing with this unworthy Nation, especially in these two Instances which I shall give you.

The first is, that of the Powder treason, when the neck of the whole State, the glory both of the Church and the flourishing Common-wealth lay upon the block, and the Instruments of death lifted up, and a few hours had done that which all the world could not have repaired: and our case so much the more helplesse, because all was done in the dark, we could suspect no danger. In that extremity our God sends his Angel, and delivers us from all the expectation of his enemies.
2. The other which is as remarkable, is this great mercy which we have now received, and this day come to celebrate: I speak to wise men, and therefore my words may be few, you all know our estates, our liberties, our Religion, and what ever we may call ours were in a manner irrecoverably lost through the malice and practice of wicked Instruments, and a dreadful cloud hath these two or three yeers been gathering, and hanging over our heads, continually ready to dissolve into showers of blood, the two Nations ready to imbrue their hands in each others blood, the most observing people in the Kingdom expecting nothing but certain ruine, and our neighbours round about us did conclude that we should soon be made the most desolate people in the world, help we could see none, our Prophets were growne fools, and our spiritual men mad; The Judges and Rulers who should have been our help, had many of them their hands in the means of our destruction: We were tantum non: swallowed up in confusion: And when the foundations were thus dissolved, what could the righteous do, onely with Iehoshaphat mournne before God, and acknowledge, Lord we have no help, we know not what to do, but our eyes are towards thee: and now lo, our God hath brought all about, and wrought a great deliverance as we see this day.

And would you know the grounds why it should be so, I could give you reasons enough, why God should help his people, they are his people, in covenant with him, he hath redeemed them by the blood of his Sonne, he hath promised to help them, their cause is his own, they betake themselves onely and wholly
A Sermon at the late Thanksgiving

The Church gives deliverance. To satisfy you in this, I can never give a better reason than our Lord himself gives in the 11. Joh. There you shall finde when Lazarus was very sicke, sicke almost unto death, his two sisters sent a messe-ner to Christ to tell him, Lord he whom thou lovest is sick, they thought he whom thou lovest is sick was argument enough to fetch Christ presently, but though Christ loved Lazarus, he tarried two or three days, and sent this answer, This sicknesse is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Sonne of God might be glorified thereby, as if he should say, The true cause of this great sicknesse, and my delaying to come presently, is not because Lazarus should be tormented or killed, but because Christ should be glorified. So the very cause of Gods putting off and delaying to help, and letting things come to an extremity, is not because he would have his people afflicted, and his enemies to triumph and be exalted, but it is to gain the more honour and glory to his own Name, to manifest his wisdom, power, love and goodnesse in creating deliverances for them. Such mercies as come in an ordinarie way are commonly interpreted to come from an ordinarie love, but mercies and deliverances coming in an unexpected time, in an extraordinary way and manner, in them Gods love and goodnesse is most apparently seen and acknowledged. God loved Hezekiah as well at other times, as when he sent an Angel to kill nine score thousand of his enemies at one time, in one night, and when at another time, he made the Sunne
Sunne go back ten degrees in the diall of AhaZ, making one day as long as two, in token of his deliverance. God loved the three Children as well at other times, as when he preserved them in the fiery furnace, so as the smell of fire should not be upon them. And Daniel was as dear to God at other times, as when he shut up the Lyons mouthes, that they could not hurt him. But his power over them, his mercie and goodnesse to them, his justice against their enemies, never was so exalted, as in deferring so long, & so unexpectedly helping them in their greatest extremity. Themselves not only finde it, but their enemies are then constrained to acknowledge it. All Moses Sermons and threatnings could not make the Egyptians so much acknowledge Gods being on his peoples side, as when they having promised themselves to overtake them to divide the spoile of them, to have their lust satisfied upon them, to have their hands destroy them, when they were entangled in the land, when the Wilderness and the Sea had shut them in, God then came in and made the Sea a path for his people, and the waters a wall to them, but took off the Egyptians Chariotwheels, and turned the waters upon them. Then they are constrained to cry out, Let us flee from the face of Israel, for the Lord fighteth for them against the Egyptians.

Thus you see this truth cleared, that God never fails his people in a time of need, let us briefly make these two or three Vses of it.

First, for our Instruction we hence learne, that all plots against the Church and people of God must prove successful in the event, how wise, how cunning, how strong soever they are, who manage an ill cause

Application.
1 Instruction.
Therefore all plots against the Church must prove successful.
against the Lord, and against his Church, though
for a time with that little born in the 7. of Daniel,
they may be very stout, and speak very great things,
and make warre with the Saints, and prosper, though
they may carry the ball long at their foot, they can
never winne the goale, God will come in an adver-
sary against them, he will awake as one out of sleep, like
a mighty man that shouts by reason of wine, and put them
to a perpetuall reproach. Search all the Scriptures, and
you shall finde, that this is the heritage of the servants
of the Lord, that no weapon that is formed against them
shall prosper; either their plot fails, or the thing which
they intended is turned another way: Their plot failed
not in the 6. of Daniel, they aymed to get Daniel into
the Lions den, and in they got him, but they little
thought that the event should be Daniels preservation
and exaltation, and their own destruction. So the
devill and his Instruments failed not in their plot in
getting Christ upon the Crosse, but they little thought
that this bruising of our Saviour's heel should prove the
breaking of the Serpents head, The redemption of the
Church, and the leading of all the power of darknesse cap-
tivity captive. Mark this all ye wise men and great Pa-
lizitians of the world, that dare drive designes against
the cause of God and his Church, write it down, and
say your unworthy Minister taught you this day
from God, Though ye take counsell together, it shall
come to nought, though ye speak the word it shall not stand;
for God is with us. Hamans wife long ago could tell
her husband, it Mordecai was of the seed of the Jews,
he should never prevail against him, but should surely
fall before him. Weigh therefore all your designes in
the ballance of the Sanctuary lay aside all carnall and
of the Commons house of Parliament.

sinfull projects, put your selves and all your reasons under Christ's footstool, take Gamaliel's counsel, refrain from opposing those men, who advance God's work, you cannot overthrow it, lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.

Secondly, this may be a mighty and wonderful refreshing to all the servants of God in their deepest and heaviest pressures and afflictions, though one deep call to another, though thou seem to be cast beyond the Antarctic pole, though all humane hope and help fail, though thy heart fail, and thy flesh fail, thy God will never fail; though thou art at thy wits end, thou hast no cause to be at thy faiths end, take God's book in thy hand, finde out the promises, how God hath engaged himself to help at a pinch, and when thou hast got a promise of deliverance, then believe that heaven and earth shall be jumbled together, rather then one jot or title of God's promise shall not come to passe in due time: Nay though he seeme to break his promise believe it not; for so he seemed to do to Mary and Martha, he sent them word, Lazarus's sickness was not to death, and he seemed to fail, for Lazarus died, but they should have believed any thing, rather then that that sickness should have been unto death.

Obj: But what if I can finde no promise that God will deliver me out of this strait. I answer, either thou art in covenant with God, or not, if thou be not in covenant, if thou be an unbeliever, an imperient person, I assure thee there is no promise in all this book of God that speaks one word of comfort to thee: All Gods promises are yea, and Amen to them who
who are in Christ Jesus: I should wrong God, and his truth, and thy soul, in speaking one word of comfort to thee. But if in truth thou reliest upon Christ, the bent of thy heart be turned to God, and so thou be brought under the line of his covenant, then I say to thee, if there be no promise for thy strait, thy strait is not greatly to be regarded. God hath made promises to deliver thee from every evil work, from what ever might hurt thee, and thou needst not fear that which cannot hurt thee.

Thirdly and lastly, Right Honorable and beloved, how should this steel your spirits, and raise up your hearts, and make you with Jehoshaphat lifted up in the ways of God: you have great works to do, the planting of a new heaven and a new earth amongst us, and great works have great enemies, they are attended with great dangers; and oftentimes great fears seize upon the spirits of Moses himself, when he looks upon the work which he knows too great for him. But could you remember that you walk not only under God’s protection, but under a promise that he will come in when ever you need him, how boldly might you place your help in the Name of this God who hath made heaven and earth: Set you your hearts to God’s work, God hath set his heart upon you to deliver you, and he can do it. Darius set his heart on Daniel to deliver him, and laboured it, but could not do it: But it is but for your God to command deliverance and it comes. I may say the same, because of all the experience you have had of God’s fulfilling this since your meeting together: how often have you been at your wits end, how often have you ebb’d and flowed, and yet in all your extremities God hath come in beyond
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yond your expectation. Trust still in this God, seek him in his own way, and lay thus with your selves, He is our rock, our fortress, he will deliver us, his truth shall be our shield and buckler.

Yet remember that I do not teach you, that ye can never be left to suffer in a good cause, that were to preach contrary to the Gospel, all Christ's disciples must take up their cross and follow him: you shall read in the 11. of Daniel, ver. 33. That they that understand among the people, and instruct many, shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil many days, and when they fall, they shall be holpen with little or no help, but yet mark what follows, their fall shall only be as the silver falls into the furnace: There are three ends why the Refiner of silver puts it into the fire. First, to try it, whether it be pure or reprobate silver. Secondly, to better it, to purge out the dross: Thirdly, to burnish it, to make it more beautifull. So these shall fall to try them, and to purge and make them white, neither shall it be so long as their enemies please, but even to the time of the end, to the time appointed by God. Resolve therefore upon it, that if ye do suffer, if evil do betide you in a good way, and for a good cause, your sufferings will be better for you, then freedom from sufferings, they shall be only to try you, to purge you, and to make you white, and at the appointed time deliverance will come, which if it be a while deferr'd, you shall be liberally pay'd for your forbearance. Thus I have done with the second part of my Text, and now

I proceed to the third Branch of my text, which I most aymed at, the use which the Church makes of this goodness of God, Blessed be the Lord, &c.

The
The Hebrew word, *Barach*, when it is applied from the creature to God, signifies, *Benedicere*, *laudare*, offerre munus, *To bless*, *to speak well of*, *to offer a gift*, *to praise*. This is our work this day, and so without any more Preface, I come to handle that lesson which is our maine duty, viz.

That the praising of God is the service which God's people are to performe, when ever God delivers them. This is a Doctrine which needs much explication and application, but little proofe. No one lesson more inculcated in the whole Scriptures, *frequently commended*, *Call upon me in the time of trouble*, and *I will hear thee*, and *thou shalt praise me*. *All that seek the Lord shall praise him*. *Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodnesse, foure times repeated in one Psalm*. At least an hundred times in one expression or other it is enjoyned in this book of the Psalms.

*Oh praise the Lord, praise ye the Lord, pressed and repeated almost in every verse of diverse Psalms*, as if the Prophet knew not what other duty to call for.

2. This duty was likewise *typified* in the old Law; They had two sorts of sacrifices, shadowing out moral duties, some *petitionary*, whereby they sought God for the mercies which they needed. Others were *Eucharisticall*, *peace-offerings*, wherein their praises were rendered unto God, and these was to be as constant as their *Supplicatory* or *Expiatory* sacrifices.

3. The duty hath always been *practised* by all God's servants: the time would fail me to tell of *Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, all the good Judges, Kings, Priests, and Prophets*, whose *Hallelujahs* were as constant as their *Hosannas*. When ever they had sought
sought God and found him, their next work was to magnifie and praise him. And for the rule and practice of the Christian Church, I shall passe by many exhortations and examples, and satisfie you abundantly with one place which is the fourth of the Revelation. That Chapter is a description of Christ’s presence in the Christian Church, and of all their service and carriage towards him; there ye have the Lambe sitting upon the throne in the midst of his people, there ye have also, all the multitude of his Saints in all the foure quarters of the world, shadowed out by the foure beasts, there ye have the multitude of Christ’s Ministers, shadowed out by the foure and twenty Elders, sitting upon their seats: Now mark what all the service is which these foure beasts, and foure and twenty Elders perform to him that sits upon the throne, it is expressed, ver. 9. to be nothing else, but to give glory, honour, and thanks to him that lives for ever and ever: So that all Christian worship, publique, and solitariy, whatever the corps of it be, the soul of it is nothing but honour, and glory, and praise to our God through Jesus Christ. Many reasons might be given, why praise and thanksgiving should be rendred unto God: All excellency and honour is his original due: All good things are received from his hand freely: Now common honesty requires, that undeserved favours should be received with thankfulness. A benefit received, and a Return of praise are inseparable among all Civill Nations. But I shall insist only upon this one.

This service of praise is the onely Quit-rent or Homage which God hath reserved to himself for all the mercies which he bestows upon his Church. Understand it.
it, I beseech you, I say what ever the Lord doth for his Church and people, he hath reserved not a shoe-latchet, save only his praise and glory. Which to understand, know that there are three things meet in every mercy. First, the thing itself which is given, suppose food, rayment, health, life, peace, wife, children, or whatsoever we enjoy. Secondly, there is the sweetnesse of it, the comfort which may be drawn out in the use of it. Thirdly, there is the glory of it, or the commendation that may arise from it, the honour or praise which exults out of it. The two first God freely gives away, he hath made nothing but he freely bestows, he gives heaven to the Saints and Angels, he gives the earth to the sons of men, he gives all creatures living upon earth for their use; and allows them to take all the sweetnesse and comfort, which can possibly be drawn out of his free gifts, lets them drink and be filled with the juice and marrow of every mercie : onely his glory he will never part with, his glory and praise he will give to none. They say quit rents and royalties are so prized by Lords of Manors, that they will not sell them under thirtie or forty years purchase: But the Lords Royalty and Homage of praise and thanksgiving is more precious unto him then heaven and earth: In somuch that it is all one in his account, not to be acknowledged God, and not to be praised. Yea so deare is his praise and glory, that it was the utmost and highest end he propounded to himself in creating, upholding and governing this goodly frame of heaven and earth, even that his glory and excellency might shine forth, that as of him, and by him, so all things might be for him. And as all things were made for his praise, so the creature man was in
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special manner made to be a fit bayliff or gatherer in of Gods Quit-rent of praises from all the rest of the creatures, and to pay it unto himself. And this David acknowledges in the 8. Psalme, and magnifies as an infinite advancement of man above all the rest of the creatures, that Gods glory which is above the heavens should be ordained to proceed out of the mouth of such a poore worme as man is.

Nay if we look yet further into it, we shall finde that when all mankinde had sinned, and fell short of the glory of God, would not praise him, and could not praise him, the Lord therefore bought a peculiar family to himself by the blood of his Sonne, that he might have a people of his own to praise him; who might while they are here upon earth, collect, gather in, and offer up the praises due unto his Name. And therefore he calls his redeemed ones his sons and daughters, which he hath created for his glory. This is plainly taught in the 22. Psalme, in the latter end whereof ye have a description of the Church or kingdom of Christ, which (as there is said) shall be gathered out of all Nations, and all sorts of people, some that are fat and mighty upon earth, some of the poore that lie in the dust, who want bread to keep themselves alive, all these shall be counted to the Lord for a generation, a seed who shall serve him, and what shall this service be? even to declare and set forth his righteous works from generation to generation, here is all this holy seed hath to do; first to seek him, then to praise him, to enjoy him, and to glorifie him. So that what Solomon said of fearing God, and keeping his Commandments, this is the whole duty of man. The same I may say of thanksgiving, praise God.
God and glorifie him, for this is the whole duty of the Church in this world; And not onely in this momentany pilgrimage, but even to all eternitie: if you would know what the triumphant Church doth, how the glorious Saints and Angels are employed, this one word Hallelujah expresseth it fully, praise ye the Lord.

And by this time, I hope you see good reason why our praises should succeed our prayers, and accompany our deliverances.

But will some say, all this labour might have been spared, is there any man who will not praise God? Doth the man live who is not willing and ready to give God the praises due unto his Name? I answer. Indeed if to praise God were no more then most people think, it were the most universall, common, ease, cheap, and constant duty in the world, such who never kept a holy fast in all their life time, such who neither pray to God in their family, nor in their chamber, do yet (if their carnall minds may be the judge) praise God an hundred times. Every day, their ordinary phrase is, I thank God, I praise God. Ask but of their welfare, well I thank God, they say: Enquire of their families, all well, I praise God. Every mouth is filled with the praises of God; blessing proceeds out of the same mouth which is full of cursing: young men and maids, old men and children can all praise God. But alas, most men are infinitely mistaken in this dutie, a thankfull man who can finde? there is not in all the world a duty more rare to be found, a duty more spiritual, more difficult, more costly, then the duty of praise.

Let me therefore (that we may not mistake when we
we come to application) give you briefly the Insti-
tution of a thankfull man according to the word, and 
I will bring it all to these two heads.

First, the qualification of the person of a thankfull 
man, who? and what he is; Secondly, the ingredients 
into the duty, or what makes it up: Who the man is; 
And what his work is.

First, who is the man that may praise God? Answ. 
None but a godly man can do it!

Onely the godly man: True it is, all men, even the worst 
are bound to do it, it lies upon them as a duty, but it 
belongs not to them as a priviledge: it is the privi-
ledge onely of the righteous, they may do it. Rejoice 
in the Lord ye righteous, it becomes well the just to be 
thankfull. Let the high praises of God be in their mouths.

Their praises please the Lord better then a bullock, that 
bath horns and hoofs. Not so the wicked, they have a 
woolfe by the eares in this work; if they do it not, 
God will have his glory out of them. Pharaoh, Sena-
cherib, Herod, such as proudly seek to rob him of his 
glory, shall yeeld him his glory in their righteous de-
struction; they would not do it with singing, they 
shall do it with bowling. On the other side, if they 
bring their peace-offerings, God spreads the dung of 
their sacrifices upon their faces: They are an abomination 
to him. See this notably expressed in the 50. Psalm, 
ver. 7. and so forward, the Lord shewed how little 
pleasure he took in the sacrifice of beasts, in compa-
rison of the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Offer 
unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows to the most 
high. Call upon me in the time of trouble, and I will de-
lever thee, and thou shalt glorifie me. This God takes 
pleasure in. Mark now what follows, But unto the 
wicked, saith God, what hast thou to do to take my cove-

E 3 nant
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Churches of thankfulness.

nent into thy mouth? who required these things at thy hands? so that you see whether wicked men praise God, or praise him not, they are abhorred by him. Just as some great Lord of a Mannour, who having an enemy holding lands of him, will compell him to do suit and service, and yet abhorres him in his suit and service. But Israel may rejoice in God, let them praise him in the dance, let them sing praises to him with timbrell and harpe, for the Lord takes pleasure in his people.

Psal. 149. 3. 4.

The second quare, what makes up the duty. Now you have found the man, wherein stands his work. Answ. When God appointed the sacrifice of peace-offerings, he made it an indifferent thing whether it were a male or female, so it were the best they had, the best it must be: Cursed be that deceiver who hath a male, and sacrificeth a corrupt thing unto God. Were a female the best, it was accepted, provided it were a whole one: To bring a limbe of a torne beast, should I accept this at your hands, faith the Lord? He will have all, or none: A whole one then it must be: Now this whole peace-offering is made up of these 3. things. The first is the soul which is the fat and inwards of it. Secondly, the tongue which is the glory of it. Thirdly the life which indeed is the life of thankfulness.

Of 3. things.
1. Heart
2. Tongue
3. Life.

Psal. 138. 1. 133. 1. 108.

Psal 138. First the soule, the heart, and spirit, this must chiefly be looked to, having to do with the Father of spirits, with God the searche of the heart: I will praise God (saith David) with my whole heart. My soule praise the Lord, and all that is within me praise his holy Name. My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed, I will sing and give praise. Now to this soul-praising of God are required principally these three things. First, A
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A minde observing the wayes and mercies of God, a spirit inquisitive into Gods wayes, not out of Athenian curiosity, but (as Bees flie from flower to flower to gather honcy) to digest them into matter of praise and thanksgiving. God makes it an argument of an unthankfull heart, not to consider his wayes, nor the operations of his hands. And on the other side, it is an argument of a thankfull heart, to take pleasure in searching out the works of God. See how David sets this down in the 68. Psalme ver. 14. They have seen thy goings, O God, the goings of my God my King in the sanctuary: then follows, The singers went before: the players on Instruments followed after: Bless ye God in the Congregation. First they observe Gods footsteps, then bless him in the Congregation. And in the 107. Psal. after the Prophet had set down the variety of Gods administrations for which he should be praised, he thus concludes the Psalme, Who so is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving kindnesse of the Lord. And ye may further observe, that the thankfull men recorded in the Scriptures have not let slip from their observation the very circumstances of Gods dealings towards them, not only the substance of the mercie, in a grosse summe, but all circumstances which have accompanied it, as time, place, manner, meanes.

Secondly, this soul thankfulness must have affections suitable to the mercies bestowed, when our heart is affected according to Gods dealing, this is thankfulness. And these affections are chiefly love and joy. I love thy Lord because he hath heard the voice of my prayer. And then they must rejoice in his mercy. Rejoice in the Lord ye righteous, it becomes the just to

The Churches thankfulness.

   Psal. 28. 5.
   Psal. 111. 2.

Ver. 43.

Thus did Hezekiah concerning his recovery.
   Ezek. 38. 9. &c.
   Thus David for all his deliverances.
   2 Sam. 22. 2.
   Suitable affections.
   Psal. 16. 1.
   Psal. 33. 1.
   Psal. 92. 4.
be thankful. Thou Lord hast made me glad through thy work, therefore will I triumph in the works of thy hands. Mercies are not mercies, deliverances are not deliverances to men who are not glad of them. God gave David a great deliverance from his rebellious sonne Absolom, he upon the news weeps and cries out, O Absolom, my sonne, my sonne. Was this thankfulnesse? God hath wrought a great deliverance for us, can those men whose fingers itch for blood, and are grieved at our peace, be thankful for this deliverance:

Thirdly, the last thing which makes up this soul-thankfulness, is the laying up and registtring these mercies of God in our memorie, to lay them up in our treaurie, not as some do their bundles of old writings in their counting-house, never looking on them in seven yeers: but in a memory which may suggest to them upon every occasion what great things God hath done for them. A memory which will lay Gods mercies before them, as the Chronicles which Ahasuerus read when he could not sleep in the night. God requires it should be so. The righteous Lord hath so done his marvellous works that they ought to be had in thankful remembrance. This thankful memory feeds the heart with continuall matter of praise, fills the thoughts with admiration of Gods dealing towards them, shews them how Gods mercies passe their understandings in the manner of them, in the measure of them, making the soul stand amazed: thankful hearts have found so much good in remembring of Gods mercies, that they have been careful to keep Registers, and set up Monuments to help their memorie, enleded Psalmes to bring to Remembrance, gaveNames
Names to places where mercies were received, new Names to times when they were received, write the Names of their deliverances upon their children, that the sight of them might quicken their memories and thoughts. Yea God himself used to take new Names to himself as he gave new mercies, sometimes calling himself, The God that brought Abraham from VR of the Caldees, then the Lord that brought them out of the land of Egypt, then the Lord that gathered his people out of the North countrey, and now since the greatest deliverance of all, The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. And all to help their memories.

2. This is the Inside of a thankfull man, but if praise be in the heart it will not be kept in, but it will be like oyle in the right hand, like the word in Jeremiah's heart, like a burning fire in his bones which he could not contain within. The tongue will be set on work, and beares a great part in this Musick of thankfulness, confessing to God, publishing to others, I will tell you what God hath done for my soul. My tongue shall ever be talking of thy wondrous works, and of thy praise all the day long. Our tongue is therefore called our glory, because with it we glorifie God. As praise is God's glory, so our tongue in exalting him is our glory. Now this tongue-praise is not confined to saying of a grace, singing of a Psalm, uttering a Benedictus, or Te Deum laudamus, but in all speech which tends to exalt God, and sets forth his excellency. Tertullian told the mercies of God, when he wrote his owne life. And David's tongue was ever talking of Gods praise, because his speech one way or other tended to exalt God.

Thirdly, true thankfulness is expressed in the life, as one truly faith, the life of thankfulness consists in
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The Church's thankfulness.

The life of the thankfulness. The praising of God, and ordering our conversation aright, are not only inseparable, but exegeticall interpretations one of another.

Now this life Thankfulness stands in these two things.

First, in using God's mercies to the right end, this is to praise him indeed, without this all other thankfulness is but complement, formalitie, and hypocrifie. Set this down for an everlasting truth, that it's impossible God should be praised with an abusing mercie. Did Israel and Judah praise God for their faire jewels of gold and silver which God had given them, when they made to themselves Images of men, and committed whoredome with them? Did they praise him for their broidered garments, their fine flour, oyle, and honey, wherewith God cloathed and fed them? Did they praise him for their sonses and daughters when they sacrificed them unto devils? Read the sixteenth of Ezekiel, and you will finde the contrary. I shall give you one example which will cleare it beyond all contradiction, and that is of Hezekiah. God gave him a most miraculous recovery, he was sick to death, and it is thought he was sick of the plague, God not only healed him, but made the Sun go back for six hours at least, and by this miracle told all the world, that the God who loved Hezekiah, had recovered him from death to life; Now mark Hezekiah's thankfulness, as soon as he got up, he mak's a Psalm, where- in he confesses his unworthinesse, his bitter affliction, God's gracious restoring of him goes to the Temple and sings it, resolves to sing it all the dayes of his life, who would not think but this man had been thankfull.
full. But Hezekiah abused this mercie, his heart grew proud, he began to think himself the most remark-
able man in the world, discovers this vanity of his heart to the Ambassadors of the king of Babylon: See now what God judged of his thankfulness: Heze-
kiah was sick to death, and God spake to him and gave him a signe, but Hezekiah rendred not again according to the benefit done unto him, for his heart was lifted up. Never doth a man render according to the mercie, who abuseth the mercie.

The second thing in life thanksgiving is the ren-
dring back again to God, what God requires by way of homage or Lords-rent. Quid retribuam? What shall I render to the Lord, is every thankfull mans Psalme. Now although no man can give unto God any thing worthy of him, yet there are some things which God requires and accepts from all his thankfull people by way of homage.

First, an humble broken contrite heart, a self-renoun-
cing, a self-abhorring spirit, for our vilenesse against so gracious a God is infinitely pleasing to him. Oh faith David (when God had pardoned his great sin, and healed his broken bones) I would give thee sacrifice and burnt offerings if thou delightedst in them: But these God cared not for, but David lights upon that which he cared for: The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

Secondly, the giving up of our selves, bodies, and souls, to have and to hold, and to use them at the will of the Lord, to consecrate them unto him, to do him faithfull service. This is notably expressed by David in the 40. Psalme, when he studied what to render
to God, and found that sacrifice and offerings God did not desire, but this pleased him, My care thou hast bored: What is that boring his care? why he alludes to the practice in Israel, that when a servant did chuse to dwell with his master for ever, his master should bore his care through with an awl. So faith David, I will be thy servant for ever, I delight to do thy will, O God, thy law is written in my heart. This is a little otherwise expressed, Hebr. 10.5. In stead of reading it my car thou hast opened. The Apostle following the Septuagint reads it a body hast thou prepared me, but full to the same sense, as if he should have said, Lord thou hast fitted me, moulded my body and soul to be thy servant. This same thing the Apostle calls for, I beseech you brethren, by all the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service: this is a second peace-offering.

Thirdly, when God had put an end to all Levitical sacrifices, both Propitiatory and Eucharistical, instead of them he hath instituted the attending upon his holy ordinances, praying, preaching, hearing, Sacraments, to be in the Christian Church acknowledgments of our homage, spiritual sacrifices acceptable unto him through Jesus Christ. This the Apostle expresseth in the 13. to the Hebrews, ver. 15. Having before shewed that all other sacrifices were abolish, he tells them, that the calves of our lips, the sacrifice of praise were now to be offered up to God continually.

Fourthly and lastly, the works of mercie to the poore, visiting the sick, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, ministering to the necessities of the Saints, are
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an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing unto God. To do good and to communicate (faith Paul) forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. Provided that because they are sacrifices they must not be offered to the Idol of our own credit, or esteem, or private ends, but unto God alone, even in obedience unto him, and for his glory.

Thus have I as briefly as I could possibly given you the true Institution of a thankfull man, his person must be holy, his sacrifice must be whole, made up of heart and tongue and life, an observing minde, suitable and enlarged affections, a readie memorie, a tongue to tell Gods praises, a life using Gods mercies aright, abusing none of them, abhorring himself before God, devoting himself unto God, humbly waiting upon his ordinances, and according to his ability, endeavouring to be an Instrument of help and comfort to him that needeth.

Now give me leave (Right Honorable and beloved) to endeavour to let all this home to your hearts in a double use. First for Humiliation. Secondly for Exhortation.

First for humiliation. It may be some will think it unseasonable in a day of rejoicing to put you upon sorrow and mourning, but certainly could I but help you to be rightly humbled for, and to slay this beast of Ingratitude, it would be the best peace offering which ever God received from many of your hands, neither will you ever be able to give him the sacrifice of an humble contrite heart, till your spirits be laid low in the fencce of this great sin. Let me speak plain and in earnest, I remember I speak to a great assembly, to an assembly of Gods, but I speak in the name of the Church's thankfulness.

Phil. 4. 18.
Heb. 13. 16.

Applicati-
on.
1. For hu-
miliation.
The Churches thankfulness.

In general our unthankfulness for all God's mercies.

great God, before whom you are but as so many grasshoppers, his poor sheards, his poor infall creatures: Pardon me (ye great Lords and Gentlemen) if I passe over all your eminencie, and discharge my dutie. Are we not a most unthankfull people? Do we render to God according to his infinite mercies vouchsafed to us? I could easily set before you great lifts and Catalogues of mercies, which you have receiv'd; Many in common with the rest of the world, Many in common with this Nation, to which God hath been mercifull above all Nations upon earth: Many in common with the places where you live: Many peculiar to your own persons, to your own souls and bodies, to your estates, families, relations, privative mercies, positive mercies, ye eat mercies, drink mercies, weare mercies, compassed about and covered with mercies, as much as ever the earth was with water in the time of Noah's flood. But beloved, where is your thankfulnesse for all these mercies to be found? I can tell you where the houses are that are full of mercies, but who can tell me where truethankfulnesse may be found? May not God say of you, that for all his goodnesse and mercies which he hath multiplied and bestowed upon you, the return is nothing but abominable Ingratitude: let me help you in a few things.

1. Are there not abundance to be found, who take no notice of God's gracious dealing to them? either through the pride of their heart, esteeming nothing worthy of their observation, or having their souls so crooked to the earth, that they cannot look up to heaven: or through the peevisbnesse of their spirit burying ten thousand mercies under one clod of discontent: and so can finde nothing for which they should
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Should either rejoice in God, or love him, or admire his goodness to them:

2. Are there not abundance whose tongues (instead of being their glory, to exalt God and his goodness) are as it were set on fire of hell, depressing his majesty, reproaching and blaspheming his Name, and works, his ordinances, and servants, seldom naming him for his praise, unless (when with the Pharisee) pretending to thank God, they intend to commend themselves?

3. Are there not abundance (even great ones, Lords, Ladies, Gentlemen) whom God hath singularly and eminently laden with his mercies, who with all these do nothing but bear arms to fight against God (as David against Goliath) with his own sword. Waters of a full cup are wrung out unto them, they prosper in the world, increase in riches, they have all their hearts can desire, therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; therefore they are corrupt and wicked, therefore they may swear and drink, dice and drab. Oh, beloved, God hath a tallie of all the mercies which you enjoy, a Catalogue of all the favours which he hath bestowed upon you, and if you be found to be the people, who thus require him, who are thus advanced and work all these abominations, God will ere long say of you, as David said of Nabal, Surely in vain have I kept all that this fellow hath, and he hath required me evil for good, I will not leave any thing that pertains to him, in vain have I done all which I have done for these men, they have required me evil for good, I will strip them naked, I will deprive them of all my abused mercies, I will spend my arrows, and heap mischiefs (instead of mercies) upon them.

4 Are

Luk. 18:11

Gal 5:21

1 Sam. 25:21

4 Are
A Sermon at the late Thanksgiving

4. Are there not abundance to whom (this thankfulness) rendering of a contrite heart, of bodies and souls consecrated to God's service, reverent waiting upon him in his ordinances, and doing good to others, thereby to praise God) to whom (I lay) these things are the darkest riddles in the world: who think God never doth enough for them, and think any thing too much for them to do to God:

But to leave this generall complaint, I beseech you (Right Honorable and beloved) to see what great cause we have to be abased concerning our great ingratitude, for the admirable mercies which God hath bestowed us this very last yeer; This one yeer, this wonderfull yeer, wherein God hath done more for us in some kinds, than in foure-score yeers before, breaking fo many yokes, giving such hopes and beginnings of a very Jubilee and Resurrection both of Church and State: This yeer wherein we looked to have been a wonder to all the world in our desolations, and God hath made us a wonder to the world in our preservation: giving us in one yeer a Return of the prayers of fourty and forty yeers. Now look abroad into the kingdome, enquire (as Abasfuerus did of Mordecai) what honour and dignity is done to the Lord for all this; my heart would bleed, were it rightly affected in the expressing of it: We scarce make any shew of thankfulness, but manifest the very power of ingratitude.

Alas, there are many whose hearts are grieved at the great things which God hath done for us, turning a Jubilee into Lamentations: I know not better how to expresse the spirit of these men, then by that in the 8. of Ezekiel. Among all the abominations which
which the Lord shewed the Prophet, whereby he was provoked to go far off from his sanctuary, one was a company of women weeping for Tammuz, they wept because they they had lost their Idol: so these grieve because they fear to loose their toys and fooleries, which provoke God against us.

Others bring up an ill report of Gods goodness and his worthy Instruments, who can see no wood for trees, ever enquiring in discontent, what is done all this yeer, the Parliament hath sate long, abundance of money given, but what have they done for us? Indeed, lesse is done, then might have been, had we been truly thankful, but much more is done, then ever thou or I had cause to hope our eyes should see: when it is Gods mercie we are not all as Sodome, art not thou a wretched man, to say what is done by way of fleighting what thy eyes see this day?

Others deny not but God hath done great things this last yeer, and all their enquirie is, What is to be done next, who (as swine under the pear-tree devoure all that falls, and whine for more, never looking to the hand that shakes down to them) in the meane time return nothing to God, abate not an ace of any of their former courses, whereby God was offended, as proud, vain, wanton, worldly, prophane, this yeer as the laft, yea a greater torrent of sin (for ought I can hear) rusheth in, and fearfully prevails and domineers in most places. God is free in his goodness, and will be mercifull to whom he will be mercifull, and the wickednesse of a Nation can set no bounds or limits to his goodness, else we should certainly conclude, that this drie winde from the wildernesse, this ingratitude of ours, would even sweep.
and drive away all God's mercies from us. 
Yea, may I not, must I not (Right Honorable and 
Noble Senators) humble you, even you, before the 
Lord this day, even in this day of your rejoicing, to 
make you begin this your Passeover with eating 
some bitter hearbs: have you rendred to God ac-
according to the mercies of this yeer? I think you may 
say of Gods dealing towards you, as newer Parlia-
ment could say, God hath carried you in his bosome, 
prevented and discovered great desigines against you, 
quelled great adversaries before you, restored great pri-
vileges unto you, appeared as your Councellour in 
all your darknesse, opened a doore, an out-gate in all 
your straits: all rubs and stumbling blocks before you, 
God hath made them but as vantage ground to raise 
you higher: What should I say? you have found your 
gracious Soveraigne granting (I think) all your suits 
hitherto; your Rights and Liberties are establisht, 
and your houses built, if it were possible you should 
surpasse the very Angels in thanksgiving. Now let 
your servant be bold with you, what glory and honour 
do you return to God? How have you observed the go-
ings of your God and King amongst you? With 
what admiring thoughts are your hearts filled? what 
Reformation appears in your hearts and lives? what 
coast are you at for this God? how strongly have 
you engaged and consecrated your selves and all 
which you have for his service and glory? Lay your 
hand upon your heart, and think in this your day of re-
joycing, whether your continuance in your old sin-
full wayes, your unbelief, your ebbing and flowing 
in your spirits, according as humane hopes and helps 
have come and gone; your not zealously laying to 
heart
heart the cause of Christ, his worship and servants, may not make the Lord say of you (as of Hezekiah) the Lords and Commons of England prayed unto God, and the Lord heard them, and gave them a signe, but they rendred not again according to the benefits done unto them. If it be so, the good Lord humble you under it, and turn away the guilt of this great sinne from you and from us all for Christ Jesus sake, and so much for the use of Humiliation.

Secondly, one more for exhortation and I have done. Oh that I were able to speak something to raise up your hearts to the praxis of this excellent service, I shall confine my self to these two heads: First, a few Motives to quicken you to the duty. Secondly, a few Directions to guide you in it.

First, the man lives not who owes not this homage or quit-rent unto God, yea even for every thing which he hath, finde out the man who lies under one evill so great as he hath deserved, or enjoyes one mercie which he hath not freely received, and that man shall go scot-free from the dutie of thankfulness: Now even common honesty will call for the discharge of this ingenuous, equall, and easie rent of Thanksgiving to men who are but Instruments of mercie, how much more to God the welspring and fountain of them all.

Secondly, consider the excellency of the duty, what a high and honourable service it is, so high that though God be most worthy to be praised, yet no creature is found worthy to praise him. In our praises we are said to blesse, honour, exalt, magnifie, and glorifie God; can any creature be thought worthy or able to do this? to lift up God, to make him a great God, to put
A Sermon at the late Thanksgiving

put glory upon God, yet God so interprets it, be that praiseth me honoureth me. Yea so excellent is this duty, that it is the onely implantion of all the glorious host of heaven. It is said in the Psalm, that man did eat Angels food; sure I am, this is to do Angels work, heavens work, to bring heaven down to earth, and to raise up poore dust to heaven, to be enabled to praise the Lord; what should I say more? this praising of God is by Interpretation, the doing of all that God requires. Tully said that Gratitude to man is Maxima & mater omnium reliquarum virtutum. But what ever Gratitude to man be, the Scriptures teach us, that gratitude to God is the comprehension of all our obedience.

3. Thirdly, it is the comfortablist duty that ever we can perform, partly, because it is the sweetest evidence of our sincere love and faithfull dependance upon God: we may pray for base self-love, when we love not God, but his gifts, but a cordiall praising of him, is a reall expression of our love to him; and partly, because God graciously accepts what ever comes under the notion of praise, a female, or turtle, a handfull of wheat flour, a pepper corn, a cup of cold water, a fig or teare, is most kindly accepted when presented as a peace offering: I will praise God with a song, this shall please the Lord better then an ox or a bullock that hath horns and hoofs. Who that loves God, would stick at any thing in this duty so acceptable unto him: It is pitifull to observe what pains and cost many poore seduced Papists are at out of a false conceit of meriting for themselves and theirs, should not love and Gratitude to God and our Lord Jesus (who hath merited all for us) be more prevalent.
of the Commons house of Parliament.

prevalent with us, then self-love and blinde superstition
in them.

4. Fourthly, I have one Motive more especially
to press upon you according to the duty of the day,
the consideration of the wonders, (I had almost said
the miracles) of this last year: Could I lively draw
them before your eyes, that you might see what this
year God hath done for you, and wrought by you, such
whose affections are lame among you would leap as
an Hart, and the tongue of the dumbe would sing.
This
year we have seen the three Nations of England, Scot-
land and Ireland in a posture of warre without blood-
shed, Oh wonderfull! This year we have seen our
neighbour Nation come into England in a hostile shew
with peaceable hearts, oh wonderfull! This year we
have seen the same Nation (after all mistakes cleared)
received into the bosome of their Soveraignes fa-
vour, their loyality and faithfulness acknowledgged,
and with a friendly aid honorably and peaceably sent
to their own homes, and the two Nations faster ce-
mented together in a league of love then ever hereto-
fore: oh wonderfull! Nay yet more, this year have
we seen broken the yokes which lay upon our estates,
Liberties, Religion, and Conscience; the intolerable
yokes of Star-Chamber, and terrible High-commission
and their Appendances, unsufferable pressures to many
thousands, all ease, removed, broken and swept
away. This year have we seen the two houses of
Parliament (and many ten thousands in the king-
dom following their example) enter into a Protes-
tation promise and vow for defence of Gods true Re-
ligion against all Popery, and Popish Innovations and
superstition. This yeer the Complaints of the Im-
prisoned,
prison, outcast, persecuted, and affli[ed we have seen and heard, tenderly received into the high and honorable Court of Parliament, and the faces of many proud enemies covered with shame. This year for preventing future grievances, the Lord hath put it into the heart of our gracious Sovereign, the Lords and Commons, all to agree upon a Triennial Parliament, and this present Parliament to continue till all things be rightly established both in Church and Common-wealth, that the foundations of the Land may be no more out of joynt, that Liberty and Religion henceforth receive no damage, unless the State (like the foolish woman in the proverbs) plucks it down with their own hands. Quadragesimus primus mirabilis annus. Oh wonderfull yeer! and so much the more wonderfull, that all these things are done for us, when our neighbour Nations round about us see no such days, when Germany remains a field of blood, when their Cities and Towns are desolate, their wives ravished, their children kill'd, when many of them eat their dead carcases, and die for want of food, yea when God's sword rides in circuit round about us, these great things are done for us, and hopes of greater: And which is most wonderfull, all this done for the most unworthy and unthankfull Nation in all the world, our God hath thus broke in over all the walls of separation which our sins have built up against us, and called for vengeance upon us.

Me thinks (Right Honourable and beloved) every one of your hearts should say to God, as the Prophet to the Shunamite, thou hast been careful for us with all this care, what is to be done for thee? Lord what
wouldst thou have us do to testify that we are sensible of thy goodness? Oh praise the Lord.

5. And the rather, because else God knows whether all these mercies may not be removed, and destruction and miserie yet break in upon us. When Tamar was to be delivered, and twins in her womb, Zarah first put forth his hand, and they tyed a scarlet thred about it, and said this came out first, but his hand was plucked in again, and his brother broke out before him. So mercie and judgement, deliverance and ruine, have seem’d to be long strugling in the wombbe which should first break out upon us: Deliverance hath now put forth the hand, and we have tyed our scarlet thred about it, and say this came out first: Oh that Ingratitude cause not this hand to be plucked back again, and destruction yet to break in upon us. Ingratitude that, Obex Infernalis, as Divines call it, that hellish stop may interrupt the course of all Gods mercies. According to what God hath threatned: that though he speak concerning a Nation to build and plant it, if that Nation do evill in his sight, he will repent of the good wherein he said he would benefit them.

Quest. What then is to be done? or wherewith shall we be thankful? Answ. Chrysostome once desired that he had a voice to speak to all the world. I could wish that my voice could speak to all the kingdom, that I might tell them what God expects from all their hands. But though that cannot be, I am called this day to speak to you, (Right Honorable and beloved) who are the Representative Body of the kingdom, and whose thankfulness will be interpreted by God and man to be the thankfulness of the whole kingdom.
kingdome, you must think of some such way of prai-
sing God, as becomes your high places and callings,
and the whole kingdome which you represent: if
single persons praiie God upon a ten stringed Instru-
ment, you must do it upon a ten thousand stringed In-
strument: some thing worthy of a Parliament of Eng.
land, such a Parliament, for whom God hath done
such great things. When King Solomon offers a
peace-offering he brings two and twenty thousand fat
beesves, and an hundred and twenty thousand fat sheepe,
there is thankfulnesse fit for a King to shew. And
when David would shew his Gratitude to God in
preparing to build him an house, he offered a thou-
sand thousand talents of silver, and an hundred thousand
talents of gold, which comes to above three and thir-
ty thousand cart-load of silver, allowing two thou-
sand weight or six thousand pound sterling to every
load; and of gold seventy millions of French crowns,
besides brasse and iron without weight: And when he
and his people had added much more unto it, he ad-
mired Gods goodnesse to give them a heart to offer so
willingly, and excuses the smallnesse of his own gift as
being prepared in a time of trouble. Let not therefore
your Thankfulnesse be in trifles, lowprizd, serve not
God with that which costs you nothing. And if indeed
you would do something heroicall, worthy of your
selves, take him for your pattern, who for his thank-
fulnesse was called the man after Gods own heart, and
that is David, who ( when God had delivered him
from all his enemies, and established him in his king-
dome ) expresses in the hundred and first Psalme,
wherein his thankfulnesse should appeare, weigh the
Psalme seriously, it comprehends the sum of what I

1 Chron.
22.14.

Cap.29.12

Following the exam-
ple of Da-
vid.
have to say to you. I will sing (faith and) of mercie and judgement, that is, I will celebrate thankfully all Gods mercifull administrations unto my soul: how would he do this? Answ. In binding himself in his rule of walking towards three sorts of persons with whom he had to do. First, himself. Secondly, his family. And thirdly, his kingdome. For his own person he would be holy, he would walk uprightly in the midst of his house. For his family he would have no wicked person about him, no slanderers, liars, proud, or deceitfull persons, he would root them out as pests to his family. And he would search throughout the whole kingdome to have his family stored with good servants. Thirdly, for his kingdome, he would root out wickem men without exception of persons, and that early, so his whole kingdome might be a City of the Lord, a people with whom God might delight to dwell. Here is an example fit for a King and Parliament to follow, oh that God would encline your hearts this day to resolve to begin first with your own persons, else you will never be sincere for the rest: Now God hath called you and separated you for his work, be not the vassals of Satan, factors or pensioners for his enemy, who hath thus far betriffted you. Secondly, look to your families, do as Jacob did at Bethel, when he payed his vow of thanksgiving unto God, he made all his family bury their Idols under an oke; that so when hereafter any of you shall be mentioned, it may truly be said, such a Noble man, such a Parliament man, and the Church in his house, that your families may be little Congregations of Saints, with whom God may delight to dwell: Not like Taverns and Alehouses, houses of lewd and debauch'
debauched persons, where Zim, and Jim dwells, doleful creatures, fit only to be agents for Satan, as it is much feared many of them are until this day.

Thirdly, then look to sweep the Church and kingdom; blessed be God you have begun well, you have been happy Instruments to ease many pressures; But beloved, there is yet much work to be done, yet the root of our evils is not taken away, yet the Ministry is not purged, yet the great Cities and Towns, and many thousand other places in the kingdom want bread for their souls, and the portions of the Levites, honorable maintenance for them who should do the work of the Lord in many places are not yet provided: yet there remains much rubbish to be carried away, as yet the honour of the Lord’s day is not fully vindicated, as yet the Lord’s Temple is not built, nor the Scepter of Christ thoroughly set up. These are services fit for a thankful Parliament, if you neglect these, and cause a cessation in building the Temple, and let it lie unfinished, as it was in Cyrus his dayes, if there be a Perez, Zealah, a breach in bringing in the Ark of God unto us: Now you have built your own house, and procured Civill Liberties, should you let Gods house lie waste, should you be (as many fear you are) lesse zealous in Gods cause, then in your own, I solemnly profess unto you, the God of heaven will require it at your hands and the hands of your posterity: he will curse all your blessings, and overturn what you think you have established. But the people of God in whose hearts and prayers you daily are, expect and hope for these great things from you: This do in the fear of the Lord, and ye shall prosper.

2. This
of the Commons house of Parliament.

2. This (Right Honorable) is that I had to say to you from the Lord, if now you (that are the residue of this great Assembly) enquire what you shall do, and how you shall testify your thankfulnesse. I answer, if you will go and ring Bels, make Bonfires, feast one another, and send portions to the poore for whom nothing is provided, I have nothing to say against it, I think you shall do well. But this I beseech you do, go home and pray God to encline the hearts of the Parliament to practice what this day they have heard, write down a Catalogue of all the great things which God hath this yeer done for us, and let your children know them, (and the Lord put it into the heart of some wise observer of the times, so to write them, that the present and future generation may be blessed with a true Narration of these wonderfull mercies) give every one of you up, your selves to the Lord to be his servants, abuse not your peace and Libertie with Idlenesse, riot, and excess, or in being choked with enlarging your selves with worldly busineses, but make that use of our peace which the Church did in the ninth of the Acts, and the 31. ver. Then had the Churches rest and peace; and what use made they of their peace? They were edified, and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comforts of the holy Ghost were multiplied: which the Lord grant unto us for Christ Jesus sake. Amen.

FINIS.