

## SERMON XI.\*

Psalm 67. 2, 3.

*That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health  
among all nations. Let the people praise thee, O  
God; let all the people praise thee.*

**I** TAKE it for granted, it is generally known that it is by public authority recommended to us, this day, to celebrate

\* Preached September 8, 1695.

\* This sermon, it appears, was preached on September 8, 1695; being the day appointed by public authority for a general thanksgiving, particularly for taking the strong town, and citadel of Namur, in Flanders, by king William: which place as bishop Burnet tells us, was so happily situated, so well fortified, and so well furnished and commanded, that it made the attempt seem bold and doubtful. Namur had been taken by the French about three years before, in the view of a great army; which was looked upon as one of the greatest actions of that long reign. But though the fortifications, both in strength, and in the extent of the outworks, were double to what they had been, when the French took the place; yet king William, after a short siege, retook that important town and fortress, in the view of a hundred thousand French, commanded by the famous Mareschal Villeroy: which, as the forementioned historian says, was reckoned one of the greatest actions of the king's life; and indeed, one of the greatest in the whole history of war.

the praises of God, for the preservation and success, vouchsafed to his majesty's person, and forces abroad : and particularly, that God hath protected and guarded so precious a life, amidst all the dangers and deaths, that threatened it in the seige of Namur ; and given success to the design of taking that fortress.

And whereas the proclamation by the lords-justices appointing a thanksgiving on this day in reference to these great things, takes notice : that this protection of the king's life, and the success of his forces in that great undertaking, is justly to be looked upon as an answer to prayer, especially the prayers of that day of fast, that was appointed and observed in the beginning of the summer, with relation to this year's expedition : I do accordingly, at this time, intend to consider the second verse of this psalm, in connexion with the third ; as I did on that fast-day consider it, in connexion with the first.

The words of the proclamation are to this purpose ; " That whereas they did appoint a general fast to be kept through this kingdom, for imploring the blessing and protection of Almighty God in the preservation of his majesty's sacred person, and prosperity to his arms, both at land and sea, which hath been observed accordingly ; and forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God, of his infinite goodness, in answer to the prayers humbly and devoutly offered up to him, to grant to the forces of his majesty, and his allies, so great success in the taking of the town and castle of Namur : they do therefore adoring the divine goodness, appoint this day &c."

Now, according to the observation that is justly made here, that God hath made the event to correspond so far unto prayer, I have, as hath been already said, determined to insist upon the second verse in connexion with the following, which run thus ; " That thy name may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations. Let the people praise thee, O God ! let all the people praise thee." Whereas on that day of public fast, I considered the second verse, in connexion with the first ; the words of which are these : " God be merciful to us, and bless us, and cause his face to shine upon us ; that thy name may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations."

It was with this design that such mercy was petitioned for ; or that God would be merciful unto us, and bless us, and cause his face to shine upon us. Which expressions, relating to a community of people, and their public affairs, import favourable aspects of providence upon such a people, and such affairs ; and that such requests were made, and such mercy supplicated for from heaven, with this design, that God's way

may be known upon earth, his saving health among all nations. As this was the end and design of prayer, so the prospect, the expectation, and hope hereof, is made the great inducement, as well as the spring and source of praise. And what we aim at or seek for, is, that all people may every where praise God: that all nations may be glad and sing for joy because he will “judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth.”

By the way of God we are to understand, the course of his economy in governing the world; but especially (as the expressions connected with it shew) as it refers to the salvation of men. What our translation reads in two words, “saving health;” is but one in the hebrew text, *salvation*. And we know that from the same word comes that name Jesus, given to the great and eminent Saviour; who by a known and elegant metonymy, is hereupon again and again in Scripture called God’s salvation. And judicious expositors understand this to be the highest intendment, and ultimate meaning of these very words; that Christ, and God’s design of saving sinners in and by him, may be more known in the world. And therefore, taking the foregoing supplication as I now state it, connected with the resolved duty of praising God, and the invitation of all to a general concurrence herein; and we have a sufficient ground for that observation, which I shall now recommend to you as the theme and subject of our present discourse,

That our souls should be greatly enlarged, and highly raised in praising God for successes, and for favourable aspects as to our public affairs, from the hope, that thereby divine knowledge may more generally be diffused, and spread in the world. I shall, in speaking to this,

I. Briefly shew you what I mean by divine knowledge.

II. Shew you, that such means as are here intimated; to wit, the successes and favourable aspects of providence, with relation to the public affairs of such as profess the name of God, and design to serve his interest in the world, have a tendency to the spreading of such divine knowledge among men. And,

III. I shall shew, that the hope and expectation hereof is a very proper, and should be the principal spring of our praises for such successes, and favourable aspects upon our common affairs. And so

IV. Make application of all, as time will allow.

I. I shall briefly shew you, what is here intended by divine knowledge. That is truly called such knowledge, whose object, and whose author, and whose nature are divine. And

such I mean that to be, which I now speak of; and shall open to you in the terms of the text.

1. For the object of it; namely, God's way, and his salvation. The way of God, as I told you, is his economy, or course of dispensations in governing the world. And that takes in both religion and righteousness together, objectively considered; the knowledge of the true religion, and of all that men do mutually owe to one another. And we find that both are intended here in this context. That the general spreading of religion and righteousness is designed, and aimed at (with the desire and expectation of which the Psalmist's heart is so much taken up) you may see from the seventh verse, which concludes the psalm. "God shall bless us, and all the ends of the earth shall fear him." This shall be the consequence of his saving us; his giving us success, or his making his face to shine upon us: that is, that as he blesseth us, men shall more and more be induced to bless him. That expression, "the fear of God" is, you know, a paraphrase of true religion: not only religion in general towards God, but even such religion as hath its foundation in Christ, the Saviour and Mediator between God and man. And this seems to be here intended in the words of the text, "That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations." There can be no such thing as religion in the world at all, which is not founded in the hope of mercy, as the spring and fountain; and of final felicity, as the end; that all shall result into at last. There could be no more religion upon earth, than in hell, if there were no hope of salvation. Men would but have the religion of devils, or fear God with a fear of horror. For the devils are said to believe there is one God, and tremble; (*φεισσοσι*;) that is, gnash their teeth for horror. James 2. 19. They tremble to think there is a power superior to them, which they cannot overcome; and that will take a just, and eternal revenge upon them, for their insolent rebellion and wickedness.

It is then the knowledge of God's salvation, that giveth a rise and spring to religion; and without this, there can be no such thing as true religion in the world. But then also, that righteousness is comprehended within the compass of the object of this knowledge, as well as religion, appears from the same context; "Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth." ver. 4. As God, by the dispensation of the everlasting gospel, requires and teacheth us to live righteously, as well as godly; so doth that knowledge, which he ingenerates and worketh in the minds of men (wherever that teach-

ing is efficacious) produce righteousness towards one another as well as religion towards God. Both these I take therefore to be comprehended together, in the object of this knowledge; and so far it is divine. And,

2. It is divine also with respect to the author of this knowledge. The promise in the new covenant, which God said he would make with his people, and which is the connective bond of all that are his people indeed, is this; that they should be all taught of God. The passage is quoted from Jeremiah, chap. 31. 33, 34. by the apostle to the Hebrews; chap. 8. 10. 11. "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me from the least to the greatest." And indeed if that were not designed and meant, we could not give a reasonable account, why this should be made the matter of request and supplication to him, that his way might be known upon earth, his salvation among all nations. But though this is a knowledge to be taught and given by God himself, yet he useth means in order thereto. But by how much the more overpowering his influences are, and by how much the brighter and more penetrating his light is, in begetting this knowledge, so much the less doth the instrumentality of the means appear herein, and God is seen in it so much the more. And then,

3. The nature of this knowledge, as well as the object, and the author of it, must be understood to be divine too; inasmuch as it is plainly intimated to be efficacious and transforming knowledge, so as to make the subject like the object; that is, so as to make men appear like so many representations of God himself in this world; with respect to their holiness towards himself and mutual love, equity, and righteousness one towards another. This is the meaning of his writing his law on their heart. For whereas his law is all gathered up (as it is by our Lord himself) into this double summary of loving God with all our hearts and souls, our minds and strength, and loving our neighbours as ourselves; to have this divine knowledge, in truth and reality, is to have it so efficaciously operative, as to transform the very soul into this twofold love; and so accordingly to frame this world and the minds of men every where into compositions of love towards God, as the supreme good, and towards one another, in obedience and subordination to him. And this is that divine knowledge, which the text and context do manifestly intend. But,

II. We are to shew you how successes, and the favourable aspects of providence, relating to the public affairs of those who profess his name and espouse his interest, tend to propagate such knowledge as this in the world: that is, according to the expression in the text, to make it universal, so as that God's way may be known in all the earth, and his salvation unto all nations; and that true religion, and the fear of God may take place unto the utmost ends of the earth, according to the conclusion of the psalm. And when we behold God in such favourable aspects and appearances, how much does the hope revive, and rise in our souls, that this shall be the final issue of things! namely, that God shall be thus known in all the earth so as to be every where worshipped, and subdue the nations of the world to his equal, mild and merciful government. I shall proceed here by these two steps.—I shall take notice to you, that we have a great deal of reason to hope for this end: and—that we may observe an aptitude in such means to subserve it.

1. We have a great deal of reason to hope for this end; as a thing, which God ultimately has in design, and will effect. We find several unaccomplished, prophetic scriptures of this import, as that "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the seas." Isai. 11. 9. And so operative will be this knowledge, that besides the impressions of religion which it shall make upon the souls of men Godward it shall also impress a universal peaceableness, and righteousness upon men's minds, towards one another; so as that men shall generally agree to "beat their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Isai. 2. 4. Such will be the powerful efficacy of this divine knowledge, that it shall transform the world into love and kindness, benignity, and goodness; as God himself is love, and the supreme, and all-comprehending goodness.

And we see also a passage in the prophecy of Isaiah, which hath a more particular reference unto Christ: "Behold my servant whom I uphold; mine elect in whom my soul delighteth: I have put my Spirit upon him, he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench; he shall bring forth judgment unto truth" (unto victory it is read in the New Testament. Math. 12. 20.) "He shall not fail, nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth; and the isles shall wait for his law." Isai. 42. 1—5. How far we are

concerned in that, I shall not insist to shew; though many have made their observation upon that expression of the isles waiting for his law, and applied it to these islands that lie so near to one another, and wherein we are so much concerned. This however was a thing to be gradually done, but withal it was to be certainly and surely done; namely, that judgment should at length be set by him in the earth. This expression plainly imports the universality of the effect, and not as if it were this or that single spot, to which such an effect was to be confined; though, in strictness of speech, if it were any where known in the world it would be known or set in the earth. But that cannot be the design of the expression as it is generally explained; but that the earth in general is to be the subject of this great effect: and the expressions, though they are wont to be applied to the case of particular souls, yet they have a more diffusive applicableness, which is not to be overlooked. "A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench." A *meiosis* is acknowledged in these words: the meaning of which is, that he shall be so far from bruising the reed, that he shall strengthen it; he shall be so far from quenching, that he shall more and more inflame the smoking flax. This, I say, besides its being particularly applicable to the case of individual persons, must be understood also to have a general reference to the state of the Christian interest. That though it be low and languishing and many times like a bruised reed, or a little smoking flax, where the fire is ready to expire and go out, yet it shall not be. That bruised reed shall grow stronger, and that smoking flax shall be blown up into a flame; and so will go further and further on, till the effect shall measure with the earth and have no other confines and limits than that; till he shall set judgment in the earth, and have wrought that general transformation in the world, that all eyes shall see the salvation of God.

And when we are told in the book of Daniel (chap. 2. 45.) of the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, that should become a mountain and fill the earth; I think there is nothing, in any time or age hitherto past, that can answer the import of such a saying as that is. This is a work yet to be done, and therefore yet in great part to be hoped for; that, that stone Christ, Christianity, his religion diffused, and spread among all nations of the earth, by an almighty Spirit poured forth upon all, shall be so great a mountain, as to measure with the world, and to fill all the earth. But I know nothing as yet done, that answers the import of so great a word of prophecy, as this is.

Moreover we are told that upon the sounding of the seventh trumpet (which most agree hath not been sounded yet) all the kingdoms of this world are to be the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ. Rev. 11. 15. And this will be in answer to what was predicted long before, in the second psalm. "Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." Psal. 2. 8. So that as to the end we have a great deal of reason to hope for it, which I proposed to represent to you in the first place.

2. We may also discern an aptitude in such means, as we speak of, to serve this end: that is, when there are favourable aspects of providence upon those that espouse the interest of God in the world; in opposition to the irreligion, the anti-christianity, and the unrighteousness, that obtain therein, and too generally take place. By the consideration of several things that concur, you may discern a happiness in such means to serve this end. As consider,

(1.) That the minds of men do naturally sink into atheism, or irreligion and a deep oblivion of God, when things run on in one course and tenor, with a still, uninterrupted stream. Nothing is plainer or more obvious. Because from the creation of the world to this day, the course of nature hath been so constant, steady and uniform; therefore men have been apt to say, "Where is the promise of his coming?" 2 Pet. 3, 4. And so when the series of providence is generally equal to itself, or because men have no changes, therefore they fear not God. Psal. 55. 19.

(2.) God hath himself declared, that in such a case as this, he will be known by the judgments which he executes. Psal. 9. 16. And when they are judgments of such a kind, as to ensnare men in the works of their own hands (to use the following words) and when men's violent doings are turned upon their own pates, the Lord is then known by the judgments which he executes. "I know not the Lord, (said Pharaoh, Exod. 5. 2.) neither will I obey his voice;" but by judgment upon judgment, and plague upon plague, he made him know him before he had done with him. He could at length say, "The Lord fighteth for Israel, against the Egyptians." Exod. 14. 25.

(3.) Men are the more confirmed in their atheism, or in undue thoughts of God (which comes upon the matter all to one) when the course of providence seems to favour unrighteousness, or to run counter to a righteous cause. Then it is that they say, "God hath forsaken the earth; and if there be any God at all, he is surely a God that taketh pleasure in wickedness; he liketh our violence, our injurious, and wrongful



dealing to mankind; and even to them, who call themselves after his name." Thus because judgment, upon men's works of that kind, is not speedily executed, therefore are the hearts of the sons of men fully set in them to do evil. Eccles. 8. 11. For they say, "Tush! God seeth not, neither is there any knowledge in the Most High;" as such men are brought in speaking in the tenth, and ninety-fourth psalms: that is, this is represented as the sense of their hearts, which to him, who reads the sense, immediately impressed upon the mind, is equal to speaking; for he doth not need that they should put it into words. God reads it as it lieth there. But then,

(4.) When the course and tenour of providence in these respects alter, it tends both to revive, and rectify the notions of God, in the minds of men; I mean, when it alters so as to animadvert upon manifest, and palpable unrighteousness and iniquity in the world, and to favour a righteous cause.

This, I say, tends to revive the notions of God in the minds of men; for every body, in his distress, is apt to think of God. There are certain *semina*, certain principles of natural religion in the minds of all; which, though some take a great deal of pains quite to eradicate, yet they can never quite do it: nature is too hard for them: but those principles that they cannot extinguish, they make a shift to lay asleep. Lust is too strong for light. A propension to, and a resolution of being wicked, are for the most part victorious, generally governing in the minds of men; so as that the truths they hold, they hold in unrighteousness. Rom. 1. 18. But affliction, and the cross rencounters of providence, revive the sleeping principles of religion; which are bound up in a torpid, and stupifying state. Men begin to bethink themselves, when they find themselves in perplexity and distress. And when the wise man in Ecclesiastes (chap. 7. 14.) bids us in the day of adversity to consider, he speaks according to the natural tendency of the thing; because there will be a greater aptitude in the minds of men to consider, when things are adverse to them, and run quite contrary to their inclination. And,

The notion of a God is not only hereby revived, but in some measure rectified too. They, who before thought God did countenance their way, now find, that this was a weak, infirm argument, and that it proves no such thing. They cannot now any further satisfy themselves that, that Deity (which they cannot altogether disimagine) is favourable to unrighteousness; but that if there be a God, he is such a one, to whom right and

wrong are not indifferent things. They begin, I say, to apprehend so now.

An ungodly frame and disposition of spirit had obtained, to a very great degree, among Joseph's brethren; but when they meet with a series of cross providences, these remind them of their unrighteous dealing with their brother: the thoughts of which had slept with them long, but now they revive; and they now begin to return to a right mind concerning that very matter. But what comes nearer our case is that Assyrian tyrant,\* who had been so long the plague and pest of the world, and wrought such a destruction among the people of God. When providence came to animadvert upon him, and he lay under God's rebukes and frowns, he fancied himself a beast; and became like one, by the power of his own imagination, (as that is most likely to be understood) till he was capable of understanding, that the Most High did rule in the kingdoms of men, and give and dispose of them as he thought fit. Dan. 4. 17. And as I noted to you before, Pharaoh would not know God, neither obey his voice to let Israel go, after a series of cross providences following one another; till at length he saw himself surrounded with waters, that gave a safe passage to the Israelites, but a continual threatening and terror to him and his army; but when he found their chariot-wheels taken off, he cried out: "Now we must all fly, God is fighting for the Israelites." Then he bethought himself of a God, who did not like such a course as his was of oppression and tyranny, over a people more righteous than himself.

Not that we are to think, that successes and favourable aspects of providence are themselves, and considered apart, a measure of right and wrong, in the world. That can by no means agree with what we have supposed already: There are the greatest variations of providence imaginable, but there cannot be variations of what is right and wrong: for what is right, always will be right; and what is wrong, will always be wrong. But supposing that a cause be in itself manifestly righteous on the one hand, and unrighteous on the other; (which may be known by other measures) then providence falling in with that which in itself is apparently right revives and strengthens the apprehension of such a Deity, as approves of that which is right and equal, and disapproves the contrary. And so it tends at once, as I proposed to shew, both to revive, and rectify the thoughts of God. And hereupon,

(5.) The great commotions of nations, when the world hath

\* Nebuchadnezzar;

been long before in a deep dream, and a drowsy sleep, taking no notice of God that rules the world, and governs the kingdoms of men : when, I say, there are great agitations ; collisions of interests, and concussions of nations ; nation dashing against nation ; if in this case an apparently righteous cause receives countenance, and is under favourable aspects from heaven, God comes to be a great deal more thought of in the world than he was. He is then also thought to be such, as indeed he is ; a God who takes not pleasure in wickedness, nor approves of unjust, or unrighteous practices, though he may have forborne, and spared those for a time that used them. But further, when hereupon the thoughts of God are revived, and rectified in any measure in the minds of men, they become so much the more susceptible of superadded revelation from him ; such as that, which is contained in the Scripture. For it is to no purpose, when the world is generally atheistical, and have either buried the notion of a God, or perverted it, so as that to think there is a God or that there is none, is all one with them ; it is, I say, to little or no purpose for men to go up and down among such persons, in such a state of things, with a Bible ; for they disbelieve such a kind of Deity, as that book reveals. But if the thoughts of God be recovered, and rectified in the minds of men, they are a great deal more susceptible of superadded revelation from heaven. And especially,

(6.) If that revelation be, as that of the gospel is, a revelation of grace. For when God hath discovered himself by terrible things ; being displeased with the wickedness, the atheism, the irreligion, the unrighteousness of men in this world : if then there be a discovery of his reconcileableness, of his willingness, or readiness to be at peace with the world ; in what a preparation may the minds of men be supposed to be to receive such a doctrine, as that of the Christian religion ? a discovery of God in Christ reconciling the world to himself. Do but observe, therefore, that method of representing the great Christian doctrine of the gospel, of free justification by faith in Jesus Christ, which the apostle takes in the epistle to the Romans. He begins it with the discovery of the general wickedness of the Gentile world, and afterwards of the Jews. As to the former he saith, The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness, and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness. Rom. 1. 18. And what is all this for ? It is all to prepare and make way for the revelation of grace. We have proved, saith he, both Jew and Gentile to be under sin ; and therefore that there can be no such

thing as reconciliation to God, and acceptance with him, but it must be by the intervening righteousness of another. And so nothing, in the way of means, doth so dispose the minds of men to receive the gospel, as when God, in the methods and course of his providence, doth appear terrible against wickedness, the impiety and the injustice of men: nothing, I say, in point of means can be a greater preparation for the diffusion of the grace and light of the gospel, and the more ready and successful spread thereof. And I add,

(7.) That by such favourable aspects of providence upon them that espouse God's interest in the world, the great obstructors of the progress of the gospel come to be debilitated, and that power of theirs weakened, and retrenched; by which they opposed to the utmost the diffusing of religion, and the spreading of the knowledge of God; making it their business as much as possible to extirpate that religion, which godly souls do so much desire to see spread in the earth. When the providence of God doth animadvert on such, as make it their business to destroy true religion out of the earth; so as that instead of its being known in all nations it shall not be known any longer in their own, as far as it is in their power to extirminate it:\* when such, I say, are animadverted upon, every eye seeth how this tends to prepare, and make way for, the freer diffusion of the gospel-light, and knowledge, among men. For they that would do such a thing as root out true religion out of their own nation, to be sure would be far from letting it spread in the rest of the world; and, if it were in their own power, there should be no such thing in the world at all. Thus it appears that favourable events to those, who espouse God's interest, tend to remove obstacles out of the way to the diffusion of true religion; and to promote the propagation of it, in the earth. I therefore come now to shew, in the

III. Place, That the hope of this issue and end should animate mightily our praises, and be the principal ground of thanksgiving unto God for such successes and favourable aspects of providence upon them, who espouse his interest in the world. This might be many ways made out, and indeed by such means as are most evident in reason, and most intimate to the very essence of religion. For in plain common reason it appears, that the creature is not to be his own end; much less are we to suppose, that God doth such and such things for the

\* The author alludes, I suppose, to the late French king's repeal of the edict of Nantz a few years before, and the terrible persecution of the Protestants in his kingdom.

creature as his end. He that is the first, must be the last in all things. He that is the author of all things must be the end of all things. All this is plain to common reason. And if you go into the deeper inwards of religion, which are nearly allied to genuine, and rectified reason, nothing is plainer, than that this is grounded in those great things of religion, which are most essential to it. Self-denial, for instance: I do not pray to, nor praise God upon my own account, so much as upon his. For if I be a christian, if I be a disciple of Christ, I am taught to abandon myself, to nullify myself, and all interests and designs of mine, further than as they fall in with his, and are subservient thereunto. It is that which best agreeth with that great essential principle of all religion, the love of God, which is the noblest of all. By how much the more I love God, by so much the more is my heart raised in praises, when I find events to happen that have any tendency to promote his glory; and to make him more known, feared, loved, and honoured in the world. And, to speak summarily unto this matter, do but consider these two things; which we may superadd to all the rest.

1. That we ought to praise God for mercies, for the same reason that we pray for them. But we are not to pray for them ultimately for ourselves, but for God; that they may serve the interest of his glory, and be the means of diffusing the knowledge of him in the earth. It is not a real glory that can be wrought out for him; but it is manifestative glory; which stands in his being known and acknowledged by his creatures, the works of his hands, and so much the more by how much the more general it is. I have said we are to give thanks for mercies, upon the same terms that we are to pray for them. And how we are to do that, we are taught by that method of prayer which our Lord himself directed; in which the first thing petitioned for, is, "Hallowed be thy name." Math. 6. 9. And that God may be glorified, is the thing which is to be first in our eye and design. It ought to be so in our seeking mercies from him; and consequently it ought to be so in our rendering acknowledgements and praises to him, for his kindness and mercies. And again,

2. We ought to praise God for mercies, for the same reason for which we are to apprehend he bestoweth them. But it is plain he bestoweth them not for our sakes, but his own, "Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord God, be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel." Ezek. 36. 32. "I do not do these things on your account, but for my own name's sake: that my name may

be known among the heathen, and that the world may more generally acknowledge me to be God."

And according as things have this tendency and design, so let our praises be directed, this day, upon the same inducement, and from this same spring; namely, the hope that God's ways shall be known upon earth, and his salvation unto all nations: and that the present favourable aspects of providence will some way contribute hereunto, as they have this tendency and design. If we do not consider the matter so, we disparage our own victories, when we should give thanks for them; we make them little and inconsiderable, and upon the whole matter to have nothing in them. For abstracted from the subserviency in such providences to the interest of God, and religion, and righteousness in the world, I pray what have they in them? All goeth for nothing, and will be as nothing in a few years. We cannot say, that any thing is truly and rationally valuable, that runs not into eternity; that hath not a look towards an everlasting state of things, and the interest of that kingdom that shall never end. When the world passeth away, and all the lusts thereof, they who do the will of God abide for ever. 1 John 2. 17. It signifieth very little to particular persons whether they be rich, or poor, for a few days, here in this world. And it signifieth as little to nations, whether their condition be opulent or indigent; whether they be under oppression, or in a state of liberty: it signifieth little, I say, when it is considered, that these are replenished with inhabitants made for eternity, and an everlasting state of things, and who must shortly pass into that eternal state. Nothing is really, or upon rational accounts valuable with them, but what carries with it a signification of good, in reference to eternity. So it is to a person, so it is to a nation, and so it is to this world and all the inhabitants of the earth.

Therefore, while we praise God for the favourable aspects of his providence, which have such a tendency as this, generally and indefinitely considered, let us bring down this to the particular case before us. If we apprehend much is not done toward this great end, by this particular instance of a favourable providence, yet consider this as a part, and as a step to more. And in order to excite our praises the more, to heighten them, and raise our spirits in this duty of praising God, let us, I pray, represent to ourselves the contrary state of the case, even as to this particular thing that we praise God for; namely, his preserving the life of our king. What, if we had been to mourn for the loss of him! A strong hold hath also been taken, which a potent army came to relieve. Suppose the armies had fought;

suppose the army that came to the relief of Namur had been victorious; and suppose there had been a total destruction of our own: think what the dreadful consequences would have been! when, instead of having the knowledge of God to spread further in the world, we should have had violence, and tyranny in the height thereof deluging Europe! and threatening a deluge as general, as such power could extend unto! What hope could we have left to our posterity, that they should long enjoy that gospel, which we enjoy; or profess that religion in peace which we profess in peace and tranquillity? I say, do but turn the tables; and consider what our case had been, if it were stated in a direct contrariety to what it is. There are many more things which I might have said,

IV. By way of particular use of this subject; but at present let us call upon God for a blessing upon what hath been now spoken.