

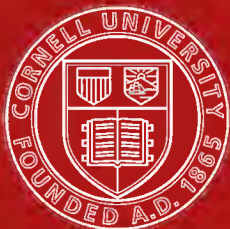


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A
S E R M O N
Preach'd before the
Q U E E N,

AT THE
Cathedral Church of *St. Paul*, *London*,
On the *Seventh* of *September*, 1704.

BEING THE
Thanksgiving - Day

F O R

The Late Glorious Victory obtain'd over the *French* and
Bavarians at *Bleinheim* near *Hochstet*, on *Wednesday*
the Second of *August*, by the Forces of Her Majesty
and Her Allies, under the Command of the Duke
of M A R L B O R O U G H.

By WILLIAM SHERLOCK, D. D.
Dean of *St. Paul's*, Master of the *Temple*, and Chaplain
in Ordinary to Her Majesty.

Publish'd by Her Majesty's Special Command.

L O N D O N:

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Church in *Fleetstreet*. M DCC IV.

Lviii. PSAL. III.

So that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous, verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth.

TH E Occasion of this present Solemnity is so very Glorious, that no Words can reach it; the Matter so well known, that it is as needless, as it would be improper to give the History of it in this Place and Presence; and the Marks and Characters of a peculiar Providence are so plain and visible in it, that one would think there should be no need to prove that it is God's doings; and then the natural Use of it, is, To give all the Glory to God, to *sing unto the Lord a new song, for he hath*

done marvellous things; his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory,
98. Psal. 1.

But as natural as it is for men to rejoice in the Blessings they receive, and to praise their Benefactors, when they see from what hands they come; very few men are so sensibly affected with an Invisible Providence, especially while all things move in their usual Course, and nothing happens, but what is within the power of visible Causes: And when such men observe, what Outrages are committed in the World by the Lusts and Passions of Men, especially of Powerful and Ambitious Monarchs, who know no other Law but their own Will and Lusts, who oppress their Subjects at home, and invade their Neighbours abroad, without any regard to Right and Justice, or the common Rules and
Prin.

Principles of Humanity , and yet that these men prosper in the World ; this tempts them to think, that there is no God, or that he takes no Care of the Government of the World, but has put Nature into Motion, and prescribed Laws to it, and then leaves it to govern it self ; and having endow'd Mankind with Reason and Understanding, leaves them to their own Counsels, and to divide the World among them as they please, and to shift as well as they can for themselves ; and thus Force and Power governs the World, though it sometimes changes Hands, and a great Oppressor sinks under the Power of a greater.

Now to awaken these Men, if they will be awakened into a sense of an overruling Providence, God sometimes visibly exercises an extraordinary Power
in

in the Government of the World; he puts Nature it self into violent Convulsions, and surprizes the most insolent Princes with unexpected and fatal Overthrows.

This was the Occasion of penning this Psalm. The *Israelites* were in great Danger from their Heathen Neighbours, who were very Fierce and Powerful, for they are compared to *young Lyons*, v. 8. *Break their teeth, O Lord, in their mouth; break out the great teeth of the young Lyons, O Lord;* that is, break their Power: And then follows a Prophecy of their final Ruin, and the wonderful manner of it; That they should *melt like waters, which run away continually; melt away like a snail, and like the untimely birth of a woman, that they may not see the sun:* and this with a very sudden Surprise; *Before your pots can feel the thorns,*
be

he shall take them away as with a Whirlwind, both living and in his wrath : This was such a remarkable Vengeance, as should be matter of joy to the Righteous, to the Children of *Israel*, and should make the Heathens themselves own God's peculiar Care and Providence in their defence ; for so I understand my Text, *so that a Man shall say* (that is, that the Heathens themselves shall confess) *Verily there is a reward for the Righteous, Verily He,* (that is, the Lord *Jehovah*, the God of *Israel*) *is a God, that judgeth in the Earth.*

The *Jews* could not want any evidence of a Divine Providence, for the whole administration of their Government, from their coming out of *Ægypt* to their possession of the Land of *Canaan*, was but one continued series of Mi-

B

racles:

acles: And tho' in after Ages Miracles were not so frequent, yet God's Government of them was very visible; for besides the standing Oracle of Urim and Thummim, which they consulted upon all great occasions, God sent his Prophets to them, to admonish them of their duty, and to direct them in War and Peace; So that those who believe the History of *Moses* and the Prophets, cannot want a Proof of a Divine Providence; but yet the Psalmist supposes, that there may be such extraordinary Events, especially as to the Successes of War, which do not amount to Miracles, and yet bear such visible marks of some invisible over-ruling Power, as may convince all, who are not obstinate Infidels, of a Divine Providence; but whether they will convince Infidels or no, they may help to inflame our Devotions,

votions, and give us a lively sense of God's wonderful Goodness in the late surprizing Success of your Majesties Arms.

As *First*, The Psalmist attributes all great and wonderful Successes to a peculiar and distinguishing Providence ; when he tells us *the Lord hath done marvellous things*, he immediately adds, *his Right Hand, and his holy Arm hath gotten him the Victory*. It is he alone, that doth wondrous things, which does not relate meerly to the Wonders of Miracles, but to the Wonders of Providence, and there are none greater than the wonderful Events of War ; such intire Victories as *David* describes, *Psal. 18. 37, &c. I have persued mine Enemies, and overtaken them, neither did I turn again till they were consumed ; I have wounded them,*
B 2 *that*

that they were not able to rise : They are fallen under my Feet : For thou hast girded me with strength unto Battel, thou hast subdued under me, those that rose up against me ; thou hast also given me the Necks of mine Enemies , that I might destroy them that hate me : Then did I beat them small as the dust before the Wind, I did cast them out as the dirt in the Streets : Many like descriptions we meet with in the Book of Psalms, which I take to be a very good Authority to attribute all such Successes to the same wonder-working Providence, and how nearly the late Glorious Victory answers this description of the Psalmist, I leave any one to judge : It is certainly one of God's marvelous Works, and we may summon all Europe in the words of the Psalmist, Come, behold the Works of the Lord, what Destruction he hath brought on
the

the Earth: And your renowned Captain General, the Duke of *Marlborough*, whose Name will live in Story, may address your Majesty in the words of the Psalmist, *I have persued your Enemies, and have overtaken them, neither did I turn back, till they were consumed. I have wounded them, that they are not able to rise, they are fallen under your Majesties Feet*, and yet there was no visible cause of such wonderful and surprizing Success: The Enemies were more in Number, had the advantage of Ground, and always thought themselves at least equal in Courage, and Superiour in Conduct; and yet never had the Power of *France* a more fatal Blow, never was such an Army so utterly, not only defeated but, destroyed; there is nothing like it in all its circumstances in modern Story, and I know not where
to

to equal it, excepting the Miraculous Victories of the *Jews* over their Enemies, when God visibly fought their Battels for them: And those who will not see and adore the Divine Glory and Majesty in such wonderful Events, deserve to fall under his Power and Vengeance.

Secondly, This was not only such a wonderful Success, as intitles it to a Divine Over-ruling Power, but was such a visible act of Justice, as may convince us, as it is in my Text, that *he is a God, that judgeth in the Earth*: In the 76 Psalm, to name no other, we have a particular account of this. *There brake be the Arrows of the Bow, the Sbiel, and the Sword, and the Battel: Thou art more glorious and excellent than the Mountains of Prey; that is, migh-*
tier

tier than those great and powerful Robbers, who oppress their Neighbours. *The stout-hearted are spoiled, they have slept their Sleep, and none of the Men of Might have found their Hands. At thy Rebuke O God of Jacob, both the Chariot and Horse are cast into a dead Sleep: And what account does the Psalmist give of this? Thou didst cause Judgment to be heard from Heaven, the Earth feared and was still, when God arose to Judgment, to save all the Meek of the Earth.*

Some Princes, who are too powerful for their Neighbours, know no other measure of Law and Justice, but the length of their Sword; but *God sitteth in the Congregation of the Mighty, he judgeth among the Gods: Arise O God, judge*

judge the Earth, for thou shalt inherit all Nations, 82 Psal. 1. 8.

We must not indeed judge of the Justice or Injustice of any Cause, meerly by the Events and Successes of War; for sometimes God may prosper unjust Arms, to punish a wicked People, whose Cause may be Just; and Unjust, Ambitious Princes, may be the Ministers of God's just Vengeance: God has given us other Rules, whereby to judge of Right and Wrong; but when we certainly know what is so, and see the Divine Providence so visibly appear in the defence of a Just and Righteous Cause, we have reason to say with the Psalmist in my Text, *Verily there is a reward for the Righteous, verily he is a God, that judgeth in the Earth.*

I think all Mankind agree, that for a Prince to abuse his great Power, to oppress his Neighbours, to invade their Territories, and afflict them with all the calamities and Desolations of War, out of an affectation of Universal Empire, to stand to no Contracts and Covenants any longer, than till he thinks he may safely break them; to draw other Princes by fear or flattery, and deceitful promises, into the Confederacy, and to threaten all *Europe* with chains and fetters; I say, all Men will agree, that this is great injustice and oppression, and that it becomes the just Judge of the World to punish it: and when we see this done in such a surprizing and wonderful manner, we have reason to attribute it to an over-ruling Providence.

Especially if we consider, that this was the critical minute; the fate of the Empire, and the Liberties of *Europe* depended upon the Success of this Battle, and that is God's time, *then he awaked, as a man out of sleep, and like a mighty man, that shouteth by reason of wine: and he smote his enemies in the hinder parts, he put them to perpetual reproach,* 78 P^{sa}. 65, 66.

This, I hope, may satisfy us from what hand this Blessing comes, and then we know where to pay our devout Praises and Thanksgivings. *Give unto the Lord, O ye mighty, give unto the Lord glory and strength. Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name, worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness,* 29 P^{sa}. 1, 2. *Sing unto God, ye Kingdoms of the earth,*

earth, O sing praises unto the Lord: to him that rideth upon the heaven of heavens, which were of old. Lo, he doth send out his voice, and that a mighty voice: Ascribe ye strength unto the Lord, his excellency is over Israel, and his strength is in the clouds: O Lord, thou art terrible out of thy holy places; the God of Israel is he, that giveth strength and power unto his people, blessed be God. 68 Psal 32, &c.

This was the constant practice of the Jewish Church, to ascribe the praise and glory of all to God; for this is to praise God, to publish his great and mighty Acts, to declare his Works with rejoicing, to exalt his Name, and to shew forth all his Praise.

We have, and I hope with very sincere and fervent Devotions, offered up

our dayly Prayers to God for the prosperous Succels of your Majesty and your Allies engaged in War ; and certainly if any People had ever reason to say, that God had heard their Prayers, we have, for whom God has done greater things than we could ask or hope for : This is an incouragement to continue our Prayers, when we see the blessed fruits of them: as the Psalmist declares, *116 Psalm 1, 2. I will love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplication; because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.* And this lays a new Obligation on us to praise him, and to give him the glory of all his works. *Blessed be God, because he hath heard the voice of my supplications: the Lord is my strength and my shield, my heart trusted in him, and I am helped; therefore my heart greatly*

greatly rejoyceth, and with my song will I praise him: the Lord is their strength, and he is the saving strength of his Anointed: save thy People, and bleſs thine Inheritance ; feed them alſo, and liſt them up for ever. 28 Pfalm 8, &c.

This is the work of this Day, to ſing, rejoyce, and give Thanks: and I hope there are none among us, ſuch profeſſ'd Enemies to a moſt gracious Queen, to their native Country, and to the Religion, Government and Liberties of it, as to envy and repine at the proſperity of our *Sion*, and even to quarrel at the divine Providence for ſaving us: If ſuch a miraculous Providence will not make Converts of theſe Men, I hope it will at leaſt make them modeſt, and that when they ſee the Power of *France* broken (the only ſupport of their hope and confidence) they

they will be more cautious how they provoke that Power which hath broken his.

Well! this is certain, that the Glory of all is due to God, and must be paid him with the most joyful Thanksgivings and Praise: But is there nothing due to Princes, nothing to their great Generals, who fight our Battles for us, and to whose Courage and Conduct, under the gracious influence of the divine Providence, we owe these glorious Successes? Yes certainly! all the Glory that can be due to Creatures, whom God thinks fit to make the great Ministers of his Providence, is due to them. All the Glory is due to God, as the sovereign Lord, and absolute Disposer of all Events; and all the Creature-glory is due to those, whom God makes the immediate Instruments of his Providence, and
by

by whose hands he conveys all these Blessings to the World.

Can any thing be more glorious to your Majesty's Reign, than to break the power of *France*, and to humble a proud insulting Monarch? How will this shine in the *English* Story, and equal you to the greatest Heroes of your Race! It is in vain for any Prince to affect an Universal Empire while an *English Queen* sits upon the Throne. *Queen Elizabeth*, of blessed memory, gave such a fatal blow to the *Spanish* Monarchy, in the height of all their pride and glory, as they could never recover to this day; and we hope *France* will as long and as sensibly feel the power of your Majesty's Arms, and be glad hereafter to secure his own Dominions, without invading his Neighbours.

What

What a glory is it to your Majesty's Reign, that when all *Europe* is in a flame, and many flourishing Countries ruined and spoiled, your Subjects enjoy a profound Peace at home, and know no more of War, than what they learn from the *Gazettes*, and other *Prints*, or from their publick Taxes, which, be they what they will, are not like free Quarter, or the plunder of Soldiers, the spoils and ruin of our Country both from Friends and Enemies, or the frights and terrors of a licentious Army.

What a glory is it to your Majesty, to defend and protect your Neighbour-States and Princes, when it shall be recorded to future Ages, that the Empire it self was preserved by your Majesty's Arms.

How

How different a Character is this from that of an Imperious Prince, who enslaves his Subjects at home, and disturbs his Neighbours abroad, who has lived upon Spoil and Rapine and sacrificed many Thousands of his own Subjects, and of his innocent Enemies, to his own Lust and Ambition: The one will be thought the Image of God, the other will make as ill a Figure, as a Crown'd Head can make.

But my Text observes, That such extraordinary Providences are a Reward for the Righteous, *Verily there is a Reward for the Righteous*; and this gives us reason to attribute, in a great measure, this glorious Success to Your Majesty's exemplary Piety and Devotion,

D

Justice

Justice and Charity. These are not very common among Crowned Heads, and such Princes may fight upon equal Terms; but a truly Devout, Praying, Just and Charitable Prince must be an overmatch, when the Divine Providence espouses the Quarrel.

Your Majesty has lately made a very acceptable Oblation to God, of the First-Fruits and Tenths for the Augmentation of small Vicarages; this directly tends to the Glory of God in providing for his Ministers, to discharge all the Offices of Religion, and to take care of the Souls of Men. Now God has expressly declared, *Them that honour me, I will honour, and those who despise me shall be lightly esteemed: and*
I know

I know not, why we may not reasonably conclude, that this great Honour God hath bestowed on Your Majesty, is a visible Testimony of his Acceptance of Your pious Offering.

This Honour God has conferr'd on Your Majesty, and this Honour we all heartily pay You; but still You will remember, in the midst of all Your Glory, from whose Hands You receive it, and make all suitable returns of Praise and Thanksgiving to God, as You do at this Day.

And can any thing be more glorious to that great Captain, the Duke of *Marlborough*, than to be intrusted by Your Majesty and

Your Allies in so great a concern, and to be the Minister of the Divine Providence, in as glorious an Action, as any upon Record.

God does not act immediately by himself, but chuses fit Instruments to execute his wise and gracious Designs; and if he does not find them every way fit, he makes them so; and if he raises them somewhat above the common Standard of Nature, this is a new Addition to their Glory.

But whether it was Nature, or something Supernatural, certainly never was Man better fitted with Courage, Conduct, and unwearied Industry for so great an Enterprize, and the Success answered it all; and

and if the Glory answer the Success, as it ought to do, and will do, he need not envy the Glory of the greatest Captains.

This is true Nobility, for Men, who have the Characters of Honour, to defend their Prince and their Country by their Arms; all the Titles and Ensigns of Honour originally came from the Field, and if they be not won there, but descend by Inheritance, or are conferr'd by the Favour of Princes, they seldom shine so bright in any other Sphere; for the People will admire a brave Captain, to whom they owe their Safety and Defence, above some empty Images of Honour.

God

God grant Your Majesty a long and happy Reign, and bless You with wise and faithfull Counsellors, and with such Generals and such Souldiers, that such Successes may attend Your Arms, and Your Arms hold the Ballance, and give Peace to Europe; that You may deliver the poor persecuted Protestants, and protect injured Princes; and that after a long and glorious Reign on Earth, full of Years and Honour, You may receive the Rewards of Just and Pious Princes in eternal Peace and Rest, through Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be honour, glory and power, now and for ever, Amen.

F I N I S.

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