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The Dean of **CHICHESTER's**

Thanksgiving-Sermon

B E F O R E

The House of Commons,

On T H U R S D A Y, *June* the 7th, 1716.





Veneris 8^o. Die Junij, 1716.

ORdered, That the Thanks of this House be given to the Reverend Dr. SHERLOCK, Dean of *Chichester*, for the Sermon by him Preached before this House yesterday, at *St. Margaret's Westminster*; and that he be desired to Print the same: And that Mr. *Ashe*, General Carpenter, and Mr. *Aislaby* do acquaint him therewith.

PAUL JODRELL,
Cler. Dom. Com.



A
S E R M O N

Preach'd before the Honourable

House of Commons,

A T

St. Margaret's Westminster;

O N

Thursday the 7th of June, 1716.



Being the

Day of Publick Thanksgiving to
Almighty God, for Suppressing
the late Unnatural Rebellion.

By **T H O. S H E R L O C K**, D. D. Dean of
Chichester, Master of the *Temple*, and
Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majesty.

L O N D O N:

Printed for **J. P E M B E R T O N**, at the *Buck and Sun*
against *St. Dunstan's Church* in *Fleetstreet*. 1716

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PSALM CXXII. 6.

*Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem:
they shall prosper that love thee.*



HERE is nothing places Religion in a more disadvantageous View, than the Opinion entertained by some, that a Concern for the present Peace and Prosperity of the World, is so foreign to all the Ends and Purposes of true Religion, that a good Man ought not to suffer his Thoughts, much less his Passions, and Affections, to be engaged in so worthless a Subject.

The Inspired Writers have indeed with repeated Instructions, guarded us against the Temptations of Riches, Honours, and Pleasures, and prepared us to undergo the Calamities and Afflictions of Life, with Firmness and Constancy of Mind. But what then? So does the General exhort his Soldiers to bear with Patience the Fatigues of War, to despise the Dangers of it, and in the Day of Action to press forward, regardless of Life it self; yet still Victory and Triumph, and the sweet Enjoyments of Peace, are the End of War; and the Soldier, tho' he must not fear to die, yet 'tis his Business to live and conquer. Religion is a Spiritual Warfare, and the World is the Scene of Action, in which every good Man will be sure to meet with Enemies enow; and 'tis not the End he aims at, but the Opposition he meets with, in pursuing that End, that makes it necessary for him to be inured to bear the Miseries and Afflictions of the World. Were the Case otherwise,
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it wou'd be Iniquity to pray for Temporal Peace and Prosperity ; since, we never ought to seek that by Prayer to God, which the Rules of our Religion will not permit us to be concerned for. So that the Exhortation in the Text, *To pray for the Peace of Jerusalem,* implies that we ought to be concerned for her Peace ; so concerned, as to do whatever is in our Power to procure, and to preserve it ; since Prayer to God for his Assistance, supposes the Use of our own Endeavours to obtain the Blessing we contend for : And that we may not think, that the Christian Religion has made any Alteration in this Case, *St. Paul* has exhorted us to pray, and to give Thanks for all Men ; especially for Kings, and all that are in Authority ; for this Reason, *That we may lead a quiet and peaceable Life in all Godliness and Honesty.*

Upon this View then, a Concern for the Peace and Prosperity of our Country, is not only a Political but a Religious

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ous Virtue; a Care that becomes us, both as we are Men, and as we are Christians; which stands not upon the narrow Bottom of Self-Interest, but rises from a more generous Principle, partaking of the Love of God, and of our Neighbour; since, whilst we seek the Publick Peace, we shew our Beneficence to one, and our Obedience to the other.

But there is a farther Consideration, which makes the Publick Peace to be the just Concern of every good Man. The present State of Religion in the World is such, and so connected every where with the Civil Rights of Mankind, that there is no probable Ground to hope, that even the Religion we profess can be saved out of the Ruins of the Liberty of our Country. If therefore, it be a Care worthy of a Good Man, to preserve the Purity of Religion in his own Time, or to transmit it safe to Posterity; if he may wish, as well as pray, that he may lead a quiet and peaceable Life in all Godliness and Honesty;

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or, that his Sons and his Daughters may stand up after him before the Lord in the Congregation of his Saints: If these be lawful Desires, and such as we may by our best Endeavours labour to obtain, our Religion will never permit us to be unconcerned Spectators in any Cause that affects the Prosperity of our Country; upon which, under God, depends the Liberty we enjoy of freely professing the Faith once delivered to the Saints.

The *Psalms*, from which the Text is taken, turns wholly upon these two Topicks; The Temporal Prosperity of *Jerusalem*, consider'd as the Head of the Civil Government, in the flourishing Condition of which the Happiness of the whole Nation was concerned; and consider'd as the Seat of true Religion, the City in which God had chose to dwell, and to place his Name there; Upon whose Peace consequently depended the Security of the Holy Religion, which was there taught and pro-

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fess'd.

fels'd. The first thing that gave Vent to the Holy *Psalmist's* Joy, was observing the Unanimity of the People in their Attendance upon the Service of God, in the Holy City : *I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the House of the Lord : our Feet shall stand within thy Gates, O Jerusalem.* From hence, he entertains himself with the beautiful Prospect of *Jerusalem*, as it was the Center both of Religious and Civil Government, in which were seated the Ark of God, and the Throne of *David* : From whence issued the Streams of Justice and Holiness to refresh and make glad all the Cities of *Israel*. *Jerusalem is builded as a City, that is compact together ; or, as the old Translation reads, that is at Unity in it self. Whither the Tribes go up, the Tribes of the Lord, unto the Testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the Name of the Lord. There are set Thrones of Judgment, the Thrones of the House of David.* The Contemplation of this happy State of his Country, naturally
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vented it self in the Warmth and Ardor expressed in the Text, and following Verse, *Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy Walls, and Prosperity within thy Palaces.* This affectionate Prayer and Exhortation was founded in a Concern for the Temporal Happiness of his Country and Nation; and therefore he adds, *For my Brethren and Companions sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee;* and in a just Regard for the Honour of God and his Religion, therefore he closes all with this Reflexion, *Because of the House of the Lord our God, I will seek thy good.*

You see the Extent of the Duty recommended in the Text, and the Reasons in which 'tis founded: And since we have so great an Authority to justify our Care and Concern for the Publick Peace and Happiness of our Country, both in regard to our Civil Rights, and to the Interest of that Holy Religion which we profess, I beg leave to bring

the Arguments home to our selves, and to the Occasion of this Day, by observing to you,

I. What Reason we have on both these Accounts to bless God for our Deliverance from the late Rebellion: And,

II. What Obligations we are under from the same Motives, to use our own best Endeavours, to make perpetual the Blessing of this Deliverance.

Some Arguments there are, which require rather a Capacity of Feeling, than any great Acuteness of Judgment, to apprehend them: Such are They which are drawn from the Experience of Sense, from Pleasure or Pain, from the Conveniencies or Inconveniencies of Life; of which no Man is a capable Judge, who wants the Sense proper to distinguish between the Pleasure and the Pain, or the Experience of the Convenience or Inconvenience under Debate. One wou'd think, that an ordinary Imagination

tion wou'd serve to represent the Difference of Liberty and Slavery ; of the State, in which every Man may sit under his own Vine, and eat his Bread with Chearfulness ; and that Condition, in which nothing is to be called our own, but the Misery of submitting to Despotick Power : And yet we find, that the Generality of Men are not Masters of so much Reflexion as is necessary to arrive at this small Degree of Knowledge in the Affairs of the World. 'Tis the Observation of *Tacitus*, the *Roman* Historian, one allowed to be a good Judge of Mankind, that the People of *Rome* were prepared for Slavery by the long Reign of *Augustus*, which had almost worn out the Race of Men that had tasted the Sweets of Liberty and Freedom. Ours seems to be the Reverse of their Case ; we have so long enjoy'd the Protection of our Laws, and are got at such a Distance from the late Times of Distress, that we have not Memory enough of them left to
awaken

awaken our Care to prevent their Return. Our Fathers, who lived under the Dregs of Popery and Arbitrary Power, are most of them gone off the Stage, and have carried away with them the Experience, which we their Sons stand in need of, to make us in earnest to preserve the Blessing of Liberty and pure Religion, which they have bequeathed us. O! that I had Words to represent to the present Generation the Miseries which their Fathers underwent; that I cou'd describe their Fears and Anxieties, their restless Nights and their uneasy Days, when every Morning threaten'd to usher in the Last Day of *England's* Liberty, when Men stood mute for want of Counsel, and every Eye was watching with Impatience for the happy Gale that shou'd save the Kingdom; whose Fortunes were reduc'd so low as to depend upon the Chance of Wind and Weather.

Had Men such a Sense of the Miseries of the Time past, it wou'd teach them
what

what Consequences they were to expect from any successful Attempt against the present Establishment. They wou'd not want to be instructed, what a Free Nation had to fear under the Government of one, Educated in sight of all the Arts of Tyranny and Oppression : Or, what Usage a Protestant Church wou'd find, under the Influence of a Prince trained up from his Cradle, in the Superstition and Corruption of the Church of *Rome*. Were the Influence of Religion confined within the narrow compass of every Man's own Breast, the Subject perhaps, would have but little Reason to be inquisitive about the Prince's Perswasion ; but since 'tis part of every Man's Religion to propagate the Doctrine he professes ; and since the Methods of Propagation in the Hands of a Prince, which are strengthened by the Power of the Temporal Sword, are not likely to be confined to the gentle Measures of Reason and Instruction ; the Religion of the Prince must be considered as a
Condition

Condition requisite to the Happiness and Prosperity of the People. In our own Case this Consideration is the more necessary, because, 'tis the avowed Principle of the Church of *Rome*, not only to wish for the Conversion of those who dissent from her, but to force it by all the Terrors of Worldly Power. And a Nation must want common Sense, to put the Sword of Government into his Hands, who they know will be bound in Conscience to use it, either to the Destruction of their Souls or their Bodies. There is no one doubts, but that there are Natural Incapacities sufficient to exclude one, otherwise entit'led to Government. An outrageous Madman no Body wou'd trust, because nothing is to be expected from him but Havock and Destruction: Now if a Moral Defect will produce the same Evil Consequences, Why shou'd not the Moral Incapacity be esteemed as strong a Bar as the Natural? It matters not whether 'tis Conscience or Madness which causes the
Destru-

Deſtruction, a Nation ſurely has a Right to prevent ſuch a Violence, without being troubled to know, whether the Diſtemper from which it grows, has its Root in the Head or in the Heart. The *Romaniſts* have little reaſon to complain of this Inſtance of our Caſe for our own Security, ſince 'tis the Doctrine of their Church, taught by Councils, confirmed by Popes, and defended by their ableſt Schoolmen and Divines, That Hereticks have no Right to Dominion; that they may be depoſed by the Pope, and their Subjects abſolved from all Bonds of Allegiance to them. And their Practice has been of a Piece with their Doctrine: *Henry* the III^d of *France* was excommunicated for a leſs Crime, for favouring only the Succeſſion of a Proteſtant Prince; and thus excommunicated, was murdered by a poor Monk. *Henry* the IVth was ſo ſtrongly oppoſed by the League, animated by the Pope, that he cou'd never fix himſelf in the Throne till he changed his Religion. If

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we come to our own Country, Queen *Elizabeth* was formally deposed by a Bull from *Rome* ; and her Subjects absolved from their Obedience to her : Nay, thrice was she deposed by three Popes, to shew how constant they were to this Point. When King *James* the First came to the Crown, his first Compliment from *Rome*, was by a Mandate of *Clement* the VIIIth, declaring him incapable of holding the Crown, because he was an Heretick ; that is, because he was a Protestant ; and therefore enjoyn- ing his Subjects to yield him no Duty or Obedience. But notwithstanding this Doctrine, so well confirmed by Authority and Practice, yet, considering the present State of *Britain*, and the Views of *Rome*, I shou'd not be surprized to hear her Emissaries maintaining, with all Solemnity, the contrary Opinion. When a Protestant Prince was to be deposed by *Roman-Catholicks*, it was proper Encouragement, to tell them, that Heresy was a Forfeiture of Dominion ; But
now,

now, that they want the Assistance of the Protestants of *England* to advance a Popish Prince to the Throne, we may certainly expect to hear from them; That Religion is out of the Question, when the Claims and Titles of Princes are under Debate; and perhaps too we may be ready enough to believe them; so much *wiser are the Children of this World in their Generation, than the Children of Light.*

The Principles upon which the Legality of the present Establishment are maintained, are I think but improperly made a Part of the present Quarrel which divides the Nation. There are but few who have not precluded themselves themselves on this Point: Those I mean who have had Courage and Plainness enough to own their Sense, and to forego the Advantages, either of Birth or Education, rather than give a false Security to the Government, which under their present Persuasion they cou'd not make good. To these I have no-

thing more to say, than to wish them what I think they well deserve, a better Cause : But to us, who had bound our selves by previous Oaths and Obligations in the most solemn manner in the World, the Accession of His Majesty cou'd administer no Occasion of re-considering this Question ; there was nothing new required of us ; we had no Faith to give, which was not already plighted, and bound upon our Souls by the most Sacred Engagements. Those therefore under these Circumstances, who have openly engaged, or secretly favoured the Rebellion, are void of all Excuse ; they are guilty of the greatest Crime, under the greatest Aggravation ; and seem to have no Refuge left, but that which was *Adam's Policy*, *who hid himself from the presence of the Lord God amongst the Trees of the Garden*, because he had nothing to cover his Nakedness.

Shou'd any such, quitting all Pretences of Dissatisfaction with the Lawfulness of the present Government, plead
 Disobli-

Disobligations or Resentments of any sort, as the Ground of their Proceedings, To them we answer in the Words of our Blessed Saviour, *Ye know not what manner of Spirit ye are of.* Where did they learn, that Rebellion is the proper Remedy in such Cases? The Church of *England* has no such Doctrine; and if they cannot govern their own Passions, yet in Justice to Her, they ought not to use her Name in a Cause which she ever has, and will disclaim.

'Tis perhaps too high a Degree of Virtue to be expected in this Age, that Men should act with a steady View to the Publick Good, without being drawn at all by the Biass of their own Interest: Whoever builds upon a Dependence on such a Behaviour from any Set of Men, will, I believe, find himself mistaken. Allow then what cannot be avoided, That Men will differ in their Views and private Interests, yet still methinks there is one common Concern, which is the Preservation of the Whole, in the Security

rity of which every Man's private Fortune is founded ; and 'tis as absurd for a Man under any Resentment whatever, to enter into Measures destructive of his Country's Peace, as it wou'd be for him to burn the Title to his Estate, because the Tenant was behind in his Rent.

If therefore we have any Concern for the Peace and Happiness of our Country, or any Zeal to preserve the Light of the Gospel with which these Kingdoms have been bless'd ; or if our Consciences are not harden'd against the Influence of the most solemn Oaths and Obligations, under which we have bound our selves to be true and faithful to our present Sovereign ; we must detest this Rebellion, and with sincere Hearts adore the Goodness of God, who hath wrought this Deliverance for us. Let us then, in the Second Place, consider,

II. What Obligations we are under from the same Motives, to use our own best

best Endeavours to make perpetual the Blessing of this Deliverance.

This Obligation is but the necessary Consequence of the Duty which we are met this Day to perform. Thanksgiving is little more than a solemn Piece of Mockery, if we have no Value for the Deliverance for which we would seem to be thankful. If any, or if all the Reasons already mentioned, ought to excite us to pray for the Peace of our Country, or to bless God for restoring it, they must also move us to do what is in our own Power to preserve it; since in vain do we pray for the Assistance of God in any Case, whilst we neglect to use the Means of helping our selves, which he has put in our own Power.

How much the Preservation of the present Establishment depends on the Success of Publick Councils, every Body knows; and yet should I, by any particular Application, seem to suppose that your Zeal in this Cause wanted a Spur, I might well be thought to *be the only*

only Stranger in Israel, and not to have known the things which have come to pass in these Days.

What private Men can do, they best know: Many are certainly well qualified by their Reputation, their Station, and great Abilities, to promote the Interest of their King and Country; and surely 'tis every Man's Duty to do what he thinks he lawfully may do, to serve these desirable Ends. And this would be allowed to be a very reasonable Demand, were not the Nation unhappily divided into Factions, which have swallowed up all publick Duty, and transferr'd to themselves that Allegiance which is due only to the Crown. Were there but half the Zeal to serve the Publick, which Men daily express for the Interest of their several Parties, there would be but little Encouragement for a Second Attempt to disturb our Peace.

'Tis wonderful to observe, in all Cases, this steddy Adherence to Party: Those who ascribe it to mere Corruption,

on, and the sordid Ends of private Gain, see but little into the true Cause: There is another Principle more remote from common Observation, which has a greater Influence; a Principle in it self more generous, tho' oftentimes in its Consequences not less pernicious: I mean, the Regard which Men have for their own Credit and Reputation. This is the natural Fruit of the best Soil; every good Man has it, and 'tis the Life of Virtuous Actions, when its Views are rightly directed. But where Kingdoms are divided into opposite Factions, the true Standard of Reputation will always be lost, and Men will grow into Esteem, not for their Virtuous Actions, but for their Party Merit. Hence it comes to pass, that in Civil Disputes, 'tis as reproachful to deviate from your Leader's Opinion, as 'tis for a private Soldier to desert his General in the Day of Battel. The Obligations of Publick Duty, or of private Opinion, will obtain no Quarter for you; for such is your

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Case, that you may with less Hazard of Reproach commit almost any Vice, than venture to be in the Right without the Support of a Majority. This Evil is the more to be lamented, because its Infection spreads most easily among the best. *Helvidius Priscus* lived in the Degeneracy of the Empire, but had all the Virtues of an Old Roman; yet he was observed to be *appetentior fame, quando etiam sapientibus*, as the Historian remarks, *cupido gloriae novissima exiit*. But whatever may be said in Excuse for this Passion, in Matters which a willing Casuist may persuade himself to be indifferent; yet surely 'tis to be highly blamed, when the Prosperity of our King, our Country, and our Religion are at stake: In such a Time every Man should run the Hazard of being true to the Publick, especially if he cannot desert it without being false to himself.

There is another Evil, not much unlike the former, tho' of a different Kind, which is owing also to our unhappy Divisions.

visions. If on one Side, it may be sometimes difficult for Men who have no ill Intention to the Publick, to discharge their Duty to it; on the other, there will always be some to rejoice when they do wrong; tho' Zeal for the Government never produces a more præposterous Effect, than when it makes Men take Pleasure in the Number, or in the Perverseness of its Enemies. Those who are sincerely, and with any Judgment in the Interest of the King, have nothing more to wish, than to see the Hearts of all His Majesty's Subjects united in Obedience and Affection to him; or if that is not to be obtained, to see as many as can be. But there is a little Kind of Men, who mistaking their Party Zeal for Affection to the Government, seem transported when those whom they have been taught to think their Enemies, do by any Misbehaviour render themselves obnoxious to the present Powers: As they rejoice in such Misbehaviour, so are they apt sometimes to

provoke it, and think themselves never better entitled to plead their own Merit, than when they have urged others to such things, as a wise Man and a Friend to the Government would with all his Care have laboured to prevent.

Under these unhappy Circumstances there is more reason to wish, than there is ground to hope for Peace and Unanimity at home. 'Tis an easy Matter for a few designing Men, to fill the People with great, and at the same time, very unjust Apprehensions from their Governors; tho' His Majesty, in His great Wisdom and Goodness, took at the very beginning the properest Step to prevent this Mischief, by declaring, that he wou'd always make the Constitution in Church and State the Rule of his Administration. As our Constitution in Church has many Friends, so to our great Misfortune has it some Enemies; and as it cannot be dissembled, but that the Fears and Jealousies on one side, so it will

will hardly be denied, but that the Hopes and Expectations on the other, have been very unreasonable. And considering, how People, in a State of Suspicion, watch and observe each other, how naturally the Fears of one increase by seeing the Hopes of the other, without knowing or enquiring what Ground or Foundation there is for them; it will be necessary, in order to quiet the angry Spirit that is among us, to suppress *these Hopes*, as well as to allay *those Fears*: And I pray God reduce them both to their proper Bounds, that we may all be content to obey on the same Terms, on which His Majesty has assured us He is disposed to Govern.

But above all, let us take care to justify our selves in our Concern for our Holy Religion, which is our best Plea, and surest Pledge of Divine Favour; by adorning in our Lives and Conversations the Doctrine which we profess. We have with a commendable Zeal, on many Occasions, stood in De-
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ſenſe of our Religion, at the Expence of the Blood and Treafure of the Nation ; let it not be obſerved by our Enemies, that the Religion of *England* is a meer Watch-word for an Army, never valued but when 'tis to be fought for ; and in Times of Peace laid by, condemned to ruſt, with other the uleſs Arms and Inſtruments of War. Our Religion has Domeſtick, as well as Foreign Enemies ; we have ſeen with what an uncommon Zeal it has been attack'd by Infidels ; profeſſing, not to introduce any Religious Perſuaſion, but to throw out all. Theſe Men who deride all Religion, will be found, in the End, to be the beſt Agents for them who labour to bring in the Worſt : And the Intereſt of our Country being ſo united to the Cauſe of Religion, ſuch profane Liberty is deſtructive of our Security, ſince every Heart that is alienated from a Senſe of God and Religion, carries off with it a Pair of Hands from the Deſenſe of the Publick.

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To a Zeal for True Religion let us add Charity, the Crown of all Vertues; and let us sanctify this Day of our Deliverance, by laying aside all Hatred, Malice, and Desire of Revenge; that we may with one Heart, and one Mind, glorify God for his Mercies, and implore his Protection for our selves, our King and our Country; that he wou'd give us the Blessings of Truth and Peace; that he wou'd long preserve our Sovereign; and that there may never want a Protestant Prince descended from him,
To go in and out before this People.

F I N I S.

*Sermons by the Reverend Dr. SHERLOCK,
Dean of Chichester.*

A Sermon Preach'd before the Queen at *St. James's*,
Jan. 31. 1703-4.

A Sermon Preach'd before the Sons of the Clergy
at *St. Paul's*, *Dec. 5. 1710.*

A Sermon Preach'd before the Right Honourable
the Lord-Mayor, &c. at *St. Paul's*, *Nov. 5. 1712.*

A Sermon Preach'd before the Honourable House
of Commons, at *St. Margaret's Westminster*,
March 8. 1714.

A Sermon Preach'd at the *Temple-Church*, *Novem-
ber 20, 1715.*

All Sold by John Pemberton.

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