A

SERMON

DELIVERED AT THE

SPANISH & PORTUGUESE JEWS' SYNAGOGUE,
BEVIS MARKS.

ON

SUNDAY 20th SIVAN—21st JUNE, 5600,

BEING THE DAY APPOINTED FOR

A GENERAL THANKSGIVING TO ALMIGHTY GOD

FOR THE MERCIFUL PRESERVATION OF

Her Most Gracious Majesty and Her
Ilustrious Consort.

BY THE REV. DR. J. L. BIBAS.

LONDON.

5600.
Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son. He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment. The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills by righteousness.” (Ps. lxxii. 1, 2, 3.)

Talmud:—In the Treatise of Berachot, Chap. 9, page 55, Rabbi Johanan says, “Three things the Almighty proclaimed himself, namely, ‘famine,’ ‘abundance,’ and ‘a good governor.’ Famine, as the text says in...
2 Kings viii. 1, 'For the Lord hath called for a famine.' Abundance, as it is written in Ezekiel xxxvi. 29, 'I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you.' A good governor, as the text proves in Exodus xxxi. 2, 'See, I have called by name Bezaleel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah.'

The sacred duty of addressing you this day has devolved upon me, in consequence of an official application with which I have been honoured, at a very short notice, by the Gentlemen of the Mahamad. I think it necessary to premise, that, although a British subject, I labour under as many and as great disadvantages as if I were a foreigner, owing to the fact, that my life and my sacred labours have been passed entirely in foreign countries, where I have been deprived of the use and study of the English language, so that I may justly fear my competency to treat this subject in a manner worthy of its high importance, and the dignity of this assembly.

I must, therefore, throw myself upon the candour of my auditory, trusting that they will not permit the high matter of my argument to suffer in their estimation from the imperfections of the diction in which I am able to convey it.

The object, my brethren, for which we are this day united in the sacred temple of the Almighty God of Israel, and in the presence of his Holy Glory, which rests upon his divine law, as it appears, and is clearly proved by the text in the pentateuch:
And there I will meet with thee, and I will com-
"mune with thee, from above the mercy seat, from
“between the two Cherubim, which are upon the ark of
“testimonies, of all things, which I will give thee in
“commandment unto the children of Israel.” (Exod.
xxv. 22.)

And although, at present, we are deprived of the
Sanctuary, referred to in the said text, by our own
misconduct, nevertheless, the merciful God has promised
his chosen people, to favour with his glory all places
dedicated by them to the worship of his holy name, and
to consider each of them as a little Sanctuary, as the
prophet Ezekiel says in chap. xi. verse 16:—

“Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord God; Although
“I have cast them far off among the nations, and
“although I have scattered them among the countries,
“yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the
“countries where they shall come.”

The object to which I have alluded in the opening
of this discourse, is the most religious, the most dutiful,
and the most noble, which has ever existed; these three
different principles, religion, duty, and honour, alike
impose upon us the most sacred obligation, of giving
thanks to Providence for the salvation of her most
gracious Majesty the Queen of these realms, and her royal Consort, from the atrocious attempt which has been made upon her sacred person, and that of her royal husband.

I do not attempt to repeat the fact; my lips are paralysed at pronouncing such horror; my bones are shattered by the terror of contemplating the evils and miseries involved in that abominable attempt: my heart is agitated.

"As the trees of the wood are shaken by the winds." (Isaiah vii. 2.) Which phrase the prophet employs to denote the continuing of an unresisting heart; comparing the same with the trees of the forest, which are in continual motion; being situated in an open place, without any kind of shelter, like the forest, the slightest breath of air keeps them in constant motion; such was the miserable situation of the tribe of Judah when the king of Syria was plotting and devising infamous plans to overturn the throne of David.

"Because Syria, Ephraim, and the son of Remaliah, " have taken evil counsel against thee, saying, Let us "go up against Judah, and vex it, and let us make a "breach therein for us, and set a king in the midst of "it, even the son of Tabeal." (Isaiah vii. 5, 6.)

Paying no respect to the Supreme Being, who had graciously granted, for ever, the throne of the kingdom
of Israel to David and his descendants, as it is written in Psalms lxxxix. 29, 30:—

"My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven."

And dreading not the severe punishment which they made themselves liable to suffer, from the justice of the Supreme Being; but what were their fates? The total ruin of Syria and its allies, and the triumph and glory of the house of David; to use the prophet's own expression:—

"And say unto him, Take heed and be quiet; fear not, neither be fainthearted for the two tails of these smoking firebrands; for the fierce anger of Rezin with Syria, and of the son of Remaliah: Thus saith the Lord God, It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass. For the head of Syria is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is Rezin; and within sixty and five years shall Ephraim be broken, that it be not a people."

(Isaiah vii. 4, 7, 8.)

No subject in the Holy Scripture could, I presume,
be more appropriate to our case, than the foregoing; there a plot was formed to overthrow the lawful king of Judah, whom the Almighty had placed upon the throne; here, in our case, an attempt of the same nature has been made upon our beloved and lawful Queen and her royal Consort.

If we only consider events from the time of king George the III, of blessed memory, to the epoch of the accession to the throne of our present gracious Sovereign, we shall clearly see that the will of the Almighty alone has placed her upon the throne of Great Britain, to govern and rule this great Empire. Consider only the wonders of Providence, in having preserved the life of William the IV, of blessed memory, until such time that her present gracious Majesty was of lawful age, to bear the burthen of Government, without the necessity of forming a Regency during her minority, shewing evidently the will of the Almighty to place in her hands the royal authority and sceptre of command, from the very moment of the demise of her uncle, our late revered Sovereign: so we may say, doubtless, she was proclaimed Queen of Great Britain by the voice of the Almighty, and not by mere succession; so I conclude that her right to the throne is not like the common order of succession, but is more substantial, from the peculiarity of events, which are so obviously demonstrated, and illustrated by the text from the Talmud, cited at the beginning of my discourse, for it cannot be supposed that the term used of proclaiming is to be understood literally, but that, from his being the Supreme Director of the Universe, the events
which he causes to take place to execute his will, may very appropriately be termed his proclaiming.

In all the attempts which history presents to us, all of them were executed instantaneously, like a thunderbolt: in none of them will be found that a ruffian, or ruffians had time to carry on their criminal schemes, or time to reflect on their murderous intentions, such for example as that of Caesar by Brutus and Cassius, a murder which was executed by a hasty *coup de main*, hardly possible to conceive; or the infernal machines which attempted the life of Louis Phillipe, king of the French: they were also contrived to act with the utmost promptitude.

The present attempt was conducted with a great deal of coolness, and such astonishing deliberation and quietness as to leave no doubt, to any living soul, of the interference of a merciful Providence, shewing that no human diligence, no precautions, no guards, no human foresight could have saved the life of our beloved and gracious Queen. The assailant had all the time to fire, not one, but two shots, and those not far from the royal persons, yet by the will of Providence, his attempt upon both proved abortive; it was thus the will of the Disposer of destinies to shew to every one, to convince every man of sense, every man of religion, that he is the only Guardian of mankind, and more particularly so to those whom he has created to rule and govern nations.

As the holy King and Psalmist says:—

\[\text{עָשָׂה הָֽוָּא לָֽא לָֽא יִהְיֶה בְּחַיָּ֥ה שֵׁיָּ֖֑א עֵמָּ֤לֶה בְּנֵּ֣וּי בּוֹרֵ֣י בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּοֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי בּוֹרֵי
"Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." (Psalm cxxvii.)

So, in our case, the Almighty sheweth clearly that his Providence has preserved our most gracious Sovereign and ourselves from all the evils which our enemies have contrived against us; but thanks to our Creator, that our gracious Queen Victoria, and her royal consort Prince Albert are saved, and will be saved; but how? Solely by the shield of the Almighty, the only Redeemer and Saviour of all mankind. Let us therefore pray and hope that, as in the case of the King of Judah, the Almighty passed a decree upon the treacherous Rezin and his colleagues to be destroyed for ever; so in our case, he will protect, for ever, our Sovereign, and her Government, and overturn and frustrate any attempt that may be imagined to their prejudice, or injury, and that the Almighty may still be gracious unto us, to preserve the precious life of our beloved Queen, and to make her triumph over all her enemies; to make her Government powerful and respected, both at home and abroad; and as the King of Judah was rewarded and blessed with a son, who was as pious as he was glorious; that he overcame the armies of the proud Sennacherib, King of Syria, so in the present case, we hope that the first scion of our beloved Queen may be pious, powerful, and mighty to his enemies, and be a father to his faithful subjects.

My brethren, I have said in the opening of my discourse, that our reunion this day, is religious, dutiful, and honourable. I propose now to explain those three different points separately.
I begin with the most essential, which is religion, the part indeed which no man can be without. I positively believe that morals and religion are synonymous in their essential meaning.

What religion can be imagined, without solid and perfect morality? And how can the practice of morality be admitted unless founded on religion? Religion teaches us to believe in God, and to fear him; morality teaches wisdom and instruction, as the wise King says:

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction." (Prov. i. 7.)

We plainly see, by the passage which I have now quoted, that religion is the beginning, and morality is the end; one is inadmissible without the other, together they form a virtuous and pious man. Can it be possible for a man to possess the end of a thing without having the beginning of it? Such idea would be absurd.

Therefore, religion which is not founded on morality is not religion, and morality which is not preceded by true religion is not morality. Every Israelite that has any correct idea of his religion, is well acquainted with this unalterable principle.

I do not mean, in this discourse, to enter into further discussions of theological matters. I mean only to point out, that, according to our holy religion, a man who pretends to be an Israelite, must respect his lawful Sovereign and the Government; for the slightest disrespect offered to the Sovereign, or the Government of the country to which he belongs, is a grave offence, as the wise King says:
My son, fear thou the Lord, and the King, and meddle not with them that are given to change.”

(Proverbs xxiv. 21.)

By which text the fear of the King is compared to that of God, and the word change made use of by the prophet, implies that no difference can be admitted.

Now, let us reflect whether our religion is such. It is! and if our duty, in consequence, is to be carried to so high a degree, what must be our attachment, and our fidelity to her Majesty’s person, to her royal Consort, and to her blessed and mild Government?

As an Israelite, I feel pride, and I trust, an honest pride, that in no other nation in the world, are loyalty and fidelity to the Sovereign, to the Government, and to the Country better understood. History has never recorded a single instance of an Hebrew having betrayed his Sovereign; not because the Hebrew nation have not filled the first and most important offices of Government, for the early Kings of Castille and Portugal employed Jews as their ministers and privy councillors; the Arabian Caliphs and the Emperors of Turkey have ever had individuals of our nation for the trustees of their vast empires; even our hated enemy Nebuchadnezzar, confided the management of the great Babylon, at that epoch the great emporium of the world, to the care of the three famous Israelites, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, and an innumerable number of our brethren, who were models of constancy and fidelity. But what need we apply to such remote ages? Let us quote what
we have witnessed with our own eyes. How many illustrious and gallant leaders have served in the armies of France and Poland; never has there been a single instance of any one of them ever betraying their trust: have they not shed their blood, and breathed their last sigh supporting and maintaining their engagements, and fulfilling their duties?

As to the second point, which is, our duty, I confess, my brethren, that I cannot find words sufficient to express the extent of such duty. Though we should pour out our souls before the Almighty, and give homage to him for so singular and powerful a miracle as he has wrought for us, on this occasion, in the salvation of our Queen, we have scarcely done the smallest fraction of our duty, considering the amazing horrors which we have escaped, and from which the merciful Almighty has graciously and mercifully saved us. The prophet Isaiah says in chap. lxiii. 7.—

"I will mention the loving-kindness of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us, and his great goodness towards the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them, according to his mercies and according to the multitude of his loving kindness."

The crisis was general, it extended throughout the world, it was the Queen of England who was menaced, (i.e.) the Queen of this great and powerful nation,
which by the Almighty's will is at present ruling directly or indirectly the whole globe. So when the head of this nation was for a moment in danger all the world was, of course, in similar peril.

And I wish to impress on your minds, brethren, that we, the Israelites, above all other subjects of the realm, are bound to return thanks to the Almighty, on this occasion, for we are the least in number, as is clearly shown in Deut. vii. 7.—

לָא מַרְבֹּעַ מִכָּלּ הָעָם השָׂקִית, בָּכִם וְיִבּוֹר בָּכִם לְיִשְׂרָאֵל

"The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people."

We are the least in power, but we are the most particularly protected by the Almighty, and so we must be the party most interested in the preservation of the life of her Majesty and that of her royal Consort, as well as in the preservation and continuance of the present happy Government.

As to the third and last point which I noticed in the beginning of this discourse, which is honour: it might be proper to explain that the word honour is transcribed in Hebrew by the word בָּכִים, but in the English language, honour is applicable to various things, but in our holy language, it is more applicable to the sixth and ninth signification which Johnson assigns to it, (viz.) reverence, veneration, glory; and of the like nature are all the texts, for example in Exodus xxix. 43.—

בָּכִים וְנַעַשְׂנֵוהּ

"And the Tabernacle shall be sanctified by my glory."
In Proverbs iii. 9.—

"Honour the Lord with thy substance."

In 1 Samuel ii. 30.—

"For them that honour me, I will honour."

Now, brethren, it is obvious enough that if the word honour signifies reverence, respect, &c., how much are we, the Israelites, indebted to her Majesty and her Government. It may be said that we do not share all the benefits of other citizens in this happy country, but do we not enjoy equal liberty and equal laws, do we not possess all that is necessary for our welfare and prosperity, and may we not expect under the benificent sway of our beloved Queen and her wise Government, the achievement of all that, as Jews, we can desire; thus anything which we may do to celebrate and to rejoice on this happy occasion, must be insufficient; indeed, I cannot find words adequate to express our duty on this occasion, except what the holy King hath said in his Psalms:—

"O, come let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our God, and with a purified and clean heart." (Psalms xcvi. 6.)

"Let us lift up our hearts in our hands to God in the heavens." (Lamentations iii. 41.)

By saying, Let us lift up our hearts, &c., is implied that before presenting himself in the presence of the
Almighty, a man must have his heart purified from sins towards God, and transgressions and offences committed against his fellow creature; as if he held it in his palms, to shew to every body his innocence. Then let us, dear brethren, repent of our sins, and acknowledge our duties towards our Creator.

Let us renounce all kinds of animosities and dissention among ourselves: let the tree of peace, harmony, and unity be planted in our hearts, and render us all of one mind and feeling, for our holy religion, and to worship the God of Israel.

Let us deserve what the Prophet said of us in 1 Chronicles xvii. 21—

"And what one nation in the earth is like thy people "Israel, whom God went to redeem, to be his own "people, to make thee a name of greatness and terrible-"ness, by driving out nations from before thy people "whom thou hast redeemed out of Egypt."

By which text we must be convinced that we cannot claim the name of Israelites without being in constant union. No difference of opinion ought to exist between us; and being so religiously prepared, let us pour out our most fervent prayers before the Almighty. Let us utter that incumbent blessing which it is our duty to do when our Creator performs some visible miracle to us individually, which is:
Blessed be the God of the host of Israel, King of the Universe, who bestoweth benefits on the undeserving, for on us hast thou bestowed all benefits, by having preserved from danger our most gracious Sovereign and her royal Consort.

We therefore are in duty bound to thank, praise, adore, glorify, extol, honour, and reverence him who wrought all these miracles to our lawful Sovereign Queen Victoria and her royal husband Prince Albert; may God preserve their lives for many years, and during her reign, and our days, may the Almighty God restore his glory to Zion, and the worship which he commanded to be performed in his holy temple in Jerusalem; may he set up an ensign for the nations, and assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.
"And on that day shall ye say, Praise the Lord, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name be exalted. Sing unto the Lord, for he hath done excellent things: this is known in all the earth. Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee." (Isaiah xii. 4, 5, 6.)

“And in our days may it please the Almighty to gather the dispersed from among the nations, and our outcasts from the extremities of the earth, that we may see confirmed what the prophet Isaiah says in xi. 12, ‘And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.’

May we witness likewise what the holy king in Psalms says concerning that glorious epoch—“When the people are gathered together, and the kingdom to serve the Lord.” Then shall be fulfilled what the prophet Zechariah says in xiv. 9, “And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one.”