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A. B. ON LITURGICAL WORSHIP.

Reply to Reader's Letter of Aug. 28.

(Continued From Last Week.)

In the next par. Reader's credulity again becomes apparent. His magic "proofs" are once more in evidence. When will he learn what a proof is? That which "follows down the history of the people" can never be taken as a proof of the origin of liturgical prayers. It is merely a presumption—a presumption that is at least as improbable as it is probable. If God had prescribed forms of prayer that were to be used by his people, they would be given in his Holy Word. But it is certain that the Old Testament never speaks a syllable about prayer books or service books of any kind. Yet Reader says that the "Temple Service" (note the capitals) was remodelled by King Hezekiah (II Chron. 29: 30). If the reader will turn to the passage he will see what King Hezekiah did. He did not remodel the Temple Service as such for the simple reason that he never heard of such a thing. Yet he did order a certain Psalm to be sung in words which David and Asaph had already used: "And he commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the Lord, with the words of David and of Asaph the Seer and they sang praises with gladness"—To maintain that this was a form of prayer, an instance of the church addressing prayer to God in a fixed liturgy is to confound the meaning of language and to outrage common sense.

Twice in this paragraph, Reader cites the Jewish Rabbis to prove that some form of liturgical service existed. He does not inform us where the Rabbis have given this information, lest, if known, it might discredit his argument. But I must perform his lack of service in this regard. It is not enough that Dean Prideaux says so, we must know the ground he had for saying so. Reader will doubtless consider it daring on my part to call the Dean's conclusions in question, but since his time (1648-1724) modern research has thrown light upon many points that were dark to him and apparently are still dark to Reader. What then is the authority upon which Lightfoot, Prideaux and others have ventured to assert that we have still extant, fragments (chiefly the prayers of Ezra) of a Jewish Liturgy? Why, on the authority of the Mishnah. The Mishnah is the text of the Talmud. It is a mass of ancient Jewish traditions which our Lord condemned (Mark 7: 13) and which Horne (Intro. vol. II p. 417) says, "they pretend were delivered to Moses during his abode on the Mount." Dr. Prideaux himself tells us concerning these traditions, that individuals "continually added their own imaginations to what they had received from those that went before them, whereby these traditions, becoming as a snowball, the further they rolled down from one generation to another, the more they gathered and the greater the bulk of them grew," and thus, says he, "it went on to the middle of the second century after Christ," when it became "necessary to put all these traditions into writings. For they were then grown to so great a number and enlarged to so huge a heap as to exceed the possibility of being any longer preserved by the memory of man." (Connexions Vol. I, p. 364). He further tells us (p. 365) that a certain Rabbi Judah collected and compiled them in six books, each consisting of several tracts, amounting in all to sixty-three. This compilation he asserts was reduced to writing about A. D. 150; but Dr. Lardner and Dr. Lightfoot say it appeared in 190 A. D. while later scholars say definitely that it was not committed to writing until the year 550 A. D. (Graetz, Hist'y of Jews IV p. 494) whensoever it appeared, one thing is certain, on the authority of Dr. Prideaux himself and admitted by Bingham (Orig. IV 194) that it is "the ancientest book" which the Jews have. It, with the Gemara or Commentary forms the Talmud. Here then, we have at last arrived at the source and fountain-head of evidence respecting these mysterious liturgies. That is, from a book published no one knows when, compiled by superstitious Jewish Doctors and stuffed with endless traditions and "imaginations" which had been gathered like a snow ball from age to age; from this authentic and trustworthy source we are informed "we may obtain proofs of facts and events occurring in the time of our Lord, and previous to His time, and out of its varicose pages have the privilege of extracting true copies of those solemn prayers, through the medium of which Jesus worshipped the Father."

Dr. Prideaux (Connection p. 418) further says, the Shemoneh Eshreh, or eighteen prayers, were, "they say, composed and instituted by Ezra and the Great Synagogue." They say, indeed! I might ask if they were actually written by Ezra, why are they not in the Bible? But let that pass. The Dr. continues (note, p. 419) it must be acknowledged that some of these prayers seem to have been composed after the destruction of Jerusalem, and to have reference to it, especially the 10th, 11th, 14th and 17th." This is the Dr's fatal admission. The Destruction of Jerusalem was in A. D. 70. Some of these prayers were therefore in the opinion of the learned Dr. composed at least seventy years after they are alleged to have been regularly used in the Synagogue. We may therefore suspect that these four of Ezra's prayers are absolute forgeries. May not the other fourteen also be spurious? There is absolutely no proof that any of them is genuine and yet Read-

er quotes them with approval as certainly forming part of the Liturgy of the Jewish service. This kind of evidence may suit Reader but Presbyterians demand proof and no man who knows what Lightfoot and Prideaux and other more recent scholars have written about the Talmud will venture to dignify any of its statements as sufficient to prove anything. I have gone into this matter so fully here because Reader has placed much stress upon the so-called prayers of Ezra. He asks me to note the resemblance of the prayers quoted to those in the Prayer Book. Doubtless they are alike. Why not? They are both man made—both of human origin—it is quite probable that the Roman prayer book, of which the Book of Common Prayer is largely a translation, copied from the Mishnah these collects—Why should they not be alike? But what authority does this give for a liturgy in the Christian Church? That is the question which is still unanswered.

Now, I have taken up one by one Reader's arguments for Liturgical Services from the Old Testament Scriptures and I think I have shown conclusively that Reader has not adduced a scrap of evidence from these Sacred Books that when carefully examined will support his rather confident assertion that "God directed their use among his people," so far as precomposed and prescribed forms of prayer in the public worship are concerned.

I would go further, did space permit, and show that while God has not altogether prohibited, in certain cases, the use of forms, yet extemporaneous supplication is the mode which His Spirit recommends to His church. It is perfectly easy to show that the great majority of the prayers of God's people under the ancient dispensation were in the strictest sense free, suggested by, and adapted to, the circumstances in which they were placed. In proof of this I refer to the prayer of Solomon (I Kgs. 8: 22), of Asa (II Chron. 14: 11) of Jehoshaphat (II Chron. 20: 5), of Hezekiah (II Kings 19:14) of Ezra (Ezra 9: 5) and of the Levites (Neh. 9: 5). These passages are too long to quote but the reader will not fail to see that they are all striking examples of unrestricted supplication, conceived at the moment, and varying with the circumstances in which those who uttered them were placed. The very fact that such prayers as those were subsequently used by the Jews in their worship furnishes a cogent argument that forms were not prescribed under the ancient dispensation at which time we might expect that such forms would have been more especially required because the gifts of the Holy Spirit were far less generally and abundantly poured out than under the New Testament.

I shall now proceed to examine Reader's assumption that Liturgies were in use in the Synagogue in the time of our Lord and that our Lord sanctioned and approved by example and by precept of such liturgies for the Jews and for us. Reader appears to place great stress upon this circumstance hence I shall take each point in order. Let me premise first however, that even if it were true that forms of prayer were used by the Jews, unless it can be shown that these were enjoined by human authority and were not to be deviated from in the slightest particular Reader can get no precedent for his liturgies. Again the fact of our Lord's being present when, as Reader asserts, these forms were used can never be made to prove that he sanctioned them. It seems absurd to imagine that when Christ attended on the service of the Synagogue, he fully approved of every part of it which he did not single out and reprehend. Was there nothing in the priests or in the people, in the matter or manner of their devotions throughout the whole routine of their public worship that He disliked, though He did not expressly condemn it? Yet Reader's whole argument rests upon that assumption. Our Lord's silence does not give approval in this case. All that can reasonably be concluded is that in that particular age of the Jewish church, when its whole connection was on the eve of being abolished, he did not deem it necessary expressly to condemn them. Even if it could be shown that He sanctioned forms of prayer for the Jews, it is impossible to deduce that he commends them to the Christian church. To justify such an inference we must be prepared to show that this element of the worship of Judaism, which it is alleged, met his approbation. He took occasion to embody in the Christian system; that those fixed forms, the propriety of which He is said to have recognized among His people Israel He used means to introduce into the Gospel church to be observed by its members throughout all succeeding ages. Did he do this? Did He prepare or instruct His Apostles to prepare a liturgy for the Christian Church? Did He in aught that He said or did throughout the whole of His ministry, give the slightest reason to believe that He wished His people in this manner to worship God? From the Citation I made from Archbishop Whately in my last letter it will be seen that he did nothing of the kind. The very reverse seems to be the case. The only apparent exception to this is the Lord's Prayer to which Reader confidently appeals in support of his theory. This claim regarding the Lord's Prayer I shall now proceed to examine.

First let me remark that at the beginning of Reader's paragraph on this subject (Aug. 28) he gives another beautiful specimen of his inability to make a correct "inference"

—He says the disciples went to their Master with the petition "Lord teach us to pray as John also taught his disciples."—From this request he "infers" that John the Baptist had given his followers a "form of prayer," and that Jesus' Disciples went to their Master also requesting a "Form of Prayer." How it is possible to twist that meaning out of the plain words of the request I cannot tell. Does not such a statement underestimate the intelligence of his readers? The disciples came to our Saviour asking, "Lord teach us to pray." If they wanted a form of prayer they would have asked for it. "Teach us to pray" does not involve a "form of prayer." It is an insult to the intelligence of the disciples that they did not know what they wanted in such a matter as this—it is not a parallel case to that recorded in Matt. 20: 21, and our Saviour does not treat it as such. Instead, we may be certain that He taught them to pray, that he gave them the knowledge they desired. The lesson by which He did this is not revealed. Only the sublime summary of it, as in so many other instances is recorded by the Evangelists. To give them a form of prayer for the spirit of it would be to give them the shadow for the substance, a stone when they asked for bread, a scorpion when they asked for a fish. No, no, to impute such trifling to our blessed Master borders on the blasphemous. If one were to ask Reader to teach him to reason, it would be simple mockery to give the enquirer a "form of reasoning" instead though perhaps it is all the enquirer could expect from any one who makes such an inference as that made here. It seems to me that the very coming of the disciples with a request "Teach us to pray" argues strongly against Reader's assumption that there were Liturgies in use in the Synagogue and that our Lord approved of them. If the disciples knew that their Master approved of these alleged forms and used them, would they come asking for a new form or for any form new or old? Would they not follow his own "example?" It is also a strong presumption against liturgies to find even John teaching his disciples to pray, and stronger still if he taught them, as Reader alleges, a "form of prayer." If there were forms in use, prescribed, as asserted by Reader, by God Himself, would John dare to teach a new form? I cannot think so, hence I believe there were no such forms prescribed or used as Reader fondly imagines. If Reader chose the only alternative, that the prayers asked for were for private not public worship then it shuts out the use of the whole passage from his argument.

Reader further says that on account of being accustomed to liturgical forms for 20 years, our Lord enjoins the same mode of worship upon His disciples, and to support this purely speculative position he advances the argument that the words of our Lord viz: "When ye pray, say, etc., are not 'merely permissive but a positive command.'" This in his opinion makes it certain that our Lord intended us to use His exact words in our worship. Let me ask, where do these words occur? In Luke's Gospel. But in the prayer there recorded we find many verbal variations from that recorded by Matthew (Matt. 6: 9). If the argument were good for anything it would prevent us from ever using the form given by Matthew. The Prayer Book has dared to discard both forms and substitute one of its own. Are not the words "When ye pray, say, Our Father," used elliptically, meaning when ye pray do so in this manner or to this purpose? Are they not to be understood as, "After this manner therefore pray ye," in Matthew? If not, why the contradiction? This elliptical form is not unknown in Scripture. Thus in Matt. 10: 7, Our Lord says to His disciples "As ye go, preach saying, the Kingdom of heaven is at hand." Did our Lord here intend that these words were only and always to be used in preaching? Such an interpretation would be ridiculous. Yet no more so than Reader's interpretation of our Saviour's words, "When ye pray, say."

Dean Stanley says, "But as He (our Lord) gave a fixed form, so neither did He bind His disciples to every word of it always and exclusively. He did not say, 'In these words pray ye,' but on one occasion, 'After this manner pray ye.' And as if to bring out still more distinctly that even in this most sacred of all prayers, it is the Spirit and not the letter that is of any avail, there are two separate forms of it given in the Gospels." (Christ. Inst. p. 318).

In this way Presbyterians regard it. Our Larger Catechism says, "The special rule of direction is that form of prayer which Christ taught His disciples," and again, "The Lord's Prayer is not only for direction as a pattern, but may also be used as a prayer, so that it be done with understanding." Our church here declares that the Lord's Prayer is mainly intended for direction but may occasionally be used as a form. And this is the practice of most Presbyterian Ministers to-day as any one knows who attends divine Service in their churches.

In the habit of praying in these exact words."

Reader appears to think it "worthy of remark" that our Lord's prayer is not an original composition but compiled by stringing together sentences out of the Jewish Liturgy. Leaving aside for the present the dishonor and discredit which he thus casts unwittingly I may say, upon our blessed Saviour, I may say that some of the wisest men in his own church think otherwise as I shall show later on if space permit. I would here ask the reader to remember that according to the best scholarship, none of these alleged Jewish Liturgies are preserved anywhere but in the Mishnah which was not committed to writing for hundreds of years after the time of our Saviour. It is altogether likely, as pointed out by several writers, that these Liturgies, instead of furnishing materials for the Lord's Prayer, stole from it and garbled in the stealing those sentences which appear similar in both. Ebrard (on the Lord's Prayer) points out that the proof adduced by Lightfoot and others for the rabbinical origin of the Lord's Prayer reduces itself to this: that in the rabbinical prayers, "God is sometimes called 'Father,' that the restoration of the Kingdom of Israel is pleaded for and that the petition occurs, 'Hallowed be Thy name through our works'—And further on he says 'The best refutation of the idea of compilation is the Lord's Prayer itself, so symmetrical in arrangement, so progressive in its thought and so inexhaustible in its depth.'" (S. H. p. 1343). So also Dr. Alfred Plummer, Master of Univ. Coll. Durham (Anglican) says after referring to supposed Hebrew parallels—"But the parallels do not carry us very far. The use of 'Father' is a very common later Jewish title to designate God, and the petition 'Hallowed be Thy name through our works,' are perhaps the strongest instances. Others are similarities of wording rather than of meaning and some of these are not at all close. In most cases the date of the Jewish prayers in which the expressions occur is either late or uncertain so that the borrowing, if there is any, is on the side of the Jews, or may be so." I might go on to quote similar testimonies by Bernard, Chancellor and Canon of Salisbury Cathedral, Rev. S. Gayford, Exeter Coll. Oxford, Dean Stanley, Calvin, Grotius, and many others but want of space forbids. From these considerations I think it is clear that the example and precept of our Lord do not furnish a shadow of evidence that he sanctioned or approved of Liturgical worship or that the Lord's Prayer was certainly "derived from the Jewish Liturgy."

The next argument of Reader is, "the practice of the inspired Apostles." He asserts that "the Church under the guidance of the Apostles soon shaped to itself by adoption and by composition, a Liturgical Service." Again we ask for proof. It is easy to make sweeping assertions such as this. Had he left out the phrase "under the guidance of the Apostles" and extended "soon" to 400 or 500 years,—he would find it easier to prove his statement. Is it not strange, that in all the Ministrations of the New Testament, we have not one single instance that even the Lord's Prayer was used by the Apostles, how in the name of common sense can any other "forms" be said to have been used? It is simply conjecture. There is abundant evidence that the Lord's Prayer was the earliest "form" adopted in the Christian Church but not one of the advocates of Liturgies has yet adduced a scintilla of proof that the Apostles used it at all or their immediate successors used it in any way or even regarded it in any sense necessary or even desirable. The burden of proof is on the shoulders of the advocates of liturgies and until such proof is forthcoming, others may rest satisfied that mere assertions will avail but little except with the ignorant and superstitious.

It is amazing to find Reader really believing that the sublime supplication recorded in Acts 4: 24-30, "So reasonable in its appeals, so exactly adapted to the perilous position in which the church was then placed," had been long previously composed and was now carefully recited or read out of a book by the Apostles. It is another striking example of how far a person is willing to be deluded to give a color of plausibility to a preconceived notion or pet theory. Still further, it will be noticed that twice, Reader misquotes the Scripture statement, "they lifted up their voice with one accord." He deliberately substitutes "voices" for "voice" in the passage, for what purpose may be easily imagined. He dare not assert on the peril of his reputation as even an ordinary scholar that the two meanings are identical. Such methods of argument are beneath contempt and deserve the detestation of all just men. There is not a scrap of evidence to show that this prayer was precomposed and its very petitions, giving the names of the Roman rulers, then in power, show conclusively to any unprejudiced mind that such an assertion is mere nonsense. The Holy Ghost caused the Apostles and brethren to be "moved by a common impulse" and in all probability this impulse found expression in the words of one of the leaders, most likely one of the Apostles and they all "with one accord" joined in the prayer so set forth. In any of our Presbyterian churches, when prayer is offered up, it may be said with perfect propriety that the whole con-

Continued on Page 8.

MARKET REPORT.

DURHAM, Oct. 22, 1902.

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|---------------------------|-------|-------|
| Fall Wheat..... | \$ 63 | \$ 65 |
| Spring Wheat..... | 63 | 65 |
| Oats..... | 26 | 26 |
| Peas..... | 65 | 65 |
| Barley..... | 35 | 40 |
| Hay..... | 7 00 | 8 00 |
| Butter..... | 14 | 15 |
| Eggs per dozen..... | 14 | 15 |
| Apples per bag..... | 50 | 75 |
| Dried Apples..... | 41 | 5 |
| Potatoes per bag..... | 50 | 75 |
| Flour per cwt..... | 1 80 | 2 20 |
| Oatmeal per sack..... | 2 65 | 2 65 |
| Chop per cwt..... | 1 00 | 1 30 |
| Dressed Hogs per cwt..... | 7 00 | 7 00 |
| Hides per lb..... | 5 | 5 |
| Sheepskins..... | 25 | 40 |
| Turkeys per lb..... | 8 | 9 |
| Beef..... | 6 | 7 |
| Lamb..... | 8 | 10 |
| Tallow..... | 5 | 5 |
| Lard..... | 10 | 12 |
| Ducks per pair..... | 30 | 50 |
| Geese per lb..... | 5 | 5 |
| Live Hogs per cwt..... | 5 55 | 5 65 |

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