

the same under the New Testament as under the Old. But everything regarding its outward form under the Old Testament, such as the accompaniment of incense or he turning the face to Jerusalem, is no longer binding, and as to its mode now, we must take the New Testament as our Directory. Again, the covenant right of believers' children is a great principle common to all God's dispensation, but the outward form by which it is marked varies, being by circumcision under one economy and by baptism under the other, and each of these is binding only under the dispensation for which it has been appointed. So is it with praise. The reason, the spirit and design of the exercise are the same in every age, but as to its outward form each dispensation has its own regulations. Still it is not only interesting but instructive to examine closely an ordinance as it existed under a former dispensation. We may learn much regarding its design, its importance, the principles on which it is based, its connection with other portions of doctrine and duty, and the benefits it is fitted to produce, which are useful for all time.

In examining the ordinance of praise as exhibited in Old Testament times we shall consider it as it existed in the two great divisions of time into which the history of that economy may be divided, first, the early or formative period of the Jewish church and nation, and secondly, the period of its glory in the days of David and Solomon and subsequent decline.

In looking at the first, we are met at the very threshold with a "service of song," which, taking all the circumstances into account, we regard as the grandest scene of the kind, and among the grandest of any kind which our earth has ever witnessed. In Exodus xv. we learn that the children of Israel having crossed the Red Sea, in consequence of the stupendous miracle, by which the sea was divided, and Pharaoh and his proud host having been overwhelmed in its waters, the Redeemed of the Lord standing on the farther shore and seeing the lately exultant foes dead upon its strand, received from Moses a song, which

doubtless he had received by inspiration of God, celebrating the deliverance achieved by the Almighty in strains which echoed through all their after history, and which shadow forth the great song of the Redeemed standing on the glassy sea where the great captain of our salvation shall have put down all rule and all authority and power, and made them more than conquerors.

This song, divine in its source, so sublime in its contents, so perfect in its form, and so rapturous in its spirit, seems to have been sung by the whole body of the men in Israel, led by Moses; while the women, led by Miriam, accompanying their voices with the sound of the timbrel and the regular motions of the dance, sang in response, probably to each sentence as sung by the men, the glorious Refrain, "Sing ye to the Lord for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea."

The effect must have been magnificent. "A nation of slaves suddenly emancipated, a people, who a few days ago were trembling with terror, betraying the cowardice bred and fostered by their previous condition, now delivered from their pursuers by a miracle at once of mercy and of judgment—standing on the shores of the sea through which they had been led in safety, and into the depths of which their enemies had been betrayed and were now buried, having *"sunk down to the bottom as a stone"*—a million of voices joining together in a set composition, divided into parts, the men singing the descriptive stanzas, and the women by themselves at the end of each coming in with their choral response, celebrating "Him who hath triumphed gloriously;" why, the mere fabrication of such a thing is enough to entitle a man to immortal remembrance. When, however, we take it for what it is, the simple record of a fact—when we try to imagine the reality, and consider that it once actually *was*—that that multitude was seen by the sun in the heavens—that the wilderness and the shore echoed to the sound of their many voices—and that with jubilant emotion, and measured cadence, and pipe and timbrel, the redeemed of the Lord rejoiced in their de-