

in Jerusalem and into the temple," the multitude following, "*and the children crying in the temple, Hosanna to the Son of David.*" (John xii. 13, Luke xix. 37, Mark xi. 9-11, Matt. xxi. 15).

For four days our Saviour retired to spend the night with the family at Bethany, but morning by morning he "came early to the temple," probably at the time of the morning sacrifice, to attend upon the sacred rite with its service of praise. But "on the first day of unleavened bread, when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve" to eat the passover, the last which he was to observe with them. His intercourse with them was about to close, and more, that night the Levitical economy was to be fully accomplished. In that passover its services were virtually to expire, and it is interesting to note that it closed with sacred song. "*When they had sung an hymn* they went out into the mount of Olives." According to the traditions of the Jews the Psalms from the 113th to the 118th were sung at the conclusion of the paschal feast, and it may have been these which were sung on that occasion.

In turning to the establishment of the New Testament we find that Judaism and Christianity for a time overlapped. Instead of at once totally destroying the Jewish system and planting Christianity on ground thus left vacant, God was pleased to allow the two to co-exist for a time. From the day of Pentecost, or from the death of Christ, till the destruction of Jerusalem was a period of transition. The old temple services still went on, and the members of the church, gathered as it was at first among the Jews, still observed the old ritual with new perceptions of its signification, and with more elevated emotions of joy, (Acts ii. 46, iii. 1, xviii. 21, xx. 16, &c.) but having their own assemblies, in which the simple ordinances of the new dispensation were observed according to Christ's appointment.

In examining the New Testament we do not find in regard to this any more than in regard to other important christian ordinances, everything exactly prescribed by express statute as under the Old. But we find enough to show not only that singing

to the praise of God still occupies a place in Christian worship, but also the principles by which it is to be regulated, and the importance which is attached to it.

At the very outset of the New Testament dispensation, when the fulness of the Spirit was enjoyed in the glorious scenes of Pentecost, we have the connexion of this exercise, with a state of elevated Christian feeling, as well as the influence of such a state of things on others, strikingly expressed in the description given of the condition of the infant church. "They continuing daily with one accord in the temple and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God and having favour with the the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved," Acts ii. 46, 47.

The importance attached to this ordinance will appear from the facts of the provision made for the new Psalmody of the church by the supernatural gifts of the Spirit. The apostle Paul, writing to the Corinthians, and referring to the various supernatural gifts of the Spirit, and the irregularities connected with their exercise, says, (1 Cor. xiv. 26) "When ye come together every one of you *hath a Psalm*, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying." The divine gift falling upon the heart of the Christian prophet came forth in a song of praise, as in the case of Miriam, Deborah and Simeon, and this the church was to use for its edification. The first Psalmody of the Church must have consisted of the ancient hymns of the sweet singer of Israel and his companions. By the Jewish portion of the church these would be sung with new views of their meaning and under richer feelings of devotion, and to the Gentiles the words and the sentiments would be alike new. But by this gift of the Spirit the newly formed community had a Psalmody of its own, from the Spirit of God. It is probable that the first Christian hymns owed their origin to the gifts of those thus endowed, and some of these may have continued to the subsequent ages. Eusebius testifies to the