

Here is inspired precedent for audible responses to extempore prayers offered to God in the public congregation. We are reminded of the hearty exclamations for which our Methodistic fathers were pre-eminently noted, though we would not build upon this analogy the argument of the child, who, finding in the Old Testament the statement, that "all the people said Amen," informed her mother that she had found the place in the Bible where all the people were Methodists.

But Paul's idea of prayer, as a part of Divine worship, is such an expression of praise and thanksgiving, and earnest request, as reaches every understanding and calls forth from every worshipper heartfelt responses. The single voice heard, is accepted as the voice of every one, and awakens in him an interest similar to that which would be evoked if he himself were leading the devotions of the congregation. Now, how can the individuals of a congregation best exclude irrelevant thought and centre their attention upon the solemn work at hand? What position best becomes the suppliants?

When Solomon prayed at the dedication of the magnificent temple, of whose erection he was the honoured instrument, "he kneeled down upon his knees before all the congregation of Israel and spread forth his hands towards heaven." That the people on whose behalf this earnest prayer was offered were kneeling at the same time, we are not told, though it was probably so. For, immediately after, when, in answer to the prayer, the fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offerings and the sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord filled the house, "all the children of Israel bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped and praised the Lord." When Ezra, mourning over the ungodliness of his people and anxious for their salvation, approached with the congregation the place where the evening sacrifice was offered, he says, "I fell upon my knees, and spread out my hands unto the Lord my God." When the disciples of Tyre, with their wives and children, followed Paul out of the city to the place where he was to embark on ship-board, the historian says, "we kneeled down on the shore and prayed." This posture in prayer is also sanctioned by our Saviour's example. In Gethsemane, when extreme mental anguish