

synagogue formed the model of the Early Christian Church. And now if you turn up the word synagogue in your Concordance, and read up all the passages referring to it with their connections, you will have a fair idea of the liberty enjoyed by the people, for the exercise of their gifts. And if you contrast that liberty with the hide-bound officialism observed in our churches to-day, you will have a fair idea of how we are fallen from primitive lines; how far the model differs from its reputed cast.

It would be well in addition to this to read what Canon Farrar, or Geike, or Edersheim, or some other reputed authority, says of the synagogue. How elastic, comprehensive, and suited for the purpose for which God reared it. Ten Jews was the number named as necessary to start one. It was considered incumbent on that number to maintain one. No prophet, priest or scribe, was needed. The older men of experience were appointed as rulers or elders, for the office of the elder was to rule. The people ministered, *i. e.*, they read selections from the law, the prophets, and the psalms. Some of these were expected to expound, or it might be to preach, if able. From 5 to 7 of the people were thus trained at every Sabbath service. The man who was selected to read the prayers was known as the messenger of the congregation, the angel of the church. And it is confirmatory of the close identity of the synagogue and Christian Church to find the same term used when God addresses the churches of Asia Minor. In the synagogue he was the congregation's spokesman to God. In the church He is made spokesman to the people. To the angel of the church of—write.

These particulars, taken in connection with those already referred to, will shew how well suited was the synagogue for a wandering people. How easily established and maintained. It will explain how James could say of Moses that he hath in every city them that preach Him, being read in the synagogue every Sabbath day. It will explain how Jewish synagogues in apostolic days dotted the Roman Empire, and how the apostle could use them so freely for the spread of Christianity.

I will say nothing here of the marvellously wide-spread dispersion of the Jews, only to point to it as a wonderful exhibition of the Divine wisdom which scattered them in order to open for the gospel through the synagogue a door of ready access to the Gentiles.

If, therefore, the principles foreshadowed by the tabernacle and exhibited in the synagogue permitted small Jewish companies in exile, to have and to hold religious services; if they permitted the holding of these services and the observance of those rights, which were the counterparts of our Christian sacraments, without the aid, assistance or presence of prophet, priest or scribe; and more than all, without the assistance of the Holy Spirit, as we now have Him, what excuse could be offered for the want of Christian services and ordinances in any corner of the Roman world? Why should Christianity be compelled to say non-possum under any conditions then existing when Judaism flourished very often under appalling difficulties? Was the church fettered with forms and formalism while the synagogue was free from either? He who over-ruled the