

**THE VOICE OF OUR
CONGREGATIONS; OR,
RESPONSIVE SERVICES, WITHOUT
PREPARED PRAYERS, FOR THE
CHURCHES OF CHRIST**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649730322

The Voice of Our Congregations; Or, Responsive Services, Without Prepared Prayers, for the Churches of Christ by J. W. C. Drane

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

J. W. C. DRANE

**THE VOICE OF OUR
CONGREGATIONS; OR,
RESPONSIVE SERVICES, WITHOUT
PREPARED PRAYERS, FOR THE
CHURCHES OF CHRIST**

THE
VOICE OF OUR CONGREGATIONS;
OR,
Responsive Services,
WITHOUT PREPARED PRAYERS,
FOR THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST.

BY
J. W. C. DRANE.

SOLD BY JOHN SNOW, 35, PATERNOSTER ROW.

Price Two Shillings and Sixpence.

MCCCLVIII.

38. d. 222.

INTRODUCTION.

TO MY READERS.

There are certain peculiarities in the structure of Hebrew verse which have struck the attention of nearly all who have duly examined the subject. One of the most marked of these is the parallelism of sentiment and expression everywhere abounding as the essential of Jewish versification. Slovenly rendered in prosaic English, these parallelisms have to modern ears a smack of tautology. But it has long struck the author that Jewish poetry was originally and essentially responsive, consisting of the utterance of a sentiment in excited and elevated mood by one party as leader, and responded to inpromptu by another party, who echoed the sentiment of the first with varied expression, and sometimes with varied phase, of the initiative thought. Occasionally a third or fourth joined to sustain and amplify the poetic theme. And at certain emphasized intervals all echoed and re-echoed together some spirit-stirring proposition of no small importance in reference to what had been already enunciated or had to follow. The choruses, in fact, constituted the telling epitome, or the thrilling disclosure, or the vital link of the poem as far as it had proceeded. Such, in my humble conception, was the origin of the peculiar form of verse prevalent amongst the Israelitish people. And this conclusion is in part sustained by the customs of Shemitic tribes to this day. The following graphic passage I take from "The Mission of Inquiry to the Jews," (p. 61):—
"The young Arabs (say the writers), in order to cheer the way, commenced a native dance and song. One of them advancing a little before the rest, began the song

dancing forward as he repeated the words, when the rest following him in regular order, joined in the chorus, keeping time by a simultaneous clapping of hands. They sang several Arabian songs in this way, responding to one another, and dancing along the firm sand of the sea-shore, in the clear beautiful moonlight. The response, the dance, and the clapping of hands, brought many parts of the Word of God to our minds." Other travellers have noted the same thing. The immutability, or at most slight modification of customs is such in the East, that this scene may be no insignificant index of primeval singing amongst some of the first populations of the world. Of the like kind, in all probability, was the song, chorus, and dance of Miriam and her companions when Jehovah gloriously triumphed at the Red Sea. There is further confirmation of the matter, inasmuch as when analysis of the poetic passages of Scripture is attempted, antiphonal structures and expressions everywhere abound, and impart character to the parallelisms as thought-rhythms. At any rate, without disfigurement or violence antiphonals may be constructed; more, the sense, pathos, and beauty of the whole composition are frequently enhanced by such a disposition of the parts. Take for instance:—

PSALM II. A DIALOGUE OR RESPONSIVE SONG.*

First chorus.

1. Why rage the nations?
And the peoples contrive vanity?
2. The kings of the land have set themselves,
And the princes are firmly leagued together,
Against Jehovah, and against his Messiah.

Chorus, representing the rebellious.

3. Let us burst their bands,
And cast from us their cords.

Second chorus.

4. Sitting in the heavens He will laugh;
The Lord will hold them in derision.

* Dr. Pyc Smith's "Testimony to Messiah," vol. 1, p. 195.

5. Then He will rebuke them in his wrath ;
And in his burning anger He will alarm them.
One speaking in the name of God.
6. But I have anointed my king,
Upon Zion, the mountain of my sanctuary.
Oye in the name of the Messiah.
7. I will declare the decree :
Jehovah hath said to me,
My Son art Thou ;
I this day have begotten Thee.
8. Ask from me, and I will give the nations, thine inheritance ;
And thy possession the uttermost bounds of the earth.
9. Thou shalt break them with an iron sceptre :
As the vessels of a potter shalt Thou dash them.
Perhaps the two choruses combined.
10. Now, therefore, ye kings, bethink yourselves ;
Be warned ye judges of the earth.
11. Serve Jehovah with reverence,
And rejoice with trembling.
12. Do homage to the Son, lest He be angry,
And ye perish on the road,
When his wrath is even for a moment kindled !
Blessed are all who trust in Him !

OR THE TWENTY-FOURTH PSALM.

First Voice. The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof :

Second Voice. The world, and they that dwell therein.

Chorus. For He hath founded it upon the seas,
And established it upon the floods.

First Voice. Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord ?
Or who shall stand in his holy place ?

Second Voice. He that hath clean hands,
And a pure heart ;
Who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity,
Nor sworn deceitfully ;
He shall receive the blessing from the Lord,
And righteousness from the God of his salvation.

Chorus. This is the generation of them that seek Him,
Who seek thy face are Jacob indeed.

First Voice. Lift up your heads, O ye gates ;
And be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors ;
And the King of glory shall come in.

Second Voice. Who is this King of glory ?

Chorus. The Lord strong and mighty,
The Lord mighty in battle.

First Voice. Lift up your heads, O ye gates;
 Even lift them up, ye everlasting doors;
 And the King of glory shall come in.
Second Voice. Who is this King of glory?
Chorus. The Lord of Hosts,
 He is the King of glory.

Now this facility of Hebrew verse to take an antiphonal form with great effectiveness, seems to be a delicate but a positive proof that it was so moulded originally—that the responsive element was its life and its charm.

The elaborate compositions of the prophets and their contemporaries may never have been intended for formal responsive singing; and the same may be true of some of the Psalms; but parallelisms having once originated for such purpose, and having had the sanction of ages, became a national habitude of verse-expression of all kinds, even when the responsive element was not actually called into operation. It may also be justly allowed, that in now seeking to reproduce the responsive parts in compositions that may have been designed for such exercise, different minds may fix upon diversified arrangements of responses and choruses, because absolute indication of the divisions fixed by the author, may, in the transmission of the poems, have been entirely obliterated; but of this we are not quite sure. A minute inspection of the complex system of accents and pauses, introduced by the Masoretes, may exhibit an intentional preservation of this self-same thing in certain parts of the sacred text.

The peculiar features of this work are the following:—

1st. Responsive Services, in three parts. The first part comprises services taken entirely from the Scriptures, and for the first time arranged for congregational response and service. In adapting the passages to such usage, the author has taken not only those that he opined were originally intended for such purpose, and probably so employed in the Temple-service of Jerusalem, but even other portions that might profitably be so arranged. It is hoped

that, besides proving aids to devotion, these services will evince the sense and power of Holy Truth. Extant liturgies chiefly those evangelical in tone, and as far as adaptable to the radical idea of this work, constitute the second part. In those of early date, being critical restorations, a few omissions have been made, principally of prayers, for which indications for extempore supplication have been substituted. A few expressions which could not well be used by our modern churches have been altered, and the words inserted in lieu are italicised. These early liturgies are given as much as specimens of what obtained in the initial epochs of Church-life as for worship now-a-days. The Church-of-England services here appear in abridged, modified, and it is hoped improved form. To the excellent and valuable Biblical Liturgy by the Rev. David Thomas, the author is indebted for four compositions in this portion of the work. Because of their length in the original services they are here abridged and, moreover, fully adapted to congregational response. The third part consists of services original in composition. Three, entitled Obedience, Purity, Eternity, are from the pen of a friend, who kindly assisted the author; by whose aid greater variety has been secured in this part.

The services of the whole work, though divided into three distinct portions, are yet designated under one, and not three series of numbers, in order to prevent confusion of reference, such as one sometimes painfully witnesses in the use of Watts' Psalms and Hymns. By the arrangement adopted, any minister can appoint a liturgy for morning or evening devotion, by simply announcing the number of the service, as the 5th, 15th, or 25th, as he may wish and see proper. And if any one object to the use of Responsive Services that are not in the *ipsisimis verbis* of Scripture, he is under no particular necessity to use parts two and three; he may confine himself entirely to the first part. For those who have no such scruple, but can

embrace evangelism, whether in the language of the ancient or modern churches, and regard as much the spirit as the letter of the Divine record, the second portion will supply with the best utterances of the universal Church of Christ, so that they may worship in concord with the sainted dead. And the third portion will remind them of the Church as a present, living reality, having the Spirit now as well as in the days of yore; and whilst not despising the good of antiquity, but conserving it, also able to contemplate wants and joys that *are*, and to present them acceptably before the All-inviting Mediatorial Throne.

2nd. No made prayers. Free prayer was a grand institute of the primal Church: it gave life and power to it. For premeditated prayer, extemporaneous in utterance, as contradistinguished from cold, prepared, unvaried public prayers, many churches have nobly contended for generations, and the author is not wishful to disown and dethrone free prayer. He would leave it precisely where it is, with this exception: that whereas "long prayer," as it is familiarly designated, is now often too rambling, too protracted, and too unspiritualizing, the author would assist devotion by the use of a responsive service, in which all should bear a distinct and hearty share, and by this means prepare for short, effective, holy, spontaneous prayer on the part of the minister and church. "Long prayer," which is a decided abuse of free prayer, might be for ever banished from our consecrated fanes, to the glad relief of both pastor and people. Not unfrequently has the author seen in small towns, and occasionally in large ones, a pulpit occupier, who had small ability in preaching, but tolerable gift in prayer, appoint four singings, make three prayers, the second one of excessive length, and all that there might be but fifteen or twenty minutes left for sermonizing. This is a disgusting time-serving in the house of God; a dodge which old and young soon comprehend. It is unseemly; and the writer wishes, by a judicious aid,