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For the Evangelical Guardian,

A discourse on the temporal support of religion. Published by request.

“Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.” 1 Cor. 16: 2.

In this verse, the Apostle gave the church at Corinth, particular instructions in reference to their benevolent contributions. We learn too, from the preceding verse, that he had given the same instructions to the churches of Galatia. “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.” And, as there is but one infallible rule of faith and practice in religion it is evident, that the same great principles, by which the members of these churches were required to govern themselves, are applicable to all Christians every where. To us therefore, as professed followers of the Redeemer, the Divine injunction is, “Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him.”

The subject presented in the text, and to which we design directing our attention at present, is the duty of contributing of our worldly substance for religious purposes. We shall examine the

Many topics in your memorial, and its vehement tone, I pass over without comment, because I do not wish to go farther in this unpleasant discussion than briefly to state the prominent grounds on which I justify my conduct. And I cannot but hope that when you come to look dispassionately at the matter, you will perceive that the warmth of your feelings has led you astray, that you have taken offence without sufficient cause, and that in fulminating your wrath at me, you have exhibited a temper which in the end may be more painful to yourselves than it can be to me. Not that I do not regret sincerely that I have so unexpectedly incurred your enmity, but because I suffer little when I am satisfied that I have done no wrong.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. H. HAMMOND.

(*From the Charleston Observer.*)

LETTER V.

PSALMODY---DIVINE AUTHORITY.

My Christian Friends,---In Letter IV. I entered on the argument in favor of the exclusive use of David's Psalms, and presented several considerations, tending, as I think, to establish the point at issue.

In the *Observer* of January 14, received since my last Letter, the Editor suggests the propriety of adhering strictly to the Scriptural argument respecting the exclusive use of David's Psalms, in order to render the discussion as brief as possible, or to avoid "running into too great prolixity." The suggestion is a very good one, but it comes up a little too late. If it had been made three months ago, and attended to, it would have saved my worthy opponent the labor of writing something like the one third of his numbers. I shall attend to the suggestion, and endeavor to confine myself, as far as possible, to the Scriptural argument. But as the argument of Mr. C. is to be followed and reviewed, it may lead me occasionally into partial digression, or into greater prolixity than would otherwise be necessary. I have no idea of following my learned friend through his long argu-

ity on this subject, cannot be ascertained from Church History, except so far as that history is recorded in the Scriptures. We purpose, therefore, to give, as the Editor suggests, the "plain Scripture precept," and the "indubitable example" for the exclusive use of David's Psalms. But in doing so we will have to prove that the precept is plain, and the example indubitable, and this may require no little argument. A man may deny in one breath a truth or proposition which will require his antagonist a whole chapter to establish. For example, in my discourse I referred to the command of Hezekiah enjoining the use of "the words of David, and Asaph the Seer," as authority for the exclusive use of David's Psalms. This Mr. C. denies; and now it will require the half of this letter to prove that it is a "plain precept," not from Hezekiah, but from God, enjoining on the Old Testament Church the exclusive use of the inspired Psalter. And if it is made to appear that this command of Hezekiah is a "plain precept" on this subject, then the "indubitable example" will follow of course. For all we have to do is to ask, who were members of this Old Testament Church confined exclusively to the use of David's Psalms? Who? Thousands of the first converts to Christianity--- Simeon, Anna, the Blessed Virgin Mary, the inspired Apostles, and Jesus Christ himself, "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords!"

I will endeavor to conduct the argument as briefly as possible. I hope, Christian Friends, you will not grow impatient; if the Seceders are right on this subject, the other denominations are certainly very wrong, and we may just as well consider the matter carefully on this side of the tomb; it cannot be settled *among ourselves* on the other side.

Having in my last letter adduced three arguments in favor of the exclusive use of David's Psalms under the old dispensation, I now offer as a 4th argument, the command of Hezekiah and his Princes, 1 Chron. xxix. 30. The command runs thus: "Moreover, Hezekiah the King and the Princes commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the Lord with the words of David, and of Asaph the Seer." I view this injunction to use, in praise, "the words of David and of Asaph the Seer," as equivalent to a command to sing "David's Psalms." By David's Psalms we mean the whole collection as it now stands, and by "the words of David and of Asaph the Seer," Hezekiah and his Princes meant David's Psalms, as the collection stood in their day. They did not intend that the Levites should not use any thing in the collection but what was composed by David and Asaph; and when we contend for the exclusive use of "David's Psalms," we do

not intend, as Mr. C. represents us, (No. 3,) that the Church is to be confined only to those attributed to David. "Even then," he says, "the Psalms of Asaph were to be sung as well as those of David." No one pleads for the exclusive use of the seventy-three ascribed to David. Nor did Hezekiah intend that the Levites should confine themselves entirely to "the words of David and Asaph," but that they should employ that whole collection of Hymns of which those two Poets were the chief composers.

I consider the command of King Hezekiah and his Princes, as cited above, as a command of God, enjoining the use---the exclusive use of this inspired collection of sacred songs. Mr. C., and those who coincide with him in opinion, contend that the injunction contained in the above cited passage, was a mere recommendation or command of Hezekiah and his Princes, Mr. C. asks, „Does this prove *God's* Divine appointment, under the old economy of the Psalms of David?" And he replies, "by no means." Dr. Latta and others view it in the same light, not as God's, but as man's appointment. Let us examine this matter for a moment. It has been usual, I believe on our part, merely to present this command as a "plain precept" in favor of our position, and on the other hand it has been customary to deny it without much discussion, but now let us argue the case. Hezekiah, it is said, had no authority from God to enjoin the use of "the words of David and Asaph the Seer," that is, David's Psalms---it was a mere matter of taste with him and his Princes---a mere "civil" regulation, as Dr. Latta intimates, page 96. Now what is the first thing that is said in this 29th chapter, respecting this pious and worthy king of Judah? It is said, verse 2d, that "he did that which was *right* in the sight of the Lord." This commendation has particular reference to the course which he pursued in regulating the worship of God, and restoring it to its former purity. Ahaz, his father, was a very bad man, and did that which was utterly wrong in God's sight, and among other evil deeds, he cut in pieces the vessels of God's house, and shut up the doors thereof. (2 Chron. xxviii. 24) But Hezekiah did that which was right in God's sight---he opened the doors of the Lord's house, and restored the Divine ordinances---and among other *right* things that he did, he enjoined the use of David's Psalms, or restored them, as well as other things, to their former place in Divine worship. But it would have been just as *right*, it will be said, if he had commanded the Levites to use the Song of Solomon, or portions of Job, Isaiah, or some other inspired poetry. I deny the correctness of this opinion. The

Song of Solomon, the poetical parts of Isaiah, Jeremiah, &c. were never designed to be used in the praise of God; but of this again. But admitting that it would have been right for Hezekiah and his Princes to have commanded the Levites to use other Divine songs instead of, or in addition to those of David, would it have been equally as acceptable to God for the King in the exercise of his taste or judgment, or "civil authority," to have commanded the use of *human* compositions instead of, or in addition to "the words of David and Asaph?" Let it be remembered, Christian friends, this is the great point in dispute. If some great Doctor had lived previous to the reign of Hezekiah, and had dreadfully mutilated the Psalms of David to suit his own caprice, and, in addition to his mutilation of these Divine songs, had composed some two or three books of poetic pieces entirely his own, would it have been *as* right for the King and his Princes to have commanded the use of these *human* compositions, as the *Divine* songs of David and of Asaph? What says brother C? He certainly replies in the negative. I defy any good man in Christendom, who understands the subject, to give any thing else than an emphatic no, to the above interrogatory. But why would it have been wrong for the King and his Courtiers, in regulating and reinstating the pure worship of God in His Temple, to have commanded the use of human compositions instead of David's Psalms? No good reason can be given but this. It was God's will---it was the Divine appointment---and not the taste or prejudice of the King and his Court, that the Psalms of David should be sung in Divine worship; and, therefore, the King and his Princes acting under the Divine direction, enjoined the use of this inspired collection, and of no other songs, either Divine or human.

If it was right for Hezekiah and his princes to exercise their judgment, their "civil authority," independent of all Divine authority, in selecting Psalms and Hymns for the worship of God, it was proper for other Kings and their Courts to follow the inclinations of their hearts in the same matter. Ahaz the father, and Manasseh the son of Hezekiah, were both very bad men and wicked rulers. According to the reasoning of our opponents, they and their Princes had a right to command the Levites to sing just such Psalms and Hymns as they might think proper to appoint; for if Hezekiah and his Court had a right to make their own selection of Hymns for Divine worship, so had other Kings and their Courts. But suppose, (and it is a very supposable case,) that Ahaz or Manasseh had, in exercising this supposed right, laid aside the Psalms of David, and commanded the use of

a collection of human songs, (for this is the point at issue,) would their conduct have been as acceptable in the sight of God, as the conduct of Hezekiah and his Princes? Our opponents say no; they are compelled to say no, though the admission may come from some of them with reluctance. But why was the course pursued by Hezekiah and his Princes more acceptable, by far, than the conduct of Ahaz and Manasseh would have been in the case supposed? Because Hezekiah and his Court acted according to Divine appointment in the matter. They knew that the whole pattern of God's house had been given to David *by the Spirit*---that the services of the Levites were divinely arranged, both as to the *manner* and the *matter* of praise. They knew that God had set apart King David to the office of Psalmist for the express purpose of furnishing the Church with a collection of inspired Hymns, and that Asaph and others had been inspired to furnish a certain number---that this collection had always been used in the Church since the days of David with Divine approbation. In restoring Divine worship to its former purity, they adopted no *new measures*, but commanded the use of those instruments and of those services and songs which God had previously authorized; and the fact, they *expressly* enjoined the Levites to sing the words of David and Asaph---that is, David's Psalms, confining them to this collection---is a strong proof that it was Divinely authorized to be used *exclusively* in the worship of God under the Old Testament dispensation.

Suffer me to make an additional remark or two touching this command of Hezekiah. Our opponents would have the world believe that when the King and his Princes opened the Temple and restored the pure worship of God, they did every thing according to Divine appointment, except making a selection of Hymns in which the works, and wonders, and perfections of Jehovah might be suitably extolled. In this matter, which was certainly not one of minor importance, or devoid of difficulty, they were left to the exercise of "private judgment." We read in 2 Chron. xxiv. 15. that the Levites, in cleansing the house of the Lord, acted according to Divine appointment, and that the King, in setting the Levites to attend to instrumental music, acted by the same authority. (verse 25.) And in the next chapter we are informed that the King, his Princes, and all the congregation took counsel---*deliberated* about keeping the Passover the second month. (verse 2.) But although they consulted about the matter, the ordinance itself was no new contrivance of "the King and his Princes"---they introduced nothing on the score of expedi-

ency, or to suit their own whim or caprice. The people obeyed "the commandment of the King and of the Princes," yet it was all done according to Divine appointment, or as it is expressed in verse 12, *by the word of the Lord.*

From what has been said above, we discover that God was very particular about every part of Divine worship, and every thing that pertained to the services of the Tabernacle or Temple. The *cleansing* of the Temple, the use of instrumental music, the time and manner of keeping the Passover; and in fact every thing about the Tabernacle---every knob, and flower, and fringe---every bowl, and branch, and board---every skin, and curtain, and coupling-loop, had its place in the Tabernacle *by Divine appointment.* (Exodus xxv. xxvi. &c.) And the whole pattern of the temple, including the service thereof, was given to David *by the Spirit.* And yet, notwithstanding all this *particularity* about the very *smallest* matters---about *pins,* and *loops,* and *flowers*---there was one thing, argues Mr. C., and that too a matter of *great* importance, which God left of old entirely to the management of Kings and Princes, and we might add, in our day, to "Committees," that is, the selection and collection of songs of praise adapted to magnify the mercy and justice, the power and glory of Almighty God!! Who can believe it? No one. And if the thing is incredible---if it is inconceivable that God should leave the selection of Hymns of praise to Kings and Courts, whether pious or impious, for if it was a matter committed to one of Judah's Sovereigns, it was to every one---then it follows that the command of Hezekiah and his Princes to the Levites to "sing in the words of David and of Asaph," that is, David's Psalms, was the command of God, and consequently we have in this injunction a "plain precept" for the *exclusive* use of David's Psalms under the Old Testament dispensation. With reference to other songs, it may be said, "he commanded them not."

From the foregoing train of argument I feel persuaded that every honest man, and even those who are not disposed to reason fairly, must admit that this command of Hezekiah and his Princes, was the command and appointment of God; and where and when, I ask, has this appointment been annulled? When or where has God said that this collection of sacred songs, dictated by His Spirit, and appointed by His authority to be sung in His praise, might or ought to be laid aside, and an imitation of them, very badly executed, with a host of other songs of man's composing, good, bad, and indifferent, should be introduced in their stead? Where? Let the chapter and verse, or

any thing in the neighborhood of *Divine* authority be produced for laying aside these heavenly songs of the "sweet Psalmist," and for substituting in their stead human compositions, and I will drop my pen and abandon the contest, or strike my colors and call for quarters---but I'll "never give up the ship," with the blessing of God, until such authority is produced.

6. We argue, in the fifth place, that the Psalms of David were used exclusively by Divine appointment, under the Old Testament dispensation, from the fact that we often find them employed in the worship of God during that dispensation. Many of them are addressed to the "chief musician," or to "the sons of Korah," to those very Levites whom David, *by the Spirit*, had set apart to the "service of song in the house of the Lord." Of course all such were designed for permanent use in the worship of God. There are a number of instances recorded in which these Psalms were used in the regular instituted worship of God, and we have no evidence that those Scripture songs, which are not in this collection, were ever sung more than once, and then not in the regular service of the sanctuary.

Some time after the death of David, at the dedication of Solomon's Temple, a Psalm of David was sung, 2 Chron. 5, 13: About one hundred years after the dedication of the Temple, when Jehoshaphat went forth to battle it with Moab and Ammon, a Psalm of David was sung, 2 Chron. 20: 21. About one hundred and seventy or eighty years after Jehoshaphat's war with Moab, Hezekiah and his friends restored the pure worship of God, and commanded, with Divine approbation, the Psalms of David to be sung. Here let me remove a cavil. Mr. C. and others say, that the occasion on which Hezekiah gave this command was *particular*. Very true, but the peculiarity favors our views, and not those of our friends. Previous to the time of Hezekiah, the worship of God had been grievously corrupted, and, in fact, entirely interrupted; scarce a vestige of it remained. His wicked father Ahaz, had "cut in pieces the vessels of the house of God, and shut up the doors of the house of the Lord; and he made them altars in every corner of Jerusalem." Now what did Hezekiah do, under these "particular" circumstances, when he came to the throne? Why he restored Divine worship *to what it had formerly been*. He added nothing new, but commanded that every thing should be resumed and conducted as God had ordained; and among other things, he enjoined a return to the use of David's Psalms ---the only collection, certainly, that had formerly been used in worship. But, to proceed; about one hundred and seventy-five years

after Hezekiah restored the worship of God, and after the people of Israel had returned from Babylon, they sung a Psalm of David, at the laying of the foundation of the second Temple. Ezra 3; 12. And it is evident, from Nehemiah 12, that the Psalms of David were sung at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem, about ninety years after the foundation of the Temple was laid. But where, it will be asked, is the evidence that the Psalms of David were sung on these occasions? The people or Levites are said to have praised God on most of these occasions---“for he is good, for his mercy endureth forever,”---and with these words, it is known, some of David’s Psalms (Ps. 106, 107, 136,) are introduced, and no other Psalms but those of David’s collection, were ever given into the hands of the Levites, beginning with such language; therefore, on these occasions, the Psalms of David were sung exclusively,

Thus, for more than five hundred years, from the time of David to that of Ezra, we find the Psalms of David, or his collection, used time after time in the worship of God, and during the whole of that period we have not one particle of evidence that any other songs, either divine or human, were employed in divine instituted worship. Does all this prove nothing respecting the exclusive use of David’s Psalms under the old dispensation? For my part, I view it as indubitable evidence of the fact. If it is not “plain precept,” or “positive proof,” it is at least *circumstantial* evidence, accumulating and corroborating until it reaches demonstration.

Let me now call your attention for a moment to some of these songs, which brother C. says were sung in the Old Testament Church; and if it will appear that they are not songs at all, or were not used in Divine worship, it will, of course, strengthen my argument. I have already said enough in a former letter, respecting the songs of Moses, Deborah, and Hannah. My object, at present, in noticing some of the songs he enumerates, is to show how hard run he was to find certain songs which would authorize him or excuse him in saying that David’s Psalms were not to be used, exclusively, under the Old Testament dispensation. After specifying a number of songs, part of which we now noticed, he comes to this strong conclusion: “Nothing, therefore, can be more unfounded than the declaration that the Church of God, under the Old Testament economy, was exclusively confined to the Book of Psalms.” Let us see. There is what he calls (No. 8) “the Song of Samuel.” 1 Saml. 12: 6, 36. Part of this “song” is a narrative of what God had done for Israel, and part a reproof of the people from Samuel for desiring a

King, closing with comfortable words from the Seer. Look at it, my friends, and if you can discover any poetry about it, your discernment must be keen. It is more like a sermon than a song. Again, there is "the Song of David." 2 Saml. 1: 19--27. This is David's lamentation over Saul and Jonathan. Whoever supposed that David's sympathy for, and praise of a disobedient King and his worthy son, was ever sung by David himself, or by any one else, as *praise to God*. For the Psalmist to have sung praise to God over the *disaster* of Saul, his Father-in-law and Sovereign, and over Jonathan, his covenant friend, would be somewhat after the fashion of those who praise God for falling from grace." This lamentation of David is highly poetical, but we must remember that *all poetry is not song*, nor is every song to be sung in Divine worship. I suppose that these pathetic strains of David over Saul and Jonathan were *uttered* and not *sung*, just as many other poetical parts of the Scriptures were.

Again, Mr. C. cites us to "the Song of Solomon," 1 Kings 5: 1--66, (a mistake I suppose, for 1 Kings 8: 1--66, as the latter chapter is the only one in Kings containing 66 verses.) The chapter records the transactions that took place at the dedication of Solomon's Temple. Let it be examined, and I will venture to say that neither Mr. C. nor any one else will maintain that there is a word of song in the whole chapter. Part of it is a narrative respecting the removal of the Ark into the Temple---part of it Solomon's dedicatory prayer, & part an account of the offerings presented, and the royal feast prepared. Was all this, or any part of it *sung* at the dedication, or at any other time in the Temple service? Never, never. But enough of this. Did ever *such songs* take the place of the book of Psalms? Here let it be understood, we see the necessity of adhering rigidly to Mr. C's own principle, viz: that the matter of Psalmody should not be left to "random choice, or to mere private opinion and judgment;" for if a man of so much talent and learning as my worthy friend, did deliberately make such a poor selection as the above "songs," what a miserable choice would many a poor ignorant Jew have made, had they been permitted to select for themselves, and not confined, as we contend, *exclusively* to the use of David's Psalms.

We have now closed our argument in favor of the exclusive use of David's Psalms, under the Old Testament dispensation---We naturally conclude that it is conclusive, and we trust that it will prove convincing. Read it again Christian friends.

Yours truly,

W. R. H.