

reference to non-Israelites. That leaves only 9 (or 10) probable deductions from my original 178, viz. those grouped under A 2 i (b) and (c).

3. It is important to note that in Baumgärtel's opinion his investigation strengthens the evidence for the trustworthiness of the Massoretic text in regard to the use of the Divine names throughout the Old Testament, but this point will come up for discussion in Article 3, Part III, and a mere mention is enough here.

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THE TEN BEST BOOKS ON PRAYER.

PRAYER is the most truly characteristic act of a religious man. It is the instinctive act of one who is aware of the personality and the nearness of God. There are great truths conditioning it, great problems connected with it, and great openings for progress in the art of it. Nevertheless, it does not in itself call for any use of books. "For praying," as William Law said, "is not speaking forth eloquently, but simply the true desire of the heart; and the heart, simple and plain in all good desires, is in the truest state of preparation for all the gifts and graces of God. And this I must tell you, the most simple souls that have accustomed themselves to speak their own desires and wants to God in such short but true breathings of their heart to Him, will soon know more of prayer and the mysteries of it, than any persons who have only their knowledge from learning and learned books." As Schleiermacher said in one of his sermons: "To be religious and to pray are one and the same thing." What Sabatier put negatively—"Where there is no prayer, there is no religion," Deissmann puts positively, "Religion, wherever it is alive in man, is prayer."

This instinctive and untutored act does, however, when the mind begins to reflect upon it, open up great problems, some religious, some scientific, some philosophical in their character, to the discussion of which many thoughtful men have given earnest attention: the experience of praying people has revealed a great variety of methods by which prayer may be cultivated, and of ends to which it may be directed: and the example of many generations of saints has accumulated a vast treasury of Christian prayers, in which those who come after may find stimulus and suggestion. Along each of these lines there has grown up a literature on the subject of prayer so great that it is an unusually difficult task to discuss it and to select from it the books that are "best."

Our selection will be made on the assumption that for the most part the needs and difficulties of Christian folk in our own generation will be best met by contemporary or nearly contemporary writers. It is true that much of what they have to say has been said in effect again and again before. But it is said now with modifications of emphasis and variations of penetration which make the recent work on the whole more fitted to the requirements of our time. We shall consider, therefore, chiefly the more recent books, and we shall classify them according as they deal with the theory of prayer, the practice and usefulness of prayer, and examples of prayer. The Liturgies and Directories of Worship must be passed over as forming a department of their own.

At the same time, the student will not be indifferent to the history of prayer, neither will he neglect the classics. A full and comprehensive history of prayer, even within the limits of the Bible and Christianity, still remains to be written; and few undertakings of the kind would be more worth while. The *terminus a quo* for such a history might

be found in Jeremiah, if Wellhausen be right in saying that Jeremiah is "the father of true prayer," on the ground that in him prophecy completes the transition to religion taken to signify the mystery of the union between man and God. For such a history much useful material has been collected by von der Goltz in his work entitled *Das Gebet in der ältesten Christenheit* (1901). The Old Testament origins which he passes over may be studied in Hempel's *Gebet und Frömmigkeit im A. T.*, in the article by Hans Schmidt in *Religion der Geschichte und Gegenwart*, II, col. 1150, or in Canon Bernard's article in Hastings's *Bible Dictionary*, IV, p. 32 ("with one exception—Deut. xxvi. 1-15—there is nothing about prayer in the Law"). In the work of von der Goltz there is a careful examination of our Lord's practice of prayer, and also of prayer addressed to Him within the New Testament. An article by the same writer on the general subject in *R.G.G.*, II, 1141, should not be forgotten, nor yet Dr. Israel Abrahams's "Some Rabbinic Ideas on Prayer" in his *Pharisaism and the Gospels*, II, 72 (1924).

Of special interest, though less historical and more analytical, is the work of the Swedish scholar, Friedrich Heiler, first published in 1918 and already in its fifth edition (1923). The section on the philosophical criticism of prayer is unexpectedly brief though penetrating. The main strength of the book will be found in the sections on Prayer as practised by great religious Personalities, and the distinction which is fully worked out between prayer in Mysticism and Prayer that is characteristic of "prophetic piety." The fifth edition is notable for the acknowledgment that the writer has seen cause to change his view about "mysticism." "Under the influence of Friedrich von Hügel, W. R. Inge and Mrs. Evelyn Underhill, the most unbiassed and most sympathetic investigators of

mysticism in the past and in the present, the writer has been led to correct at various points his earlier conception of, and judgment upon, mysticism, and to free himself entirely from the theory of mysticism held by Ritschl." The results of this important change of view have not yet been incorporated in the text, but are represented in the appendix, which gives abundant provision of notes and references. In English there are two recent books contributing to the history of prayer, one by Professor Emery Barnes, *Early Christians at Prayer*, the other by Mr. A. L. Lilley, *Prayer in Christian Theology*. Both these volumes are to be welcomed, though the scope of the latter is not so wide as its title might suggest: it confines itself almost entirely to prayer and the conception of it as represented among the mystical theologians.

Again, the student will not neglect the classical writings on the subject. Among these must be reckoned the treatises by several of the ancient Fathers, especially Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian and Origen. They, particularly the two former, deal largely with what may be called the circumstances and the adjuncts of prayer, but it is Tertullian who has given us the memorable phrase, "that noble and costly sacrifice of prayer," and Clement (in his portrait of the ideal Christian in the seventh book of the *Stromateis*) develops a conception of prayer which has had a wide influence on subsequent thinking. He defines prayer as "ascensio mentis ad Deum," and although he does not exclude definite petition from the scope of prayer the emphasis that he lays on knowledge of God's will as a condition of prevailing prayer introduces a note of hesitancy into such petitions. Origen shows himself familiar with perplexities such as present themselves to the modern mind, e.g. that prayer is vain if God foresees already what is to happen, or if all things happen according to a fixed Divine

decree, which it is presumption to believe that prayer can change. He shows himself concerned to maintain the propriety and the efficacy of direct petition even for material things. The distinction reappears throughout the succeeding centuries. Thought tends to emphasize either the contemplative or the active aspect of prayer, the former being specially represented in the mystical writers of the Middle Ages.

The effects of the Reformation in this field may be seen in the collection of prayers by Martin Luther, Bugenhagen and others, which was published in 1866, prayers which are simple, terse and full of believing confidence, in which he who prays does not reflect much upon himself, but makes his wants, spiritual and material, known to a merciful God. The classics of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in England include the *Preces Privatæ* of Bishop Andrewes, Jeremy Taylor's *Holy Living*, and particularly the works of William Law. It should be unnecessary to commend his *Serious Call*, which is a classic of delightful wit as well as of Christian experience; but equally deserving of careful study, though less well known, is his *Spirit of Prayer* (1752). "Every breath therefore of the true spirit of prayer can be nothing else but the breath of the Spirit of God, breathing, inspiring, and moving, the heart in all the variety of its motions and affections towards God. And, therefore, every time a good desire stirs in the heart, a good prayer goes out of it that reaches God as being the fruit and work of His Holy Spirit."

Among modern books it can hardly be said that we have a thoroughly satisfactory monograph dealing with the whole subject of prayer. The intellectual problems to which it gives rise are referred to and treated more or less thoroughly in many of the books on the philosophy of religion or on Christian theology, or again in books which are mainly

concerned with the practice of prayer. But in either case they "come in from alongside" as the Apostle might have said. And the treatment is apt to be either too technical or too perfunctory to satisfy the serious student who is not deeply versed in philosophy. The best approach to the study is probably to be found in the article in the *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, by Dr. d'Arcy (Archbishop of Armagh). In this the modern Christian explanation and defence of the practice of prayer is set forth with clearness and authority. The moral or theological objections and the scientific are dealt with in succession, and then a series of "minor objections." The scientific objection is met as by most modern theologians by a criticism of the conception of "natural law." The sharp distinction between the material and the spiritual realms cannot any longer be maintained. It is admitted that man has power to affect and to alter the inclinations and the purposes of his fellow-man. But he is able also to affect and alter the influences of Nature. He is able to use these natural forces, and combine them in a multitude of ways to serve his own ends. And all this is done in accordance with the "laws of nature." Its very possibility depends upon the existence of natural law. The "laws of nature" are only another name for the trustworthiness of natural forces. And it is absurd to suppose that this characteristic of natural law which gives man all his power over nature, creates an obstacle in the way of Divine activity. After dealing with the special difficulty felt in connection with intercessory prayer, the writer, in the closing section of his article, sets the whole subject in the light of a true conception of God as at the same time immanent and transcendent, the supreme personal Life within the sphere of whose being there is room for the free interaction of a whole multitude of finite persons. "The result of the whole investigation is this:

to a believer in a living God the efficacy of prayer is capable of ample justification. None of the objections that have been made against it on scientific or on philosophical grounds can be sustained."

A wider and fuller treatment of the subject will be found in the well-known volume entitled *Concerning Prayer* (edited Canon Streeter, 1916), to which several distinguished writers have contributed. Many of the topics discussed belong rather to the periphery of the subject than to its centre: and while there is a chapter on Prayer in the Old Testament, we miss any corresponding account of prayer in the New Testament or after. The chapters on "Petition, some Theoretical Difficulties" (by Mr. Edwyn Bevan), on "Intercession" (by Mr. Leonard Hodgson), and on "The World Order" (by Mr. A. C. Turner) deal with the heart of the problem, and indicate helpful lines for its solution. *The Christian Doctrine of Prayer*, a volume edited by the late Dr. Hastings (1915), combines the theoretical and the practical interests of the subject, and is perhaps for those who are not prepared to go deeply into the philosophy of the question, the most useful manual available. It is characterized by the large number of illustrative passages culled from many different writers and thinkers. A curious and interesting volume is that entitled *The Power of Prayer* (edited W. P. Paterson, 1920). It consists of a selection to the number of twenty from more than sixteen hundred essays upon Prayer sent in connection with a prize offered by the Walker Trust. The selection, while it includes the best, includes also other essays which have been printed "with a view to producing a volume which should throw light upon the life and thought of the whole religious world of to-day." It would be hard to find a volume in which more varied and opposed opinions were represented, but there is an underlying unity of conviction as to the importance

and reality of prayer which in the end becomes very impressive. Mention should be made of the excellent classified bibliography (by W. C. Fraser) which is printed at the end of this volume.

Our second class should include those books which are devoted to the exposition of prayer, its methods, its value and the possibilities which it opens up. In the choice to be made from a large number of excellent books it is inevitable that personal taste should play a considerable part. One would not like to forget one's gratitude to Marcus Dods for *The Prayer that teaches to Pray*, or to Bishop Gore for *Prayer and the Lord's Prayer*. Among more recent books we may distinguish a group in which the mystical element is dominant. Of such are Miss Swettenham's *Conquering Prayer* (1906) and *Creative Prayer* by the late Mrs. Herman (1921). The latter is remarkable for the sustained way in which prayer is exhibited as a creative agency transforming both the worshipper and his environment. "Any material amelioration or social reform which may be secured is a by-product of the central process; its excellence depends upon its connection with it." So it is with entirely practical aims on the far horizon that the book is devoted to an account of that central process whereby men rise to the Priesthood of Prayer. To some it may seem to present an ideal that is beyond the reach of plain men, but it is a book that should be studied.

A small volume which has commended itself, and that deservedly, to a very large number of people, is Dr. McNeile's *Self-training in Prayer* (first edition, 1916). Its very practical purpose is carried out in a very practical way, and yet with an earnestness and persuasiveness which make both the book and the subject attractive. A suitable companion to Dr. McNeile's work will be found in Dr. Fosdick's *The Meaning of Prayer* (first edition, 1915). This

is arranged for devotional reading from day to day, and owes its attractiveness to the skilful combination of Scripture text with comment and illustration and with prayers drawn from many sources. Mention should also be made of *A Book of Prayers for Students* recently published by the Student Christian Movement.

When we come to collections of prayers there is again a wide choice. And the choice will include two extremes. It would appear that written prayers to be helpful must either be such as have stood the test of time, or new minted out of the heat and pressure of contemporary life. Prayers, and still more collections of prayers, which can be described as modern, seldom have the quality of wearing. The more exactly they have fitted in with the mood and need of an hour that is passed, the less certain they are to fit without jarring into the mood or need of the present. We shall be wise therefore to seek for what is best among the classical examples and also for those provided by fine Christian minds which combine a keen sense of the needs, religious, moral and social of our own time with a clear understanding of the bearing upon them of the revealed mind and will of God. Among the English classics it is hard to pass over *The Devotions of Bishop Andrewes* (edited by Dr. Alex. Whyte, 1896, and by Dr. A. E. Burn, 1908). Scriptural and doctrinal in their basis, minute and, as it sometimes seems, almost mechanical in their analysis, these prayers may often fail to appeal to the modern mind. Yet there is about them as a whole a massiveness and a solemnity which are a valuable prophylactic against the superficiality and the jauntiness of many modern prayers.

These prayers are the work of one hand. Of prayers from many sources there are old collections which have still historical value. Of such are *Reformed Devotions*, edited by Wasse (Oxford, 1719), and *The Book of Private*

Devotion, edited by E. B. Bickersteth (1839). As a collection of the finest examples from the past, the product of many minds, there is nothing so good as that edited by Dr. Selina Fox, *A Chain of Prayer across the Ages* (1913). It is thoroughly catholic and comprehensive in its representation of the best in Christian prayer. Within it each one can form for himself his own canon of prayer as he forms his own canon of scripture. Of similar quality, though not so extensive, is the volume edited by M. W. Tileston, *Great Souls at Prayer*, a selection made with knowledge and good judgment. It is hardly necessary to mention *Prayers, written at Vailima*, by R. L. Stevenson (1905). They have commended themselves to many by the simplicity and directness with which they express the common needs and aspirations of a family group.

Finally, though our list is far from exhausted, there is a small collection of special value, recently published by Mr. Hoyland. Its title, *A Book of Prayers for Indian Colleges*, indicates its special purpose; but the limitation is only an apparent one. Some may detect a certain preciousness in some of the prayers; others may miss any specifically Christian reference. But the latter is easily and naturally supplied; and of most of the prayers it may be said that along with deep sincerity they have a note of peculiar freshness and insight: many Christians will be thankful to make them their own. And others who may do the same will surely be led ere long to seek in the Gospel of Christ "the divine Force unto Salvation."

Confining ourselves therefore to books in English, and bearing in mind that in this connection especially the needs and tastes of different persons are very different, we may make our list as follows:—

"Prayer, Christian": Dr. d'Arcy's article in *ERE*.

Concerning Prayer: edited by Canon Streeter.

The Christian Doctrine of Prayer: edited by Dr. Hastings.

A. H. McNeile : *Self-Training in Prayer.*

H. E. Fosdick : *The Meaning of Prayer.*

E. Herman : *Creative Prayer.*

Bp. Andrewes : *Private Prayers.*

S. Fox : *A Chain of Prayer across the Ages.*

M. W. Tileston : *Great Souls at Prayer.*

A Book of Prayers for Use in Indian Colleges.

C. ANDERSON SCOTT.

*SYMBOLS AND SACRAMENTS ;
OR, WHAT PREVENTS INTERCOMMUNION ?*

THERE is to-day, at any rate in the Protestant Churches, a widespread desire for real brotherhood. Each denomination, anxious to be loyal to its inheritance, is at the same time readier than ever before to respect the loyalties of others. The line of cleavage between them is so often quite evidently not that of any fundamental *religious* difference. Anglicans and Free-Churchmen of various kinds gladly pray together and worship together on occasion, and unite whole-heartedly in all sorts of religious work. Why is it that in the act which is to nearly all of them central in their religious life, the most important expression of their union with their common Lord and with one another, they are still obliged, with perplexity, with sorrow, and with something of shame, to keep apart ? What virus is there in philosophical and theological theory that turns the sign of deepest union into the occasion of apparently irreconcilable disunion ?

The perplexity suggests an inquiry into the meaning of Sacrament and the function of Symbol generally, in the hope that it may throw light on this question of the Holy Communion and Intercommunion.