

AN
ANSWER
TO
A Brief Discourse
CONCERNING
SINGING
In the publick
Worship of God
IN THE
GOSPEL-CHURCH,
By I.M in. 1690.

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Beloved Brother,

The *Apostle James saith* (Chap. 5.V.19.20.) Brethren if any of you do err from the *Truth*, and one Convert him; Let him know, that he which Converteth a Sinner from the Errour of his Way, shall Save a Soul from Death, and shall hide a Multitude of Sins.

I have read your Little Book (which you gave me) *concerning Singing. And now after Prayers to GOD, and Serious Consideration of what you have said therein; I return you this Brief Answer, which I do intreat you to Consider: So I remain,*

Your Brother,

In our Lord JESUS CHRIST,

H.K.

AN
ANSWER
To a Brief Discourse
Concerning Singing, &c.

The Subject that you intended to treat of (*expressed in the Title page of your Book*) is, “Singing in the Publick Worship of God in the Gospel-Church”: *That is*, say you, *pag. 5. lin. 1,2, 3.* The Primitive and Apostolical Church; your words are these: “That spiritual and vocal Singing was used in the Primitive and Apostolical Church of Christ, is undeniable.” You also confess in your *first, 5th.pag. lin. 28, 29, 30. That Vocal Singing, Coloss. 3. 16. is there to be understood, &c.* And in your *second, 5th.pag. lin. 20, 21, 22.* “Intelligible Singing (*say you*) for teaching and admonishing others, cannot be without the use of the Organical Instruments of the Voice.

I beseech you (*my Beloved Brother*) to consider, that Singing in the Publick Worship of God, in the Apostle’s *daies*, was not only used and practised (*as you have confessed again and again*) but Commanded by the Apostle Paul, *Col. 3. 16.* where the word *Let* hath the Force of a Commandment of God; as *Eph. 4. 29. Phil. 1. 27. Eph. 5.33. Jam. 5.13. Read the words, especially consider what you say concerning Women, 1 Cor. 14. 34. Let your Women keep silence in the Church: And, 1 Tim 2. 11. Let the Women learn in silence with all subjection. Pag. 21 line .12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17. read your own words; You say, p.5. lin. 5.* “But the *Question* is, Whether *David’s* Psalms, or any Human prescribed or precomposed Matter may, or ought not to be vocally sung by all the Church together, as part of the publick, constant, and ordinary Worship of God, instituted in his Gospel-Church”.

You had done fairly, to have put this your Question in the Title Page of your Book, but there is not one word of it there, except what you have confessed and granted, again and again, (as I have already noted out of divers Pages of your Book.) And so I proceed to offer something to your serious consideration, about the Essence or Being of Singing; “Which, *you say*, consists in an Inward Spiritual Exercise of the Soul or Mind of Man, *p. 5. lin. 24,25,26. And this must be granted, say you.*”

No Brother! You must not take it for granted, until your Reasons or Arguments be examined, which you bring to prove it. You affirm, *p. 6. lin. 9, 10, 11, 12.* “That the Scriptures do clearly witness, That the Essence of Prayer and Praises, and of Sin, do all consist in an inward Exercise of the Soul and Spirit.” And from thence you conclude, That the Essence or Being of Singing consists in the inward Spiritual Exercise of the Soul or Mind of Man. If you consult with any Logician, he can shew you the Weakness of your Consequence in this Argument.

Now, the Essence or Being of Singing in the Church of God, unto edifying, consists in the Voice, *as well as* in the Soul or Mind of Man: *Page 16.lin. 16, 17. you say right pag. 9.lin.9, 10.* “We find in Scripture another kind of Singing, *1 Chron. 16. 32, 33. & Psal. 65. 13. that. is, the . Virtual, or Metaphorical Singing of the Creatures*”. But there is no other kind of Singing in the Publick Worship of God in the Gospel-Church, unto edifying without the Voice. You should have put the Voice into the *Essence* or *Being* of this kind of Singing: The natural kind of the Singing of Birds, and of little Children, is not without Voices, and Organical Instruments of the Voice: You have neither Scripture nor sound Reason for your Opinion about Singing without the Voice, unto edifying in the Church of Jesus Christ. You bring a Scripture to prove Silent Singing in the Church, *1 Cor. 14. 26, 27, 28.* All I need to say in answer to what you have said, *p. 7, 8, 9* is, to shew you, that you are mistaken in the Mind of Christ and his Apostle in that Scripture. The Apostle mentioneth divers Gifts, *ver. 26. a Psalm, a Doctrin, a Tongue, a Revelation, an Interpretation:* Then he exhorted them, saying, *Let all things be done to edifying;* and *ver. 27. If any Man speak in an unknown Tongue, let it be by two, or, at most, by three, and. that by course, and let one interpret; but if there be no Interpreter, let him keep Silence in the Church.* What is this to silent Singing in the Church, any

more than if you had brought it to justify the *silent* Meetings of them called Quakers. Then, *p. 8, l. 20, 21, &c.* say you, “What can be more plain, than that Singing and other Gifts of the Holy Spirit have their Essences in our Spirits, wherein we are capable of worshipping God *acceptably*, without the verbal and vocal Instruments of the Body”.

O my Brother! I know you are not one of them that approve of silent Meetings, who supposing that they have a *Light* within them, whereby they are capable to worship God *acceptably* without his Gospel-Ordinances of Baptism, the Lord’s Supper, and Singing without verbal and vocal Instruments in their *Silent* Meetings. In a word, This *unsound* Opinion of yours, will lead you, and others of the same mind, into some Erroneous Principles of them called Seekers, Quakers, and such as are for Non- Churches, if God do not prevent by his Holy Spirit and Grace, or restrain.

The next Particular you treat of, is *David’s Psalms*, *p. 9, to p. 15.* where you labour to prove, That *David’s Psalms* ought not to be sung in the Churches of Christ, in the days of the Gospel. (I have proved, that the Apostle *Paul* commanded the Saints and Faithful Brethren in Christ, *Col. 1.2.* to sing Psalms, *Col. 3. 16. that is, David’s Psalms.* Read those Scriptures, *Luk. 20. 42. & 24. 44. And David himself saith in the Book of Psalms, The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand. And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning me. Acts 1. 20. & 13. 33. For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and, his Bishoprick let another take. God hath fulfilled the same unto us their Children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* You cannot shew where the word Psalms are understood of any other, but only *David’s Psalms*, called *The Book of Psalms*.

But you having no Scripture against Singing of *David’s Psalms*, do seem to reason, and argue against singing of them, *first* because the Church of Christ is now in a Wilderness-condition, and in a mourning Sackcloth-state, *p.12. l. 13,-21.* But the Wilderness-state of the Church under the Gospel (*Isa. 52. 7,8, 9. How beautiful upon the Mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tydings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tydings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! Thy Watchmen shall lift up the voice, with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion. Break forth into joy, sing together ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem*) should not hinder the Churches and Servants of God to sing Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs, making Melody in their Hearts to the Lord. Was not Christ and his Disciples in a mourning condition, the same night our Blessed Saviour was betray’d? yet they sung an Hymn, *Mat. 26. 30. Mark 14.26.* Was not the Condition of *Paul* and *Silas* a Wilderness-condition? *Act. 16. 23.-30. And when they had laid many Stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the Jaylor to keep them safely: Who having received such a Charge, thrust them into the inner prison and made their feet fast with the stocks: And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great Earthquake, so that the Foundations of the Prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every ones bands were loosed. And the Keeper of the Prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the Prison-doors open, he drew out his Sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the Prisoners had been fled: But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thy self no harm, for we are all here. Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas; and brought them out, and said, Sirs, What must I do to be saved? Yet they sang Praises to God; and God wrought a notable Miracle of Confirmation, not only an Earthquake, that shook the Foundations of the Prison, opened all the Prison Doors, and every one’s Bands were loosed, and the Keeper of the Prison was terribly affrighted and converted, *ver. 34.**

You say, *p. 29. l. 26.* “The word *Sung* is not in the Greek: But it is there read, *And they having*

hymned.” “Which word,” say you, “is taken by divers Learned Men to be of a general signification of all kinds of Praises or Thanksgivings, and not confined to Songs only.” Neither do I confine the signification thereof only to Songs: Yet *Beza* translates *quum hymnum cecinissent*, When they had sung an Hymn. *Screvilius* and *Hill*, in their Greek Lexicon, translate *celebro hymnum cano*; and learned *Dr. Owen*, upon *Heb. 2. 12.* [which the Learned Translators do read, *In the midst of the Church will I sing Praises unto thee*] hath these words in his Exposition, viz. “It is declared further, first, what Christ will moreover do; *He will sing Praises unto God.* Secondly, where he will do it; *In the midst of the Congregation or Church.*” So that it is manifested, say you, from the aforesaid Premises, that praising of God is not limited to Songs of Praise. I do not limit the signification of the word only to Songs; neither you, nor all the Learned Men and Books in *Sion-College* can prove that the word signifies the Essence of Singing (*without the Voice*) in heart and Mind only; especially, *Col. 3. 16.* if a Minister of the Church, who hath received a spiritual Gift to sing an Hymn or a spiritual Song, do sing in the Church; as *1 Cor. 14. 15. 16. 26.* *What is it then? I will pray with the Spirit, and will pray with the Understanding also; I will sing with the Spirit, and I will sing with the Understanding also. Else when thou shalt bless with the Spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned, say Amen at thy giving of Thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest? How is it then, Brethren? when ye come together, every one you hath a Psalm, hath a Doctrin, hath a Tongue, hath a Revelation; hath an Interpretation. Let all things be done to edifyng; may, and in my opinion ought to administer his Gift, 1 Pet. 4. 10, 11. As every man hath received the Gift, even so minister the same one to another; as good stewards of the manifold Grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the Oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ; to whom be Praise and Dominion for ever and ever. Amen.* Yet this I confess, That those Hymns and Spiritual Songs, which they sing in the Spirit, and with understanding, unto edifying, are not those *Psalms of David*, which the Apostle mentions, *Col. 3. 16.* as I have proved before: Neither will those Ministers or Members of the Churches of Saints, that sing Hymns or spiritual Songs, affirm or assert, that they are *David’s* Psalms, Hymns and spiritual Songs, *Col 3. 16,* no, nor given them by the Inspiration of the Holy Spirit, as the Book of Psalms was.

And *p. 14. l. 10, 11, 12.* you say, “Some of the Psalms were clear Prophecies of the Sufferings of Christ, which to sing now were to deny, That Christ is come in the Flesh. If this argument was good, it would also follow, That to Read those Psalms now, was to deny, that Christ is come in the Flesh.

And *p. 15, l. 4,5,6, 7,8.* You say, “There is no Instance can be given in the New Testament, that any of *David’s* Psalms were ever Sung by any Persons, or Churches, &c.”

And yet you say, affirm, and confess; That Vocal Singing of Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs, was practiced in those Churches of *Ephesus* and *Coloss, p. 5. l. 20, 21, 22, 23. & p. 5. l. 1, 2, 3, 4.* And you say Vocal Singing was used in the Primitive and Apostolical Church of Christ.

But Women may not speak in the Church, and therefore they may. not Sing, *p. 21.* for Singing is Teaching. Why do the Churches of Saints require Women to declare the Work of Conversion, in the Church? Or to bear Witness of the disorderly Walking of any Brother or Sister, if they may not speak in the Church. Women have the Essence of Singing (*as well as Men*) both in their Souls, and with their Voices; and are allowed to speak by all the Churches of Saints.

Many other things you have said, and many Objections you have Propounded and Answer’d, in which I am not willing to shew your Weakness; but leave you and others of your Perswasion therein, to consider what I have said, and pray, that GOD will Convince you of your & Errour, and make known unto you His Revealed Will in the Holy Scripture of Truth.

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This text was transcribed from scanned TIF files downloaded from Early English Books Online (EEBO - <http://eebo.chadwyck.com>) and accessed through the University of Sydney Library. The original book is held in the Folger Shakespeare Library, UK. Reel position: Wing / 2406:18.

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