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ORIGEN AGAINST CELSUS.

It must be a welcome opportunity to all Christian teachers and preachers at least, and to all students of theology, if not to all Christians, to gain a closer vision of the first elaborate attack upon Christianity preserved to us, to which, as far as we know, any scholar and thinker of the pagan world condescended. We see in Tacitus (*Annals* 15, 44) and Pliny (*Epp.* 10, 96) with what haughty contempt such leaders of culture referred to the humble and despised sect, and with what consummate ignorance, we may add. This was during the reign of Trajan (98—117 A. D.). Under the Antonines a Greek philosopher, Celsus, published a special treatise against the Christians. The allusions to the distressful and troublous situation of the empire, when Celsus wrote, the great war on the Danubian frontier which Marcus Aurelius was compelled to undertake in 178, which he carried on in 179, and in which he died without bringing it to completion, in 180—this era best fits the allusion by Celsus. In 177 had occurred the terrible persecution at Lyons and elsewhere: Celsus intimates (VIII, 68) that the Christians are not sincerely loyal to the emperor; he says outright that, "if all [the subjects of the Roman empire] were to do the same as you [the typical Christian], nothing will prevent him [the emperor] from being left alone and desolate, and things on earth fall under the control of the most wicked and most savage barbarians [the Marcomanni], and no rumor left either of your own worship [the Christian] or of true philosophy." I do not share the view of many scholars, even of Origen himself in the earlier part of his treatise, that this

THE PROOF TEXTS OF THE CATECHISM WITH A PRACTICAL COMMENTARY.

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

PRAYER IN GENERAL.

(Continued.)

Matt. 4, 10: *Thou shalt worship the Lord, thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.*

This passage recalls the temptation of Jesus. The Prince of Peace and "the Prince of the World," John 12, 31, are in battle array. The Savior is tempted to doubt the Word of God, v. 3. Satan is baffled by an "It is written." Next, the Lord is to be tripped into disobedience by a misquoted passage of Scripture. The Tempter's lie is laid bare by another "It is written." Finally, Jesus is to reject Scripture. By diabolical art "all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them" are shown the Lord, and the promise is made: "All these things will I give Thee," on this condition: "If Thou wilt fall down and worship me." The Savior immediately recognizes the device of the devil to lure Him from the path of humiliation. With disgust He says: "Get thee hence!" Begone! Now you are showing your true colors. Your name is *Satan*, Adversary;

you would thwart my plan, God's plan, for the salvation of sinful man. Worship thee! Such a demand is truly satanical. Worship is due to God only. "*Thou shalt worship the Lord, thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.*" Get thee hence! Thus the Lord Jesus repels His adversary, fighting as Man in man's stead by appealing to the Scriptures, the weapon all Christians should continually use in their spiritual battles. The quotation is from Deut. 6, 13: "Thou shalt fear the Lord, thy God, and serve Him, and shalt swear by His name." The emphasis indicated by text and context in the Hebrew, Deut. 6, 13, is brought out by our Lord's free quotation, introducing the word "only" — "Him *only* shalt thou serve," — and by substituting the specific word "*worship*" for the general term "fear." Thus the intent of Deut. 6, 13 that "the Lord," *i. e.*, Jehovah, the true God, only is to be worshiped, is made apparent. To Him alone such honor is due.

Ps. 65, 2: *O Thou that hearest prayer, unto Thee shall all flesh come.*

The first strophe of Ps. 65 deals with the great blessings of the man dwelling in God's courts, that approaches Him in prayer. "*O Thou that hearest prayer,*" *i. e.*, it is an attribute of God to hear prayer; He is, if we translate the participle more closely, "the Hearer of prayer." That is God's characteristic. He is willing, always ready, to hear prayer; and only He is able to do so. Hence: "*unto Thee,*" — not to idols, not to Mary nor to the saints, — "*unto Thee shall all flesh,*" — *all* men, not only Israel; but "*all flesh,*" — you and I, and all that are in weariness and in need of an ear into which to pour our wants, necessities, and sorrows, — "*come.*" Only the true God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is able and willing to hear our prayer.

Is. 63, 16: *Doubtless Thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not. Thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer; Thy name is from everlasting.*

This passage is part of a most beautiful prayer. Here the reason is given why Jehovah is entreated to look down upon

Israel with favor and to manifest His love towards them. "Doubtless," according to the Hebrew, might have been rendered simply by "for." "*For Thou art our Father.*" The contrast in the text brings out the thought: Thou, Jehovah, Lord, art our true Father. Abraham and Israel, *i. e.*, Jacob, are fathers, it is true, and great men they were, great was their authority, great is the honor to be descended from them; but still they were but *men*. "Abraham is ignorant of us" now; he is dead; Jacob, Israel, acknowledges us not, *i. e.*, he has no knowledge of us, knows us not; he, too, is dead. Both are incapable of hearing prayer, much less, of answering it. "*Thou, O Lord, Jehovah, art our Father.*" Jehovah is Thy covenant name. In the Messiah, the Redeemer, Thou hast covenanted to be our *Father*; we are Thy children for the Messiah's sake. This Messiah will redeem, aye, in Thy sight has already redeemed, Israel from all sin. To Him we take refuge; our sins are covered before Thy face. The barrier between Thee and us — sin — has been removed. Thou art our loving Father, who wilt hear when Thy children cry unto Thee. How can it be otherwise? "*Our Redeemer, from everlasting is Thy name*"; and as Thy name is, so wilt Thou deal with us.

Isaiah deals the Catholic saint-worship a mighty blow. Saint-worship is gross idolatry. Abraham and Jacob, both saints, cannot hear prayers. "Abraham is ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledges us not." Saint-worship has no command, no promise of being heard, and no example in the Scripture.

Phil. 4, 6: *Be careful for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.*

What should we ask of God in our prayers? Phil. 4, 6 gives the answer: "*Be careful for nothing,*" *meden merimnate*. Similar to this is Matt. 6, 25: "*Take no thought*" = *be not careful, me merimnate*, "as to your life," etc. "Be careful for nothing," does not argue for carelessness; but what St. Paul does wish the Philippian Christians to cultivate is the virtue

of casting all their care upon God, to cut loose from the anxious, carking, harassing cares for the things of this life, which are so apt to smother the thoughts pertaining to yonder life, and to hinder growth in sanctification. "*Be careful for nothing,*" entertain no overanxious cares, but "cast all your care, *ten merimnan,* upon Him; for He careth for you." 1 Pet. 5, 7.

But cares, both temporal and spiritual, will crowd upon the Christians. What are they to do? Bring them to the Lord in prayer; "*let your requests be made known unto God,*" *proston Theon* = *before God*; lay the matter before Him. For means to help will fail Him never.

What requests are we to make known to God? All, both spiritual and temporal. There is no limitation whatever. "*In everything*" let your requests be known to God; be the matter great or small, pray. Cultivate the habit of bringing all that troubles you to your God in prayer. He knows your frame, and understands your cares. What an encouragement to pour out our hearts to God!

What a privilege to carry
Everything to God in prayer!
Oh, what peace we often forfeit,
Oh, what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry
Everything to God in prayer.

How should we make our requests known to God? "*By prayer and supplication with thanksgiving.*" Says *Lightfoot*: "While *proseuche*, prayer, is the general offering up of the wishes and desires to God, *deesis*, supplication, implies special petition for the supply of wants. Thus *proseuche*, prayer, points to the frame of mind of the petitioner, *deesis*, supplication, to the act of solicitation. The two occur together also in Eph. 6, 18; 1 Tim. 2, 1; 5, 5. In *aitemata*, requests, again the *several objects* of *deesis* are implied." — "Great stress is laid on the duty of *eucharistia*, thanksgiving, by St. Paul; *e. g.*, Rom. 1, 21; 16, 6; 2 Cor. 1, 11; 4, 15; 9, 11. 12; Eph. 5, 20; Col. 2, 7; 3, 17; 1 Thess. 5, 18; 1 Tim. 2, 1. All his own letters to the churches, with the sole exception of the Epistle to the Galatians, commence

with an emphatic thanksgiving. In this epistle the injunction is in harmony with the repeated exhortations to cheerfulness, *chara*, which it contains."

Pray, offer up your requests "in everything"; send them to the throne of grace. *Supplicate*, lay this special trial, this special distress, this special trouble, before Him, and do not neglect, thou child of God, to *thank* Him for His manifold blessings which He daily and richly showers upon you. Is it a *spiritual* gift you crave for, observe the prayer of the publican, Luke 18, 13. Is it a *temporal* thing you desire, follow the example of the woman of Canaan, Matt. 15, 22—28. In child-like confidence say, "Abba, Father."

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(To be continued.)