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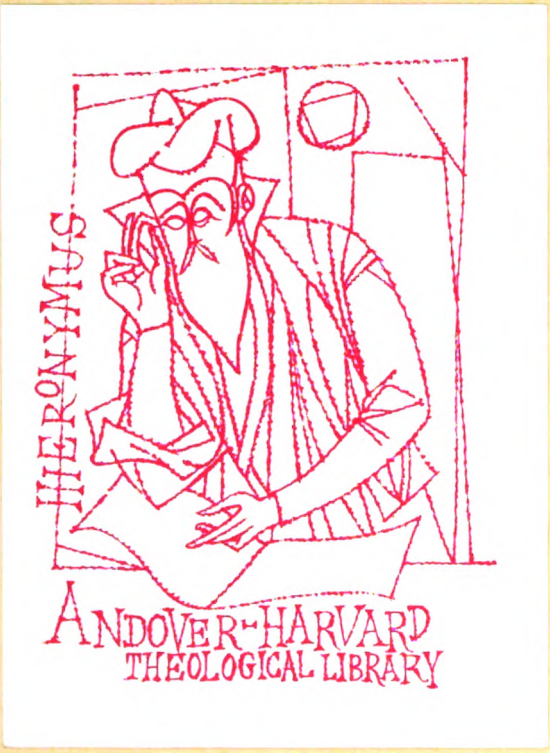

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27

THE

BOOK OF PSALMS

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THE

BOOK OF PSALMS

OR

THE PRAISES OF ISRAEL

A NEW TRANSLATION, WITH COMMENTARY

BY THE

REV. T. K. CHEYNE, M.A. D.D.

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CANON OF ROCHESTER



LONDON

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Divinity School.

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TO

PROF. FRANZ DELITZSCH

IN ADMIRATION OF

NOBLE SERVICES TO SCHOLARSHIP AND THE CHURCH

AND IN GRATITUDE FOR

THE PRIVILEGE OF HIS FRIENDSHIP

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INTRODUCTION.

THE NATURE OF THIS NEW VERSION OF THE PSALMS, AND ITS JUSTIFICATION IN CERTAIN PERMANENT WANTS OF THE EDUCATED READER —HOW THOSE WANTS WERE SATISFIED IN THE REFORMATION PERIOD AND AFTERWARDS—EMENDATION OF THE TEXT, WHY AND HOW RESORTED TO—THE SPIRIT OF THE PRESENT COMMENTARY—THE ALTERNATIVE TITLE EXPLAINED—THE DIVISIONS OF THE PSALTER —THE DOXOLOGIES OR SUBSCRIPTIONS—THE TITLES OR SUPERSCRIPTIONS—EWALD'S CHRONOLOGICAL ARRANGEMENT—EWALD CHARACTERISED.

LATER than I hoped, but sooner than I have sometimes feared, comes this fresh contribution to the study of the Hagiographa; the enforced delay, however painful, may at least have added somewhat to the maturity of the book. I need scarcely say that it would have been impossible to cover the whole subject of the Psalms in a single volume. I made it my object, therefore, to diminish the amount of necessary exposition by bestowing special care on the clearness of the translation, reserving the higher criticism and the consideration of psalm-theology for another occasion. Circumstances led me, uncertain whether I should proceed further, to prepare a translation first, and to accept the offer of my publishers to include it in the *Parchment Library*. That translation is here repeated, with numerous corrections which do not, I trust, materially affect the style. Where a literary as well as a scholarly standard has been aimed at, it is desirable to exercise caution in alteration. For the friendly reception accorded to my version of 1884 on both sides of the Atlantic, I can but express mingled surprise and gratitude. It confirms me in the belief that the careful but still in many respects somewhat antique Revised Version does not sufficiently reveal to the educated reader the thoughtful, radiant beauty of Hebrew poetry. That he has not been uncared for by the Revisers is indeed evident; a Revision merely

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intended for use in churches, or for simple, uneducated readers, would have contained far fewer modifications and innovations. But his wants could only be satisfied by (to quote Dr. De Witt's words) 'independent, individual effort,' and the Revision Company had neither individuality nor independence. It is of course true—and most happily true—that no single translator, however independent, could fully meet the demands of educated Bible-readers. Next to fidelity, he is bound to cultivate ease and clearness of expression; otherwise, instead of meaning too much, his version will certainly to the common ear and eye mean too little. But he has also to warn the reader that the waters which run so clear are deep, and that it is often difficult to determine between different interpretations of some group of words, or different forms of a single vague idea, the key to which must be derived from the context, not to speak here of the frequent uncertainty of the text. It is possible to do this by marginal notes, with or without comment; but evidently the reader can judge best of the effect of a different rendering by seeing it in a continuous version. One cannot therefore too strongly recommend the comparison of such careful independent versions of the Psalter as those of Kay, Perowne, and De Witt, to which may be joined Reuss' French translation, and this not only from the point of view of literature, but from that of devotion. For I fear that there is too much truth in the late Professor Brewer's remark that the present generation, almost too familiar with the Church-versions, 'has broken down the strong meaning of his (David's) words into the devotional dust of vague generalities.'

The two pleas which I have urged for independent translations of the Psalter—viz. their superior intelligibility and their devotional helpfulness—were, I suppose, advanced long since in the Reformation period. So at least I can better account for the constant popularity among the educated classes of Greek and Latin metrical versions of the Psalter, at least in the lands of the Reformation (for at Rome there were those who compared such classicized Psalters to 'seed committed to the arid sand,' the 'sand' being not the classic but the Hebrew element[1]). We may observe in the first place that the modern literary style did but slowly develope; to many educated persons the classic tongues seemed alone to furnish a worthy mould for the

[1] H. Stephanus, *Liber Psalmorum Davidis cum Cathol. Exposit. Ecclesiasticâ* (Par. 1562), quoted by Tholuck.

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poetry of Zion. To us indeed the idea of Homeric and Virgilian grafts on the Davidic stock is an æsthetic offence, and it is rightly regarded as one of the merits of Herder that, unlike the 'elegant' Lowth, he forgot his Horace and Æschylus when he read David and Job. But if even Lowth was blind to this late-discovered law of good taste, can we wonder that in the previous century a greater scholar than either Lowth or Herder (J. Spencer, author of *De Legibus Hebræorum*) called the Cambridge professor Duport's *Metaphrasis* in Homeric verse (Lond. 1674) 'golden,' and that earlier still the friend of the author of the *Faerie Queene* delightedly asks—[1] 'What Festivall Hymnes so divinely dainty as the swete Psalmes of King David, royally translated by Buchanan'?

Certain at least it is, that these pseudo-classic works served a good purpose in their day. They promoted the enjoyment of the Psalms as continuous poems and artistic wholes—an enjoyment too seldom known to Bible-readers in our own time. My next observation may to some appear stranger, but I cannot help making it. These faulty and hybrid compositions were true helps to piety and kindled the flame of devotion. The frequent use of the Church-versions was even then seen to have its dangers; 'devotional dust' was no support for faith in those rough times of persecution. Personal edification was Olympia Morata's motive for translating the Psalms into Greek verse in 1552, and religious interests dictated the retention of Buchanan's Psalms in Scottish and in some English schools. As late even as 1722 we find a Scottish gentleman (Sir Patrick Hume, of Polwarth) declaring that this Psalter, which he could repeat from end to end, had been his comfort by night and by day, and most of all when, like the royal psalmist, he had been hunted into dark hiding-places.[2] He was among the last of a good old school, brought up to value most in religion a strong and direct faith, and nourished intellectually on the lucid clearness of the classic models. To us the same escape from the combined familiarity and obscurity of the Church-versions is offered by translations such as I have mentioned, to which I venture diffidently to add my own in its present revised form.

I trust that I need not defend myself for deviating so often from

[1] Gabriel Harvey, *Foure Letters and certaine Sonnets*, 1592, p. 48. (There is a copy of this curious work in the Bodleian.)

[2] See quotation in Ker's *The Psalms in History and Biography*, p. 182.

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the Massoretic text. I agree with an old commentator on Isaiah, earnestly commended to me by the late Dr. Pusey (alas ! at twenty-one, I found his noble work too voluminous)—need I mention the name of Vitringa?—'Præstat dicere, si res ita sit, nos sensum Vatis non perspicere, quam dura et voluntaria ei impingere.'

Yes, 'voluntaria'—that is the right word. Those who, out of simple conscientiousness, emend the Hebrew text are ofttimes accused of 'subjectivity.' The term is then used in a bad sense ; but I think that a subjectivity which forms and disciplines and tests itself by critical methods and canons is nothing to be ashamed of. Where long reflexion has convinced me that the mutilations of time have rendered exegesis impossible, I have either left a blank in my version, or else sought for a worthy rendering, based upon some natural emendation. The critical notes, which, out of regard for my readers and my printers, I have limited to the most essential points, will, I hope, account for my innovations.

Of the commentary proper, much need not be said here. This too could easily have been expanded into twice the size ; it would then perhaps have been easier reading. Delitzsch has somewhere remarked that the Oriental writer reckons largely on the intellectual cooperation of his reader, and that even Oriental commentaries themselves need commentaries. I trust that there is not an unpardonable amount of this Orientalism in my book, though I confess that I think it no hardship myself to *work* on a good commentary. Some fair products of Christian scholarship there are which it is an education both for head and for heart to read. And though this book falls far short of its ideal, yet of one thing those who work at it may be assured —that it has been written from love, and contains nothing which the author has not found helpful to himself. He has enjoyed this Book of Praises alike for its poetry, for its critical and exegetical problems, and for its rich historical and religious significance. The messages which, both in dark days and in bright, it has borne to him, he has endeavoured to hand on to others. He does not therefore compete with his predecessors, nor seek to supplant them. The Psalm-country is wide and full of interest ; each traveller may see something fresh, though not without toil and preparation. I know that it is also a 'holy land.'

Thou, Jehovah, art the Holy One,
Enthroned upon the praises of Israel.

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These Spirit-taught utterances of the heart can, like the 'throne-bearing' cherubim, at any moment bring Him nigh : thus I venture to paraphrase the passage. I know and feel this. The Psalter is a Bible within the Bible, and has the twofold sacredness of its origin and its associations. I have lost no fair opportunity of showing my sense of this ; or rather, as I hope, a fragrant breath from the hills has followed me throughout. I have not said everything, however ; this is virtually the first volume of a treatise on the Psalms. Will the reader kindly remember this, and accept me as a sympathetic guide to the outermost part of the meaning of this deep Book?

Before passing on, I would offer a few indispensable hints on some technical points. And first, let me account for the alternative title 'The Praises of Israel.' One cannot, I think, be very grateful for the awkward foreign word Psalm, which conveys no definite meaning to the English reader, and which we owe to the old Latin version based upon the Septuagint. With the Greek-speaking Jews it was otherwise ; ψαλμός (= מִזְמוֹר, Syr. *mazmûrâ*[1]) gave them a truthful though not a complete description of the nature of the poems in this Book, which are in fact songs or poems set to music (and partly at least to the music of stringed instruments) for use in the temple and the synagogue.[2] In like manner, ψαλτήριον (properly a stringed instrument described by St. Augustine on Ps. xxxii. ; cf. the *psantêrîn* of the Book of Daniel) is a metaphorical expression for the collection of such songs or poems : the idiom is well reproduced by Bythner in the title of his once popular analysis of the Psalms called *Lyra Davidis*. But even if 'psalm' expressed more to us than it does, there is a title of this precious book which throws a brighter light upon its contents, and which is therefore even more preferable to the Greek title than Koheleth is to Ecclesiastes. The Jews in fact called the Psalter by

[1] The Arabic word *zabûr*, used in the Korán (see Sur. iv. 61, xxi. 105) for the Psalter, may, perhaps, be a mutilated form of *mazbûr* = *mazmûr*, and so be virtually an Aramaic loan-word. More probably it was used in this sense by Mohammed on account of its resemblance to *mazmûr*, but was really derived from a S. Semitic root *zabara* 'to write,' whence also comes *zubur* 'Scriptures' (Sur. iii. 181). Comp. T. Fraenkel, *Die aram. Fremdwörter im Arabischen* (Leiden, 1886), p. 248.

[2] Strictly speaking, of course, מִזְמוֹר and ψαλμός mean the music to which the song (שִׁיר, ᾠδή) was set. This distinction is clearly expressed by Gregory of Nyssa, quoted by Delitzsch (*Psalms*, E. T., i. 132).

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the expressive title 'praises' or 'songs of praise'[1]—תְּהִלִּים (shortened into תְּלִים or, with the Aramaic termination, תְּלִּין). This is attested for the third century A.D. by Hippolytus (ed. Lagarde, p. 188), Ἑβραῖοι περιέγραψαν τὴν βίβλον Σέφρα θελείμ ;[2] and Jerome after him, in the preface to his own translation of the Psalter, says, 'Titulus ipse hebræicus, Sephear Theallim, quod interpretatur volumen hymnorum.' The Talmudic writers too draw attention to the eucharistic element as the most essential in the book. Obviously the name is pre-Talmudic, though of a date long subsequent to the return from the Exile. The long post-Exile period had many vicissitudes ; but this title could only have been given when the circumstances of the Church-nation were such as to inspire jubilant thanksgiving—some part of the age of the Ptolemies naturally suggests itself. But is the title an appropriate one for the *earlier* psalms? Yes ; for the sympathetic reader cannot fail to notice an undertone of praise even in the more melancholy psalms. Ps. lxxxviii. is the solitary exception. The reason of this is clear. It is a foundation-truth with all good Israelites that, as one psalmist expresses it,

> Jehovah upholds all them that fall,
> and lifts up all them that are bowed down (cxlv. 14);

or, to quote a passage from a less joyous psalm specially dear to the greatest of Christian poets (Dante, *Parad.* xxv. 73–75),

> And they that know thy name will trust in thee,
> since thou, Jehovah, forsakest not those that enquire after thee (ix. 11).

It is possible indeed that an earlier title for the liturgical songs of the Israelites was תְּפִלּוֹת or 'prayers' (see lxxii. 20, where the Septuagint narrows the meaning too much[3] by rendering οἱ ὕμνοι). But, considering that the title 'praises' or 'songs of praise' comes to us recommended by the authority and religious experience of centuries,

[1] A synonymous title for the Psalter, which won favour as containing the most sacred Name, was Hallelujah (*Midrash Tillim*, c. 1, cited by Fürst, *Der Kanon*, &c., p. 65). In a narrower sense, eight (or in the Sept. fifteen) psalms may be called Hallelujah psalms (from their titles), and in a still stricter sense the five last psalms in the Book are technically so termed.

[2] Eusebius, quoting Hippolytus' list of books, gives the title Σφαρθελλείμ (Burton's text).

[3] See on xlii. 9, and note that the famous liturgical forms known from their earlier number as 'the eighteen' are called collectively the *Tefillah* ('prayer'), though the concluding Benedictions might give them a claim to be called the *Tehillah* ('praise'). *Tefillah* occurs in the heading of five psalms—xvii., lxxxvi., xc., cii., cxlii.

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and that even the great Sufferer in the Psalm-book speaks of the historic, self-revealing God as 'enthroned upon the praises of Israel' (Ps. xxii. 4), we shall do well to accustom ourselves to the intelligent use of the title תְּהִלִּים or 'praises,' and to make it a rule of our exegesis to look out in every psalm for an element of praise. I therefore describe the Psalter as a collection of the liturgical forms in which, 'in trouble and in joy,' the Jewish Church embodied its praiseful prayers and prayerful praises.

On the division of the Psalter (or Praise-book) St. Jerome has some interesting remarks in the Preface from which I have already quoted.

'Scio quosdam putare Psalterium in quinque libros esse divisum, ut, ubicumque apud LXX. interpretes scriptum est *γένοιτο γένοιτο*, id est fiat fiat, finis librorum sit, pro quo in hebræo legitur amen amen. Nos autem hebræorum auctoritatem sequuti et maxime apostolorum, qui semper in Novo Testamento Psalmorum librum nominant, unum volumen asserimus.'

In spite of the father of Christian Biblical criticism, it is worth while to emphasize the fivefold division of the Psalter, as a fact of some historical significance. The antiquity of the arrangement is attested by the presence of the very same formulæ which in our Hebrew text close the first four books (see xli. 14, lxxii. 19, lxxxix. 53, cvi. 48) in the Septuagint version. It is possible, and I think even probable, that the development of a fivefold out of an earlier fourfold division was held to be justified by the analogy of the Pentateuch This theory is expressed in the third century in a remark of Hippolytus,—*Τοῦτό σε μὴ παρέλθοι, ὦ φιλόκαλε, ὅτι καὶ τὸ ψαλτήριον εἰς πέντε διεῖλον βιβλία οἱ Ἑβραῖοι, ὥστε εἶναι καὶ αὖτο ἄλλην πεντάτευχον* (ap. Epiphan., *De Pond. et Mens.* c. 5). Similarly the Midrash Tillim, referred to above, in its introductory comparison of the sweetest of singers with the great legislator, points out that 'Moses gave them (the Israelites) the five fifths (i.e. parts) of the Law, and corresponding to these David gave them the book of Tehillim ('praises') in which are five books.' The remark is a suggestive one ; it seems to mean this—that the *Praise-book* is the answer of the worshipping community to the demands made by its Lord in the Torah, the reflexion of the external standard of faith and obedience in the utterance of the believing heart.

May we venture to go a step further, and say with Grätz that not

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only the number of the books but also that of the several Psalms (150) in the Psalter was arranged on the analogy of the Pentateuch? It is a well-known fact that the Law was divided into as many Sedarim (or 'orderings') as would occupy those Sabbaths which did not coincide with a festival in a cycle of three years.[1] The number of the Sedarim is variously given as 154 (so Jacob ben-Khayim in the Massora, though he only enumerates 153), 167, and 175;[2] and there is no reasonable doubt that at any rate the lowest of these numbers was influenced by considerations based upon the calendar. But is there any proof that lessons were taken from the Psalter in the synagogue-worship[3] even in 44 A.D., which Grätz boldly gives as the approximate date of the Septuagint version of the Psalms (our earliest evidence as to the number 150)? Has it even been ascertained that the three years' cycle of Pentateuch lessons is as old as the Septuagint Psalter (upon any view as to the date of this version)? Certainly if we could answer the latter question in the affirmative, we might plausibly suppose that the number 154 of the Pentateuch Sedarim, partly influenced those who brought out the number of 150 psalms. Both in Palestine and in Alexandria, great importance seems to have been attached to this number. On the main point the two great churches were agreed; but the Greek-speaking Jews united our psalms ix. and x., and cxiv. and cxv., which involved dividing our psalms cxvi. and cxlvii. In Palestine, however, there were some who counted only 147 psalms, 'according to the number of the years of Jacob.'[4] This meant uniting Psalms i. and ii. (David's favourite psalms, it was said, begin and end with אשרי), xlii. and xliii., lxx. and lxxi. Kimchi, combining Psalms cxiv. and cxv., makes 149, a reckoning which also frequently occurs in both Karaite and Rabbanite MSS.

Next, as to the subscriptions of the first four books (excluding lxxii. 20 for a special reason[5]). To us they may serve no other purpose

[1] The three years' cycle (for which see *Megilla* 29 *b*) continued in some synagogues as late as the times of Maimonides and Benjamin of Tudela (Zunz, *Die gottesdienstlichen Vorträge*, p. 410, note *a*).

[2] See, besides Zunz, *ibid.*, p. 4, Theodor in Grätz's *Monatsschrift*, 1887, p. 361. Grätz (*Die Psalmen*, i. 9) speaks of 150 sections of the Pentateuch, but I know not on what authority.

[3] See Herzfeld, *Geschichte des Volkes Jisrael*, iii. 216, and comp. Acts xiii. 15, 27.

[4] (Talm. Jerus.) *Shabbath*, c. 16, *Midrash Tillim*, c. 104, and other references in Fürst, *Der Kanon*, &c., p. 71.

[5] Missing the fact that lxxii. 20 is a subscription to a whole group of psalms

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than that of 'boundary-stones' (Delitzsch); but properly speaking they are liturgical doxologies, as appears from the fact that in 1 Chron. xvi. 35, 36 the doxology in Ps. cvi. 48 (together with *v.* 47) is attached to the artificial psalm which precedes, with introductory invitation to the worshippers 'and say ye,' and that in Neh. ix. 5 the Levites summon the congregation to 'bless Jehovah their God from everlasting to everlasting.' A Talmudic tradition illustrates this. It states that to every benediction a response was uttered by the congregation which in the temple took this form: 'Blessed for ever be the name of the glory of his kingdom,' and elsewhere consisted of a simple 'Amen.'[1] It is certainly strange that these liturgical doxologies should only occur at the end of four particular psalms, especially if we consider the fondness of the later Jews for benediction-formulæ; and it is one of Grätz's more probable conjectures that a benediction was usual at the end of every psalm, though to save space the scribes only wrote it at the end of Books I.–IV. This will account for the doxology appended to a composition in 1 Chron. xvi. mainly drawn from Psalms cv. and xcvi., which have no benediction either in the Hebrew or in the Greek text. It would seem, too, though further evidence is desirable, that the psalms were sometimes designated *Berakhoth* or 'benedictions.'[2]

On the subject of the titles or superscriptions, I hope to write elsewhere. So far as they relate to the music of the psalms, we may perhaps assume that they come neither from the age of the national independence, nor yet from that of the Greek dominion, but mainly from the beginning of the Persian period, when Ezra and Nehemiah so systematically reorganised the temple-services. So far as they relate to the authorship of the psalms, we may refer them partly to that and partly to a later period. They represent, as I have said elsewhere, 'traditional opinions of ancient critical schools—opinions, however, which were not universally held, as the Hebrew headings do not altogether agree with those in the ancient versions. At an earlier day much labour was rather unprofitably spent in defending the Davidic authorship of psalms transparently non-Davidic. An opposite tendency now prevails. Of the three most distinguished

(see note), Calvin actually supposes that Ps. lxxii. is the last prayer of David put into a poetical form by Solomon.

[1] (Talm. Jerus.) *Berakhoth*, 14 *c*; (Talm. Bab.) *Taanith*, 16 *b*.

[2] See Grätz, 'Die Doxologien in den Psalmen,' in his *Monatsschrift* for 1872, pp. 481–496; but comp. Perowne, *The Psalms*, i. 73, ii. 267.

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recent critics, Ewald acknowledges only 11 entire psalms and some fragments of psalms as Davidic, Hitzig 14, and Delitzsch 44. All of these agree as to the Davidic authorship of Psalms iii., iv., vii., viii., xi., xviii., xix. 1–7, and two out of three as to that of Psalms ix., x., xii., xiii., xv.–xviii., xix. 8–14, xxiv., xxix., xxxii., ci. Kuenen, however, will admit no Davidic psalms, though Davidic passages may perhaps have been inserted. In any case, it is quite certain that there are none in the last three books, and the probability is that Ewald's is the most conservative view of the headings at present tenable.' Need I add that I merely record his position without either endorsing it[1] or attaching any special weight to his authority? 'Non enim me cuiquam emancipavi; nullius nomen fero: multum magnorum virorum judicio credo, aliquid et meo vindico. Nam illi quoque non inventa, sed quærenda nobis reliquerunt.'[2] I am in no other sense a disciple of Ewald than that in which Biblical scholars generally must continue to be so, as long as lofty ideals and noble achievements are had in honour. A recent American writer on the Psalms has called Ewald 'the great denier:' the expression is singularly ill-chosen; Ewald is much more moderate in denying than in asserting. Especially is this the case in his chronological rearrangement of the Psalms (first published in 1839), which might have been less defective if Ewald had not attempted it so early in his career. We must not therefore accept his contributions to the conservative side of psalm-criticism without a careful testing; as a critic, he stands decidedly higher in his other works. And yet how much may be learnt even from this premature attempt! How much of permanent value it contains! With the hasty assertions how much solid truth is intermingled! And passing from the critical sphere, how precious upon the whole are its exegetical qualities! What a distinct view of the connexion of thought, and above all what a lively emotional sympathy with the psalmists! This indeed is a characteristic which Ewald has in common with the accomplished scholar to whom this volume is dedicated, and it comes from that personal religious experience which alone can qualify any one to be a sympathetic interpreter of the Old Testament saints.[3] May I not

[1] Comp. *Parchment Library Psalms*, Introd., pp. xi.–xvi. All that can be said for a more conservative view than Ewald's will be found in Delitzsch, or more clearly expressed in Perowne.

[2] Seneca, *Ep. ad Lucil.*, xlv.

[3] See 'Franz Delitzsch,' by Prof. Salmond, *Expositor*, 1886 (1), pp. 456–471, and 'The Life and Works of Heinrich Ewald,' by the present writer, *ibid.*, 1886 (2), pp. 241–265, 361–376.

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then on this ground couple the preceding caution with an equally emphatic statement of Ewald's claims not only upon our admiration but upon our reverence? We need not adopt his or any man's chronology of the Psalter, but we may obtain from him the secret of the reconciliation of faith and criticism, and so like him maintain our spiritual ardour amidst the coldest and driest philological analysis. Would that the serene atmosphere which envelopes his best exegetical and historical work had more completely penetrated his outward life! Would that his spiritual development had been less tragically interrupted! We may learn many a lesson from the imperfections of our best teachers. But I must pause: we have lingered long enough in the vestibule. Let us now press on with alert minds and uplifted hearts into the sanctuary of the 'praises of Israel.'

NOTICE.—Asterisks in the translation indicate either that an incurable corruption is suspected in the Hebrew text, or that words appear to have dropped out which cannot even conjecturally be supplied. When, however, such words can be conjecturally restored the English equivalent is generally enclosed in *square* brackets.

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THE PSALMS.

BOOK I.

PSALM I.

It is mentioned in the Talmud (*Berakhoth*, 9 *b*) that Psalms i. and ii. form a single Parasha; and this was formerly the case in many more Hebrew MSS. than at present (Euthymius, in Wettstein on Acts xiii. 33). According to another arrangement in some MSS. of the Hebrew text and of Sept. this psalm is not Ps. i., but simply a prologue. Originally, it would seem, it was prefatory to Books I. and II. The date of the psalm is therefore specially important; it is unwise to decide too hastily, on the ground of the parallelism of *vv.* 3, 4 and Jer. xvii. 5–8, that the psalm must have been written not later than the age of Jeremiah.

1 Happy the man that has not walked in the counsel of the ungodly,
  nor stood in the way of sinners,
  nor sat in the company of scoffers!
2 But in the law of Jehovah is his delight,
  and on his law meditates he day and night.
3 For he is like a tree planted by water-courses,
  that brings forth its fruit in due season,
  and whose leaf withers not;
  and whatever he does, makes he to prosper.

4 Not so are the ungodly,
  but they are like the chaff which the wind drives away.
5 Therefore the ungodly cannot stand in the judgment,
  nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.
6 For Jehovah takes knowledge of the way of the righteous,
  but the way of the ungodly perishes.

1 **Happy.** Lit., 'O the happiness (or, good fortune) of;' *not* 'blessed' (the word in Jer. xvii. 7) —to quote Carlyle's famous distinction (De Witt) is not in point. The psalmist, standing aside like a Greek chorus, congratulates the righteous man. So Moses before his death exclaims, 'Happy art thou, O Israel' (Deut. xxxiii. 29). The external rewards of righteousness will sooner or later be assigned (*'ashrê* implies this even in xxxii. 1, 2, xciv. 12); one of the leading

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ideas of the psalmists, and naturally put forward in the prologue. May we not add that the 'generous universal invocation of all nature' which forms the *envoi* of the Psalter supplies a necessary balance to this heart-searching announcement?—**That has not walked,** &c. In this and the two next clauses both verbs and nouns have by many been regarded as forming a climax—by Ibn Ezra and Kimchi not less than Hitzig and Delitzsch. Hupfeld and Hengstenberg, however, take the clauses as synonymously parallel, and there is no adequate reason against this, which is the simpler view. Three forms of a corrupting association with the wicked are delicately distinguished (cf. Judg. v. 10, 'ye that ride . . . sit . . . walk'): for the first, cf. Mic. vi. 16, Jer. vii. 24; for the second, Prov. iv. 14; for the third, xxvi. 4, 5, Jer. xv. 17.——**The ungodly.** Whatever be the root-meaning of *rāshā'*, the word is certainly the opposite of *çaddîq*. If the latter means 'one who adheres strictly to the divine rule or standard,' the former signifies 'one who neglects this rule or standard.' In Proverbs and Job, it is clearly used of anyone who, at the bidding of his passions, violates the divinely appointed laws of ordinary morality; the wise men had reached that distinction between the ritual and the purely moral which was obscured again when the lawbook became predominant. There is consequently no occasion (except in Ps. cxix.) to assign to *rāshā'*, 'the ungodly,' the sense which *ἀσεβὴς* has in Josephus and *ἄνομος* in 1 Macc., viz. 'one unfaithful to the true religion.' Sometimes, however, it means 'heathen enemy' (see on iii. 8).——**Company** (as cvii. 32), almost = 'club-meeting.' 'Seat' (De Witt) seems too literal; cf. Ar. *mejlis* 'social gathering' (prop. 'seat').——**Scoffers.** The only place in the Psalms where this word *lēçîm* occurs. In Prov. it is frequent in the sense of one who despises that which is holy, and avoids the company of the nobler 'wise men,' but yet in his own vain way seeks for truth: his character is marked by arrogance, as that of the wise is characterised by devout caution (*εὐλάβεια*); see Prov. xiv. 16, xxi. 24, and cf. *Job and Solomon*, pp. 119, 151. To the psalmist, as to the author of Prov. xxx. 5, the volume of revelation is sufficient for all the legitimate needs of human reason.

2 **But in the law,** &c. The 'law' (*tora*) may here include the prophets (including the prophetico-historical books) as well as the Pentateuch; *tora*, in fact, before the time of Malachi, is generally used of the revelations of God's will made through the prophets (cf. *The Prophecies of Isaiah*, ed. 3, i. 6). In later Jewish literature, where nothing is said to the contrary, *tora* means the collection of canonical writings (see *Sanhedrin*, 90 *b*). Comp. Ecclus. xxxix. 1, 'But he that giveth his mind to the law of the Most High and meditates thereon, will seek out the wisdom of all the ancients, and be occupied in prophecies.' I presume, however, that our psalmist would have placed all other books second in rank to the 'law' properly so called, in the spirit of Josh. i. 8.

3 See the fuller description in Jer. xvii. 8, and comp. the application made in *Pirke Abhoth*, iii. 17.——**For he is.** So our language requires us to render. Part of the meaning of a Hebrew clause has to be gathered from the context, and it is clear that *v.* 3 unfolds the meaning of the *μακαρισμός* in *v.* 1; the explanatory particle 'for' is therefore justified. But the Hebrew, through the 'vav consecutive,' states something else, which in English we should leave to be inferred. The literal rendering is, *So he becomes* (viz. as a consequence of studying the Law), and this is adopted by De Witt.——**Like a tree,** &c. The writer tacitly forbids us to specialise; he implies a garden with 'trees of all kind of fruit' (Eccles. ii. 5), such as the vine

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(Ezek. xix. 10), the palm (Ps. xcii. 12, 13), the pomegranate (Cant. vi. 7), and the apple (Cant. ii. 3). Mohammed is equally vague; 'Seest thou not to what God likeneth a good word [the preaching of Islam]? To a good tree; its root firmly fixed, and its branches in the heaven: yielding its fruit in all seasons by the will of its Lord' (*Korán*, xiv. 29). The psalmist's application of the figure is not so very different from Mohammed's; the life of his happy man is one in which the good word of the Law has taken form.——**By water-courses,** i.e. by artificial streams for irrigation (comp. Eccles. ii. 5, 6). See on xlvi. 5, lxv. 10.——**Makes he to prosper.** The old doctrine of Hebrew faith, so common in Proverbs, that prosperity attends the righteous, is distinctly adopted. The psalmist, however, is well aware that the reward may be delayed; hence he refers in *vv.* 4–6 to a sifting process through which the professedly righteous community (*v.* 5; comp. cxlix. 1) will pass.

4 **Like the chaff,** &c. Threshing-floors, as Isa. xvii. 13 suggests, were usually in high situations, where the wind would readily carry the chaff away. The winnower beats out the wheat or barley with a stick, and then throws it up in the air; the grain and the crushed straw (Heb. *tebhen*) fall in heaps, but the chaff is blown away. Thus the figure is a comprehensive one. It is implied that a winnower has been at work; that is, God, who in each successive judgment winnows the 'corn of his floor' (Isa. xxi. 10). Comp. Matt. iii. 12. In Jer. xvii. 6 the corresponding simile is that of a stunted desert plant,[1] which æsthetically considered furnishes a better contrast to the figure of the tree planted by the watercourses. Comp. Wisdom v. 14 ('like chaff-dust,' *χνοῦς*).

5 **Therefore.** The psalmist continues in a prophetic tone. He announces that the ungodly who so scandalise the pious of his day will, when another judgment-day comes round, be separated from the true Israel. This he infers from the fact, which is within his own experience, that the ungodly are 'like the chaff,' i.e. sooner or later meet with a just retribution.

6 **Takes knowledge of,** i.e. is interested in, and takes trouble about. Cf. xxxi. 7, xxxvii. 18; Gen. xviii. 19, &c.——**The way,** &c. 'Way' here means not 'behaviour' (as Prov. xii. 15, &c.), but the outward circumstances of a man's lot; comp. xxvii. 11, 'Lead me on an even path;' xxxvii. 5, 'Roll (the care for) thy way upon Jehovah;' and ii. 12, (literally) 'and (lest) ye perish in respect of way' (or destiny). The parallelism in the two members of the distich is not complete; we might fill it up thus:

For Jehovah notices (and makes to prosper) the fortunes of the righteous, but (disregards and) sends ruin to the fortunes of the ungodly.

——**Perishes** (*yōbhēdh*). Hupfeld, 'shall go astray'—as a path fades away into the desert; comp. Job vi. 18, '(the caravans) go up into the desert and lose their way' (*yobhēdhū*). Here, as often, there may be a double sense; an image of a fading path may have floated before the writer's mind; but the derived sense of destruction is also present to him, and is obviously meant to be supreme, 'perishing' being the necessary antithesis to 'making to prosper' (*v.* 3). Comp. Jer. xii. 1, 'Why doth the way of the ungodly prosper?'

PSALM II.

THIS psalm falls into four nearly equal strophes. The first of these describes a rebellion of subject-kings against the Messianic king; the second, Jehovah's destruction of the rebels. Then the poet turns back,

[1] For another view, see on cii. 18.

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and introduces the Messianic king reporting a divine oracle in his favour; after which, assuming the rebellion to be in progress, he warns the kings of the earth to return to their allegiance. (Consequently *v.* 5 is virtually a conditional prophecy.) Compare Orelli's translation and exposition, *Old Testament Prophecy*, p. 158, &c.

Many critics hold that the poem has a basis of contemporary fact. Without discussing their conflicting opinions, I may at least state my own, viz. that it refers not to any of the historical kings regarded as typically Messianic, but to the ideal or Messianic king himself.[1] So thought the doctors of the Synagogue (see Talm. Bab., *Berakhoth* 7 *b*, *Succa* 52 *a*), and the mediæval Rabbis (see Rashi and Kimchi [2]), and this view is implied in the Judaising portion of the Apocalypse (Rev. ii. 7, xii. 5, xix. 15). Exegetical considerations point in the same direction. The psalm is a lyric echo and interpretation of the promises in 2 Sam. vii. 12, 14–16 (*v.* 13 is certainly a later insertion), and is in this respect parallel to part of Ps. lxxxix. Ps. ii. differs, however, from the latter psalm in its tone of joyous confidence. Neither psalmist sees as yet either an empire or a 'son of Jehovah' worthy of the promise, but whereas the author of Ps. lxxxix. is content with laying Israel's low estate before his God, the other can forget the grey realities of the present in the glories which he anticipates by faith.

How much is inevitably lost in translating (Dante would say 'transmuting') such a psalm as this! The first six verses especially afford a specimen of the utmost art of Hebrew poetry. The words seem to live and breathe, and the rhythm to paint the actions. But the 'musical band' of which Dante spoke is broken, and he who would see how metre and rhyme and assonance may be skilfully though irregularly employed must read this psalm in the Hebrew.

1 Wherefore do the nations throng together,
and the peoples meditate vanity?
2 The kings of the earth stand forth,
and the sovereigns take counsel together,
against Jehovah and against his anointed:
3 'Let us tear off their bonds' (say they),
'and cast from us their cords.'

4 He who is seated in the heavens laughs,
the Lord mocks at them.
5 Then speaks he unto them in his anger,
and in his hot wrath confounds them:
6 '. . . When *I* have established my king
upon Zion my holy mountain.'

The King speaks.

7 'I will relate Jehovah's decree:
he said unto me, Thou art my son,
I have this day begotten thee.
8 Ask of me, and I will grant thee

[1] See Eichhorn's vigorous summing up in his *Allgemeine Bibliothek*, 1787, i. 534–5; and on the Christian fulfilment of this psalm cf. *The Prophecies of Isaiah*, vol. ii. Essay 3; Maurice, *Moral and Metaphysical Philosophy*, i. 15.

[2] Ibn Ezra gives a double interpretation, applying it either to David or to the Messiah, but prefers the strict Messianic interpretation as clearer.

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nations for thine inheritance,
and the earth's utmost parts for thy possession.
9 Thou shalt break them with a mace of iron ;
thou shalt shiver them like a potter's vessel.'

10 Now therefore, ye kings, deal wisely ;
be admonished, ye judges of the earth.
11 Serve Jehovah with fear,
be in trembling agony.
12 * * *
lest he be angry, and ye go to ruin ;
for his anger kindleth easily :
happy all those that take refuge in him !

2 **The kings of the earth.** Both in the Old Testament and in the New this phrase has a very wide reference ; it cannot mean simply the kings of the nations round about Israel. See lxxvi. 13, lxxxix. 28, cii. 16, cxxxviii. 4, cxlviii. 11, Lam. iv. 12, Rev. i. 5 (and elsewhere). The picture in this verse is like that in Joel iii. 2, Zech. xiv. 2, 3, except that the nations of the earth are here regarded as having previously been subject to Jehovah's Anointed One. (Ps. xlviii. 5, lxxxiii. 6 are not parallel.)

4 **Laughs.** So xxxvii. 13, lix. 9. But here the mention of the heavens reminds us of the Thunder-god, whose 'wild raging' is pictured in the myths as 'scornful laughter.' In the Hebrew of the next verse we seem to hear the thunder's roll, and see the lightning-flash. The Biblical writers had a fixed purpose of utilising all that they could of the ancient vocabulary of the myth-forming stage of thought. The thunder is God's voice ; the heaven is His impregnable fortress.

5 **Then,** i.e. when the crisis has arrived, and all bids fair for the success of the revolt. Comp. Isa. xviii. 5.

6 **When I.** Literally, 'And I.' Comp. l. 16, 17, 'What right hast thou, &c., whereas thou (literally, and thou).' So here we must understand, 'What right have ye to independent action, when I—the King of kings—have established my royal deputy ?' —— **Zion,** either Mount Zion properly so called (i.e. the eastern hill of old Jerusalem, on which the 'city of David' stood, and—on the northern summit—the Temple), or, poetically, Jerusalem (comp. on xlviii. 2). The latter is the more probable view, if the psalm is post-Davidic.

7 **The decree of Jehovah** (see crit. note). The mention of the 'establishment' of a king (*v.* 6) leads to the recital of the antecedent 'decree' (or 'statute'). Strictly speaking, this 'decree' is confined to *v.* 7 ; *vv.* 8, 9 have more the character of an 'oracle' (comp. Ps. cx. 1).——**Thou art my son.** So, 'he shall call upon me, Thou art my father' (lxxxix. 28 ; see note) ; both passages echo 2 Sam. vii. 14, and imply membership of a society or college of (in some sense) superhuman beings.——**This day.** We may explain equally well with reference to the day of the king's birth and to that of his enthronement. I incline to the former view. So Assurbanipal says at the beginning of his Annals that the gods 'in the body of his mother have made him to rule Assyria ;' and the god Ra says to Ramses II., 'I am thy father ; by me are begotten all thy members as divine.' So too Amenophis II. says, 'He made me lord of the living when I was yet a child in the nest.' Comp. also the *Alexandrine* translation of cx. 3.

8 **The earth's utmost parts.**

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The king of Egypt claimed a *de jure* sovereignty over the world as son and heir of the sun (see Renouf, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 162). The Assyrian kings were more sober in their inscriptions (see, however, Sargon, *Records of the Past*, xi. 33). There is no evidence, nor probability, that the Israelitish kings put forward any such claims as the 'king' puts forward here. If this were an accession-psalm we might compare lxxii. 8, where among other idealistic anticipations occurs the hope that the young king may have dominion 'unto the ends of the earth.' But it is no anticipation that we have here, but a promise actually fulfilled. Observe that the promise outruns the revelation in 2 Sam. vii. (but comp. lxxxix. 26, 28). Are not all these psalm-passages (ii. 8, lxxii. 8, lxxxix. 26, 28) dependent on the *Messiah*-promise in Zech. ix. 10?

9 **Thou shalt break them.** Comp. cx. 5. Not to be explained as a description of the habitually severe rule of the Messiah, but as a prophecy of what must happen if the nations persist in revolting from the appointed king.——**With a mace of iron.** Not with the sceptre of peace, but with the spiked iron mace used in war, which bears the same name (*shébhet*), the σιδηρεία κορύνη of *Il.* vii. 140. Throughout Asia the history of this implement was doubtless the same; the shepherd's oaken club (see on xxiii. 4) developed on the one hand into the sceptre [comp. Assyr. *ri'u* = (1) shepherd, (2) ruler], and on the other into the formidable weapon a picture of which is given by Rawlinson, *Ancient Monarchies*, i. 459. 'Mace' would have been the best rendering of *shébhet* in our version of Num. xxiv. 17, 2 Sam. xviii. 14, and of *matteh* in Hab. iii. 14.——**Like a potter's vessel.** So the Assyrian kings (e.g. Sargon) speak of crushing countries like earthenware (*kima ḫaṣḫâti*). See Norris, *Assyrian Dict.*, ii. 413.

11 **Be in trembling agony.** Or, 'exult with shuddering.' But these ideas are nowhere else found combined, and joy seems unsuitable here. See crit. note.

12 **Lest he be angry.** This is preceded in the received text by 'Kiss the son' (an Aramaic word for 'son' is used). If these words be genuine, they must mean such a kissing as implies submission (somewhat as Luke vii. 37); 'kissed my feet' means 'did homage' in Assyrian inscriptions. Instead of 'Kiss the son,' the Targum and the Septuagint, which agree but rarely, have, 'Take hold of admonition,' or in better English, 'Learn well your lessons' (R. Stanihurst, 1583), which is adopted by the Peshitto (Ambrosian Codex) and the Vulgate. This, however, is no equivalent of the traditional reading, but a marginal gloss upon 'be admonished' (*v.* 10), which intruded (as glosses have often done) into the text, and which in course of time became corrupted into the present Hebrew reading. It is obvious[1] that the subject of the verb in the clause 'lest he be angry' is Jehovah, who absorbs the attention in this part of the psalm. We must either emend, reading 'Seek ye his face' with Brüll, or something similar, or else suppose that the two doubtful words are a post-Exile (Aramaising) insertion by one who wished to bring out the Messianic reference more distinctly. The former view seems the more probable. It is at any rate very doubtful whether the title 'son of God' was applied to the Messiah in the time of Christ.[2] ——**And ye go to ruin.** Hupfeld, 'and ye go astray as to the way.' The image of the treacherous path seems more prominent here than in i. 6; still Hupfeld's rendering is too weak. Some have thought

[1] This too is implied by the Talmudic interpretation, בר = תורה, *Bammidbar rabba*, 10; cf. *Sanhedrin*, 92 *a* (Weber, *System*, p. 148).

[2] See Drummond, *Jewish Messiah*, Bk. ii. chap. x.

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(see Rosenmüller) that the way is that which leads to the king, as if the enforced homage came too late, wrath being already kindled. But 'way' means 'fortune,' and 'going astray' means 'being ruined' (see on i. 6).——**Kindleth easily.** Or, 'will soon kindle,' i.e. 'little more is needed for his wrath to burn' (Orelli).

PSALM III.

A MORNING-PRAYER in time of danger, purporting to be spoken by a leader of the church-nation, but apparently meant for liturgical use (*v.* 9). The enemies are evidently heathen (see on *v.* 8). There are four strophes, the first three tetrastichs, the fourth a pentastich. Read this and the next psalm together, and comp. xxvii. 1–6.

2 Jehovah, how many are my foes become!
many are they that rise up against me.
3 Many are saying of my soul,
'There is no salvation for him in God.'

4 But thou, Jehovah, art a shield about me,
my glory, and the lifter up of my head.
5 I cry aloud unto Jehovah,
and he answers me from his holy mount.

6 I laid me down and slept,
I have awaked, for Jehovah sustains me.
7 I am not afraid of the myriads of people
that have arrayed themselves against me round about.

8 Arise, Jehovah; save me, O my God!
for thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek-bone,
the teeth of the ungodly hast thou broken.
9 Unto Jehovah belongeth salvation;
thy blessing be upon thy people!

3 **Of my soul,** i.e. of myself as a living, conscious, personal being (see on xlii. 2).——**Salvation.** A distinct word is desirable to express the wonderful deliverances which, as the Israelites and their neighbours[1] felt, God alone can give. 'Salvation,' however, must not be understood in a Christian, theological sense. External deliverances—these were what pious Israelites longed for (so even in li. 14) as 'tokens for good,' involving no doubt the forgiveness of sins, but only as the forgiveness of an earthly father is betokened by his good gifts to his wilful children. 'God' and 'saviour' or 'deliverer' are in fact synonymous terms; see cvi. 21, Isa. xliii. 3, 11, xlv. 15, 21. This material sense of 'salvation' is in accordance with the physical meaning of the root of *y'shūāh*, 'spaciousness' (see on iv. 2). 'Deliverance' (as an act) or 'liberty' (as a state; see l. 23, xci. 16) is the derived sense in Hebrew; riches, knowledge, and power in Arabic (so in the Korán).

4 **My glory,** i.e. in the fullest

[1] Mesha (inscr., *l.* 4) says of Kemósh that he 'saved' him.

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sense of the word, the source and the preserver of all that in me is glorious, of my personal life (comp. vii. 6), of which many foresee a speedy termination (*v.* 3), and of my personal dignity (see iv. 2).

5 **I cry,** &c. It is my constant experience that Jehovah answers prayer.——**From his holy mount,** i.e. from Mount Zion, the equivalent of heaven as a storehouse of divine powers (see on lxviii. 19). Possibly the psalmist is now far from Jerusalem.

6 **I might have slept unto death** (xiii. 4). Danger converts the most natural processes into proofs of God's 'passing great kindness' (iv. 4).

8 **Thou hast smitten.** Such has been my *repeated* experience. Milton, 'hast smote ere now.'——**The ungodly.** Heathen enemies are meant (see on lxviii. 3); for no psalmist ever describes his Jewish enemies as 'ungodly' (*r'shā'im*) in the mass, at any rate before the Maccabean period. Comp. ix. 5, where 'the nations' and the 'ungodly' are parallel.

PSALM IV.

THIS and the preceding psalm are jewels on one string; that was a morning, this is an evening prayer. Even in expression there are points of contact between them (cf. iii. 3, iv. 7; iii. 4, iv. 3; iii. 6, iv. 9). May we not supplement the one psalm from the other? The dangers to which the psalmist and his friends are exposed, are represented in Ps. iv. as mainly from within, but surely *vv.* 7–9 give vague hints of dangers from without upon which a bright light is reflected from Ps. iii.

2 Answer me when I call, God of my righteousness;
O my heart's ease in distress, pity me and hear my prayer.
3 O sons of men, how long shall my glory be insulted,
in that ye love vanity, and seek after falsehood?
4 But see how passing great kindness Jehovah hath shown me;
Jehovah hears when I call unto him.

5 Tremble, and sin no more:
resolve in your heart upon your bed, and be still.
6 Offer the right sacrifices,
and put your trust in Jehovah.

7 Many are saying, 'O for the sight of good fortune!'
Jehovah, lift thou up the light of thy face upon us.
8 Thou hast put more joy into my heart
than when others have their corn and new wine in abundance.
9 In peace will I at once lay me down and sleep,
for thou, Jehovah, makest me dwell alone in safety.

2 **O God of my righteousness,** i.e. thou who declarest my righteousness (see on vii. 18) by rewarding me openly. Success viewed as the gift of a righteous judge is itself called 'righteousness' (cf. xxiv. 5, Isa. liv. 17, &c.)——**My heart's ease,** &c. Past experiences, the ground of present faith (see on iii. 8). For the phraseology, comp. Isa. lx. 4, 'Thy heart shall throb and be enlarged.' It is more obvious, indeed, though not more admissible, to see in the Hebrew an image from a walker who, after being hemmed in by rocks, is sud-

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denly introduced into a broad space (comp. xviii. 19, xxxi. 8, and see notes on iii. 3 *b*, xxvi. 11 *b*, 12). In my version I had an eye to the brevity of the Hebrew; we have, in fact, only half a line to spare! The literal rendering is, 'Thou (who) in a strait hast enlarged (a space) for me.'

3 **O sons of men.** Or, as Delitzsch, 'ye men of high degree' (comp. on lxii. 10); but the antithesis is perhaps not between great men and mean men, but between man and Jehovah. Strengthened by the thought of God, the psalmist can beard these 'blasphemers of dignities' (2 Pet. ii. 10, lit. 'glories'). ——**My glory.** Two meanings are open to us, (1) my personal dignity as a king or prophet (comp. on lxii. 5), (2) the God whose service is my glory (comp. on cvi. 20). The former accords with the best interpretation of the next line.—— **To love vanity and seek after falsehood.** Taking these words in connexion with *v.* 6 *a*, as directed against worldly-mindedness, we might paraphrase with Milton,

> How long be thus forborn
> Still to love vanity,
> To love, to seek, to prize
> Things false and vain, and nothing else but lies?

Another view may be supported by comparing Isa. xxviii. 17 (where Delitzsch thinks 'lie' and 'falsehood' mean breach of faith towards Assyria). The psalmist, like Isaiah (xxx. 12), may perhaps reproach his opponents with relying on a crooked policy rather than on Jehovah, and with forming plans which, like those of 'the nations' in ii. 1, are 'unrealisable' (*rîq* is the word in both places). Such plans necessarily involved contempt for the 'glory' of prophets of the noble style, such as Isaiah and (perhaps) our psalmist. Or, taking 'my glory' as a synonym for 'my God' (see above), and remembering that 'to love' and to 'seek after' are used elsewhere in a religious sense (see xl. 16, lxix. 33, 37), and that 'lying vanities' (*hébhel*, not as here *rîq*) and 'falsehoods' (xxxi. 7, Am. ii. 4) are synonyms for idol-gods, we might view the passage as a reproof to the heathenish section of the Jewish nation. We might then compare xvi. 4; it is certain that the persons addressed are not hearty worshippers of Jehovah. Still I think the psalmist would in this case have used sterner language; and, on the whole, comparing that striking passage lxii. 5, I would rather explain 'vanity' and 'falsehood' of the calumnies uttered by the opponents of the psalmist (comp. xxxi. 14, Jer. xx. 10); or perhaps 'vanity' may refer to the 'unrealisable' plans which they loved to forge for his destruction.

4 **But see** (or, 'take notice'), as a contrast to your depreciation of my dignity; or, 'then see,' since your passion so blinds you.—— **How passing great kindness,**[1] &c. Vain is all this hostility, for my life exhibits a series of divine loving-kindnesses. No common phrase this. David, we are told, was anxious to find out members of Saul's family, 'that I may show the kindness of God unto him' (2 Sam. ix. 3); the psalmist was now brought as low as the family of Saul in the hour of David's success. He needed a 'passing great' or 'singular' (not 'marvellous') exhibition of God's dearest quality—'lovingkindness;' compare similar expressions in xvii. 7, xxxi. 22. To this manysided conception we shall have occasion to return. 'Lovingkindness' (*khésedh*, usually ἔλεος in Sept.) means first of all the covenant-love of Jehovah to those who know and serve Him; next, the covenant-love of a servant of Jehovah to his God; next, the love of Jehovah's fellow-servants among themselves. We shall do well to begin with fixing in our minds this primal truth of the religion of the Psalms—that

[1] The traditional reading is, 'That Jehovah hath set apart a loving (i.e. pious) one for himself.' Against this see crit. note.

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God is not merely man's Baal or lord, but the head of a community, bound together by mutual love. See further on xii. 2, xvi. 10, xviii. 26, xxxvi. 8–11, l. 5, and my *Hosea* (1884), pp. 27–30.

5 **Tremble,** &c. (see *v.* 6 *b*, and comp. xl. 4, 'that many should see it, and fear, and put their trust in Jehovah'). He would have them shaken out of their proud security (comp. Isa. xxxii. 11, Heb.) by the sight of the favour which he enjoys; for this favour implies Jehovah's disfavour for His servant's enemies. This view follows the Targum. The Septuagint has, for 'Tremble,' 'Be ye angry;' i.e. 'Be angry, if you will, but let it be in silence; let your factious opposition have an end.' But how unlike the religion of the psalmists, to allow a lower standard to others than to oneself, and to sanction the dumb brooding of unholy passion! See v. 10.——**Resolve in your heart.** Literally, 'say in your heart.' The heart is the seat, not only of the desires and emotions, but also of the conscience and the intellect. The psalmist appeals, in these words, to the conscience and reason of his hearers. He would have them collect their thoughts, and 'say in their heart' something like those words of Isaiah, 'Come ye, and let us walk in the light of Jehovah' (comp. *v.* 7). The unexampled omission of the words to be inwardly said constitutes the phrase one of those enigmas by which the psalmists from time to time love to stimulate the interest of their readers. 'Heart-speeches' (if the word may be coined) are among the characteristics of the proud and self-confident (see x. 6, 11, 13, xiv. 1, xxxv. 25). But such 'communing' is not 'for peace;' 'they frame deceitful plots against the quiet in the land' (xxxv. 20). Especially at night, when God 'giveth his beloved sleep' or thoughts still sweeter than sleep (cxxxix. 18, cxlix. 5), these men, we are told, are as busy as ever 'devising mischief *upon their beds*' (xxxvi. 4). But now the psalmist hopes that his proud opponents will change their custom. There are heart-speeches of piety as well as of pride. They may be expressed in the form of prayer (see 1 Sam. i. 13), or in that of holy resolution (xxvii. 8). The latter seems the most appropriate here as a preparation for *v.* 5. Observe the mildness of the psalmist's reproof; other poets did not copy him in this. The calm of evening broods over his gentle thoughts.——**Be still.** Or, 'be silent;' this narrower sense is suggested by the context. A fatal fluency of speech was one characteristic of the 'ungodly' in Israel (v. 10, lix. 22).

6 True piety is both inward and outward. Inwardly it is trust; outwardly it is expressed in **right sacrifices,** those which are offered from right motives, as opposed to 'false (or, hypocritical) offerings' (Isa. i. 13). So li. 19, Deut. xxxiii. 19.

7 **Lift thou up,** &c. An image for the restoration of the divine favour, says one. A poet of the school of Dante saw deeper,—

> Tu sei, Signor, la luce chiara e pura,
> La qual, levando su senza dimora,
> Farà la rocca di Sion sicura.

See further on xvii. 15, and comp. Num. vi. 25, 26 (of which some unnecessarily consider our passage to be an echo).——**Upon us.** It is a national psalm, therefore, even though the speaker may not here be the personified Israel.

8 The prayer of faith has been answered (cf. xxxvi. 9, 10). From the contrast in this verse, we may assume that the persons spoken of had heathenish tendencies. The 'good fortune' they desired consisted in mere material blessings, which followed as a matter of course on the due worship of the gods of the soil. To the prophets and psalmists, these same gifts were conditional on the moral obedience of the worshippers (comp. Deut. xxviii. 1–14), and the confirmed believer could, if called upon, dispense

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with them (Hab. iii. 17, 18). The exuberant joy of harvest and vintage is alluded to in Isa. ix. 3, Hos. ix. 1 (comp. vii. 14).

9 Comp. xvi. 9*b*. **At once.** No tossing before slumber comes. ——**Alone,** i.e. without friends or allies; comp. Deut. xxxiii. 28, Num. xxiii. 9, Mic. vii. 14, Jer. xlix. 31.

PSALM V.

ANOTHER morning-prayer (*v.* 4), designed, like Ps. iii., for the temple-service (*v.* 8). The central petition is in *v.* 9; the psalmist fears by any lapse into sin to 'give occasion to the enemy to blaspheme.' Comp. this psalm therefore with xxvi. and xxviii., the leading petitions of which are similar.

2 Give ear unto my words, Jehovah,
understand my murmuring.
3 Listen to the sound of my crying, my King and my God,
for unto thee do I make my prayer.
4 Jehovah, in the morning dost thou hear my voice;
in the morning do I order (my sacrifice) for thee, and look out.

5 For thou art not a God that has pleasure in wickedness,
evil cannot be a guest of thine:
6 Boasters cannot stand up before thine eyes,
thou hatest all them that work naughtiness:
7 Thou destroyest them that speak lies;
the man of blood and of deceit Jehovah abhors.

8 But I, because of thine abundant kindness, can enter thy house,
worshipping toward thy holy palace in the fear of thee.
9 Jehovah, lead me in thy righteousness, because of my keen-eyed enemies;
make thy way even before my face.
10 For there is no sincerity in their mouth,
their inward part is engulfing ruin;
an open grave is their throat,
though they make smooth their tongue.

11 Declare them guilty, O God,
let them fall by their own plots;
for their manifold transgressions thrust them down,
for they have rebelled against thee:
12 So shall all that take refuge in thee be glad,
and ring out their joy for ever;
and if thou protect them, in thee shall they triumph
who love thy name.
13 For thou, Jehovah, givest thy blessing to the righteous;
with favour, as with a buckler, surroundest thou him.

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2 **My murmuring,** which none but God can interpret.

4 **Order (my sacrifice).** Prayer and praise, being 'mediative' (see on xlii. 9*c*), belong to the class of sacrifices (*πνευματικαὶ θυσίαι*, 1 Pet. ii. 5). The same conception of prayer as in cxli. 2; cf. cvii. 22, Hos. xiv. 3. Milton,

> I' th' morning I to thee with choice
> Will rank my prayers.

Others explain, 'will I set forth (my cause);' cf. Job xiii. 18, xxiii. 4. ——**Look out,** viz. unto Jehovah (Mic. vii. 7) for an answer, or, more poetically, for the angel of His lovingkindness (xlii. 9). 'Look up' (A. V.) in Bishop Alexander's paraphrase is fine, but 'look out' is truer to the feelings of the age; Jehovah is not 'far above,' but waiting in his 'holy of holies' (see on *v.* 7) to send help.

5 **Cannot be a guest of thine,** i.e. cannot enjoy thy hospitable and protecting care. See on xv. 1.

6 **Boasters** (*hōlᵉlīm*). The root expresses a loud, noisy, self-important demeanour. What ideas are connected with this will be seen from lxxiii. 3, 8, 9. *Korán*, lvii. 23, is also instructive. The line of thought there is, Be neither distressed at poverty, nor exultant at riches; for God appoints this difference, and 'God loveth not the presumptuous, the boaster.'—— **Haughtiness,** that which is morally worthless.

7 A contrast to be explained thus. Since 'evil cannot be a guest of thine' (*v.* 5), the only real congregation is that of believers; all others do but 'trample God's courts' (Isa. i. 12). All others will sooner or later perish; but Jehovah's guests shall 'dwell in His house unto length of days' (xxiii. 6).

8 **I . . . can enter,** &c. I, who am conscious of being a *khástdh* (one who is duteously loving to God and man), can be assured of Jehovah's *khesedh* or covenant-love, and encompassed and enabled by that love, can enter His house.[1] Comp., with Driver, Isa. xxvi. 13, 'only through thee can we celebrate thy name.' ——**Can worship.** 'To worship' in Hebrew is properly 'to prostrate oneself.' So in Arabic *mesjid* 'a mosque' (Dante's *meschita*) is strictly 'a place of bowing the head.' ——**Toward thy holy palace,** i.e., perhaps, towards the Holy of holies (comp. xxviii. 2), though in the description of the Solomonic temple 'palace' (*hēkāl*; see crit. note) is the word for the Holy place, the 'nave,' one might say, as opposed to the 'chancel' (1 Kings vi. 5, 17, vii. 50). See further on xxviii. 2.

9 Encouraged by the thought of his privilege, the psalmist now offers his prayer. **Lead me in thy righteousness,** i.e. either 'lead me in thy quality of a righteous God' (vii. 10), or, in the path of righteousness (Prov. viii. 20, Heb.) The former explanation seems the safer. The second line explains the first. A fall, i.e. a misfortune, would cause my enemies to rejoice (xxxv. 15), and to imagine that I had been guilty of some great sin.——**Make thy way even,** i.e. probably, free from misfortune; see on xxvi. 12. The life of a saint is finely described as God's way (comp. xvii. 5), because God alone has the plan or 'counsel' of it (lxxiii. 24, xvi. 7).

10 **Engulfing ruin.** The root-meaning (see crit. note) may here have been present to the writer's mind (comp. on 'perishes,' i. 6), though the secondary sense, 'destruction' (see xxxviii. 13, lii. 4, lv. 12, lvii. 2, xci. 3, xciv. 20) is evidently more prominent. The plural

[1] 'House' (*bayith*) might conceivably mean the so-called Tabernacle, just as *bait* in Arabic, according to the Arabic lexicons, may be used of a tent; it does indeed mean this in Josh. vi. 24, 2 Sam. xii. 20. But I doubt if 'palace' (*hēkāl*) could be so used. It would sound almost ironical to call the temporary tent in which (partly, perhaps, for want of space in the citadel of Jebus) David deposited the Ark a 'great house' (see crit. note). Hengstenberg maintains that the Tabernacle is called *hēkāl* in 1 Sam. i. 9, iii. 3, but few will now deny that the *hēkāl*, or divine palace, referred to was the Temple of Shiloh, as to which see note on lxxviii. 60.

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(*havvōth*) indicates the manifoldness and intensity of the 'ruin.'

11 **Declare them guilty.** Sept. κρῖνον αὐτούς. Misfortune was regarded as declarative of God's anger against sin (see xxxiv. 22); this idea was stamped as deeply on the language (see on xxxi. 11) as on the theology of Israel. What 'searchings of heart' followed from it, the Book of Job and the cognate psalms testify.

12 **Ring out their joy.** This is a peculiar word used with delicate tact in Biblical Hebrew, and much more widely in the Targum on the Psalms (see crit. note). It properly means a shrill, piercing cry, expressive of emotional excitement, such as an Eastern scruples not to use in prayer (1 Kings viii. 28, Jer. xiv. 12, Lam. ii. 19, Ps. xviii. 1, &c.), but which is also equally adapted for rejoicing and for lamentation (see my note on Isa. xliii. 14). More in crit. note.

13 **As with a buckler.** It is the shield of largest size which is meant (1 Sam. xvii. 7). Naturally, for 'the righteous' is collective; in short, it is a term like Jeshurun for the ideal Israel. We may then compare Tasso's lines of liquid harmony,

Si vedea fiammeggiar fra gli altri arnesi
Scudo di lucidissimo diamante
Grande che può coprir genti e paesi.
Gerusalemme Liberata, c. vii. st. 81.

PSALM VI.

A RECORD of still deeper depression (cf. Ps. xxxviii.) Mental produces bodily suffering. Persecution is at its height; by the 'workers of wickedness' (*v.* 9) the psalmist means irreligious oppressors (xiv. 4). Faith restores his wonted elasticity. The speaker is either the pious Israelite personified, or a representative righteous man who feels the sins and sufferings of his people as his own (see on *v.* 2).

2 Jehovah, do not in thine anger reprove me,
neither in thy wrath correct me.
3 Have pity upon me, Jehovah, for I am languishing;
heal me, Jehovah, for my bones are confounded.
4 My soul also is confounded exceedingly;
but thou, Jehovah, how long?

5 Return, Jehovah, deliver my soul,
save me, for thy lovingkindness' sake.
6 For in Death there is no mention of thee,
in Sheól who will give thee thanks?
7 I am wearied with my groaning,
every night make I my bed to swim,
I melt away my couch with my tears.
8 Mine eye has fallen in from vexation,
it has grown old with the insulting of my foes.

9 Away from me, all ye that work wickedness,
for Jehovah has heard my loud weeping.
10 Jehovah has heard my supplication,
Jehovah will receive my prayer.

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11 Ashamed and sore confounded be all mine enemies,
let them turn back with shame suddenly!

2 The 'whispered prayer' (Isa. xxvi. 16) of penitent Israel under a sense of God's anger. **Not in thine anger,** 'but with mildness and with perfect love,' as the supposed Dante paraphrases. Cf. xxxviii. 2, and the original of both passages—Jer. x. 23, 'Jehovah, correct me, but according to justice; not in thine anger, lest thou make me small.' Here, as in the whole section (Jer. x. 17–25), the speaker is, not Jeremiah as an individual, but as a prophet who loses himself in the people which he represents. Hence he says, 'lest thou make me small,' i.e. 'lest I (Israel) survive as the mere shadow of my former self.' See above, and cf. on *v.* 6.

3 **Heal me.** The psalmist thinks partly of his own sufferings as a persecuted Israelite, but still more of those of the nation (see on xxx. 3) with which he identifies himself. 'Sickness' is a figure of various application. As applied to the pious kernel of Israel, it means the danger in which it was of being extinguished by persecution. But this application is not to exclude a personal reference to the agonising anxiety of individuals, including the writer, for their own safety.——**My bones.** The Hebrew conceives of physical and spiritual life as existing in one undivided personality, while the Aryan nations are dualistic. Hence the bones sometimes (as here) represent the whole body, and sometimes even the whole nature of man. See, e.g., xxxi. 11, xxxii. 3, xxxv. 10, xxxviii. 4, li. 10, and compare the use of *'eçem*, Gen. vii. 13, &c., for the essence or body of a thing (*res ipsa*).

6 **For in Death,** &c. Observe the writer's strong fear of death. Though most of all anxious probably for the future of his nation (see on xxx. 4, 10, lxxxviii. 4–6), he retains his hopes and fears as an individual; the psalm of Hezekiah shows (Isa. xxxviii. 18) how terrible to a believer was the cessation in Sheól of the life of prayer and praise. This terribleness was, however, one element in the training of the Jews for a final 'illumination' of 'life and immortality' (2 Tim. i. 10).——**Death,** not the process or state of death, but another name for Sheól (as ix. 13, xxii. 16, lxviii. 20, lxxxix. 49, cvii. 18); comp. Rev. i. 18, vi. 8, xx. 13, 14.——**Sheól,** i. 2, the underworld, the land of the Refaim (lxxxviii. 11) or shades. In the Sept. and in the N.T. the Hebrew Sheól is presented as Hades, a rendering which was adopted in the Parchment Library Psalms, and involves an anachronism far more innocent than that of using the Teutonic 'hell.' The Assyrian equivalent of Sheól is traced by some in *šu'âlu* = 'place of decision:' see Friedr. Delitzsch, *Prolegomena*, p. 109; Jeremias, *Die bab.-ass. Vorstellungen* (1887), pp. 62, 109.

7 The first clause is taken from Jer. xlv. 3. Comp. lxix. 4.

8 The first clause recurs with the slightest variation in xxxi. 10 (where the speaker is the nation). **With the insulting of.** The received text gives, weakly, 'because of all.' See crit. note.

9 A strange but noble transition! Sudden spiritual changes, then, *are* possible. God has 'prepared a table before him in the presence of his enemies' (xxiii. 5, A.V.) He has an oracle within his heart which tells him that his prayer has been heard, and he humbly adds his own inference (not the 'subjective tense') that God will 'receive' it graciously, i.e. grant his petition (comp. 1 John v. 15). When this is realised, his enemies will be as much 'confounded' as he himself was (*v.* 4), labouring under the consciousness of God's wrath.

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PSALM VII.

'A STORM of the most varied thoughts, fears, and hopes, rightly called in the heading a dithyramb,' says Ewald; and Ainsworth long before (1627) had spoken of its 'sundry variable and wandering verses.'[1] Not only by the variety but by the energy of its style the psalm contrasts with the two which precede it. A national psalm it is, beyond doubt. Righteous Israel (Jeshurun) is the speaker. Who else can utter the solemn declaration of innocence in *v.* 9 (see note)?

2 Jehovah my God, in thee have I taken refuge;
save me from all my pursuers, and deliver me:
3 Lest he tear my soul as a lion,
when there is none to rescue, and none to deliver.
4 Jehovah my God, if I have done this,
if there be iniquity in my hands,
5 If I have wrought evil unto him that was at peace with me,
or oppressed him that was my foe for nothing,
6 Let the enemy pursue my soul, and overtake it,
yea, let him trample my life to the earth,
and lay my glory in the dust.

7 Arise, Jehovah, in thine anger,
lift thyself up at the fury of my foes,
yea, arouse thyself to meet me—
a judgment hast thou (already) appointed;
8 Yea, let the assemblage of the peoples come about thee,
and sit thou above them on the high mount.
9 Jehovah judges the peoples;
right me, Jehovah, according to mine innocence
and according to mine inward integrity.

10 O that the wickedness of the ungodly might come to an end,
and that thou wouldest establish the innocent,
thou trier of the hearts and reins, thou righteous Elohim!
11 My shield over me is Elohim,
the saviour of the upright in heart,
12 Elohim, a righteous judge,
and a God who is wrathful every day.
13 If any do not turn, he whets his sword;
he has bent his bow and made it ready,
14 And has aimed at the man the weapons of death,
setting his arrows aflame.

[1] This assumes a derivation from *shāgāh* 'to wander.' Zimmern (*Babylonische Busspsalmen*, p. 1) compares Bab. *šigu*, the technical term for a class of *penitential* hymns, from the emotional excitement which characterises them.

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15 Behold, he travails with wickedness ;
he both conceives mischief and brings forth a lie.
16 A pit has he dug and hollowed it out,
and he will tumble into the (very) pitfall he made.
17 His mischief shall return upon his own head,
upon the crown of his own head shall his violence descend
18 I will thank Jehovah according to his righteousness,
and make melody unto the name of Jehovah most high.

3 **Tear my soul.** Comp. 'his soul went into the iron' (cv. 18).

5 **If I have wrought evil,** &c. So (after Targ.) Ewald, Hupfeld, Riehm, Delitzsch. Less naturally, Dathe, Olshausen, Böttcher, 'If I have done evil to him that recompensed evil to me,' taking *gāmal* in a pregnant sense (see on xiii. 6). Against this see Rödiger in Gesenius' *Thesaurus*, s.v. שָׁלַם.——**Or oppressed,** &c. The text, as rendered by Ewald and most critics, has 'and delivered, &c.,' which De Witt paraphrases into 'I, that would rescue my causeless foe.' But see crit. note.

6 **Pursue my soul,** as if a fugitive bird (xi. 1).——**My glory** not in the sense of iv. 3, but = 'my soul' (xvi. 9, xxx. 13, lvii. 9, cviii. 2, Gen. xlix. 6). In spite of its obscurity to the English reader, it is important to keep the literal rendering. The phrase illustrates and is illustrated by 'my only one' (= my dear life), even though it be only different in degree of excellence (not in kind) from the 'soul' of any other kind of animals (see on xlix. 13, 21). How natural it would be to take one step in advance and infer the happy immortality of this 'soul,' like Macbeth in the phrase 'my *eternal* jewel'! This step was not with full consciousness taken by the early psalmists, but there seems to have been an intuitional belief in the higher truth (see on xvi. 9–11, lxxiii. 25, 26), which was religiously as precious as the more developed creed of the Psalter of Solomon.

7 **A judgment** (in my favour) **hast thou already appointed.** We should have expected the imperative (cf. lxviii. 29) ; the perfect is best explained (as xxii. 22) by a sudden burst of heaven-storming faith. 'Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?' Ewald and Driver, however, take this line, not as a coordinate but as a circumstantial clause, 'having commanded judgment.'

8 **The assemblage of the peoples,** viz. of the nations of the world whom Jehovah is about to judge, including Israel. Comp. Isa. iii. 13, 14, but *not* Ps. l. 1 (where all nations are merely summoned to act as witnesses).——**And sit thou above them** (lit. 'it'), &c. The received text was rendered in *P. L.* psalms, 'And return thou over it unto the high heaven.' The difference of readings is but small, and the traditional text is somewhat favoured by the consideration that 'the height' is very frequently (see on xviii. 17) used as a synonym for 'heaven.' (Some say that when used absolutely it always means 'heaven ;' but see on lxviii. 19.) But how unlikely that in the first half of *v.* 7 the scene of the judgment should be described only in order that in the second half the judge should return to his heavenly palace! Observe too that in *v.* 9 the sentence is still waiting to be pronounced ; how can the psalmist pray to be righted if Jehovah has already returned to his holy habitation? Calvin, indeed, supposes that 'return' is spoken with reference to Jehovah's previous inactivity, and means 'Resume thy judicial functions.' So too Hupfeld, but against the analogy of passages like xxi. 14. Hence the corrected reading and rendering given above (on which see crit.

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note). 'The height' is, here, not 'the holy mount of Heav'n's high-seated top' (*Paradise Lost*, vii. 584–5), but Mount Zion (see on lxviii. 18). This view alone suits the context. The mention of the surrounding 'assemblage' of itself shows that the throne is an earthly one, just as the mention of judgment shows that not 'returning'—a phrase suggestive of repose—but 'taking one's seat' is the appropriate verb in this clause. (Clericus explains, 'conscendere solium, juris dicendi causâ').

9 Observe the significant parallelism, 'Jehovah judges the peoples; (therefore) right *me* (the people of Israel).' But from what point of view does the speaker so confidently lay claim to innocence? From the point of view of general obedience to the law, i.e. presumably that of Deuteronomy (lately promulgated?) Comp. 2 Kings xxiii. 25, 'And like unto him (Josiah) was there no king before him that turned to Jehovah, . . . according to all the law of Moses.' At a somewhat later time a prophet, though almost bound to take a severe view of the people, says that the ungodly (Chaldæan) swallows up one who is more righteous than he (Hab. i. 13). The psalmist's view may seem too rose-coloured, but probably he fairly represents the feelings of most of the best men respecting Judah-Israel. It is easy to conceive that humility became a virtue of individuals before it characterised the nation. Comp. on xliv. 18–22.

10 Comp. Hab. i. 4, 'Therefore law is benumbed, and judgment doth never go forth; for the ungodly compasseth the righteous,' &c.——**Thou trier,** &c. A Jeremian expression (see above); comp. xvii. 3, xxvi. 2. The implied antithesis is brought out in 1 Sam. xvi. 7. Note the effective repetition of 'righteous' at the end (in Heb.) of lines 2 and 4, a mere trifle, but it shows how a passion for righteousness dominates the author.

11 **My shield over me is God.** Comp. Ps. iii. 4. If, however, we keep the traditional text ('My shield is upon God'), we must give 'shield' the secondary meaning of 'defence;' 'shade' is thus used for 'protection' in cxxi. 5. 'Upon God' will then mean 'resting (as an obligation) upon God;' comp. lxii. 8, 'On God (rests) my salvation.' But the expression is doubly difficult, and the parallel line suggests that 'God' is the subject to which 'the saviour,' &c., is in apposition.——**The upright in heart.** A plural in apposition to the singular in line 1, thus suggesting that the speaker is the nation (Yeshurun 'the Upright One').

13 **If any do not turn.** Since there is no fresh subject to the verb, some (e.g. Ewald) think that 'God' must be understood, and render 'Surely he will again whet his sword.' But the poet had probably a rhythmical reason for not naming the subject. The context, he knew, would forbid the assignment of such fatal weapons to any but God. 'Turn' = repent. God's threatenings (*v.* 12) precede his judgments, and ought to lead men to repentance. Julius Hammer paraphrases,

> Wer trotzig nicht auf seine Huld verzichtet,
> Hört täglich, wenn er droht, bevor er richtet.

——**Whets . . . has bent.** The arms of Jehovah, from Deut. xxxii. 41, 42. Notice the verbal forms in the Hebrew. The one suggests that the punishment is prepared gradually; the other, that at any moment the preparation may be finished, so that then the punishment will issue forth as a shaft from the bow.

14–16 The punishment of the wicked man is described in two ways, first as 'the vengeance of (God's) eternal fire' (hence the flaming arrows of *v.* 14; cf. xviii. 15), sometimes as developing out of his own sin. So Isa. xxxiii. 11, 'your own blast is fire which shall devour you;' *v.* 14, 'who can tarry with (God's) perpetual burnings?' St. Augustine, *Hom. ad loc.*, overlooks this double presentation. Comp.

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also Isa. xxvi. 18, lix. 4, and especially Job xv. 35.

18 **According to his righteousness.** 'Righteousness' has a peculiar sense in the Old Testament. Its root-meaning is firmness or tightness; hence it is the quality which leads one to adhere to a fixed rule of conduct. God's rule is his covenant; hence righteousness shows itself in all such acts as tend to the full realising of the covenant with Israel (comp. xi. 7).——**Jehovah most high.** Strictly, Yahvè Elyōn; comp. Elohim Elyōn, lvii. 3. In Gen. xiv. 19 we read of a Canaanitish king, named Melchizedek, who was a priest of El Elyōn or 'God Supreme' (a name belonging originally to the Sky-god); cf. Eliun in Philo of Byblus *ap.* Euseb. *Præp. Evang.*, i. 10, 11, &c. The psalmist, like Abram, claims for his uniquely great God Jehovah a right to this lofty title. But supremeness may have two meanings. In the stage of a qualified monotheism, the Most High or Supreme God will derive His title from His vast superiority to the other superhuman beings called Elohim (cf. lxxxii. 6). In the stage of a more nearly complete monotheism, the same title Elyōn will express the infinite distance between the holy God and all created things, the universality and absoluteness of His rule (see on lxxxiii. 19, xci. 1). Being equally appropriate to both these stages (which may of course be represented by different persons contemporaneously), and being attested by traditions of probable antiquity, the name Elyōn is not to be taken (as by Geiger[1]) as a sure sign wherever it occurs of post-Exile date. We cannot, e.g., say that our psalm *must* be post-Exile, because the name Elyōn occurs in it. And yet a subsidiary argument can be based upon the title, because it is certain that post-Exile writers were specially fond of using it (see especially Daniel and the Wisdom of Sirach); and it is more than probable that some at least of the 19 psalms in which it occurs are of post-Exile date. The name (El Elyōn or Elyōn) was in existence earlier, just as El Shaddai or Shaddai existed long before the Book of Job; but probably from its Phœnician associations it was discountenanced by the pre-Exile prophets. Some reader may object here, But does not the Book of Isaiah contain the word Elyōn as a divine title? Yes; in a passage known to be due to a later hand (Isa. xiv. 14). Elyōn was not, indeed, freshly minted in Babylon, but it was the widening influence of their foreign sojourn which opened the eyes of the Jews to the usefulness of this ancient word-symbol. Comp. Plumptre, *Biblical Studies*, pp. 17–36.

PSALM VIII.

EWALD forms a noble trilogy by grouping Pss. xxix., xix. 1–7, and viii. —a storm-piece, a day-piece, and a night-piece. (I should have liked to add Ps. xciii. for a sea-piece.) In this psalm the lessons of nature are specially prominent. The poet (who is scarcely either a shepherd-boy or a warrior-king) has a deep feeling for Earth's beauties, but he knows something more glorious even than the sky of an Oriental night. Somewhat as St. Paul in 1 Cor. xv. 41 the glories of the firmament do but suggest a 'glory which excelleth.' 'High above the heavens' is Jehovah's 'majesty.' A modern might infer from this that God cared not for the populations of so small a planet as the earth; the psalmist however reflects that, since He *does* care for earth, His glory is enhanced by earth's relative insignificance. And he cares for earth by appointing man as his

[1] 'Offenbar aus Babylonien mitgebracht,' says Geiger in his latest volume (Lectures). Comp. his *Urschrift* (1857), p. 33.

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viceroy. Man, in short, is idealised; for (to apply the words of Heb. ii. 8) 'we see not yet all things made subject to him.' How natural it was, and (as Dr. Westcott has shown[1]) how natural it is, to apply this psalm to Christ, the 'Son of man'! But there is an application still nearer to the letter of the text, viz. to regenerate humanity (which St. Paul would call 'the body of Christ'). The psalm is virtually a prophecy of the glorification of the race (comp. 2 Pet. i. 4). Many as are the jealous and revengeful enemies of the upward-striving portion of the race, there is a power ordained of God which shames their futile efforts, and those who wield it are simple-minded, childlike, praiseful believers.

The psalmist knows nothing of the watchwords of philosophic theology. He believes in a divine Creator and Governor, who lavishes his care even on the world of men. He believes too in man, and does not depress man by telling him that he is 'a worm' compared with the 'armies' of the sky (Bildad in Job xxv.), or, as Shelley puts it, 'the glory *and the burden* of the earth.' It is more unmixedly exhilarating even than Pss. ciii., civ.

The divisions of the psalm are not perfectly clear, except indeed the first (after *v.* 3). Delitzsch brings *v.* 6 into connexion with *v.* 5, and divides after it. But (1) *v.* 7 is logically as closely connected with *v.* 6 as *v.* 6 is with *v.* 5, and (2) the tone of *vv.* 6, 7 is different from that of *v.* 5—humility has given place to pride in divinely given privileges. It is best to make four stanzas or strophes, the first and fourth of which have six lines, the second and third four. The refrain begins the first and ends the last strophe, 'enclosing as it were the whole psalm.'[2]

2 Jehovah our Lord,
how glorious is thy name in all the earth!
whose majesty is raised above the heavens.
3 With the mouth of little children and sucklings hast thou
founded a stronghold
because of thy foes,
to still the enemy and the revengeful.

4 When I behold thy heavens, the work of thy fingers,
the moon and the stars, which thou didst establish,
5 What is mortal man, that thou art mindful of him,
and the son of the earth-born, that thou visitest him?

6 Yea, thou madest him scarce less than gods,
and didst crown him with honour and with state;
7 (And) madest him to rule over the works of thy hands,—
all things hast thou put under his feet,

8 Sheep and oxen, all of them,
moreover the beasts of the plain,
9 The fowl of the heaven, and the fish of the sea,
that which traverses the paths of the seas.
10 Jehovah our Lord,
how glorious is thy name in all the earth!

[1] *Christus Consummator*, ii.
[2] Prof. Briggs (*Presbyterian Rev.*, July 1885), who divides the psalm into two strophes of eight lines each.

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2 **Our Lord.** The psalmist is here man's spokesman, not Israel's. ——**How glorious,** or, how magnificent (Jerome, 'quàm grande'). *Addîr* and *kābōd* both express the idea of the divine glory, the one as swelling amplitude, the other as massiveness. The former is the word here; there is no better commentary on it than xciii. 4 (see note).——**Thy name,** i.e. thyself in thy self-revealing aspect (see on xx. 1), without assuming a revelation as full as in Ex. xxxiv. 5-7.—— **Whose majesty,** &c. The 'majesty' is that with which Jehovah is 'clothed' (civ. 1, *hōd* as here), i.e. the essential light which preceded the heavens (see Gen. i.) If (see crit. note) we adhere to the received text, rendering this, 'whose majesty doth extend over the heavens,' we may perhaps see an allusion to xix. 1; comp. cxlviii. 13. If, however, we follow Sept. as above (see crit. note), this passage goes beyond xix. 1, cxlviii. 13 in its recognition of the divine transcendence (cf. lvii. 5, 11, cxiii. 4). At any rate, the thought in this third line is a subordinate one; comp. *v.* 10.

3 **With the mouth of children,** &c. One of the psalmist's riddles, and not to be interpreted prosaically (as by Hitzig) of some particular event, when the crying of children excited a feeling of humanity in the foe. I suppose the Children's Crusade would be based on this text. The children and sucklings, however, are poor and humble believers (comp. Matt. xi. 25). Jehovah 'inhabits the praises of Israel,' whose 'soul is like a weaned child' (cxxxi. 2). These praises are Israel's stronghold; Nehemiah says the same thing of 'the joy which is in Jehovah,' Neh. viii. 10. And such bulwarks as these are powerful enough to still the fury of the fiercest enemy. ('To still' seems better than De Witt's 'to silence,' which implies that the fury was confined to threats.)—— **The enemy and the revengeful,** i.e. the revengeful enemy. The only nationalistic touch in the psalm; for xliv. 17 proves that the reference is to the enemies of Israel.

4 Why is not the sun mentioned? Because 'the moon and the stars' of an Eastern sky give a deeper notion of infinity. Ewald, however, thinks that a new-moon or full-moon festival suggested the poem, and consequently the form of expression here used.[1]——**Thy heavens.** So civ. 5 (with a different *nuance*).

5 Comp. cxliv. 3, and Job's despairing 'parody' in Job vii. 17, 18. **What is mortal man . . .** Man is too small to be cared for, and yet, wondrous goodness! he *is* cared for; 'so thou madest him,' &c. The renderings 'mortal man,' 'son of the earth-born,' are to suggest the meaning which a Hebrew reader would attach to *'enōsh* and *ben 'ādām*. Such plays upon words seem almost instinctive with early writers. De Witt, for a similar reason, gives 'a mortal' and 'a son of Adam.' But there is no more an allusion here to Adam than in Job's 'born of a woman' to Eve.—— **Visitest him.** See on xxxiii. 18. 'Visitation' is the Hebrew equivalent for 'special providence' (Job x. 12). Cf. James i. 27, 'to visit (i.e. to relieve) the fatherless.'

6 (See introd.) **Scarce to be less than gods.** Milton's rendering. Comp. Gen. i. 27, 'in the image of Elohim (superhuman beings, gods) created he him.' The R.V.'s rendering, 'than God' (Ewald in his *Psalms*, Hitzig, Delitzsch), seems to me less probable, because God to our psalmist is Jehovah, and besides is directly addressed in this very clause. Ewald's later rendering,[2] 'than (high) angels,' limits the sense too much. (So Sept.) To the Hebrew consciousness there was no unseemliness in calling the heavenly beings 'sons of Elohim' or even 'Elohim' (see on xxix. 1), not because they were the 'mere interpreters and executors of the divine

[1] *Die Lehre der Bibel von Gott*, iii. 2, p. 100, *n.* 1. [2] *Ibid. n.* 2.

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will' (Ewald), but because Jehovah and those who composed His court belonged to the same class of superhuman beings (*'elōhīm*). The rendering 'than angels' seems also to involve some disparagement of human nature. Dante, that great painter of angels, after quoting this passage, makes bold to say that in virtue of its manifoldness the noble human character surpasses the angelic nature (*Convito*, iv. 19). The Septuagint translators, however, did but satisfy a craving of their times. Hermann Schultz has shown in detail how much the belief in angels increased in definiteness after the Return from Exile, especially in the period of the Apocrypha.[1] [For Sept. rendering, comp. xcvi. 7, cxxxvii. 1, Isa. ix. 5, Job xx. 15. In the two latter passages ἄγγελος = *'el*.]——**And didst crown him . . .** The first part of this verse referred to man's creation 'in the image of *'elōhīm*' (Gen. i. 27); the second describes his participation, in virtue of his almost divine nature, in the glory of the divine sovereignty. 'Honour' (*kābōd*) and 'state' (*hādār*)—Milton's words—are both ascribed elsewhere to Jehovah (e.g. xxix. 1, 4, civ. 1, cxlv. 5).

7 **Put under his feet.** Comp. the 'have dominion over' (rather, 'tread down' or 'subdue') of Gen. i. 26, 28.

8 Prof. Legge well expresses the antithesis—

> The sheep and oxen, creatures mild,
> Beasts of the field, untam'd and wild.

9 **That which traverses,** &c. Milton, with an added grace of Homeric reminiscence,

> . . . fish that through the wet
> Sea-paths in shoals do slide . . .

But he forgets that there are other sea-dwellers (cf. Gen. i. 21). The poem of creation is now complete, and we ought not to find the closing refrain too sudden.

PSALM IX.

'THIS and the next psalm originally formed but one, but such changes have been introduced that it is better to retain the division into two parts. The original psalm was alphabetic [see on Ps. xxv.], i.e. it consisted of twenty-two pairs of verses, beginning with the letters of the alphabet in succession.' So the P. L. edition briefly summed up results with which most scholars would agree. These results indeed are the development of the conclusion arrived at long since by the Septuagint translator, who makes no division between ix. 21 and x. 1. But the development involved a correction. Ten verses of Ps. x. (*vv.* 2–11) differ so much from the surrounding context, partly in roughness of style, partly in peculiarity of contents, that we can hardly believe them to belong to the same psalm. On examining them closer, we find that they also differ from the context in that they offer no trace of acrostic or alphabetic arrangement; x. 1 begins with Lamed, and x. 12 with Kof, but the six intermediate letters are unrepresented. Is it not probable, then, that the nine[2] verses which now fill up the interval between *v.* 2 and *v.* 12 are the substitutes for six pairs of distichs, each beginning with one of those six letters? An object for the substitution can be traced, viz. to produce a second psalm for a time of still more keenly felt oppression, in which Israelites and not foreigners were the guilty agents, leaving the first half of the original psalm, with a concluding quatrain due to the editor, to stand by itself as a monument of an earlier period.

Two questions may fitly be asked and answered here. 1, 'Why may

[1] *Alttestamentliche Theologie*, ed. 2, pp. 813–5.

[2] Most of the critics who take the view here adopted make the inserted passage begin at *v.* 2. My reasons for thinking *v.* 2 a part of the original psalm are given below, on x. 2. Dogmatism on either side would be out of place.

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not the irregularity with which the alphabetic system is carried out be due to the author himself, who would not have his liberty of thought too much confined?' But is not this an improbable assumption? 'In der Beschränkung zeigt sich erst der Meister,' and it was only every other distich which had to begin with a certain letter. There is no analogy for such a mixture of self-limitation and caprice, except indeed in one of the hymns of St. Ephrem edited by Bickell,[1] which, as the editor assures us, betrays a deliberate imitation of Pss. ix., x. And 2, 'Is it certain that Ps. ix. and Ps. x. (putting aside later additions) proceeded from the same hand?' Yes; the evidence from parallels of expression,[2] combined with the fact of the continuation in Ps. x. of the acrostic system begun in Ps. ix., is decisive on this point. Parallels of expression indeed are not entirely wanting in the two parts of Ps. x.;[3] these would decide the unity of authorship of Ps. x., but for the large amount of stylistic difference and of unlikeness of contents. [They do at any rate suggest that the inserted passage, x. 3–11, was superficially harmonised with the older part of Ps. x.] I unwillingly break off here; the critical interest of these psalms (or this psalm) must not lead me into details best reserved for a more special work.

And now let us read Ps. ix. by itself. It is a psalm of mingled import —thanksgiving, glowing anticipations, and supplication. Only once do we catch the note of despondency (*vv.* 14, 15), and there it is remarkable that the psalmist appears to speak as an individual. It is barely possible (see on vi. 6) that the appearance may here be trusted. But the analogy of xxx. 4, 10, lxxxviii. 4–6 would justify us in explaining even this passage of the pious Israel. At any rate we must hold fast to this—that the psalmist writes for the edification of believers in general.

2 I will thank Jehovah with my whole heart;
I will tell out all thy wonders.
3 I will be glad and triumph in thee,
I will make melody to thy name, O Most High!

4 Because mine enemies turn backward,
stumble and perish at thine (angry) face:
5 For thou hast maintained my right and my cause,
thou art seated on the throne, judging righteously.

6 Thou hast rebuked the nations, destroyed the ungodly,
their name hast thou wiped out for ever and ever.
7 The enemies are consumed, they are perpetual ruins:
and the cities which thou didst uproot—the memory of them has perished.

8 *They* may perish, but Jehovah shall be seated for ever;
he has prepared his throne for judgment:

[1] In the fourth of the *Carmina Nisibena* (1866); cf. *Conspectus rei Syrorum literariæ* (1871), p. 19, *n.* 18.

[2] Notice especially the peculiar expressions rendered 'the downtrodden,' 'times of hopeless trouble' (ix. 10, x. 1, 18); the use of 'mortal men,' 'the nations' (ix. 20, x. 18; ix. 5, x. 16); and the appeal, 'Arise, Jehovah' (ix. 20, x. 12).

[3] Notice 'contemns' (Jehovah or Elohim), x. 3, 13; 'seek' = 'punish,' x. 4, 13, 15; and especially 'the hapless,' x. 8, 10, 14.

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9 And he himself shall judge the world in righteousness,
he shall give doom to the peoples in equity:

10 That Jehovah may be a sure retreat for the downtrodden,
a sure retreat for times of hopeless trouble;
11 And that they who know thy name may trust in thee,
since thou, Jehovah, dost not forsake those that inquire after thee.

12 Make melody unto Jehovah, whose seat is in Zion,
publish his exploits among the peoples,
13 How that he who punishes bloodshed has been mindful of them,
he has not forgotten the cry of the afflicted,—

14 'Have pity upon me, Jehovah; behold my affliction from them that hate me,
thou that liftest me up from the gates of Death:
15 That I may tell out all thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion,
that I may exult in thy salvation.'

16 The nations are sunk in the pit that they made,
in the net which they hid is their foot taken:
17 Jehovah has made himself known, he has executed judgment,
snaring the ungodly in the work of his own hands.

18 The ungodly shall depart to Sheól,
all the nations that are forgetful of God.
19 For not alway shall the needy be forgotten;
the hope of the afflicted shall not perish for ever.

20 Arise, Jehovah, let not mortal man be too strong;
let the nations be judged in thy presence.
21 Strike them with terror, Jehovah;
let the nations know that they are mortal men.

3 **O Most High.** *Elyōn*, a word symbolic of God's worldwide sovereignty (see on vii. 18).

4 **Face,** here symbolically for 'manifestation of anger' (cf. on xvii. 15).

6, 7 As the parallelism shows, **ungodly** = foreign nations (cf. lviii. 11, lxviii. 3, cxxv. 3; see also on lxviii. 3). Can we help thinking of Nineveh and Babylon? See Nah. i. 14, Isa. xiv. 20 (end), 23.——**Perpetual ruins.** Cf. 'I will make them .... lasting ruins' (Jer. xxv. 9). Faith cannot be satisfied with weak expressions or imperfect fulfilments.

8 **They may perish.** There is the same striking antithesis (which reminds us of II. Isaiah) in cii. 27. On the text see crit. note.

9 **He himself . . .** See xcvi. 13, xcviii. 9 (post-Exile psalms).——**Give doom.** 'He gyueth doom to pore men' (Job xxxvi. 6, in Purvey).

10 **A sure retreat.** Strictly 'a high fort' (cf. xviii. 3), but often used in the sense of 'a place of security.' So too the verb ('to set on high'); see xx. 2, lix. 2, &c.——**Times of hopeless trouble.** The word suggests a comparison of such times to places where the prospect is entirely cut off.

12 **Publish his exploits,** &c.

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So xcvi. 3, 10, cv. 1 (post-Exile psalms). It is implied that God's great deeds for Israel (*v.* 13) have a wider purpose affecting all mankind. Cf. Isa. xl.–lxvi. *passim.*

13 See Joel iii. 21 (iv. 21). We need not, for this more or less rhetorical passage, compare lxxiv. 19, lxxix. 10, which refer to very definite circumstances in the greatest of Israel's persecutions. The taking of life represents and symbolises all the violent conduct of Israel's persecutors (cf. on Isa. i. 15).——**Who punishes . . .** Lit., 'who seeks (satisfaction for the wrong).' In *v.* 10 *b* the same participle occurs, and in x. 4, 13, 15 the verb is used without any expressed object. Cf. Gen. ix. 5, 'I will seek (satisfaction for) the (taken) life of man.'——**The afflicted** (Heb. text, *'anîyyîm*; marg., *'anāvîm*). A standing phrase, not for the Levites (as Graetz strangely supposes[1]), but for the pious kernel of the Jewish people (as Joseph Mede already saw two hundred years ago), reminding us of the name 'Ebionites,' which beyond question arose in the apostolic age, and was applied to the Christians in Jerusalem (Harnack, *Dogmengesch.*, 226). Both expressions had of course a derivative moral sense. The distinction between *'ānî* 'afflicted' (with the secondary sense 'humble') and *'ānāv* = πραΰς is not ratified by the Sept., nor by the contexts of the passages where they occur (see on *v.* 19). Linguistically there is no doubt a formal distinction; *'ānî* = 'one who is bowed down,' *'ānāv* = 'one who bows himself;' but it is a distinction without a substantial difference. The *'ānāv* 'bows himself' in obedience to an outer as well as an inner call, and the *'ānî* may be 'bowed down' with the perfect consent of his own will (= 'lowly'). To say with Lagarde[2] that the conception of *'anāvāh* was borrowed by the Hebrews from the Aramæans, because the latter 'were always a trodden-down race,' is too great a paradox. Pride and humility were equally characteristic of the 'sons of Israel;' not pride alone, but pride and humility. *'Ebhrāh*, which Lagarde claims as alone Hebraic, belonged, no doubt, not only to Simeon and Levi (Gen. xlix. 7), but to the proud, self-conscious nature inherited from the nomad; but the chastened character commended by the prophets had its roots in the still, quiet temper (*tām* 'friendly,' Philo's ἥμερος, Gen. xxv. 27) proper to the agriculturist. Cf. on xlv. 5.

14, 15 Either a change in the writer's mood supervenes, or this is the very prayer which God has answered. The speaker's troubles are not merely personal; they are those of all pious Israelites.——**The gates of Death** (i.e. of Sheól; see on vi. 6). So cvii. 18, Isa. xxxviii. 10. The Assyrian Hades had seven walls and gates; cf. Matt. xvi. 18.

18 **Shall depart to Sheól.** Lit., 'shall return.' 'Return is used in two senses, of departure from the point just reached to a point previously left, and of departure from the point reached to a point never previously seen. For the latter (which must be the sense intended here) comp. 2 Chr. xviii. 25, Job i. 21.——**That are forgetful of God,** not as if they had heard of the name and nature of Jehovah, but 'as treading all law and righteousness under foot' (Venema). St. Paul, in Rom. i. 21, says the same and something more. The psalmist is not attacking idolatry, but immorality (comp. l. 22). Note how the changes are rung on remember-

[1] *Krit. Comm. zu den Psalmen*, i. 20, &c. 'Whence comes it,' he asks, 'that these pious, God-fearing, meek persons were at the same time poor and unfortunate? Their situation can only be explained by their belonging to the Levite body, as in fact the author of Ps. xxii., who was decidedly one of "the meek," describes himself as "poor," and must have been a Levite.' I do not see on what grounds this rests, though of course 'the afflicted' *might* conceivably be a class-name; cf. 'Paterini' (sufferers), the name of the Italian Albigeois.

[2] *Mittheilungen*, I. 80, 81.

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ing and forgetting; also the continuance of a shadow of national life even in Sheól.

19 **The afflicted.** Heb. *'anāvīm*. The Massoretic marginal reading (K'ri) here is *'anîyyîm*; in *v.* 13, and in x. 12, the margin corrects *'anîyyîm* into *'anāvīm*, assuming the latter to mean 'the meek.' Probably they had exegetical reasons (see Hengstenberg); but the changes were quite unnecessary. See on *v.* 13.

20 **Mortal man.** The idea is that Jehovah being Israel's king, the tyranny of cruel men is an anomaly. See on lxvi. 12, and cf. x. 18, lvi. 2, Isa. li. 12, and especially 2 Chr. xiv. 11 (10).

PSALM X.

SEE on Ps. ix. The Lamed quatrain in the original alphabetic psalm indicated a change in the psalmist's mood; the later editor therefore bisected the psalm at this point.

1 Why, Jehovah, standest thou afar off,
  and hidest thee in times of hopeless trouble?
2 The ungodly in his pride hotly pursues the afflicted:
  let them be caught in the knaveries which they have devised.

3 For the ungodly praises for his soul's desire,
  and robbing he blesses (but contemns) Jehovah.
4 The ungodly in his arrogance . . . 'He will not punish,'
  'there is no God,' is the sum of his thoughts.

5 His ways are stable at all times;
  thy judgments are too high in heaven for him to see;
  as for all his foes, he puffs at them.

6 He has said in his heart, 'I cannot be moved;
  I shall be firm in my goings age after age.'
7 His mouth is full of cursing, deceits, and oppression;
  under his tongue are mischief and trouble.

8 He sits in the lurking-places of the villages,
  in hiding-places he slays the innocent:
  his eyes are on the watch against the hapless.

9 He lurks in a hiding-place as a lion in his lair,
  he lurks to catch the poor;
  he catches the poor, dragging him with his net.

10 * * and, being crushed, (the poor) sinks down,
  and the hapless fall by his strong ones.
11 He has said in his heart, 'God has forgotten,
  he has hidden his face, he can never see it.'

12 Arise, Jehovah! O God, lift up thy hand,
  forget not the afflicted.
13 Wherefore does the ungodly contemn God,
  saying in his heart, 'Thou wilt not punish'?

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14 Thou hast seen it ; for thou lookest on mischief and sorrow,
to show forth [vengeance] with thy hand ;
to thee the hapless commits [his way]—
thou provest thyself the helper of the orphan.

15 Break thou the arm of the ungodly,
yea, the evil man's ungodliness—punish it, till thou find none.
16 Jehovah is King for ever and ever :
the nations are perished from his land.

17 Jehovah, thou hast heard the desire of the afflicted,
thou establishedst their heart, thou madest attentive thine ear,
18 To right the orphan and the downtrodden,
that mortals of the earth may overawe no more.

2 **Let them be caught,** &c. So A.V. (R.V. marg., 'they are taken'). This is certainly the most natural rendering, as Hupfeld admits ; it has also some ancient authority (Targ., Aquila, Symmachus, Jerome). I adopt it because I incline to think that *v.* 2 was not a part of the later insertion, but completed the Lamed quatrain from the first. Notice the parallelism between *v.* 2 *b* (as rendered above) and ix. 17 *b* ; also the use of the demonstrative *šū* as a relative in *v.* 2 *b* and ix. 16 ; and notice lastly that *m'zimmōth* (comp. xxxvii. 7, in a contemporary alphabetic psalm) is here used in a different sense from *v.* 4 (in the later portion). Most moderns, however, make 'the afflicted' the subject of the verb, the singular (*'ānī* in 2 *a*) and the plural (*'anīyyīm* in 2 *b*) alternating as in Gen. xii. 3. This seems necessary, if *vv.* 2 and 3 are to run on consecutively.

3 **For the ungodly praises,** &c. Whom he praises is clear from *v.* 3 *b* ; it is Jehovah, but not the Jehovah of true believers. Like the mercenary shepherds in Zech. xi. 5, they say, 'Blessed be Jehovah that I become rich.' But such 'blessings' argue supreme contempt (comp. *v.* 13) for the Governor of the world, 'the God of recompences' (Jer. li. 56).——**Blesses (but contemns).** Or, 'renounces, yea, contemns' (so R.V.) See crit. note.

4 **The ungodly,** &c. We should expect a verb to follow, such as 'thinks.' But the construction is suddenly changed.——**There is no God,** i.e. no divine government ; cf. Jer. v. 12, Zeph. i. 12, and see on xiv. 1.

5 **His ways are stable,** i.e. he has no vicissitudes of fortune.——**Thy judgments,** &c. The judgments of which 'the afflicted,' i.e. poor and pious Israelites, speak so much are to him as purely imaginary as their idea of God. Jehovah's dwelling-place is far removed from the stirring scenes of human activity.

6 **Age after age,** &c. This represents the oppressor's feeling ; he never thinks of death. Pride stifles reason. The language of the heart cannot be translated into spoken words without seeming exaggeration. Comp. Hab. i. 11 (R.V.), 'he whose might is his god,' and Isa. xiv. 13, 14 (the self-deification of the king of Babylon).

7 **Under his tongue,** in readiness for uttering, as lxvi. 17, cxl. 4.

8, 9 Comp. lvi. 7, Jer. v. 26. Here again (see on *v.* 6) the remark is justified, that the details of descriptions are not to be pressed too far. To use this passage as an indication of early date, and explain it[1] of

[1] Canon F. C. Cook in *Speaker's Commentary, ad loc.*

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'the wild, half-savage nobles who retained habits formed or developed in the troubled period' (of the Judges), is an example of such undue pressure. That there is a certain amount of imaginativeness in the details, seems certain from the imitation in xvii. 11, 12, and also from the change of figure at the end of *v.* 9. But I admit that all is not drawn from the fancy; the mention of the 'villages' must surely be connected with some recent facts. It is possible the editor of this psalm, like the prophet Micah, felt a special interest in country people. The oppression of which he was a witness bore with its full weight upon the 'villages,' though in representing the typical oppressor as the meanest of robbers he simply expresses his horror at the base conduct of the greedy upper class of his time. Incidentally he contrasts these home-tyrants with the cruel but not ignoble foreign oppressors, referred to in Ps. ix. and in many a prophecy. If the Chaldæans may be compared to the eagle, and described as 'bearing themselves proudly,' 'scoffing at kings,' and 'deriding strongholds' (Hab. i.), these unnatural Israelitish tyrants are like treacherous wild beasts,[1] lurking in 'hiding-places' near the unwalled villages, where the too trustful poor folk dwell. Comp. Ecclus. xiii. 18, 'What peace between a hyæna and a dog? and what peace between a rich and a poor man?'——**His eyes,** &c. 'Like those of a tiger in the dark.' See the weakened version of this in xvii. 12.

10 Hebrew poets have a strong sense of proportion, and one cannot believe that this verse has reached us in its integrity.——**His strong ones,** i.e. probably his claws (Ewald, Delitzsch).

14 This should be a symmetrical quatrain, like the other alphabetic stanzas; the present text must therefore be more or less incorrect. The first line here given is too long; the second too short. According to the text it would be still shorter; but the text-reading yields no satisfactory sense. 'To give it into thy hand' cannot be intended as the object of God's beholding wrong. Many explain as if 'to give' (or 'to lay') could mean 'to keep;' but is this justifiable?

15 **Punish it, till thou find none,** i.e. till the last atom of wickedness be removed. 'Punish' (see on ix. 13) is literally 'seek,' viz. satisfaction. The psalmist, however, combines an allusion to the proverb 'to search for and not find' (xxxvii. 36).

16 The psalmist's warrant for the foregoing prayer. A king by the very conception of kingship must execute judgment.——**The nations,** i.e. Israel's foreign oppressors (as in Ps. ix.)——**Are perished.** The anticipated answer to prayer (see on ix. 6, 7). 'Prayer is possession' (E. Irving).——**From his land.** Not as if limiting the Divine sovereignty. Jehovah is the judge of the world (ix. 9), and yet his throne is in Zion, and Israel is 'his own possession' (cxxxv. 4). Cf. Joel iii. 2, 'my land,' and for the expulsion or excision of foreigners, Nah. i. 15, Isa. lii. 1, Joel iii. 17. The inimitable alliteration is full of meaning; see on xvii. 14.

PSALM XI.

A VIVID little poem full of antitheses—Jehovah on high and the 'children of men,' the righteous and the ungodly, the reward of the one and the punishment of the other. The ideas and expressions resemble those of Psalms v., vii., x., and xvii. A righteous man in trouble is the speaker in *v.* 1, but, as the second line of *v.* 1 shows, it is the Church within the Jewish nation of which the poet thinks. The individualising is merely poetical. There are two seven-lined strophes, and a closing motto.

[1] The figure of the lion in *v.* 9 is even more appropriate in this context than in some of the prophetic descriptions of Assyrian and Chaldæan invaders.

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1 In Jehovah have I taken refuge ; how say ye to my soul,
'Flee to your hills, ye birds?
2 For lo! the ungodly bend the bow,
they make ready their arrow upon the string,
to shoot unseen at the upright in heart.
3 When the foundations are being torn down,
what can the righteous do?'

4 Jehovah in his holy palace,
Jehovah, whose throne is in heaven—
his eyes behold, his eyelids try the children of men.
5 Jehovah approves the righteous,
but the ungodly and him that loves violence his soul hates.
6 Upon the ungodly he shall rain fiery coals and brimstone,
and a burning wind shall be the portion in their cup.

7 For Jehovah is righteous, he loves righteous acts ;
whoso is upright shall behold his face.

1 *b* Well-meant advice of little faith. A whole picture is condensed in these few words, the explanation of which is given in *v.* 2. The 'soul' or personality is imagined as a hunted bird (vii. 6, cxxiv. 7, Lam. iii. 52). How gladly would the weak in faith flee as birds (*har* and *çippor* are both collectives) to the 'rocks of the wild goats'! Cf. lv. 7–9.

2 Similar expressions occur in lxiv. 3, 4, where they are explained as descriptive of cruel and calumnious language. Here persecution of any kind may be meant.

3 **The foundations,** viz. of the state regarded as a house (as lxxxii. 5) ; less probably, the higher classes of society (as Isa. xix. 10).——**What can the righteous do?** Or, 'what has the righteous done?' (i.e. effected hitherto), as Müller (*Hebrew Syntax*, § 3, 1). Delitzsch and Driver support the first rendering ; for the delicate Hebrew idiom, see Driver, *Hebrew Tenses*, § 19. The sense is, 'What could he conceivably effect?' Bickell forcibly,

Wenn Säulen stürzen,
Hilft kein Gerechter.

4 **In his holy palace.** Milton's 'palace of eternity' is meant (xviii. 7, xxix. 9, Isa. vi. 1, Hab. ii. 20). 'Holy,' implying inviolable security (see on xciii. 5).——**His eyelids try,** &c. A Jeremian phrase ; cf. vii. 10.

6 Lightning, thunderbolts, and simoom (comp. lviii. 10, cxl. 11, Ezek. xxxviii. 22, and especially Gen. xix. 24). One of those pictures of judgment, less frequent in the Bible than in the Korán, which remind us that we are reading an Oriental book. But what lies behind this Orientalism? An important theological conception, expressed thus by Jeremiah : 'Israel is holiness unto Jehovah ; all that devour him shall be counted guilty ; evil shall come upon them' (Jer. ii. 3). And what if those who 'devour' Israel and contemn his ideal are his own children? (xiv. 4, Mic. iii. 3.) Then they must be treated like heathen enemies ; 'the Light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame' (Isa. x. 17). For Jehovah is surrounded by a fire which guides and comforts His own people (Ex. xiii. 21, Isa. iv. 5), but descends in 'coals of fire' (xviii. 13) on the ungodly. Comp. note on this circle of ideas in xiv. 3, and see crit. note.

7 **Righteous acts,** i.e. 'the righteous acts of his rule' (Judg. v.

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11, R. V.); so 1 Sam. xii. 7, Mic. vi. 5, Isa. xlv. 24. See note on vii. 18.——**Shall behold his face.** The rendering of A. V. is against usage, it is opposed by the parallel passage cxl. 13; comp. 10). We have here a promise of spiritual communion with God. In this life or the next? The psalmist is not in a mood to answer. He is close upon St. John's conception of 'eternal life' as a present possession. (See further on xvii. 15.)

PSALM XII.

A PSALM in four stanzas or strophes of four lines each, which somewhat reminds us of Ps. v. (note the stress laid on sins of the tongue). The subject is the deep misery of the righteous, against which the psalmist can bring but one remedial agency—a divine promise, contrasting with the proud speeches of the enemies, and possibly taken from some prophetic writing.

2 Save, Jehovah, for the man of love is no more,
for the faithful have vanished from among the children of men.
3 They speak falsehood every one with his neighbour:
flattering language do they speak with a double heart.

4 May Jehovah cut off all flattering lips,
and the tongue that talks grandly,
5 Those that say, 'With our tongue do we make a firm covenant,
our lips are our allies; who is Lord over us?'

6 For the oppression of the afflicted, for the groaning of the needy,
now will I arise, saith Jehovah,
I will set him in the safety after which he pants.
7 The sayings of Jehovah are pure from dross,
silver well tried (and running) to the ground, seven times refined.

9 All around walk the ungodly,
meanness being on high above the sons of men.
8 Mayest thou preserve us, Jehovah,
and guard us from this generation for ever!

2 See on xiv. 3, and Mic. vii. 2, Isa. lvii. 1 (reign of Manasseh?) **The man of love.** Here for the first time we meet with the fine, characteristic word *khāsīd*, which some scholars (represented in the margin of R. V., Ps. iv. 3) render 'one graced or favoured, viz. by God,' but which, as I must think, certainly means rather one who himself practises the virtue of *khésed*. In l. 5 the phrase is equivalent to Israelite; here, however, it has the ethical sense which we find as early as Mic. vii. 2, and as late as Sir. xxxix. 13, 24. There is no English word to express the full meaning of the Hebrew; I defend my paraphrase by a reference to Prov. xi. 17, *'ish khésed*, 'a man of love' (the love arising from the sense of a covenant relation; see on iv. 4). The 'godly' and 'saint' of King James's Bible fail to give the emotional tinge of Hebrew piety. Jehovah requires that a

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man should do his duty both to God and to his brother man with a certain warmth of feeling. Love and duty, then, are both implied: comp. 'love is **dutiful** in thought and deed.' Here, however, this duteous love finds its chief sphere among mankind; comp. on xliii. 1.——**The faithful**, i.e. the trustworthy in all the relations of life = 'the upright' in the parallel passage, Mic. vii. 2. 'Faithfulness' is here a department of that 'lovingkindness' which is the bond of Israel's covenant; so in xlv. 5, 'good faith' or 'truthfulness' is a department of 'righteousness.'

5 **With our tongue . . .** The tongue is more than their faithful servant; it unweariedly suggests the most artful lies, the most terrifying threats, which are a stronghold to these wicked ones, as the praises of children are to God's people (viii. 3). The tongue is in fact their ally, better than any 'lord' or 'god' to them. They are in covenant, neither with Baal, nor with Jehovah, but with their tongue.[1] This is Ewald's interpretation of the obscure passage. It is possible to regard one of the idioms as a sign of late date. See crit. note.

7 **Pure from dross**, with no admixture of falsehood; purer than the purity of refined silver. Similar references to the 'promises' or 'sayings' (Heb. *imrāh*) of Jehovah occur in *late* psalms, cv. 20, cxix. 140 (and often), and a bold critic might include the striking parallel xviii. 31 (cf. Prov. xxx. 5). See also xix. 7–10.——**(And running) to the ground**; mentioned as the sign that the smelting-process has been effectual. See crit. note.

8 With Hupfeld, I transpose *vv.* 8 and 9; the gain is clear (cf. on xxxiv. 17, 16).——**All around**, &c. Again the psalmist's courage sinks at the ubiquity and power of the irreligious faction. Israel has become 'like the grape-gleanings of the vintage,' which in point of fact amounts to nothing at all; 'there is no cluster to eat' (Mic. vii. 1). How could it be otherwise, **meanness** (or, vileness, abjectness) **being on high for the sons of men**? 'For' may be here put instead of 'above' (comp. xiii. 3), or it may be a case of the 'dativus incommodi,' so that we might paraphrase, 'the vilest men being promoted to the pain and grief of the common people' (*b'nē 'ādām*, not *b'nē 'ish*). But though this rendering is perfectly possible, the oddness of the phraseology suggests that the text may be corrupt. See crit. note.

9 **From this generation**, i.e. from this class of men (as xiv. 5, xxiv. 6, lxxiii. 15, cxii. 2).

PSALM XIII.

A STORM-PIECE, but the storm is a spiritual one. Many pious Israelites may have found in this psalm a true reflection of their feelings in time of persecution. The opening words remind us of those of Ps. lxxiv. Observe that the tristich which forms *v.* 6 corresponds to that which forms *v.* 3. The irregularity is designed, and there was no occasion for Sept. to complete *v.* 6 by inserting vii. 18 *b*.

2 How long, Jehovah, wilt thou 'forget me for ever'?
how long wilt thou hide thy face from me?
3 How long shall I lay up sorrow in my soul,
heaviness in my heart, day [and night]?
how long shall mine enemy be on high above me?

[1] A.V.: 'With our tongue will we prevail' (lit., show ourselves strong). Delitzsch: 'To our tongue we will give strength' (i.e. will give effect to our words).

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4 Look hither and answer me, Jehovah my God,
lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep unto death;
5 Lest mine enemy say, 'I have prevailed against him,'
and my foes exult because I am moved.

6 But as for me, in thy lovingkindness is my trust;
let my heart exult in thy salvation,
let me sing unto Jehovah, for he has dealt bountifully with me.

2 **How long . . . for ever?** A difficult phrase, but only from its excess of meaning. The psalmist, we must suppose, has been ringing the changes on those gloomy words, 'My God has forgotten me, and that for ever; I shall soon sleep the sleep of death.' Day after day and night after night (see *v.* 3) he has lain helpless in Doubting Castle, till at last he plucks out the key of Promise (see Isa. lvii. 16) and exclaims, 'The needy shall not be forgotten for ever' (ix. 19). But the battle is not yet won; the weaker element—the 'soul'—declares, 'with strong crying and tears,' that God has really forgotten for ever. This conflict within the man is reflected in his language. 'How long shall I be in such a state that my lower self is forced to exclaim, God has forgotten me for ever?' Comp. the aposiopesis in vi. 4. Dr. De Witt prefers to regard the second part of line 1 as an additional question, rendering (nearly as A. V.), 'How long, O Jehovah? wilt Thou forget me for ever?' But this explanation does not suit Lam. v. 20. The rendering 'entirely' is plausible, but an unnecessary deviation from usage. Even in lxxiv. 3, Job xxxiv. 36, the ordinary rendering 'for ever' is adequate, both passages being coloured by emotion. Sept. and Symm., *εἰς τέλος*, which Theodoret interprets *παντελῶς*; Aquila, *τέλεον*.

3 In both lines the text has lost something. In *a* it reads, 'How long shall I array plans,' &c. (Sept., *βουλὰς*); in *b*, 'heaviness . . . by day' (Gesenius violently, 'the whole day'). See crit. note; 'array' and 'lay up' are equally justifiable renderings of the same verb; 'array' corresponds best to 'plans,' 'lay up' to 'sorrow.'

4 **Lest I sleep unto death.** Now we see what God's 'forgetting for ever' involved; it meant death, 'the eternal sleep,' Jer. li. 39, 57; for the dead are those whom 'thou rememberest no more,' lxxxviii. 6. Death of the nation? or of the individual? See on vi. 6.

6 A striking contrast to the preceding complaints. The psalmist is in mortal danger, but he trusts still, and this trust, through finding expression, deepens into a sure hope. In line 3 deliverance is even assumed as a fact.——**Dealt bountifully with me**—a heavy rendering of *gâmal ālai*; but how can we reproduce the pregnant sense of *gamal* (for which cf. Ass. *gimil* 'to do good,' Budge, *Proceedings of Soc. of Bibl. Arch.*, 1883, p. 7)? Sept., *τῷ εὐεργετήσαντί με*. In a different context, the same phrase might mean 'he hath done evil to me' (cf. vii. 5), the root meaning being probably to complete or accomplish.

PSALM XIV.

'EINER der schwungvollsten Psalmen,' Ewald. Its theme resembles that of Ps. xii. General depravity and practical atheism meet the psalmist at every turn. Illustrating this fact of experience by the truth of God's omniscience, he arrives at the conclusion that things are no better in the

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larger theatre of the world. Being a poet, however, and an earnest believer, he expresses this in a dramatic way, reminding us of Psalm ii. The Most High bends over His world (as xxxiii. 13), to see if there be not at least 'ten righteous' (Gen. xviii. 32) in the crowd of evil-doers (comp. xi. 4); but his eyes rest upon a mere mass of moral corruption. Even in Israel, He can only find His own people among the poor and afflicted ones, who are eaten up by the exactions of irreligious oppressors. Thereupon He reveals Himself, to the consternation of those who deny Him and to the joy of those who have fled to Him for refuge. The concluding verse, which is in a different rhythm, contains an aspiration after deliverance (fuller deliverance is probably meant) for Israel. This seems to have been added to give distinctness to the meaning of the psalm in liturgical use.

The psalm evidently belongs to a period either of persecution of the higher religion within the nation, or of oppression exercised upon Israel from without. It was evidently popular, for it exists in a duplicate version (see on Ps. liii.), as also do Pss. xviii. (see 2 Sam. xxii.), xl. 14–18 (see Ps. lxx.), xcvi., and parts of cv., cvi. (see 1 Chron. xvi. 8–36). It is an interesting fact that the later editor of the Psalter respected the integrity of the minor collections which he took up.

On Pss. xiv., xv., xvi., xix. cf. Delitzsch, *Der Dekalog in Exodus und Deuteronomium*, in Luthardt's *Zeitschrift*, 1882, p. 290; on the interpolation in Rom. iii. 10–12, see Field, *Hexapla* (*ad loc.*)

1 The fool says in his heart,
'There is no God.'
Corrupt and abominable are their practices,
there is none that does good.

2 Jehovah looks down from heaven
upon the children of men,
to see if there be any that deals wisely,
and inquires after God.

3 The whole race has turned aside, together they have become tainted;
there is none that does good,
no, not one.

4 'Shall they not rue it, all that work naughtiness,
that eat up my people?
They have eaten up the bread [of the afflicted],
they call not upon Jehovah.'

5 Thereupon do they shudder indeed, for Elohim
is in the righteous generation.
6 Ye would frustrate the purpose of the afflicted!
yea, but Jehovah is his refuge.

7 Oh that from Zion were come the salvation of Israel!
when Jehovah turns the fortune of his people,
let Jacob exult, let Israel be glad.

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1 **The fool.** One surely need not suppose that an individual is here stigmatised: 'fool' (*nābhāl*), like 'scoffer' (*lēç*), is a class-word; both words denote that kind of ungodliness which not only acts irreligiously, but justifies its irreligion on theoretic grounds, which grounds may be derived either from an erroneous view of the nature of Israel's God or from an absolute negation of His existence. (For the contrast see cxi. 10.) The 'fool' of Isaiah's time is thus defined by the prophet: 'The fool speaks folly, and his heart prepares wickedness, to practise profanity and utter error concerning Jehovah, to make empty the soul of the hungry, and to cause the drink of the thirsty to fail' (Isa. xxxii. 6). The 'fool' of the Maccabean age was one who (like Antiochus Epiphanes) 'insulted' Jehovah and 'contemned (or, blasphemed) his name,' from the point of an alien religion (lxxiv. 18). It is possible that Prov. xxx. 1–4 are quoted from a poem by a post-Exile scoffer of a third, the intellectualistic type. Now, to which class does the 'fool' of our passage belong? There is nothing to suggest an absolute negation of Jehovah (except it be *v.* 4 *b*). The psalmist at once proceeds (*v.* 1 *b*) to comment, not on the fool's theory, but on his practices. So in Ps. x., 'there is no God,' is the sum and substance of the fool's thoughts, but, as the same verse shows, this merely means, 'El will not punish,' i.e. the generally recognised Godhead, who has no special relation to Israel, has also no special relation to the speaker. So too in xxxvi. 3, which explains the 'oracle' in *v.* 2. And so in Ps. xii., 'who is Lord over us,' means, in Ewald's words, that the speakers 'have transferred their homage to a new sensuous God.' The safest inference is that of Dr. Benisch—'The utterance quoted is that of atheism characterising an over-refined age, and seeking to reason away the existence of an avenging Deity.'[1] Comp. Jer. v. 12, 'They denied Jehovah and said, He is not,[2] neither shall evil come upon us;' one among a series of parallels in Jer. v. See also on xxxvi. 2, lxxiii. 11. With the last line compare Savonarola's fervid complaints in his early treatise 'On Contempt of the World:' 'Virtues are turned into vices and vices into virtues. There is none that doeth good, no not one.'[3] May not this suggest that the psalmist is a disciple of the prophets, and writes in the spirit of Elijah (1 Kings xix. 10, 14; comp. 18) and Jeremiah (Jer. v. 1, 23)?

3 **The whole race has,** &c. Precisely as Jer. v. 23, 'This people has a heart that turns aside and rebels; they have turned aside and gone away.' The prophet and the poet are agreed. Though the former only speaks of Israel, he would not have rejected the wider statement; the symbolic name Jacob, as he well knows, is as applicable to mankind as to the people of Israel.[4] The expressions used by the psalmist here are still stronger than those in xii. 2. The idea in both passages is that while man, as man, is necessarily sinful, there are times when his sinful impulses manifest themselves on a singularly large scale and in forms singularly displeasing to God. At such times men of heart-religion would not be surprised if the judgment upon Sodom and Gomorrha were to be repeated (xi. 6). ——**No, not one.** The same result of a divine scrutiny as in Jer. v. 1.

4 A divine speech, in spite of the inconsistency in *l.* 4. **Shall they not rue it?** Literally, 'Shall they not come to know [their folly]?'

[1] *Miscellanies of Jewish Literature* (by various writers), p. 119.

[2] This cannot mean positive or theoretic atheism, for in Jer. v. 2 the same persons are described as swearing by Jehovah.

[3] Creighton's *History of the Popes*, iii. 146.

[4] An inference from the Hebrew of Jer. xvii. 9, 'The heart [of man] is treacherous ['*ăqōbh*].'

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Comp. Isa. v. 19, ix. 9. It is best to take this view of the text in preference to that which found favour with the Massoretic critics. The surprise and anger which the speaker evidently feels receive thus a more vigorous expression, and the transition to *v.* 5 becomes more natural. The case would be different if we accepted the form given to the next verse in Ps. liii. (see note there).——**That eat up . . . upon Jehovah.** This arrangement of the verse seems to me, as well as to De Dieu, Hupfeld, and Bickell, rhythmically preferable to the Massoretic one adopted by A.V. The figure of 'eating' a people is common in Hebrew; sometimes it is applied to the destruction wrought by invaders (Num. xiv. 9, and especially Jer. x. 26, Ps. lxxix. 7), sometimes to the cruelties of native oppressors (Mic. iii. 3, Prov. xxx. 14). I have said above why I prefer the parallel from Micah to that from Jeremiah as illustrative of the meaning. The 'workers of naughtiness' and the 'eaters of my people' are designations of unworthy Israelites who do not own Jehovah with heart-homage, and whom Jehovah will not own as His people. 'My people,' spoken doubtless in pitying tones (comp. Isa. iii. 12, 15), means those who are so often called 'the afflicted' (see on ix. 13). So far all is plain. Then follows, according to the text, 'they eat [or, they have eaten] bread; they call not upon Jehovah.' How are these two clauses related to each other, and to the context? The former clause seems to be incomplete; the distich to which it belongs is not symmetrical compared with its fellows. Whatever explanation of the passage we adopt, this has to be borne in mind, and the incompleteness must be conjecturally removed. Three views of the meaning may plausibly be taken. The Targum explains thus: 'Do not all the workers of a lie know that food is given by him? why then do not the devourers of my people, who eat bread, bless the name of the Lord?' Following this we might render, 'They eat bread, [and are full,] and call not upon Jehovah,' viz. to 'bless Him for the good land which He has given them' (Deut. viii. 10). But thus we get no connexion with the context. De Dieu indeed provides one[1] by taking the 'eaters' to be the Babylonian oppressors of the Jews, and the 'not calling upon Jehovah' to be the omission of a proper 'grace after meat' consequent on the profession of heathenism! A second possible view may be mentioned—to render, 'They eat bread, [they drink wine;] they do not call upon Jehovah,' and explain this of the absorption in sensuous enjoyment which God would soon interrupt by a frightful catastrophe (comp. Isa. xxi. 5). This is better than the first view, but we still miss a connexion with the first part of the verse. The third view seems to supply this want. I do not offer it as certain, but as plausible; it is due to Bickell, who has however since then changed his opinion, not (I feel sure) for the better. We should paraphrase thus: 'They have eaten up the bread that the afflicted should eat, they have robbed Jehovah of his homage.' Who can help comparing Isa. iii. 14, 'So then ye have devoured the vineyard; the spoil of the afflicted is in your houses'? Precisely as in that passage the second clause explains the first, so here 'eating the bread of the afflicted' explains the sense in which the oppressors were called in the first distich 'those who eat up my people.' The latter phrase means more than δημοβόρος βασιλεὺς (*Il.* i. 231; comp. 1 Sam. viii. 14–17); it implies that, instead of, or in addition to, the customary exactions of a royal master, the mass of poor Israelites had now to undergo the unmitigated oppression of a multitude of despots who were void of that heart-religion characteristic of

[1] *Animadversiones in Vet. Test. libros omnes* (1648), p. 315.

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the 'poor' and 'afflicted.' Long ago, Amos had denounced the selfishness of the rich creditors who 'trode upon the helpless, and took from him presents of wheat' (Am. v. 11). Kindred expressions of Isaiah have been quoted already; it is interesting to notice that one mark of 'folly' in Isa. xxxii. 6 is depriving the poor man of his livelihood. The concluding words of the verse describe the injury done to Jehovah. The two middle lines of the verse refer to the afflicted; the first line and the last refer to the afflicted one's God. 'Workers of naughtiness' expresses the character of a class of men in the sight of Jehovah. He who judges men by their deeds can find no moral element in the works of these tyrants. The words, 'they call not upon Jehovah,' explain the secret of this; such men have no communion of the heart with God. They are of those 'who say inwardly, Jehovah does neither good nor evil' (Zeph. i. 12), i.e. He is a non-moral deity, and leaves the world to itself. Those who carry the sheaves may be hungry (Job xxiv. 10), but He cares not; bread is not 'the bread of the afflicted,' but of those who possess that might which is really their 'god' (Hab. i. 11; cf. Mic. ii. 1). Having no conscience, the rich oppressors of course do not pray, at least with the heart. But in the very midst of their cankered prosperity, a great change comes (see next verse). Such appears to be the connexion. Note the stress laid in this passage upon prayer, which may possibly be an indication of date; cf. Isa. xliii. 22 (with note) and Isa. xxvi. 16.

5 **Thereupon,** i.e. when Jehovah has thus spoken. The perfect of prophetic certitude follows.—— **In the righteous generation.** There is, besides, another 'generation' (see xii. 10), but this one has an invisible ally in Jehovah. This limitation of the divine presence to a section of the natural community of Israel is very striking. Comp. Isaiah's doctrine of the righteous remnant.

6 **Ye would frustrate,** &c. Probably an allusion to some religiously important object which the psalmist and his friends were hoping to gain.

7 **From Zion.** This verse has the air of a liturgical addition. Both in the Exile and the post-Exile period, Zion and salvation are connected ideas; comp. cxxi. 1, Isa. lii. 7, 8, and especially lxvi. 6 (as I believe, a post-Exile passage).—— **Turns the fortune.** Against the rendering, 'brings back the captives,' see crit. note.

PSALM XV.

Ps. xiv. gave an emphatic recognition to prayer (*v.* 14). Ps. xv. aptly follows with its description of the conditions upon which communion with God may be enjoyed. Add to it Ps. xxiv. 1–6 and Isa. xxxiii. 15–16, and you have a fine triad of poetic catechisms on the elements of moral religion.

Ps. xv. reminds us somewhat of the declaration of innocence pronounced by the soul before the tribunal of Osiris in the Book of the Dead (ch. cxxv.) Only ten testing qualities, however, are mentioned in the psalm.

1 Jehovah, who can be a guest in thy pavilion?
who can dwell upon thy holy mountain?
2 He that walks blamelessly, and works righteousness,
and speaks truth with his heart:
3 He that has no slander upon his tongue,
that does no ill to his companion,
nor utters a reproach against his neighbour:

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4 Despicable is a reprobate in his eyes,
but those that fear Jehovah doth he honour;
if he swear to (his) hurt, he changes not:
5 He that gives not his money for usury,
nor takes a bribe against the innocent:
he that does these things can never be moved.

1 It is a plausible account which A.V. gives of this psalm in the heading, 'David describeth a citizen of Zion.' By 'Zion' it means (see Ps. xxiv. A.V.) the Messianic or spiritual Zion spoken of in the prophecies of Isaiah (Isa. ii., iv., xi.) Plausible but superficial; for the *gēr* ('foreign guest' or 'sojourner') was only a 'half-citizen' (Ewald[1]), and required the protection of an Israelite. 'To be Jehovah's guest' means primarily 'to enjoy an inviolable security.' The phrase is connected on the one hand with the old customs of hospitality, and on the other with the ancient Semitic right of sanctuary, which lingered on, though with limitations, in Israel (Ex. xxi. 14, 1 Kings i. 51, ii. 29). It is an aggravation of the offences of the ungodly that 'they slay the widow and the sojourner' (xciv. 6), and the readiness with which the duty of hospitality is still accepted among the Arabs is shown by the everyday formula, 'I am the *dakhîl* of such an one,' i.e. 'I claim his protection.' Social customs are one great source of religious imagery, and so it is not surprising that we find a Hebrew worshipper describing himself as the 'guest' of Jehovah, and Phœnician inscriptions[2] containing the names Gersacun ('guest of Sacun'), Germelkart ('guest of Melkart'), Gerastart ('guest of Astarte'), and even Gerhecal ('guest of the temple'). The prominent idea in all these names is not so much participation in the sacrificial feasts, as Renan would have it,[3] but the enjoyment of divine protection; comp. the Arabic phrase for an inhabitant of Mecca, *jâr-ullah*, 'God's protected one.'[4] The faithful worshipper has, as it were, 'taken sanctuary,' whether he lives near his god's shrine or not. But what constitutes fidelity? Abundant material sacrifices, or 'walking blamelessly'? The psalmists differ from their heathen neighbours; 'evil cannot be a guest of thine' (v. 5). Jehovah's requirements are far greater than those of Astarte; on the other hand, his gifts are proportionately valuable. His 'guest' is secure in a far deeper than the common sense of the phrase. See lxi. 5, where it is very clear that a deep spiritual meaning lies behind the words (see on xxvii. 4).——**Pavilion.** Milton's synonym for 'tent' (see his version of iii. 18) is adopted for rhythm. 'Tent' or 'pavilion' = 'house' (comp. cxxxii. 3, 'the tent of my house,' 1 Kings viii. 66). More especially, as the context shows, the temple is meant; nothing compels us to think of the Davidic 'tabernacle.'——**Upon thy holy mountain.** 'Holy,' i.e. unapproachable by sinners (see xxiv. 3).

[1] *Antiquities*, p. 236, note 9. Kuenen, however, has noted variations in the different legal systems overlooked by Ewald. See, e.g., *Hibbert Lectures* (1882), p. 183.

[2] For the three former, see Euting, *Punische Steine*, pp. 13, 15, 16; for the latter, *Corpus Inscr. Semit.*, tom. i. fasc. 2, pp. 132, 133.

[3] *Le Judaïsme et le Christianisme* (1883), p. 9.

[4] The Arabic verb *jâra* in conj. iii. and iv. means 'to receive under protection;' in x., 'to ask protection.' Compare *Hamâsa*, p. 51, 'A mountain have we where dwells he whom we take under our protection;' and *Kordn*, ix. 6, 'And if any one of the idolaters ask thee for protection, then receive him under protection . . . . then let him gain his place of safety.'

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On this sense see Baudissin, *Studien zur semit. Religionsgeschichte*, ii. 91, 92.

2 **And speaks truth.** The importance and the range of truthfulness was only recognised by degrees. The Decalogue, however, contains the germs of subsequent developments. Ex. xx. 16 refers to all kinds of false statements respecting a neighbour; and a preceding law, Ex. xx. 7, contains a still more comprehensive prohibition of false asseverations, that is, if לשוא means 'for a falsehood.' (It implies that an Israelite, in affirming something, would naturally appeal to Jehovah, and requires that this appeal shall not be made 'with reference to vanity.') The Egyptians, however, were beyond the Israelites in emphasising the religious duty of truthfulness. This Elysium in 'Amenti' was called 'the land of truth of speech,' and line 7 of the declaration of the soul (referred to above) ran, 'I have lied in no man's face.'——**With his heart.** We should say, '*from* the heart.' But the Hebrew regards the lips as merely the servants of the heart, i.e. of the mind and conscience (comp. xii. 3). So too the hands; hence Isa. xxxii. 6, 'his heart does iniquity.'

4 **If he swear to (his) hurt.** Literally, 'to do evil;' the context shows that he himself is the sufferer in the case supposed. The allusion is to the law in Lev. v. 4, which supplements Ex. xx. 7, 'If any one swear in idle talk to do evil or to do good,' (he shall confess and make atonement for his sin); or at least to some current law in which the obligation of keeping one's word was expressed in similar phraseology. Followers of Wellhausen will grant that the technical phrases of Leviticus may in part be ancient. ——**He changes not,** i.e. he does not go from his word. Not, therefore, in the technical sense of Lev. xxvii. 10, 33.

5 **He that gives not,** &c. To the poor Israelite such a man lends gratuitously (xxxvii. 26, cxii. 5; comp. Prov. xxviii. 8). Here, too, there is an allusion to some current law, probably to Ex. xxii. 24 or Deut. xxiii. 19; comp Lev. xxv. 37.

PSALM XVI.

If this were the only psalm with the title Miktam, one could easily adopt the explanation 'a golden song,' this psalm being, as De Dieu says, like gold for preciousness. God, the one great good, is its theme, and it is written not only for the Jewish Church (Theodore of Mopsuestia) but for any pious Israelite. Alluding, perhaps, to the close of a neighbouring psalm (xii. 8), the psalmist opens with a short petition for preservation (*v.* 1); he then assumes the tone, successively, of profession, description, and prophecy. He professes his own utter faith in Jehovah, which makes all other joys pall, and his exclusive attachment to his spiritual leaders (2, 3). Why this mention of Jehovah and Jehovah's 'noble ones' in the same breath? Because, in times like the present, a man's society is the test of his religion. There are many recreant Israelites who have fallen into heathenism; intercourse with these would too surely involve a share in their defilement. 'At every table was the altar, on every tongue the light oath, of idolatry.' But loneliness is no grief to the believer; his mind is to him a kingdom. Jehovah is at his side, and knowing this, he would not change his lot (4–6). He blesses Him who guides him in accordance with his wise purpose (lxxiii. 24) and is jealous (like Bishop Ken) of the sleep which cuts short his Hallelujahs. He continually looks to Israel's invisible Guide; this is his talisman (7, 8). And now from description he passes to prophecy. He is confident that Israel's work is not yet done, and that even for him (however his persecutors may rage,

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or may lately have raged) a share in this work is reserved. But he seeks something more—not 'in the world to come life everlasting'—but 'a path of life' beginning here, though broadening in what later writers called the 'age to come' (9–12). Jehovah's guest begins his banquet on earth (xxiii. 5); the psalmist would not have pourtrayed the present age as only the vestibule leading to the *triclinium* or banquet-hall, i.e. the world to come.[1] In fact, his antithesis is not this world and the next, but life with God and life without God (comp. xvii. 14).

But more of this below. The prevalent misapprehension of the psalm seemed to call for the above analysis. What is wanted to understand such poems is, first, a feeling for literature, and secondly, a strong and deep theistic consciousness. To follow the leadings of these inward monitors obliges us to modify the sense of the words 'Davidic' and 'Christian.' To us, the former becomes a symbolic term for vigour and originality of style, and the latter describes a peculiar spiritual intuition and tone of feeling. Ps. xvi. is in a high degree both Davidic and Christian. Comparing it with neighbouring psalms more or less parallel, we find little in it that is absolutely new, but the intensity with which all is felt and expressed makes it seem original. All earthly desires are stilled; the psalmist is in the mood of the writer of lxxiii. 25, 26.

For a special study of Ps. xvi., see Dr. Robertson Smith, *Expositor*, 1876, pp. 341–372. See also Delitzsch (see introd. to Ps. xiv., end), who remarks that Ps. xvi. is a development of the idea that all Israel is 'a kingdom of priests and an holy nation' (Ex. xix. 6). On the linguistic relation of this and the next psalm, see crit. note.

1 Preserve me, O God; for I seek refuge in thee.
2 I say unto Jehovah, 'Thou art my Lord,
  without thee my welfare is nought,
3 And in thy noble ones is all my delight.'
4 They multiply their own griefs who change for another:
  their drink-offerings of blood will I not pour out,
  nor take their names upon my lips.

5 Jehovah is mine appointed portion and cup,
  thou wilt be continually my lot.
6 My measuring-lines have fallen in pleasant places;
  yea, I have a delightsome heritage.
7 I will bless Jehovah, who has given me counsel:
  yea, in the night-seasons mine own reins admonish me.
8 I have set Jehovah before me continually:
  for with him at my right hand I cannot be moved.

9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory exults,
  my flesh also dwells in safety.
10 For thou wilt not give up my soul to Sheól,
  neither wilt thou suffer thy loving one to see the pit;
11 Thou makest known to me the path of life;
  near thy face is fulness of joys,
  all pleasant things are in thy right hand for ever.

[1] *Pirke Aboth*, iv. 23 (Taylor).

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2, 3 An emphatic confession of faith, supplemented by a declaration of brotherly fellowship with Jehovah's 'noble ones.' The correction in *v.* 3 (see crit. note) relieves the text from great awkwardness.

2 **I say.** An emphatic introduction to the confession of faith which follows; comp. xci. 2.——**My Lord.** So Adonai must be rendered in xxxv. 23. There is thus a contrast to the 'Who is Lord over us' of xii. 5.——**Welfare have I none,** &c., i.e. to Thee alone do I look for happiness. I would not lay too much stress on the point, but the writer seems here (comp. *v.* 6) to imply that, though danger still threatens, a comparative degree of prosperity is enjoyed. The context of lxxiii. 25, 26 is quite different.

3 **Thy noble ones.** The Hebrew *addîr* expresses here 'amplitude' of rank and power, as Jer. xxv. 34–36, 2 Chron. xxiii. 20, Neh. x. 30 (see on xciii. 4). Jehovah's 'noble ones' are opposed to worldly grandees; possibly the priests are meant, who in 1 Chron. xxiv. 5 are called 'hallowed princes.' The interpolated line in this verse comes from the margin; it does not, indeed, make the verse senseless, if we approach it with a disposition to find a particular meaning. We have then a declaration that the 'noble ones' in whose company the speaker delights are 'the holy ones that are in the land.' 'Holiness,' i.e., in this connexion, severance from the impurities of heathenism, is specially the mark of the Maccabean rising (see on l. 5); but of course we are not shut up to the theory that this is a Maccabean psalm. Holiness is the predominant thought of the whole post-Exile period. 'Holy ones' occurs again of individuals in xxxiv. 10; the expression says more than 'holy people' (Isa. lxiii. 18, Dan. xii. 7). In Num. xvi. 3 the two statements, that the people is holy, and that its members are holy, are virtually combined. 'In the land' of course means in Canaan. The phrase suggests that many Jews were not 'holy;' cf. the phrases 'the quiet in the land' (xxxv. 20), 'the faithful of the land' (ci. 6). Cf. also 'his holy ones' (xxxiv. 10), where, however, the context does not require the same shade of meaning as here.

4 **Their own griefs.** Comp. Jer. ii. 19, Isa. l. 11 (*not* cxxxix. 24). Jehovah is a 'jealous God,' and will not 'give His glory to another' (Isa. xlii. 8).——**Who change for another.** We do not often in these psalms meet with direct references to idolatry. This is the first, unless there be another in iv. 3. For the phraseology, see cvi. 20, Jer ii. 11. There may be a secondary meaning, 'purchase,' *māhārū* alluding to *mōhar*, the purchase-money for a wife; comp. Isa. lvii. 9. That idolatry was a constant temptation to Israel needs no showing. It was not least so after the Return, as is clear, not indeed from Isa. lvii. 5, 6, but certainly from Isa. lxv. 1–7, 11, and from 1 Macc. i.——**Their drink-offerings of blood.** 'Of blood' is best taken figuratively (so Kimchi); comp. Isa. lxvi. 3, 'He that slaughters an ox is a man-slayer.' The psalmist execrates the apostasy of these men so much that the choice wine of their libations (comp. Isa. lxv. 11) is to him as offensive as the blood of a human sacrifice. (It is not the bloodshed of rapine—comp. Isa. i. 15—which is referred to; an error of Kimchi's.) On this view, the phrase 'their drink-offerings of blood' is as comprehensive as 'their idol-names' in the next line. The figure involved may seem somewhat harsh, but remember the poetic expression 'the blood of grapes,' Gen. xlix. 11. Accepting the post-Exile origin of the psalm, I think this view the most probable. Otherwise we might hold that heathenism in general is credited with the abominations of particular cults in which it found its climax. Human sacrifices were certainly offered to Moloch in Judah in the time of Ahaz and later (see 2 Kings xvi. 3,

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Isa. lvii. 5, 6). That literal blood-libations are meant is held by Ibn Ezra, and among the moderns by Calvin, Ewald, Baethgen, and Dr. Robertson Smith. Dr. Trumbull, specialising too much, sees an allusion to a custom connected with the rite of blood-brotherhood, still recognised in Syria as a primitive custom.[1] It is worth remarking that libations appear to have been more prominent both in the heathen cults of Palestine and in the quasi-heathen worship of Jehovah (see Hos. ix. 4) than in the Levitical worship. ——**Their names,** viz. those of the idol-gods whom the renegades invoked; cf. Ex. xxiii. 13, Hos. ii. 17 (Heb. 19).

5 **Mine appointed portion and cup.** Two figures are combined; first that of the distribution of the communal land with which we meet again in *v.* 6 (comp. Cambridge Bible on Mic. ii. 5), next that of a host filling up his guest's cup (comp. xxiii. 5). The first figure properly belongs to Israel (Jer. x. 16, li. 19), but, as lxxiii. 26 and the name Hilkiah show, it was appropriated by individual believers.——**My lot,** a synonym for 'my portion;' comp. Isa. lix. 7, 'they, they are thy lot.' 'Continually' is added, because the believer feels one with a God who is eternal. Comp. lxxiii. 23, 'I am continually with thee,' and *v.* 26, 'God is for ever . . . my portion.' The Massoretic reading is variously rendered, 'Thou holdest fast,' and 'Thou makest broad (my lot).' But there are strong objections to it.

6 **My measuring-lines . . . in pleasant places.** This may of course be a materialising expression for the 'pleasantness' (i.e. tender friendship, xxvii. 4) of Israel's God. But it is clear from *v.* 2 *b* and *v.* 8 *b* that outward prosperity and security are prominent in the writer's mind: in short, he is not merely conscious of Jehovah's favour in the heart, but sees it expressed in act. Was not Canaan, 'the lot of your inheritance' (cv. 11), a 'pleasant place'? (see cvi. 24, Mal. iii. 12.) Does not the psalmist mean, not only his 'pleasant' or gracious God, but the land which Jehovah has 'chosen'? Spiritual and material blessings are not yet separated; Jehovah and Jehovah's land are both the 'portion' of Israel. Comp. 1 Macc. xiv. 8, &c., 'And [in the days of Simon] they tilled their ground in peace, and the earth gave her products, and the trees of the field their fruit. Elders sat in the streets; all communed together of good things; and the young men put on honours and warlike apparel. . . . He made peace in the land, and Israel rejoiced with great joy.' May not these be among the 'pleasant things' in Jehovah's right hand (*v.* 11)? Comp. Job. xxxvi. 11.

7, 8 See introd. Others explain the 'admonishing' of the moral warnings of conscience. But the 'reins' mean the feelings, which stimulate to the expression of joy or gratitude (comp. Prov. xxiii. 16), not the reason, nor the conscience.

9 The psalmist's joy in God is no mere physical sensation. A holy calm fills his body, and a rapturous joy his inner man, while the 'heart' brings all this into the full light of the central consciousness. So in Prov. xiv. 10, 'The heart knows the grief of one's soul.' The same *apparent* trichotomy occurs in lxxxiv. 3; remember, however, that the true Hebraic division of human nature is into soul and flesh (see, e.g., lxiii. 2).

10, 11 See introd. for the sense in which these verses may without any effort be called Christian. *V.* 11 is easier than *v.* 10. 'Life,' 'joys,' and 'pleasant things' are all those good things, both material and spiritual, which the author of Prov. i.–ix. repeatedly holds out in prospect to the God-fearing man. That beautiful didactic poem, and the psalms which resemble it (e.g. Ps. xxxiv.), treat of the 'beginning of wisdom,' but the 'secret of Jehovah'

[1] *Blood-covenant*, p. 251 (cf. p. 6)—a striking passage.

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(xxv. 14) must be sought in psalms like this. He who has God for his 'portion' cannot attach an extreme importance to what 'men of the world' (xvii. 14) call 'life.' He does, indeed, value it, highly value it, but more for Israel's sake than for his own. The sad complaints in vi. 4–7 express the despondency of one who fears deeply for Israel. The title, 'Thou that liftest me up from the gates of Death' (ix. 14), refers to some past national trial little less bitter than death. The thanksgiving of one alive from the dead in xxx. 4 is spoken in the name of the true Israel. And so the psalmist in *v.* 10 is thinking of Israel when he says, in the πληροφορία of faith, 'Thou wilt not give up my soul to Sheól.' But not of Israel only (so Theodore of Mopsuestia). Israel's work is not yet finished; and Israel needs my help. Therefore 'I (like Israel) shall not die but live, and tell out the works of Jehovah' (cxviii. 17). Pleasant are God's earthly gifts, but not for selfish reasons do I seek them. 'Let the pleasantness of Jehovah our God be *over us*, and *the work of our hands* prosper thou over us' (xc. 18). But the psalmist may have soliloquised still further. It is consistent with his view of things to imagine him speaking thus: When my own share in this work is over, and the hand of Sheól takes hold of me, then He who is my portion, and whose portion I am (see Deut. xxxii. 9, 2 Macc. xiv. 15), will 'set free my soul' (xlix. 16), will finish 'making known' to me 'the path of life,' will give me 'joys' and 'pleasant things' which last for ever; above all, will 'receive me with glory' (lxxiii. 24), and bring me nearer to Thy face (*v.* 11, xvii. 15).

An important question arises here, to which two very different answers have been given, the truth lying probably midway between them. How far can passages like this be employed in illustration of the belief of the average pious Israelite? M. Halévy thinks[1] that, few and incidental as are the references to Sheól in the Old Testament, and careful as both narrators and poets are to spiritualise popular expressions and to transform them into poetical images, 'the form of the popular beliefs disengages itself in a luminous manner—beliefs which are evidently identical with those which the Assyrio-Babylonians professed relatively to the fate of man after death.' Putting together the notices of Enoch and Elijah and the phraseology of Ps. xvi., xlix., lxxiii., and Prov. xii. 28,[2] he concludes that 'the pious Hebrew hoped to escape from Sheól, either by ascending alive into heaven, or by being received after a short sojourn in Hades into the presence of Jehovah, seated at whose right hand he would enjoy everlasting delights.' Some Christian critics will strongly object to this, as confusing the distinction between the Old Testament and the New. Others, with whom I agree, will steer a middle course.[3] They will draw that most important distinction between the spiritualising monotheistic writers of the canonical books and the *average* believer in Sheól, but require as a preliminary to any inferential reconstruction of Jewish beliefs a critical examination of the date, origin, and object of each writing to which reference may be made. They will see in M. Halévy a predisposition to identify popular Jewish beliefs with those of the Assyrio-Babylonians, without allowing room for a somewhat different course of development among the different peoples, and to extract

[1] *Revue archéologique*, juillet 1882, p. 53, &c; cf. *Mélanges de critique*, p. 368, &c.

[2] On the psalm-passages my notes will show how far I agree with M. Halévy. Against his rendering of אל־מות, Prov. xii. 28, 'immortality,' see *Job and Solomon*, p. 123.

[3] At the last moment I can specify among these Dr. A. Jeremias (*Die bab.-ass. Vorstellungen vom Leben nach dem Tode*, 1887, the appendix of which is concerned with the O. T.

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a more definite form of belief from the Hebrew records than it is always quite safe to do. That traces of mythic ideas of Sheól do exist in the Old Testament I have long since repeatedly admitted, also that both in primitive times and in the Exile period the Israelites came under the influence of Babylonian conceptions, but reserves and qualifications have to be made all along the course that M. Halévy has taken.——**Thy loving one.** The phrase implies an argument. 'Thou wilt preserve me because of the bond of loving-kindness (*khésed*; see on v. 8) which unites Thee to Israel.' So another psalmist, 'Preserve thou my soul, for I am duteous in love' (*khāsīd*), lxxxvi. 2. Have we not here a foregleam of Christianity? (The exposition of *vv.* 10, 11 may, I know, be weakened, but only by a wholesale introduction of hyperbole both here and elsewhere—see on Ps. xxi.)——**The pit** (as vii. 16, ix. 16, xlix. 10). That *shakhath* commonly means 'pit' is undeniable; and that there should be a second *shakhath* = 'corruption' is not at all probable (as Perowne has already pointed out). Even in Job xvii. 14 the ordinary sense seems to me sufficient. But does not the rendering 'pit' impair the Messianic element in the psalm? No (see Perowne, *Psalms*, i. 205).

PSALM XVII.

THE complaint of the nobler Israel personified, of a representative pious Israelite; comp. *v.* 11. The assertions of innocence are to be explained as in vii. 9.

The tone is in marked contrast to that of Ps. xvi.; it more resembles that of Pss. vii., x.—psalms of painful and agitated feeling. The antithesis presupposed is within the sphere of the religion of Jehovah; it is not that of Jehovism and heathenism, but that of morality and immorality. Pss. xvi. and xvii. agree indeed in one respect, viz. that in both the psalmist rises above the struggles of his day into the pure air of mystic devotion, where God is felt to be the all-sufficient 'portion' (see on xvi. 5, xvii. 14). The points of contact between them (see Ewald and Delitzsch) have been pressed too far; there is a more striking relation (see *v.* 14) to Ps. xlix. (where חֵלֶד occurs in the sense of world, xlix. 2), to Job (see xx. 26 *a*), and to Ecclesiastes (where we find the phrase 'in life,' i.e. in the life of the senses, Eccles. vi. 12, ix. 9). For though these parallels are suggested by a single verse of one psalm, even Bickell does not regard this passage as an interpolation. We may add that the phrasing of the confession of faith in xlix. 15 illustrates that in xvii. 15. The style of Ps. xlix. may be smoother than that of Ps. xvii., but the Book of Job itself contains examples of the calmer and of the more excited style; the moods of the wise men who discussed these deep problems would vary with their circumstances. Ps. xvi., again, differs in tone from each of these psalms, while Ps. lxxiii. reminds us in various degrees of all of them, though in the bright happiness of its conclusion it alone can be compared to Ps. xvi.

1 Hearken unto innocency, Jehovah;
attend unto my piercing cry;
give ear unto my prayer from guileless lips.
2 Let my sentence come forth from thy presence;
let thine eyes behold uprightly.
3 Thou triest my heart, thou visitest it by night,
thou assayest me, but canst find no evil device;
my mouth transgresses not.

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4 As for the doings of men, by the word of thy lips
I have shunned the paths of the spoiler.
5 My steps have held fast to thy tracks,
my feet have not trembled.

6 I (being such an one) call upon thee, for thou wilt answer me, O God;
incline thine ear unto me, hear my speech.
7 Make passing great thy kindnesses, O saviour of those that flee for refuge
from them that assail, by thy right hand.
8 Watch over me as the apple of the eye,
cover me with the shadow of thy wings,
9 From the wicked ones who treat me with violence,
my greedy enemies, who compass me about.

10 Their unfeeling heart they have shut tight,
with their mouth they speak haughtily.
11 No step of ours but they are already about us,
with eyes fixed on our swerving in the path.
12 He is like a lion longing to tear in pieces,
and as it were a young lion lurking in secret places.

13 Up, Jehovah, confront him, make him bow down,
deliver my soul from the wicked by thy sword,
14 From men of the world, whose portion is in life,
and whose belly thou fillest with thy treasure,
who are full of sons, and leave their abundance to their children.
15 As for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness;
may I be satisfied, when I awake, with thine image!

1 **My piercing cry.** De Witt, 'my wailing.' See on v. 11.

3, 4 Comp. on vii. 9, 10. The divine searcher will find me free from sin in thought, in word, and in deed, that is, sincerely faithful to the Law. Sins of thought are examined **by night,** when the thoughts and imaginations rove unchecked, and thus call for the divine Judge. ——**The spoiler**; or, 'the robber'—the type of lawlessness (Hos. vii. 1). Cf. x. 3, 7.

7 **Make passing great,** &c. See on iv. 4. 'Surpassingness' is the mark of the divine (Judg. xiii. 18, Isa. ix. 5, Heb.)

8 The figures may be borrowed from Deut. xxxii. 10, 11; cf. on xxxvi. 8, xci. 4.

9–12 Comp. vii. 2, x. 8–12, xxii. 13, 14, 17, 18, lvii. 5, lviii. 7.

10 **Their unfeeling heart.** Lit., 'their caul' (the membrane surrounding the heart, Hos. xiii. 8, A.V.) Comp. lxxiii. 7.

13 **Confront him.** Or, 'intercept him' (when he is in act to spring). 'Bow down' of the lion, as Gen. xlix. 9.

14 On the text see crit. note, and on the points of contact with Ps. xlix., Job, and Eccles., see introd. ——**Men of the world,** &c. 'The world' and 'life' have here a special and deep signification. A true Is-

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raelite has a better home than 'the world,' and a greater prize than the 'life' of the senses (lxiii. 4). He has 'laid hold on the life which is life indeed' (1 Tim. vi. 19, R.V.), or, in Old Testament language, he dwells in the 'house of Jehovah,' that 'living God' who 'makes known to him the path of life' (see introd.) With 'men of the world' comp. the phrase 'the children of this æon,' opposed to 'the children of light' (Luke xvi. 8). Comp. also 'mortals of the earth' (x. 18), which reminds us of the phrase 'he that is of the earth' (John iii. 31). Note in passing the religious use of the term 'portion' as a synonym for 'protecting deity' (see on xvi. 5). 'Life,' or pleasure, is in fact idolised.—**Whose belly,** this part of the body being regarded as the seat of greed and avarice; comp. Job. xx. 11, 'nothing escaped his eating.'—**With thy treasure.** A coincidence with Job xx. 26*a* (see Heb. and R.V.)—**Who are full of sons.** Job felt the same difficulty (Job xxi. 8, 11).

15 **As for me,** &c. Worldlings forget the Giver in the gifts ('thy treasure'), and practically say, 'There is no God but pleasure.' As for me, who am called upon to 'serve God for nought,' what is my 'portion'? It is to 'see thy face in righteousness' (i.e. either 'recognised by Thee, the great Judge, as righteous,' or 'in accordance with Thy promise,' Isa. xlii. 6, xlv. 13)—mystic communion with God, begun in this life, and to be perfected **when I awake.** A phrase of much-disputed import. Does it mean 'on the morning of the resurrection'? This is possible, if the psalm be a Maccabean one; comp. Dan. xii. 1, Isa. xxvi. 19. But a vague allusion to so great and definite a hope is improbable; and in the Book of Job, with which this psalm is partly parallel, the idea of waking from the sleep of Sheól is only mentioned to be dismissed (Job xiv. 12). 'On to-morrow's dawning'? Far too weak for a climax! 'After weeping has tarried for the night and gone on her way'? But there is no parallel for this interpretation. 'Every morning, when I awake'? Hermann Schultz has adopted this view; the 'image' or 'form' of God will then mean the apparition of the divine Champion of afflicted Israel.[1] But this requires the present instead of the cohortative; Schultz boldly renders 'erwache ich, sättige ich mich.' Only one explanation remains. 'When I awake' may mean 'when life's short day is past.' That life, when past, is a sleep, we find (perhaps) in another psalm (xc. 6); is it surprising that the correlative truth that death is an awaking out of sleep should meet us in a grand utterance like that before us? Is it not rather an image which mystics in all ages have claimed as their own?—**Thy face . . . thy form.** (Comp. xi. 7, xvi. 11.) On the latter expression, see below; it is only a synonym for 'thy face,' which is the proper expression in the early religious systems of Palestine for that aspect of the Divine Being which was turned towards and capable of being apprehended by man.[2] The Canaanitish Deity was in fact, not a triad, but a duad. The phrase 'the face of God' was retained by 'Moses and the prophets,' being a part of the received language of religious thought in those symbol-loving ages. 'The face of Jehovah' was therefore not a metaphorical phrase for His favour, derived from earthly courts. His 'face' was one aspect of Himself, was therefore personal (comp. xx. 1, Ex. xxxiii. 14, Isa. xxx. 27), and to 'see His face' was to receive from Himself intuitive revela-

[1] *Alttestamentliche Theologie*, ed. 2, pp. 600–2. But I regret the exegetical paradox on p. 601, *n.* 1.

[2] *Prophecies of Isaiah*, notes on Isa. i. 12, xxvi. 8; Ginsburg, *Moabite Stone*, p. 43. That the 'Face' of Jehovah was not a co-ordinate deity with Jehovah, entitles us perhaps to compare the worship of Assur, who 'stands by himself' and 'has no "face" or reflection' (Sayce, *Hibbert Lectures*, pp. 126, 127).

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tions of His nature and character, so far as these concerned Israel and the individual Israelite; it was, in short, to 'know' Him. God as He is 'can no man see and live' (Ex. xxxiii. 20), but with a 'faithful servant' like Moses Jehovah 'will speak *mouth to mouth*,' and '*the form* of Jehovah shall he behold' (Num. xii. 8, R.V.) This softening of God's brightness in condescension to the weakness of Moses is a beautiful feature of the Yahvistic narrative,[1] and helps to prepare the way for the devotional use of the expression 'seeing God's face' in the Book of Psalms. Probably there was a parallel movement in Assyrian religion. In the Annals of Assurbanipal we read thus: 'Istar, who dwells in Arbela, entered, and right and left she was surrounded with glory.' It is indeed only a vision that is granted; but even in Israel the experience of Moses is said to be unique. The parallel is a real one, but stops short where we most want it. That 'God is love,' is a truth which, as Hosea and the psalmists preached it, is peculiar to Israel. And without this truth, 'seeing the face of God' loses the tenderest part of its meaning. The sterner part of course remains; without God's love, His face is as a consuming fire (comp. on xi. 6). Nothing is gained by changing 'with thy form' into 'and thou wilt appear' (De Witt). 'Seeing thy form' expresses the *objective reality* of communion with God. Indeed, I do not myself think that more than this is claimed for Moses in the passage quoted above (Num. xii. 8). The case is different in Ex. xxiv. 10, which appears to state expressly that the sight of the God of Israel vouchsafed to the 'nobles' was such as under ordinary circumstances would have involved their destruction. The solemnity of the moment (we are probably intended to infer) was recognised by this unique privilege.

PSALM XVIII.

Clovis's psalm[2] and John Wesley's (see on *v.* 2). A song of triumph, but with one or two touches of a milder sentiment. The critics agree in eulogising the skill of the poet, from Amyraut (the colleague of Louis Cappel), who calls it 'artis poeticæ luculentissimum specimen,' to Ewald, who points out the symmetry of its divisions. It is true that the poem falls at first sight into two *unequal* parts, viz. *vv.* 2–28 and *vv.* 29–51. But remove the four distichs numbered 25–28, and the number of distichs and tristichs in either part becomes very nearly equal, and approximate symmetry is, so far as I can see, all that the Hebrew poets usually aimed at. The first part is 'Davidic' in virtue of its style; the second may be thought to be so, in spite of the falling off in the style, in virtue of its regal and triumphant tone. An ancient belief in the integrity of the poem is guaranteed by its occurrence, not only in the Psalter, but in our second Book of Samuel (chap. xxii.), where it forms part of an appendix to the history of David. Besides this, Micah, or some prophet in the reign of Manasseh, alludes to *v.* 46 of our psalm (Mic. vii. 17), and Habakkuk in Jehoiakim's reign (if the ode in Hab. iii. be really his) seems to copy *v.* 34 (Hab. iii. 19). The imitative psalm in Jon. ii. is partly based on *vv.* 5–7. A wise man of the post-Exile period copies *v.* 31 (Prov. xxx. 5), and a very late psalmist adopts features from both parts of the psalm (see introd. to Ps. cxliv.) I cannot stay to speak here on the relation of our psalm to Deut. xxxii., with which it has some points of contact; but, without a long argument, I may safely assert that Ps. xviii. as a whole is not later than the reign of Hezekiah, whose reforms may be alluded to in *vv.* 21–

[1] Kautzsch, art. *Theophanie* in Herzog-Plitt's *Realencyclopädie*.
[2] Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, chap. xxxviii. (ed. 1855, iv. 358).

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25, and that it was found in a collection of sacred lyrics, which also contained at any rate Ps. xxxvi. (compare the headings of the two psalms), by the second or final editor[1] of the Books or rather Book of Samuel.

There are some hard problems connected with the higher criticism and the exegesis of this psalm. For instance, is the poem the work of king David himself? Ewald thinks so, and the insertion of it in the closing part of 2 Samuel may seem to some to decide the point. Other critics (with whom I coincide) are content with affirming that the psalm was at least written with an eye to the life of David (comp. Perowne, *Psalms*, i. 6). On this and other points I may hope to speak elsewhere; on the question as to the relation of this recension of the psalm to that in 2 Sam. xxii. I must refer to the critical notes, though a condensed treatment of it is all that will be possible.

2 I will exalt thee, Jehovah my strength,
3 Jehovah my high crag and my fortress and my deliverer,
my God, my rock, whereon I take refuge,
my shield, and my horn of salvation, my sure retreat.
4 I call upon him who is to be praised, upon Jehovah,
and so am I saved from mine enemies.

5 The breakers of Death had come about me,
the rushing streams of perdition had affrighted me,
6 The cords of Sheól had surrounded me,
the snares of Death had surprised me.
7 In my strait I called upon Jehovah,
and cried for help unto my God:
he heard my voice out of his palace,
and my cry came into his ears.

8 Then the earth shook and quaked,
the foundations also of the hills trembled,
and shook violently, because he was wroth.
9 There went up smoke at his nostrils,
and fire out of his mouth devoured,
coals were set aflame therefrom:
10 And he bowed the heavens and came down
with a mass of clouds under his feet.

11 And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly
eagle-like upon the wings of the wind:
12 He made darkness his covert,
round about him as his bower,
cloud-masses, dark with water:
13 From the brightness before him there issued forth
hail-stones and coals of fire.

[1] See that useful book Kleinert's *Abriss der Einleitung zum A. T. in Tabellenform* (1878), p. 14, and compare Bleek and Wellhausen's *Einleitung*, p. 229.

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14 And Jehovah thundered in the heavens,
and the Most High uttered his voice ;
15 And sent out his arrows and scattered them,
flashed forth lightnings in abundance and confounded them;
16 And the channels of the sea were seen,
and the foundations of the world were laid bare,
at thy rebuke, Jehovah,
at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils.

17 He reached out from high heaven and took me,
he drew me out of many waters ;
18 He delivered me from my fierce enemy,
and from my haters, for they were too mighty for me ;
19 They confronted me in the day of my calamity,
but Jehovah became my stay ;
20 And he brought me forth into a broad place,
he rescued me, because he delighted in me.

21 Jehovah dealt with me according to mine innocence,
according to the purity of my hands he recompensed me,
22 Because I kept the ways of Jehovah,
and did not sin myself away from my God ;
23 For all his ordinances were before me,
and I did not put away his statutes from me ;
24 I was also without flaw towards him,
and I kept myself from guiltiness.

25 So Jehovah recompensed me according to my innocence,
according to the purity of my hands in his eyesight.
26 With the loving thou showest thyself loving,
with the flawless man thou showest thyself flawless ;
27 With him that purifies himself thou showest thyself pure,
and with the wayward thou showest thyself wayward.
28 For thou savest lowly people,
but haughty eyes thou dost abase.

29 For *thou* lightest my lamp,
Jehovah my God makes my darkness radiant.
30 For by thee I can break down a fence,
and by my God I can leap over a wall.
31 As for God, his way is flawless,
the promise of Jehovah is well-tried ;
he is a shield unto all that take refuge in him.

32 For who is God save Jehovah?
or who is a Rock save our God?

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33 The God who girt me with strength,
and rendered my way flawless,
34 Who made my feet like hinds' feet,
and set me upon my high places,
35 Who trained my hands to war,
so that mine arms could bend a bow of bronze.

36 Yea, thou gavest me the shield of thy salvation ;
thy right hand held me up,
and thy lowliness made me great.
37 Thou madest for me a broad place to walk in,
that mine ankles did not waver.
38 I pursued mine enemies, and overtook them,
and turned not again till I had consumed them.
39 I dashed them to pieces that they could not rise,
but fell under my feet.

40 For thou didst gird me with strength for war,
thou didst bow down mine assailants under me.
41 Thou madest mine enemies turn their backs unto me,
and them that hated me I extinguished.
42 They cried, but there was none to save ;
unto Jehovah, but he answered them not.
43 I beat them small as the dust before the wind,
I emptied them out as the mire of the streets.

44 Thou didst win for me escape out of the strifes of peoples,
thou didst set me to be head of the nations ;
people whom I knew not did serve me.
45 At the hearing of the ear they were obsequious unto me,
aliens came cringing unto me.
46 The alien folk languished,
and came trembling out of their holds.

47 Jehovah lives, and blessed be my Rock,
and exalted be the God of my salvation ;
48 The God that gave me vengeances,
and subdued peoples under me,
49 That won for me escape from mine enemies,
yea, that set me on high above mine assailants,
that delivered me from the violent man.
50 Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, Jehovah, among the nations,
and make melody unto thy name :
51 Great salvations gives he unto his king,
and shows lovingkindness unto his anointed,
to David and to his seed for evermore.

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2 **I will exalt thee.** Comp. xxx. 2, cxlv. 1, Isa. xxv. 1. The received reading followed by A.V., and perhaps alluded to in Ecclus. xlvii. 8 ('and loved him that made him'), is scarcely consistent with the context. Wesley's fine hymn (based on the German)—

> Thee will I love, my strength, my tower, &c.

shows what a lyric beginning 'I love thee' ought to be. See crit. note.

3 **My high crag,** &c. 'Great rock (or, mountain)'—*ṣaḏḳî rabbî*—is a common title of Assur and Bel in Assyrian. A truly Palestinian image (cf. on *v.* 32).

5 'The waters of the underworld had broken in upon me.' He means the great river whose waters bathe the foundations of the world, and which bounds the vast city of the dead on every side.—— **Breakers of Death** (so 2 Sam. xxii. 5) is evidently the true reading; 'cords (of)' is a scribe's error (see opening of *v.* 6). 'Death' is a synonym for Sheól (the city of the dead), which was placed underneath the sea (cf. Job xxvi. 5, 6, Jon. ii. 3, 5, 6). Another name is **rushing streams of perdition** (Heb. *beliyya'al*), i.e. such as endangered my life. Sept., χείμαρροι ἀνομίας. But χείμαρροι is inappropriate in this connexion, and though 'Belial' (*beliyya'al*) usually (e.g. ci. 3) means that degree of evil which is without any 'soul of goodness,' it may also mean deadly ruin (as xli. 9). The word being parallel to Death and Sheól, the latter sense is preferable. Observe that the road is open to the personification of deadly ruin or perdition (Milton's word for Abaddon in lxxxviii. 12) as a prince of the demons; see 2 Cor. vi. 15, 16, where 'Christ' is parallel to 'light' as 'Belial' to 'darkness.' Compare Milton—

> . . . hurl'd headlong down
> To bottomless Perdition, there to dwell.

(*P. L.*, i. 45–47); also his phrase 'baleful streams' (*ibid.*, ii. 576), a possible alternative rendering

6 Death or Sheól (i.e. the prince of the underworld) is imagined as a hunter with cords and snares (cf. on xci. 3).

7 **Out of his palace,** i.e. the heavenly dwelling of Jehovah (see on xi. 4).——**Came into his ears.** So 2 Sam. xxii. 7. The additional words in the text are evidently a marginal explanation.

8 In 2 Sam. we read 'the foundations of the heavens,' but this unique (Job xxvi. 11 has 'the *pillars* of heaven') phrase is improbable in a description full of conventional expressions. A proof of the importance of the twofold form of the text.

9–13 Comp. l. 3, Isa. xxix. 6, lxiv. 1, and especially Ex. xix. 16, xx. 18. Let us imitate the frank simplicity of the writers, and enjoy this imaginative description. Our own anthropomorphism differs from that of the psalmist, but it is none the less real. We are therefore equally well able to analyse and to sympathise with his anthropomorphic language, and the sympathy must never be disjoined from the analysis. The description now before us is clearly based on traditional mythic pictures of the Heaven-god (heaven is in fact in *v.* 7 called Jehovah's 'palace'). When compared with parallel passages in the Old Testament and elsewhere, it shows that, in times still earlier than the psalmist's, the phenomena of the sky, now bright and cheerful, now dark and threatening, were ascribed to the action of mythic beings.[1] In short, this whole passage is a reflexion of an older mythology, and it is to this reflexion that the epic tinge which has been noticed in our psalm (see above) is due. If Israel had not been destined to be the vehicle of a spiritual revelation, there is no reason why it should not have produced a genuine epic poem.—— **Upon a cherub.** We meet else-

[1] See Steinthal, 'The Legend of Samson,' sect. 10 (Goldziher's *Hebrew Mythology*, p. 420, &c.)

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where with 'cherubim' (except indeed in Ezek. xxviii. 13-16), and Sept. gives ἐπὶ Χερουβίμ here. To the Hebrew poets they represent the more awful forces of nature, and the 'cherub' in this passage may almost be taken as an equivalent for the storm-cloud. The psalmist remembers the original meaning of the word just as the poet of the *Odyssey* (xx. 66, 77) still describes the mythic Harpies as θύελλαι. The root-meaning of 'cherub' seems to be, not 'covering' (as Goldziher thought), but 'greatness, power.'[1] See on xxii. 4. ——**And did fly eagle-like.** The Heb. has two verbs, one of which is the simple word for 'flying,' the other describes the peculiar hovering motion of birds of prey (Deut. xxviii. 49, Jer. xlviii. 40, xlix. 22). The 'cherub' was probably an eagle-winged animal, like the Assyrian steer-god, and imagined as the bearer as well as the attendant of the Deity. Comp. the 'throne-bearers' in the Assyrian Flood-story.[2] But apart from this, the eagle's wings formed part of the constant religious symbolism of the poets (e.g. Deut. xxxii. 11, Ps. xci. 4).——**On the wings of the wind.** (Cf. Isa. xix. 1, but not Ps. lxviii. 34.) This may be a mythic phrase = 'on a cherub;' if so, the storm-wind will be meant. The Assyrian star-god is addressed (once) as 'begotten by the god Zu' (the divine storm-bird); see *Isaiah*, ii. 296. Or perhaps the phrase before us may merely mean 'swiftly as the wind;' there is a second mythology of the imagination.—— **Cloud-masses,** &c. A word for word rendering would fail to express the sense. See on lxxvii. 18. ——**From the brightness before him,** &c. The 'brightness' is that of Jehovah's glory (as Ezek. x. 4), from which lightnings and hail 'issue forth' (with an impetus as of a flood or a hostile force, Isa. viii. 8, Job xiii. 11, &c.) On the much-disputed text of this and the next verse see crit. note.

14, 15 The thunder is, semi-mythically, God's voice; hence Jehovah is said to 'roar.' 'After it (the lightning) a voice roars' (Job xxxvii. 4). So Ps. xxix. The lightnings are His arrows, as lxxvii. 18 and (in the parallel psalm of Habakkuk) Hab. iii. 9, 11.——**The Most High.** An ancient title suggesting at once God's exaltedness and His supremacy over the forces of the universe. See on vii. 18.

16 The effect of the earthquake (*v.* 8) on the seas is mentioned out of its place to smooth the transition to the figurative 'many waters.' Cf. civ. 7.——**The channels of the sea.** A vigorous expression found in 2 Sam., and rightly preferred by Street (1790), Ewald, Hitzig, Delitzsch, &c., to the Psalter-reading.

17 **He reached out,** &c.; comp. lvii. 4. 'The height' = heaven, as often, e.g. xciii. 4, Isa. xxxiii. 5, and especially Mic. vi. 6 ('the God of the height'). —— **He drew me,** &c. Luther paraphrases strikingly, 'He made a Moses of me,' since the word rendered 'drew out' (*māshā*) only occurs again in Ex. ii. 10. For this we might compare a plausible rendering of Isa. lxiii. 11 *a*, and group this supposed allusion with other possible allusions in the context to passages in Exodus. But my judgment does not go with it. ——**Many waters.** See introd., and comp. *v.* 5. The same image in lxix. 2, 3 and elsewhere.

21 **Jehovah dealt with me,** &c. Legal righteousness is meant; see on vii. 9, xvii. 3, 4. If the view maintained in introd. be correct, the psalmist looks forward to a 'son (or, sons) of David,' in whom this description shall be verified. Yet he would hardly have written thus unless the actual king and people had made some visible progress towards 'righteousness.'

[1] Comp. Goldziher, *Hebrew Mythology*, pp. 196, 197; Lenormant, *Les origines*, &c. i. 118; Friedrich Delitzsch, *Wo lag das Paradies?* p. 115, and my own *Isaiah*, ii. 296-99.

[2] Ass. *guzalû*; see Haupt in Schrader's *K. A. T.*, p. 500.

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Hezekiah's reformation would be such a step in advance. It fell indeed 'far short of giving full expression to the spirituality of prophetic teaching,'[1] but, as the first great visible result of prophetic activity in Judah, a fervent disciple of Isaiah may well have overrated. But, while overrating it, by faith he dimly imagined an obedience far more complete and flawless (*vv.* 23, 24). Delitzsch considers *vv.* 21–25 to be quite in harmony with David's language in 1 Sam. xxvi. 23*a*, and the prophetic utterance respecting David in 1 Kings xiv. 8 (comp. 1 Kings xv. 5, xi. 4). But though this prophetic utterance contains a kernel of truth, yet in form it is an exaggeration, such as was natural to one who lived and wrote not earlier than the 'finding' of Deuteronomy. As to the 'language of David,' who shall guarantee that it was handed down at all by tradition?

22 **Sin myself away from my God.** One of those 'brief and suggestive phrases' spoken of by Müller in *Hebrew Syntax*, § 49, 1. I justify the English by 'drinking himself drunk' (1 Kings xvi. 9, A.V.), i.e. 'bringing himself by drinking into a state of drunkenness.' Or we might render, 'tear myself by sin from my God.'

23 **Were before me . . . I did not put.** Delitzsch, 'are before me . . . I do not put.' But this is not in harmony with his and my view of the context. It involves carrying the present tense throughout *vv.* 21–27 (so De Witt), and obscuring the whole picture. After the 'four central distichs,' however (see introd.), the present is natural.

24 **From guiltiness.** 'From mine iniquity' is a misleading rendering, as suggesting a reference to 'indwelling corruption' (so Hengst.). Geier paraphrases well, 'ne peccatum aliquod fieret meum.'

26 **With the loving,** &c. An impressive statement of the eternal tragedy of history (cf. 1 Sam. ii. 30, Prov. iii. 34). It implies the great idea of the covenant, which is in fact the main principle of Jehovah's government, so that another psalmist can say that His loving-kindness and truth are for such as keep His covenant (xxv. 10). The epithet 'loving' or 'kindly' (see on xii. 2) is only once again applied to Jehovah (cxlv. 17).

27 **Showest thyself pure.** Job complains of God for being hostile to him in secret (x. 13)—in short, not being 'pure' (in heart).——**With the wayward.** So the Wycliffite version of 1388 (Lat. *cum perverso*). God's 'waywardness' may be illustrated by Isa. xxviii. 21; it is his 'strange work.' His delight is to do good; His 'righteousness' is to bless those who are 'upright' towards Him; but 'if ye will walk contrary unto me, then will I also walk contrary unto you' (Lev. xxvi. 23 24).

28 **Lowly people.** See on ix. 13, and comp. Zeph. iii. 12.

31 **His way is flawless.** So 'his work is flawless' in the great historical psalm called the Song of Moses (Deut. xxxii. 4).——**The promise,** &c. This and the next line recur in Prov. xxx. 5 (see introd.); comp. also xii. 7 (note).

32 **Who is God . . .** For 'God' 2 Sam. has El; the psalter, Eloah. The latter is the singular implied in the plural Elohim, and seems to have been revived,[2] or virtually formed, by the poets of the eighth century (see Deut. xxxii. 15, 17); it is specially frequent in the literature of the Chaldæan and later periods; see Hab. i. 11, Isa. xliv. 8 (the two isolated passages of pure prophecy), Hab. iii. 3,[3] Prov. xxx. 5, Job (*passim*), Dan. xi. 37–39 (four times), Neh. ix. 17, Ps. l. 22, cxiv. 7, cxxxix. 19. The question,

[1] Robertson Smith, *The Prophets of Israel*, p. 364.

[2] Comp. Ewald, *Lehrbuch d. hebr. Sprache*, § 178 *b*; *Jahrbücher der bibl. Wiss.*, x. 10, *n.* 3.

[3] I separate this passage from Hab. i. 11 as occurring in a poetical passage, and in one moreover which may, like the 'song of Hezekiah,' have been inserted long after the time of the chief writer of the book.

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'Who is God,' &c., reminds us of 1 Sam. ii. 2, 2 Sam. vii. 22. Without denying the existence of the so-called gods (comp. Deut. xxxii. 17), it asserts that none is possessed of divine power. Comp. Baudissin, *Studien zur semit. Religionsgeschichte*, i. 72.——**A Rock.** So *v.* 47. An old phrase for God, more poetical than El (the strong one); comp. Deut. xxxii. (six times), Isa. xvii. 10, xxx. 29, xliv. 8. It reminds the student of the poor natural substratum of the spiritual religion of Israel, which must have included a 'fetishistic' stone-worship.

33 **My way,** i.e. my career. ——**Flawless,** i.e. unspoiled by sins or blunders.

34 This verse is found again, with two variations, in Hab. iii. 19. The latter part nearly agrees with Deut. xxxii. 13 *a*; but the phraseology is familiar (see Am. iv. 13, Mic. i. 3, Isa. lviii. 14), so that there need not be indebtedness on either side.——**Like hinds' feet.** Swiftness was a heroic quality (2 Sam. i. 23, ii. 18, 1 Chron. xii. 8; comp. on xix. 6).——**My high places,** i.e. those which I claim as mine by right, and which are the bulwarks of my power.

36 **Thy lowliness,** i.e. thy fellow-feeling with the lowly. The phrase is remarkable as applied to God, but the idea is the same as in cxiii. 5, 6, Isa. lvii. 15. Comp. Zech. ix. 9, where the ideal or Messianic king is described as not only a great conqueror, but 'lowly' (is there an allusion to this in Matt. xi. 29?). In both passages there is an evident reference to the 'lowly' people whom Jehovah or His anointed delivers (comp. *v.* 28). A.V. gives the fine paraphrase 'thy gentleness;' comp. Dante's use of 'umile' in the sense of 'sweet' or 'gentle' (*Vita Nuova*, xxviii.; *Canzoniere*, ii. 1, 2). But this makes an insufficient contrast with 'made me great.' 2 Sam. has another reading—'thine answer' (viz. to prayer).

42 **Unto Jehovah.** Suggesting that the foes are Israelites. But this detail may be merely picturesque.

43 **I emptied them out.** 2 Sam. has, 'I trode them fine.'—— **As the mire of the streets.** 'Dust' and 'mire' are again parallel in Zech. ix. 3. The sun-dried bricks of Eastern houses 'make the streets dusty when there is wind, and dirty when there is rain.' 'Upon a violent rain at Damascus,' says Maundrell, 'the whole city becomes, by the washing of the houses, as it were a quagmire.'[1]

44 **Strifes of peoples.** See crit. note. The text has, 'strifes of the people' (or, as 2 Sam., 'of my people'), which might refer to civil wars (comp. *v.* 49); but the parallelism is against this.

51 The concluding tristich may well be a liturgical addition, although it agrees in rhythm with the rest of the psalm.

PSALM XIX.

TWO of the distichs of part i. of this psalm are incomplete; but the sense is unaffected. *Vv.* 2-7 consist of 26 (or, shall we say, 28) lines, each with four tones; *vv.* 8-15 of fourteen five-toned lines. This variety of rhythm of itself suggests a diversity of origin for the two parts.'[2] *Vv.* 2-7 have probably been taken from a longer psalm, since *v.* 6 does not form a suitable close. It is only by an afterthought that the two parts of the psalm have been brought into relation, the sun being regarded as a type of the law of God. (Comp. Kant's deep saying on the two great themes of perennial wonder, the starry sky and the moral law.) The first part is

[1] Harmer, *Observations on Divers Passages of Scripture* (1776), vol. i. p. 176.

[2] We shall meet with this phenomenon repeatedly. So in Assyrio-Babylonian hymnology, poems originally separate were joined together by editors.

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obviously the finer; but the second shows a great development of the conscience; as St. Paul says, *διὰ νόμου ἐπίγνωσις ἁμαρτίας* (Rom. iii. 20). Clearly the Scriptures are now the great source of spiritual life (comp. Ps. i., cxix., and see on xii. 7); notice the six different designations given to them. *Regenerate Israel* began to find in these books, or in this book, his truest home. Pressure from without contributed to this result, for (see *v.* 14) it was a time of great danger from heathenism.

2 The heavens recount the glory of God,
and the firmament declares his handiwork.
3 Day unto day is a well-spring of speech,
and night unto night shows forth knowledge;
4 Their voice has gone out through the whole earth,
and their words unto the end of the world;

* * * * *

for the sun has he set a pavilion in them;
6 And he is like a bridegroom going forth from his chamber,
and rejoices hero-like to speed on his path;
7 From one end of the heavens is his going forth,
and his circuit unto the ends thereof,

* * * * *

and there is nothing hidden from his heat.

(Fragment of another Psalm.)

8 The law of Jehovah is perfect,|restoring the soul,
the testimony of Jehovah is faithful,|making wise the simple;
9 The behests of Jehovah are right,|rejoicing the heart;
the commandment of Jehovah is pure,|enlightening the eyes;
10 The fear of Jehovah is pure,|abiding for ever;
the ordinances of Jehovah are truthful,|and righteous altogether.
11 More to be desired are they than gold,|yea, than much fine gold,
sweeter also than honey|or the droppings of the comb.

12 Moreover thy servant gets warning by them;|in the observance of them is great reward.
13 Lapses—who discerns them?|from unknown (faults) absolve thou me.
14 Hold back thy servant also from the proud,|let them not rule over me:
then shall I be blameless,|and absolved from great transgression.
15 Accepted be the words of my mouth|and the musing of my heart before thee, Jehovah, continually,|my rock and my redeemer.

2 The divine name here used is El, i.e. God outside his relations to Israel, God the Strong One. The wonders of the sky especially engaged the attention of the author or authors of Job; see the question in Job xxxvii. 18. Did our psalmist live equally late?

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3 **Day unto day,** &c. Every day the heavens renew their testimony to God's glory. This is the sense. The form, however, is semi-mythical. The days were regarded in primitive times as having an independent, quasi-personal existence (Job iii. 1–10). Comp. Emerson—

Daughters of Time, the hypocritic Days.

3–5 A fourth verse is given in the Hebrew text, which is variously rendered, 'It is not a speech, neither are they words, the voice whereof cannot be heard' (so Sept., Targ., Vulg., followed by Vitringa, Hitzig, and Delitzsch), and 'Without speech and without words; not heard is their voice' (Hengst., Hupfeld, Ewald, Perowne, Kay, De Witt). The latter rendering is the more plausible,' but involves a direct contradiction of *v.* 2 ('speech without speech'). But no explanation removes the prosaic character of the distich, which has this further peculiarity, that it is not composed of regular four-toned lines like the rest of the psalm. It must be a gloss, i.e. a marginal note for dull readers which has intruded into the text. Of course, though poorly expressed, it is in substance correct. Comp. Plutarch, *On Isis and Osiris*, c. lxxv., 'For the Divine Reason stands not in need of voice, but walking along a silent path and rule, guides mortal affairs according to justice.' It also confirms the reading 'their voice' in *v.* 5. How much the brilliant psalm-fragment gains by its omission! ——**Their voice,** i.e. either that of the heavens, or of day and night. Louis Cappel's sharp-sighted emendation. The text-reading is generally rendered, 'Their line,' i.e. their dominion (Hengst., Hupfeld, Delitzsch); but the older interpretation (Sept., Symm., Jerome) is 'their sound,' a paraphrase upon the (questionable) literal rendering 'their string:' comp. τόνος. So Ewald. Hitzig, on the other hand, 'They span the whole earth with a chain of praise.' This is better than the 'Œolian harp theory,' but lacks proof. On St. Paul's Haggadic use of this verse, see Briggs, *Biblical Study*, p. 316. ——**In them,** i.e in the heavens. Hitzig, less probably, 'where' (i.e. at the end of the world; the plural pronoun, as in Isa. xxx. 6, to express the neuter). If the psalmist were recording a myth, he would place the sun's tent, not in heaven, but in the underworld. Comp. introd. to Ps. xxiv.

6 **Like a bridegroom.** A primitive solar myth has died down into a metaphor (see on cxxxix. 9). Comp. *Rig Veda*, ix. 86, 32 (of the setting sun), 'The husband of the wives approaches the end.'[1] A bridegroom is the symbol of youthful vigour; comp. *Pirké Aboth*, v. 21 (Strack, p. 45), 'He who is eighteen years old is (ripe) for the *khuppah*.' The sun is masculine in Hebrew (generally), Aramaic, and Assyrian, feminine in Arabic. —— **From his chamber.** Strictly, 'from his alcove' (not 'canopy,' as De Witt, in accordance with the later Jewish custom). From Joel ii. 16 we may infer that the *khuppah* (rendered 'alcove,' and I say, not on etymological grounds) was a part of the nuptial chamber curtained off for the bride, and probably a survival of the wife's separate tent[2] (comp. Gen. xxiv. 67). —— **Hero-like,** &c. Another mythic corruption—that of the sun as a warrior (comp. again introd. to Ps. xxiv.) His 'swiftness' reminds us of the picture of the ideal warrior in xviii. 34; 'horses of the sun' (reminding us of Aryan mythologies) are mentioned in 2 Kings xxiii. 11. See *Paradise Lost*, vii. 372, where the myth is still further attenuated.

8 **The law of Jehovah,** i.e. probably the Pentateuch, and the prophetico-historical and strictly prophetic writings (see on i. 2). Observe that at this point Jehovah

[1] Max Müller, *Lectures on the Science of Language*, ii. 513.
[2] Robertson Smith, *Kinship in Arabia*, p. 168.

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(Yahvè) takes the place of El (*v.* 1). —**Restoring the soul**; see on xxiii. 3.

10 **The fear of Jehovah,** i.e. the religion regulated by the sacred books. The context obliges us so to define it.——**Pure** (comp. xii. 7), i.e. without the moral defilements of all merely natural religions.——**Truthful,** because based on the *eternal* laws of morality.——**Righteous altogether.** Is this an echo of Deut. iv. 8, or is the reverse the case?

12 **Thy servant,** i.e. either Israel (comp. Jer. xxx. 10, xlvi. 27, 28, 'my servant Jacob,' and 'the Second Isaiah') or a representative Israelite. So xxvii. 9, xxxi. 17, lxix. 18, lxxxvi. 2, 16, lxxxix. 40, cxvi. 16, cxix. 125, cxliii. 12.

13 **Lapses,** i.e. errors due to ignorance or inattention (Lev. iv. 5, Num. xv. 22). Note the εὐλάβεια, the scrupulous conscientiousness, of the writer, a characteristic in which the Jew more reminds us of the Roman than of the Greek.

14 **Hold back . . . from the proud.** Less probably (see crit. note), 'from presumptuous (sins),' called 'sins with a high hand' in Num. xv. 30. The difficulties in keeping the Law were of two kinds. Within, there was the fear of one's own infirmities, a fear intensified by the manifoldness of the precepts of the Law. Without, there was the fear of the 'proud men,' so often mentioned in Ps. cxix., viz. the paganising upper classes. We cannot be sure whether the writer actually lived under heathen rule (comp. cxix. 133–4, cxxv. 3).——**Great transgression,** or, 'the great revolt' (viz. to heathenism).

PSALM XX.

THIS, like its companion-psalm, seems intended for liturgical use. The people had been called together to take part in a sacrifice, on the occasion of the king's going forth to battle. *Vv.* 2–6 may be assigned to the people, *vv.* 7–9 to some priest or prophet who declares God's acceptance of the sacrifice, and *v.* 10 again to the people (as chorus). These are Ewald's very probable inferences. At this point I must leave him: I do not see why king Asa should be referred to. The style is simple and flowing; the ideas popular but pure from superstition. Israel is inferior in physical strength to its enemy, but is compensated by its faith.

2 Jehovah answer thee in the day of trouble;
the name of the God of Jacob be thy sure retreat;
3 Send thee help from the sanctuary,
and uphold thee from out of Zion;
4 Remember all thine offerings,
and find thy burnt sacrifice fat;
5 Grant thee according to thy heart,
and fulfil all thy purpose!
6 We would shout for joy at thy salvation,
and exult for the name of our God;
Jehovah fulfil all thy petitions!

7 Now am I sure that Jehovah saveth his anointed,
he will answer him from his holy heaven
with the mighty saving acts of his right hand.
8 Some (boast) of chariots, and some of horses,
but we will boast of the name of our God.

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9 They must stoop and fall,
whilst we arise and stand erect.
10 O Jehovah, save the king,
and answer us when we call.

2 **The name,** &c. Precisely as Prov. xviii. 10. The 'Name of Jehovah' is one of those symbolic phrases which are capable of indefinite expansion. To many of the people it may have had a very simple meaning (victory, for instance; see *v.* 6); to the disciples of the prophets its signification was complex and deep (see on Isa. xxvi. 8, xxx. 27, lxiii. 9), in all which passages Jehovah and Jehovah's Name are all but synonymous.

4 **Find . . . fat,** i.e. accept. Comp. Gen. viii. 21, 'And Jehovah smelled a sweet savour.'

6 **At thy salvation,** i.e. at thy success in warfare (as 2 Sam. xix. 2). Victory is counted upon as the gift of Jehovah (see on iii. 3).—— **Exult.** Comp. xxi. 2. The text-reading is supposed to mean 'wave the banner;' but see crit. note.

7 **Now am I sure,** &c. A sacrifice has probably just been offered to make the war a 'holy war' (see 1 Sam. xiii. 9, and comp. my note on Isa. xiii. 3).

8 **Some (boast),** &c. The heathen enemy is probably referred to; see Isa. xxxvi. 8, xxxvii. 24, and cf. Isa. xxxi. 1, Deut. xvii. 16.

9 **They must stoop,** &c. In the Hebrew, the perfect of prophetic confidence. It is evidently implied that Israel is now weak (comp. cxlvi. 9).

10 **Save the king.** 'Save' = give victory. The absolute use of 'the king' for God in the received text is without parallel. The correction is dictated by the rhythm (the lines are four-toned); it involves a further correction in line 2 ('and answer').

PSALM XXI.

ANOTHER liturgical hymn; *vv.* 2–8 may be assigned to the people, *vv.* 9–13 to a priest, and *v.* 14 again to the people (Ewald). We might naturally infer from *vv.* 2 and 3 (comp. xx. 6, 5) that this psalm commemorates the victory prayed for in Ps. xx.; *vv.* 4, 5 equally suggest a coronation-feast or birthday; lastly, *vv.* 9–14 seem prompted by the expectation of renewed hostilities. It is not accurate, therefore, to describe our psalm as a pæan for the victory prayed for in Ps. xx., nor yet as a poem on the royal birthday (Ewald). The tone adopted towards the king reminds us of expressions in the Assyrian royal psalms, e.g. 'Distant days, everlasting years, a strong weapon, a long life, many days of honour, supremacy among the kings, grant to the king, the Lord, who made this offering to his gods.'[1] It was natural, as long as the O.T. was studied without reference to its roots in Orientalism, to think that *vv.* 5–7 could only be explained of the Messiah of the future (see Rashi and Kimchi); but the exalted language of Hebrew writers with reference to their kings is now perfectly explicable by the popular belief in kings as reflections of the divinity (cf. 'Let the king live for ever'). To this view we are led by a comparison of the still more exalted language of Assyrian and Egyptian writers. I do not say that the gulf between the king and his subjects was as great in the land of Israel as in Egypt or even in Assyria; but the distinction existed, though in a less marked form. These remarks of course also apply to Ps. xlv. (where see notes). Has the psalm a meaning for Christians? Yes. That all blessings come from above, and that evil must sooner or later be de-

[1] *Die Höllenfahrt der Istar*, p. 73; comp. Sayce, *Hibbert Lectures*, pp. 35–67.

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stroyed, are Christian ideas; and besides this, the peculiar Orientalisms of *vv.* 5, 6 furnished the moulds in which the highest and most distinctively Christian sentiment naturally ran at the time when Christian phraseology was fixed. The stern predictions in *vv.* 9–11 belong of course to a lower level of feeling than that on which the heroes of revealed religion, so far as they are true to their message, move.

2 Jehovah! for thy strength the king is glad;
and for thy salvation how greatly doth he exult!
3 The desire of his heart hast thou given him,
and the request of his lips hast thou not withheld.

4 For thou meetest him with richest blessings,
thou settest on his head a crown of fine gold.
5 He asked life of thee—thou gavest it him,
even length of days for ever and ever.

6 His honour is great through thy salvation,
glory and grandeur thou layest upon him.
7 For thou makest him most blessed for ever,
thou cheerest him with joy near thy face.

8 For the king trusts in Jehovah,
and through the lovingkindness of the Most High he shall remain unmoved.
9 Thy hand shall reach all thine enemies,
thy right hand shall reach them that hate thee.

10 Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven when thou showest thy face,
Jehovah shall swallow them up in his wrath, and fire shall devour them:
11 Their fruit shalt thou destroy from the earth,
and their seed from among the children of men.

12 For though they cause evil to impend over thee,
and plan a wicked device—they will perform nothing;
13 For thou wilt make them turn their backs,
with thy bowstrings thou wilt aim against their faces.

14 Exalt thyself, Jehovah, in thy strength;
we will sing and make melody to thy might.

2 **For thy strength,** i.e. for thy protection (lxxxvi. 16).

4*b*, 5 Some would explain *v.* 4*b* by 2 Sam. xii. 30, and *v.* 5 by Isa. xxxviii. 5. How prosaic! On *v.* 5, see the quotation above; on *v.* 4*b* (where the king's own crown is meant), cf. line 2 of the inscription of Yehawmelek, king of Gebal, 'us (or, me) whom the lady the Baalath of Gebal hath set, a royal race, over Gebal.'—**For ever and ever.** Comp. xlv. 3, lxi. 7. This is of course not an assertion of non-mortality. We might even weaken it into 'long life.' But probably a special 'golden

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mansion'[1] was believed to be in store for worthy kings in heaven (called in Schrader's royal psalm 'the land of the silver sky'[2]); see my note on Isa. xiv. 13, 14. Besides the quotation in introduction and the phrase 'let the king live for ever' (Dan. ii. 4), comp. *l.* 9 of Yehawmelek's inscription, 'May she preserve his life, may she lengthen his days and his years over Gebal, for he is a just king.' 'Æternitas' too was a title of the Roman emperors. 'Rogatus per æternitatem tuam, ut,' &c., Plin. *Ep.* x. 87 (to Trajan).

6 The royal majesty is described as a reflexion of the divine (see civ. 1, 31). So xlv. 4.

7 **Most blessed.** Lit., 'blessings' (comp. Isa. xxvi. 18), i.e., as in J. Montgomery's hymn, 'all-blessing and all-blessed.'——**Near thy face.** So cxl. 15. The king is regarded as seated at Jehovah's right hand, where is 'fulness of joys' (xvi. 11).

9–13 The king is addressed (not Jehovah, as Hupfeld); see especially *vv.* 8 and 10. Glowing but unpurified anticipations, which contrast with the calm and dignified tone of xx. 2, 3.

10 **When thou showest thy face.** Lit., 'at the time of thy face.' 'Face' here is a symbolic or semi-mythic phrase for 'divine manifestation' (whether for good, see on xvii. 15, or for evil, see on ix. 4). The actions of the king are identified with those of the heavenly king (see next line).——**Swallow them up,** i.e. make them as though they had not been. Comp. Isa. iii. 12, xxv. 7, 8.

11 **Their fruit.** Comp. the last line of the inscription of Eshmunazar, king of Sidon, 'and the man shall be slain and his seed for ever.'

14 **Exalt thyself,** i.e. exercise thy supernatural power and authority (as xlvi. 11, lvii.)

PSALM XXII.

An appeal for help from the depths of affliction, followed by a joyous announcement of the answer vouchsafed, and prophecies of its far-reaching effects, in which all nations, and (in what sense, will have to be examined) even the departed, shall share. An appeal, but *from whom*? To be consistent I ought to reserve my answer for another place; but most of my readers will agree that Ps. xxii. is an exceptional psalm. From whom, then, does the appeal come? From some one of those great men who tower like mountain-peaks above the low average attainments of Israel—from David, Jeremiah, or even the Christian Messiah Himself? David? The David of history? or even (if I may say so) the writer of Ps. xviii.? But is there anyone so prosaic as to maintain that any scene in the great king's life explains and justifies such terrors and such complaints? Jeremiah (so Hitzig), or at least 'an eminent leader of the theocratic church' (so Orelli[3])? But we must look at the psalm as a whole, and of the latter part Jeremiah himself would have been the first to declare that it soared

[1] Comp. Theocritus, xvii. 15, 16 (Lang), 'Him (Philadelphus) hath the Father stablished in the same honour as the blessed immortals, and for him a golden mansion in the house of Zeus is builded.' Mr. Lang well remarks that there is a strong tinge of Egyptian sentiment in this Greek hymn.

[2] The bright, changeless region of the upper heaven is of course meant. Comp. Sayce, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 190.

[3] Orelli's solution of the problem of authorship (*Old Testament Prophecy*, p. 174) is not very different from Hitzig's. But we have a right to ask who this 'eminent leader, banished or a prisoner,' of the 'next age' (to David) can have been. The case is very different from that of the second part of Isaiah. We know next to nothing of the history and biography of the Exile-period, and cannot be bound to suggest a name for the author of that prophecy. But we know much of the 'leaders' of the germinal Church in the regal period, and cannot allow Orelli to put us off so easily. He virtually almost assumes a Christophany before Christ.

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far above his spiritual atmosphere. That the psalmist was influenced by Jeremiah is a more reasonable inference from parallelisms of expression than that he was Jeremiah himself. The Christian Messiah? Many parts truly are applicable to Jesus, as few perhaps will deny, but Theodore of Mopsuestia and Calvin have already pointed out[1] how inapplicable are some of the most striking expressions. David and Christ conjointly? This is the so-called typical-Messianic theory, which dates from the same Theodore (see on *v.* 2), and has been held by many from Calvin and Amyraud to Tholuck, Stier, and Delitzsch. Nothing but the fear of lowering the credit of the New Testament (a book so little understood by those who undervalue Jewish lore) could have suggested a view so subversive of the laws of psychology. 'How David could extend his own consciousness to that of his offspring, cannot be conceived, without confusion of the soul-life and destruction of personal identity.'[2]

Is it then a personification of the exiled Jewish people that we have before us? So De Wette (originally), following Rashi and Kimchi. But the sufferer, though he speaks partly as the mouthpiece of Israel (see on *v.* 5), yet distinguishes himself from the people to which he belongs (*vv.* 23, 24, 26), and the entire description is in the highest degree individualised. More defensible is the view of Olshausen, who explains the psalm as a record of the religious differences of the Maccabean age (comp. *v.* 9 with lv. 23). And certainly that the religious differences of the Exile or post-Exile period (or both) have contributed ideas to the mental stock of the psalmist, must at any rate be acknowledged. The nobler spirits of the Jewish people did, from the Exile onwards, form a church within the nation, and did both strengthen and justify the belief in an ideal Israel of the future. But, as the Israel of the past, so the greater Israel of the future needed a Moses (comp. Isa. lxiii. 11). Here I must check my pen, not to repeat what I have said in Essays II. and V. of *The Prophecies of Isaiah*, vol. ii. (ed. 3).

To be brief. Ps. xxii. is most probably a description, under the form of a dramatic monologue, of the ideal Israelite, called by a kindred writer 'the covenant of the people,' and 'the light of the nations' (Isa. xlii. 7), who shall rise out of the provisional church-nation, and, identifying himself with it, lead it on to spiritual victory. This view includes the essence at least of Olshausen's, but goes beyond it. The speaker is an individual who might also be surnamed 'Israel,' for he is the flower of Israel. The foes who have reduced him to such straits are not merely 'those of his own household' (comp. lxix. 9), but the heathen as well (see on *vv.* 7, 22). His victory will be the final reunion of the human race. Ewald is on the road to this view when he gives up the 'collective' theory of the 'Servant of Yahvè' in Isa. liii., and substitutes a view which, to be consistent, he should have extended to Ps. xxii.[3] The 'Servant,' as explained by him, on the analogy of the 'Wisdom' of Prov. viii., is a poetical impersonation (suggested, however, by the life and death of some martyr-prophet) of the nobler and spiritually more aspiring side of Israel's character. This seems too weak an explanation, whether of the 'Servant' or of the speaker of Ps. xxii. The ancient Orientals were ideal-realists, and did not, with an English poet, seek in poetry 'an ever surer and surer stay' than the facts

[1] Kihn, *Theodor von Mopsuestia*, p. 161; Calvin, *Comm.*, on *v.* 2.

[2] Hengstenberg, *Commentary on the Psalms*, E. T., i. 363.

[3] In his work on the Psalms, Ewald describes our psalmist as 'presumably a very important person,' who lived at the very beginning of the Exile, before the destruction of the Temple, and whose fearless confession of his faith drew upon him the most bitter persecution. Though in danger of death he 'painfully rescues himself from despair,' and believes in spite of appearances that he will not only himself be delivered but that wondrous consequences will proceed from his deliverance.

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of religion. A Hebrew writer, not less (comp. Renouf's *Hibbert Lectures*) than an Egyptian, believed in the fact of the supersensible life of ideals like Wisdom and the national Genius. When, therefore, a psalmist or a prophet, in the circumstances of the Babylonian period, portrays this 'Genius' in the colours of human life, is it not reasonable to go further than Ewald, and see a presentiment of an 'Israelite indeed,' in word and in act, in life and in death, rivalling and surpassing the Israel and Moses of antiquity? This view enables us to combine the elements of truth in other solutions of the problem. I do not, however, attempt even an imperfect criticism of Christian and Jewish interpretations of this and similar psalms, because this would interfere with that immediateness of impression which it is my perhaps too bold hope to produce in the reader. But the presentiment of an ideal Israelite and second Moses is not the only spiritual acquisition of this unnamed writer. As the Jewish scholar Castelli has well pointed out, the psalmist's great idea of the denationalising of religion is justification enough for calling the psalm Messianic (*Il Messia*, p. 69).

It is important to compare Ps. xxii. with other similar psalms, some of which may be adequately explained as utterances of pious Israel, while others (as xxxv., I hesitate to add lxix.) seem to have a fuller significance. In general, too, the parallel passages referred to should be carefully studied in reading this psalm. We are evidently in the midst of saintly and unambitious writers, deeply exercised by the ways of God with their nation, and zealous and admiring students of Israel's best religious literature. The date I may at present leave open; readers of vol. ii. of *Isaiah* will, however, divine my opinion and its grounds. The poem falls almost entirely into strophes of eight lines of trimeters. If the text were free from corruption (see crit. notes), we might be able to carry this division all through the psalm.

2 My God, my God, [hearken unto me;]
why hast thou forsaken me?
far off [art thou] from my salvation,
from the words in which I roar, my God.
3 I cry by day, and thou answerest not,
by night also, and get no respite:
4 But thou art the Holy One,
enthroned upon the praises of Israel.

5 In thee did our fathers trust,
they trusted, and thou didst deliver them;
6 Unto thee they cried, and made their escape:
in thee did they trust, and they were not shamed,
7 But I am a worm and no man,
a reproach of men and despised of people.
8 All that see me make a mock at me,
they open wide the lips, they shake the head.

9 'He has rolled (his cares) upon Jehovah; let him deliver him;
let him rescue him, since he delights in him.'
10 Yea, but thou art he that drew me out of the womb,
thou didst make me to trust upon my mother's breasts.

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11 Upon thee was I cast from the birth,
thou art my God from my mother's womb.
12 Be not far from me, for trouble is near,
for there is none to help.

13 Many bulls have come about me,
strong ones of Bashan have encompassed me.
14 They gape upon me with their mouths,
(as) a ravening and roaring lion.
15 I am poured out like water,
and all my bones are out of joint;
my heart hath become like wax,
molten in the midst of my bowels.

16 My palate is dried up like a potsherd,
and my tongue cleaves to my gums,
and thou layest me in the dust of Death.
17 For dogs have come about me,
the crew of evil-doers have closed me round;
they have digged into my hands and my feet.
18 I can number all my bones,
while these—with delight they gaze upon me.

19 They part my garments among them,
and cast lots upon my vesture:
20 But thou, Jehovah, be not thou far off;
O my strength, speed to my help.
21 Deliver my soul from the sword,
my dear life from the power of the dog.
22 Save me from the lion's mouth,—
yea, from the horns of the wild oxen—thou hast (already) answered me.

23 I would fain rehearse thy name unto my brethren,
in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.
24 'Ye that fear Jehovah, praise him;
all ye seed of Jacob, glorify him;
and stand in awe of him, all ye seed of Israel:
25 For he has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted,
neither has he hid his face from him,
but when he cried, he hearkened unto him.'

26 From thee is my praise in the great congregation,
my vows will I pay in the presence of them that fear him.
27 The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied;
they that inquire after Jehovah shall praise him;
let your heart revive for ever!

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28 All the ends of the earth shall remember and return unto Jehovah,
and all the families of the nations shall bow down before him.
29 For the kingdom is Jehovah's,
and he is ruler among the nations.
30 All the fat ones of the earth shall surely bow down unto him,
all that have gone down into the dust shall bend the knee before him,
31 And as for him that kept not his soul alive,
his seed shall be reckoned unto Jehovah;
32 To the next generation they shall rehearse his righteousness,
to a people that shall be born, that he hath done nobly.

2 Mrs. Browning has well caught the parallelism between this verse and Isa. xlix. 14. The two passages combined have inspired her touching poem, 'Cowper's Grave.' The second member of *v.* 2 in the Hebrew is very difficult in spite of the easiness of the context. The stanza, moreover, is too short. Some such filling out as Bickell has suggested seems necessary (see crit. note).——**My God.** Heb. *Elī*, not *Elohai*. The shortest name for God (*El*) best suits the agonised speaker. So again *v.* 11. Comp. on xlii. 3.——**In which I roar.** Lit., 'of my roaring.' The same figure as in xxxii. 3, xxxviii. 9. Theodore of Mopsuestia's comment is too characteristic to be withheld (see introd.), *ἐνταῦθα μέντοι ὁ θεῖος Δαβὶδ καὶ τὴν εἰς αὐτὸν γεγενημένην ἀδικίαν διδάσκει, καὶ τὴν εἰς τὸν Δεσπότην ἐσομένην προδιαγράφει, τῇ κοινωνίᾳ τῶν παθημάτων ἐναβρυνόμενος καὶ μονονουχὶ βοῶν μετὰ σώματί μου βαστάζω* (Migne, *Synes. et Theod.* col. 678).

3 **And get no respite** (lit., no silence, rest). Understand, from the griefs which find expression in my tears. Comp. Jer. xiv. 17.

4 **The Holy One.** Heb. *Qādōsh*, used in the manner of proper names, as xcix. 3, 5 (comp. on Isa. xl. 25). Why is 'holiness' here referred to? Certainly not in the ethical sense of the word. But, as Vatke remarks, it would be a great mistake to find in the phrase or name 'the Holy One' nothing but 'numen venerandum.'[1] The Holy One is recognised as such by His judgments, by the destruction of sinners and the deliverance of His faithful servants in righteous accordance with the plan summed up in the technical phrase 'the covenant.' Comp. Isa. v. 16, xxix. 23, lii. 10. Jehovah, being 'holy,' i.e., primarily, separate from all creaturely weakness, and next sacrosanct, inviolable, has the power, and being 'Israel's Holy One,' has also the will, to interpose for His people. How is it then (comp. Isa. xlix. 14) that Jehovah has become deaf to the complaint of Israel's representative?——**Enthroned upon,** &c. The 'praises of Israel' are like the wings of the cherubim on which Jehovah is enthroned. Thus the phrase is an adaptation of the title 'who dwells upon the cherubim' (lxxx. 2, xcix. 1). The cherubim, as we have seen (on xviii. 11), are at once the bearers and the guards or attendants of the Deity; an old mythic form of expression retained for its symbolic usefulness by the sacred poets. Jehovah's throne was a throne of clouds (xviii. 10, xcvii. 2), symbolised by the cherubim. The clouds themselves are, however, to the psalmists merely the representatives of the obscure forces of nature. Another view of the expression, 'who dwells upon the cherubim,' brings it into connexion with the cherubim of the sanctuary. Riehm,

[1] *Die Religion des Alten Testamentes*, i. (1835), p. 475, *n.* 2.

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for instance, thinks it meant that Jehovah, as manifested in the temple, was altogether inclosed by the cherubs and their wings. He renders 'who inhabits the cherubim,' which equally well suits the account of the cherubim in 1 Kings vi. 23–27 and that in Ex. xxv. 18–22 (the priestly legislation). The phrase will then mean 'who dwells in the midst of His people, as their protector.' But the first explanation is preferable. The semi-mythic view of the cherubim pervades the Old Testament; and wherever we find this phrase, in Isa. xxxvii. 16, as well as in Ps. lxxx. 2, xcix. 1, it clearly describes Jehovah, *not as the God of Israel, but as the master of the forces of the universe.* Now see how exquisitely the poet glorifies the old mythic phrase. The true cherubim are the praises of God's people for His wondrous works. He is not merely a God of force, but a God of praise-producing lovingkindness. It is another form of the same idea, when another psalmist calls Righteousness 'the base of His throne' (xcvii. 2).

5 **Our fathers.** The phrase suggests the idea that the speaker is a personification of Israel (so Lagarde, *Orientalia*, ii. 63). I prefer to say that the speaker is the mouthpiece of the Church of which he is the leader. See introd.

7 **A worm and no man.** Comp. Isa. xli. 14 (of Israel, oppressed by *the heathen*), lii. 14, liii. 2 (of Israel, or Israel's leader?)——**Despised of people.** Comp. Isa. liii. 3 and especially xlix. 7 (of the individualised 'Servant'). The 'people' referred to are all those with whom the speaker has to do, in so far as they obstruct his religious mission, whether Jews or Gentiles.

8 **They shake the head.** So xxxi. 12, xliv. 14, cix. 25, Lam. ii. 15.

9 **He has rolled,** &c. An unusual phrase, perhaps from the common speech. So in a more complete form in xxxvii. 5, Rev. xvi. 3. Others render in the imperative, 'Roll it' (as if an ironical counsel), rather unnaturally in this context, and against the ancient versions, though the pointers understood thus, thinking of xxxvii. 5.

10 **That drew me out of the womb.** So lxxi. 6 (see crit. note). If the speaker be the pious Israel personified, we may compare Isa. xlviii. 8, 'Rebellious from the womb.'

13, 14 Observe (1) how frequently the Hebrew writers identify Israel's enemies with wild beasts (*θήρια ἀνθρωπόμορφα*, Ignat. ad Smyrn. 4; cf. 1 Cor. xv. 32). They could not see any great moral gap between the human and non-human races, and put the former too low and the latter too high (cf. Jon. iii. 7). Could they have judged otherwise in those early ages, when man still acted so much by impulse? See on xxxvi. 7, and comp. introd. to Ps. xlix. There are exceptions, however; see viii. 6, cxlix. 14. And (2) the carefully varied imagery—a herd of Bashan bulls (comp. Ezek. xxxix. 18, Am. iv. 1), a single, stately lion (so *v.* 22 *a*; comp. Isa. xv. 9, R.V.) Note, *'abbīrīm*, 'strong ones' = bulls (as l. 13, lxviii. 31). In Jer. viii. 16, xlvii. 3, l. 11 for horses; in Ps. lxxviii. 25 for angels.

15 Cf. Isa. xiii. 7, 'Therefore shall all hands be slack, and every heart of man shall melt;' also Josh. vii. 5.

16–18 To understand this strophe, comp. cii. 5, 6. Both passages mean the same thing, viz. that distress and anxiety have reduced the body of the persecuted man to skin and bones. All is clear, if for a moment we omit *v.* 17, which is partly, indeed chiefly, intended to explain why the speaker feels as God-forsaken as if he were in Sheôl. It is not only because he is as 'strengthless' as the shades (see lxxxviii. 5), but because, under the fascinating gaze of a hundred insolent eyes, he cannot realise the 'guidance' of that Eye (xxxii. 9), without which all is like the shadow of death ('while these,' in *v.* 18 *b*, will still be intelligible from *v.* 14). Next restore *v.* 17, but with the provisional omission of the third

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line. What a gain arises to the sense from that omission! These 'masterless hell-hounds' (Bunyan) have clustered around him from all quarters (see on lix. 7), not to kill him (for death cannot be far off), but to gloat over his sufferings and to plunder him (*vv.* 18, 19). The third line of *v.* 17, is a subordinate detail (see below). A second tristich was needed to correspond to the first (*v.* 16); *v.* 18 is only a distich to make up the number of eight lines for the strophe.

16 **My palate,** &c. Something is evidently wrong in the text. 'My strength' does not suit the parallelism, and the image of the potsherd suggests rather 'my palate' (see crit. note).——**Thou layest me,** &c. He considers everything as an instrument in the hands of God. His troubles are but the messengers who conduct him to 'dusty death,' not, however, in the Shakespearian sense of those words, for 'Death' is here a synonym for Sheól (as vi. 6, &c.) The Babylonian Hades is described as 'the place where much dust is their nourishment' (*Descent of Istar*, l. 8). Comp. *v.* 36 and xxx. 10.

17 **They have digged into my hands and my feet,** or, as an alternative reading (of inferior authority) is generally rendered, 'Like a lion at my hands and my feet' (i.e. they have beset me as furiously as lions and so completely that I can stir neither hand nor foot). Few now maintain the latter reading and rendering (see crit. note), which is too short a phrase to be intelligible, interrupts the lifelike description of the 'dogs,' and seems at any rate to assume that the lion specially attacks the hands and the feet. (To which Aben Ezra replies that a man defends himself with his hands and runs away with his feet: hands against a lion!) The genuineness of the text, as represented by the former reading, seems beyond reasonable doubt. We have here a subordinate detail in the behaviour of this troop of half-wild dogs. It is a feature true to life, as Tristram and others have pointed out. The pariah dogs which prowl about in packs in Eastern cities are in general cowardly, but if provoked might rush at a man's hands or feet, and wound them. (One of two renderings given side by side in the Targum—I refer to Bomberg's Rabbinical Bible—is 'they bite my hands and my feet.')

18 **I may number,** &c. This clause is not in sequence to the last clause of *v.* 17; it has to be explained on the analogy of *v.* 15. His emaciation is due, not to bodily ill-treatment, but to mental agony.

19 **They part,** &c. Here the figure of the dog is interrupted. According to Ewald, the sufferer is imagined as a prisoner condemned to death. But the inhumanity of the enemies will be more striking without supposing this (comp. Mic. ii. 8, Job xxiv. 7, 10). The psalmist is partly thinking of the plundering experienced by Israelites at the hands of their oppressors. The **vesture** is the large upper garment, which was only valuable as a whole.

21 **Sword . . . dog.** Strictly, these dogs would only indirectly cause death by their continued worrying, the sufferer being half-dead already without them. But, as 'sword' in line 1 shows, it is of a less ignoble but more bloodthirsty foe than the dog that the psalmist is now thinking—the lion. 'Dog,' though not strictly appropriate as a parallel to 'sword,' was put, either for the sake of the rhythm, or to wind up the passage on the dog-like enemies. Now it is once more (see *v.* 14) the turn of the 'lion-like.' The meaning is that Israel and Israel's great leader draw on themselves the hatred of both high and low, both noble and ignoble, among those who 'enquire not after God.' ——**My dear life** (so Geddes and the American Reviser's margin). Comp. xxxv. 17. Keble, 'mine orphan'd one;' Kay, 'my solitary one' (following Jerome). Calvin defends the latter rendering very forcibly, comparing xxv. 16, where, however, it is the 'ego' which is *yākhīdh*; here it is something

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belonging to the 'ego,' viz. the 'soul' (see parallel line). De Witt has, 'my only life,' following Vulg.'s *unicam meam* (Purvey, 'myn oon aloone'), which of course means *unicè dilectam*, as also does Sept.'s τὴν μονογενῆ μου (comp. Sept. Gen. xxii. 2 and Prov. iv. 3). A.V. ('my darling') appropriates a phrase much wanted for another Hebrew word ('a pleasant child' in Jer xxxi. 20 is weak). The preciousness of life is at any rate the idea; see on vii. 6, 'my glory.'

22 **The lion's mouth** (comp. *v.* 14). Comp. Esth. xiv. 13 (apocr.), 2 Tim. iv. 17. The lion, with his open jaws, is an image of the great world-empire (whether Assyria or Babylonia) which threatened to annihilate Judah as it had virtually annihilated N. Israel. See Isa. v. 29, Nah. ii. 11–13, Jer. iv. 7, Dan. vii. 4. ——**The wild oxen.** Worse foes even than 'bulls of Bashan.' The *rîm* (Assyrian for Heb. *re'ēm*) is represented in the Assyrian sculptures with two long curving horns and a hump. See on Isa. xxxiv. 7. That some species of *urus*, or wild ox, is meant was first proposed by Arnold Boot. The unicorn of some Oriental sculptures has been amply discussed in Mr. R. Brown's monograph.—— **Thou hast answered me.** The poet has the imperative on the tip of his tongue, but changes his mind at the price of a break in the parallelism. It is the 'perfect of confidence' = 'thou hast decreed to answer me' (viz. by delivering me; cf. cxviii. 5). See crit. note.

23 'Thou answerest not (*v.* 3) is the key-note of *vv.* 2–22; 'thou hast answered me,' of *vv.* 23–32. ——**My brethren,** i.e. my fellow-Israelites. In fact, *vv.* 23–26 specially relate to Israel.

24, 25 A song of praise in the 'great congregation' (*v.* 26). All true believers are directly concerned in the wonderful deliverance of their representative. Hence 'ye that fear Jehovah' (which includes proselytes; see on cxv. 11) precedes 'all ye seed of Israel.'

26 **From thee is my praise.** 'Thou art the Alpha (and Omega) of my song.' The parallel passage, lxxi. 6, weakens this into 'Of thee is my praise continually.'——**In the great congregation.** Is the temple standing (Ewald), or does the poet anticipate (see introd.)?——**My vows,** i.e. my praises (comp. *vv.* 23, 27), as l. 14, &c.

27 Comp. the parallel passage, lxix. 32, which hardly favours the view that a legal feast is meant, such as the *zébakh sh'lāmîm*, 'thank-offering;' at any rate, we must infer that the meal connected with the offering is all that is in the writer's mind (comp. on Isa. xxv. 6). It is simpler to recall the image of Jehovah as an entertainer, and His blessings as a feast (see xxiii. 5). —— **The afflicted,** of course, means the martyr-church of Israel (see on ix. 13).——**Let your heart revive,** not so much an appeal to 'be of good cheer,' but the most trenchant form of assertion = ye shall have a vivid feeling of happiness, and this **for ever,** because the 'latter days' of changeless joy for Israel have begun. It is as if the afflicted ones could not believe in the duration of their happiness; the poet, with fervent sympathy, calls on them not to be afraid to rejoice. Or, 'your heart' might mean 'your personality;' but this seems inconsistent with the vagueness of the sequel.

27, 28 But he has also the 'enthusiasm of humanity.' He has learned to 'love his enemies.' The heathen have forgotten God (ix. 18); His wondrous works shall rouse them from their insensibility. He has now become their king and their God; outward and inward lordship cannot be dissevered. This 'universalism' of the psalmist marks him out as either a forerunner or a member of the *later* Jewish Church (comp. xlvii. 9, 10, xcvii. 1, xcix. 1). This, however, is not the most interesting point. We must ask how it is that 'the personal deliverance swells beyond all private proportions, and has for its sequence the setting up of God's kingdom

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over the whole world.'[1] See introd.

30–32 (See crit. notes; 'eating' is quite out of place here.) Many see in *v.* 30 simply the antithesis of rich and poor, rendering in *b*, 'all that are on the point of going down' = in extreme poverty. But a parallel is wanting.——**The fat ones,** i.e. those in the full vigour of life (as xcii. 15), opposed to the feeble shades in the underworld. ——**The dust,** i.e. Sheól (see on *v.* 15). Jehovah's covenant embraces the living and (in some sort) the dead; comp. Phil. ii. 10. The eschatology of the author is peculiar, but do we not find various eschatologies and views of death elsewhere, e.g. in the Book of Isaiah, xxv. 8, xxvi. 19, lxv. 20? Earlier psalmists thought of Hades as the land where praise is silent; but this psalmist proffers as a *viaticum* to the dying the privilege of worship after death. He goes beyond the author of Job, who can simply affirm that '(even) they that are deceased tremble (before Eloah),' Job xxvi. 5, R.V.

31 'One generation goeth, and another cometh.' But there is comfort in the thought that *we* shall have trained our successors to the service of God. My strength may be brought down, and my days shortened (sings Israel personified, cii. 24; comp. 19), but a new generation shall fill up that which remaineth. Suffer me to live on earth till the tradition of God's might be firmly fixed in Israel (lxxi. 18; comp. above, *v.* 23). Similarly xlviii. 14, lxxviii. 4.

PSALM XXIII.

THE resting pilgrim's song. The speaker is any pious Israelite in whose mind both national and personal hopes and fears rest side by side. A national element in the psalm cannot be denied. The language used in *v.* 1 reminds us, on the one hand, of the Asaphite references to Jehovah's flock, and on the other, of the lovely words referring to the nation in Deut ii. 7. The foes in *v.* 5 may well be national foes (comp. iii. 7). The dark valley' may be parallel to the 'valley of Baca (?)' in lxxxiv. 7, and the 'table' to the feast of the afflicted in xxii. 26. Still the 'national' and the 'personal' elements cannot be dissevered by the most potent analysis. The Shepherd's tending is, no doubt, 'for the sake of His name' ('Jehovah, *Israel's God*'). But 'Israel's Shepherd' (lxxx. 2) does not neglect the individual; from Jeremiah's time onwards this truth was realised with increasing vividness. It has found its classic expression in this psalm, which brightly contrasts with the pathetic confession of the noble Clifford, 'We have felt with utter loneliness that the Great Companion is dead.' On the character described, see *Ecce Homo*, ed. 2, p. 8.

The rhythm is perhaps not uniform throughout; but there is a tendency to alternate trimeters (lines with three beats) and dimeters (those with two). By some happy instinct C. B. Cayley (the translator of Dante) approaches in his verse-rendering the form of the original. But from an æsthetic point of view Herder's version must be pronounced far superior. Crashaw's is a beautiful adaptation to the Christian sentiment.

1 Jehovah is my shepherd; I want for nothing.
2 In pastures of young grass he couches me:
to reposeful waters he gently guides me;
my soul he doth restore.

[1] Brownlow Maitland, *The Argument from Prophecy*, p. 96. This small work proves that it is possible to be an apologist and yet a candid student of exegesis.

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3 He leads me along in right tracks
because of his name ;
4 Should I even walk in a ravine of Hades gloom,
I will fear no evil.

[No unseen foe shall hurt me,]
for thou wilt be with me ;
thy club and shepherd's staff,
they will comfort me.

5 Thou furnishest a table before me
in the presence of my foes ;
thou hast anointed my head with oil,
my cup is abundance.

6 Surely good fortune and lovingkindness shall pursue me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in Jehovah's house
for length of days.

1 **My shepherd.** A title equally true of Jehovah's relation to the people and to the individual (regarded as drawing his moral and physical life from the nation). See on lxxx. 2.

2 **Reposeful (or rest-giving) waters.** Lit., 'waters of rest,' or, perhaps, 'waters of resting-places' (such as the oases in the desert). Comp. cxxxii. 8, and Ass. *manakhtu* 'resting-place.'——**Gently guides me.** Friedrich Delitzsch would render, 'makes me to lie down,' *na'âlu* being a synonym of *rabaçu*. To me, this simply confirms the idea of restful guidance which A.V. found in *y'nahel* in Isa. xl. 11. See, however, crit. note. Hengstenberg, 'he tendeth me,' following Sept., Vulg. (comp. Purvey, 'he nurschide me on the watir of refreisching').—— **Doth restore.** Crashaw—

When my wayward breath is flying,
He calls home my soul from dying.

The 'soul' is the conscious, individualised principle of life ; faintness indicates, in Hebrew phrase, that this 'soul' has 'gone out' (Cant. ii. 6, A.V., 'my soul failed'). Explaining this line of the nation, it finely expresses the tenacity of Israel's self-consciousness under the stress of prolonged trial.

3 Still as applicable to each 'Israelite indeed' as to Israel. **Right tracks,** as opposed to delusive tracks which lead nowhere. Calvin and even Clericus, with A.V., prefer 'paths of righteousness,' but this spoils the allegory by introducing an interpretation. 'Just paths' would be better—i.e. paths traced out in accordance with the divine standard ; cf. 'just balances.'

4 The happy 'lamb of God' holds fast to his confidence alike in prosperity and adversity, the one figured by 'the reposeful waters,' the other by one of those narrow mountain glens so common in central Palestine, haunted by robbers and wild beasts, and dismal even at midday.[1] ——**Hades gloom** (lit., shadow of Death, i.e. of Hades) may mean either 'gloom like that of Hades' or 'the very gloom of

[1] Such, for instance, as the Wady el Haramîya ('the Robbers' Valley'), described by Renan in his *Vie de Jésus*, chap. iv., and which he identifies with the 'valley of weeping' (i.e. of 'oozing waters') in lxxxiv. 7 (but see note). National tastes differ ; Tristram gives a very different description (*Land of Israel*, p. 165). Socin seems to agree with Renan (Baedeker's *Palästina*, p. 341).

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Hades.' I now incline to the former view, but the latter is not at all impossible, and deserves to be explained. Accepting it, the 'ravine' will be, not Sheól or Hades itself (which is a city with gates, Job xxxviii. 17), but Virgil's 'fauces Orci,' Milton's 'rifted rocks whose entrance leads to Hell' (*Comus*): one remembers that the Babylonian Hades was situated in the recesses of Mount Arâlû. The psalmist may perhaps be alluding to the dread moments preceding the judgment of the soul (cf. Halévy's view, on xvi. 10, 11).[1] The Egyptians figured to themselves the departed soul as going through narrow passes and defiles haunted by serpents and monsters (such as the Babylonians also imagined in their own underworld). The psalmist may hope to be escorted by his good shepherd along the awful road to the city of darkness,[2] as the pious Egyptian king was escorted by Amen Ra, when approaching the tribunal of Osiris. On the alternative rendering 'black darkness' see crit. note.——**Thou wilt be with me,** in the darkness where unseen foes may attack me at an advantage. The words supplied may not be the right ones, but they complete the sense and restore symmetry.——**Thy club.** Of this 'club' the weapon rendered in ii. 9 'mace' was a development. Osiris had such a 'mace' (*Records of the Past*, viii. 122; cf. x. 79).——**Thy staff.** Moses the shepherd says in the Korán (xx. 19), 'It is the staff on which I lean, and with which I beat down leaves for my sheep, and I have other uses for it' (e.g. guidance).——**They will comfort me.** Clericus well, 'ea sunt quæ me consolabuntur.'

5 We are now at one of the 'resting-places' of the flock (cf. Cant. i. 7). Or better, like a true Semitic poet, our author leaps to a new figure, and says, 'Jehovah bids me to a feast' (cf. on xvi. 5, xxii. 26). Is the table spread in this world or the next? The psalmist does not draw the distinction. Whilst life lasts, that feast shall last (see introduction to Ps. xvi.) The foes will look on, themselves excluded.——**Thou hast anointed,** &c. See on xlv. 8, and cf. civ. 15, Cant. i. 12. An Egyptian illustration may be added. Every rich man had in his household an anointer who had to place a cone of ointment on the head of his master, where it remained during the feast. Ointment to the Jews was a symbol of joy; so too it was in Egypt. At the solemn entry of a king on a festival-day, everyone poured sweet oil on his head (Erman, *Aegypten*, i. 316–7).——**Is abundance.** A large portion being a proof of hospitality (Gen. xliii 34).

6 This is not (like its seeming antithesis, cxl. 12 *b*) a naïve assertion of the retribution-doctrine of Job's friends, but a riddle for the believing heart to solve. So also is the following statement of the psalmist's assured dwelling-place. See note on xxvii. 4, and for the image of the guest in Jehovah's house, note on xv. 1, lxxxiv. 11. The alternative rendering of the second line (notice the points) is 'And I shall return (and dwell) in the house,' &c., implying that the psalmist is in exile Less naturally (cf. Perowne)

PSALM XXIV.

THE psalm as it stands is divisible into two parts, the connexion of which is at any rate not obvious. The God of *vv.* 1–6 is the God of the infinitely great and the infinitely small, the God who made the earth and all that is

[1] *The Monthly Interpreter*, iii. 470–72.

[2] Sheól is called indifferently Death, and the Shadow of Death ('Hades gloom'), Job xxxviii. 17. The Babylonian Hades, 'the house from whose visitors the light is excluded' (*Descent of Istar*, *l.* 7, Sayce's transl.)

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in it, and yet does not disdain to be called 'my God;'[1] the God of *vv.* 7–10 is a victorious war-God. The religion of the first part is inward and moral; the religion of the second, so far as it can be characterised at all, is not in harmony with that of the first. The first part speaks of a going up to meet Jehovah (to explain *v.* 3, 'Who may go up [with the ark] to the mountain of Jehovah,'[2] is surely as arbitrary as anything in German exegesis); the second, of Jehovah's entering an ancient fortress. It is much more natural (as in the case of xix., xxvii., lxxxi.) to suppose that two psalms have been joined together by a later editor for use in the temple-service. Not, however, out of mere wilfulness. The great God may be conceived of as coming either to His people collectively, or to each member thereof individually. But as are the individuals, so is the nation; the psalm begins therefore with a testing description of the worshipper whom the 'King of glory' will own when He enters His citadel. This may have been the connexion which he would have us supply mentally, regardless of the distinctive peculiarities of the two parts.

The second part is evidently taken from a song of victory (comp. xx., xxi., xlvii.) Its more precise object must be considered elsewhere.

1 The earth is Jehovah's, and the fulness thereof;
the world, and they that dwell therein,
2 For it was he that founded it upon the seas,
and established it upon the floods.

3 Who may ascend the mountain of Jehovah,
and who may rise up in his holy place?
4 He that has clean hands and a pure heart,
that has not set his desire upon treachery,
nor sworn deceitfully.
5 He shall receive a blessing from Jehovah,
even righteousness from the God of his salvation.
6 Such is the generation of those that enquire after him,
of those that seek the face of Jacob's God.

(Fragment of another Psalm.)

7 Lift up your heads, O ye gates,
yea, lift yourselves up, ye ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.
8 'Who, then, is the King of glory?'
'Jehovah the Strong and Valiant,
Jehovah the Valiant in battle.'
9 Lift up your heads, O ye gates,
yea, lift them up, ye ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.
10 'Who, then, is the King of glory?'
'Jehovah Sabáoth, he is the King of glory.

[1] See Ewald, *Die Lehre der Bibel von Gott*, &c., ii. 1, p. 267.
[2] Cornill, in Luthardt's *Zeitschrift*, 1881, p. 341.

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1–6 On this moral compendium, see introduction to Ps. xv.

4 **Heart** = conscience (li. 12). ——**Set his desire.** Lit., 'lifted up his soul.' Note same phrase in xxv. 1, whence Hitzig infers that the next phrase 'upon emptiness' (so literally) is the opposite of 'upon Jehovah,' i.e. 'upon idols' (cf. xxxi. 7, Jer. xviii. 15). 'Upon wickedness,' however (cf. Isa. v. 18), suits the context better; or, which I prefer, 'upon treachery' (falsehood in action; cf. xii. 3, xxvi. 4, xli. 7).

5, 6 **Righteousness,** i.e. righteous treatment from a faithful God. ——**Such is the generation,** i.e. the class of men (see on xii. 8). How well *v.* 6 concludes the psalm! ——**The face of Jacob's God.** The text-reading is usually rendered 'thy face, even Jacob' (so Delitzsch, after Targ.); but we should have expected 'even Israel' (comp. lxxiii. 1). See crit. note.

7 **Lift up your heads.** A feeling hyperbole, similar to one in Sappho (Grotius). The gates seem too low for the majesty of the great king. Comp. the image in Prov. xvii. 19.——**Ye ancient doors.** So Grotius, with true historical tact. 'Everlasting' was suggested by the Messianic application; Milton retains it in his own poetic application of the passage, *Par. Lost*, vii. 565–9.——**That the King,** &c. Not only by the Philistines (1 Sam. iv. 7), but by Moses himself (Num. x. 35) we are told that the ark was in some sense identified with Jehovah, as the symbol of his mighty invisible aid in Israel's wars. It is very probable (comp. 2 Sam. vii. 17) that David and any contemporary psalmists had the same form of belief. But to suppose that the later psalmists whose works have been thought worthy of preservation cherished this 'archaic religion' (Ewald, *Alterthümer*, p. 169) would be to deny the progressiveness of the sacred writers. In xlvii. 6, lxviii. 19, therefore, we seem bound to hold that Jehovah's 'going up' is a poetical way of saying that His special interposition for the armies of Israel is over. It seems to me that we obtain a worthier meaning by interpreting on the analogy of these two passages. It is slightly captious to object that to 'go in' is not to 'return.' The secondary sense of 'returning' is as justifiable in Hebrew as in Arabic.

8 **Valiant.** Or, 'hero;' or, 'warrior.' Comp. lxxviii. 65, ciii. 20. So in Ex. xv. 3 (a post-Davidic hymn), 'Jehovah, the man of war.'

10 **Jehovah Sabáoth.** Yahvè (the God of) Çebáoth (i.e. hosts or legions) is the fullest title of 'Israel's God' (lix. 5), and occurs first in 1 Sam. i. 3, 11, whence it has been thought to have arisen at the close of the period of the Judges. It is doubtful whether it referred in the first instance to the hosts of Israel (as Kautzsch among recent critics[1]), or, as I have argued elsewhere,[2] to the stars—the 'host of heaven'—in which case this title is a protest against star-worship. It is true that the earliest *proof* of star-worship in Israel is Am. v. 26;[3] but mythologic researches show that Babylonian influences existed all round the Israelites in a degree which presupposes a long and continuous propagation. The date of Deuteronomy may be long after Moses, long after David; and yet the tendencies referred to in Deut. iv. 19, xvii. 2, 3, may well have been more or less known long before that book was written. I look upon Jehovah Sabáoth as a kind of condensed creed, expressing (1) the superiority of Israel's God even to creations so great and so mysteriously potent as the stars, (2) the manifoldness of the heavenly powers which Jehovah can employ in his people's behalf. Compare in this connexion two passages, the one much earlier than the other—2 Sam.

[1] Herzog-Plitt, *Realencyclopädie*, art. 'Sabaoth.'
[2] *The Prophecies of Isaiah*, i. 11, &c.
[3] See Schrader, *The Cuneiform Inscriptions and the O. T.*, on Am., *l.c.*; Lotz, in Herzog-Plitt's *Realencyclopädie*, xiv. 694.

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vi. 2, 'the ark of God, over which is called the name of Jehovah Sabáoth that dwelleth upon the cherubim,' and Jer. x. 16, 'the Former of all things, he is his inheritance, whose name is Jehovah Sabáoth.' 'That dwelleth upon the cherubim' (see on xxii. 4), and 'the Former of all things,' both express the supremacy of the great God over the powers of nature which He has made. That Sabáoth also came to have a reference to the armies of Israel is suggested by 1 Sam. xvii. 45; comp. Josh. v. 14, but the stars, with which the angels were in general so closely connected (but see on ciii. 20, 21), have the first claim to be considered. Whether 'Sabáoth' may be regarded as a germinal proper name, is considered below on lix. 6.

PSALM XXV.

An appeal to the divine compassion, interrupted by a few verses (8–10, 12–14) in the didactic style, and proceeding, as the closing verse suggests, from pious Israel personified. Ps. xxxiv., a hymn of thanksgiving, is its counterpart. The two poems have the same structural peculiarities. Each is composed of 21 'alphabetic' distichs, and an additional closing distich. In each of the former, the first word begins with a fresh letter of the alphabet, the 22 letters being taken in order, except that in *v.* 5 each line does duty for a distich, *Hè* beginning *v.* 5 *a*, and *Vāv v.* 5 *b*. This statement, however, will only be correct, if we may be allowed, following Bickell, to correct xxv. 1, 5, 7, which appear in the received text the first as a monostich, the second and third as tristichs, and also xxv. 18, which, on the 'alphabetic' principle, wants an initial word beginning with *Qōf*. Each psalm too closes with a second *Pè*-distich, relative to the deliverance of Israel, from which, on the analogy of a later (post-Christian) Jewish custom, Lagarde [1] too boldly concludes that the authors of the psalms were named respectively Pedāēl and Pedāiāh (cf. Neh. viii. 4). For other alphabetic psalms, see ix. and x., xxxvii., cxi., cxii., cxix., cxlv.

1 Unto thee, Jehovah, do I lift up my soul;
for thee have I waited all the day long.
2 In thee do I trust, let me not be shamed;
let not mine enemies triumph over me.
3 Yea, let none that wait for thee be shamed:
let those be shamed who vainly break their faith.
4 Make me to know thy ways, Jehovah;
teach me thy paths.
5 Direct me in thy truthfulness,
and teach me, for thou art my saviour-God.
6 Remember thy compassions, Jehovah,
and thy lovingkindnesses, for they have been from of old.
7 The sins of my youth and my transgressions
remember not for thy goodness' sake, Jehovah.

8 Good and upright is Jehovah,
therefore will he instruct such as miss their aim in the way.

[1] *Symmikta* (1877), p. 107; *Academy*, Jan. 1, 1872. Hofmann compares Nos. 1, 2, 5 of the Reshuyoth which follow the Targum to the prophets in Lagarde's edition.

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9 The afflicted will he direct in that which is right,
yea, the afflicted will he teach his way.
10 All the paths of Jehovah are lovingkindness and truth
unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.
11 For thy name's sake, Jehovah,
forgive mine iniquity, for it is great.
12 Who, then, is the man that feareth Jehovah?
him will he instruct in the way that he should choose.
13 He himself shall abide in good fortune,
and his seed shall inherit the land.
14 The secret of Jehovah is for them that fear him,
and his covenant for their instruction.

15 Mine eyes are continually toward Jehovah,
for he shall bring my feet out of the net.
16 Turn thou unto me, and have pity upon me,
for desolate am I and afflicted.
17 Enlarge the straitness of my heart,
and bring me out of my distresses.
18 [Arise,] behold mine affliction and my travail,
and pardon all my sins.
19 Behold mine enemies, for they are many,
and they hate me with cruel hatred.
20 Preserve my soul, and deliver me:
let me not be shamed, for I have taken refuge in thee.
21 Let integrity and uprightness guard me,
for I await thee still, Jehovah.

22 Set Israel free, O God,
from all his straitenings.

1 The second line is restored by Bickell from *v.* 5, where it does not fit in well with lines 1 and 2, whereas here it is the counterpart of line 1.

3 **Vainly,** i.e. without any (good) result; cf. ii. 1, 2 Sam. i. 22.

7 Israel's 'youth' is meant, as in cxxix. 1; so that this passage supplies the key to li. 8. The distinction between 'sins' or 'failings' and deliberate 'transgressions' seems clear. To 'sin' (*khāṭā*) is properly 'to miss the mark' (see next verse, and comp. Prov. viii. 36). Generally, however, *khaṭṭāth* is used in a stronger sense, as Julius Müller (*Doctrine of Sin*, i. 93) rightly observes, without implying the excuse of incapacity or want of thought. The second line of *v.* 7 in the received text supplies an unnecessary qualification of the first—'according to thy lovingkindness remember them for me.' See introduction.

8 **Such as miss their aim.** The text-reading is 'sinners,' but this seems to say too much (see i. 1). Bickell's correction of the points is beautiful. Comp. on xxxix. 2, and see Prov. viii. 36, xix. 2.

11 **For it is great.** Calvin, 'quia multa est' (comp. xl. 13). The plea is virtually that in xxxviii. 5 *b*.

14 **The secret,** viz. that of divine

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truth, not necessarily as embodied in a written revelation (comp. cxix. 18), but that which suffering believers found it so difficult to understand—the principle of God's providential dealings. For the sense of 'secret' or 'private communication,' comp. Prov. xi. 13, Am. iii. 7. We may also render, 'the intimacy' comparing lv. 18; notice, however, the difference of the contexts in the two psalms. *V.* 14 *a* is repeated in Prov. iii. 32 *b* (see Del. *ad loc.*)——**And his covenant . . .** Understand, 'is designed,' or explain, 'his secret and his covenant are appointed for their instruction.

15 **Mine eyes,** &c. Comp. the proper name Elyōēnai or Elyehōēnai, 'Unto Yahvè are mine eyes,' 1 Chr. iii. 23, Ezra viii. 4, &c.

16 **Desolate.** Or 'friendless' (lit., solitary). The psalmist lacks the full faith which inspired iii. 7, iv. 9, xxvii. 10.

17 **Enlarge . . .** Or, 'relieve the troubles of my heart, and bring me out of my straits.' Comp. cxix. 32, 2 Cor. vi. 11, and see on iv. 2. Ancient authorities are on the side of A.V. and R.V.; but R.V.'s marg. has the weight of scholarly opinion on its side.

22 **Set free.** The root-meaning is to sever, to separate (cf. Ex. viii. 19, A.V. 23, *p'dūth* = division). This verb is a favourite element in proper names; see introduction (end), and refer to the Concordance; in Phœnician we have Baalpada (Euting).

PSALM XXVI.

INNOCENCE and especially love to Jehovah's house appeal confidently (see *v.* 12) for their natural reward. According to Ewald, *v.* 9 expresses the occasion of the psalm—a prevalent wasting sickness. But surely the petition which it contains is only incidental, though doubtless it suggests that the times were dangerous. The speaker represents the nation (see on *v.* 11).

1 Right me, Jehovah, for I walk still in mine integrity
and trust in Jehovah without wavering.
2 Prove me, Jehovah, and try me;
assay my reins and my heart.
3 For thy lovingkindness is before mine eyes,
and I walk still in thy truthfulness.
4 I have not sat with men of falsehood,
neither have I converse with dissemblers.
5 I hate the congregation of evil-doers,
and will not sit with the ungodly.
6 I wash my hands in innocency,
and would fain compass thine altar, Jehovah;
7 That I may proclaim with the voice of thanksgiving,
and tell out all thy wonders.

8 Jehovah! I love the precinct of thy house,
and the place of thy glory's habitation.
9 Take not away my soul with sinners,
nor my life with men of blood;
10 In whose hands are outrages,
and their right hand is full of bribes.

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11 But as for me, I walk on in mine integrity ;
O set me free, and have pity upon me.
12 My foot stands on even ground ;
in full choirs will I bless Jehovah.

3 **In thy truthfulness,** i.e. ever conscious of it as my guide (xxv. 5, xliii. 3). God's will marks out the saint's path, and the truthful revelation of this, whether in command or in promise, is his guide. So lxxxvi. 11.

4, 5 See on i. 1. For **dissemblers,** the Heb. has, picturesquely, 'self-hiders.' Cf. the 'dyed' or hypocritical class of Pharisees in the Talmud (*Sota*, 22 *b*).

6 **I wash my hands,** i.e. I keep them free from sin (as lxxiii. 13). The symbol is explained by Ex. xxx. 17–21; comp. Deut. xxi. 6 Matt. xxvii. 4.——**Compass thine altar.** Going round in procession was a characteristic form of Israelitish as as well as of Arabian and Roman religion. The special object of the rite in the present case was a sacrifice of thanksgiving (see *v.* 7). See further on cxviii. 27.

8 **I love,** &c. To take part in the temple-services seems the highest conception of happiness to the 'Israelite indeed.' Comp. xxvii. 4. —— **Thy glory's habitation.** Comp. Ex. xvi. 10. To the psalmists, however, the conception of God's glory is spiritualised, like that of the 'form' (xvii. 15) which the glory enveloped (Ex. xiii. 21). Hence in xxvii. 4 'glory' is paraphrased into 'pleasantness' (see note).

11 **I walk,** i.e. I go on walking, in spite of these 'outrages.' Or, I will still do so (after my deliverance).——**Set me free.** Israel, then, is the speaker (see xxv. 22).

12 Faith anticipates the answer to prayer. **On even ground** (as xxvii. 11). The speaker has been like a man stumbling over a rugged path. Comp. iv. 2 ; the ideas of broadness and levelness are connected, as in the Arabic salutation, 'God give thee breadth and levelness' (Freytag, s.v. *raḥuba*).—— **In full choirs** (Heb. *b'maqhēlīm*). Cf. xxii. 23, 26 (*b'qāhāl*). The same form (with fem. term.) occurs in lxviii. 27, where (as here) the 'congregation' spoken of is vocal with praise, justifying the above version.

PSALM XXVII.

THE rhythm of this psalm changes at *v.* 7, and both tone and contents of the remaining verses differ widely from those of part i. The obvious explanation is that two psalms have been linked together, the one full of inward calm delight, regular in form and gracefully simple in style, the other a psalm of anxious supplication, which, judging from the Massoretic text, is inferior in rhythm and of less carefully turned expressions. Both seem to be national psalms.

1 Jehovah is my light and my salvation ;
whom have I to fear?
Jehovah is the fortress of my life,
at whom have I to tremble?
2 When evil-doers came near against me
to eat my flesh,
those my foemen and mine enemies
stumbled and fell.

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3 Though a host should encamp against me,
my heart would not fear;
though war should rise against me,
still would I be tranquil.

4 One thing have I asked of Jehovah—
that is my desire;
that I may dwell in the house of Jehovah
all the days of my life,
to gaze upon the pleasantness of Jehovah,
and to contemplate his temple.
5 For he treasures me in his bower
in the day of trouble;
he covers me in the covert of his pavilion,
upon a rock does he exalt me.
6 And now shall my head be exalted above mine enemies
round about me:
fain would I offer in his pavilion
sacrifices of resounding mirth,
I would sing and make melody unto Jehovah.

(Probably another Psalm.)

7 Hear, Jehovah, when I cry with my voice,
have pity upon me and answer me.
8 [Hast thou not said unto me,]
'Seek ye my face'?
unto thee my heart hath said,
'Thy face, Jehovah, will I seek.'
9 Do not hide thy face from me,
thrust not thy servant aside in anger:
thou hast been my help,
abandon me not, neither forsake me,
O God of my salvation.
10 For my father and my mother have forsaken me,
but Jehovah will take me up.

11 Show me thy way, Jehovah,
and lead me on an even path
because of my keen-eyed enemies.
12 Give me not over unto the greed of my foes:
for against me there have risen up false witnesses
and such as breathe out injurious words upon me.
13 I am confident of beholding
the goodness of Jehovah in the land of the living.

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14 Wait for Jehovah:
be courageous, and let thine heart gather strength,
wait, I say, for Jehovah.

2 **To eat my flesh,** like wild beasts (Jer. xii. 9, Isa. lvi. 9). See xiv. 4.

4 **That I may dwell,** &c. How this can be, is an enigma for the faithful (cf. on xxiii. 6). The psalmist thinks in the first instance of the house of Jehovah on Mount Zion. There he has learned what communion with God means, and he feels towards the temple like a child towards its mother. But though, like another poet (lxxxiv. 5), he envies those who can always worship God in the one local sanctuary which the law permits, he reaches out towards a purely spiritual solution of faith's enigma. Those who are not mere formal worshippers, and whose sacrifices are symbols of heart-devotion (see on *v.* 6), will find themselves in God's house at all times and in all places, and will enjoy a fuller and deeper security than that implied in the old phrase, 'Jehovah's sojourner' (*gēr Yahvè*). Thus explained the words will seem to some to anticipate those lines of Browning—

> Why, where's the need of temple, when the walls
> O' the world are that? What use of swells and falls
> From Levites' choir, priests' cries, and trumpet calls?

But the three following lines do not represent the position of any psalmist. Nor do even the three lines quoted fully represent our psalmist's mind. Caanan, which Hosea (viii. 1) calls 'the house of Jehovah,'[1] is still the centre of his world, and the temple still holds a place of special honour (cf. on xxviii. 2), like the sacrament of the Eucharist to one who fully believes in extra-sacramental spiritual influence. His point of view is naturally a little different from that of a post-Christian writer who exclaims, 'O Israel, how great is the house of God, and how large the place of his possession' (Baruch iii. 24)!——**To gaze upon the pleasantness of Jehovah.** Sept. well, *τοῦ θεωρεῖν με τὴν τερπνότητα Κυρίου*. We should have expected 'to gaze upon His glory (or His face);' but the conceptions of God's 'glory' and of His 'face' have become spiritualised (xxvi. 8 *b*). 'To gaze upon,' therefore, means 'to experience.' God's 'pleasantness' (so xc. 17) means His tender friendship: 'softness' is the root-meaning; the verb is used of a friend (2 Sam. i. 26), the adjective of a beloved one (Cant. i. 16). So too, in Phœnician, the cognate is used of the divine favour (Yehawmelek's inscr., *l.* 8).——**To contemplate his temple** (or, 'his palace'), like a stranger admitted to a sight of the king's 'great house' (*hēkal*). Spiritually explained, this means 'to see traces of God's greatness and goodness wherever I may be.'

5 **Treasures me,** &c. So xxxi. 21. The righteous man 'lives' at such times 'in virtue of his trust' (Hab. ii. 4). To 'trust' is to hold fast by the 'Rock of ages' (Isa. xxvi. 4). 'Treasures;' for this sense, see on lxxxiii. 4.——**In his bower,** i.e. in the shelter which he has screened off, as by thick plants, from plotting enemies (symbolised in Isa. iv. 6 by heat, storm, and rain). So lxxvi. 3 (סֹךְ), Lam. ii. 6 (שֻׂךּ), Ps. xxxi. 21, Isa. iv. 6 (סֻכָּה).

6 The psalmist does not undervalue sacrifices; these, however, are made real by the spiritual qualities of faith and love. **Sacrifices of resounding mirth,** i.e. such as are accompanied by songs of thanksgiving (cf. cvii. 22 *a*). *T'rū'āh*, pro-

[1] The expression is peculiar. If it stood alone it might mean the people of Yahvè, but see Hos. ix. 15, compared with *v.* 3; also Jer. xii. 7. The nearest parallel is Ass. *bît Khumri* = 'house of Omri,' i.e. N. Israel, but Omri is not the name of a god.

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perly, a loud sound; the context decides whether that of a trumpet (Num. x. 10), a voice singing (xxxiii. 3), or a voice shouting (lxxxix. 16). We might also render 'sacrifices with a trumpet sound' (De Witt, after Gesenius); this requires us to assume that Israel is the speaker (Num. x. 10 does not apply to the thank-offerings of individuals).

8 The verse is formed of two distichs, the first of which is imperfectly preserved. Clearly something must be supplied, and a small transposition effected. To avoid this conclusion, Hitzig ingeniously but impossibly gives us, 'Seek him, O my face,' continuing as in A.V.

9, 10 Does not the psalmist clearly speak in the name of Israel—'thy servant' (see on xix. 12), the 'friendless and afflicted' (xxv. 16)? He seems to compare himself to a sobbing child, deserted by its parents (note the monotonous rhyming cadence in *v.* 9*b*). We might render *v.* 10, 'Should my father and my mother have forsaken me, Jehovah would take me up.' Comp. with Calvin Isa. xlix. 15 (scarcely Isa. lxiii. 16).

11 **Thy way . . . an even path.** See on v. 9. The 'path' is 'even' in a physical, and not (as in cxliii. 10) in a spiritual sense. That the good man is directed by God's Spirit is 'doctrina perutilis,' but 'præsenti loco quadrare non videtur' (Calvin). For the figure of 'even ground,' see on xxvi. 12.

12 **False witnesses.** The phrase suggests more than it expresses. The foes of the righteous psalmist were absolutely devoid of good faith (as v. 12, xii. 3, and elsewhere). Persecution is represented again as mainly carried on by false witness in xxxv. 11, cix. 2; but false witness stands for a class of hostile actions, just as 'bloodshed' stands for great crimes in general (see on li. 16).——**Breathe out;** rather, 'puff out.'——**Injury,** i.e. false witness, one of the principal forms of injustice (see on xxxv. 11).

13 **I am confident,** &c. The received text implies an aposiopesis—'Unless I had been confident, &c. (I should utterly have fainted).' But the first word is marked as spurious by the points placed above it, and evidently it makes the rhythm too heavy (see crit. note). The author of Ps. cxvi. (see *vv.* 9*b*, 10*a*) may possibly allude to the verse in its correct form.——**In the land of the living.** See Isa. xxxviii. 11 (comp. 18, 19).

14 Perhaps this verse belongs to the chorus; comp. xxxi. 25, xxxii. 11.

PSALM XXVIII.

THE peril hinted at in Ps. xxvi. (comp. *v.* 3 with xxvi. 9, 10) has become more imminent, and deliverance now becomes the central thought of pious worshippers. It is a life and death struggle between the depositaries of progressive religion and a selfish, malignant enemy; hence the imprecations, which deserve to be treated as leniently as 'the words of the desperate' in Job and Jeremiah. At *v.* 6 (see note) the tone changes. The supposed Jeremian authorship must be considered elsewhere.

1 Unto thee, Jehovah, do I cry,
my rock, be not deaf unto me,
lest if thou hold thy peace towards me
I become like those that have gone down into the pit.
2 Hear the voice of my beseeching
when I cry unto thee for help,
when I lift up my hands toward thy holy chancel.

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3 O drag me not away with the ungodly
and with those that work naughtiness,
who speak peace to their neighbours,
while evil is in their hearts.

4 Give them according to their deeds,
and according to the evil of their practices;
give them after the work of their hands,
render to them their deserts.
5 For they give no heed unto the deeds of Jehovah,
nor unto the work of his hands—
he shall throw them down, and not build them up.

6 Blessed be Jehovah!
for he has heard the voice of my beseeching.
7 Jehovah is my stronghold and my shield,
my heart trusted in him, and I was helped;
therefore my heart dances for joy,
and with my song will I thank him.
8 Jehovah is a stronghold for his people, and an asylum;
he is a full salvation for his anointed.
9 Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance;
shepherd them, and carry them for evermore.

2 **Toward thy holy chancel.** Comp. *Korán*, Sur. ii. 139, 'Turn thou thy face towards the sacred Mosque.' The psalmist too has his *kibla*; comp. v. 8 (note), 1 Kings viii. 29, Dan. vi. 10. R.V. marg. renders, 'toward the innermost place of thy sanctuary.' This is correct (it is the 'holy of holies' which is meant; see 1 Kings vi. 16), but lengthy. Analogous renderings to 'chancel' are sanctioned by the authority of A.V.; and 'chancel' in (Christian) Ethiopic literature is actually rendered by the cognate of Heb. *d'bhîr*. See also lxviii. 30 (note), where, as in 1 Kings vi., 'temple' (*hēkāl*) is used somewhat as our 'nave.' The root-meaning of *d'bhîr* is 'to be behind,' the holiest place, in the temple of Jehovah as in that of Bel-Merodach,[1] being at the extreme end. The rendering 'oracle' (Aquila, Symm., Jerome) is based on a pardonable etymological mistake. The Sept. translators either render *ναός* (as here), or transcribe *δαβίρ* or *δαβείρ* (so Theodotion).

6 It is difficult to decide whether the portion which begins here antedates the answer to prayer (cf. vi. 9–11, xxvi. 12), or was added by the same psalmist later (so Ewald, Hitzig). I incline to the former view, regarding the tense as the perfect of certitude. 'Such sudden turns,' remarks Driver (*H. Tenses*, ed. 2, p. 44), 'are no less effective and emphatic than the abrupt introduction of a new and dissimilar key in a piece of music.

8 **For his people.** Sense, rhythm, and parallelism require this rendering, instead of 'for them' (Mass. text.) So Sept., Pesh.; cf. xxix. 11. Rhythm too favours bringing 'and an asylum,' or (the other *mā'ōz*) 'and a fortress,' into the first line. For the close coup-

[1] Sayce, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 64; cf. Tiele, *Bemerkungen über Ë-sagila in Babel*, &c. (Separatauszug), p. 184.

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ling of '*ōz* and *mā'ōz* comp. Jer. xvi. 19; for *y'shū'ōth* as applied to Jehovah, xlii. 6, &c. Those, however, who prefer R.V.'s rendering, 'and he is a stronghold of salvation,' &c., may compare Isa. lx. 18, 'thy walls, Salvation.'

9 **Shepherd them.** Cf. on lxxx. 2.

PSALM XXIX.

A NOBLE specimen of parallelism and a poetical gem of purest ray. The storm-piece in *vv.* 3–9 may be compared to one of the fairest works of Arabian poetry (see Imra-al-Ḳais, as rendered by Lyall, *Translations*, p. 103). Prologue and epilogue, too, are worthy of their position. With remarkable tact, the psalmist recognises the poetical value of the conception of the *b'nē ēlīm*. Milton with equal tact follows him in those numerous passages in which the phrase 'gods' or 'sons of God' is applied to supernatural beings, less than 'God Supreme' and more than man. Comp. 'O Sons, like one of us Man is become' (*Paradise Lost*, xi. 84). The reader of Goethe will not forget to compare the songs of the Archangels in *Faust*; Job and Ps. xxix. have both contributed ideas and motives. The tone of the last two lines of the song of Michael reminds us especially of the peaceful close of the psalm. Ps. xxix. is specially important with reference to Israel's view of nature (see on Ps. civ.) Comp. Ewald, *History*, ii. 128.

1 Ascribe unto Jehovah, O ye sons of the gods,
ascribe unto Jehovah glory and strength.
2 Ascribe unto Jehovah the glory of his name,
worship Jehovah in hallowed pomp.

3 The voice of Jehovah is upon the waters,
the God of glory thunders,
Jehovah is upon the great waters.
4 The voice of Jehovah is with power!
the voice of Jehovah is with majesty.
5 The voice of Jehovah breaks the cedars;
yea, Jehovah breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon;
6 And Lebanon he makes to skip like a calf,
and Sirion like a young wild ox.
7 The voice of Jehovah hews [the rocks],
[hews them with] flames of fire;
8 The voice of Jehovah shakes the wilderness,
Jehovah shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.
9 The voice of Jehovah pierces the oaks,
yea, strips the forests bare;
[fearful is he from his high places,]
whilst in his palace all are saying, Glory.

10 At the storm Jehovah sat enthroned,
Jehovah is enthroned as King for ever

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11 Jehovah will give strength unto his people,
Jehovah will bless his people with peace.

1 **Sons of the gods.** Heb. *b'nē 'ēlim*, which means *either* 'sons of El (or, God)'—a double plural form *ben 'ēl* (so Gesenius, *Gram.* § 103, 8; Ewald, *Gram.* § 270 *c*), *or* 'sons of (the) Elim (or, gods).' Elim = Elohim; cf. Ex. xv. 11, Dan. xi. 36. 'Sons of El' would emphasise the derived and dependent existence of the beings referred to; 'sons of (the) Elim,' their membership in the class[1] of superhuman, heavenly powers, and consequently their possession of a common nature with the head of this class, Jehovah. The latter explanation seems the more natural one, and brings our passage into closer relation to the narrative in *Job*, where, precisely as here, a special assembly of the court of heaven is described. ('The sons of God' in Job i. 6, ii. 1, A.V., should rather be 'sons of the Elohim;' cf. Gen. vi. 2, where the article is again expressed. Davidson.) *B'nē 'ēlim* occurs once again (lxxxix. 7) in a striking context relative to the celestial 'ecclesia' (Sept.) Are we to identify these 'sons of the gods' (we can hardly say, 'of the Elim;' see on lxxxii. 1, 7) with the 'seraphim' (see Isa. vi. 1, and comp. *v.* 9 with Isa. vi. 3), or with the distinctly spiritual beings called angels?[2] Probably with the latter (as Targ.) The heavenly 'seraphim' are mentioned but once, and in Job (v. 1; cf. iv. 18) we find the same term 'holy ones' used of the 'angels' which in lxxxix. 6-8 is applied to the 'sons of the gods.' 'Sons of the gods' is in fact a fragment of that naïve, popular phraseology which had affinities with the common Semitic religion. The mythic systems of 'heathen' nations knew of no messengers, who were not themselves gods. The broad distinction between God and the angels (comp. Rev. xix. 10) arose later. Twice at least in the Psalter (lviii. 2, lxxxii. 1, 6; see also on xcvii. 7) the 'angels' are even called Elim or Elohim, which reminds us of Gen. i. 27, xxviii. 17, xxxii. 2, where the title is given to the angels exclusively, not to mention Gen. xx. 13, &c. May we illustrate this by the variable and elastic application of 'god' even in Christian Greek?[3]

2 **In hallowed pomp,** i.e. in festival attire. The celestial worshippers must not be behind those of earth (xcvi. 9). Sept. has, 'in his holy court' (rather, courts), as again in xcv. 9. A various reading (Del.); comp., however, Jennings and Lowe on xcvi. 9.

3 **The voice of Jehovah** refers no doubt primarily to the pealing thunder (see Isa. xxx. 30, Ex. ix. 28, A.V., marg., and comp. Korán, xiii. 14), but also, as the context shows, to the other awful sounds which accompany the storm. Ewald's 'Hark! Jehovah,' &c., is therefore unsuitable. This 'voice' is said to be **upon the waters**, i.e. possibly the Mediterranean Sea (Schröder), more probably the 'cloud-masses, dark with water' (xviii. 12; cf. Jer. x. 13); but if the phrase means the same thing in line 1 as in line 3, almost certainly the 'waters that are above the heavens' (cxlviii. 4; cf. on civ. 3).——**Jehovah is upon,** Ewald, '(even) Jehovah upon,' 'Jehovah' being in apposition to 'the God of glory.' But Jehovah himself and not merely his 'voice' is 'upon the great waters' (civ. 3).

5-8 The storm discharges itself in its full fury, passing from Lebanon in the north to Kadesh in the south. **The cedars of Lebanon,** a grander image than even the traveller can

[1] Cf. the phrase 'sons of the prophets,' and Robertson Smith's *The Prophets of Israel*, pp. 85, 388. See also crit. note.

[2] The 'angels' or 'messengers' of civ. 4, which forms a link between the ordinary idea of the 'angels' and those Titanic forms the cherubim and seraphim.

[3] Harnack, *Dogmengeschichte*, p. 81, *n.* 2.

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now realise, except from the description of Ezekiel (Ezek. xxxi. 3–9). On *v.* 6, see crit. note.

7 The text has simply, 'The voice of Jehovah cleaves (or, hews) flames of fire,' i.e. sends forked lightning, or, less plausibly, 'hews them out' from the storm-clouds. But this gives no parallelism and is a strange expression. The cleaving of rocks is a regular feature of theophanies.

9 **Pierces the oaks.** 'The common translations suppose this passage to relate to the *hinds bringing forth young*, which agrees very little with the rest of the imagery either in nature or dignity:[1] nor do I feel myself persuaded even by the reasonings of the learned Bochart on this subject, *Hierozoïcon*, part i. bk. 3, ch. 17.[2] Whereas the oak struck by lightning admirably agrees with the context.' Bishop Lowth, Lect. 27. See crit. note. ——[**Fearful is he,** &c.] Something has evidently dropped out, or the distich will be imperfect. The parallel line suggests the contrast of God's awful working upon earth, and the jubilation of the heavenly ones at this glorious revelation of Divine power. (The ideas of fearfulness and glory combined, as in Deut. xxviii. 58.) Comp. the transition at the opening of *Faust*—

Doch ihr, die ächten Göttersöhne,
Erfreut euch der lebendig reichen Schöne.

For it is surely the temple of heaven which is meant (xi. 4, xviii. 7, Isa. vi. 1), not of heaven and earth together (as Cook). The participle **are saying** expresses that the cry of praise is heard while the storm rages.——**Glory** reminds us of Isa. vi. 3. Those who cry are the 'sons of the gods' (*v.* 1); the singular is used ('all of it'), to show that all cry in unison. 'Cry,' for we have not yet come to the 'harpers harping with their harps' (Rev. xiv. 3).

10 The psalmist's healthy religious nature reacts against the depressing physical effect of these awful sights and sounds. In justification of **storm** see crit. note. The common rendering is 'flood,' i.e. either Noah's flood or the inundation produced by a violent rain, such as that which Imra-al-Ḳais describes in its effects in the poem referred to above—'ces ondées violentes, qui suivent les grands coups de tonnerre, et qui arrivent de préférence à la fin des orages' (Volney). But one can scarcely suppose an abrupt reference either to the Deluge or to a phenomenon which the description of the storm has ignored. What we expect in the epilogue is a final word containing the poet's reflexions as he looks back on this fearful but glorious manifestation of Israel's God.

11 Comp. xxviii. 8, 9. **With peace** (or welfare). Perhaps implying that storms are but good angels in disguise. Or this last verse may be a liturgical addition.

PSALM XXX.

CLOSELY parallel to Ps. vi.; comp. *v.* 3 *b* with vi. 3 *b*, *v.* 6 with vi. 2 *a*, *v.* 10 with vi. 6. Compare also Ps. xxviii. Here again we must ask, Is it the resurrection of Israel (see on *v.* 2), or the deliverance of any righteous man whose sorrows are not merely personal but national? Or may both references be combined?

2 I will extol thee, Jehovah, for thou hast drawn me up,
and not made mine enemies to rejoice over me.
3 Jehovah my God!
I cried unto thee for help, and thou didst heal me.

[1] It is inanimate nature which is elsewhere referred to by the poet.
[2] For the premature 'calving' of the hinds, Ewald refers to line 76 of the Arabic poem already mentioned (in introd.); cf. Mr. Lyall's translation, part 3.

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4 Jehovah ! from Hades thou broughtest up my soul,
from those sunk in the pit thou recalledst me to life.
5 Sing unto Jehovah, O ye his loving ones,
and give thanks to his holy memorial.
6 For a moment passes in his anger,
a life in his favour ;
weeping may come to lodge at eventide,
but (hark !) a glad cry in the morning.

7 But I—I said in my security,
I shall never be moved.
8 Jehovah, in thy favour
thou hadst set me on strong mountains :
thou didst hide thy face,
and I was confounded.
9 Unto thee, Jehovah, did I cry,
and unto the Lord made I supplication.
10 'What profit is there in my blood,
in my going down to the pit ?
can the dust give thee thanks ?
can it declare thy truthfulness ?
11 Hear, Jehovah, and have pity upon me :
Jehovah, be a helper unto me.'

12 Thou didst turn for me my mourning into dancing,
thou didst loose my sackcloth, and gird me with joy,
13 To the end that my glory might make melody unto thee without ceasing :
Jehovah my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever.

2 **Drawn me up**, viz. from Sheól (*v.* 4 ; cf. lxxxviii. 5, Jon. ii. 3) ; or from a 'sea of troubles' (cf. xviii. 17, lxix. 2, 3). The former view gives greater force. Ephraim 'died,' says Hosea (xiii. 1), when he 'became guilty through the Baal,' and the same prophet speaks of the future resurrection of Israel and Judah (Hos. vi. 2). The idea was taken up by later prophets and psalmists (Ezek. xxxvii. 1-10, Isa. xxvi. 19, and notes on vi. 6, lxxxviii. 4-10).

3 **Thou healedst me.** A phrase used of Israel (Ex. xv. 26, Isa. vi. 10, xxx. 26, lvii. 18, 19, Hos. vii. 1, xi. 3, and elsewhere).

5 **His loving ones** = those who are in covenant with God (l. 5). *Khésed*, like the Christian ἀγάπη, is born of duty and not of impulse (see on xii. 1).——**His holy memorial.** So xcvii. 12. Jehovah is holy, i.e. separate and different from all that is earthly, and in the sphere of morals inconceivably just and kind (Isa. lv. 9). Holy too must be His memorial (*zéker*),[1] i.e. His name (Ex. iii. 15), that by which He reveals Himself and would be remembered. From *v.* 6 it appears that in the writer's present mood the leading feature in God's self-revelation is forgiving love (xxxiii.

[1] The Assyrian cognate *sikru* = name ; cf. Haupt in *Hebraica*, vol. iii. (1885), p. 230.

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21 is slightly different). We may compare Hos. xi. 9, where 'the Holy One' is almost a synonym for 'the Forgiving One,' just as in Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7, 'Jehovah' is paraphrased as 'compassionate and pitiful.'

6 A 'moment' is opposed to 'a life,' as the shades of 'evening' to the brightness of 'morning.' Grief is but a moment in a lifetime of God's favour. Comp. Isa. xxvi. 20, liv. 8, Ps. xlvi. 6, xlix. 15, xc. 14, cxliii. 8.

7–12 The speaker had to learn this truth (*v.* 6) by experience. He had never thought that he might lose God's favour. Hence suddenly trouble came; he fancied that God had forsaken him. Then he tried the effect of prayer, and soon a 'glad cry' followed.

8 **On strong mountains.** (See crit. note.) A figure of security. Hitherto the psalmist had been walking 'in slippery places.' Comp. xxvii. 5, Isa. xxxiii. 16 (note here the same use of the plural of category), and this fine passage of the Mu'allaqa of al-Ḥarith—

As though the Fates, beating against us, met
A black mountain, cleaving the topmost clouds.

(Lyall, *Translations*, p. 22.)

9–11 Note the repetition of the name Jehovah. Trouble gave the speaker an intuition of its meaning ——**In my blood.** As if Jehovah were the slayer. Cf. xxii. 15, Job xiii. 15, xvi. 18.——**The dust,** i.e. 'the grave' (xxii. 30), not 'my dead body' (as Gesenius after Theodoret and Kimchi); see vi. 6.

13 **My glory.** The text has simply 'glory,' which Kimchi explains of the immortal soul in antithesis to the dead body (see last note), while Ewald, Hitzig, and Olshausen give it the sense of 'praise.' Even great scholars neglect the Septuagint.

PSALM XXXI.

A BEAUTIFUL psalm in which all the keys of the soul's music are touched; see Savonarola's touching application of it to his own case in his unfinished *Meditatio*. The speaker may be either a prophet or the pious kernel of Israel regarded as having a prophetic calling (cf. on *v.* 17); but the parallelism between *vv.* 10–13 and some at least of the so-called typically Messianic psalms (see *Isaiah*, ii. 200) suggests that the latter is the truer view. The elegiac tone and the variableness of mood suggest a comparison with Jeremiah; and, true enough, we find verbal points of contact both with Jeremiah and with Lamentations. Comp. *v.* 11 with Jer. xx. 18; *v.* 13*b* with Jer. xxii. 28; *v.* 14 (especially) with Jer. xx. 10; *v.* 18 with Jer. xvii. 18; *v.* 23 with Lam. iii. 54. The phrase 'a dread (is) on every side' occurs six times in Jeremiah (see also below, on *v.* 17).

2 In thee, Jehovah, have I sought refuge,
  let me never be put to shame:
  in thy righteousness rescue thou me.
3 Incline thine ear unto me, deliver me speedily,
  be unto me an asylum-rock,
  a fortified house, that thou mayest save me.
4 For thou art my high crag, and my fortress,
  and for thy name's sake thou wilt guide and gently lead me.
5 Bring me out of the net that they have hidden for me,
  for thou art my stronghold.

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6 Into thy hand I commend my breath ;
thou settest me free, Jehovah, thou God of truth.
7 Thou hatest those that give heed to lying vanities,
but as for me, in Jehovah do I trust.
8 Let me exult and be joyful in thy lovingkindness,
who sawest mine affliction,
and tookest notice of the troubles of my soul,
9 And didst not enthrall me under the hand of the enemy,
but didst plant my feet in a broad place.

10 Have pity upon me, Jehovah, for I am in trouble ;
mine eye is fallen in for sorrow,
my soul and my body [are confounded].
11 For my life is consumed with heaviness,
and my years with sighing ;
my strength breaks down because of my guilt,
and my bones are fallen away.
12 I am the butt of insult to all my foes,
and to my neighbours a shaking of the head,
and a terror unto all my familiar friends ;
they that see me without flee away from me.
13 I am cut off, like a dead man, from remembrance,
I am become like a vessel left to perish.
14 For I hear the backbiting of many,
cause for terror is on all sides ;
now that they conspire together against me
their devising is how to take away my life.

15 And I—on thee, Jehovah, have I trusted ;
I have said, Thou art my God.
16 My times are in thy hand ;
rid me out of the hand of mine enemies and from my pursuers.
17 Make thy face to shine upon thy servant ;
save me for thy lovingkindness.
18 Let me not be shamed, O Jehovah, for I have called upon thee ;
let the ungodly be shamed, and put to silence in Sheól.
19 Let the lying lips become mute,
which speak arrogantly against the righteous
in haughtiness and scorn.

20 How plenteous is thy goodness, Jehovah,
which thou hast treasured up for those that fear thee,
which thou dost practise unto them that take refuge in thee
before the sons of men !

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21 Thou coverest them in the covert of thy face
from slanderers among men :
thou treasurest them in a bower against the accusing of tongues.
22 Blessed be Jehovah !
for he hath made passing great his lovingkindness unto me in a fenced city.
23 And I—I had said in mine alarm,
I am cut away from before thine eyes :
but surely thou heardest the voice of my beseeching
when I cried for help unto thee.
24 O love Jehovah, all ye his devout ones :
Jehovah keeps faithfulness,
and abundantly recompenses him that deals haughtily.
25 Be courageous and let your heart gather strength,
all ye that wait for Jehovah.

2–4 These verses are copied, with some variations, in lxxi. 1–3. Strange enough, as they are full of the conventional phraseology of the psalms of supplication.

6 Theodoret sees here a reference to past deliverances as the ground of present confidence (and so in *vv.* 8, 9). But the perfect of confidence is here more natural and forcible than that of history.—— **Into thy hand,** i.e. into thy providential care. A more tender expression than 'thy hands' (Sept., Luke). —— **My breath.** Heb. *rūkhī*. Comp. Job x. 12, 'and thy care (or, providence) hath preserved my breath.' 'My spirit' facilitates a confusion with 'my soul' (as in Theodoret); the poet means 'the breath (*rūakh*) of life' (Gen. vi. 17; cf. Lam. iv. 20, Gen. ii. 7).—— **God of truth.** Almost equivalent to 'God of faithfulness' (Deut. xxxii. 4). God's 'faithfulness' is the revelation of His essential 'truth.'

7 Imitated in Jon. ii. 9. **Lying vanities,** the opposite of 'God of truth.' Hitzig, 'der wesenlos [unreal] nichtigen.' But the qualifying word may mean 'useless,' and so 'disappointing.'

10–13 See introd. **Have pity,** &c. Faith grounded on past experiences revived the psalmist's courage for a moment. But his sensitive nature cannot long resist the trials without and within to which it is subjected.

11 **My guilt** (or, mine iniquity). 'My punishment' is also possible; cf. xl. 13, Ezek. iv. 5, Gen. iv. 13 (?), xix. 15. This combination of senses of '*āvōn* reminds of the twofold sense of Assyr. *annu* (= Heb. *aven*) —1, sin, guilt (Deluge-story, iv. 15, v.l.); 2, penalty (Annals of Assurbanipal, viii. 10).

12*a* Lit., 'I am (the subject of) insult (proceeding) from all my foes.'

12*b* **A shaking of the head** (as xliv. 15). The text has 'exceedingly,' though Delitzsch and De Witt (after Michaelis and Dathe) assume a right to render 'a burden.' Comp. the descriptions in xxxviii. 12, lv. 14, lxxxviii. 9, 19, Job xix. 13, Isa. liii. 3 *b*.

14 Lines 1 and 2 come from Jer. xx. 21, and being at once unrhythmical and but ill adapted to the context, are possibly a later insertion and substituted for something else. It is of course hopeless to restore the original words, which were probably already illegible in the time of the editor. See on lxxix. 5.——**The backbiting of many** (comp. *v.* 21). Or, perhaps, 'a stealthily spreading evil report.' In Jer. xx. 10, some understand the word here rendered 'backbiting' of the hostile talk, others of the injurious reflections upon character, of which

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the prophet was the subject. In the former case, the 'hostile talk' is explained by the 'Let us inform against him' which follows. But usage is in favour of the latter view. Etymologically *dibba* seems to mean that which 'creeps' from mouth to mouth (comp. Prov. xxv. 10), though Hitzig explains the 'creeping' or rather 'soft treading' as an analogical metaphor for 'whispering.' The limitation to '*evil* report' comes from Old Testament usage; yet from Gen. xxxvii. 2, where *rā'āh* is added epexegetically to *dibbāthām*, we see that the original meaning of *dibbāh* (like that of Syriac *ṭebâ*; see Matt. iv. 24, ix. 26 Pesh.) is simply 'report.'——**Cause for fear,** &c. Heb. *māgōr missābîb*. A favourite expression of Jeremiah, reflecting his timid and retiring character.

16 **My times,** i.e. the crises, the 'changes and chances' of my life. Browning glorifies this passage by intertwining with it the idea of development (*Rabbi Ben Ezra*, st. 1). The psalmist merely thinks of life as a series of hairbreadth escapes.

17 **Thy servant.** This modest though glorious title is never applied to himself by Jeremiah, but only to Israel (Jer. xxx. 10, xlvi. 27, 28; comp. Ezek. xxxvii. 25). May not this be at least a faint sign of date? The psalmist is hardly influenced by the great prophecy in II. Isaiah. Comp. on xix. 12.

21 **The covert of thy face.** A lovely variation upon the phrase in xxvii. 5. The shining of God's face (like brooding wings, lxi. 5) shelters believers from the storms of human passion.——**From slanderers among men.** An exact parallel, at least in idea, to 'against the accusing of tongues' (comp. *v.* 14 *a*), gained, it is true, at the expense of an emendation. But Hebrew text must surely be wrong, though R.V., giving it a gentle twist, renders, not quite as unsuitably as most, 'from the plottings of man.' [So too Dathe, and Gesenius as an alternative.] A.V.'s rendering, however, 'from the pride of men' (derived from Kimchi) is also a plausible guess; see Isa. xl. 4, Heb., where 'the ridges'—seemingly a cognate word—might be a figurative expression for pride; cf. Hab. ii. 4 (Heb.), Ps. cxxxi. 2 (Heb.) But a figurative phrase like this is improbable here. See crit. note.——**From the accusing of tongues.** Sept. excellently, ἀπὸ ἀντιλογίας γλωσσῶν; 'strife' of A.V. and R.V. is too vague.

22 **In a fenced city** (see crit. note); i.e. (if the words are to be taken literally) either by protecting me in it when besieged, or by bringing me safely into it (comp. lv. 19, line 1). We may also render 'like (in the manner of) a fenced city' (comp. Isa. xxxiii. 21, or Jer. i. 18). In any case, the expression 'hath made passing great,' &c., favours a reference to some exceptional event in the speaker's history (see on iv. 4); similarly the next verse.

23 Borrowed by the author of Jon. ii. 5. Comp. xxx. 7 *a*.——**In mine alarm.** Or, 'in my trepidation, scare, anxiety.' 'In my haste' (A.V.; Kay) substitutes a weak secondary for the strong primary meaning. Better Keble, 'in my wild hurrying heart.'

25 A verse for the chorus; comp. xxxii. 11. A seldom noticed quotation occurs in 1 Cor. xvi. 13 (see Sept.)

PSALM XXXII.

THE prologue (*vv.* 1, 2; comp. *v.* 11) strikes the keynote of the poem—the happiness of the truly righteous, that is, of the forgiven man. The strain then becomes first lyric and afterwards didactic. The lyric portion, which describes a fact of personal experience, is naturally the finer. As

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in the two partly parallel psalms (vi., xxxviii.), the speaker is a pious Israelite who represents his people (Israel as it should be, and to a reasonable extent actually is): in short, we have here, principally though not exclusively, a national psalm. The way to obtain forgiveness is to confess the sin which has displeased God; this is certainly the second of the leading ideas of the psalm. It is, however, not merely an idea, but a fact. One great 'time of distress'—of distress occasioned by national sin—is over; God has visibly forgiven His penitent people (comp. lxxxv. 2, 3), and every 'devout man' feels the more assured in view of the possible recurrence of great national dangers (*v.* 6). It was not all at once that the singer and his brethren connected the ideas of sin and punishment, or rather of definite sins with definite punishment. At first they were like Job in the early period of his sufferings; they denied that God could have aught against them. Afterwards they came to recognise the existence of sins which no human eye could detect (xix. 13), and then what had been felt an unmerited punishment became a humbly accepted chastening. This is the second of the three Beatitude-psalms in Book I.

1 Happy he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.
2 Happy the man to whom Jehovah reckons not iniquity,
and in whose spirit there is no guile.

3 When I kept silence, my bones wasted away
through my roaring all the day long:
4 For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me,
my sap was turned as in the droughts of summer.

5 My sin I made known unto thee,
and mine iniquity I covered not;
I said, I will confess my transgressions unto Jehovah,
and thou—thou tookest away the guilt of my sin.

6 For this let all men of love pray unto thee in time of distress,
when the flood of the great waters is heard;
unto such an one they shall not reach.
7 Thou art a covert for me; thou wilt guard me from trouble:
* * wilt thou surround me.

8 I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way thou art to go;
I will counsel thee, keeping mine eye upon thee.
9 Be ye not like unto horse or mule, without understanding,
who must be curbed with bit and bridle,
till he can be brought unto thee.
10 Many pains hath the ungodly,
but he that trusts in Jehovah—
with lovingkindness will he surround him.

11 Be joyful in Jehovah, and exult, ye righteous;
and ring out your gladness, all ye upright in heart.

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1, 2 Observe the three terms for sin (compare *v.* 5 and li. 3–7, Ex. xxxiv. 7), which describe it (1) as a breaking loose from God, (2) as a missing of the right aim, (3) as perversion or distortion. To each of these a special term for forgiveness corresponds, (1) the taking away (of sin), *nāsā*, like *αἴρειν*, having a double sense, (2) its covering, or, less probably (on *kippēr*, see Isaiah, vol. ii. index), its obliteration, (3) its non-imputation in the great account. The last of these three terms for forgiveness struck home to St. Paul (see Rom. iv. 6–9), who quotes *vv.* 1, 2 *a* to show that human righteousness in the sight of God is not legal but imputed. He might also have quoted xix. 13, where it is clear that the 'absolution' or 'acquittal' is based upon the non-imputation of 'unknown' faults. In one sense, the sins cannot but exist; in another sense, they are non-existent, because God does not call them to mind (evidently a popular mode of conceiving of forgiveness; see 2 Sam. xix. 19, 20). ——**No guile**; that is, according to most, no attempt to make oneself out to be better than one is. This is, perhaps, a little too special. Sincerity is with the psalmists a criterion of goodness; a 'guileless spirit' is equivalent to an upright character. If the set of the will is towards God and his moral law, a man is 'guileless;' if away from God, he is 'treacherous' or 'faithless.' It took the psalmist some time to find out that he was really 'treacherous.' His sin was not a mean one, like David's in 2 Sam. xi.

3 The psalmist **kept silence**, but only so far as concerns confession of sin. To expunge 'my roaring' (cf. xxii. 2) with Ley only simplifies the passage by weakening it.

4 **Turned**; cf. 'dried up like a potsherd' (xxii. 16).

6 **In time of distress.** The received text has, 'at a time of finding,' or 'of hitting the mark' (comp. Prov. viii. 35, 36, where 'wisdom' is represented as an aim which may be 'found' or 'missed'), so that Sept's. *ἐν εὐθέτῳ καιρῷ* (similarly Pesh. renders) would seem a good paraphrase. The mark is surely God himself—no mere gift of God;[1] whatever we think of Lagarde's derivation of *El*, God to the psalmists is their mark and their prize. To me, however, the implied possibility of missing the goal of life seems out of place in this connexion. If it were 'let all ungodly men,' or 'let all that are backsliders,' &c., it might pass, but for a *khāsīd*, i.e. one who responds to God's covenant-love, can there be a time which is not a 'finding time'? This consideration, joined to the strangeness of the form of expression in the Hebrew, leads me to accept Lagarde's very natural correction. See crit. note.—— **When . . . is heard.** The correction involved hangs together with the preceding one; the received reading is best rendered, 'surely, when great waters overflow,' &c. The 'overflow' of the 'great waters' may be simply a figure for any sore trouble, but the analogy of Isa. viii. 7, 8, xxviii. 15, Jer. xlvii. 2 (cf. Dan. ix. 26) suggests that the danger to Israel's national existence from her foreign foes (Assyria and Chaldæa) is meant, as perhaps also in cxxiv. 4, 5. The exemption promised to the *khāsīd* corresponds to that of the 'believer' in Isa. xxviii. 17 (comp. the false boast in *v.* 15).——Those who like may transpose the (,) and (;) at the end of lines 1 and 2 of this verse.

7 *b* 'With shouts of deliverance' begins the line in the received text. The Hebrew phrase, however, though plausibly defended by Delitzsch, is difficult, and so too is the meaning—to be 'surrounded' by one's own 'shouts,' is an expression which has no parallel. Instead of 'shouts' we should rather expect

[1] De Wette and Hupfeld understand 'forgiveness' or the like. The ancient Rabbis thought of 'a wife,' 'the Tora,' or 'death.' See Wünsche, *Der bab. Talmud*, i. 23.

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something from the heavenly world, such as God's 'lovingkindness' (*v.* 10) or His 'favour' (*v.* 13). To answer this by referring to such phrases as 'girding with joy' (see xxx. 12, lxv. 13) does not hit the mark. But though the received reading is impossible, a poet like Keble, with gentle violence, can transmute though not translate it—

> Thou fill'st with songs of liberty
> The glad air as I go.

8 **I will instruct thee,** &c. A promise, first, of moral teaching, and next, of protection in the path of duty. It is disputed whether Jehovah (so Tholuck, Olshausen, Ewald, Hitzig; cf. xvi. 7 *a*, xxv. 8, 12) or the psalmist (Calvin, Hupfeld, Delitzsch; cf. xxxiv. 12, li. 15) be the speaker. The figure of the 'horse or mule' in the next verse, and the reference in the present to a vigilant and powerful Eye (comp. Jer. xxiv. 6, and on xxxiii. 18), seem to favour the first view. Would a 'wise man,' like him who speaks here in the tone of Prov. i.–vii., have asserted such an absolute supremacy over his pupil as this verse describes? Whichever view be adopted, the transition, it must be owned, is extremely harsh. One almost regrets the insertion of *vv.* 8–10.——**I will counsel thee,** &c. A.V.'s rendering is appropriate (the soft guidance of the eye being contrasted with the harsh constraint of the rein), but too bold. See crit. note.

9 **Horse or mule.** Israel is likened to domestic animals in Hos. x. 11, xi. 4, Deut. xxxii. 15, &c., and contrasted with them, somewhat in the manner of our psalmist, in Isa. i. 3.——**Who must be curbed,** &c. A beautiful antithesis. The horse or mule, at first so wild, is curbed with bit and bridle, and can then be led along, as quiet as a lamb (Isa. liii. 7), to its master. The received text is admittedly very difficult. Hupfeld renders, 'whose trappings consist in bit and bridle for curbing it, (because) it comes not near unto thee:' Delitzsch, 'with bit and bridle, its trappings, must it be curbed, else it comes not near unto thee.' But 'trappings' puts force upon the Hebrew; there is also a difficulty in the construction of the last clause, which Olshausen even gives up as unintelligible. One way out of the maze might yet be suggested; 'ornament' (so the Hebrew word, *'edyō*, rendered 'trappings' above, strictly means) might refer to the 'soul,' i.e. the feelings and longings of the animal or non-human 'soul' being described by a term also applicable (see on ciii. 5) to the human, to throw contempt on the splendour of human pride (comp. xlix. 21). In this case we should render, 'Whose spirit (or, wildness) must be curbed,' &c. But the awkward word *'edyō* is certainly not what the poet wrote. Bickell boldly omits it, on the plea of metrical necessity, but the Hebrew still remains difficult. In justification of my own reading, see crit. note.

10 **Pains,** viz. physical ones (as Ex. iii. 7, and partly Isa. liii. 3, 4). Here in the sense of 'plagues' (Sept. *μάστιγες*).

11 A verse for the chorus, like xxxi. 25. Note how the O.T. religion is throughout one of joy (of 'ringing joy'); even in Nehemiah (viii. 10) we read, 'The joy of Jehovah is your bulwark.' The final ruin of the outward forms of Judaism alone destroyed this joyousness.

PSALM XXXIII.

A COLLECTION of twenty-two distichs; the number dictated by that of the Hebrew letters. (So Pss. xxxviii., xxxix., cxlvi., Lam. v.) The distichs known are grouped in pairs, except at the beginning and the end, where we meet with triplets; and there is a clearly marked division at *v.* 12.

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1 Ring out, ye righteous, your gladness in Jehovah;
for the upright praise is seemly.
2 Give thanks unto Jehovah with the lyre;
with a ten-stringed harp make melody unto him.
3 Sing unto him a new song;
play cunningly with sonorous tone.
4 For the word of Jehovah is straight,
and all his doing is in faithfulness.
5 He loves righteousness and justice:
the earth is full of the lovingkindness of Jehovah.
6 By the word of Jehovah were the heavens made,
and all their host by the breath of his mouth,
7 Who gathered the waters of the sea as in a bottle,
who laid up the floods in store-chambers.
8 Let all the earth fear Jehovah;
of him let all the world's inhabitants be in awe.
9 For *he* spake, and it came into being;
he commanded, and there it stood.
10 Jehovah has brought the purpose of the nations to nought,
he has made the designs of the peoples of none effect.
11 The purpose of Jehovah shall stand for ever,
the designs of his heart unto all generations.

12 Happy the nation whose God is Jehovah,
the people he has chosen for a heritage unto him.
13 Out of heaven looks down Jehovah,
he beholds all the sons of men:
14 From the place of his habitation he gazes
on all the inhabitants of the earth—
15 He who forms all their hearts together,
who gives heed to all their works.
16 A king is not saved by a great army,
a hero does not deliver himself by great power:
17 A horse is vain for saving help,
neither causeth he any to escape by his great strength.
18 Behold, the eye of Jehovah is upon them that fear him,
upon them that hope for his lovingkindness;
19 To deliver their soul from death,
and to keep them alive in famine.
20 Our soul waits for Jehovah:
he is our help and our shield.
21 For our heart shall rejoice in him,
because we have trusted in his holy name.
22 Let thy lovingkindness, Jehovah, brood over us,
according as we have hoped for thee.

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1 Comp. xcvii. 12, cxlvii. 1, and see on cxi. 1.

2 *b* So cxliv. 9. Comp. xcii. 4, where the ten-stringed *nébhel* (Sept. generally νάβλα or ψαλτήριον, but twice ὄργανον) seems distinguished from the less perfect instrument in common use, which perhaps had fewer strings (comp. the Greek tetrachord). Against Josephus, who states that the νάβλα had twelve φθογγοί, see Grätz's *Commentary*, pp. 67–71, which gives the Jewish traditions. The best description of the *nébhel* and the *kinnōr*, bringing them into connexion with the Assyrian and Egyptian delineations, will however be found in Delitzsch's note on the subject, as rewritten in his 4th edit. (now translated). See also Wilkinson (*Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*, ii. 296), who complains of the confused accounts of Israelitish music, and compare Rowbotham's *Hist. of Music*, i. 221.

3 **A new song.** So in five other places; see especially xcvi. 1, xcviii. 1, evidently based on Isa. xlii. 10. The deliverance from Babylon seemed to dim the splendour of all previous divine interpositions (Isa. xliii. 18).

5 *b* What a noble expansion of the range of the divine quality of covenant-lovingkindness (see on iv. 4)! Comp. cxix. 64, which is decisive against Hitzig's rendering 'the land' (i.e. Judah).

6 Comp. *v.* 9, cxlviii. 5, Isa. xlviii. 13. **By the word of Jehovah,** &c. Alluding probably to Gen. i. 6, &c. The creatorship of Jehovah is a favourite subject with II. Isaiah (e.g. Isa. xlii. 5, xlv. 12, 18, xlviii. 13), but without the conception of the agency of the divine word. The 'word' of prophetic revelation meets us often in pre-Exile writings; the creative 'word' in this passage only, which is therefore (as also cxlviii. 5, which presupposes this use of 'word') presumably a reflexion of the ויאמר אלהים of Gen. i. Sirach took up the expression and extended its reference: 'by His word,' he says, 'all things consist' (Ecclus. xliii. 26). Ewald,[1] from whom I take this reference, adds one to Wisd. xviii. 15, 16, but this splendid personification of the judicial 'word' of God has its antecedents in Isa. ix. 8 [7], Hos. vi. 5. The expression is anthropomorphic, and is based on the inseparable connexion of language and thought; it might mean simply God's plan (comp. 'he said in his heart' = he thought), but the context and the usage of the original phrase in Gen. i. show that it rather describes symbolically the effectual working out of God's plans and purposes, a mystic power being attributed to sacred words in the primitive stage of thought. Need it be added that the psalm-passage is not to be used as a proof-text for 'creation out of nothing' (2 Macc. vii. 28)? Poetic feeling and not later theology must be the guide of the interpreter. Cf. H. Schultz, *Alttestamentliche Theologie*, ed. 2, p. 527.

7 **As in a bottle** (or, wine-skin, ἀσκός; see on cxix. 83). This is the rendering of the oldest authorities (see crit. note). Most, however, pronouncing differently, 'like a harvest-heap.' So the Massoretic critics, supposing a reference to the passage of the Red Sea (Ex. xv. 8); but the context and the parallel line support the rival view. With Ewald we may compare Job xxxviii. 8, 'Or who shut up the sea with doors?' That the sea means the 'waters above the heavens' (Hitzig) is less likely, in spite of Job ix. 8, 'and treadeth upon the high places of the sea' (parallel to 'the heavens'), and Job xxxviii. 37, where 'the pitchers of heaven' = the clouds.——**In store-chambers.** So in Job xxxviii. 22, 'the store-chambers of the snow,' and 'of the hail;' and in Jer. x. 13 of the wind (cf. cxxxv. 7).

10 **Has brought.** Or, 'bringeth' (comp. *vv.* 13, 14); less pro-

[1] *Geschichte Christus'*, p. 98; comp. *Die Lehre der Bibel von Gott*, iii. 2, 83–4.

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bably, as the 'new song' (*v.* 3) requires a justification.——**The purpose of the nations,** i.e. the Chaldæans, the Edomites, and all other enemies of the nationality of Israel; or perhaps those referred to in lxxxiii. 4–9.——**The designs of his heart,** as in Jer. xxix. 11, Isa. lv. 8, 9, are God's plans of mercy for Israel, and through Israel for the world.

12 Comp. cxliv. 15 and (see also *v.* 20) Deut. xxxiii. 29.

13 Comp. xi. 4, xiv. 2, cii. 20.

15 **He who forms,** &c. So Zech. xii. 1; comp. cxxxix. 13. Not merely the human body is the work of the Creator, but the mind and conscience, the intellectual, moral, and emotional nature of man, and not only of man, but of individual men ('together' virtually. = *κατὰ μόνας*, as Sept. and Symm. render). Individual life has now fully realised its existence; the man has fully emerged from the family and the tribe. Were the psalmist a philosopher, we should say that he inclines to Creationism rather than to Traducianism, but he is far removed from scholastic theories (see Schultz, referred to on *v.* 6).

16, 17 Note the parallelism between lines 1 and 3, 2 and 4. **Is not saved . . . for saving help** (as xcviii. 2). Comp., besides Deut. xxxiii. 29, Zech. ix. 9, 'he is just and saved,' i.e. victorious; victory being a gift from on high (xxi. 6). These verses give a generalisation from facts of recent experience. Cf. cxlvii. 10 (xx. 8).

18, 19 **The eye of Jehovah.** A lovely symbol of 'providence.' Comp. xxxii. 8, Ezra v. 5. So *pāqad* 'to visit' = care for (so often used of God; comp. on viii. 5) is etymologically 'to open the eyes wide (upon).'——**Upon them that hope,** &c. Comp. cxlvii. 11 *b*.——**From death,** i.e. probably from pestilence (Jer. xv. 2). War, famine, and pestilence, the three great outward dangers of ancient Israel (2 Sam. xxiv. 3). War has been mentioned in the last distich.

20 **Waits.** A different word from that in xxvii. 14, and only found again in cvi. 13. But the proper name read by the Massoretic critics Hakaliah (Neh. i. 1, x. 2) should probably be pronounced Hakke-le-yah (i.e. Wait for Jehovah); comp. Elyoenai (see on xxv. 15).——**Our help,** &c. Comp. cxv. 9, 10, 11 (and on *v.* 12, above).

21 **In his holy name.** 'Holy' = divine (see on xxx. 5). The context must decide which of the elements of God's 'holy' nature is in the writer's mind. In xxx. 5 it is His forgivingness; elsewhere (e.g. Isa. x. 20, xxxi. 1) it is His almightiness. Here it seems to be primarily His power which excites trust (*v.* 20 *b*), but a power which is wielded by love (*v.* 22 *a*).

PSALM XXXIV.

An alphabetic psalm, the first ten verses of which (2–11) have the character of a hymn, the last twelve (12–23) of a sermon. On the structure, see introd. to Ps. xxv., of which this psalm is the counterpart, as well in contents as in form (except in the relative order of the ב and the ע verse). Columba, the apostle of the Picts, had transcribed the Psalter as far as *v.* 10 when the hand of death touched him.

2 I will bless Jehovah at all times;
  his praise shall be continually in my mouth.
3 My soul shall make her boast in Jehovah;
  the afflicted shall hear, and rejoice.
4 Magnify Jehovah with me,
  and let us exalt his name together.

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5 I enquired of Jehovah, and he answered me,
and delivered me from all my terrors.
6 O look unto him, and ye shall beam with joy,
and your face cannot be abashed.
7 This afflicted one cried, and Jehovah heard,
and saved him out of all his troubles.
8 The angel of Jehovah encamps round about them that fear him,
and sets them at liberty.
9 Taste ye and see that Jehovah is good:
happy the man that takes refuge in him.
10 Fear Jehovah, ye his holy ones;
For they that fear him want nothing.
11 Young lions pine and suffer hunger,
but they that enquire after Jehovah cannot want anything good.
12 Come, (my) sons, hearken unto me,
I will teach you the fear of Jehovah.
13 Who is the man that delights in life,
that loves many days, to see good fortune?
14 Guard thy tongue from evil,
and thy lips from speaking guile.
15 Depart from evil, and do good;
seek peace, and pursue it.
17 The face of Jehovah is against them that do evil,
to cut off their memorial from the earth.
16 The eyes of Jehovah are towards the righteous,
and his ears are towards their cry.
18 They cry, and Jehovah hearkens,
and delivers them out of all their troubles.
19 Jehovah is nigh unto the broken in heart,
and saves them that are crushed in spirit.
20 Many are the misfortunes of the righteous,
but Jehovah delivers him out of all:
21 He keeps all his bones,
not one of them is broken.
22 Misfortune shall slay the ungodly,
and the haters of the righteous shall be dealt with as guilty.
23 Jehovah sets free the soul of his servants
and none shall be dealt with as guilty that take refuge in him.

5 **From all my terrors.** Comp. xxxi. 14, 'Cause for terror is on all sides.'

6 **O look unto him,** &c. Following Sept. and Pesh. The text has, 'They looked . . . and were. and their faces,' &c. Comp. 'By thy light do we see light' (xxxvi. 10).

7 **This afflicted one.** Does the psalmist point to some particular poor man whose history was well known (cf. Eccles. ix. 14, 15), or (less probably) to himself (εἰτελῆ

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ὄντα με καὶ προβατέα, Theodoret)? Does he not rather mean any and every member of the jubilant church?

8 **The angel of Jehovah.** This may be the 'angel of Yahvè,' who in parts of Genesis, Exodus, and Judges, which represent a naïve and strongly anthropomorphic theology, is a personal revelation of Yahvè (cf. on cxxxix. 7–10). It is safer, however, both here and in xxxv. 5, 6, to explain the phrase of any one of the angelic host whom God may send for the protection of a believer (or, believers). Comp. the use of 'l'angel di Dio' in Dante and the *Fioretti*. We might also render 'an angel of Jehovah,' but this would suggest that the angels were individuals. No doubt in the visions of the Book of Daniel the angels are individualised; but our psalmist is still at the earlier stage of thought in angelology. (May we infer from 'my God hath sent his angel,' in Dan. vi. 22, that the stories in Daniel are of earlier origin than the visions?)——**Encamps round about.** Comp. Mark v. 9, 'What is *thy* name?' 'Legion; for *we* are many.' It is the leader of an angelic host who is meant.

9 **Taste ye.** So Prov. xxxi. 18, 'She tastes (A.V. perceiveth) that her gain is good.' A popular idiom; there is no reference to that higher food 'che non gustata non s'intende mai' (Dante, *Par.* iii. 38).

10 **His holy ones,** viz. as members of the holy people' (Deut. vii. 6, Isa. lxii. 12, Dan. viii. 24, xii. 7, and elsewhere in Daniel), and therefore standing in the closest relation to Jehovah. Moral perfection is of course no part of the idea. Comp. on xvi. 3.

12 (**My**) **sons.** The affectionate style of the 'wise men' towards their disciples; comp. Prov. i. 8, ii. 1, &c.

17, 16 These verses are transposed, i.e. the verse beginning with פ should precede that with ע (as in Lam. ii., iv., and in the alphabetic poem at the end of Prov. xxxi. according to the Septuagint). The common arrangement produces an absurdity in *v.* 17. Such transpositions are (need it be said?) not unfrequently necessary in ancient texts (see on xii. 9, 8, Isa. viii. 22, 21), and we sometimes feel certain of them (see Nowack on Prov. iv. 16–19). The study of the Septuagint will confirm this statement. It may seem strange that the *Pe*-stanza should precede that beginning with *Ayin*, but remember that *Pe* = mouth, and *Ayin* = eye, so that the order of these was a matter of indifference. The same phenomenon occurs in Lam. ii.–iv.

17 **To cut off their memorial,** i.e. their name (xxx. 5)—a terrible threat to those who identified the continuance of existence with the perpetuation of the family. See Job xviii. 17.

19 **The broken in heart . . . crushed in spirit,** i.e. the despondent; comp. the same or similar phrases in li. 19 (where penitence is also implied), cix. 16, 22, Prov. xv. 13, Isa. lvii. 15 (note), lxvi. 2.

PSALM XXXV.

THE psalm falls into three parts, closing at *v.* 10, *v.* 18, and *v.* 28, but it is only the first two in which some logical development can be traced—the last repeats with some variation expressions in the earlier portion. It is a prayer for deliverance from base and cruel persecutors, who partly consist of Israelites, partly of foreigners (see on *v.* 15); cf. introd. to Ps. xxii. The psalmist himself may be a leading Israelite, who suffered more than others, and draws some of his details from personal experience, if it is not safer to regard the individualising features as poetical ornament. At any rate this is in some sense undoubtedly a national psalm, and we can on

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this ground more easily excuse its imprecations. Israel was the vessel to which was committed the precious treasure of the true religion. If at any point of history imprecation was justified, it was justified in times when the fate of pure religion seemed trembling in the balance. Note, however, with Bishop Alexander [1] the 'gentle undertones, breathings of beneficent love,' which relieve the fierceness of the imprecatory passages.

This is one of a group of psalms which have numerous points of contact, both among themselves and with Jeremiah and Lamentations. Comp. with Hitzig *v.* 6 with Jer. xxiii. 12 ; *v.* 12 with Jer. xviii. 20 ; *vv.* 21 *b*, 25 with Lam. ii. 16 ; and the expressions rendered 'my fall' (*v.* 15) and 'them that implead me' (*v.* 1) with Jer. xx. 10, xviii. 19. Besides which cf. *vv.* 4, 26 with xl. 15 ; *v.* 17 with xxii. 21 ; *vv.* 17, 18 with xxii. 23, 26, xl. 10, 11 ; *vv.* 21, 27 with xl. 16, 17 ; *v.* 12 with xxxviii. 21 ; *vv.* 14, 15 with xxxviii. 7, 18 ; *vv.* 21, 27 with xl. 16, 17 ; *v.* 13 with lxix. 11, 12 ; *v.* 28 with lxxi. 24.

1 Plead my cause, Jehovah, with them that implead me ;
fight against them that fight against me.
2 Take hold of shield and buckler,
and stand up as my helper :
3 Draw spear and dirk to meet my pursuers ;
say unto my soul, I am thy salvation.
4 Put to shame and dishonoured be they that seek my soul,
turned backward and abashed be they that devise my hurt ;
5 Be they as chaff before the wind,
and the angel of Jehovah pursuing them ;
6 Be their way dark and slippery,
and the angel of Jehovah thrusting them :—
7 Since without cause have they hid for me their net,
without cause have they dug a pit for my soul :—
8 Ruin beset him unawares,
and his net which he hath hidden, let it catch himself !
9 And my soul shall exult in Jehovah :
full joyous shall it be at his salvation ;
10 All my bones shall say,
Jehovah, who is like unto thee,
who deliverest the afflicted from a stronger than he,
yea, the afflicted and needy from him that spoils him !

11 There arise unjust witnesses ;
of things that I know not do they question me.
12 They reward me evil for good ;
bereavement is come to my soul.
13 But I—when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth,
I afflicted my soul with fasting,
and my prayer—mayest thou recompense it into mine own bosom.

[1] *Bampton Lectures on the Psalms*, p. 53.

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14 I went about as though it had been my friend or my brother,
I bowed down in mourning weeds, as one that lamented for his mother.
15 But at my fall they rejoice, and gather together :
aliens whom I know not gather together against me,
and cry out unceasingly ;
16 Among profane mockers
they gnash upon me with their teeth.
17 Lord, how long wilt thou look on ?
recover my soul from their roaring,
my dear life from the young lions.
18 I will give thanks unto thee in the great congregation,
I will praise thee among much people.

19 Let not them rejoice over me that are for a lie mine enemies,
they that for no cause hate me—let them not wink with the eye.
20 For it is not peace that they speak ;
but they frame deceitful plots against the quiet in the land ;
21 And they open their mouth wide upon me,
they say, Aha, aha, our eye has seen it.
22 Thou seest it, Jehovah; keep not silence,
Lord, be not far from me.
23 Rouse thee and awake for my just right,
my God and my Lord, for my cause.
24 Right me, according to thy righteousness, Jehovah my God,
and let them not rejoice over me.
25 Let them not say in their heart, Aha, our lust (is given us);
let them not say, We have swallowed him up.
26 Put to shame and abashed together
be they that rejoice at my misfortune :
clothed with shame and dishonour
be they that show me insolence.
27 Let them ring out a glad cry
that have pleasure in my righteous cause :
and continually, Jehovah be magnified,
who delights in the welfare of his servant ;
28 And my tongue shall speak musingly of thy righteousness,
all the day long of thy praise.

1 **Plead my cause.** A favourite legal figure explained by the poet in the next line. War was regarded as an appeal to the divine justice, and conversely divine judgments were a kind of 'fighting from heaven.' Comp. Isa. xxxiv. 5.

2 **As my helper.** Not 'for mine help,' as A.V. and R.V. The shade of meaning is not too delicate even for an English reader. God's nature is to help ; 'stand up' then 'in their essential character.' This is the first example of the so-called *Beth essentiæ*—the 'in' which is prefixed to an *essential* quality ; see

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xxxvii. 20, xxxix. 6, lxviii. 5 (?), liv. 6, cxviii. 7, and consult Müller, *Hebrew Syntax*, § 52; Ewald, *Lehrbuch der hebr. Sprache*, § 217 *b*, 299 *b*, *Gram. Arab.*, § 583.

3 **And dirk** (so Horsley). The ordinary rendering is 'and stop (the way), which is doubtless intended by the vowel-points but which does not suit the following preposition, and is decidedly less natural than the rendering adopted. The view that *s-g-r* is a 'weapon of war' is already mentioned by Kimchi, and in fact has the authority of Parchon, and among the moderns of Drusius, Grotius, Vitringa, Michaelis, Ewald, Bickell, and our own Kennicott, who remarks, 'סגר or סגור is the σάγαρις or scimitar; הריק influences the word as well as חנית "the lance."' I adopt this view, pointing סָגֹר with Bickell. The σάγαρις was the usual weapon of the Scythians (Herod. i. 214), and Sayce compares it to the short dagger worn by the warriors on the 'Hittite' sculptures. It was also used by the Persians and other races of the interior of Asia (Xenophon, *Anab.* iv. 4; *Cyrop.* i. 2, 9, &c.) The objection of course is that the Jews are not known to have employed it. It is hardly sufficient to answer that the Hebrew literature is most incompletely preserved; we have such frequent references to weapons that a ἅπ. λεγ. in the pre-Exile literature is improbable. It is not likely that the Jews picked up the word (and the object?) during the Scythian incursions, for the strong probability is that the Scythians spared the territory of Judah. I can only suppose either that this is an archaic word, used long ago in the times of the Hittite empire (?) in Palestine, and revived by a writer fond of archaisms, or that it was picked up in the early part of the cosmopolitan period of the Jews during or after the Exile.

5 *b* **The angel of Jehovah.** No common angel, but the leader of a host is meant (see on xxxiv. 8). ——**Pursuing them.** A bolder statement than in 5 *a* (cf. Isa. xvii. 13); but from the winds to the angels there is but a step (civ. 4). The Korán (lxxix. 1) has the same conception in a more advanced stage—'By those (angels) who tear out (souls) violently.' The Mas. text makes 'pursuing' and 'thrusting' (see next verse) change places to the detriment of the imagery. The correction is suggested by the parallel passage, Jer. xxxiii. 12. Comp. also the displacement in *v.* 7 (crit. note).

6 **Dark and slippery.** Imitating Jer., *l.c.*

8 Here the foes are regarded collectively. Comp. line 1 with Isa. xlvii. 11, and line 2 with vii. 16, ix. 16. The text gives a very feeble third line—'with ruin let him fall into it'—probably a marginal gloss explaining in what the 'ruin' spoken of in line 1 consisted. Segond's rendering, 'qu'ils y tombent et périssent,' is arbitrary. I need not chronicle the various desperate resources of ancient and modern interpreters.

10 **All my bones,** &c., i.e. my entire being, body and soul. Comp. li. 10, and see on vi. 3.——**Who is like unto thee?** viz. among the gods or supernatural beings (see on lxxxvi. 8, and cf. lxxi. 19, lxxxix. 9, also Ex. xv. 11, and the proper names Micaiah, Michael). The question expresses a believer's strong conviction that his God, if not the only supernatural Power, is yet supreme, and beyond comparison great.

11 **Unjust witnesses** (μάρτυρες ἄδικοι, Sept.), equivalent to the 'false witnesses' of xxvii. 12 (see note). The same phrase occurs in Ex. xxiii. 1, Deut. xix. 16. Persecution is compared to bringing a false accusation against the righteous, in accordance with the figure in *v.* 1.

13 Cf. lxix. 11, 12. **My clothing was sackcloth,** the 'sackcloth of my prayer,' in Baruch's fuller phraseology (Bar. iv. 20).——**I afflicted my soul** (i.e. as a means of atonement). This characteristic ritual phrase seems already on the road to supplanting the simpler expres-

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sion 'to fast.' I say 'on the road,' for the poet at once explains it by the words 'with fasting.' Comp. my note on Isa. lviii. 3. ——**And my prayer,** &c. 'My prayer was so full of unselfish brotherly love that it deserved a recompense, or at least a recognition. That which man denies, do thou, O God, vouchsafe to grant!' This involves an easy correction. 'Into my bosom' (i.e. into the folds of the garment used as a pocket) reminds us of lxxix. 12, Jer. xxxii. 18, Isa. lxv. 6, 7. The verse most probably consists of two distichs; it is the taking it for a tristich of parallel lines which has wrought confusion in the exegesis, and led even Delitzsch to think that 'my prayer returned into my bosom' (so he renders the received text) can possibly mean 'I prayed with my head bent on my breast.' If, however, we cling to the text, it seems best to render (comparing the ἀποστραφήσεται of Sept.), 'and my prayer—let it return into mine own bosom,' i.e. let it be recompensed by the great Judge. Less probably Riehm, 'and my prayer returned (empty) into my own bosom (possession),' comparing Matt. x. 13, Luke x. 6.

14 **In mourning.** Lit., 'in black.' Black was the mourning colour with Jews and Arabs, being significant of the infernal regions (Ewald, *Antiquities*, p. 60, n. 5). (It is noted as an exception when certain Caliphs chose white as the mourning hue.)

15 **At my fall.** Literally, 'at my bending to one side;' as xxxviii. 18, Job xviii. 12 (cf. xii. 5), Jer. xx. 10. ——**Aliens.** The text has the strange form *nēkīm*, which might mean 'afflicted ones.' In 2 Sam. v. 6, the taunting Jebusites represent the blind and the lame as a match for David: and Jeremiah might, with some want of simplicity, speak of 'afflicted ones' as thinking themselves strong enough to overthrow him. But, unless the text be infallible, Olshausen's correction is obvious (cf. xviii. 45, 46).

16 **Profane mockers.** 'Profane,' because, in mocking at a believer, they do despite to Jehovah. There is one untranslatable word in the received text which is obviously corrupt. Perowne renders, 'With them that are profane in their outlandish mouthings' (representing strange Hebrew by unusual English). De Witt, 'They were like vile babblers for a dainty morsel' (parasites). But 'profane' should certainly not have been weakened into 'vile.' The reason, of course, was that 'profane parasites' is an impossible phrase.

17, 18 See on xxii. 21, 23, 26.

20 **The quiet in the land.** The sense is clear, though the adjective occurs only here. Those who have found 'rest' or 'quiet' (see Isa. xxviii. 12, Heb.) in Jehovah will also have rest from evil devices. The Peshitto has 'the lowly of the land.' The antithesis is 'the ungodly of the land,' ci. 8.

25 **Our lust** (rendering as lxxviii. 18) Literally, 'our soul.' The 'soul' or 'life' of the oppressed was a dainty morsel for their 'soul.' ——**We have swallowed him up.** So Lam. ii. 16; cf. lii. 6; and for the figure, note in Cambridge Bible on Mic. ii. 2.

28 **Shall speak musingly,** in the low murmur of one entranced by a sweet thought. Strictly, either 'shall murmur,' or 'shall meditate' (meditation being regarded as something nearer to speech than to silence), but poetically = 'shall speak,' but implying that meditation accompanies the speech. So xxxvii. 30, lxxi. 20; cf. on lii. 2.

PSALM XXXVI.

PROBABLY we have here parts of two psalms, for the connexion suggested between *v.* 4 and *v.* 5 is artificial. Comp. on Pss. xix., xxiv., xxvii. The appended psalm consists of three stanzas of three distichs each.

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2 [That 'God is not,'] is Sin's own oracle
to the ungodly man within his heart ;
no dread of Elohim is before his eyes.
3 For He treats him gently, so he imagines,
touching the finding of his guilt.
4 The words of his mouth are mischief and guile ;
he has left off to act wisely and well.
5 He devises mischief upon his bed ;
he sets himself in no good way ;
he does not abhor evil.

(Another Psalm.)

6 Jehovah, thy lovingkindness touches the heavens ;
thy faithfulness reaches unto the skies.
7 Thy righteousness is like the mountains of God ;
thy judgments are (like) the great abyss.
Man and beast savest thou, Jehovah :
8 How precious is thy lovingkindness, Elohim !
[in thee] do the children of men [put their trust],
in the shadow of thy wings they find refuge ;
9 They feast upon the fatness of thy house ;
and of the river of thy pleasures thou givest them their drink.
10 For with thee is the fountain of life ;
by thy light do we see light.

11 O continue thy lovingkindness unto them that know thee,
and thy righteousness to the upright in heart.
12 Let not the foot of pride come upon me,
and let not the hand of the wicked make me a wanderer.
13 There are the workers of mischief fallen :
they are thrust down, and are not able to rise.

2 **That 'God is not' . . .** The opening words are very happily supplied by Olshausen from xiv. 1 (comp. on xci. 1). Sin (or rather, Apostasy) is boldly personified as a quasi-divine power within the man who has 'fallen away' from the true God (comp. Zech. v. 8, Gen. iv. 7). Practical atheism is meant, which from one point of view is folly (xiv. 1), and from another is the suggestion, if we may say so, of an evil power, an Ahriman. Comp. lviii. 12 *b*.

3 **For He treats him gently,** &c. The sense of this much-tormented passage is clear, so soon as we omit the corrupt and intrusive word in the Heb. of line 2 (see crit. note). 'In his eyes' (end of *l.* 1) can only mean 'in the man's eyes.' There would be no sense in saying that God was either the subject or the object of any action merely 'in His eyes' (i.e. in his imagination).——**Finding,** viz. with a view to punish (Gen. xliv. 16). God, if there be a God, is an inert, apathetic Being, according to the ungodly man (comp. on x. 4, 11).

6 Here begins a very fine hymn on the divine attributes (or let us

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rather say, 'name'), which gains greatly by being viewed separately from *vv.* 2-5. Possibly those who combined the two passages (*vv.* 2-5 and 6-13) intended to suggest to us a contrast between the serene atmosphere of God's 'philanthropy' (Tit. iii. 4) and the stormy passions of ungodly men, also between the low conception of a purely transcendent and therefore practically non-existent God formed by the wicked man (*vv.* 2, 3), and the high truth of a God who by His own will is immanent in the world of humanity. Comp. lvii. 10, ciii. 11.

7 The mention of the heavens suggests the 'sky-pointing peaks' (Coleridge), to which the **great abyss** (ἄβυσσος πολλή, Sept.) of the ocean—see on lxxi. 20—forms an antithesis.——**The mountains of God** (so l. 10); the mountains being above all other objects (except the finest specimens of tree-life, lxxx. 11; comp. civ. 16) monuments of the greatness of the Creator (see note on xc. 2). To explain with Calvin, 'scimus divinum vocari quidquam excellit,' exaggerates the fact without in the least accounting for it.——**Thy judgments**—in their various effects of destruction and salvation. There is no need to suppose a reference to the Flood, though the first line of our *v.* 7 has suggested this to some; the saviourship of God is not limited to a single extraordinary crisis.——**Man and beast,** &c. On this fine passage see Keble (*Prælectiones*, ii. 458), who compares Æsch. *Suppl.* In his delicate criticism, however, he does not notice that the psalmist shares the feeling of St. Francis[1] that there is, morally speaking, no complete break of continuity in the scale of sentient life (all degrees being gifted with a 'soul,' Gen. i.) Lions and dogs have their moral relatives among men (see on xxii. 13), and so too the mild domesticated animals to whom the psalmist here refers under the name *b'hēmāh* (see on lxxiv. 19). The latter are in fact regarded as a part of the human community (Jer. xxi. 6; comp. Jon. iv. 11); the 'desert-beasts' form a 'folk' by themselves (lxxiv. 14).

8 The stanza which opens here mentions the peculiar privilege of the 'sons of men'—conscious communion with Jehovah. The text reads (after 'Elohim'), 'and the children of men take refuge,' &c., an extremely awkward explanatory clause ('and' = in fact). But the *waw* before *b'nē ādhām* is probably to be explained as a fragment of a verb (3rd plur. perf.); experience shows that such fragments of readings are often preserved (see, e.g., Cornill's edition of Ezekiel).——**In the shadow of thy wings,** &c. See the exquisite parallel, Ruth ii. 12. The figure is that of the eagle (see on xci. 4). So lvii. 2, lxi. 5; cf. xvii. 8.

9 **The fatness of thy house.** See on xxiii. 5, 6, xxvii. 4, lxv. 5. Gesenius strangely, 'semel de universo mundo.'——**River.** *Nakhal*, an everflowing stream (see *v.* 10 *a*), as Am. v. 24.

10 **The fountain of life.** Cf. Jer. xvii. 13. No doubt psalmist and prophet have spiritualised an expression of common speech (see Prov. xiv. 22). But whither shall we look for the origin of the phrase—to outward nature or to mythology? Surely to the latter. In Prov., *l.c.*, 'a fountain of life' is exactly synonymous with 'a tree of life,' and we know that *this* phrase belongs to Hebrew mythology (cf. Ewald, *Hist.*, i. 37, 40). Moreover, in the latest Biblical recast of mythic material we actually find, not only the tree (or, trees) of life, but a 'river of water of life' (Rev.

[1] Herder has by anticipation vindicated the Israelites from the charge of want of sympathy towards animals brought against them by Schopenhauer. Putting aside the Levitical Law, the evidence is all in the direction opposed to this biassed thinker's view. The Hebrew writers will seem to some to have hit the right mean between inhumanity and sentimentalism. We nowhere in the O. T. meet with those touching extravagances reported to us in chaps. xxi., xxii. of the *Fioretti di San Francesco.*

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xxii. 1, 2). Our only description of the Hebrew Paradise, it is true, says nothing of the 'waters of life;' but the description is not intended to be complete, and Chaldean mythology (see the *Descent of Istar*) knows of waters as well as of a tree of life. (Comp. also Ralston's *Russian Folk-tales.*)——**By thy light** (comp. xliii. 3). Orientals still have an intense fondness for light, and this is equally true of the Jews, as the Biblical imagery shows. The lower light is essential to the lower life ('the light of life,' lvi. 13; cf. xlix. 20), and the higher light to the higher life (comp. John i. 4). The link between the two is represented mythically by the essential light in which God dwells (civ. 2; comp. 1 Tim. vi. 16, and the Assyrian hymn in which the Creator is called 'lord of light'). The 'light' which the psalmist sees, and hopes still to see, is the 'light' of that joy and peace which spring from the sense of God's favour, and which are better even than those visible mercies of which they give the assurance (see on iv. 7). Sept. renders, *ὀψόμεθα φῶς*, implying the hope of immortality. Comp. *Psalm. Sol.* iii. 16, *καὶ ἡ ζωὴ αὐτῶν ἐν φωτὶ κυρίου καὶ οὐκ ἐκλείψει ἔτι.*

11, 12 The psalmist appropriates his personal share in God's covenanted lovingkindness (*khésed* implies a covenant; see on iv. 4). ——**Make me a wanderer.** The word certainly refers to exile, as an imminent danger to the community (see 2 Kings xxi. 8, and comp. Gen. iv. 12, 14).

13 The psalmist dramatically represents the overthrow of the wicked as having just taken place ('there' is demonstrative, so that xiv. 5 is hardly parallel).

PSALM XXXVII.

'In respect of warmth of contents and inner connexion, this is one of the best of the alphabetic psalms' (Ewald). It should be read together with Pss. xxxix., lxxiii. Observe (1) the respect for poverty, so unknown to the *Vedic* hymn-writers, and (2) the insistence on the doctrine (the half-truth, as we should call it) of earthly retribution; note also the points of contact between this psalm and the Book of Job. The awful mystery of divine Providence is more superficially treated here than in that great poem, and also than in Ps. lxxiii.

The psalm is for the most part in quatrains or double verses, beginning with the successive letters of the alphabet. A glance will show, however, that here and there a stanza is too short or too long. In one case this want of symmetry can be corrected with certainty (see on *v.* 28).

1 Be not thou incensed at the evildoers,
  neither be thou envious against them that work injustice;
2 For they shall quickly fade away as the grass,
  and wither even as the green herb.

3 Trust thou in Jehovah, doing that which is good;
  dwell in the land, cherishing faithfulness;
4 Then shalt thou have sweet pleasure in Jehovah,
  and he shall grant thee thy heart's petitions.

5 Roll (the care of thy way) upon Jehovah,
  trust in him, and he shall do nobly,
6 And shall bring forth thine innocence as the light,
  and thy just right as the noonday.

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7 Be at rest towards Jehovah, and wait on for him ;
be not incensed at one whose career prospers,
at the man who brings to pass knaveries.

8 Cease from anger, and forsake wrath,
be not incensed—it would lead only to evildoing ;
9 For evildoers shall be cut off,
but they that await Jehovah—those shall inherit the land.

10 Yet a little while, and the ungodly will be gone ;
thou shalt look after his place, but he will be away ;
11 But the afflicted shall inherit the land,
and have sweet pleasure in the abundance of peace.

12 The ungodly plots against the righteous,
and gnashes upon him with his teeth :
13 The Lord laughs at him,
for he sees that his day is coming.

14 The ungodly draw the sword and bend their bow
to slay the afflicted and needy,
to murder such as are upright in way.
15 Their sword shall enter into their own heart,
and their bows shall be broken.

16 Better is the righteous man's little
than the opulence of many ungodly ;
17 For the arms of the ungodly shall be broken,
but Jehovah upholds the righteous.

18 Jehovah takes notice of the days of the blameless,
and their inheritance shall be for ever.
19 They shall not be shamed in the evil time,
and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.

20 For the ungodly shall perish,
and Jehovah's enemies shall be as the splendour of the meadows :
they shall vanish as smoke, they shall vanish.

21 The ungodly borrows, and cannot pay it back,
but the righteous shows pity and gives.
22 For his blessed ones shall inherit the land,
but his cursed ones shall be cut off.

23 It comes of Jehovah that a man's steps are established,
and he takes delight in his way.
24 Though he fall, he shall not remain prostrate,
for Jehovah upholds his hand.

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25 I have been young, and now am old,
and I have never seen a righteous man forsaken,
or his seed begging their bread.
26 He is ever showing pity, and lending,
and his seed is blessed.

27 Depart from evil, and do good,
and thou shalt dwell for evermore.
28 For Jehovah is the friend of justice,
and forsakes not his loving ones.

The unrighteous shall be destroyed for ever,
and the seed of the ungodly shall be cut off;
29 The righteous shall inherit the land,
and dwell therein for ever.

30 The mouth of the righteous speaks musingly of wisdom,
and his tongue utters just things.
31 The law of his God is in his heart,
his steps shall not be unsteady.

32 The ungodly watches the righteous,
and seeks to slay him.
33 Jehovah will not leave him in his hand,
nor condemn him when he is accused.

34 Wait for Jehovah, and observe his way,
and he shall exalt thee, that thou inherit the land:
when the ungodly are cut off, thou shalt see it.

35 I have seen the ungodly inspiring awe,
and spreading himself like a cedar of Lebanon.
36 I passed by, and lo, he was gone:
I searched for him, but he could not be found.

37 Observe the blameless man, and behold the upright,
how there is a posterity to the man of peace.
38 But transgressors shall be destroyed together:
the posterity of the ungodly shall be cut off.

39 The salvation of the righteous is of Jehovah:
he is their asylum in the time of trouble;
40 And Jehovah helps and delivers them,
he delivers them from the ungodly, and saves them,
because they take refuge in him.

1 **Be not thou incensed.** The wise man feels like a parent to his disciples (comp. the context of the parallel passage, Prov. xxiv. 19).

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He deprecates, not righteous anger, but a murmuring discontent, of which Job has given the typical expression. Of course few pious Israelites would adopt Job's style; but the unspoken thought here reproved is virtually that of Job in his agony. Not to 'trust in Jehovah' as a moral governor (*v.* 3) is virtually to say 'there is no God' (x. 4).——**Envious.** See on lxxiii. 3.

3 **Dwell in the land,** i.e. do not seek to make thy fortune in other lands. Schultens and Ewald explain *v.* 3 *b* as a promise, 'thou shalt dwell (undisturbed; comp. *v.* 29, and Jer. xxv. 5, xxxv. 15, Heb.), and have safe pasture.' This seems forced.

4 **Then shalt thou have . . .** Delitzsch, 'and have thy (pleasure),' making the apodosis begin in the next line. This is opposed by Job xxii. 26, xxvii. 10, Isa. lviii. 14.

5 **Roll (the care of);** see on xxii. 9. 'Way' = life's journey.

7 **Be at rest,** &c. Or, look in stillness towards (see on lxii. 2).

9 **Shall inherit the land.** So *vv.* 11, 22, 29, 34. See on xxv. 13. *V.* 11 seems to be spiritualised in Matt. v. 5 (τὴν γῆν = the new earth; see on *v.* 29).

11 **The afflicted**; or, 'the lowly.' 'Who seeth not,' says Mede, 'that by meek is here meant the opposite party to the wicked?' (*Works*, p. 161.) Hitzig, not amiss, 'die Frommen.' Better, 'die frommen Dulder.' See on ix. 13.

13 **His day,** i.e. the day of the man's death; comp. 1 Sam. xxvi. 10, 'or his day come that he die.'

19 Note the parallelism with Job v. 19, 20.

20 **As the splendour of the meadows.** As the gay and perfumed but shortlived blossoms of Sharon or Esdraelon. A charming and suggestive phrase; the play upon sound, however, is lost in the English. Comp. 'plants of Naaman,' Isa. xvii. 10 (note).

21 Comp. cxii. 5 *a*; Deut. xv. 6, xxviii. 12, 44.

22 Understand, Jehovah will reward them to the uttermost.

23, 24 Comp. Prov. xx. 24, xvi. 9, xxiv. 16, Jer. x. 23.

25 Comp. Prov. x. 3, xiii. 25. Such passages illustrate 1 Tim. iv. 8.

28 Auth. Vers. follows the received text; the correction suggested to Lowth by the Sept. is certain. As the text stands, there is no stanza beginning with *Ayin*, and the *Samech* stanza is too long.

29 **The righteous,** &c. The only Biblical passage quoted in the Korán (Sur. xxi. 105), but Mohammed interprets of the new earth (see on *v.* 11).

33 **Nor condemn him.** The world may do so, but Jehovah will pass a different judgment. Comp. on cix. 7 *b*.

35, 36 Comp. lii. 7, Job v. 3. **Like a cedar of Lebanon.** Comp. Hos. xiv. 5, 'and shall cast out his roots like (the cedars of) Lebanon' (note parallel line). The received text (with which Targ. agrees) has, 'like a native, fresh-green (tree).' A unique expression, for *'ezrakh* ('native') is elsewhere only used of men, but if allowable, at any rate only in poetic style. The psalmist, however, has not himself a poetic style, though he may conceivably have borrowed from some unknown and more poetical writer. But why should the attributes of indigenous birth and sappiness or fresh green be combined? Are not 'native-born' trees struck by lightning or cut down, as well as others? Or are such trees more spreading than others? (We have no right, with Del., to make *'ezrakh* = primeval).

37 **Blameless.** One might almost render 'quiet,' remembering Gen. xxv. 27 (if Dillmann be right). In parallel line, 'man of peace' occurs.——**A posterity.** Or, 'sequel' (comp. 'make our beginning and our sequell truth,' T. Middleton, 1597): a good man's 'sequel' or 'after-life' being in his children.

38 *b* Comp. Job xviii. 13–20.

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PSALM XXXVIII.

ALPHABETIC so far as the number of the distichs goes (see crit. note on *v.* 12). The speaker represents suffering Israel (comp. Lam. iii.), who, though 'following after good' (*v.* 21), cannot be sinless before God.

2 Jehovah, reprove me not in thine indignation,
neither correct me in thy hot displeasure.
3 For thine arrows have sunk into me,
and upon me has sunk thy hand.

4 There is no soundness in my flesh for thy fervent ire,
no health in my bones because of my sin:
5 For mine iniquities are gone over my head,
as a heavy burden they are too heavy for me.

6 My weals are become noisome and fester, because of my foolishness;
7 I am bent double, I am bowed down greatly,
I go about in mourning weeds all the day long.

8 For my loins are filled with burning;
and there is no soundness in my flesh.
9 I am benumbed and crushed exceedingly;
I roar for the disquiet of my heart.

10 Lord, before thee is all my desire,
and my sighing is not hid from thee:
11 My heart throbs quickly, my strength has forsaken me,
even the light of mine eyes is gone from me.

12 My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my plague,
and my kinsmen stand afar off,
13 And they that seek my soul lay snares;
and they that are zealous for my harm speak of utter destruction,
and brood upon deceits all the day long.

14 But I am as a deaf man and hear not,
and as a dumb man that opens not his mouth.
15 Yea, I am become as a man that hears not,
and in whose mouth are no rejoinders.

16 Yea, for thee, Jehovah, do I wait;
Thou wilt answer, O Lord my God.
17 For I said, (I fear) lest they should rejoice over me;
when my foot wavers they become insolent toward me.

18 For I indeed am ready to fall,
and my pain is continually before me;

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19 (For I have to confess my guilt ;
I am distressed because of my sin :)

20 Whilst they that without a cause are mine enemies are strong,
and they that hate me lyingly are many in number ;
21 They also that render evil for good
are adverse to me because I follow after good.

22 Forsake me not, Jehovah ;
O my God, be not far from me.
23 Speed to my help,
O Lord my salvation.

2 See on vi. 2 (one word only different).

3 **Thine arrows.** It is an image for bodily sickness ; vii. 14 is therefore not so strictly parallel as Job vi. 4, xvi. 13.——**Thy hand.** Comp. xxxii. 4.

4 **No soundness,** &c. Comp. the description of Israel in Isa. i. 5, 6.

5 The figure is taken first of all from overflowing waters (comp. lxix. 3, 16), then from a crushing load such as even an Eastern *hammāl* cannot carry (cf. Gen. iv. 13).——**Mine iniquities,** or, the punishment of my sins (see on xxxi. 11).

6 **My foolishness,** i.e. my sin. 'He that misseth Wisdom (i.e. true religion) wrongeth his own self' (Prov. viii. 37). Cf. cvii. 17 (?).

9 **Crushed.** In xliv. 19 the pious Israelites, individually, are said to have been 'crushed.' Hence the phrase may well be used of a representative Israelite (so li. 10).

12 See on xxxi. 12. **Lovers,** i.e., perhaps, Israel's friendly neighbours ; comp. Jer. xxx. 14, Lam. i. 2, 19.

14, 15 Comp. the description of the suffering Servant in Isa. liii. 7.

19 **I have to confess** (see on next psalm). The idiom as in Job ix. 29, 'I am to be guilty ;' Jer. xxxvi. 16.

PSALM XXXIX.

THIS psalm has been called 'the most beautiful of all the elegies in the Psalter.' With all its exquisite individualising touches, it is an admirable church-hymn, as it mirrors the experiences of all faithful Israelites. This view is confirmed by the parallels in Ps. xxxviii. ; comp. *vv.* 3, 10 with xxxviii. 14, 15 ; *v.* 8 with xxxviii. 16 ; *v.* 11 with xxxviii. 3. There are also points of contact with Ps. lxii.—the idea of the nothingness of human life, and the fondness for the particle which expresses triumphant faith (אַךְ). A refrain marks out the two divisions of the psalm.

2 I said, 'Let me take heed to my ways,
that I mistake not with my tongue ;
let me put a bridle on my mouth
while the ungodly is still before me.'
3 I became mutely resigned, I kept silence afar from happiness,
but my pain was stirred up

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4 My heart was hot within me ;
as I mused, the fire kindled ;
(at last) I spake with my tongue.
5 'Make me, O Jehovah, to know mine end,
and the measure of my days, what it is ;
let me know how short my time is.
6 Behold, thou hast made my days (a few) hand-breadths long,
and my lifetime is as nothing before thee :
surely every man is vanity.
7 Surely in mere semblance man walks to and fro ;
surely for mere vanity are they so boisterous :
he piles up, and cannot tell who will gather it.
8 And now, Lord, what wait I for ?
my hope is in thee.
9 Deliver me from all my transgressions :
make me not the reproach of the fool.
10 I am become mute, and open not my mouth,
for thou hast done it.
11 O remove thy plague from off me ;
I am wasted away with the onset of thy hand.
12 With rebukes for iniquity when thou dost chasten a man,
thou destroyest, like the moth, his desirable things ;
surely every man is vanity.

13 Hear my prayer, Jehovah, and give ear unto my cry,
hold not thy peace at my tears :
for I am a guest with thee,
and a sojourner like all my fathers.
14 Avert thy frown, that I may smile again,
before I go hence, and be no more.'

2 **That I mistake not.** The power of saying the right word at the right time is essential to a worthy character, according to Prov. xv. 23, xxv. 11. To fail in this, was to 'miss one's aim,' or, as I have rendered, to 'mistake.' The same word is used in xxv. 8 (see note), also in Judg. xx. 16 (Hifil) of archers missing their mark.—— **While the ungodly,** &c. Partly because the sufferer would not willingly give occasion to the enemy to blaspheme, and so injure the cause of his God, partly because by 'envying the evildoers' (xxxvii. 1) he will still further excite the divine anger against himself. True, he is already 'wasted away' with 'rebukes for iniquity' (*vv.* 10, 11); but whereas the 'iniquity' as yet is a 'hidden one' (see introd. to Ps. xxxii.), the cause for a further punishment would be only too patent.

3 **I became mutely resigned.** Lit., 'I became mute in stillness,' i.e. either the stillness of the grave (so Hitzig ; comp. xciv. 17), or that of pious resignation (as Delitzsch); comp. xxxvii. 7, lxii. 2). At any rate, Bickell is venturesome in omitting *dūmīyyāh* as otiose.

5 **Make me . . . to know,** &c.

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This may well have been the language of an individual, but, from the point of view of the Psalter (see on cii. 12), it is equally applicable to a nation. Even a plain reader, like the late Lord Shaftesbury, saw this when he remarked at Antwerp, quoting this verse, 'Let us Englishmen take warning.' But why does the speaker, whether an individual or Israel personified, or even both, pray for this? That he may not set his affection on earthly greatness and prosperity, but on Him 'whose lovingkindness is better than life itself.' Oppressed as he is by the rich and prosperous ungodly, he may too easily be tempted to envy their wealth. *Vv.* 5–7 directly meet this temptation (see on lxii. 10).——**How short my time is.** Comp. lxxxix. 48. The text-reading is rendered, 'how frail I am;' but see crit. note.

6 Comp. this verse and *v.* 7 with lxii. 10.——**Surely.** Or, 'only' (see on lxxiii. 1).——**Vanity**; lit., 'a breath.'

7 **In mere semblance.** (Not, 'in a shadow;' see crit. note.) Strictly, 'in the character, or manner, of an image (xxxv. 2); i.e. not 'imaginis (instar) Quam reddit æquor vitreum' (G. Buchanan), nor yet 'like a sculptured image,' a meaning which is neither suitable here nor in lxxiii. 20. In the latter passage, 'image' is parallel to 'dream.' This suggests that *çélem*, like εἴδωλον and *imago*, and like the Egyptian *ka*,[1] has two senses—(1) an image formed by art, (2) a phantom seen in a vision or dream. Piscator (1646), 'Vita hominis non est vere vita, sed tantum imago et inanis larva vitæ.' Comp. Woolner, 'All is but coloured show' (*A Beautiful Lady*), and the well-known passage in Soph. *Ajax*, 126.

9 **From all my transgressions.** He means, from their punishment. So 1 Chron. xxix. 15; see on v. 5, xv. 1.

13 **Hold not thy peace.** Cf. xxviii. 1, xxxv. 22. A change of fortune is a word of God (lxv. 6). The poet finely adds 'at my tears,'

> ... the saddest, sweetest, lowest sound,
> Nearest akin to perfect silence.[2]

——**A guest . . . a sojourner,** i.e. only a short time here and dependent on Jehovah's protection. So 1 Chron. xxix. 15; see on v. 5, xv. 1. The words are the technical expressions for the foreign 'half-citizens' of Israel (Ewald, *Antiquities*, p. 236, note 9). It is not merely a figure which the psalmist employs, but a representation of fact. The Israelites were Jehovah's feudatories. 'The land is mine; for ye are guests and sojourners with me' (Lev. xxv. 23).

14 **Avert thy frown.** Lit., 'look away from me' (cf. Job vii. 19, xiv. 6).——**That I may smile;** lit., that I may gleam (like the sky when the clouds are dispelled), i.e. recover my cheerfulness (as Job ix. 27, x. 20).

PSALM XL.

Two if not three poets seem to have been concerned in this psalm as it has come down to us. The first of these regards Israel's great deliverance (from Babylon?) upon the bright side as the reward of its fidelity to its God; the other two (if we admit three poets) as only a first stage in the divine interposition, Israel being in their time as much afflicted as ever before. To the first belong *vv.* 2–12; to the second, *vv.* 14–18; while a third, perhaps, unites the two by inserting *v.* 13. Space forbids me to continue this subject here. There is certainly a strong Christian element in this psalm (*vv.* 2–12), as there is in its companion—Ps. l.

[1] Renouf, *Transactions of the Soc. of Bibl. Archæology*, vi. 494–508; cf. Maspero, *Academy*, xv. 456, and Renouf's letter, *ibid.* p. 480.

[2] Bishop Alexander, *St. Augustine's Holiday, and other Poems*, p. 233.

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There are important phraseological parallelisms with other psalms. Comp. *v.* 3 with lxix. 3, 15, 16; *v.* 4 with xxxiii. 3 (see note); *v.* 6 with cxxxix. 17, 18; *v.* 7 with l. 8–13, li. 18; *v.* 10 with xxii. 23, 26; *v.* 13 *c* with lxix. 5 *a*; *v.* 15 with xxxv. 4, 26; *v.* 16 with xxxv. 21; *vv.* 15–18 with lxix. 23–29. The speaker in both parts of the psalm is either pious Israel personified, or (virtually the same thing) a representative pious Israelite (see on *v.* 7). Observe that there is still great danger from idolatry (*v.* 5).

2 I had waited, waited for Jehovah,
and he inclined (his ear) unto me, and heard my cry.
3 He brought me up also out of the pit of destruction,
out of the miry swamp,
and set my feet on a rock,
made firm my stepping;
4 And he put a new song in my mouth,
even praise unto our God;
that many should see it, and fear,
and put their trust in Jehovah.

5 Happy the man that hath made Jehovah his trust,
and hath not turned to the proud
and them that have lyingly fallen away.
6 In full measure hast thou accomplished, O Jehovah my God
thy marvels and thy designs concerning us;
there is nothing comparable unto thee:
were I to declare and discourse of them,
they would be too vast for numbering.
7 In sacrifice and offering thou hadst no delight,
(but) open ears didst thou make me;
burnt-offering and sin-offering thou didst not require;
8 Then said I, 'Lo, I am come;
in the roll of the book is my duty written;
9 To do thy will, O my God, is my delight,
and thy law is within my heart.'
10 I told the glad news of (thy) righteousness in the great congregation;
behold, I did not restrain my lips,
thou, Jehovah, knowest it.
11 Thy righteousness I hid not within my heart;
thy faithfulness I declared, and thy salvation;
I concealed not thy lovingkindness
nor thy truth from the great congregation.
12 Thou, too, Jehovah, canst not restrain thy compassions from me;
thy lovingkindness and thy truth—
let them guard me continually.

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(Fragment of another Psalm.)

13 For evils past numbering have encompassed me,
mine iniquities have overtaken me, so that I cannot see;
they are more than the hairs of my head,
and my heart hath forsaken me.
14 Be pleased, Jehovah, to deliver me:
Jehovah, speed to my help.
15 Let them be shamed and abashed together
that seek my soul to take it away;
let them be turned back with dishonour
that delight in my misfortune.
16 Let them be palsied with shame
that say unto me, Aha, Aha.
17 Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee;
let such as love thy salvation say continually,
Jehovah be magnified.
18 And I—the afflicted and needy—
Jehovah will care for me:
thou art my help and my deliverer;
make no tarrying, O my God.

2 **I had waited . . .** Israel calls to mind his mercies in the past, and so strengthens his faith.

3 Hitzig compares Jer. xxxviii. 6, interpreting the psalmist realistically (so too lxix. 3, 15, 16).

4 **A new song.** See on xxxiii. 3.——**That many should see it,** &c. A characteristic idea of II. Isaiah — that the restoration of Israel will spread the knowledge of Jehovah to the most distant nations.

5 **Happy the man . . .** This and the next verse are not indeed the 'new song,' but at any rate an echo of it.——**Not turned to the proud,** &c. As in Ps. xvi., xxxi., cxix., there is a large party of paganising Jews, with whom the psalmist absolutely disavows complicity. Comp. Ps. cxix. 21, 'the proud [another word], the accursed, who wander from thy commandments.'

6 **Thy marvels,** &c. 'Marvels,' the favourite word of the psalmists for the exceptional mercies of God's leadership; 'designs,' a less common but equally distinctive expression for the complicated plan of Israel's divine-human history (xxxiii. 11, xcii. 5; comp. Isa. lv. 8, 9). 'Concerning us.' The psalm, then, is a national psalm.——**There is nothing,** &c. An exclamation of joyful surprise; comp. lxxi. 19.

7 Israel of old 'made a covenant with Jehovah with sacrifice' (l. 6); but it was not the 'sacrifice' which was important to Jehovah, but Israel's obedience. Thus viewed, our passage is precisely parallel to Jer. vii. 22, 23. The sacrificial system had been continually growing in elaborateness; the *'āshām* or 'guilt-offering' is the only Levitical sacrifice which is wanting, and this being a national psalm, we cannot be surprised at the omission. Our psalmist, however, differs, it would seem, from the friends of the Levitical legislation in not referring the sacrificial system to the institution of Jehovah. All that God, when forming Israel into a nation, expressly required was obedience (see on l. 7–15, li. 18, and comp. 1 Sam. xv. 22, 23, Hos. vi. 6); and this was all that God still required of

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each individual Israelite (comp. Mic. vi. 8).——**Sacrifice,** including especially the *shélem* or thank-offering; **offering,** i.e. the so-called meal-offering (R.V.) and the accompanying libation; **sin-offering,** Heb. *khᵉtāāh* (not *khattāth*, the word used in Leviticus and elsewhere).——**Open, ears,** &c. Lit., 'ears didst thou dig for me,' i.e. 'thou gavest me the faculty of hearing and obeying thy will.' Comp. Assurbanipal's language, 'The great gods . . . [to me] attentive ears have given' (*Records of the Past*, ix. 39).

8 **Then,** i.e. as soon as my ears were opened.——**I am come,** i.e. in obedience to thy call. To have come is equivalent to having entered on a course of obedience.——**In the roll of the book is my duty written** (lit., it is prescribed unto me). At first sight it may seem more plausible to render 'with the roll of the book' (cf. lxvi. 13), and explain, 'I am come before thee, not with sacrifices, but with the book in which I am exonerated from sacrifice, or in which at any rate the relative value of sacrifice and obedience is clearly set forth.' But then how are we to continue the line? We cannot say, 'with the roll of the book which is prescribed unto me.' We must therefore take the line as explaining the nature of the obedience which the speaker has undertaken to render. 'What "the roll of the book" prescribes as my duty, that will I perform.' But what is this 'roll'? Just afterwards we find the *tōra* of Jehovah spoken of. This suggests that the laws and exhortations embodied in Deuteronomy (so often called *tōra*) may be meant; Moses actually says, 'These words which I command thee this day, shall be in thy heart.' (Delitzsch, who regards David as the speaker, and makes Deuteronomy pre-Davidic, finds an allusion to the king's duty as prescribed in Deut. xvii. 14–20.) Certainly the closing words seem like an echo of those given to Moses. But may we not take *tōra* in a wider sense, to include the prophets as well as the law (see on i. 2)? This will help us to understand the outspoken preference of what St. Paul would call personal sacrifice to ritual. To the psalmist, there was a Bible within the Bible, and the books of Deuteronomy and Jeremiah formed principal elements in its composition. 'Thy law within my heart' reminds us at once of Deut. vi. 6 and Jer. xv. 16, xxxi. 33.

10 **I told the glad news of (thy) righteousness.** 'Righteousness' is the later 'Isaiah's' favourite word for 'salvation' under one of its aspects (comp. *v.* 11 *b*); hence Hitzig renders here, 'Ich verkündete Heil.' The verb is well rendered εὐηγγελισάμην (Sept.) The psalmist is such a 'herald of glad news' as is spoken of in Isa. xli. 27, li. 7.

12 **Thou too . . . restrain not,** &c. Corresponding to 'I have not restrained' (*v.* 10). The same idea as in Isa. lxiii. 15.——**Thy lovingkindness and thy truth,** &c. Comp. xlii. 9, lxi. 8.

13 **Mine iniquities,** or, the punishment of mine iniquities (see on xxxi. 11).

18 **Will care for me,** or, has designs (comp. *v.* 6) which even I can help to further. See crit. note.

PSALM XLI.

THE people of Israel is likened to a man who is dangerously sick, and whose sore disease is taken by malicious neighbours as a proof that he is forsaken by God. The sufferer makes his plaint to God, before whom he may no doubt be guilty (see introd. to Ps. xxxii.), but who will assuredly recognise before the world that he is innocent so far as man is concerned: like Job the speaker will by no means 'give up his integrity' (Job xxvii. 5).

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That this psalm (with which compare vi. and xxxviii.) has a contemporary historical basis, can hardly be doubted. *Vv.* 2–4, which suggest an edifying lesson to the individual as such, are not really fatal to this conclusion.

2 Happy he that considers the helpless and poor!
in the day of misfortune Jehovah will rescue him.
3 Jehovah will preserve him and keep him alive,
and he shall be called happy in the land;
and do not thou deliver him unto the greed of his enemies.
4 Jehovah will support him upon the bed of languishing:
as oft as he lies low, thou recoverest him in his sickness.
5 As for me, I say, 'Jehovah, have pity on me:
heal my soul, for I have sinned against thee.'
6 But mine enemies wish me evil,
'When will he die, and his name perish?'
7 And if one come to see me, he speaks falsehood,
his heart gathers malice to itself;
he goes abroad and speaks.
8 All that hate me whisper together against me,
against me do they imagine evil,
9 'That which will be his perdition is fixed upon him,
and now that he lies, he will rise up no more:'
10 Even the man of my peace, in whom I trusted,
he who did eat of my bread, has become insolent towards me.

11 But thou, Jehovah, have pity on me,
and raise me up, that I may requite them.
12 By this I am sure thou hast pleasure in me,
that mine enemy shouts not in triumph over me.
13 And as for me, thou upholdest me in my blamelessness,
and settest me before thy face for ever.

Subscription to Book I.

14 Blessed be Jehovah, the God of Israel,
from æon to æon!
Amen and Amen.

2 **Considers.** The word in A.V. is happily chosen so as to include not merely the relief of material wants, but 'the fairness of those who judge prudently and with moderation of the afflicted.' Calvin even limits the reference to this. An instance of such friendly considerateness occurs in a parallel psalm (xxxv. 13, 14).

3 **In the land,** i.e. in the land of Canaan (as xxxvii. 3). Comp. xxxvi. 12 *b*.——**Do not thou.** Or, 'thou canst not' (comp. xxxiv. 6). The construction is changed, to express a more intense degree of feeling. The Sept., Symm., and Pesh. read 'let him not.'

4 **As oft as,** &c. Lit., 'all his lying down thou turnest (i.e. chang-

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est into health) in his sickness.' The tense is the perfect of experience.

5 **Heal my soul.** For soul and body alike suffer from the sense of God's anger (vi. 3, 4, xxxi. 10).

7 **Falsehood,** i.e. hypocritical sympathy. —— **Gathers malice,** viz. by observing the symptoms which justify the malicious conjecture that the case is desperate.

8 **Whisper together . . . imagine evil.** Either the poet falls out of the metaphor of a divinely sent sickness, and represents the enemy as plotting Israel's final ruin, or we must suppose that the whispered imagination consists in the malicious hope which they form, and would willingly, if they could, convert straightway into fact.

9 **That which will be his perdition.** Lit., 'a matter of perdition,' i.e. something which must sink him in perdition or the world of the dead (see on xviii. 5). The alternative rendering, 'a base deed' (comp. ci. 3), does not suit the context.——**Is fixed upon him.** Lit., 'is molten upon him,' like one of Dante's 'mantles of lead.' Comp. Job xli. 15, Heb.——**He will rise up no more.** Sept. suggestively (reading *lū*), 'if he were to go on to recover;' see Driver, *H. Tenses*, § 142, n. 1.

10 The cruellest pang of all came from a treacherous friend, called **the man of my peace,** i.e. not merely 'mine own familiar friend' (A.V.), but one who was specially attached to me by a covenant, and one **who did eat of my bread,** i.e. who was my frequent guest at table. The parallelism with lv. 13–15 cannot escape notice. In both passages the question arises whether we have an episode of personal history (comp. Jer. xx. 10), or whether 'the man' is a personification of treacherous neighbours of the Jews. For the latter view, comp. the similar phraseology of Obad. 7, 'The men that were at peace with thee [viz. with Edom] have deceived thee and prevailed against thee; [they that ate] thy bread have laid a snare under thee.' If the speaker in *vv.* 5–13 is either Israel or a typical pious Israelite (see introd.), we obviously must accept this view for *v.* 10, and may then compare xxxviii. 12, but are not perhaps tied to its acceptance for lv. 13–15 (see notes).

13 **Settest me before thy face.** See on xi. 7, xvi. 11, xvii. 15.

14 (Subscription.) A doxology such as was probably uttered in the name of the people at the close of every psalm used in the liturgy (comp. Neh. ix. 5). 'From æon to æon' (Tennyson and Browning having enriched our language by the word)[1] means 'both in this æon and in the next.' The doxology thus becomes a creed; no one who disbelieved in a future life could repeat it (Talm. Jerus., *Berakhoth* ix. 5, 9).——**Amen and Amen.** 'So is it' (rather than 'So be it'). Comp. the fuller form of the doxology in cvi. 48.

[1] Cf. also Goethe's *Faust*.

'Es kann die Spur von meinen Erdentagen
Nicht in Aeonen untergehen.'

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BOOK II.

PSALMS XLII. AND XLIII.

THE sigh of an exile. These two psalms really form but one, as appears from the identity of subject and of refrain, and from the interlacing repetitions. They can only have been separated at a comparatively recent date, as the so-called Ps. xliii. is the only psalm in this Korahite group (xlii.–xlix.) unprovided in the Hebrew with a superscription. The author writes at a distance from the sanctuary, and is a prey to the taunts of an impious people. In the first strophe, he longs for his God; in the second, he utters his plaint, and describes his need; in the third, he passes into definite supplication, and anticipates the joy and gratitude of deliverance. It is a perfect lyric poem. Compare Ps. lxxxiv., also a Korahite psalm.

The preference for 'Elohim' (instead of 'Jehovah') which distinguishes Book II. is visible in this psalm. It was characteristic, not merely of the editor, but of the original author. Here and there, however, there is reason to believe that the writer allowed himself to use 'Jehovah,' which the editor changed into 'Elohim,' except in *v.* 9.

2 As a hind which pants after running streams,
so pants my soul after thee, O God.
3 My soul thirsts for Elohim, for the living God;
when shall I come in and appear before God?
4 My tears have been food to me day and night,
whilst all day long they say unto me, Where is thy God?
5 This must I remember, pouring out my soul upon me,
how I went along with the throng, conducting them to the house of God,
with ringing cries and giving of thanks—a festive multitude.
6 Why art thou bowed down, O my soul, and why moaning upon me?
wait thou for Jehovah, for unto him I shall yet give thanks
as the saviour of my countenance and my God.

7 My soul upon me is bowed down; therefore will I think upon thee
from the land of Jordan and of Hermonim, from the little mountain.
8 Flood calls unto flood at the sound of thy cataracts,
all thy breakers and billows have gone over me:

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9 (Yet) will Jehovah by day give charge to his lovingkindness,
and in the night will his song be with me,
even a prayer unto the God of my life.
10 Let me say unto God my rock, 'Why hast thou forgotten me?
why go I as a mourner amidst the oppression of the enemy?'
11 Like rottenness in my bones, my foes reproach me,
whilst all day long they say unto me, Where is thy God?
12 Why art thou bowed down, my soul, and why moaning upon me?
wait thou for Jehovah, for unto him I shall yet give thanks
as the saviour of my countenance and my God.

1 Right me, Elohim, and plead my cause against a loveless nation;
from the deceitful and unjust man mayest thou deliver me.
2 For thou art God my stronghold: why hast thou cast me off?
why go I as a mourner amidst the oppression of the enemy?
3 Send forth thy light and thy truthfulness; let them lead me,
let them bring me unto thy holy hill and to thy habitation.
4 Then will I go in unto the altar of Elohim,
even unto God my exceeding joy:
and give thanks to thee upon the lyre, O Jehovah my God.
5 Why art thou bowed down, O my soul, and why moaning upon me?
wait for Jehovah, for unto him I shall yet give thanks
as the saviour of my countenance and my God.

2 **As a hind.** Under any circumstances, the comparison of the 'soul' of the believer (observe that *nefesh* is feminine) to a hind would be appropriate, this sensitive creature being a type of affectionateness (Rev. v. 19; cf. Jer. xiv. 5). But the psalmist, who is debarred from the services of the temple, has now in his mind's eye a deer who has been long unable, from fear of the huntsman, to descend from its rocks to slake its thirst. He may even be writing within sight of panting hinds gathered by the fresh mountain streams which flow into the Jordan. But there is no absolute necessity for this hypothesis; the image is natural enough to a Hebrew poet. So Jeremiah calls his God the 'fountain of living waters,' Jer. ii. 13, xvii. 13.——**Running streams.** Comp. Job vi. 15–17.——**My soul,** i.e. that part of human nature which to the Hebrew writers appeared the most characteristic of personality—the emotional and volitional, the centre of which is the heart. Naturally enough, it was of the feminine gender (hence compared to the 'hind'). It 'is apt to sink and droop under affliction; and to lie as a burden *upon* the spirit of the believer' (Kay). See *v.* 6, and comp. cxxxi. 2. A merry heart is also said to lie (lightly) 'upon' a man (1 Sam. xxv. 36).

3 **For the living God.** The word for 'God' (*'ēl*) is chosen for its shortness (comp. on xxii. 2); it lent itself better than *'elōhīm* to the formation of quasi-compounds (comp. *v.* 9). 'The living God' (so lxxiv. 3), in contrast to the 'dead' gods of the heathen (cvi. 28). Comp. 'fountain of life,' xxxvi. 10. ——**Come in,** viz. into the temple, as xliii. 4; comp. lxiii. 3.

4 A fresh pang arises from the blasphemy of the heathen, who

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assure him that he has lost his God.——**My tears,** &c. Comp. lxx. 6, and see on cii. 10.——**Where is thy God?** Heathen conquerors arguing from Israel's calamities to the impotence (=non-existence) of Israel's God, lxxix. 10, cxv. 2 (see note), Joel ii. 17.

5 **Let me bethink me,** &c. Let me indulge the sad pleasure of retrospect. 'Pouring out my soul' is parallel to the phrase 'pour out your heart' (lxii. 19). The soul is elsewhere identified as it were with the blood; but here this elegiac poet represents it as passing away in a flood of tears (comp. Lam. ii. 18, 19). So Job xxx. 16.——**How I went,** &c. The tense is a frequentative. The 'throng' consisted of the pilgrims who went up (cf. Isa. xxx. 29) at the great festivals.——**Led them in procession,** as a Korahite skilled in song (2 Chron. xx. 19). The word is expressive and pictorial; see on Isa. xxxviii. 15 (where R.V. marg. is alone correct).

6 The retrospect has been one of mingled sorrow and joy. The singer has not admitted the blasphemy that he has lost his God. He expostulates with his too feminine 'soul,' and calls upon 'her' to hope still in God.——**Moanest upon me** (see on *v.* 2). Similarly Keble. Comp. 'my heart moaneth unto me,' Jer. iv. 19.——**As the saviour,** &c. We should have expected 'the lifter up of my countenance,' i.e. 'him who causes me to see prosperity' (iv. 7); so Keble, 'th' Enlightener of mine eye.' But the face (as the noblest visible part of the body (comp. Isa. iii. 15) represents here the person (i.e. body and soul together, but with more emphasis on the body); rhythm was better served by *yeshūath pānai* than by the shorter *yeshūathī* (just as Dante had to put *le nostre persone* for *noi*, *Purg.* xii. 108). The received text has 'thank him (for) the salvation (or, saving health) of his countenance;' the Hebrew construction in this case becomes extremely harsh.

7 With a pleasing variation the poet repeats his sad complaint, but at once betakes himself to a sure source of encouragement. In interpreting this passage, I follow the imitative writer of Jonah's psalm (see Jon. ii. 7). Even in the beginning of his elegy, the retrospect of the past was not altogether depressing. In another equally plaintive psalm, too, though at first the poet 'can but moan' when he 'thinks upon God'—that God who seems to have 'cast off for ever'—yet soon afterwards a wider retrospect restores elasticity to his spirit (lxxvii. 4, 6–13). So here. Prayer has no obstacle but sin (Isa. lviii. 4); it can cross streams and pierce through mountain-walls. In the first strophe the poet was not as yet fully conscious of the benefits of memory; but now he deliberately has recourse to it as a source of encouragement; he has reached a higher spiritual level. This interpretation, however, stands or falls with that of *v.* 9. If that verse (see note) relates to the past, it will seriously affect our rendering of *v.* 7. It is a fair inference from *v.* 6 that the poet as it were doubles his consciousness (comp. Isa. xxi. 6, 7), and regards his mental state as an outsider.

Why sittest thou on that sea-girt rock,
With downward look and sadly dreaming eye?

he seems to say, like 'New Self' in the *Lyra Apostolica* (No. lxxix.), and it may be that *v.* 7 contains the result of his enquiry, viz. that 'Old Self' is sadly thinking of that God from whom locally he seems to be parted. The Hebrew has, 'therefore do I think upon thee;' but this means 'therefore it is clear that I am, or have been, thinking upon thee' (a thought which is a depressing one to a like-minded psalmist; see lxxvii. 4). Comp. xlv. 3, 'therefore (=this can only be because) God hath blessed thee for ever;' and Isa. xxvi. 14, 'The dead live not . . . therefore thou hast visited and destroyed them,'

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i.e. 'The "other lords" have passed into Sheól; it is clear, then, that a divine punishment has overtaken them.' If we adopt this view, we shall, in deference to Western idiom, substitute 'because' for 'therefore' (Hitzig, 'dieweil'). [Prof. Briggs would omit the opening words, 'My soul,' &c.; the distich thus becomes more symmetrical. Prof. Bickell obtains the same result by omitting 'upon me' and 'from the little hill' as interpolations.]——**From the land of Jordan,** &c. He will not minimise his privations; he counts the cost of his venture of faith. He is not indeed 'at the end of the earth,' and could easily be brought back to his heart's true home (see on xliii. 3). But this only aggravates his vexation. 'By the rivers of Babylon' he would find it easier to be patient than in the neighbourhood of his own majestic mountains and swiftly flowing stream. We might also render 'since (I left) the land of Jordan and Hermonim;' or 'far from the land,' &c. In this case the writer may be supposed to be in a more distant place of exile (so Olshausen and Smend). But this is not the most obvious meaning of the Hebrew, and in a lyric composition we should prefer the easiest interpretation. The preposition 'from' is chosen (rather than 'in') with a subtle purpose. It suggests that the psalmist's faith will bridge over the interval between himself and the sanctuary: 'I can send my thoughts to thee from the distant frontier, even as thou canst send thy light and thy truth to me.' The phrase, **the land of Jordan,** &c., seems most naturally explained of the north-eastern corner of Palestine near the lower slopes of Hermon, or, as it is here called, with an allusion to its three summits, **Hermonim.** There the writer is against his will detained, far from Jehovah's temple and surrounded (it can scarcely be an anachronism to suppose) by the signs of fervent heathenism. 'There must be something,' observes Thomson, 'about this Upper Jordan and its surroundings particularly calculated to call out and foster the religious or the superstitious propensities of our nature.' The temples which crowd the region of Anti-Libanus with Hermon may be far more recent than our psalm, but they doubtless stand on holy sites of immemorial antiquity. But what is the meaning of the additional words, **from the little mountain**? According to an old view, the expression is a disparaging one; as Musculus puts it, 'Vocat ea montana montem modicum respectu regni ac populi Dei' (comp. lxviii. 16, 17). But I do not believe any poet would have hinted disparagement in this way at the end of a verse. One of the more recent theories[1] discovers in the words a covert reference to the physical insignificance of *Mount Zion*: Olshausen, to make the reference more distinct, proposes to read conjecturally 'mountain of (the solemn) assembly' (comp. Isa. xiv. 13). In this case the entire land of Canaan is described by enumerating three of its most remarkable localities, the river Jordan, the Hermon range, and the temple mount. If either Tabor (lxxxix. 13) or Lebanon (Zech. x. 10) had been included, this view would be plausible; but as the passage stands, I can only regard it as a description of the extreme north of the trans-Jordanic region, admirably reproduced in Herder's version:—

Und dennoch grämt sich meine Seele noch!
So will ich denn auch hier an dich gedenken,
Hier zwischen Berg und Strom,
Am Jordan und den Hügeln Libanus.[2]

The German poet, however, not only changes Hermon into Lebanon,

[1] See Smend, *Theol. Stud. u. Krit.*, 1884, p. 733; Halévy, *Mélanges de critique*, p. 19.

[2] *Geist der ebräischen Poesie*, sect. x.

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but omits the 'little mountain.' The views already mentioned are no doubt inadequate to account for this phrase; can any other be suggested? Can it mean one of the lower hills of the Hermon range, such, for instance, as the hill above Paneas, from which one of the finest prospects in Syria can be enjoyed,[1] and near which the Jordan bursts forth from its two sources at Paneas and Tell el-Ḳaḍi? Or some hill farther south, which would equally command a view of the snow-fields of Hermon? Some may think this more probable than I do. To me this appendage to 'Hermonim' seems a poetic loss. Unless the 'little mountain' has a symbolic meaning, I wish it away. Can it have this symbolic meaning? Böttcher, Riehm, and Grill think so,[2] 'Hermonim' being, according to them, a poetic name for the 'mountains whence cometh my help' (cxxi. 1), or, as it might be expressed, Hermon being the advanced guard of the 'mountains of Zion' (comp. cxxxiii. 3), and 'the little mountain' a symbol of the humiliation of the psalmist (the antithesis of the phrase in xxx. 8). In this case we should render, 'and (I think of) Hermonim from the little mountain.' But how can 'Jordan' be taken literally, and the following topographical features symbolically? On the whole, I cannot help suspecting a corruption, which, however, I have not the means of healing.

8 **Flood calls unto flood,** &c. A striking figurative description of a succession of calamities. 'Misfortunes never come singly.' Each billow as it roars seems to call its fellow, and all alike to have come from no earthly fountain-head, but from 'the cataracts of heav'n set open' (*Paradise Lost*, xi. 824-5). The climax is added by the statement that all these heaven-sent 'breakers and billows' have gone over the sufferer (a detail copied in Jon. ii. 4). These images might no doubt have occurred to any Hebrew poet (comp. xxxii. 6, lxix. 2, 3, lxxxviii. 8). They might be suggested by the sea, but also by the chief river of Israel—the Jordan. Hengstenberg is perverse in denying this; the mention of Jordan in *v.* 7 renders the conjecture a natural one. The deafening murmur with which this river dashes over the rocks in its meandering course amply justifies the descriptive title *tehōm* (see on lxxi. 20), and the expression 'breakers and billows' is surely applicable, not only to the sea, but to any stream which struck the poets as in any respect resembling the sea.

9 This verse is the happy result of calling Jehovah to mind; the thought of that God who has before now revealed Himself in love has lifted the singer out of his despondency. *V.* 9, then, corresponds to the second clause of *v.* 7, as *v.* 8 to the first. ('Yet' is justified by 'therefore,' &c.)——**Unto his lovingkindness,** personified as an angel (comp. xci. 11, and *Parad. Lost*, iii. 329).——**By day give charge,** &c. 'Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning' (xxx. 6). A day of lovingkindness (shown in God's outward favours) will dawn again, and the night which follows on such a day will be vocal with praise. We thus obtain a parallel to the fine epithet of God in Job xxxv. 10, 'who giveth songs in the night.' The prayer spoken of in the last line will be that of praiseful recognition of God's lovingkindnesses, which are 'new every morning' (Lam. iii. 22). It is tempting, no doubt, to emend *tefillah* ('prayer') into *tehillah* ('song'); comp. on lxxii. 20. Tempting; but unnecessary. Here, as in Hab. iii. 1,

[1] Socin, *Palästina und Syrien* (Baedeker), p. 401; comp. Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 398 (on Paneas).

[2] See Riehm in Hupfeld's *Psalmen*, ii. 392; Grill, *Der achtundsechsigste Psalm*, p. 115.

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prayer is the name of a class of mediative agencies pertaining to the individual, of which praise is one subdivision, and supplication another (comp. on lxv. 2, 3). This is in perfect accordance both with Biblical usage and with the primary idea of the Heb. *tefillah*. The songs of Hannah and of Jonah are introduced by, 'And Hannah prayed,' 'And Jonah prayed' (1 Sam. ii. 1, Jon. ii. 1). And why not? The essential idea of *tefillah* is mediation or interpretation;[1] prayer is in fact a provision of human nature for mediating between the individual and his God, and interpreting his religious feelings and longings. The objection to this view of the meaning of the verse is that the next verse *seems* like a specimen of the prayer referred to at the end of *v.* 9. But we may be deceived by appearances; prayer means, as we have seen, not necessarily supplication, but sometimes praise. We may, however, if we reject this sense of prayer, at least for this passage, render the second and third lines 'and in the night his song is with me, even a prayer unto the God of my life;' i.e. even now, in this night of affliction (comp. Isa. xxvi. 9). I can solace myself by singing my prayers or supplications (such as that which follows in *v.* 10) to my own personal God. This is less natural: 'by day' and 'by night' seem correlative, and together to mean 'continually' (cf. xcii. 3). We hardly ought to refer lines 1 and 2 to different points of time. A third view, not without some plausibility, is to refer the whole verse to time present; this makes it a good match for *v.* 8, which describes the psalmist's present circumstances. We shall in this case render, 'By day doth Jehovah give charge,' &c., i.e. God still sends messages of love, though they have not yet been felt in the return of outward prosperity, and I therefore still send up songs of praiseful and expectant faith. Another lyric poet, in still more depressing times, exclaims, 'The lovingkindnesses of Jehovah, surely they are not consumed'[2] (Lam. iii. 22). May not our psalmist, then, express the same confidence in his own more vivid style? He might; but not in the middle of his spiritual crisis. He still feels, in spite of his better self, as if God had forgotten him, and looks forward to praising God in the future (see the refrain *vv.* 6, 12, xliii. 6). According to a fourth view, the tenses in the translation should be in the past,—'By day did Jehovah give charge,' &c. (viz. in the former happy times), and in the night was his song with me! This is possible; we thus obtain a parallel to the imperfects in *v.* 5. But the transition thus produced from *v.* 8 to *v.* 9 and from *v.* 9 to *v.* 10 is singularly abrupt.——**His song**, i.e. a song of which He is the subject.——**The God of my life.** A beautiful variation upon 'the living God' (*v.* 4). Comp. Sirach xxiii. 4, 'Father and God of my life.'

10 **Let me say.** This is not one of those prayers which are also 'songs' (*v.* 9); but an expostulation broken by sobs, like xxii. 2.

11 **As though they broke,** &c. The expression is peculiar. Either the hurling of hostile reproaches is compared to the slashing of a warrior with his sword (comp. Heb. iv. 12), or the mental pain which they cause to the piercing sensation (Job xxx. 17) of a physical pain in the bones. (The two senses of *rāçakh* are 'dashing in pieces,' see lxii. 4; and 'killing,' Deut. xxii. 26 and elsewhere.) The latter view is recommended by the preposition 'in;' but may not this 'in' be due to an accidental repetition on the part of the scribe (*b'réçakh b'açmōthai* stands in the text)? The Sept., against Aquila and Symmachus, has no preposition.

[1] See Delitzsch on Isa. i. 15.
[2] Following the Sept., Targum, and Peshitto.

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12 **For Jehovah.** So v. 6. The text has 'for Elohim;' *can* this be right—'for Elohim . . . as my Elohim'? Cf. xliii. 4, 5, and on lxxxii. 1.

XLIII.—1 **A loveless nation.** Or, 'an impious nation,' but less suitably to the parallelism. Probably the heathen oppressors of Israel are meant, whose ideal did not include humanity or the love of man as man. True, Israel's ideal had not always included this. Benevolence and mercifulness were features of the later Jewish character. See *Pirke Abhoth* v. 19, 'A good eye, &c., belong to the disciples of Abraham our father;' *Beça* (Talm. Bab.), 32 *b*, 'Everyone who is merciful towards his fellow-creatures is certainly of the seed of Abraham our father, and everyone who is not so is certainly not of his seed.' In short, φιλαδελφία had widened into φιλανθρωπία. Comp. note on xii. 1.

3 **Send forth,** &c. God's light and truthfulness are personified; comp. 'Frau Treue' and 'Frau Wahrheit' in old German poetry. One would take them for angels (see on xlii. 9). In fact, the angels are in course of becoming pure symbols. God is now more precious than any mere messenger of his. He is a God, however, who does not sit aloof, but is ever radiating 'light;' that is, loving-kindness (see on lvii. 4) and 'truth;' that is, all those blessings which He has promised, especially return from exile and the enjoyment of the temple services.

4 **Upon the lyre.** For in this land of exile we have hung up our lyres on the willows (cxxxvii. 1, 2). Theodoret's comment, who supposes the psalmist to assume *prophetically* the standpoint of the Babylonian exile.

PSALM XLIV.

THE prayer of the martyr-nation—oppressed, scattered, and insulted Israel, which feels itself, like Job its type, to be suffering innocently. A Maccabean date has most recent authority in its favour (cf. Ps. lx., also in Book III., lxxiv., lxxix., lxxx., and others); but at this point I can only glance here.

2 We have heard with our ears, Elohim,
our fathers have rehearsed unto us,
the work thou didst in their days, in the days of old.
3 With thy hand thou didst root up nations and plant *them* in,
didst hew down peoples, and spread *them* abroad.
4 For they conquered not the land by their own sword,
neither did their own arm save them:
but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance,
because thou hadst pleasure in them.

5 Thou thyself art my King, O God;
command salvation for Jacob.
6 Through thee can we push down our foes,
in thy name can we tread down our assailants.
7 For not in my bow do I trust,
neither can my sword save me

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8 But *thou* hast saved us from our foes,
and hast put them to shame that hated us.
9 We make our boast of Elohim all day long,
and give thanks unto thy name for ever.
10 Yet thou hast cast off and hast disgraced us,
and goest not forth with our hosts.

11 Thou causest us to turn back from the foe,
and they that hate us plunder at their will.
12 Thou makest us like sheep for eating,
and hast scattered us among the nations.
13 Thou sellest thy people cheaply,
and hast not set their prices high.
14 Thou makest us a reproach to our neighbours,
a mocking and a derision to those around us.
15 Thou makest us a byword among the nations,
a shaking of the head among the peoples.
16 All the day long is my disgrace before me,
and the shame of my face hath covered me.
17 At the voice of him that reproaches and reviles,
at the mien of the enemy and the revengeful.

18 All this is come upon us ; yet have we not forgotten thee,
nor become disloyal to thy covenant ;
19 Our heart hath not turned back,
neither have our steps swerved from thy way,
20 That thou shouldest (therefore) have crushed us down into the place of jackals,
and covered us with Hades gloom.
21 If we had forgotten the name of our God,
or stretched out our hands to any strange god,
22 Would not Elohim search this out?
for he knows the secrets of the heart.
23 But nay ; for thy sake are we killed all the day long,
we are accounted as sheep for slaughter.

24 Rouse thee, why sleepest thou, Jehovah?
awake, cast not off for ever.
25 Wherefore hidest thou thy face,
forgetting our affliction and oppression?
26 For our soul is bowed down to the dust,
our body cleaves to the earth.
27 Arise to be our help,
and set us free for thy lovingkindness' sake.

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3 **Spread them abroad.** First, Israel is 'planted in;' next, its *branches* are 'spread abroad.' So lxxx. 9, 12.

5 Sept. has, *Σὺ εἶ αὐτὸς ὁ βασιλεύς μου καὶ ὁ Θεός μου, ὁ ἐντελλόμενος τὰς σωτηρίας Ἰακώβ.* Certainly a petition for deliverance seems to come too early; but the order of thought in lyric poems is not always the logically natural one. Bickell, however, follows Sept.——**My King.** The nation is involuntarily personified, as so often (cf. *v.* 7).——**Command,** or, 'give a charge to.' 'Salvation' or 'full salvation' (plur., a divine interposition being referred to, as xviii. 51 and lxxiv. 12, Isa. xxxiii. 6, but not Isa. xxvi. 18) is personified (cf. lxviii. 29).

6 **Push down,** a metaphor from bulls (see Deut. xxxiii. 17, 1 Kings xxii. 11, Dan. xi. 40, and cf. Virg. *Æn.* xii. 720, &c.)

7 **Save me,** i.e. give me the victory (xx. 6, 10).

9 **We make our boast,** &c. So another plaintive psalm speaks of Jehovah as 'enthroned on the praises of Israel' (xxii. 4).

10 **Goest not forth,** &c. So lx. 12; cf. lxviii. 8, Judg. iv. 14.

13 **Thou sellest,** &c. 'Thou dissolvest thy relation to thy people' (Deut. xxxii. 30, Isa. lii. 3). There is probably no allusion here to the slavery into which many Jewish captives were sold (cf. Joel iii. 6).

17 **At the mien,** &c. This rendering is required to obtain a parallel to 'at the voice.'

18–23. This consciousness of (legal) righteousness seems to most to indicate the Maccabean period. The expressions remind us of lxix. 8 (see, however, on lxix. 6, 7).

20 (**Therefore**); i.e. as a punishment for infidelity. We must supply this word.——**Into the place of jackals.** This is scarcely a topographical reference, as Hitzig takes it, reminding us that jackals are still common in the region mentioned in 1 Macc. v. 56–61.[1] The psalmist nowhere gets beyond a general description of the misery of himself and his people. He knew the prophets, and may have remembered the close of Jer. x. 22.

24 **Why sleepest thou?** Faith cannot dispense with symbols, and weak faith naturally falls into the worn-out symbols of a lower stage of religion (cf. 1 Kings xviii. 27). A 'full assurance of faith' would have rejected the idea of Jehovah's sleeping (cxxi. 4, note). The Phœnicians represented El (Ἶλος) with eyes before and behind, *ἐπειδὴ κοιμώμενος ἔβλεπε, καὶ ἐγρηγορὼς ἐκοιμᾶτο* (Philo Bybl., *ap.* Euseb. *Præp. Ev.* i. 10). Similarly two late Biblical writers (Zech. iv. 10, 2 Chron. xvi. 9). But the Psalter was meant to be the record of all moods (cf. vii. 7, xxxv. 23, lix. 5, 6, lxxviii. 65).

PSALM XLV.

GOD'S best gift to a fortunate king. A poem of lofty and yet elegant art, but wanting (the remark is Ewald's) in the fire and energy which mark the Davidic and Solomonic age. It may be called a mixture of the encomion proper and the epithalamion. But to what king is it addressed? One translator, who, being no mean poet, has a special right to speak (Julius Hammer), evades this question as not affecting the enjoyment of the reader. But surely we cannot appreciate the poem without at least knowing how the historical allusions have been explained. The question is one with which exegesis is deeply concerned, and the data are entirely exegetical. Obviously the subject of the poem is the marriage of a great and warlike king to his principal wife, and if we explain 'daughter of

[1] Hitzig thinks that the psalm was occasioned by the defeat of Joseph and Azarias, described in this passage.

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Tyre' (*v.* 13) as a vocative, it determines the queen to be a Tyrian princess. Let us first of all accept this view of *v.* 13 *a*. Among all the kings of Israel and Judah, the only one whom we know to have been married to a Phœnician princess is Ahab (1 Kings xvi. 31). This is pointed out by Hitzig. Like the hero of our psalm, Ahab was a lover of luxury, and built himself an ivory palace (1 Kings xxii. 39); he was also not unsuccessful in war (1 Kings xx.), and showed great courage in the battle in which he died (1 Kings xxii. 35). It is true that his weak, unsteady character led him into acts which the leading prophets could not condone (1 Kings xvi. 30, but comp. xxi. 27–29); but these acts were yet future, nor can we assume without proof that the psalmist would have expressed himself like the writer of 1 Kings xvi. 30. True, moreover, that *v.* 17 rather suggests a long line of royal ancestors; but a poet would readily declare and believe that the 'fathers' of the youthful Ahab were mighty and valiant men. Of course, no editor of temple-songs would have admitted such a poem into his collection, had he supposed that it referred to Ahab, or indeed to any king of (northern) Israel. But if he mistook the psalm for a hymn to some typically Messianic king of Judah, or why not say at once, to the Messiah of the future, he might well have admitted it, especially if he read *v.* 13 *a* in its present most probably corrupt form, misinterpreted by him. We know that the psalm was expounded of the Messiah by the Targum and many Jewish scholars (e.g. Kimchi).

Would it surprise us to find a king of Israel described as the favourite of Jehovah, and in language elsewhere applied to kings of the Davidic house (cf. Isa. xvi. 5, Ps. lxxxix. 28)? But ought it so to do? Did not a prophet expressly sanction the kingdom of Jeroboam (1 Kings xi. 29–39; cf. *Hosea* in the Cambridge Bible, p. 26)? And why should we be reluctant to admit that a pure marriage-song could have proceeded from the heretical north? Many regard the Song of Songs as describing the simple manners of the rural districts of the north, and we have no right to assume that moral decay was general as early as Ahab. The fact that such a prophet as Hosea was born in the north, proves the contrary. Nor may we ignorantly depreciate the youthful Ahab. This poem may have been an inspired appeal to him to walk worthily of his high calling. Still I confess that Jeroboam II. would please me better as a hero, partly because he was the greatest of the northern kings, and 'by his hand Jehovah saved Israel' (2 Kings xiv. 27), and partly because Ps. xlv. and the Song of Songs may then, as it seems, be used for the purpose of mutual illustration. So Ewald, who finds the same king referred to in Ps. xxi. But Ewald cannot tell me who was Jeroboam II.'s wife!

But now suppose that (with Ewald himself) we accept a different view of *v.* 13 *a*. Then it becomes possible to refer the psalm to some king of Judah. Delitzsch thinks of Joram, the son of Jehoshaphat; Grätz, paraphrasing 'thy people' in *v.* 11 *b* by 'thy family' (cf. 2 Kings iv. 13), of Hezekiah.[1] Delitzsch's view is certainly the more plausible. To whom would the warning in *v.* 11 *b* be more suitable than to Athaliah? And if Tyre is mentioned as sending presents to Jerusalem, the Tyrian descent of Athaliah may perhaps account for this. The word שׁנל too in *v.* 10 *a*, if specially north-Palestinian, would be very appropriate to the daughter of Ahab. I confess that this latter argument seems to me to overshoot the mark. There are other words besides, or meanings of words (מנים, מהיר, רחש), which might plausibly be regarded as north-Palestinian (because possibly Aramaising), and which a bolder critic might even treat as indications of a post-Exile date (the king being some heathen king—some Ptolemy or

[1] But would the favour of a Jewess (Hezekiah's wife) have been courted by foreigners?

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Persian king, for instance—who was friendly to the Jews). To me, the most conservative view which is probable is either Hitzig's or Ewald's. But the question must be treated again under a more comprehensive heading.

For my own part, I have no doubt that the psalm was preserved in the Psalter on the theory of its original Messianic reference—a theory which few will maintain now. Wetzstein's theory that the *songs* in the *Shir ha-Shirim* were admitted into the Canon as models of worthy marriage-songs may at least suggest a reason for the retention both of Canticles and of Ps. xlv. in our Bible. It is in fact most instructive to see how loftily even a Hebrew court-poet thinks of the institution of marriage. 'Und wer das Alte Testament von einem freiern Gesichtspunkt auffasst, sei er Theolog oder bloss Literator, um keinen Preis ein so seltenes Stück des hebräischen Alterthums missen wollen; denn unstreitig wirft das Niedere ein Licht zurück auf das Höhere.' These are the words of Ewald, full of youthful fire, in ed. 1 of his work on the Psalms. The traditional Christian application, whether of single verses or of the whole psalm, cannot here be examined (see Calvin and Delitzsch); I am here confined to the historical meaning. But how striking, in the light of the history of the retribution-doctrine, is Gregory VII.'s application of *v.* 8 to himself.

The sense does not seem to me to favour Bickell's division of the psalm into five strophes of eight lines each. How, for instance, can we break up *vv.* 4–8?

2 My heart bubbles with goodly words;
I address my work unto the king:
be my tongue the pen of a ready scribe!
3 Beauteous art thou, beauteous, above the sons of men;
grace is shed over thy lips:
therefore God has blessed thee for ever.

4 Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, thou hero,
even thy glory and thy grandeur.
5 * * ride on, press through,
in behalf of good faith, righteousness, and humbleness,
and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things.
6 Let thine arrows be sharp, [thou hero,]
in the heart of the king's enemies;
let the peoples fall under thee.
7 As for thy throne, [firm is its foundation,]
God [has established it] for ever and ever:
a sceptre of equity is the sceptre of thy kingdom.
8 Thou lovest righteousness and hatest iniquity,
therefore Jehovah, thy God, has anointed thee
with the oil of joy above thy fellows.

9 Myrrh and aloes (and) cassia are all thy garments,
out of the ivory palace stringed instruments make thee glad.
10 Kings' daughters are among thy favourites:
upon thy right hand stands the consort in gold of Ophir.

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11 Hearken, O daughter, and behold, and incline thine ear ;
forget also thine own people, and thy father's house ;
12 And when the king longs after thy beauty
(for he is thy lord), bow down unto him.
13 [And unto thee] shall they [come], O daughter of Tyre, with gifts,
the richest of people shall sue for thy favour.

14 All glorious is the king's daughter ; of pearls
in ouches of gold is her clothing.
15 In broidered apparel is she led along unto the king :
a train of virgins her companions is brought unto thee ;
16 Led along with all joy and exultation,
they enter into the king's palace.

17 Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children,
whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth.
18 I will celebrate thy name throughout all generations,
therefore shall the peoples give thanks unto thee for ever and ever.

2 The poet feels himself inspired, but as yet feeling is in excess of judgment. Words crowd in upon his mind, but require to be artfully arranged, for he bethinks himself that he is to celebrate a king.—— **A ready scribe** (cf. Ezra vii. 6, A.V.) De Witt (with Sept), 'a swift writer ;' i.e. the poet says he can improvise the beautiful lines which follow as fast as the nimblest pen can write. Hitzig thinks the allusion is to calligraphy. If so, the singer compares the choice form of his poem to the elegant characters of a master-scribe. But would not this better suit an Arabic writer?

3 **Beauteous art thou . . .** Comeliness being one important attribute of a king (comp. Isa. xxxiii. 17, 'the king in his beauty') ; still more of a royal bridegroom.—— **Above the sons of men.** Comp. 1 Sam. ix. 2, x. 23.——**Grace is shed,** &c. 'Words of grace' (Luke iv. 22) proceed from lips about which a smile plays.——**Therefore,** expressing the poet's inference from the noble appearance of the king. ——**For ever.** See introduction to Ps. xxi.

4–6 The mention of the king's graciousness suggests that of his chivalrous prowess. He smiles on the righteous, but frowns on the oppressor. The poet imagines him taking the field, and calls upon him to exhibit himself in the truly royal light of a defender of the innocent. Comp. Milton's noble application of the passage, *Paradise Lost*, vi. 710–4.

4 **Thou hero.** As xxiv. 8. Or, 'thou valiant one' (as xix. 6). ——**Thy glory and thy grandeur.** These are divine attributes (see on xxi. 6), and communicate a divine force to the king's weapons. In short, *they* are his true panoply. Nothing is said of the king's men of war. He is filled with the spirit of Rameses, as described by another 'skilful scribe' (Pentaur) ; 'I am with thee, I, thy father Ra : my hand is with thee. I am worth to thee a hundred thousand joined in one' (*Records of the Past*, ii. 70).

5 The received text repeats 'And thy grandeur.' We could understand this, if the king's grandeur or splendour (taking this in a weakened sense of the king's splendid weapons) stood in any real relation to the following verbs—if, for

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instance, we could render, with Ewald, 'and clad with thy grandeur' (an *anadiplosis* like that in xciii. 1). De Witt's 'In thy splendour ride on to victory' requires the insertion of a preposition.—— **In behalf of good faith,** &c. The king is to take the field against all oppression both within and without Israel's boundaries. He is to protect the faithful as opposed to liars and deceivers, the righteous as opposed to breakers of the law, and the humble as opposed to the proud. 'Good faith' or 'truthfulness' is, strictly speaking, a department of 'righteousness,' just as 'humbleness (of mind)' is a condition of that 'righteousness' which Jehovah loves[1] (so that a prophet can say, 'seek righteousness, seek humbleness,' Zeph. ii. 3). On the conception of '*anāvāh* (idealised poverty) in passages like this, see on ix. 13. Others suppose the three qualities named to belong to the king—'because of (thy) faithfulness, justice, and condescension' (cf. for this last xviii. 37, Zech. ix. 9); this view, like the former, assumes a transposition. The received text, however, gives one simple and one compound virtue—'faithfulness and humbleness-innocence' (or, 'condescension-justice,' if the king be referred to). There being no complete parallel in Hebrew for an apposition of this kind, one might follow out the hint given in the points, and read '*anvath*; this, however, gives an unsuitable sense, 'righteous humbleness' or 'just condescension,' and it is much simpler to assume a transposition as above.[2]—— **Terrible.** The word is poor; we might paraphrase 'fearful-glorious' (see on lxv. 6).

6 **Let the peoples,** &c. Certainly an idealistic but not a selfishly patriotic hope. The poet longs for an universal empire of truth and goodness, and by a bold anticipation awards this empire to the king whose prowess he celebrates.

7 **Thy throne,** &c. If we accept the text, 'Elohim' may (1) here be a title of the king. In defence of this, observe that the title Elohim is applied to the judicial authority (Ex. xxi. 6, xxii. 8), to Moses (Ex. vii. 1), and to the apparition of Samuel (1 Sam. xxviii. 13), and that a prophet, looking into the future, declares the Davidic family to be 'as Elohim, as the (or, an) angel of Jehovah' (Zech. xii. 8). Again, in a Temanite inscription, discovered by Dr. Euting, we find אלהן used for 'princes,' and אלהא in a Palmyrene (Neubauer, *Studia Biblica*, p. 212). This use of the word was therefore a Semitic idiom. The one conclusive objection to this view is, that in the very next verse 'Elohim' is used with distinct and sole reference to Jehovah (unless indeed with St. Jerome and Bishop Pearson we take 'Elohim' there too as a vocative[3])—a use which corresponds to the pervading tendency of the Korahite psalms. It would be unnatural to interpret the word differently here. Or (2), 'Elohim' may be the predicate, the noun, however, which is the subject forming an unexpressed element in the predicate; comp. 'thine eyes are doves' (Cant. i. 15), for 'eyes of doves.' Thus, 'thy throne is God' will be equivalent to 'thy throne is God's throne,' i.e. as permanent as God's throne. But this

[1] Cf. A. Ritschl, *Die Lehre der Rechtfertigung*, &c., ii. 564.

[2] Some will ask, Why not adopt A.V.'s rendering (cf. Sept.), 'and meekness (and) righteousness,' the construction being as in *v.* 9 *a*? Because this spoils the rhythm of the verse, as the authors of the points appear to have felt.

[3] Pearson, 'Being those words are spoken unto God as well as of God' (*An Exposition of the Creed*, 1676, p. 98). Of course we might equally well say, 'unto the king as well as of the king,' and Pearson himself admits that there may be a reference to the anointing of a king of Israel (Solomon). St. Jerome, 'Satis miror cur Aquila non, ut cœperat in primo versiculo [ὁ θρόνος σου θεός], vocativo casu interpretatus sit, sed nominativo, bis nominans Deum qui supradictum unxerit Deum' (*Epist.* 104, quoted by Pearson).

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is very harsh, and would a Hebrew reader have understood the phrase thus? A dove has really eyes, but God has only metaphorically a throne: would the reader have naturally thought of 'God's throne'? If the Hebrew words form a separate clause, surely the only rendering can be, 'Thy throne is God,' or 'God is thy throne,' neither of which expressions would be consistent with the religion of the psalmists. (The latter rendering, however, is actually that of Döderlein, who compares 'God is my rock,' lxii. 3.) The sum of the matter is that the only natural rendering of the received text is that of the versions, 'Thy throne, O God,' and the only natural interpretation that of the Targum, 'Thy throne, O Jehovah.' But is such an abrupt transition to Jehovah conceivable? Must not the poet's idea be this: that the king's success is assured, because *his* throne (not Jehovah's) is founded in righteousness? So in substance Saadia (see Ibn Ezra). Sense and rhythm are equally furthered by Bickell's correction.

8 **Has anointed thee,** &c. An official anointing (lxxix. 21) is not meant here; the phrase is symbolic for 'gladdened thee with prosperity' (see on xxiii. 5, and cf. Isa. lxi. 3). For construction, cf. Am. vi. 6.——**Above thy fellows.** A singular expression. Are these companions the other members of the royal caste (e.g. the kings of Egypt and Assyria), or (if a N. Israelitish king be meant) the other nobles, any of whom might, through the application of the elective principle, have risen, or even yet rise, to the throne (cf. Isa. xxxiv. 12)? The latter is Ewald's view; but in this connection the passage seems rather an idealisation parallel to that in lxxxix. 28 *b*.

9 Here the psalm becomes a marriage-song. First, the nuptial dress of the bridegroom is described; then, out of the natural order, his entrance into his palace. **Myrrh and aloes** are combined as in Prov. vii. 17, Cant. iv. 14. **Cassia** is only mentioned again as the name of one of Job's daughters (Job xlii. 14). For the omission of 'and,' cf. Deut. xxix. 22, Isa. i. 13. In each of these three passages, the two objects coupled by *Waw* are regarded as having a specially close connexion. Neither *v.* 5 nor Job xlii. 9 is parallel; in the latter passage Waw should be supplied before *Çofar*.——**Are all thy garments.** It is as if they were one mass of precious perfume. Construction as in Isa. v. 12.——**Out of the ivory palace** (the Heb. has 'palaces'—the plural of extension). Cf. 1 Kings xxii. 39, Am. iii. 15. 'Ivory' = adorned with ivory, like the Ninevite palaces and the chambers of Menelaus (*Odyss.* iv. 72, 73).——**Stringed instruments,** &c. Music welcomes the king as he enters the palace to receive his bride. How could music be omitted in such a festival? This view of the line is not absolutely certain, but is infinitely preferable to Bishop Horsley's, who renders, 'from cabinets of ivory of Armenia (cf. Targum) they have pleasured thee' (similarly Dr. Kay, except as regards 'Armenia,' which comes from the Targum; he compares Prov. xxvii. 9). For the rendering of *minnīm* (so read), see crit. note on cl. 4.

10 A chronological leap is taken. The king is in his hareem; among his wives are kings' daughters, but the post of honour is given to the newly espoused Tyrian princess.——**The consort.** Heb. *shēgāl*. The word is found in late books (see Lexicon), but this may be accidental, especially if it be rightly inserted, for *shālāl*, in Judg. v. 30 (Deborah's song being assumed to be north-Palestinian).

11–13 The poet, as a fatherly friend, offers advice to the inexperienced princess. He then holds out in prospect the rich presents which her influential position will bring to her.——**Thine own people.** See introd. and comp. Isa. ii. 5, if we may render there, 'thou hast cast off thy people (i.e. the

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ways of thy people), O house of Jacob.' In any case, the exhortation doubtless has special reference to religious usages.——**And unto thee,** &c. So Bickell. The text, as pointed and accented, is rendered either, 'And, O daughter of Tyre, with gifts shall they sue for thy favour, (even) the richest of people' (so St. Jerome, Hupfeld, Hitzig, Wickes), or, 'And the inhabitants (lit., daughter) of Tyre shall sue for thy favour with gifts, (even) the richest of people' (so Ewald, Delitzsch, Perowne). Against the former view it is urged that though *Waw* may be prefixed to a vocative, this is elsewhere done only when another vocative precedes (except in the doubtful passage, Jer. xx. 12), e.g. Prov. viii. 5. Against the latter, that 'daughter' is not a collective term, equivalent to 'inhabitants,' but a personification; even in Mic. iv. 10, where the statements made of the daughter would suggest putting the verb in the plural, the singular is preferred. Both views, then, are objectionable; and if we next try the rhythm of the verse, it is clear that the distich will be unsymmetrical, unless we divide as proposed above, and either supplement line 1 as suggested by Bickell, or else, in a manner favoured by the Targum (comp. Sept., Pesh.), rendering 'And unto thee shall the daughter of Tyre come with gifts' (so in the main Böttcher). The view which I have taken of *v.* 11 *b*, and the use of *bath* for 'damsel' in *v.* 11 *a*, justify me in adopting Bickell's suggestion.

14–16 Another violation of the natural order, like that in *v.* 9. First, the attire of the queen is celebrated; then the bridal procession.——**Of pearls.** The text reading is 'within,' i.e. not 'inwardly,' as opposed to 'outwardly,' as if the poet meant 'her greatest charms are those which do not strike the eye' (so even Herder), but in the inner apartment. The context requires Krochmal's correction.

17, 18 Closing wishes for the king and his poet. **In all the earth.** For many peoples will have become the king's loyal subjects (*vv.* 6, 18). Not only the character (*vv.* 5, 7) but the fortunes of the king are idealised. But we might equally well render, 'in all the land,' i.e. throughout the kingdom.

PSALM XLVI.

LUTHER'S psalm. The theme is the same as in the two following psalms—God is the Ruler of the nations. The three strophes are singularly well-marked and symmetrical, if at least, to the advantage of the sense, we restore the noble refrain at the end of the first. The third strophe clearly refers to some recent danger, possibly to the invasion of Sennacherib. The refrain reminds us of 'Immanu-el' in Isa. viii. 8, 10, and Ps. xlviii. presents points of contact with Isa. xxxiii. Notice the divine titles *Elyōn* (*v.* 5; cf. on vii. 18) and 'Jehovah Sabáoth' (see on xxiv. 10).

2 Elohim is our refuge and stronghold,
fully proved as a help in troubles:
3 Therefore will we not fear, though the earth should change,
and though the mountains should sink into the ocean's midst;
4 Let the waters thereof roar and foam,
let the mountains quake at the insolence thereof:

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[Jehovah Sabáoth is with us ;
our sure retreat is Jacob's God.]

5 [His lovingkindness is] a river, the arms whereof make glad
the city of God, the sanctuary of the Most High.
6 Elohim is in the midst of her ; she totters not ;
Elohim helps her when the morn appears.
7 Nations roar, kingdoms totter :
he utters his voice ; the earth melts away.
8 Jehovah Sabáoth is with us ;
our sure retreat is Jacob's God.

9 Come, behold the works of Jehovah,
who appoints such astonishments in the earth,
10 Who makes wars to cease unto the end of the earth,
who breaks the bow, and cuts the spear in sunder ;
who burns the chariot in the fire.
11 'Give up, and be sure that I am Elohim :
I will exalt myself among the nations,
I will exalt myself in the earth.'
12 Jehovah Sabáoth is with us ;
our sure retreat is Jacob's God.

2 **Fully proved.** Or, 'fully proving himself;' more strictly, 'letting himself be found exceedingly' (comp. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9, Isa. lxv. 1).

3 **Should change.** This may perhaps pass as a vaguer and more awful expression than 'should be moved.' But I doubt the text.

5 An antithesis to the stormy sea. **[His lovingkindness is] a river,** &c. Rhythm, syntax, and sense are equally helped by the word supplied. Even putting aside the two former, it is clear that 'a river, (that is) the arms thereof make glad the city of God' is not a very intelligible sentence. Some explanation of the river is indispensable to prevent us from taking it literally on the analogy of the ocean and its waves in *vv.* 3, 4 ; in xxxvi. 9, a parallel passage, such an explanation is suggested. If we reject the above 'restoration' of the text, we are reduced to render with Hitzig, 'A stream, whose arms . . . . is the Holy One of the dwelling of the 'Most High' (for the circuitous phraseology Hitzig compares xlviii. 2, lxv. 5). This can be supported by Isa. xxxiii. 21, where the presence of Israel's God is said to place Jerusalem on an equality with cities like Babylon and Nineveh, but is less natural than the view adopted above. 'Lovingkindness' is also the prevailing note in the cognate forty-eighth psalm (see xlviii. 10). This, therefore, is just the word to supply in this connexion (comp. also *v.* 6 with xlviii. 10). On Sept.'s reading, see crit. note.——**The arms whereof.** De Witt, 'whose conduits.' If accuracy is desired, 'canals' would be better (comp. the synonymous word in Isa. xxxiii. 21). The 'river' is a broad, sea-like stream such as the Euphrates or Tigris, with artificial canals. But in rendering a poem, I prefer 'arms' or 'branches' (see on lxv. 10). It is strange that there should still be some literalists (e.g. Mr. King, in *Bypaths of Bible Knowledge*, vol. iv.) who look for the 'river' underneath the Temple-hill, and explain it, not

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indeed any longer of the pool of Siloam, but at least of some perennial stream which was the source of the water-supply of ancient Jerusalem. But the psalmist must mean a 'river' worthier of the name (*nāhār*).——**Make glad.** To be glad in Jehovah is a common religious phrase (ix. 3, xxxii. 11, &c.) ——**The city of God,** i.e. the city where the 'great king' is enthroned (xlvii. 3, 6, xlviii. 3).—— **The sanctuary.** Lit., 'the holy place of the dwelling.' 'Holy'= inviolable. Mount Zion is used interchangeably with Jerusalem (comp. ii. 6). If the one is 'holy,' so also is the other. We are on the road to the phrase 'the holy city,' found in the later books (see my note on Isa. xlviii. 2).

6 **Elohim helps her,** &c. Whenever danger threatens, as of late, a short 'night of weeping' (xxx. 6) gives place to morning brightness.

7 **Nations roar,** &c. The context suggests that this is a hypothetical clause, 'If nations roar,' &c.; but it is also admissible to take it as a retrospect, 'Nations roared . . . earth melted away' (strictly, 'began to melt').

9 **The works of Jehovah.** A well-supported variant is 'the works of Elohim' (see De Rossi and Baer). The alteration was a natural one; we find the same reading in the imitative passage lxvi. 5.—— **Astonishments,** i.e. astonishing, stupendous things. Or we may equally well render, 'devastations.'

10 That the danger has been averted is represented as due to a word from God (comp. Zech. ix. 10).

PSALM XLVII.

STRICTLY speaking, the first of the theocratic or 'accession' psalms (see on xciii.)

2 O all ye peoples, clap your hands together,
shout ye unto Elohim in ringing tones.
3 For Jehovah is most high and terrible,
a great king over all the earth.

4 He subdued peoples under us,
and nations under our feet;
5 He chose out our inheritance for us,
the pride of Jacob whom he loved.

6 God is gone up with a shout,
Jehovah with the sound of the trumpet.
7 Make melody unto God, make melody,
make melody unto our King, make melody.

8 For God is the King of all the earth;
(make melody with an artful song);
9 God is become King over the nations:
God has seated himself upon his holy throne.

10 Princes of peoples have gathered together
with the people of Abraham's God:
for to God belong the shields of the earth,
greatly is he become exalted.

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3 **Terrible.** So Deut. vii. 21, x. 17, and often in the Psalms. There is no allusion here to a 'dark nature-principle in God' (see on lxv. 6).

4, 5 A retrospect of the subjection of the Canaanites and the conquest of Canaan.——**The pride of Jacob,** i.e. the goodly land of Israel (Jer. iii. 19). The phrase seems taken from Amos, who, however, seems to use it in a different sense or senses (Am. vi. 8).

6 **God is gone up.** The phraseology is suggested by those early times in which the presence of the 'ark of Elohim' was regarded as the pledge of victory; but the meaning is simply that God is no longer so visibly working for Israel as before, the need of a special interposition having passed away. 'Gone up,' viz. in the original sense of the phrase, to the sanctuary on Mount Zion; but the contemporaries of the poet would more naturally think of the heavenly temple (comp. ciii. 19), where in the strictest sense Jehovah had a 'holy' or inviolable throne (*v.* 9). See on xxiv. 7, lxviii. 19, xcii. 9.

7 **Our King.** Not merely in the common Semitic sense of 'King of heaven,' nor yet in the *old* Hebrew theocratic sense ('I will not rule over you . . . Jehovah shall rule over you,' Judg. viii. 23; comp. Deut. xxxiii. 5), but in that sense which became increasingly prevalent in later times, of Israel's and the world's Ruler. See on xciii. 1.

8, 9 The theme of the psalm. In *v.* 8 *b*, most render, 'chant ye a song of praise,' but how the Heb. *maskil* comes to mean a 'song of praise' is not clear. Delitzsch himself, who adopts this rendering, says that *maskil* properly means only 'a pious meditation' (introd. to Ps. xxxii.) I follow Ewald and Riehm. Cf. Sept., ψάλατε συνετῶς.

10 A vision of the future (comp. cii. 22) is here described as a present fact. The Hebrew text has no preposition before 'the people;' hence R.V. renders, '(To be) the people of the God of Abraham.' But what of 'Jacob whom he loved' (*v.* 5)? —— **Abraham's God,** Abraham being 'the first of the confessors of God' (*Chagiga*, 3 *a*) and 'the father of many nations' (Gen. xvii. 4).——**For to God,** &c. Exactly parallel to 1 Sam. ii. 8, 'for to Jehovah belong the pillars of the earth.' 'Shields' = rulers, as Hos. iv. 18. Bickell, to improve the rhythm, changes 'God' (Elohim) into 'Yahvè,' and inserts at the end 'above all gods;' comp. xcvii. 9. 'Yahvè' would certainly come in well, as explanatory of 'the God of Abraham.' But it is not clear why rhythm is to be always so uniform.

PSALM XLVIII.

Is this a psalm of praise for Sennacherib's overthrow (comp. Isa. xxxvii. 18, 20), or a post-Exile pilgrim-song (cf. Ps. cxxii.)? The significance of the psalm will vary much according to our answer. Ewald has remarked on its elegance as a lyric. The first strophe is eulogistic, the second historical, the third and fourth pervaded by a personal reference —to whom? to the citizens? or to pilgrim-visitors? In the latter case, one cannot help referring to the two lovely *terzine* of Dante beginning, 'E quasi peregrin che si ricrea' (*Parad.* xxxi. 43–8).

2 Great is Jehovah, and highly to be praised
in the city of our God, his holy mountain.
3 Beauteous in elevation, the joy of the whole earth,
is mount Zion, the city of the great king
4 Elohim in the palaces thereof
has made himself known as a sure retreat.

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5 For, behold, the kings combined—
they came onward together.
6 When they saw, they were amazed—
were confounded—were scared away.
7 Shuddering took hold of them there,
agony, as of one in travail.
8 By an east wind thou didst break in pieces
ships of Tarshish.

9 Even as we have heard, so have we seen
in the city of Jehovah Sabáoth,
in the city of our God;
Elohim establishes it for ever.
10 We think of thy lovingkindness, O God,
in the midst of thy temple.
11 According to thy name, O God, so is thy praise
unto the ends of the earth:
thy right hand is full of righteousness.

12 Let mount Zion rejoice, let Judah's daughters exult,
because of thy judgments.
13 Walk about Zion, and make the round of her,
reckon up the towers thereof.
14 Mark well her rampart,
study her palaces,
that ye may tell the next generation,
15 That there is Elohim—
our God—he it is that shall lead us
for ever and for ever.

2 **His holy mountain.** Mount Zion symbolises Jerusalem (see on xlvi. 5).

3 **Beauteous in elevation, the joy of the whole earth.** Jerusalem, above all other great capitals, is a mountain-city. But it is Mount Zion which the poet specially refers to, the 'elevation' of which in ancient times well deserved the epithet 'beautiful.' It is a question, however, whether this very obvious explanation exhausts the meaning. The prophets had taught men to look forward to a wondrous exaltation of the temple-mount (see Isa. ii. 2, Mic. iv. 1), loftiness being an essential element in the conception of God's 'holiness' (cf. Isa. lvii. 15). It is conceivable that the psalmist may have lived by faith in that ideal time when this feature of 'holiness' would be exemplified in the sacred hill in such a way as to excite the admiring joy of 'all the earth.' Another poet speaks in similar terms of Mount Zion (l. 2)—probably he had read our psalm—while a third uses still more completely parallel phraseology of Jerusalem as a whole (Lam. ii. 15).——**Is mount Zion, the city of the great king.** After 'mount Zion' the received text inserts 'the utmost parts of the north,' from which Sir Charles Warren, like Lightfoot before him, infers that Zion, the City of David, stood on the north side of the city. But, first, have we a right to expect a topographical description here, and

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next, would this be the form that such a description would take? The answer must surely be negative. Hence some critics have sought for another solution. The use of the same phrase, 'the utmost parts (or, recesses) of the north' in Isa. xiv. 13, with reference apparently to a mythic mountain of the gods,[1] has suggested to them that a parallel is intended between the Israelitish and the Babylonian Olympus; or, in Halévy's modified form of the view, that the Hebrews regarded Mount Zion as a miniature of the immense 'world-mountain' of Semitic mythology, crowned as it was with the sanctuary of Jehovah, and having at its feet the awful valley of Hinnom—the supposed entry to the region of the underworld.[2] We might indeed support Halévy's view by Isa. xxix. 1, 2, where 'Ariel' probably alludes to the name of the Assyrian 'world-mountain' Arâlû. But I would ask, how can 'the recesses of the north' be equivalent to 'a mountain like that mythic one in the far north'?[3] The words thus rendered, though found by the Septuagint translator, are surely a gloss, due, perhaps, to a scribe who noted in the margin two catch-words from Isa. xiv. 13 which seemed a parallel passage — words which found their way into the text. See article in *Expositor*, Jan. 1888, p. 24.

4 **In the castles thereof.** The word *'armōn* (again in *v.* 14 and cxxii. 7) will include both 'burgs' or castles and high (and strong) houses (see on *vv.* 13, 14). The former were indispensable for security (see on *vv.* 13, 14); chief among them was the Baris, fortified by the early Maccabees as a safeguard of the temple against the Acra. Baris (in plur.) is the Sept.'s word here; it seems cognate with Heb. *bîra* (Ass. *birat*), which is equivalent to *'armōn* (comp. Neh. ii. 8, 2 Kings xv. 25).

5 The poet describes the fact on which he bases the foregoing assertions. **The kings,** i.e. the Assyrian generals, 'altogether kings' (Isa. x. 8).——**Combined.** *Parad. Lost*, ii. 750–1, 'with them combin'd in bold conspiracy.'

6 **They saw it,** viz. Jerusalem. But the Hebrew has simply 'they saw.' The opposite of Cæsar's '*Veni, vidi, vici*.'

8 Probably an allegorical description of the overthrow of the hostile power. Comp. Isa. xxix. 6, xxxiii. 21. Sharpe,[4] indeed, sees an allusion to the destruction of the Tyrian vessels which were carrying supplies to the army of Sennacherib at the siege of Pelusium (comp. Herod ii. 141). But a transition from plain description to allegory (comp. my note on Isa. xxxiii. 21) is quite in the style of Hebrew writers (comp. lxxviii. 9), and the poet simply speaks (see *v.* 9) of that which he has seen.

9 **Heard . . . seen.** Does the poet mean that the lessons of the ear have now become truths of personal experience (comp. Job xlii. 5) through the recent wonderful deliverance of his native city? Or that he is now at length able to realise the facts of history by actually seeing the palaces of Jerusalem, so stately and strong, in this his first pilgrimage to the holy city?——**For ever.** See on lxxviii. 69.

10 **We think,** &c. 'We seek to realise thy love' (comp. last note); this is the full meaning of the verb (lit., 'to make like'). The temple is the place for pious meditation, as lxxiii. 17.

11 **According to thy name,**

[1] On which see Lenormant, *Les origines*; Schrader, *K. A. T.*, pp. 389, 390; Jeremias, *Die bab.-ass. Vorstellungen*, &c., pp. 59–61.

[2] *Revue archéologique*, juillet 1882, p. 52, where, for the description of Hinnom, the Talmudic treatise *Erubin* 19 is quoted.

[3] Hence Dr. Bredenkamp, 'Even in the uttermost north, in Nineveh, Elohim is known as a strong defence through the recent overthrow of Sennacherib' (*Gesetz und Propheten*, pp. 145, 146).

[4] *History of the Hebrew Nation*, p. 131

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&c. Many names are 'named' (Eph. i. 21), but only one receives such high, impassioned, world-wide praise as Jehovah. *World-wide* (comp. *v.* 2), partly because, by an emotional fallacy, the psalmists reckon upon the sympathy of heathen bystanders, partly because the dispersion of the Jews was by this time, speaking rhetorically, world-wide (comp. my note on Isa. xli. 9).

12 **Judah's daughters,** i.e. the provincial towns (as 'thou and thy daughters' (Ezek. xvi. 48). For the whole personification, comp. Isa. xl. 9).

13, 14 Either the *citizens* are bidden to inspect Jerusalem, to convince themselves of its freedom from injury, or the *pilgrims* exhort one another to impress the sights of Zion on their memories, guiding their eyes, as Dante says, 'now up, now down, and now all round about' (*Parad.* l.c.) The former view is probable enough. The unhurt condition of those high houses was well worthy of mention if, as in Amos's time (Am. vi. 11), even the mansions of the nobles were liable to 'breaches' and 'clefts.' Maundrell (*Travels*, p. 125) speaks of houses at Damascus, the walls of which were of mud, though the doors were adorned with carved and inlaid marble portals (cf. on Isa. ix. 10, Jer. ii. 34).——**Reckon up the towers.** 'Towers' there were from the first in the fortress-city; Hezekiah's zeal for fortification is mentioned in 2 Chr. xxxii. 5, nor did he stand alone. And yet the admiring emphasis of the psalmist seems to point to a time subsequent to some great overthrow. Ps. cxxii. produces the same impression, and both psalms must be compared with the accounts of the fortification of Mount Zion in 1 Macc. iv. 60, x. 11, xiii. 52, and of Jerusalem in 1 Macc. xiii. 10, xiv. 37.—— **The next generation,** i.e. not the Christian Church (as virtually Bishop Alexander), but the Jews of the next age, who at any rate would not know how splendid Jerusalem had appeared on the morrow of its great danger; or else, those children of the pilgrims who could not as yet follow their fathers' example.

15 **That there is Elohim** (cf. Isa. xxv. 9). Or, 'that this one (who has so wonderfully protected Zion) is God.' But the immediate context favours the first rendering. Even if זֶה be not adverbial but adjectival the sense must be that in yonder buildings God is manifestly present, or, in the old Hebrew phrase, that Zion is a 'Beth-el.' 'Where is thy God?' (see xlii. 3) is a question which psalmists will henceforth be able to answer with flashing eyes and erect head.—— **He it is,** &c. This is certainly a near approach to the actual words of the poet. It involves transposing 'for ever and for ever' from the last line but one to the last. Delitzsch well remarks that the close of the psalm, as it now stands, is not full-sounding enough (he of course rejects the last word of the received text—*'al-mūth*, perhaps a misplaced musical note; comp. *'al-mūth labbēn*, ix. 1). The transposition proposed by Bickell, which follows the analogy of xxviii. 9 *b*, sufficiently remedies this defect.

PSALM XLIX.

ONE of the finest didactic psalms, containing, as Hupfeld remarks, not merely consolation for righteous sufferers (like Ps. xxxvii.), but a real, however crude and imperfect, theodicy. Compare it with Pss. xxxix. and lxxiii., and *vv.* 15, 16 with xvi. 10, 11, xvii. 14, 15.

2 Hear ye this, all ye peoples,
give ear, all ye dwellers in the world,

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3 Both those of low and those of high degree,
rich and poor alike.
4 My mouth shall speak wisdom,
and the musing of my heart shall be of understanding.
5 I will incline mine ear to a parable,
I will open my riddle to the lyre.

6 Wherefore should I fear in the days of misfortune,
though the malice of my foes surround me,
7 Even of such as trust in their riches,
and make their boast of their great wealth?
8 Nevertheless none can set himself free,
nor give unto God his ransom;
9 (Yea, too costly is the redemption of man's soul,
and one must let that alone for ever;)
10 So that he should live on perpetually,
and should not see the pit.
11 Truly, see he must that (even) wise men die,
the fool and the brutish man alike perish,
and give up their riches to others.
12 The graves are their houses for ever,
their habitations for generation after generation;
[forgotten are] they whose names
men spoke with honour in the lands.
13 But man in splendour hath no continuance;
he is become as the beasts that are cut off.

14 This is the fortune of those who have self-confidence,
and of those who after them applaud their speech.
15 Like sheep, they are folded in Sheól;
death is their shepherd, and their form shall waste away;
Sheól shall be their castle for ever,
and the upright shall trample upon them in the morning.
16 Nevertheless God shall set free my soul,
from the hand of Sheól shall he take me.
17 Be not thou afraid when a man becomes rich,
when the glory of his house increases;
18 For he will not take away all that when he dies,—
his glory will not descend after him.
19 Although in his lifetime he bless his soul,
(and men praise thee that thou doest well unto thyself,)
20 He shall go to the generation of his fathers,
who shall never see the light.
21 Man, being in splendour but without understanding,
is become as the beasts that are cut off.

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5 **I will incline mine ear.** This wise man claims inspiration in prophet-like words (comp. *Job and Solomon*, p. 43). Not so lxxviii. 2.——**Parable . . . riddle.** See *ibid.* p. 75.

6 **The malice of my foes.** A reproduction rather than a version. But 'the iniquity of those who would trip me up' is lengthy.

7 What does **trusting in riches** mean? Making it a god, some will reply. Yes; but 'a god' in the primitive sense, i.e. one who can protect against adversity. The psalmist regards such confidence as a delusion, because a *premature* death will overtake the ungodly rich (see on *v.* 15).

8 **Nevertheless.** 'Sicher doch' (Ewald). As the particle indicates, this is one of the fixed points in the psalmist's philosophy of life. (Comp. *Korán*, ii. 117, 'And fear the day when no soul shall pay a recompense for a soul,' &c., also that fine passage, *Il.* ix. 401, &c.) It is only half the truth, as he well knows, and in *v.* 16 the other half is given. The received text can be ingeniously defended, but is certainly wrong. Psalms xxxix. and lxxiii. show us how these wise men expressed their conclusions. They expressed them piecemeal, and each fragment was introduced by the appropriate particle (אַךְ). It would be strange if *v.* 16 had no counterpart, introduced, as it is itself, in the characteristic way. The received text runs, according to the Revised Version,

None (of them) can by any means redeem his brother,
Nor give to God a ransom for him.

This rendering, however, inserts one word which is not in the original ('his' before 'brother'), and does not take notice of the unusual position of the object or accusative (i.e. that the clause begins not with אִישׁ, but with אָח). We surely want such a word as 'even' prefixed to '(his) brother.' Ewald would therefore take אָח to be an error of the ear (both the ear and the eye being fertile sources of false readings) for אַךְ, and render as above. If we keep the received text (which agrees with the Sept.), we must suppose a digression. There may have been in popular Hebrew, as well as in popular Arabic phraseology (see *Hamāsa*, i. 3, 1), such an expression as 'May I be thy ransom,' i.e. May I bear the evil destined for thee. There may have been a Hebrew dirge like that Syrian one from which Wetzstein translates two couplets thus:—

Ah! if he could be ransomed! Truly I would pay the ransom!
Redeem me, O my dear kinsfolk, with steeds of noble limbs.
Ah! if he could be ransomed! Truly I would pay the ransom!
Redeem me, O dear brother mine, with pure virgins.

It is possible that the digression was suggested by a sudden recollection of language such as this. The poet may thus illustrate the idea that, just as Dives can do no real harm to those whom he oppresses (see *v.* 6), so he can do no real good to those whom he would fain befriend. Digressions, however, are not to be expected in a didactic psalm like this. The leading thought is the perishableness of life without God. This, and no subordinate idea, requires illustration. It is Dives himself who will, when his hour comes, be unable to shake off the hand of death. It is possible that the false reading אָח ('brother') was introduced in opposition to the later Jewish doctrine that the living could redeem the dead by almsgiving (the same word for 'to redeem' was currently used on this subject which we find in the psalm). See Weber, *Altsynagogale Theologie*, p. 315.——**Set himself free.** Or, 'redeem himself.'

11 **Wise men die.** If the text is right, 'wise men in their own eyes' (Isa. v. 21), i.e. perhaps, the secularist portion of the class of 'wise men,' who had no positive

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religious belief (Prov. iii. 7). See on *v.* 13.——**The fool,** &c. Characteristic terms; see lxxiii. 22, xcii. 7, xciv. 8.

12 The reading adopted here has at least equal authority with the Massoretic, and it alone suits the context. If the palaces of these men were referred to, it would at any rate not be the indestructibleness of these buildings on which the poet would dwell, but the parting between the rich man and his splendid home ('Linquenda tellus et domus'). And if Egypt and Babylon may furnish examples, it was not in any irreligious spirit that rich men built houses to defy time, and they rested their hopes of fame chiefly on their temples. Thus Usertsen I., the founder of the great temple at Heliopolis (see Jer. xliii. 13) says—

> Let my name be the temple, my monument the lake.
> Immortality is a glorious deed.
> There is no desolation by the effect of time, the works will last:
> It is a striving for glories;
> It is an enterprise of a perfect name;
> It is the watching over an eternal work.[1]

——**Their houses for ever.** First, in the sense that the sepulchres of the rich were carved out or built up with a view to permanence (comp. Isa. xxii. 16), and next, that the grave (a type of Sheól) is, in the popular phrase, 'an everlasting house' (Eccles. xii. 5; see the commentators).——**Forgotten are they,** &c. Something must be supplied; sense and rhythm require it. Observe that the context speaks of honouring men's names, and that 'land of forgetfulness' is a synonym of Sheól equally with 'the grave' in lxxxviii. 12, 13.——**In the lands,** viz. in those which these rich men owned.

13 A poetic anticipation of Eccles. iii. 18, 19. The psalmist agrees with Abelard, 'cum fere omnes animales sint homines, ac paucissimi spirituales' (*Introd. ad Theol.*, p. 1047). He has already told us that there is a wisdom which is no better than folly, inasmuch as, to use Koheleth's words, 'one chance happens to them all' (Eccles. ii. 14). Such wisdom may have a temporary use (*ib.* ii. 13), but in the end 'what pre-eminence hath the wise above the fool' (*ib.* vi. 8)? Our psalmist, however, is a wise man of another stamp, who knows that true understanding gives the pledge of continuance, and he expresses this by a significant rhyme in the two slightly different forms of the refrain (*v.* 13, *yālīn* 'hath continuance;' *v.* 21, *yābhīn* 'understandeth;' the Sept., however, reads *yābhīn* in both verses).——**In splendour.** Probably this goes with the subject, not with the predicate. 'Fearfully am I distinguished' (cxxxix. 15). Is the poet thinking of the cosmogony in Gen. i., like the author of Ps. viii.?——**As the beasts.** Comp. lxxiii. 20 (note). In one sense this verse (and *v.* 21) may be called the *māshāl* (*v.* 5); it draws a moral lesson from the outer world of nature.

14 This verse closes the foregoing description; comp. the form of Job xviii. 21, xx. 29. 'This' = such.——**The fortune.** Lit., 'the way' (as xxxvii. 5).——**Self-confidence.** 'Folly' would be too weak a rendering here, though suggested by *k'sīl* in *v.* 11 *b*; 'confidence' (see Job iv. 6, xxi. 24) would be better, but still too indefinite. The context shows that an ill-grounded self-trust is meant—in short, obstinacy. So lxxv. 9.——**Who after them,** &c. Comp. lxxiii. 10 (received text), where the pernicious influence of false teaching may, as here, be referred to.

15 If *v.* 13 is the *māshāl* ('parable') *v.* 15 is the *khīda* ('riddle') of the poem. To us, that is, not to the original readers. They had an unfailing key to the sense, having the same circle of ideas and images as the author, and sharing his passionate resentment at the wicked, which mirrors itself in an abrupt,

[1] Stern, *Records of the Past*, xii. 54, 55.

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sharp style. A parallel from Arabic literature may throw light on the imagery. It occurs in an Arabic poem in the *Hamāsa* which is probably of pre-Islamic origin. A plague had smitten the tribe to which the poet belonged, and the tribe is therefore compared to a herd of camels, with Death for their herdsman, 'to whose stall they must all come home, some sooner, some later.'

> And to-day they wander, a trembling herd, their herdsman Death:
> One speeds away to his rest at eve, one stays till dawn.[1]

Like most figures from pastoral life, this image admits of more than one application. Take this from a fine work by the Abbé Gratry. 'La masse des hommes, qui tourne le dos à la mort et qui fuit devant elle, constitue le troupeau de la mort. La mort est le pasteur, et le genre humain le troupeau. Plus on tourne le dos, plus elle frappe. Plus on va vite, plus elle vous écrase de fardeaux.'[2] But is not the interpretation of the Arab poet that which most completely corresponds to the condensed allegory of the figure? What reason is there for not adopting a similar one in our passage, especially as in a parallel psalm the ungodly rich men are said to be 'swept off' in a moment by 'terrible events' (lxxiii. 19)? Thus *v.* 15 goes beyond *v.* 11, where the psalmist describes the fate of dull, insensible men in general (rich, but not 'towards God'); it expresses the author's conviction as to the future of those violently hostile rich men spoken of in *vv.* 6, 7. Dull insensibility in these psalms is by no means synonymous with active hostility to the cause of God. It is a mental disorder which might for a moment attack even the righteous (lxxiii. 22), and is in one passage made to consist in a shortsighted view of the career of the ungodly (xcii. 7, 8). The dull man cannot wait God's time for retribution to the ungodly (who are therefore distinguished from the dull). This determines the sense in which **Death is their shepherd.** He is so, not merely (as *Speaker's Comm.* takes it) by ruling his victims like Pluto, in his own sad realm, but by 'stealing upon them' when in the height of their prosperity, so that they 'go down alive (in full strength) into Sheól' (lv. 16). Those who are less violently hostile 'die,' 'perish' (*v.* 11); but these men are overthrown 'as in a moment' (lxxiii. 19). Sheól is called **their castle for ever** (comp. *v.* 12), because mythology represented Hades as an underground city with gates (see on Isa. xxxviii. 10). At the close of the verse (or quatrain), we have the triumphant demeanour of the righteous. The description is an unpleasing one, but is outlined with more reserve than that in Isa. lxvi. 24. Line 4 must of course be taken in connexion with the latter part of line 2; the 'wasting' of the 'forms' certainly does not take place in Sheól (as the received text has it). And what of the time-definition? Can the 'morning' be that of the resurrection? If so, it is a resurrection of the righteous only which is meant; for the ungodly 'never see the light' (*v.* 20). But, as Del. remarks, not even in the latest psalms does the hope of the resurrection find a living expression. 'Morning' is a symbol of deliverance (see on xxx. 6).

16 The counterpart of *v.* 8. 'None can set himself free,' but 'my soul shall God set free.' The psalmist is the representative of the class of those religious wise men who have learned the secret of true 'life.' For surely it is the weakest of explanations to say that he rejoices thus in the prospect of mere deliverance from the danger of death. A few years later, and the

[1] Mr. Lyall's metrical version; comp. Freytag, Arabic text, p. 375, Latin version, ii. 21.

[2] Gratry, *De la connaissance de l'âme*, ii. 469 (épilogue).

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danger will return in a heightened degree. Possibly in xvi. 10 the poet who speaks there may partly mean deliverance from danger, but not here. The problem of human fortunes is set forth here in such a way as excludes even a partial reference to this. That 'wise men die' (*v.* 11), is true of religious as well as secular-minded sages. We must compare lxxiii. 24. The 'taking' is really 'receiving with honour'—a 'taking home' (as Keble finely renders). Perhaps indeed there is an allusion to that fuller passage. The poet has that religious intuition which forms the kernel of the hope of immortality. Was his language suggested by some popular belief? It is an open question.[1] [We may, however, equally well render, 'when it (viz. Sheól) takes me away;' comp. Ezek. xxxiii. 4. So Ewald and Hitzig. The rendering adopted conduces more to rhythm.]

17–21 The poet resumes the didactic tone. Like a fellow-psalmist (see lxxiii.), he cannot remain on the heights of mystic devotion. The person addressed is a scholar of the wise men (see on xxxvii. 1). He is not to be afraid lest the power which wealth gives should be turned to evil purposes. How short is the time for its enjoyment! The tone of this epilogue is calmer (contrast *v.* 18 with Isa. v. 14). The poet no longer distinguishes degrees of badness and of punishment. Earthly wealth is a disqualification for that high honour referred to in *v.* 16 (as explained above). Note the significant phrase **in his life.** The rich man has had 'his portion in life,' and (*v.* 20 *b*; comp. xxxvi. 9) there is no other 'light' for him to see. He has 'blessed his soul,' like the rich man in Luke xii. 19 (comp. Deut. xxix. 18), but for what? His fathers, where are they? To them shall he be gathered in the dark land. (Observe that 'going to his fathers' is distinguished from death and burial; see Gen. xxv. 8, xxxv. 29, 2 Kings xxii. 20. The received text has, 'thou shalt go'—a scribe's error, caused by the use of the second person in the preceding line.)

PSALM L.

JEHOVAH judges His people in the presence of 'heaven and earth;' He sets forth His character and the worship which He requires. We find here the same purified conception of true religion as in xl. 7 and in the great pre-Exile prophets. The divisions are well marked.

1 El Elohim Yahveh has spoken,
and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof.
2 Out of Zion the perfection of beauty
God has shone forth.
3 Our God will come, and may not keep silence:
fire devours before him,
and around him it is very tempestuous.
4 He calls to the heavens above,
and to the earth, that he may judge his people.

[1] It is proper to speak with reserve on such a subject. But certainly we can best account, psychologically, for the revelation of the indestructible higher life, if the soil was prepared by a popular belief in at least the bare possibility of escaping 'from the hand of Sheól' (see above, p. 41, and cf. 1 Sam. ii. 9). The revelation will then consist in the extension of this escape to a much larger number of persons, and in making it depend on the attainment of a certain character.

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5 'Gather my duteous loving ones unto me,
those that have made a covenant with me with sacrifice.
6 And the heavens declare his righteousness,
for God is about to judge.

7 Hear, O my people, and I will speak,
O Israel, and I will protest unto thee;
Yahveh thy God, am I.
8 Not for thy sacrifices will I reprove thee,
(truly, thy burnt offerings are continually before me;
9 I will take no bullock out of thy house,
nor he-goats out of thy folds;
10 For mine is every beast of the forest,
the cattle upon the mountains of God.
11 I know all the birds of the mountains,
and the roamers of the plain are in my mind.
12 If I were hungry, I would not tell thee,
for mine is the world and the fulness thereof.
13 Would I eat bulls' flesh,
or drink the blood of goats?
14 Sacrifice unto God thanksgiving,
and (so) pay thy vows unto the most High;
15 And call upon me in the day of trouble,
I will rescue thee, and thou shalt glorify me.

16 But unto the ungodly saith God,
What right hast thou to rehearse my statutes,
or to take my covenant into thy mouth?
17 Whereas thou hatest correction,
and castest my words behind thee.
18 When thou seest a thief, thou hast pleasure in him,
and with adulterers is thy portion.
19 Thou hast let thy mouth loose for evil,
and thy tongue contrives deceit.
20 Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother;
thou givest a push to thine own mother's son.
21 These things hast thou done, and I kept silence;
thou imaginedst that I was even like thyself;
I will reprove thee, and order the facts before thee.

22 O consider this, ye that forget God,
lest I tear in pieces, and there be none to deliver.
23 Whoso sacrifices thanksgiving, glorifies me,
and to him that is blameless in his walk will I show the salvation of God.

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1–6 The appearance of the divine Judge; the summons to the witnesses and to the defendants. Who is it, whose voice peals forth? A king of many titles, three of which are given, to impress the fulness of the Divine Being. This triple name, in which it were too painful to write 'Jehovah,' occurs again only in Josh. xxii. 22, but the principle is the same as in 'Yahveh [Jehovah] Elohim' in lxxii. 18, Gen. ii., iii., &c. El is put first, because in the primitive Semitic world, to apply Dante's words, 'El s'appellava in terra il sommo Bene' (*Parad.* xxvi. 135). Whatever its origin,[1] a connexion with the idea of 'strength' must have suggested itself to Israelitish writers, just as, whatever the origin of Yahveh, the ideas of self-existence and self-manifestation must have inseparably cohered with that name to reflective worshippers. El is the most general, Yahveh the most special name for the Divine Being (see on cxviii. 27). Elohim does not at once suggest a significant Hebrew etymology; but considering the idiomatic use of this plural noun with a singular verb (as if a collective[2]) we may perhaps paraphrase it, 'the many in one.' 'He in whom all that man has ever conceived of strength, wisdom, goodness, &c., is summed up and exceeded.' From the use made of Ps. l. 1 in a Talmudic treatise, it would seem that early Jewish Christians quoted it to prove the doctrine of the Trinity. The answer of the Rabbi to the objector (*Berakhoth*, c. 9) was, that these three expressions are the attributes of a single person, as we say indifferently, Cæsar, Augustus, or Emperor. A good answer. Each has a different meaning, and brings out one side of the Old Testament conception of God. Duport's rendering (1674) is a praiseworthy attempt, 'Αθάνατος φώνησε Θεὸς μακάρεσσιν ἀνάσσων. ——**And called the earth.** Not to be judged, but to witness the judgment of the covenant-people (*v.* 5).

2 **The perfection of beauty.** As Lam. ii. 15 (comp. 1 Macc. ii. 12). For the idea, see on xlviii. 3.

3 **Will come,** as a judge. This is the object of the bright radiance (*v.* 2).——**May not . . .** because the occasion is so great. Literally, 'let him not . . .' It is the vehement protest of the emotional nature against a grievous evil. See xxxiv. 6, xli. 3, cxxi. 3, Isa. ii. 9. Comp. also the phrase common in Arabic elegies, *la tabʿad*, 'die not,' and the beginning of the 37th elegy in the *Hamāsa* (Freytag, p. 405), 'Let not God cause to die (*la yubʿid*) our brothers who are deceased.'

5 The ministers of justice are to **gather** God's **duteous loving ones** (see on xii. 2), i.e. not, as in xii. 2, Israelites worthy of the name, but all those who are outwardly at least servants of Jehovah. (See further on *vv.* 16, 23.) There being no special indication of a Maccabean date, I abstain from comparing 1 Macc. ii. 42, vii. 13, 2 Macc. xiv. 6 (where the Asidæans—'every one who offered himself freely for the law'—are the strict Jehovists who rallied round Judas the Maccabee). A mutual relation of 'lovingkindness' (*khésed*) between Jehovah and His servants, arising out of the 'covenant' between them, entitles us to call either party by the title *khāsīdh*, *khasīdhīm*. Jehovah is *khāsīdh* (cxlv. 17, Jer. iii. 12). Levi is *khasīdh* (in connexion with a religious 'covenant,' Deut. xxxiii. 9); the whole people, and each of its righteous members, is *khāsīdh* (xvi. 10, l. 5, and nineteen other psalm-passages). The second half of *v.* 3 emphasises the connexion of the

[1] On this point, see Nöldeke, 'Ueber den Gottesnamen אֵל,' in *Monatsberichte der Akademie d. W. zu Berlin*, 1880, p. 760, &c.; Friedrich Delitzsch, *Wo lag das Paradies?* 1881, p. 165; D. H. Müller's paper on אֵל and אִלָּה among the Sabeans in the Proceedings of the 6th International Congress of Orientalists; Lagarde, *Mittheilungen*, 1884, p. 94, &c.

[2] The Ethiopic *amlāk* 'God' is a pure collective form.

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ideas of 'covenant' and lovingkindness, with the addition—somewhat strange in the light of *vv.* 14, 23—of the words **with sacrifice.** It is not enough to explain these words by a reference to Ex. xxiv. 5. Clearly they are ironical (comp. Isa. xlii. 19). Jehovah, who at the outset permitted the great covenant of blood, still tolerates the sacrifices by which the covenant is continually renewed.[1] Sacrifice is a form of devotional expression, but how childish a form! 'Ye have been very zealous,' He seems to say, 'about something which I enjoined not (Jer. vii. 22, Isa. xliii. 23; cf. lxvi. 3); but ye have not been equally careful about that which I did enjoin.'

6 The heavens **declare His righteousness.** Why? Because Jehovah stands in a quasi-legal relation to Israel, and before He can judge, a witness must guarantee His perfect righteousness.

7–15 The continuation of this dramatic scene scarcely answers to the commencement. The judgment seems to be adjourned, or it is left to the conscience of the defendants (Jehovah is both plaintiff and judge). The speech which follows is an exposition of the claims of Jehovah, which is substantially equivalent to the first table of the Decalogue, and which, like the Decalogue (Ex. xx. 2), begins with the solemn assertion, **Jehovah thy God am I.** Comp. lxxxi. 11, and (for the reading) see on xlv. 8. The greater part of this passage is strongly ironical. Instead of bringing definite charges against the people, Jehovah states what the subject of reproof is not, viz. the due performance of sacrificial rites. Much has been said by commentators on this and similar passages (e.g. Hos. vi. 6, Isa. i. 11–13, Mic. vi. 6, 7, Jer. vii. 22) on the relation of the higher teachers of Israel to animal sacrifices. It seems to me certain that neither the prophets nor the wise men (see Prov. xxi. 3) regarded these as ideally good. The spiritual meaning of the sacrificial system cannot have been recognised by them. Probably they considered it a means of keeping up the religious sentiment adapted only to less noble spirits. The psalmist, at any rate, as it seems to me, not only with the greatest emphasis denies that God (as some undeveloped minds imagine[2]) requires nourishment, but reveals a sympathetic interest in the animal creation (cf. Ps. ciii.), which is hardly consistent with a cordial endorsement of the principle of animal sacrifice. I speak with hesitation, but my phrase 'hardly consistent' may be defended by the obvious indifference of the wise men as a class (except Sirach) to the sacrificial system. The speech concludes with a restatement of Jehovah's ancient promise of protection together with its conditions. Thus far the divine speaker has confined Himself to these formal but not openly ungodly worshippers who formed (perhaps) the larger part of Israel.

10 **Upon the mountains of God** (xxxvi. 7). Although God Himself is speaking, the phrase is not from a Hebrew point of view objectionable (see *vv.* 14, 23). The received text is perplexing. The easiest rendering is, perhaps, 'upon the mountains where thousands are' (so Hupfeld); or, by altering one point, we might render the text, 'upon my mountains by thousands' (Bredenkamp). The Sept. may seem to have read differently; it renders the line, *κτήνη ἐν τοῖς ὄρεσι καὶ βόες* (comp. viii. 8, Heb.) But every view both of text and of

[1] So Jeremiah (in spite of the strong words in Jer. vii. 22) concedes the practice of sacrifice in Jer. xvii. 26, xxxi. 14, xxxiii. 11, though not its divine origin (see the exposition of Jer. vii. 22 in the *Pulpit Commentary*).

[2] This gross theory, repudiated by our psalmist, survives in the phraseology of Leviticus (iii. 11, xxi. 8, 17, 21). Expressions like the 'food of Jehovah' can only have been derived from consecrated traditional formulæ. The compiler or compilers of Leviticus had a different view of sacrifice from our psalmist (see end of note on *vv.* 16–21), but are not to be held responsible for the invention of such phrases.

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construction seems awkward but that suggested by Olshausen and adopted above.

11 **The roamers of the plain** (viz. either 'that which moves to and fro,' or 'that which comes forth abundantly'). So in another Asaph-psalm (lxxx. 14).

14 Thanksgiving and the performance of vows, the (only) true sacrifice (so xl. 7, 10, li. 17, 18, and perhaps lxix. 31, 32). The expressions are synonymous; see xxii. 26, lxi. 9. 'Vowing' has become spiritualised; comp. Hos. xiv. 2.[1]

16-21 Israel's judge, who has (it would seem) severed the imperfectly good from the bad, now addresses Himself to the latter. This time the subject of reproof is specified—viz. the neglect of the simplest moral duties. In short, the second table of the Decalogue is virtually expounded. Observe that the class now addressed is not composed of paganisers; it is as familiar with the 'covenant' as the former class. I mean that the reference to the covenant links the 'ungodly' who are addressed here to the formal but (as it would seem) not ungodly worshippers who are indirectly and with gentle irony reproved in *vv.* 7-13. But besides the 'covenant' we find that in this verse the 'statutes' of Jehovah are spoken of. Bredenkamp thinks that from the whole tenor of the psalm these 'statutes' must include ordinances respecting ritual, and consequently denies that the first part of Jehovah's address can possibly mean to disparage sacrifice in itself. The answer is that the psalmist, like Jeremiah, draws a distinction between more and less important 'statutes.' There is much in Deuteronomy (which substantially, I suppose, represents the 'covenant' here referred to) which is simply adopted from current sacerdotal tradition; there is much also which proceeded from a direct revelation, whether to 'Moses' of old or to his late prophetic successor. The two tables, called the 'tables of the covenant,' are what the psalmist is especially thinking of. These, and the prophetic enforcements of these in Deuteronomy and Jeremiah, are the 'words' which the 'ungodly' is accused of 'casting behind him,' instead of keeping them in his heart (xl. 9, Deut. vi. 6). According to this compendium of the covenant, there is but one indispensable religious form, the observance of the Sabbath; sacrifices are omitted, as belonging to purely natural religion and supremely unimportant from the point of view of the searcher of hearts (Jer. xvii. 10). Of course, the formalists, both the moderately good and the openly bad, gave a different interpretation to the 'statutes' and the 'covenant.' This seems to be ironically alluded to by the divine speaker, who is however far from endorsing it. By the phrases, **my statutes** and **my covenant**, then, I understand that part of the Law which the ungodly man regarded as in a special sense divine appointments, and by **my words** those 'weightier matters' which he spoke of but little and practised still less. The expressions are not synonymous, but antithetical. This is confirmed by the use of the term **correction** (*v.* 17 *a*), which clearly expresses the aim and object of the divine **words** (*v.* 17 *b*). The true 'statutes' of Jehovah are those upon which both public and private morality depend; they of course include the fear of God, but prescribe no fixed form of worship. The authors of the Levitical legislation of course thought otherwise; they must have written subsequently to our psalmist in a different set of providential circumstances.

18-20 Transgressions of the seventh, sixth, and eighth commandments. The 'brother' in *v.* 20 is any fellow-Israelite (for 'mother,' comp. Isa. l. 1). To 'push' or 'overthrow' is to oppress in the forms of justice.

[1] Against this view, however, see Bredenkamp, *Gesetz und Propheten* (1881), p. 64.

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23 *b* For the received text, see R.V. (text and margin; the latter follows Del.) It may be rendered literally, 'whoso lays down a way,' but does this fit the context? See crit. note. The 'salvation' spoken of is no small temporary victory (as xx. 7), but rather (note the Hebrew idiom, more fully rendered at xci. 16) some grand interposition of Jehovah, placing His people in a state of perfect happiness (comp. on Isa. xii. 2). It is a greater promise than *v.* 15.

PSALM LI.

DEVOTION has its own canons of exegesis. But reverence for historical truth, which is equivalent to reverence for the ways of God, bids us enquire into the original meaning of this most sacred lyric. First of all, however, we must ask, Do the two closing verses belong strictly to the psalm, or are they a later addition? Upon the answer depends in no slight degree our view of the meaning of the psalm. Assuming the former alternative, the psalmist holds a different theory of sacrifice from the writer of Ps. l. Sacrifices fell through during the Exile, but as soon as Jerusalem was rebuilt, legally correct offerings would again be brought to the temple. I cannot help referring to the beautiful Jewish service for the Day of Atonement. This liturgy expresses the feelings of pious Jews during their second great Exile, and it does so in language borrowed from Ps. li.—'O rebuild (the temple) speedily, and then will we prepare the offerings enjoined upon us.' Meantime, how is God to be propitiated? The answer is that repentance (*t'shūbāh*) is tantamount to burnt-offerings. 'There would be no end,' it adds, to the burnt offerings for our debts, and no number to the sweet savours for our guilt.' In the same spirit the Unity Hymn quotes Ps. l. 8 and Jer. vii. 22, and adds these lovely lines: 'I will build thee an altar with my broken heart, and will also break my spirit within me. The shreds (lit., breakings) of my spirit are thy sacrifices; may they come up acceptably on thine altar.'

The interpretation of the psalm adopted in this liturgy is precisely that advocated by Dr. Robertson Smith in his first volume of lectures.[1] It is at first sight commended by the connexion of thought which early readers must surely have found between *vv.* 18, 19 and *vv.* 20, 21. That connexion is subtle and beautiful; too subtle as I think for the author of this psalm, who would have expressed his idea more plainly, but not too subtle, nor too beautiful, for those editors of the religious classics of Israel who, as I have said before, had some at least of the qualities and the gifts of their more inspired predecessors.[2]

Assuming the latter alternative, we find a beautiful progress in the three kindred psalms—xl., l., and li. The first merely says, Obedience is better than sacrifice; the second adds that prayer and thanksgiving are essential to true worship; the third, that, since Israel and each Israelite are sinners, they must be forgiven before they can obey or praise, and that God will forgive them, not for sacrifices, but for heartfelt repentance. Perfect obedience is impossible; but, as a Jewish doctor expresses it, 'that which God declares to be a defect in an animal sacrifice, He accounts an advantage in the heart-sacrifice of a man.'[3]

The view which has been indicated above seems to have been anticipated by Theodore of Mopsuestia, who is thus epitomised by Bar Hebræus:[4] '(This psalm was) spoken with reference to the people in Babylon, which

[1] *The Old Testament in the Jewish Church*, p. 416.
[2] *The Prophecies of Isaiah*, ed. 3, pp. 228, 229.
[3] So Holdheim (*Predigten*, i. 86) paraphrases a sentence in *Wayikra rabba*, c. 7.
[4] See Baethgen in Stade's *Zeitschrift*, 1885, p. 95.

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confesses its sins, and prays forgiveness and the cessation of its exile.' He weakens the sense of *v.* 6 *a*, however, by explaining, 'against thee alone, and not against the Babylonians.' The affinity of the poem to the Second Isaiah cannot be overlooked.

3 Have pity upon me, Elohim, according to thy lovingkindness :
according to thy plenteous compassions wipe out mine offences.
4 Wash me throughly and oft from mine iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin.

5 For I myself acknowledge my transgressions,
and my sin is continually before me.
6 Against thee, thee only, have I sinned,
and done that which is evil in thine eyes,
that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest,
and be clear what time thou judgest.
7 Behold, in iniquity was I brought forth,
and in sin did my mother conceive me.
8 Behold, thou desirest truth in the dark places,
therefore in the secret place make me to know wisdom.
9 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean ;
wash me throughly, and I shall be whiter than snow.
10 Fill me with mirth and gladness,
that the bones thou hast crushed may thrill with joy.
11 Hide thy face from my sins,
and wipe out all mine iniquities.

12 Create me a clean heart, O God,
and renew within me a stedfast spirit.
13 Cast me not away from thy presence,
and take not thy holy spirit from me.
14 Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation,
and uphold me with a willing spirit.
15 Then will I teach transgressors thy ways,
and sinners shall turn back unto thee.
16 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, Jehovah, my saviour-God,
and my tongue shall ring out thy righteousness.
17 O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth shall publish thy praise.
18 For thou hast no pleasure in sacrifices, that I should present them,
burnt offerings [and whole burnt offerings] thou favourest not.
19 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit,
a broken and a crushed heart, O God, thou canst not despise.

20 Do good in thy favour unto Zion ;
build thou the walls of Jerusalem.

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21 Then wilt thou be pleased with the right sacrifices, burnt offering
and whole burnt offering;
then will they offer bullocks upon thine altar.

3 The first plea for pardon—God's lovingkindness (implying the existence of a 'covenant'); comp. xxv. 6.

4 **Wash me throughly** (so *v.* 9), like a fuller, πλῦνον (Sept.), not νίψον (Duport).

5 The second—the sinner's sincere confession. Comp. xxxii. 5, and, for the form of expression in *b*, xxxviii. 18, xliv. 16.

6 The third—God permitted, or even caused transgressions. 'Against thee, thee only' is not said to enhance the gravity of the sin, but to enforce a humble appeal for mercy. God made that holy law which Israel has broken; He placed Israel in circumstances too difficult for him. Therefore, **against thee, thee only, have I sinned, that thou mightest be justified,** &c. (Not, in this context, to be weakened into 'so that thou art,' &c.) Clearly Israel is suffering under God's judgment, and in his physical and mental agony he cannot choose his words. Another spokesman of the Jewish Church used equal freedom of speech—'Why hast thou hardened our heart so as not to fear thee?' (Isa. lxiii. 17). But this free language involves a plea for pardon with both speakers. 'It is thine own doing at least in part. Our freedom has been imperfect; we have been tethered by divine predestination.[1] We have not been able to resist the stream of circumstance. We have done wrong; thou art sure to be just in thy sentence. But since thou art partly the cause of our wrong-doing, deal gently with us.' The speaker is clearly Israel personified, or one who feels himself entirely united to his people in guilt and punishment. No other speaker could say, 'Against thee, thee only.' [Comp. Rom. iii. 5. The supposed objector there assumes that God is unjust in punishing. The psalmist would urge, not that God has been unjust in punishing, but that He would be not just, i.e. not Jehovah, if He did not 'in the midst of wrath remember mercy.']——**Be clear,** viz. in the eyes of the world. Sept., νικήσῃς (ἐν τῷ κρίνεσθαί σε), giving the verb an Aramaising sense. The radical idea of a clear bright light may in fact equally well develope into that of glory or of victory (comp. *néçakh*, 1 Sam. xv. 29)

7 The fourth—man's natural liability to sin. Yes; it is again a plea for pardon that we have before us, and Calvin errs in declaring that this view of the passage makes the psalmist into a hypocrite, who seeks to evade a just judgment by minimising his guilt. Nowhere does the speaker extenuate his faults; but nowhere does he think of his God as other than a kindly and considerate judge ('judge' indeed is a poor makeshift word to describe the relation of the covenant-God to his offending but repentant people). In his horror at the idea of 'extenuation,' Calvin rushes to the other extreme, and speaks of 'amplification'—'quin potius ad amplificandam malorum suorum gravitatem a peccato or ginali ducit exordium . . . illustre testimonium de peccato originali, quo Adam totum humanum genus implicuit.' Not so; the O.T. contains no theory whatever on the origin of sin. Gen. iii. simply relates a fact; at any rate, it stands by itself, and is nowhere referred to again in the O.T. (Hos. vi. 7, Isa. xliii. 27, Job xxxi. 33 are not proofs to the contrary). All that the speaker means (and is not that a sad confession enough?) is that he belongs to an erring race and drew his first breath in sin. So far as he is an individual, he re-

[1] Later Jewish theology recognises the coexistence of predestination and free-will. R. Akiba said, 'Everything is foreseen, and free-will is granted' (*Pirke Aboth*, iii. 15).

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calls the fact that his own mother, and that mother's mother, sinned ;[1] so far as he represents the nation, that Israel from the first was prone to infidelity (see Isa. xlviii. 8). Upon the latter view, the 'mother' is an altogether ideal person (as we speak of our 'mother-country'), and to be explained as in xxii. 10, 11, l. 20, lxxi. 6, Isa. l. 1 ; this indeed is chiefly in the speaker's mind, so that the passage is virtually equivalent to xxv. 7. I say, 'virtually,' because what is there ascribed to Israel, is here predicated of the contemporary Israel's 'mother,' i.e. of the nationality. [There is a noteworthy discussion of this passage in J. Müller's classic work, *The Christian Doctrine of Sin*, ii. 274–5. He says that it may be understood either 'as affirming that the mother, in conceiving and bearing children, is tainted with iniquity and sin ; or that man, from the beginning of his existence, from conception onwards, is in a state of sin and iniquity.' The former view, he says, contradicts the moral teaching of the O.T., especially the divine ordinance of marriage in Gen. i. 28. He thinks that it weakens the passage to assimilate it to xxii. 10, 11, lviii. 3, lxxi. 6 ; but it is rather he who weakens these passages by his inadequate explanation of them as 'proverbial or figurative.' Comp. also Ewald (*Die Lehre der Bibel von Gott*, iii. 147, note 4), who however misses the national reference of the psalm, though the 'Second Isaiah' repeatedly speaks of the persistent sinfulness of Israel from the first, Isa. xliii. 27, xlviii. 8, lvii. 3.]

8 The fifth—God's own pleasure in true inward religion. This verse is in antithesis to the foregoing. Two things are too obvious to be contradicted—that human nature is deeply ingrained with sin, and that God would have it as deeply penetrated with 'truth' or 'stability.' This comprehensive word means here not merely a true recognition of our sinfulness (Tholuck), but a stable, truthful character, one rooted in the fear of God and moulded by His indwelling law (xl. 9), which is 'truth' (cxix. 142), in contrast to that of the ungodly, who are 'like the troubled sea,' and false to the only standard of right. The controlling principle of such a character is called 'wisdom,' i.e. the fear of God (cxi. 10 ; comp. xc. 11, 12). In the latter part of the verse the psalmist passes again into the language of prayer (the imperfect is an optative), but he expressly bases his petition on God's known desire for true inward religion.

9, 10 First, purification ; then a joy with no undertone of sadness. *V.* 10 reflects its sweetness on *v.* 9 : '*Asperges me* si dolcemente udissi,' &c. (Dante, *Purg.* xxxi. 98).——**With hyssop.** Which plant, or plants, may be designated by *'ēzōbh* (which, received from the Phœnicians, became *ὕσσωπος*) need not here be decided. The allusion is, not to the plant as such, but to the legal rite of purification (Lev. xiv., Num. xix.)——**Wash me,** &c. Sin is too deeply ingrained for the sinner himself to efface it ; God Himself must do this wonder (see also on *v.* 4). For the phraseology comp. Job ix. 30, and still more Isa. i. 18, where there is also a certain *incomplete* parallelism of sense (see my note, *ad loc.*) Observe, the psalmist presupposes the deepened intuitions of Jeremiah (see Jer. ii. 22, xiii. 23).——**Fill me with mirth.** The text has, 'Make me to hear of mirth,' i.e. 'send me a message of glad tidings.' But the form of expression is too strange ; Pesh. has preserved the original reading (see crit. note).——**The bones which thou hast crushed.** The 'bones' represent the whole nature of man (see on vi. 2) ; 'crushed' points on to *v.* 19, and reminds us also of xxxviii. 9, xliv. 20.

11 It is not enough that to earthly eyes he may be whiter than the driven snow. His sins must be as though they had not been for God Himself.——**Hide thy face,** &c., viz. that Thou mayest not see my

[1] He does not make any such abstract statement as that in Job xiv. 4.

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sins (comp. xc. 8). Riehm, on the ground of Hebrew usage, explains differently—that my sins personified may not see Thee and accuse me before Thee.[1] In either case, forgiveness is referred to a free act of divine grace; but the former seems the more natural interpretation.

12 'Thou art a God that doest wonders. Therefore do more than forgive, do more than cleanse; make me a new as well as a clean heart, as the central organ of my moral and religious life' (see on cii. 19 and comp. Ezek. xi. 19, xxxvi. 26, Jer. xxiv. 7). Observe that 'heart' and 'spirit' are parallel, both here and in *v.* 19; so too lxxviii. 8 (comp. 37), where, by the way, the equivalence of the ideas of the words rendered respectively 'truth' (*v.* 8) and 'stedfast' (in this verse) is apparent. 'Heart,' like 'soul,' emphasises the individual side of a man's life; 'spirit,' its divine or at least preternatural side. 'Stedfastness' is a quality which is equally manifested in obedience (lxxviii. 37 *b*; comp. l. 16 *b*) and in trustfulness towards God (cxii. 7 *b*).

13 He asked in *v.* 12 for purity of heart; he now completes the petition (xi. 7, Matt. v. 8). That gift would be precious, as bringing him near to God, whereas exclusion from God's presence would prove that the gift was denied. But how could such a gift and such a station be preserved? Only by the spirit of Jehovah's holiness. The 'spirit' is here evidently more than a mere influence; it is an undefinable something which represents or makes effectual the presence of God. So in Isa. lxiii. 9, 10 the 'angel of God's face' (or, presence) is parallel to 'the spirit of his holiness.' But why is the special epithet 'holy' added to 'spirit'? Jehovah is holy in two senses, as separate from creaturely weakness and impurity, and as devotedly attached to Israel. This double meaning explains Hos. xi. 9, 'the Holy One in the midst of thee,' which says more than 'Israel's Holy One.' But the latter sense predominates in the phrase 'holy spirit' in Isa. lxiii. 10, 11 (see my notes), and this determines the primary meaning here. The psalmist's petition relates in the first instance to the confirmation to Israel of the gift of Jehovah's felt presence. And yet the context shows that it includes a prayer for the assimilation of Israel and of each good Israelite to Jehovah. Observe that *v.* 12 refers more prominently to the individual Israelite; *v.* 13 to the Israelites collectively. In the former we hear of a (divinely renewed) human spirit; in the latter, of the (humanly tabernacled) divine spirit. In the former, the psalmist asks for a new gift; in the latter for the confirmation of an old one.

14 **Salvation** (*yesha'*) has not quite the same full significance as in l. 23; but here too outward blessings are at any rate included. Sin is attended by chastisement; forgiveness by an equally visible deliverance. So it is with the individual; so also with the nation. The psalmist, even if referring to his own sins and chastisements, regards them as shared by every other Israelite. The burden of guilt removed, he (and such as he) can obey the divinely given impulse, walking in the ways of God.—**A willing spirit,** or, a spirit of willingness, of spontaneous motion towards goodness—'the princely heart of innocence' (Keble).

15 Personal experience, the text of a sermon addressed not to believers (as xxii. 23, xxxii. 6, 8), but to sinners. The speaker is one of those who 'turn many to righteousness' (Dan. xii. 3), and is not necessarily a prophet.

16 The Hebrew writers are wont to specify some typical sin or sins, where we should rather employ a generic term. Thus, 'your hands are full of bloodshed;' 'they build up Zion with bloodshed;' 'for his unjust gain I smote him' (Isa. i. 15, Mic. iii. 10, Isa. lvii. 17; see notes). Another peculiarity of theirs is to speak of sins, when they mean

[1] *Der Begriff der Sühne im A. T.*, p. 8, *n.* 2.

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rather the punishments of sins (see, e.g., xxxviii. 5). So that the petition, 'Deliver me from bloodshed' (so literally), means, 'Deliver me from the punishment of those heinous sins (such as murder) which led Israel captive in the past' (comp. cxxx. 8). This accounts for the reference which follows to God's 'righteousness.' Jehovah is equally 'righteous' when he sends and when he removes chastisements.

18, 19 Why express thanks in words? Because God cares for no other sacrifice but **a broken spirit,** i.e. the expression of sincere penitence (see introduction). Comp. xxxiv. 19, Isa. lvii. 15 *b*, where, however, there is no clear reference to sorrow for sin.——**A crushed heart** points back to *v.* 10.

20, 21 The theme changes. Spiritual duties and blessings give place to Jerusalem and the temple, the disciple of the Second Isaiah to the earnest fellow-worker of Ezra and Nehemiah. The community has to be built up; it needs walls and a systematised ritual. Without these Jerusalem is but a wailing-place. As a historical fact, the restored exiles obtained both together. ——**The right sacrifices**; see on iv. 6.

PSALM LII.

ADDRESSED to some high official who misused his power, and is threatened somewhat as Isaiah threatened Shebna (see on *vv.* 7, 9). Note the wonderful change of key in *vv.* 10, 11. The speaker is probably Israel (see on *v.* 10).

3 Why gloriest thou in mischief, thou tyrant?
the divine lovingkindness endures perpetually.
4 Thy tongue devises engulfing ruin,
like a whetted razor, O thou that workest guile.
5 Thou lovest evil more than good;
lying rather than to speak righteousness.
6 Thou lovest all devouring words,
[the devices of] a deceitful tongue.
7 God in return shall pull thee down for ever,
grasp thee, and pluck thee out of thy tent,
and uproot thee from the land of the living.
8 The righteous shall see it, and fear,
and shall laugh at him:
9 'Lo, there is the man that made not God his asylum,
but trusted in his great wealth, and felt strong in his substance.'
10 But I am like a flourishing olive-tree in the house of God;
I trust in the lovingkindness of God for ever and ever.
11 I will give thanks unto thee for ever, for thou hast done nobly,
and declare before thy loving ones that thy name is good.

3 **Thou tyrant.** Lit., 'thou mighty man;' but the word *gibbōr* connotes the idea of tyranny (or, more widely still, as Schultens says, arrogance towards both God and man). *Gibbōrim* occurs in the description of the antediluvian *nefilim* ('destructive ones'?) in Gen. vi. 4, and *gibbōr* in the notice respecting Nimrod in Gen. x. 8. As Dillmann says (note on Gen. vi. 4), 'Wo Kraftmenschen ihr Wesen treiben,

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kann es ohne Verletzung von Recht und Ordnung nicht abgehen.' The Arabic *jabbâr* has the same full meaning; comp. *Korán*, Sur. xi. 62, where Palmer renders '(the Adites) followed the bidding of every headstrong *tyrant*.' Grätz quite unnecessarily emends *haggibbōr* into *haggébher* (see *v.* 9).

4 Note how violent words are taken as specimens of malignant hostility. **Thy tongue devises** (comp. on xxxv. 28, &c.), the speech of the 'tyrant' being the embodiment of the imaginations of the heart.——**Engulfing ruin** (comp. lv. 12). 'Plans of destruction' (De Witt) is not strong enough; the utterances of this evil tongue are 'words of swallowing up' (*v.* 6, literally rendered; cf. on xxxv. 25), which of itself suggests a lingering consciousness of the root-meaning of *havvōth* (see on v. 10).

6 **A deceitful tongue.** Or, 'O deceitful tongue' (comp. note on the parallel phrase, cxx. 3). This is certainly better than to make 'a deceitful tongue' the second object of the verb 'thou lovest' (as Sept.); the phrase is not strong enough to stand thus. But prefix a noun in the construct state, and the case is altered. The parallelism gains.

7 Comp. Isaiah's threat, Isa. xxii. 17, 18.——**Out of thy tent.** So Job xviii. 14. Tent = dwelling (see on cxxxii. 3); but there may be an allusion to the nomadic character (may we say?) of human life in general. In Isa. xxxviii. 12 the image of the 'tent' is applied differently.——**Uproot thee from,** &c. Comp. the picture of the wicked tyrant in xxxvii. 35, 36, and note the fine contrast below, *v.* 10. See also xxvii. 13.

8 **Shall see it,** &c. The keynote is in the second verb, which expresses reverence for the law of the Divine government (comp. lviii. 12).

9 **There is the man.** Heb. *haggébher*, not *haggibbōr*; the former is a word descriptive of age, the latter of an exceptional gift. The speech quoted seems to have a touch of sarcasm. The 'righteous' cannot use the word *haggibbōr*, for this would be to recognise the position usurped by the bad man; in preference to *'ĭsh* or *'ādām*, they select *gébher* (properly 'a grown-up man,' 'a man in his full strength'), because it suggests the claim which they contemptuously disallow. Comp. 'Gird up thy loins like a man' (*k'ghébher*, 'like a man who thinks himself strong'), in Jehovah's address to Job (Job xxxviii. 3), and 'Jehovah will hurl thee, O man' (*gébher*, 'thou who thinkest thyself strong'), in the prophecy against Shebna (Isa. xxii. 18).——**But trusted,** &c. Comp. xlix. 7.——**In his substance** (see crit. note). The text-reading, however interpreted, does not suit the parallelism. The word (*havvāh*) having but two actual meanings, (1) passionate desire (Prov. x. 3, xi. 6, Mic. vii. 3), (2) ruin, calamity (Job vi. 2, xxx. 13); comp. the usage of the plural *havvōth* (see above on *v.* 4).

10, 11 Who is the speaker—an individual, or the nation? Comparing xcii. 13 (which forms part of a strikingly parallel passage) we might say, Any and every righteous member of the nation. But in xcii. 10 the speaker must be Israel, and here too this is not improbably the case. See the other parallel passage, Jer. xi. 16, where Israel is compared to 'a flourishing olive-tree, fair, and of goodly fruit' (comp. Rom. xi. 24).——**Like a flourishing olive-tree.** The epithet is often rendered 'fresh-green.' 'Green' is no doubt a vague word in ancient languages (comp. Pliny's *cœlum viride*, 'H.N.' xvii. 10, 14). But *ra'anān* is not properly a word of colour (see on xcii. 14); 'fresh green' would be scarcely accurate. Tristram speaks of the '*pale-blue* foliage' of the olive (*Nat. Hist. of the Bible*, p. 374).——**In the house of God.** In the parallel line we have 'in the lovingkindness of God.' Now, as another psalmist reminds us, 'the earth is full of the lovingkindness of Jehovah' (xxxiii. 5). Clearly the tie of a mutual

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love based on the covenant' mus make, not merely the temple of Jerusalem and the land of Israel, but the whole earth 'the house of God and the gate of heaven' (see on xxiii. 6). I cannot persuade myself then that the psalmist alludes here to olive-trees actually planted in the precincts of the temple (comp. xcii. 14). It is true that magnificent cypresses and a few olive and lemon trees may be seen at this day in the area of the Haram. But to infer from lxxxiv. 4, Zech. i. 8, and 2 Macc. xiv. 4 that such trees existed in the sacred precincts in ancient times seems hazardous. On the first of these passages see below, and cf. Wright, *Zechariah* (1879), pp. 8, 530, and Grimm's note on 2 Macc. *l.c.*

11 **Thou hast done nobly.** Strictly, a future-perfect (cf. liv. 9, lvi. 14).——**Declare.** A necessary correction, for the senseless text-reading 'wait.'

PSALM LIII.

ANOTHER recension of Ps. xiv., with 'Elohim' for 'Yahveh' (Jehovah), and certain various readings which in *vv.* 2–5 are obviously wrong, but which Hitzig and Merx accept as correct in *v.* 6. This is the form in which this verse (cf. xiv. 5, 6) appears:

> Thereupon did they shudder indeed, where no cause was,
> for God scattered the bones of him that encamped against thee;
> thou didst put (them) to shame, for God had rejected them.

As Street long since remarked, the variations may be intentional, the psalm having been retouched to adapt it to a second great deliverance. But they may also be simply due to the ordinary causes of corruption.

PSALM LIV.

THE expressions in this psalm of supplication need illustration from the more definite ones in the psalms which follow.

3 Save me by thy name, Elohim,
and right me by thy strength.
4 O God, hear my prayer,
give ear to the words of my mouth.
5 For strangers are risen up against me,
and the violent seek my soul,
not setting God before their eyes.

6 Behold, God is my helper;
the Lord is the great upholder of my soul.
7 Their evil shall return unto my foes:
do thou exterminate them in thy truthfulness.
8 I will sacrifice unto thee with a free will,
and give thanks unto thy name, Jehovah, because it is good.
9 For out of all trouble has he delivered me,
and mine eye has looked its fill upon my spying enemies.

5 Here, as in Isa. i. 7, critics are divided as to the meaning of **strangers.** Generally no doubt *zārīm* is used of foreigners (e.g. Isa. xxv. 3, xxix. 5, Ezek. xxviii. 7), but so also is the parallel word

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'ărîçîm. If there were an Israelite so deaf to the voice of the law (Lev. xix. 18) and of nature as to be an *'ărîç*, for instances of which see perhaps xxxvii. 35, Jer. xv. 21, there was no reason why he should not also be called *zār*. There is a various reading here (MSS. and Targ.)—*zēdîm* 'proud ones,' but this is caused by lxxxvi. 14.——**Not setting God,** &c. Cf. xvi. 8.

6 **The great upholder of my soul.** Sept., *ἀντιλήπτωρ τῆς ψυχῆς μου.* To render, 'among them that uphold my soul,' would mislead. The sense is not that God is the support of the psalmist among many others, but that He is so in a supreme degree—that He sums up in Himself the qualities of a class, viz. the class of helpers (so cxviii. 7). Comp. Judg. xi. 35, 'Alas, my daughter, thou hast bowed me down; even thou art my greatest troubler' (A.V. 'thou art one of them that trouble me'). The construction is the *Beth essentiæ* (see on xxxv. 2).

7 **Their evil shall return,** &c. So the text, but the margin, 'He shall requite their evil,' &c. With this reading the preposition is a little more natural. But need we for this desert the text?

8 **With a free will.** Or, as De Witt, 'with a gift of free-will' (similarly R.V., after Hengstenberg and Hupfeld). But the sacrificial reference of the context does not necessitate this rendering. In confirmation of this, see Num. xv. 3, where render, with Hupfeld himself, 'willingly,' not (as R.V., forcing a *Beth essentiæ*) 'as a freewill offering.'——**It is good,** viz. thy name (cf. on cxxxv. 3).

9 The poet looks forward, and treats the future as past (see on lii. 11*a*).——**Has he delivered me,** viz. either Jehovah or (what is virtually the same) the Name of Jehovah; see on Isa. xxx. 27, &c.——**Mine eye has looked,** &c. Comp. lix. 11, xcii. 12. The word rendered 'spying enemies' has a special force here. The psalmist had suffered from the piercing gaze of the scoffers, *ὀνειδισμοῖς τε καὶ θλίψεσι θεατριζόμενος* (Heb. x. 33). Cf. xxii. 18.

PSALM LV.

A PRAYER against ungodly enemies, especially against a treacherous friend. The psalm must be taken in connexion with Ps. lix., from which it would seem that the enemies spoken of are partly heathen (see below, on *v.* 11). See also Ps. lvi., and comp. some phenomena of Pss. ix., x.

2 Give ear to my prayer, Elohim;
And hide not thyself from my beseeching:
3 Attend unto me and answer me;
I am distraught in my musing, and can but moan,
4 For the sound of [the revilings of] the enemy,
because of the cries of the ungodly:
for they are ever hurling wickedness at me,
and in wrath they persecute me.
5 My heart is sore pained within me,
and deadly terrors have fallen upon me.
6 Fearfulness and trembling penetrate into me,
and a horrible dread enfolds me.
7 Then I said, 'Oh that I had wings like a dove!
I would fly away and abide:

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8 Truly, I would flit far away,
and lodge in the wilderness,
9 Would wait for him that is my deliverer
from storm-blast and from tempest.'

10 Confound, Jehovah ; divide their speech :
for I behold violence and strife in the city.
11 Day and night they make their rounds on the walls thereof ;
trouble and mischief are in the midst of it.
12 Engulfing ruin is in the midst thereof :
oppression and deceit depart not from its forum.
13 (For it is not an enemy who insults me—that I might well bear ;
nor is it my hater who hath been insolent towards me—
from him I might well hide myself.
14 But it is thou, a man mine equal,
mine associate and my familiar friend ;
15 Together we had sweet intimacy,
and walked to the house of God in the throng.)

16 Let Death guilefully swallow them up ; let them go down alive into Sheól ;
for wickedness is in their dwelling,
[abominable outrages are] in their midst.
17 As for me, I will call upon Elohim ;
and Jehovah shall save me.
18 Evening, and morning, and at noon will I muse and make my moan :
so shall he hear my voice.
19 He hath set free my soul in peace that they might not come nigh me,
for in great numbers have they been against me.
20 God heareth [the cry of the afflicted],
yea, he that is enthroned of old answereth them.

(Here follows a misplaced portion of this or of another Psalm.)

* * * * *

To whom there are no changes,
and who fear not Elohim.
21 He has laid his hands upon those at peace with him,
he has desecrated his covenant.
22 His mouth is smoother than butter,
but his heart is all war ;
his words are softer than oil,
and yet are they drawn swords.

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23 Cast thy care upon Jehovah,
and he will support thee ;
he will not always appoint tottering for the righteous.
24 And thou, Elohim, shalt cast them down into the pit of the grave :
bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days,
But I—will trust in thee.

3 **I am distraught** (Heb. *'arid*). The psalmist feels inwardly as if driven hither and thither by a like violent impulse to that of an animal which has broken loose (comp. the cognate Arabic word, *rāda*).

4 The **ungodly** in this connexion are heathen men ; or, at least, these are primarily thought of (comp. on lix. 6).

7 At last his anguish condenses itself in words. He wishes, like Jeremiah, that he could leave his people, and lodge in the wilderness (Jer. xi. 2). This is not, as Petrarch and many others have taken it, an aspiration after heaven. It is rest upon earth which the persecuted psalmist longs for. He craves to live his life to God without let or hindrance, even though it be in the desert. But the writer of xi. 1 takes a higher position, remembering that he is 'continually with' Jehovah (lxxiii. 23).——**Wings like a dove.** The psalmist speaks for Israel, who is sometimes symbolised by the dove, Heb. *yōnāh* (see lxviii. 14). But he also alludes to the habits of the *wild doves* (comp. Cant. ii. 14, Jer. xlviii. 28, Ezek. vii. 16), which abound in rocky districts, especially in Lebanon. The Arab poet Abu Katīfa makes a singularly contrasted use of the image of the dove. He represents himself among the pillared palaces of Damascus, 'on whose parapets the tame dove coos.' Like the psalmist, he longs for freedom, and the tame dove is the symbol of the too artificial life at which he chafes. (Rückert, *Hamâsa*, ii. 230, 'Anhang.') The Ethiopic version renders *yōnāh* by *regeb* (proprie 'avis pavida,' Dillmann).

7 *b*–9 We seem to trace the fluctuating feelings of the speaker (see *v.* 3 *b*) in his language. The verbal forms in *v.* 7 *b* express eager readiness ; the tone sinks in *v.* 8 (note the imperfects), and in *v.* 9 ardour revives in voluntatives. On text of *v.* 9, see crit. note.

8 **Flit.** Comp. 'He that oftimes flitteth,' 'Thou tellest my flittings,' Prov. xxvii. 8, Ps. lvi. 8 in the Bible of 1551.

10 Comforted by prayer, the psalmist can endure the sad sights and sounds which beset him ; he no longer craves to be taken away. He thinks of the builders of the Tower of Babel, and imprecates the fate of those builders on his enemies. This reference confirms the view (see introd.) that the most dangerous of the psalmist's enemies are foreigners.——**Confound, Jehovah ; divide their speech** (lit., their tongue). Note the allusion to the Jehovistic passages, Gen. x. 25, xi. 1–9. The meaning is, Produce dissension among mine adversaries. But the ground immediately afterwards given is not very clear. The **violence and strife** which the psalmist beholds are not characteristics of a design of heaven-storming arrogance like the Tower of Babel. It would be unsafe to dogmatise ; but possibly the description of the precarious situation of the psalmist and all good men in *vv.* 10 *b*–15 may stand in some such connexion as this with *v.* 10 *a*. The enemies of Jehovah's cause are partly foreigners (see on *v.* 19), partly Israelites. Wisdom to plan and strength to execute belong to the former, but these are materially aided by the violent and factious conduct of the latter. The former, being the most dangerous, are the first objects of the psalmist's imprecation. 'Confound' (their counsel),

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he prays, 'for they will otherwise get the complete mastery of our ill-governed city.'

11 **Day and night,** &c. Comp. lix. 7 *b*, 15 *b*. It is not a siege or blockade which is described, and the persons spoken of are not foreign but native enemies—the men of 'violence and strife.' These are compared to watchmen on the walls; only, instead of keeping watch against the enemy, they 'watch for iniquity' (Isa. xxix. 20). This line is parallel to *v.* 12 *b*; the next line, to *v.* 12 *a*.——**Trouble and mischief.** The terms used here and in *v.* 12 *b* remind us of x. 7; the two psalms are partly parallel.

12 **Engulfing ruin.** Perhaps the city was still under the tyranny of the *gibbōr*, who is said to have planned such a sore evil (lii. 2, 3). ——**From its forum.** The *r'khōb* (broad place), the ἀγορά or 'forum' of the East, devoted alternately to gossip, traffic, and judicial business, was the courtyard adjoining the vaulted passage of the city-gate (cf. *v.* 10 *a*). Hence Isa. lix. 14, 'for truth hath stumbled in the broad place, and rectitude cannot enter (the city).' See Perrot-Chipiez, *History of Art in Chaldæa and Assyria*, ii. 66–72.

13–15 Public grief has had the precedence, but cannot expel the thought of a cruel personal injury. Some may think indeed that there is a personal accent in *v.* 4, but probably the psalmist speaks there in the name of his people. Here, however, one's sympathies seem to be drawn out towards a suffering individual. I can believe that the language used in xli. 10 is that of personification, and am far from denying that in *v.* 22 of this very psalm the subject of the verb may be the ungodly regarded collectively (I would rather say, each ungodly person). But the description in *vv.* 13–15 is individualising to such a singular extent that I cannot bring myself to suppose any poetic fiction in the case. We know what Jeremiah suffered at the hands of his townsmen (Jer. xi. 21) and other 'men of his peace' (Jer. xx. 10), one of whom perhaps was Pashhur the priest, who might certainly have been called 'a man of [Jeremiah's] rank' (Ps. lv. 14). Without identifying the psalmist with Jeremiah, we may at least argue that at various times of religious dissension and persecution the prophet's experiences may have been renewed. So a prophet in Manasseh's reign says, 'Trust ye not in a companion, put ye not confidence in a *familiar friend*' (Mic. vii. 5; cf. Jer. ix. 4).

13 **That I might well bear**—as the inevitable lot of God's poor. Calvin, with fine insight, objects that this is not in character with David, who would not have patiently suffered reproach from an open enemy; *nāsā*, he thinks, must mean here to parry the blow ('quod Gallice dicimus, *J'eusse receu le coup*'). But if the psalmist is neither David nor any other warrior? Evidently Segond's '*je le supporterais*' is more accurate than Calvin's version.

14 **A man mine equal.** Lit., 'a man (*'enōsh*) according to my valuing;' i.e. not a true man, one who seemed to come up to my standard (this would require *'ĭsh*)—comp. Jer. v. 1—nor yet a man whom once I valued at the same rate as myself (Sept. ἄνθρωπε ἰσόψυχε; comp. Phil. ii. 20), but, one of my own social rank (comp. the verb in lxxxix. 7), with whom therefore I was on easy and natural terms, and who had no claim to lord it over me.

15 **Together we had,** &c. Symm., ἐκοινολογούμεθα γλυκεῖαν ὁμιλίαν. The psalmist's complaint assumes the form of a melancholy retrospect. 'At home and in society,' he says, 'we were never far apart' (comp. lxiv. 3, Heb.) *V.* 15 *a* reminds us of Job xix. 19, 'All the men of my intimacy (A.V., my inward friends) abhor me; and those whom I loved are turned against me.' The word *sōdh* also has the sense of 'secret' (xxv. 14) and 'council' (lxxxiii. 4); nor can

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we venture to exclude these senses altogether here. With the second line comp. xlii. 5. May we infer that the false friend was also false to his religion?

16 **Death** (here = Sheól; see vi. 6, xviii. 6, xlix. 15) is summoned, that he may **guilefully swallow them up** (lit., 'deceive—swallow them up'). Brüll's correction seems inevitable. The phraseology of line 2 is from Num. xvi. 30; is it not reasonable to expect an allusion to the same passage in line 1, so completing the parallelism? The text-reading is admittedly difficult, and puts a strain on the resources of the interpreter (see crit. note). The idea of *v.* 16 *a* (corrected text) is that of xxxv. 8 *a*. ——**In their dwelling.** Strictly, 'in their settlement,' with the idea of temporariness (cf. Job xviii. 19, Heb.)——**In their midst.** The words supplied before *b'qirbām* (with Bickell) remove one more thorn from this verse.

17–20 A renewal of spiritual strength is needed after this long outburst of feeling. The speaker knows where to seek it. He will call upon Elohim (the Manifold One, the strong God of the world), and Jehovah (the Self-revealing God of Israel) will hear him. Jehovah, then, is clothed with the might of Elohim. The psalmist will pray without ceasing (first, in silent musing, and then in an inarticulate but not inexpressive moan). The result is as certain as any fact in history; the Hebrew of *v.* 18 *b* suggests this—we might accurately render, 'and he heard my voice.' In *v.* 19 the psalmist still dwells on the thought that prayer is linked to its answer (as sin to punishment; see on lxiv. 8), and expresses this by the 'perfect of prophetic certitude.' In *v.* 20 *a*, with calmed feelings, he states the general truth.

18 Remember that the Hebrew like the Assyrian day began with sunset. The Talmud finds a reference to the three customary times of prayer (Dan. vi. 11, 12, 14); on this point, R. Joshua ben Chananya was the first Protestant.

19 **For in great numbers,** &c. The clause gives the reason, not why Jehovah will surely deliver him, but why his feelings have been so deeply moved, and his prayer so earnest. The foreign enemies, whose are the greater might and skill (see on *v.* 10), far outnumber the servants of Jehovah (lvi. 3; comp. iii. 2).

20 **Enthroned of old.** Comp. lxxiv. 12, and the Second Isaiah's repeated references to Jehovah's eternity as a pledge of the continuance of His people. The sense of the epithet is clear enough, but how is it fitted into the structure of the verse? If we follow the text (with the one exception admitted even by Delitzsch), we should render, '[God] will hear and answer them—He that sitteth King from of old—these that are changeless and that fear not God.' So De Witt. 'Answer them' means 'give a judicial sentence against' (the ungodly). But surely 'hear and answer' must—especially so near to *vv.* 17, 18—signify 'hear and answer prayer.' Yet how can we connect this with the following words? We cannot. The rest of the psalm has no obvious appropriateness where it stands; at any rate, the next four distichs, which are certainly misplaced, if they are not a later insertion. It is worth noticing that the Hebrew text interposes a 'Selah' between the two distichs of *v.* 20.——**To whom,** &c. Ewald, following the great Dutch scholar Albert Schultens, renders, 'who have no good faith;' but the philological basis of this is unsound. I wish it were otherwise, for the rendering makes the connexion perfect. But what if in the text to which this whole passage (*vv.* 20 *b*–23) must once have belonged, and which doubtless described the character and doings of the ungodly, *v.* 20 *b* stood at the close of a section? In this case, there need not be a parallelism of contents between *v.* 20 *b* and the following distichs. 'Changes' (*khali-*

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fōth) may then mean (*a*), vicissitudes of fortune' (Calvin), comp. x. 6; or (*b*) 'changes from evil actions to good' (Hupfeld), comp. Jer. ii. 30, v. 3; or (*c*), 'relief-troops' or 'discharges' (Hengstenberg), comp. Job x. 17, xiv. 14. The last of these three meanings is the most ingenious. In *v.* 11 the ungodly are said figuratively to patrol the city-walls like soldiers on the watch. May not a similar figure have occupied the distich to which *v.* 20*b* must have been attached? In this case *v.* 20*b* means 'those who are never relieved in, nor discharged from, their godless function of "watching for iniquity"' (see on *v.* 11). The second meaning will to most appear safer; the distich will then signify 'those who are unceasing in their disregard for religion'—to me a rather weak idea, unnaturally expressed. The first meaning requires too much to be supplied. The text, however, may well be unsound, especially as it gives us an incomplete sentence. May not *khalīfōth* be a corruption of *kharçubbōth*, and the line be a quotation from lxxiii. 3, 'for torments have they none'?

21 What is the subject of the verb? The faithless friend (Hupfeld, supposing the passage to have stood originally after *v.* 15), or the ungodly collectively (comp. xxxv. 8)? Ps. xli. 10 may seem to favour the former view; note however that the persecution is (apparently) directed in that passage against an individual, but here against a number of persons. The **covenant** spoken of in *v.* 21*b* may be, not that between friend and friend (as 1 Sam. xviii. 3, xxiii. 8), but that between members of the same nation, worshipping the same God.

22 The mouth is described as **smooth** (cf. v. 10), because deceitful words are produced by it with such fatal facility. Sept. has 'face' instead of 'mouth' (see crit. note).

23, 24 A liturgical appendix (comp. xxvii. 14, xxxi. 25). **Cast thy care.** So Sept. and Pesh., in harmony with the context (comp. xxxvii. 5, xxii. 9). 'Cast thine appointed (lot)' is unnatural; 'cast thy burden,' ill supported from Arabic, is inconsistent with 'he will support thee.' The precise sense of the noun is uncertain.——**Into the pit of the grave.** Two synonyms joined as cxxxii. 3, Prov. viii. 31, Ezek. xxxvi. 3.——**Half their days.** So Jer. xvii. 11.

PSALM LVI.

THIS and the next psalm are twins; Ewald considers them among the most beautiful in the Psalter. Both begin in the same way; both have refrains; both have the strong expression 'to crush' (lvi. 2, lvii. 4), indicating the heartless cruelty of the enemy. They are, however, not without points of contact with Pss. liv., lv., lix.

2 Have pity upon me, Elohim, for man crusheth me;
fighting all day he oppresseth me.
3 All day they crush me that are my keen-eyed enemies,
yea, many with high looks do fight against me.
4 The day when I might fear I will trust in thee.
5 Through God can I praise his word,
in God do I trust without fear:
what can flesh do unto me?

6 All day they torture me with words:
all their thoughts are against me for evil.

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7 They attack, they set an ambush ;
they, even they, mark my footsteps,
even as they have long waited for my soul.
8 * * * * *
In anger do thou cast the peoples down, O God.
9 My wandering life have I recounted unto thee ;
put thou my tears into thy bottle.
10 Straightway shall mine enemies turn back,
the day that I call upon thee :
this I know, that God is for me.
11 Through God can I praise his word :
12 In God will I trust without fear ;
what can man do unto me?

13 Vows made unto thee are upon me, O God :
I will render thank-offerings unto thee.
14 For thou hast delivered my soul from death ;
surely [thou hast saved] my feet from stumbling,
that I may walk before God in the light of life.

2 **Man crusheth me.** 'Man,' or 'weak, mortal man' (as a Hebrew writer might naturally explain *'enōsh*), is opposed to God (as ix. 20, x. 18). 'Crusheth' (note the parallelism), so substantially the versions (comp. Baur on Am. ii. 7). Most moderns, since Gesenius, 'panteth after ;' better perhaps, 'would eat me up.'

4 **When I might fear,** i.e. when I have good excuse for fearing.—— **I will trust.** 'I' is emphatic—I, the poor, the weak one.

5 **Through God,** &c. So *v.* 10; comp. lx. 12 and especially Isa. xxvi. 13, 'only through thee (i.e. through thy interposition) can we celebrate thy name.'—— **His word,** i.e. his fulfilled word of promise (cxxx. 5).

6 **They torture me with words.** The text has either, 'they torture my words' (but this verb always has a personal object), or 'they hurt my interests' (this is prosaic). Would it not be strange if sins of speech were here alone not imputed to the enemy?

7 Comp. x. 8, 9. **Even they.** The expression of the pronoun seems at first sight unnecessary. But it may refer to the men of the ambush, or, more probably, it emphasises the unnaturally cruel conduct of men who have been in covenant with the psalmist (comp. lv. 21).—— **Even as,** &c. Their malignant watchfulness is in character with their conduct from the first (comp. lix. 4).

8 In the text, the first line of this verse runs thus : 'In spite of iniquity, an escape unto them,' a short line and of difficult construction, containing, moreover, a word which only occurs elsewhere in a probably corrupt passage (xxxii. 7). See crit. note. —— **The peoples.** As in Pss. lv., lix., the chief enemies of the Israelites are at this time heathen, and the psalmist regards their overthrow as a part of the divine judgment upon 'the peoples.' Comp. vii. 7–10.

9 **My wandering life,** &c. The text of this difficult verse is evidently incorrect, but needs gentle treatment (see crit. note). We must not touch the significant word *nōdī*, and so cut out a characteristic play upon words (*nōdī* 'my wandering,' *b'nōd'ka* 'in thy bottle'). We need not of course try to repro-

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duce this play in English, as the idea of the verse is beautiful enough in itself. The psalmist is no lover of vagueness in prayer; he 'makes known his requests' with the utmost particularity. He is a wanderer (the lot deprecated in xxxvi. 12), and his eyes are 'a fountain of tears' (Jer. ix. 1). Shall this stream of sorrow flow in vain? No; **put thou my tears in a bottle** (a skin-bottle of large capacity; see on cxix. 83). To some early readers this may have appeared grotesque, and so a scribe ventured to substitute 'in thy book' (cf. Mal. iii. 17). Probably his view of the meaning was correct; probably the psalmist's thought was, 'Store them up in thy memory.' And yet, if this psalm were the work of a great lyric poet, who, like Dante, bent the forms of poetry to his own ends, we should be justified in seeking a further meaning, such as this—'Store up my tears as precious wine for that table which thou wilt yet prepare for me in the presence of my foes.' Comp., 'They that sow in tears shall reap in joy' (cxxvi. 5), and George Herbert's line—

I have not lost one single tear.

11 The second line in the received text is a feeble Jehovistic interpolation, which interrupts the refrain.

14 Comp. the parallel in cxvi. 8.——**Before God**, i.e. under His protection (Gen. xvii. 18).——**In the light of life** (or, of the living, as Sept.) The phrase is a deep one (see John viii. 12 and note on xxxvi. 10), and the psalmist may have had a latent consciousness of its fuller meaning. I admit, however, that the context does not force this view upon us, as does that of xvi. 11.

PSALM LVII.

VERSES 8–12 are repeated in cviii. 2–6 (an inferior form of the text).

2 Have pity upon me, Elohim, have pity upon me,
for in thee my soul takes refuge,
yea, in the shadow of thy wings shall be my refuge,
till the storm of ruin hath passed by.
3 I call unto God most High,
unto the Strong One that deals bountifully with me.
4 He shall reach out from heaven and save me,
giving to dishonour him that would crush me;
God shall send forth his lovingkindness and his truthfulness.
5 My soul has dwelt among lions,
fire-breathers, (but) sons of men,—
their teeth are spears and arrows,
and their tongue a sharp sword.
6 Exalt thyself, O God, above the heavens;
let thy glory be above all the earth.
7 They have prepared a net for my feet;
they have bowed down my soul—they have digged before me
a pit into whose midst they have fallen!
8 Stedfast is my heart, O God, stedfast is my heart;
I would sing and make melody.

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9 Awake, my glory; awake, harp and lyre;
fain would I awaken the dawn.
10 I will give thanks unto thee, O Lord, among the peoples,
I will make melody unto thee among the nations:
11 For thy lovingkindness is great unto the heavens,
and thy truth unto the skies.
12 Exalt thyself, O God, above the heavens;
let thy glory be above all the earth.

2 **The storm of ruin.** Heb. *havvōth*. Etymologically, the figure is that of a yawning gulf (see on v. 10), but the choice of the verb suggests that a storm is more present to the writer's imagination.

3 **God most High.** Heb. *'elōhīm 'elyōn*, which occurs again only in lxxviii. 56; we have, however, *'el 'elyōn* in lxxviii. 35 (and virtually lxxiii. 11), and *Yahveh 'elyōn* in vii. 18 (see note). The word is here equivalent to 'almighty' (see *v.* 6).

4 Line 1 reminds us of xviii. 17; line 3 of xliii. 3, where 'light' (more suitable to the figure of a guide) takes the place of 'lovingkindness' in the divine *συμμαχία*. Line 2 in the Hebrew interrupts the description of God's gracious activity with the short and abrupt statement, 'he that would crush me hath insulted.' We can no doubt treat this as a 'circumstantial clause' (see Driver, *Hebrew Tenses*, § 163), and render 'my enemy having insulted me,' but at the cost of simplicity, the two parts of the sentence thus produced being (as Hitzig remarks) not in any close relation to each other. See crit. note.

5 This verse explains the second line of *v.* 2. 'In thee my soul takes refuge, because it dwells and has long dwelt among "beasts in human form"' (Ignatius; comp. on xxii. 13). How common the lion once was in Palestine, is shown by the numerous words for it in Hebrew; that here used (*l'bhī*, in plur. *l'bhātm*) seems to mean 'the voracious' (comp. Hos. xiii. 8). Presumably the enemies described are foreigners (comp. on xxii. 13). ——**My soul has dwelt.** The same phrase as in cxx. 6. The text has, '(With) my soul let me (since I must) lie down,' a very improbable sentence; a slight correction suffices to restore naturalness. —— **Fire-breathers.** Or, 'fiery-eyed.'

6 God is by right *'Elyōn* 'most High;' may He now show Himself in fact supreme over and superior to all created things. There is no occasion to render *'al* 'above' in line 1, and 'over' = throughout in line 2. See end of note on viii. 2.

8 **Stedfast,** i.e. 'rooted and grounded' in the fear of Jehovah (see on li. 12), and therefore fearless. Comp. cxii. 7.

9 **My glory**; see on vii. 6.—— **Awaken the dawn.** Milton's 'cheerly rouse the slumbering morn.' See on cxxxix. 9.

PSALM LVIII.

VERSES 2, 3 must be explained by Ps. lxxxii. (see introd.) The situation may be described thus: Ungodliness and wrong have made such progress, that the psalmist can only ascribe it to supernatural agency. The 'gods' or 'sons of the Most High' (lxxxii. 6), to whom the actual administration of the world's government has been entrusted (Deut. xxxii. 8), have neglected their duties, and in the persons of their subordinates have actually helped forward the cause of wickedness. From the wicked

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tyranny practised, even in the land of Israel (see on *v.* 4), the psalmist seems to have inferred that Jehovah had withdrawn from the government of that 'inheritance' which, according to the Song of Moses (Deut. xxxii. 9), He had reserved for Himself.[1] Observe that from *v.* 4 onwards we hear no more of the *'ēlīm*. What their fate is to be, the psalmist saith not, and there is an analogy for this silence in Isa. xxiv. 22, where the imprisonment referred to is that of the 'kings of the earth,' not that of their heavenly patrons. It is otherwise in lxxxii. 7.

2 Do ye indeed speak righteousness, O ye gods?
do ye judge in equity the sons of men?
3 (Nay,) surely ye all prepare unjust acts;
ye weigh out in the earth the violence of your hands.
4 The ungodly have been estranged since the womb:
they have gone astray from their birth, speakers of lies.
5 They have poison as the poison of a serpent:
yea, as that of a deaf adder which stops her ear;
6 Which will not hearken to the voice of charmers,
nor of the most cunning binder of spells.
7 Elohim! shatter their teeth in their mouth:
tear out the jawbones of the young lions, Jehovah.
8 Let them melt as water that runs away;
as grass, let them be quickly cut off:
9 [Let them be] as a snail melting as it goes along,
as an untimely birth which never saw the sun.
10 Before your pots can feel the thorns,
[and] while your [flesh] is [still] raw,
the hot wrath (of Jehovah) shall sweep it away.
11 The righteous shall rejoice that he has seen vengeance,
he shall wash his feet in the blood of the ungodly;
12 And men shall say, Surely there is a fruit for the righteous,
surely there are divine powers that judge in the earth.

2 **Do ye indeed,** &c. Comparing this passage with lxxxii. 2, &c., it seems most probable that the speaker is the most High. The *'ēlīm* (see on xxix. 1) or *'elōhīm* (lxxxii. 1) have presented themselves before Jehovah, and reported that they have exercised a righteous sway in the world of men. Jehovah first expresses a sarcastic doubt of this, and then, as He who seeth and knoweth all, declares the contrary. See crit. note.

3 (**Nay,**) **surely ye all.** A direct negative is unnecessary; the particle used implies a strong antithesis (see on *v.* 12). 'Ye all;' the world must be at its darkest before the bright light of Jehovah will dawn (Isa. lx. 2). See crit. note. ——**Ye weigh out.** A severe sarcasm. 'Ye are as accurate in injustice as ye ought to be in administering justice.' An example of that Semitic ὀξύμωρον which in Arabic literature exceeds the bounds of discretion (see, e.g., Hariri, *passim*).

4 Here the psalmist drops the

[1] In this remarkable passage 'Elyōn ('the most High') means Him who is supreme both over the 'Sons of El' or 'Elohim' and over the nations which he assigns to those inferior supernatural beings. See *Job and Solomon*, pp. 81, 291.

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'ĕlīm (see above), and passes into a description of the wicked men, who prosper through the neglect of the heavenly powers and their human instruments. It is not expressly said, but from the position of the psalm and from the ideas of *vv.* 1, 2, it is most probable that these 'ungodly' men are, at any rate chiefly, foreigners (see on ix. 5).——**Have been estranged,** &c. Calvin finds it difficult to reconcile this with the doctrine of original sin; but the psalmists are no theologians, and simply record in poetic language here and elsewhere the facts of an experience, which Calvin throughout his noble commentary admits to agree with his own, and which shows 'quosdam esse verecundos et honestis moribus: alios mediocri tantum corruptela imbutos: alios vero naturæ adeo perversæ, ut sint prorsus intolerabiles.' The words of *v.* 4 simply mean that evil habits have to these men become a second nature; they are *ἀεὶ τῷ κακῷ χαίροντες* (Theod. Mops.)

5, 6 Comp. Sir. xxv. 15, 'There is no poison (*κεφάλη* = רֹאשׁ) above the poison of a serpent, and no wrath above the wrath of an enemy.' On serpent-charming, comp. Jer. viii. 17, Eccles. x. 11, Sir. xii. 10, and an Arabic proverb for obstinate resistance, 'Answer not, serpent' (Meidani).

7 Description passes into imprecation, with an 'Elohim' emphatically placed first, and the figure changes to that of a lion (comp. lvii. 5). 'Charming' being impossible, violent means must be adopted for curbing such foes.

8, 9 Four terribly strong figures for the utter destruction of the wicked. *V.* 8 *b* runs, in the received text, 'when he aims his arrows, let them be as if they were headless, which Segond polishes into, 'qu'ils ne lancent que des traits émoussés,' without making the image itself a better parallel to that in line 1. See crit. note.——**As a snail,** &c. Alluding to the slimy trail which the snail leaves behind it, for surely we need not think of the 'myriads of snail shells' still found adhering to the surface of rocks in Palestine (Tristram, *Nat. Hist. of Bible*, p. 295). —— **The untimely birth.** Comp. Job iii. 16, Eccles. vi. 3–5.

10 From the time of the ancient versions this verse has challenged interpreters by its obscurity. I can but offer a rendering of the text as corrected. The key to lines 1 and 2 is the description of the persecuted people of Jehovah, in Mic. iii. 2, 3, as with skin plucked off and broken bones, and made ready for the caldron. The wicked oppressors of Israel have done the like in the time of the psalmist. In figurative language, pots full of flesh have been placed on a fire of thorns (comp. Eccles. vii. 6), or, more strictly, of *'ăṭād* or buckthorn, which, as Jotham hints (Judg. ix. 15), readily takes fire, though the flame may not last (cxviii. 12). The cook stands by, watching to see on the pots the effect of the burning thorns. But One above 'quenches the violence of the fire' (Heb. xi. 34), or rather, before the sparks of flame can affect the still raw flesh, a tempest sweeps the man away. It is, however, no common whirlwind, but the divine wrath which falls, like a burning simoom (xi. 6), upon Jehovah's enemy; comp. lxxxiii. 15, Job xxvii. 21. Meantime, what of the tormented righteous? The key to line 3 is a passage in Ezekiel (xi. 7), where the Jews in Jerusalem are warned that they are not safe even in the 'caldron' of misery (besieged Jerusalem), but shall be fetched out thence to suffer the punishment of their bloody deeds. So, by a different application of the figure, the psalmist declares (taking *v.* 10 with *v.* 11) that the righteous, released from their 'caldron' of persecution, shall look with satisfaction on the divine vengeance. The various attempts to explain the received text are failures. How can the sweeping away of pot, flesh, and fuel be a figure for the sudden ruin of the plans of the wicked? And how too can the

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psalmist leave the fate of the wicked man himself out of his description? Hengstenberg sees the force of the latter objection, and therefore renders 'shall sweep *him* away.' But the text as it stands will not allow this. We might of course emend 'your pots' and 'your flesh' into 'his pots' and 'his flesh;' but it is really less arbitrary to admit at once the mutilation and corruption of the text, and adopt Bickell's very natural way of remedying these (see crit. note). For the figure of the boiling caldron, comp. 1 Pet. iv. 12, τῇ ἐν ὑμῖν πυρώσει.

11 The **righteous** probably are the Israelites as a nation (cf. on *v.* 4); the antithesis reminds us of lxviii. 3,4 (see note). Other nations 'walk in the name of their (unrighteous) gods' (Mic. iv. 5), but Israel, walking in the name of Jehovah, 'follows after a law of righteousness' (Rom. ix. 31). Power, knowledge, art, may be their ideals; but Israel's is righteousness; hence his family name is Jeshurun 'the upright.' We must perhaps admit that the use of such a phrase implies a consciousness of innocence such as the Israelites did not possess in the Babylonian, but did possess in the Maccabean period.

——**That he has seen vengeance.** Dante may comment on this—

> O Signor mio, quando sarò io lieto
> A veder la vendetta, che nascosa
> Fa dolce l'ira tua nel tuo segreto?
> *Purg.* xx. 94–96.

——**He shall wash his feet.** Cf. lxviii. 24.

12 The confession of the rest of mankind that, in spite of the doubts which have so long harassed them (אַךְ 'but surely;' see on lxxiii. 1, 18), 'it is well with the righteous, for the *fruit of their doings* do they eat' (Isa. iii. 10); or perhaps, more precisely, 'it is well with the righteous nation, Israel' (Isa. xxvi. 2; comp. the congratulatory song of mankind, Isa. xxiv. 16): and further, that the 'divine powers do really trouble themselves about men, and 'judge in the earth.' The poet doubtless intends a contrast between the *'ĕlīm* (v. 2) and the *'elōhīm* (v. 12); so too 'judge,' 'men' (*'ādām*) in *v.* 2, and 'in the earth' (*v.* 3) correspond to the same expressions in *v.* 12. *'Elōhīm* with the plural (contrast Gen. i. 1), because the speakers are, not merely in expression but in feeling,[1] polytheists: an explanation which may not suit all the passages in which this construction is found, but which is required by some, e.g. by 1 Sam. iv. 7, 8 (in *v.* 7 read נָאוּ with Sept.)

PSALM LIX.

THESE companion-psalms resemble each other, but the most important parallels to Ps. lix. are in Ps. lv. The situation of the psalmist is obscure; but who the most dreaded foes are, is clear enough from *vv.* 6, 9, 12, 14. Notice the refrains in *vv.* 7, 15 and 10, 18; the two former are *initial* refrains (see on Pss. lxii., lxvii., and cf. Am. i. 3, 6, &c).

2 Deliver me from mine enemies, O my God,
set me secure from them that assail me:
3 Deliver me from the workers of wickedness,
and save me from the men of blood.
4 For lo they have long lain in wait for my soul;

[1] This is said to forestall a criticism. In expression, the authors of Pss. lviii. and lxxxii. are polytheists, but in feeling they are monotheists. Some rags of polytheism may still cling to them, but they are working their way to a monotheism like that of the author of Pss. ciii., civ.

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fierce (invaders) attack me
without any transgression or sin of mine, Jehovah.
5 Without my fault they run and take their place ;
awake thou to meet me, and behold.
6 But thou, Jehovah Sabáoth, Israel's God,
rouse thee to visit all the nations ;
have no pity on all these wicked traitors.

7 They come evening after evening, they snarl like dogs,
and go round about the city.
8 Behold, they belch out with their mouth,
swords are in their lips,
for 'Who hears?'
9 But thou, Jehovah, laughest at them,
thou mockest at all the nations.
10 My strength, unto thee will I make melody,
for God is my sure retreat.

11 My God shall meet me with his lovingkindness,
God shall make me look my fill upon my spying enemies.
12 Slay them not, lest my people forget ;
by thine army make them to wander,
and cast them down, O Lord our shield.
13 Their mouth sins by each word of their lips,
therefore let them be taken in their pride,
and for the cursing and lying which they talk.
14 Make an end in wrath, make an end, that they be no more,
and let them know that Elohim is ruler in Jacob,
unto the ends of the earth.

15 And they come evening after evening, they snarl like a dog,
and go round about the city.
16 They indeed wander about to devour,
they murmur if they be not satisfied ;
17 But I will sing of thy strength,
and will ring out thy lovingkindness in the morning,
for thou hast been unto me a sure retreat
and a refuge in the day of my trouble.
18 My strength, unto thee will I make melody,
for God is my sure retreat,
the God of my lovingkindness.

4-6 Observe the stress laid on the unprovoked aggression and on the treachery of the foe (comp. Isa. xxxiii. 1) ; also on his 'fierceness,' a quality which in fellow-Israelites was contrary to the primary law in Lev. xix. 18. *V.* 4 *a*, *b* reminds us of lvi. 7 ; comp. liv. 5.

6 'But *thou*, being what thou art, Jehovah, Israel's God, and yet

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also the disposer of hosts of supernatural and natural[1] powers, be not like one in a deep sleep (Jer. xiv. 9, Sept.); succour us once for all by a general judgment upon **all the nations**' (see on *v.* 9, and comp. on lvi. 8). This latter phrase decides the question as to the foes spoken of; they are, primarily at least, foreigners (comp. liv. 5), and therefore enemies of Jehovah's people. The war is a religious war, and as long as these naturally hostile peoples remain there is no peace for Israel. This is why the psalmist says, 'all the nations,' and not, as some by their paraphrase show that they would rather he had said, 'all these heathenish men.'——**Jehovah Sabáoth.** The text has '*Yahveh 'Elōhīm Çebāōth*,' which Olshausen explains as a triple name of Israel's God. This latter statement goes too far; Sabáoth may be in process of becoming a personal name, but it is not altogether so; we cannot say with Spenser (*Mutability*), 'May I that Sabaoth see.' The case is different from that of Astar-Kemos, a compound divine name of two independent personal names (cf. also Hadad-Rimmon). Most probably, however, '*Elohim* in our passage is an editorial correction which was intended to supersede the name Jehovah. In lxxx. 8, 15 the received text actually gives us the 'impossible form' (Bickell) '*Elohim Çebāōth*; the equally impossible form quoted above recurs in lxxx. 5, 20, lxxxiv. 9. The latter is specially surprising here, since directly after we read '*Elōhē Yisrāēl*. Comp. on xxiv. 10.

7 Here, with a description of the recreant Israelitish enemies, a new stanza begins.——**They come,** &c. Lit., 'they keep returning at evening.'——**Like dogs.** The half-wild dogs of an Eastern city, referred to in xxii. 17 (note); comp. Matt. vii. 6, xix. 24, Mark x. 25. —— **Go round about.** Some infer from this expression that the psalmist's city was being besieged or blockaded. But there is no more occasion for this inference here than in lv. 11. They seek out opportunities for disquieting and robbing the righteous (*v.* 16)—that is the meaning of the phrase.

8 **They belch out,** viz. 'arrogant things,' as xciv. 4. The same verb in a good sense in xix. 3, cxix. 171.——**Swords,** &c. Cf. lv. 22, lvii. 5.——**Who hears?** Cf. x. 11, 13, lxiv. 6, lxxiii. 11, xciv. 7.

9 **Laughest at them,** for they *have become* 'aliens from the commonwealth of Israel,' and are infected with the folly of 'all the nations.' Comp. xxxvii. 13, and still more ii. 4, the context of which refers to a similar madness on the part of 'the nations.' Does the psalmist regard the present calamities of Israel as the first stage in that great uprising of the heathen world so vividly described in Joel iii.?

12 **Slay them not,** &c. We need not attempt to reconcile this with *v.* 14; the inconsistency is due to the psalmist's mental agitation (comp. on lxxxiii. 16). His first thought is that by lingering on in life for awhile the wicked may be more edifying monuments of the divine anger. For a parallel see Ex. ix. 16, 'But in very deed for this cause have I kept thee alive, to show in thee my power, and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.'——**By thine army.** So Hitzig and Riehm, Delitzsch more than half assenting. The 'army' is the heavenly host, the 'heroes' (*gibbōrīm*; see on ciii. 20) whom Jehovah Sabáoth will summon to the valley of Jehoshaphat (Joel iv. 11). The ungodly heathen nations are to become vagabonds, and beg their bread (see cix. 10, Heb.), chased, like the Wandering Jew, by invisible angels (comp. xxxv. 5, 6).

13 **Cursing.** Ewald, as also in x. 7, 'perjury;' but this is more allowable as exegesis than as translation.

[1] The reader will pardon this anachronism; such logical distinctions are no part of the psalmist's intellectual world. But see on Ps. ciii. 20, 21.

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14 See on *v.* 12. The ungodly, in perishing, are to acknowledge that Jehovah, Israel's God, is the ruler of the world.

16, 17 An antithesis between the insatiable greed of the traitorous Israelites (?) and the praiseful religious trust of the psalmist.

PSALM LX.

ISRAEL has but now sustained a grievous defeat in an expedition against Edom, and in Israel's name the psalmist implores deliverance and an answer of peace. The answer comes; but the psalmist's joy is not untroubled by doubt, and the contrast between the third stanza and the second is so great that one is tempted to suppose *vv.* 8–10 to be a quotation subsequently added from an older psalm. In truth, if these verses really contain a special revelation to the psalmist, how can we account for his relapse into despondency (*vv.* 7–14 are repeated in Ps. cviii.)?

3 Elohim, thou hast cast us off and scattered us,
thou hast been angry, O vouchsafe to restore us!
4 Thou hast made the land to quake; thou hast cleft it;
heal the breaches thereof, for it totters.
5 Thou hast caused thy people to see hard things;
thou hast made us to drink the wine of reeling.
6 Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee,
(only) that they may flee before the bow.
7 That thy beloved ones may be delivered,
save with thy right hand, and answer us.

8 God has promised by his holiness; let me triumph (therein);
I shall divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth.
9 Mine shall be Gilead and mine Manasseh,
Ephraim also the defence of my head;
Judah my staff of command:
10 Moab shall be my washpot, over Edom shall I cast out my shoe:
over Philistia shall I break into shouting.

11 Who will bring me into the entrenched city?
who can lead me into Edom?
12 Surely thou, O God, hast cast us off,
and goest not forth, O God, with our armies.
13 O give us help from trouble,
for vain is man's deliverance.
14 Through God we shall do valiantly,
and it is he that shall tread down our foes.

4, 5 To express the severity of the blow, the poet says that land and people have both suffered. This is one among many evidences in the O.T. of the primitive sentiment of the intimate union between a people and its land (see on Hos. ii. 3). Torn from its native soil, and therefore (as it seemed) from its god, a primitive nation 'collapsed' entirely; a crushing defeat like the present seemed the prelude of such

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a wreck, the effects of which the poet naturally extended to the land for which he had some of the feelings of a lover. Comp. 4 *b* with Isa. iii. 6, 7, xxx. 13.

5 **Wine of reeling.** Another psalmist has finely developed this figure (lxxv. 9), which indeed became a commonplace of the prophets (see Isa. li. 17, Jer. xxv. 15–17, xlix. 12, Ezek. xxiii. 32–34, and comp. Jer. li. 7, Zech. xii. 2).

6 We have no right to convert this verse into a suggestion of comfort, 'Thou hast given a banner for the fugitives to rally round and renew the fight' (this requires too much to be supplied). The only natural view is that which sees in *v.* 6 a continuation of the description of calamity in *v.* 5. Unfortunately *v.* 6 *b* in the received text obstinately refuses to harmonise with this view. Hence Delitzsch (somewhat as Calvin) connects *v.* 6 with *v.* 7, and explains, 'Since thou hast given thy people a banner, that we may lift ourselves up bannerwise because of the truth, therefore help, in order that thy beloved ones may be delivered.' This connexion might be accepted, in spite of the fact that *v.* 7 begins the extract in Ps. cviii., if it pointed the way to even a plausible interpretation of *v.* 5 *b*; but can it be said to have done so? Can a poet have expressed himself as Del. supposes the psalmist to have done? Besides, even if 'to lift oneself up' be an admissible rendering of *l'hithnōsēs* (see Zech. ix. 16), 'because of (i.e. to further the interests of) the truth' is not a possible rendering of the complementary words. In short, the only satisfactory view is that of Ewald, who sees in the Hebrew of *v.* 6 *b* a characteristic wordplay (comp. lvi. 9). 'Thou gavest us indeed a banner, when we took the field for the true religion; but what a banner! Far from being a rallying-point for God's warriors, it seemed as if only intended to scatter us in flight.' There is one deficiency, however, in Ewald's comment, viz. that he does not propose to insert נָס at the beginning of line 3, though the insertion improves the rhythm and is indispensable for the sense.

7 **Answer us,** viz. by 'terrible acts of righteousness' (lxv. 6), at least if *vv.* 8–10 were a later addition. If, however, these verses were placed where they now stand by the psalmist himself, they may be taken as the desired 'answer' to prayer. That they contain the substance of a prophecy, is no objection; prophetic revelation is in Jer. xxxiii. represented as an answer to prayer.

8–10 Does this strophe contain the very words of a divine oracle, or is it merely a picturesque elaboration of its substance? In the former case, it is Jehovah who says, 'Let me triumph, dividing Shechem,' &c.;[1] in the latter, some Israelitish general encourages himself by this divine word of promise. A passage like Isa. xlii. 13 (where 'he shall shout'—the same verb as in *v.* 10, only Hifil—is said of Jehovah, who is compared to a 'man of war') may make us hesitate to pronounce the former view impossible. Still, the extremely realistic details incline one to prefer the latter. Delitzsch thinks that the substratum is the promise of Nathan (2 Sam. vii. 9, &c.), which is similarly recast or adapted as the case may be in Pss. ii., lxxxix.——**God has promised** (comp. the use of the verb in lxxxvii. 3, Deut. vi. 3, xii. 20, xix. 8). Or (if God be the speaker in the following verses), 'God has sworn' (lit., 'hath spoken').——**By his holiness** (comp. lxxxix. 36, Am. iv. 2). The oath or promise is inviolable like Jehovah's majesty. Comp. cv. 42, 'his holy promise (lit., 'word').——**Divide . . . mete out.** Alluding to the original distribution of Canaan (see Joshua).——**Shechem . . . Succoth.** The former represents the west, the latter the

[1] So Ewald, who however makes 'let me triumph' a parenthetic exclamation of the psalmist.

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east side of the Jordan. There were, it seems, other Succoths, but the 'valley' in which this Succoth lay was, we may infer, specially populous (Josh. xiii. 27) and fruitful (see on lxv. 14). So too in a high degree was the district of Shechem. Both places are mentioned together in a narrative known perhaps to the psalmist (Gen. xxxiii. 17, 18, R.V.), according to which Jacob-Israel sojourned at Succoth ('Deir Ula') on his way to 'the city of Shechem.'

9 Gilead and Manasseh, Ephraim and Judah are again geographically representative.——**My staff of command.** Alluding to the royal dignity of Judah (see Gen. xlix. 10).

10 Ewald (see *Salomonische Schriften*, p. 427, 'Zusätze') strangely enough sees here a description of the successive preparations of the royal warrior for repose. But the language does but represent figuratively the subjugation of Israel's most troublesome neighbours—that of Moab is described with a contumely reminding us of Isa. xxv. 10. ——**Cast out my shoe,** on the other hand, is probably a legal symbol for taking 'seisin' of a piece of land. In Ruth iv. 7 (cf. Deut. xxv. 9) the drawing off the shoe is a form which expresses giving up a right; a similar Arabic phrase signifies divorce (see Delitzsch). That there is no example of a phrase like the psalmist's elsewhere in the O.T., may be ascribed to accident. But, even without this supposition, a poet might easily coin such a figure on the analogy of a familiar legal form. I do not venture to seek further light from Mr. McLennan's theories. Philistia is mentioned last as most westerly; she loved to taunt Israel of old (comp. 2 Sam. i. 20), now she is to be taunted herself.——**Shall I break into,** &c. So cviii. 9 reads. The text (which I only mean to paraphrase) reads, when rightly pointed, 'is my shouting.' The received text, however, gives a different colour to the line, 'Philistia, triumph thou because of me' (as a new subject), or, ironically, 'triumph, if thou canst;' or, perhaps, 'cry aloud for pain because of me' (cf. Isa. xv. 4, Heb.)

11–14 'But who, oh! who, will conduct my champion-warriors through the strong entrenchments of the Edomitish city?' (*v.* 11), i.e. probably, the rock-city Sela; cf. 2 Kings xiv. 7. The psalmist (who speaks, as in *vv.* 3–7, for Israel) longs for a divine guide. But, alas! Jehovah has 'surely cast us off and goeth not forth,' &c. (*v.* 12).——**Surely thou,** &c. Hitzig plausibly, 'Who but thou, O God, who hast (hitherto) cast us off?' &c. This facilitates the defence of the unity of feeling and of composition, but is not the most natural construction of the Hebrews. In *v.* 3 the complaint 'thou hast cast off' refers to time present, and so in the parallel passage xliv. 10. The speaker yearns for reconciliation with God, and through prayer rises out of his depression into triumphant faith (*vv.* 13, 14).

PSALM LXI.

PRAYERS of a pious Israelite afar (as it seems) from the Holy Land. Must he be a king because of *v.* 9? At any rate, the petition for the king (*v.* 7) connects this psalm with lxiii.

2 Hear my cry, Elohim,
attend unto my prayer.
3 From the utmost part of the earth
I call unto thee with fainting heart;
lead me upon the rock that is too high for me.

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4 For thou hast been a refuge to me,
a strong tower against the enemy.
5 Let me be a guest in thy pavilion perpetually,
let me take refuge in the hiding-place of thy wings.

6 For thou, O God, hast hearkened to my vows,
thou hast granted the request of those that fear thy name.
7 Mayest thou prolong the king's life,
may his years be for generations on generations.
8 May he sit before God for ever;
appoint (thy) lovingkindness and truthfulness to guard him.
9 So will I make melody unto thy name for ever,
that I may perform my vows day by day.

2 **My cry.** Heb. *rinnāthī*, 'my piercing cry' (see xvii. 1, and note on v. 11).

3 **From the utmost part of the earth.** The natural exaggeration of one parted from all that his soul counts most dear. Whether we are to explain the phrase of the land beyond Jordan, whither David for instance betook himself at a great moment of his life, or of some more distant region (the speaker being supposed to belong to the great Diaspora), is disputed. The analogy of Ps. xlii. (if interpreted rightly above) seems, however, to point to the former view (the connexion with David being of course left uncertain). To one who mourns such spiritual privations as the psalmist, the 'end of the land' is virtually the 'end of the earth;' such is the power of feeling sometimes to exaggerate, sometimes to extenuate difficulties. Comp. on lxiii. 2 *c.*——**Lead me upon the rock,** &c. All safe retreats seem to be on eminences too far off for him to reach and too high for him to climb.

4 **For thou hast been,** &c. 'Thou hast been true to thy covenant-purpose of love, true to thy sacred name, 'I am'—or 'I will be' (viz. whatever Israel my people needs), Ex. iii. 14.[1]

5 The psalmist shares the longing of his fellow-believer in xv. 1, but piles another big word on the phrase—**perpetually** (more literally, 'for æons' (*'ōlāmīm*[2]).

6 According to Ewald, a verse has dropped out after *v.* 5, expressing the psalmist's desire to praise God in His temple, upon which would follow, 'that thou, O God hast,' &c.; comp. liv. 8, 9. This however, seems unnecessary. *V.* 6 is a preface to *vv.* 7, 8; *v.* 9 is their supplement. The tenses are prophetic perfects (cf. xx. 7); the psalmist confidently anticipates the fulfilment of his prayers. Vows and prayers go together in *v.* 6; praise, as the fulfilment of the vows, is the theme of *v.* 9. Midway come specimens of the 'requests' or 'petitions' of 'those that fear Thy name' (comp. xxi. 4, note). The received text has, not 'request,' but 'heritage'—i.e. perhaps the land of Israel, which may have been recently delivered from a dreaded foe.

7, 8 *a* See on xxi. 5. The prayer in 8 *b* reminds us of xl. 12. The verb rendered 'appoint' is used of God's providential appointments in Jon. ii. 1 (i. 17), iv. 6, 7, 8.

[1] Comp. Dr. Robertson Smith, *British and Foreign Evangelical Review*, Jan. 1876, p. 161.

[2] The plural of *'ōlām* is rare in the Psalter. In lxxvii. 6 it signifies ancient times, in cxliii. 13 the whole course of the world's existence.

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PSALM LXII.

SOME pious Israelite of high rank (see *v.* 5) is in imminent danger from malignant opponents, and encourages himself and his companions to hold fast to their faith. The last four distichs are in a different key, and seem to claim prophetic inspiration (see on *v.* 12). Observe two peculiarities of this psalm, the six times repeated particle אַךְ (see on *v.* 2), and the refrains at the *beginning* of the first and second strophes (comp. on Pss. lix., lxvii.) There are some resemblances to Pss. iv. and xxxix.

2 Be all at rest, my soul, toward Elohim ;
from him comes my salvation.
3 He alone is my rock and my salvation,
my sure retreat—I cannot be shaken.
4 How long will ye be frantic against a man?
will ye be dashing in pieces all of you—
as it were a toppling wall, a fence pushed in?
5 They only consult how to thrust him from his dignity ;
they delight in lies ; they each of them bless with the mouth,
but inwardly they curse.

6 Be all at rest, my soul, toward Elohim,
for my expectation is from him.
7 He alone is my rock and my salvation,
my sure retreat—I cannot be shaken.
8 Upon God rests my salvation and my honour ;
the rock of my stronghold and my refuge are—God.
9 Trust ye in him, O assembly of the people ;
pour out your heart before him ;
God is a refuge for us.

10 Simply vanity are men of low degree, the lordly are (simply) a lie ;
being weighed in the balances, they are altogether as a breath.
11 Trust not in perverseness, neither become vain by crookedness :
if riches shoot up (as a plant), give no heed thereto.
12 God hath spoken once ; twice have I heard this ;
that strength belongs unto God :
13 Thine, too, Jehovah, is lovingkindness,
for thou renderest unto every man according to his work.

2 **Be all at rest,** &c. Hitzig's 'Nur auf Gott still hoffet meine Seele' preserves the order of the Hebrew, but, as this critic points out in his note, the particle אַךְ, which some render 'only,' others 'surely,' and others even 'nevertheless' (comp. on lxxiii. 1), by no means always affects the words most closely which it immediately precedes. To render this fine phrase briefly is difficult. The sense is, 'Do nothing but look trustfully to Jehovah ;' 'stillness' is the root-idea of

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the verb, a 'stillness' which implies not merely the cessation of that moaning of which another psalmist speaks (xlii. 6, &c.), but also of useless endeavours to bring one's own feet out of the net (xxv. 15). For the idea, comp. Lam. iii. 26; for the corrected reading, see crit. note.

4 **Against a man.** Observe that here, as in Psalm iv., it is on the ground of humanity, not of a common citizenship in Israel, that the speaker appeals to his enemies.

5 **They only consult,** &c. There is a fine though subtle connexion with *vv.* 3, 7. *Only* God can be my helper, for my enemies are *only* considering how to destroy me. A single humane thought on their part would have been to me a secret ally; but I am quite alone, or in the midst of friends who are paralysed by despair (see on *v.* 9). The mention of the psalmist's endangered 'dignity,' and of the delighting of his foes in falsehood, reminds us of iv. 3. For the description which follows comp. xii. 3, xxviii. 3, lv. 22.

9 This verse forms a transition to the last strophe. The speaker forgets his 'dignity,' and speaks to his fellow-believers, whose dangers, and whose high hopes, he shares. Or rather, he puts more value on the permanent functions of a wise man and a teacher than on the accidental dignity of leadership thrust upon him by the exigencies of the times. In rendering **O assembly of the people** I follow Sept. (see crit. note).

10, 11 Here the psalmist becomes didactic. The connexion, however, is not at first sight clear. Does this verse contain the encouraging thought that the numerous band of the enemies of Israel has but an apparent existence, all men being naturally but 'vanity' (or, 'a breath') and 'a lie' (both names given to the idol-gods, Jer. ii. 5, Am. ii. 5)? A comparison of xxxix. 6, 7 suggests a safer view. There the connexion is, that pious Israelites are tempted by the oppression which they suffer from the rich and prosperous ungodly to covet the 'mammon of unrighteousness.' To meet this temptation, the psalmist is led through a fierce conflict to the conviction that piling up treasure is irrational, because man has but a short and, as it were, phantom existence. We see from iv. 7, 8 that in very similar circumstances a psalmist had to warn his friends against thinking too much of material blessings.

11 For **perverseness** and **crookedness** the text has 'oppression' and 'robbery' (which in fact are parallel terms in Ezek. xxii. 29). But what sense does this give? Why should the psalmist's companions in misfortune be exhorted not to centre their trust on such objects? On the other hand we cannot suppose a sudden transition to the hostile party, because of the evident connexion of this verse with *v.* 10. Besides, how little would the enemy have minded a gentle caution not to trust in their high-handed policy of injustice! The correction of the text adopted is in harmony with the didactic tinge of this part of the psalm. The wise man whose work introduces the 'proverbs of Solomon' describes those who are the enemies of true wisdom as men who 'are perverse in their paths and crooked in their ways' (Prov. ii. 22)—a passage which seems to me more completely parallel than Isa. xxx. 12 (following the Sept. with Bishop Lowth), where 'perverseness' and 'crookedness' have perhaps a more special reference to false statecraft. In our psalm it is not worldly politicians but average Israelites who are addressed—those to whom another psalmist addresses the warning, 'O lovers of Jehovah, hate ye that which is evil' (xcvii. 10). 'Trust in Jehovah' means, not merely belonging to the 'assembly of the people' (*v.* 9), but 'doing that which is good' (xxxvii. 3), and to 'be at rest towards Jehovah' is incompatible with 'being incensed' at the prosperity of the unjust, an irritation which 'would only lead

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to evil-doing' (xxxvii. 7, 8). The great teacher, therefore, who speaks here, warns the 'assembly' against practically transferring their 'trust' from Jehovah to a course of action which may be lucrative but which He abhors.——**Neither become vain.** He said before that men of high and low degree were equally vanity; but now he warns his hearers not to 'become vain.' Why is this? Because to the believer Jehovah 'makes known the path of (true) life' (xvi. 12); 'vanity of vanities' was not said of life in God, which is the only real life to the psalmists. Comp. Jer. ii. 5, '(your fathers) walked after that which is vanity and became vain' (so 2 Kings xvii. 15).——**If riches shoot up.** Obviously he means the riches of the ungodly, which the faithful are warned not to gaze at, lest, like wine (Prov. xxiii. 31), the glittering heaps should fascinate them. The figure in the verb is peculiar; Sept. substitutes a more common one, πλοῦτος ἐὰν ῥέῃ (cf. Milton's 'flowing wealth'). 'Shoot up' perhaps involves an allusion to usury, two of the names for which mean properly multiplication (*marbîth*, *tarbîth*). Comp. the somewhat different meaning in xlix. 17.

12, 13 **God hath spoken once.** 'Once' and 'twice' in parallel clauses mean 'again and again' (Job xxxiii. 14, xl. 5). Others render, 'One thing has God spoken; these two have I heard.' The writer claims for himself an assured knowledge of certain fundamental truths, produced by the divine Spirit. A similar claim is made by another psalmist (lxxxv. 9). Both writers do but follow the example of the 'wise men' (see Job iv. 16, and comp. *Job and Solomon*, pp. 43, 186), one of whom even maintains that divine revelations are vouchsafed to all who are willing to receive them (Job xxxiii. 14–16; comp. Joel ii. 28, 29). On the ground of this claim the writer once more proclaims the old and ever-precious truth that absolute power belongs only to God, but supplements it directly by a less generally recognised truth that the God who reveals Himself in Israel is also essentially kind, that instead of crushing frail man for his 'lapses' (xix. 12) He will reward him according to his work, i.e. in proportion to his honest endeavours to serve God. 'Lovingkindness' is that gracious quality which knits together the members of a community and the parties to a covenant; it is therefore not inconsistent with 'justice;' indeed, it is one form of justice. Such a quality in its highest degree alone can unravel the tangled skein of human responsibility, and determine how much in each human life is the 'work' of the man, and how much that of other members of the community. Therefore it is that we read in *v.* 13, 'Thine, Jehovah, is lovingkindness.' The psalmists tend to resolve morality into love, as Plato into justice.

PSALM LXIII.

'HEIMWEH nach dem Dienst Gottes' (Julius Hammer). The circumstances described remind us partly of Ps. lxi.; comp. also Pss. xlii., xliii.

2 Jehovah, thou art my God; earnestly do I seek thee;
my soul thirsts for thee, my flesh pines for thee
in a dry and thirsty land where no water is;
3 In such wise do I long for thee, in the sanctuary
to behold thy power and glory.

4 For thy lovingkindness is better than life itself;
(therefore) my lips shall praise thee.

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5 So will I bless thee while I live,
and lift up my hands in thy name.

6 My soul is satisfied as with marrow and fatness,
and with mirthful lips doth my mouth sing praise.
7 When I call thee to mind upon my bed,
in the night watches do I meditate upon thee.

8 For thou hast been my help,
and in the shadow of thy wings can I shout for joy.
9 My soul clings fast after thee :
thy right hand upholds me.

10 As for them, they seek my soul to destroy it :
they shall enter into the nether world.
11 They shall be given up into the grasp of the sword ;
they shall be the portion of jackals.
12 But the king shall rejoice in Elohim ;
everyone that swears by him shall glory :
for the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped.

2 The psalmist's whole nature (see on xvi. 9) longs for the sanctuary ; comp. lxxxiv. 3, and for the figure of thirsting, xlii. 2. The word rendered 'pines' occurs here only (Symm., *ἰμείρεται*).——**In a dry and thirsty land,** &c. It is tempting to render (with Pesh.) '*as* a dry and thirsty land' (properly 'in the the manner of . . .;' comp. xxxvii. 20). The image produced is a fine one, and this view has the support of cxliii. 6 *b*, which is clearly an imitation of our passage. But the later psalmist was not bound to copy the exact phrase of his original, and indeed began the line in a way which necessitated continuing 'like a thirsty land.' On the other hand, the ordinary rendering in lxiii. 2 seems favoured by a somewhat parallel passage in a cognate psalm (see lxi. 3). The region in which the psalmist is seems to him at the very end of the world, seems to him dry and barren, because of his spiritual privations. It is just the opposite of lxxxiv. 7, where the psalmist probably means that hot, parched valleys appear full of delicious fountains to those who have a joyous trust in Jehovah.

3 **In such wise,** i.e. with such eager longing.——**Do I long for thee.** Or, 'have I longed for thee,' viz. in former times when I had the privilege of worship in the sanctuary. But there is no reason for explaining the time-reference otherwise than in *v.* 2, and the analogy of xlii. 3 pleads strongly for the view that the poet here expresses bitter regret at his absence from the temple. The text-reading is rendered, 'So have I gazed at thee ;' against which, see crit. note. ——**In the sanctuary.** Because there, in happier days, 'service high and anthem clear' could 'bring all heav'n before mine eyes.'——**To behold,** i.e. to realise (xxvii. 4). The temple being the citadel and throne of the Most High.

4 Thus far we are reminded of Pss. xlii., xliii. But here the resemblance ceases. In that psalm it is only by a painful effort that the hope is formed of praising God at some future day ; but here the lips of the psalmist are opened at once for praise. How is this? Evidently this poet has had a deeper experience than the other. Severed though he is from the material

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sanctuary, his heart has become a temple of praise. Much as he loves the temple, he knows that God's name is not confined to the 'holy mount,' and that He can be worshipped even in a dry land; he has solved the enigma of xxvii. 4. He knows that God's lovingkindness is not of fitful operation, but follows him wherever he goes (xxiii. 7), and in this knowledge his heart becomes a temple of praise. He forgets all that is painful in his situation, and remembers only what God is permanently and essentially. Hence he continues, **For thy lovingkindness,** &c. God's 'power and glory' are at the disposal of His 'lovingkindness.' It is only or chiefly to intensify the sense of God's lovingkindness, which is 'better than life itself' (see on xvii. 14), that the psalmist longs so much to see His power and glory in the sanctuary. But he already has in no slight degree that happy consciousness, and so *v.* 4 *a* becomes the justification of *v.* 4 *b*, and the psalm takes a new turn. We can now understand the transition from the melancholy of the first to the ecstatic joy of the second stanza.

5 **So will I bless thee,** i.e. in thankful recognition of Thy love. ('So' = accordingly, as lxi. 9.) — **While I live.** Lit., 'in my lifetime.' Lagarde would emend this into 'in a dry land.' It is true that in *v.* 4 *a* the psalmist *seems* to be speaking in the spirit of R. Baxter:

> Lord, it belongs not to my care
> Whether I die or live

There is an inconsistency in continuing 'in my lifetime;' but such inconsistencies are frequent in the psalms, and show the sincerity of the authors.

6 **As with marrow and fatness.** There was perhaps a strong sensualism in the idea of being a 'guest of God' (at sacrificial feasts) formed by the Phœnicians (comp. on v. 5); 'marrow and rich altar-steam' (Keble) was something to be desired for its own sake. But to the psalmists, as well as to the author of Isa. xxv. 6, the most exquisite delights were not those of the lower man, though described in sensuous language.

10 Like Savonarola, and like the Scotch Covenanters, the psalmist has no sense of any incongruity between deeply spiritual musings and vehement denunciations of his enemies. *His* enemies are those who would frustrate God's purposes for Israel.——**The nether world.** See lxxxvi. 13 (note), lxxxviii. 7.

12 *a* This one line devoted to the king is strange (contrast lxi. 7, 8). In *b*, **by him** certainly means 'by Jehovah' (lxiv. 11).

PSALM LXIV.

FRESH complaints and anticipations of a great turn of events—these latter expressed in the tone of prophecy (see on *vv.* 8–10).

2 Hear my voice, Elohim, in my complaint:
guard my life from fear of the enemy.
3 Hide me from the conspiracy of the ungodly,
from the throng of them that work wickedness;
4 Who have whet their tongue like a sword,
and stretched their arrow—a bitter speech,
5 That they may shoot in their hiding-places at the blameless,
suddenly shoot at him, and not be afraid.

6 They fix their choice upon an evil purpose,

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they discourse of hiding snares,
they ask who looks at them.
7 They think out acts of injustice, [and say,]
'We have accomplished a well thought out thing,'
and the inward part of each one [is unsearchable],
and the heart [of every one] is deep.

8 But *God* shall shoot at *them* with an arrow;
suddenly shall they be wounded.
9 * * * * *
so that all that look upon them shall shake the head;
10 And all men shall fear and shall declare God's work,
and shall understand his operation.
11 The righteous shall rejoice in Jehovah, and take refuge in him,
and all the upright in heart shall glory.

4, 5 Comp. lv. 22, lvii. 5, lix. 8, and (for *v.* 5) x. 8, lv. 20 (end). —— **At the blameless.** (Heb. *tām.*) Another rendering is possible. Jacob the tent-dweller is called *tām*, in distinction from Esau the roving hunter (Gen. xxv. 27). 'Blameless' in the sense of 'honest' this cannot mean (see Ewald, *History*, i. 352); 'friendly' is not unsuitable, and the same rendering is admissible here. On the possible Arabic affinities of *tām*, see Delitzsch on Job i. 1.

7 The words supplied in brackets are required either for sense or to produce symmetry. With 7 *c*, *d* comp. Jer. xvii. 9, 10.

8–10 **But God shall shoot,** &c. Lit., 'And (or, so) God hath shot at them,' and so on. That which is here described is historically future, but past in the language of faith. Punishment, the effect, is already latent in sin, the cause. Comp. xciv. 22, 23.

9 *a* Can the text be correct? The easiest rendering is, 'So shall they against whom their tongue was make them to stumble,' but the mention of human instruments of punishment is not in harmony with the context. The only alternative is, 'So they shall be made to stumble, their own tongue [i.e. the fate which they imprecated upon others] coming upon them;' but this is harsh in the extreme. The middle word in the Hebrew may be corrupt; we might correct, 'So shall the mischief of their own tongue bring them to ruin' (comp. cxl. 10 *b*), but this is not quite satisfactory. Comp. 9 *b* with lii. 8.

11 Comp. lviii. 11, lxiii. 12.

PSALM LXV.

A SONG of praise, composed in the spring, when the 'pastures were already green, the 'meadows' clothed with flocks, and the 'valleys' covered with swelling corn. Not long before, a great national deliverance had probably occurred, but this is not directly mentioned. The most prominent blessings in the psalmist's mind are the early and the latter rain.

2 Meet for thee, Elohim, is praise in Zion,
and unto thee let the vow be performed.
3 O thou that hearest prayer,
unto thee may all flesh come.

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4 Manifold guilt is too strong for me :
our transgressions—vouchsafe to cancel them !
5 Happy is he whom thou choosest and causest to approach,
that he may abide in thy courts :
fain would we have our fill of the goodness of thy house,
even of thy holy temple.

6 In terrible acts of righteousness dost thou answer us,
O God of our salvation ;
thou confidence of all the ends of the earth,
and of the regions afar off :
7 Who establishes the mountains by his force,
being girded with might :
8 Who hushes the roaring of the seas,
the roaring of their billows, and the tumult of the peoples ;
9 So that upon those who dwell at the ends comes fear at thy signs,
the sources of morning and evening thou fillest with ringing cries.

10 Thou hast visited the land and given her abundance,
greatly enriching her ;
with God's full river thou didst prepare their corn.
11 For right well dost thou prepare her,
drenching her furrows, smoothing down her ridges,
softening her with showers, blessing all that springs of her

12 Thou hast crowned the year of thy goodness,
and thy chariot-tracks drop with richness,
13 The pastures of the wilderness drop (therewith),
and the hills are girt with dancing joy.
14 The meadows are clothed with flocks,
and the valleys are covered with corn ;
they shout for joy ; yea, they sing.

2, 3 Observe how closely prayer and praise are connected. Men are coming to see that these are the truest sacrifices (see on l. 14, 15), and since 'prayer' includes 'praise' (see on xlii. 9, Acts xvi. 25) the temple may be called by a kindred writer 'a house of prayer for all peoples' (Isa. lvi. 7). Comp. on lxxxiv. 5.——**Meet for thee.** So Ewald, Hitzig (formerly), Grätz, and Bickell (with Sept.); comp. xxxiii. 1, and see crit. note. The text has, 'Unto thee (or, towards thee) silence (or, expectant resignation) is praise;' or, '.. is resignation (and) praise.' The former rendering gives a fine but an unbiblical sense; in the latter, 'resignation' seems out of place (*dūmiyyāh* should precede not accompany praise; see Ps. lxii.)——**In Zion.** See note on next verse (end).

3 **May all flesh come.** An aspiration after the time of which Isaiah prophesied in ii. 2, 3; comp. Jer. xvi. 19, Isa. lxvi. 23, Ps. xxii. 28, lxxxvi. 9. The answers to prayer (i.e. supplication) of which Israel is abundantly conscious fill

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the psalmist with a longing that all mankind may have recourse to the same divine Friend. That such a longing is in his mind we can see from the second part of *v.* 6 (comp. also *v.* 9). We have therefore no occasion to limit the reference of 'all flesh' to the people of Israel (with Ewald and Hitzig). We might, however, with most critics, render 'doth all flesh come,' or interpret 'may come' in this sense. The most illuminated minds of Israel were in fact so absorbed in the prophetic ideas that they now and then treat spiritual germs as if full-grown plants, and idealize the religious condition of the world (see especially Mal. i. 11, 'my name is great among the nations, and in every place incense is offered unto my name and a pure offering'[1]). In this case, what is the connexion of this verse with *v.* 2? Surely this—that though God is the general Father, yet in a special sense he is the Father of Israel (c. 3; comp. *v.* 1), and that though 'all flesh' can everywhere approach God, yet there are some whom He takes by the hand and causes to draw specially near to Him in Zion. As Tholuck boldly expounds, 'All prayers, even those which men direct to fictitious deities, are known to the true God;' and yet truly spiritual sacrifices 'the Lord receives in Zion as nowhere else upon earth.'

4 **Manifold guilt.** Lit., 'matters of guilts.' The colourless word 'matters' seems chosen designedly. There is an emphasis on the plural form—the two plural nouns together strongly mark the variety of the sins spoken of; comp. the solemn repetition of 'all' in Lev. xvi. 21. The same idiom occurs in cv. 27, cxlv. 5. The psalmist is oppressed by his representative character. He speaks for the nation, and the national sins in their manifoldness and separate individuality weigh down his spirit: he knows that neither he nor the nation nor (really) the high priest can atone for them. But though this is the sad truth (*v.* 4 is virtually a hypothetical sentence), he can ask the God who answers prayer to cancel them, and with simple faith he passes into another strain.

5 To whom does this μακαρισμός refer? To the 'house of Levi,' or to the whole 'house of Israel' (cxxxv. 19, 20)? The expressions in the first line may seem to suggest the former (comp. Num. xvi. 5, xviii. 22, Deut. xxi. 5). But the unpriestly tone of *v.* 2 and *v.* 4 favours the view that the church-nation of Israel is meant, which is described in Ex. xix. 6 as ideally a 'kingdom of priests and a holy nation' (comp. lxxiii. 1). By the 'temple' and its 'courts' the psalmist means (see on xxvii. 4), not merely the temple 'in Zion' (*v.* 2), but also that spiritual temple of which the psalmist has conceived the idea while using to the full the means of grace provided for him in the visible sanctuary. On the other hand, by 'the goodness' (i.e. the good things) of God's house he cannot mean in any degree the meats of the sacrificial feasts; he refers to the blessings common to all the true Israel, as well those of the material as those of the spiritual order. Comp. xxxvi. 9, lxiii. 6.

6 Here the special thanksgiving begins. Again and again, when Israel 'cries unto Jehovah in his distress' (cvii. 13), He answers him in acts not less terrible than righteous (note the double accusative). For **terrible**, we might substitute 'fearful-glorious;' for, as Dathe remarks, the phrase describes those deeds at which the ungodly are affrighted, but for which the godly, whose good they promote, give praise to God. See on cxxxix. 14.——**Of** (lit., in = in accordance with) **righteousness.** God must be faithful to his acknowledged principles, which include interposition for his covenant-people (comp.

[1] See Kuenen, *Hibbert Lectures* for 1882, p. 181, and cf. my art. 'The Invisible Church in Hebrew Prophecy,' in *Monthly Interpreter*, May 1885, pp. 77–79.

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Isa. xlii. 6, xlv. 13).——**Thou confidence,** &c. The wonderful history of Israel (such is the faith of the psalmist) has impressed, or is sure to impress, the nations outside first with fear (*v.* 9) and then with confidence (cf. xl. 5).——**The regions afar off.** The phrase occurs in Isa. lxv. 19; cf. also Isa. xxxiii. 13. The text-reading is, 'and (of) the sea of those who are afar off.'

7, 8 The God of nature and the God of history are one. There may be also a secondary symbolic reference, the mountains suggesting the colossal power (cf. Isa. xli. 15), and the seas the restless character of the world-empires which so often troubled Israel (xlvi. 4, 7, Isa. xvii. 12–14).

9 The reverent awe and enthusiastic delight of spectators at the downfall of tyrannical powers.——**The ends,** viz. of the earth (*v.* 6); in other words, east and west, **the sources** (lit., places of outgoing) **of morning and evening** (a zeugma which is illustrated by 'the two orients,' Korán, xliii. 37). Morning and evening are here synonyms for the rising and the setting sun (cf. introduction to Ps. xxiv.)

10, 11 Again a change of key. God also 'answers' his people by the gifts of the soil. Lovingly the poet describes the 'early rain' or first showers of autumn, without which the operations of husbandry cannot begin.——**Visited** means 'taken notice of' (see on viii. 5, xxxiii. 18, and cf. Ruth i. 6).——**With God's full river,** i.e. with water from heaven; cf. the Talmudic but doubtless also primitive Hebrew expression 'field of Baal,' i.e. 'a field nourished, not by springs, but by rain' (*Isaiah*, ii. 295). Schultens quotes a passage from the (Arabic) history of Tamerlane (p. 82), 'When the river of God comes, the river Isa ceases.' A mythic conception lies at the root of the Hebrew phrase, as the Targum already suggests by paraphrasing, 'from the cask (or cistern) of God which is in heaven' (cf. Job xxxviii. 37, 'the bottles of heaven' = the clouds). The rain was naïvely regarded in the earliest times as coming from the heavenly ocean (see on civ. 3), which was behind the 'doors' and 'lattices' of heaven (lxxviii. 23, Gen. vii. 11). The word for 'river' (*péleg*) is remarkable; generally it means 'conduit' or 'canal,' but here, as in xlvi. 5, 'river' is evidently the sense required. A *divine* stream, though not of the same character, being referred to, a peculiar word is chosen in both passages (see crit. note). And truly the contrast between the state of the soil before and after the early rain, might well suggest the expression, 'a stream of Elohim.'

11 **For right well,** &c. In the text these words close the preceding verse, but how awkwardly! There is a play upon the word *kēn*, which may signify either 'so' or 'right' (the latter meaning suggested here by the word 'prepare' or 'righten'). 'So' would mean 'so generously.'——**All that springs of her.** The Heb. *çémakh* being almost always used collectively (see on Isa. iv. 2).

12–14 If the 'early rain' might be called a 'river of Elohim,' the 'latter rain' and its consequent blessings well deserved to be called 'the crowning of the year.' The development of the grain stands almost still in January and February; in the months of March and April, when the 'latter rain' falls, it has to become fully ripe. How eagerly the Israelites looked out for this precious gift, may be seen from Job xxix. 23, Prov. xvi. 15, Jer. iii. 3, Zech. x. 1, as well as from the landscape-picture in *vv.* 12–14, which is suffused with emotion, though, remarkably enough, the emotions of grateful Man are transferred to the hills and valleys which he cultivates. The only figure indeed besides the quiet sheep is that of One who drives through the land in His chariot, not as a man of war (as Hab. iii. 12), but to scatter **richness** (lit., fatness) on the waiting earth (Hos. ii. 21). Poets make their own myths when

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they do not find them. No doubt the meaning is that the 'latter rain' had fallen in abundance when the corn was coming into ear (Deut. xxxiii. 26, quoted by Del., is parallel rather to lxviii. 33). The **valleys** (*v.* 14) are 'the long broad sweeps sometimes found between parallel ranges of hills' (*'ēmeq*).——**They shout for joy** reminds us of lyric passages in II. Isaiah (e.g. xliv. 23, xlix. 13; cf. also Ps. xcvi. 11, 12, xcviii. 7, 8). Some indeed would supply 'men' as the subject; but Virgil at least would not have been shocked at making nature 'sing' (see *Ecl.* v. 62). There are surely scenes in which it is not enough to speak of 'smiling fields.'

PSALM LXVI.

A LITURGICAL psalm. It is uncertain, however, whether the sacrifices spoken of are offered in the name of the people by the high priest or some other leader, or by an individual in his own name (see *v.* 16). In the latter case, as there is no historic setting to *vv.* 13–20, we must suppose the psalm to be intended for any individual who might bring the offering which he had vowed to the temple. The exordium echoes (we might say, popularises) the prophetic idea of the worldwide significance of Israel's history. Passages parallel to it, in form and contents, will at once suggest themselves (e.g. xcviii. 4 for *v.* 1; Prov. xv. 3 for *v.* 11 *b*; Isa. xlviii. 10, Jer. ix. 7, Zech. xiii. 9, Mal. iii. 3 for *v.* 10).

1 Shout ye merrily to Elohim, all ye upon earth,
2 Make melody unto the glory of his name,
  ascribe glory to praise him.
3 Say unto God, 'How terrible are thy works!
  so great is thy strength that thine enemies cringe unto thee.
4 All upon the earth shall worship thee,
  and make melody unto thee, make melody unto thy name.'
5 Come ye and see the works of God,
  how terrible he is in his doing toward the sons of men.
6 He turned the sea into dry land;
  they went on foot through the river—
  there let us rejoice in him.
7 He rules by his might for ever;
  his eyes survey the nations:
  let not the rebellious deal so proudly.

8 O bless our God, ye peoples,
  and make the sound of his praise to be heard,
9 Who hast set our soul in life,
  and hast not suffered our foot to waver.
10 For thou, O God, hast proved us:
  thou hast refined us, as silver is refined.
11 Thou broughtest us into the dungeon;
  thou laidest upon our loins a crushing weight.
12 Thou didst cause mortal men to ride over our heads;

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we went through fire and through water,
but thou broughtest us out into a place of liberty.

13 I will go into thy house with burnt offerings,
I will render unto thee my vows,
14 Such as escaped from my lips,
and my mouth did utter, when I was in straits.
15 Burnt offerings of fatlings will I offer unto thee,
with the sweet savour of rams;
I will sacrifice bullocks with goats.

16 Come ye, hearken, and let me rehearse, all ye that fear God,
that which he did for myself.
17 I cried unto him with my mouth,
and a lofty hymn was (already) under my tongue.
18 If I have intended iniquity in my heart,
the Lord will not hear;
19 But verily God has heard,
and been attentive to the sound of my prayer.
20 Blessed be Elohim,
who has not driven [from him] my prayer,
[nor withdrawn his kindness] from me.

3 **How terrible.** Cf. cxlv. 6. The paraphrase 'fearful-glorious' (see on lxv. 6) is very suitable here, and in *v.* 5 (cf. 6).

5 **Toward the sons of men.** And yet the example given in *v.* 6 is a deliverance of Israel. But Israel is beginning to feel himself the elder brother of 'the nations;' indeed, it is 'the nations' who are now addressed in sympathetic language.

6 If the text is correct, this seems the only intelligible rendering. The poet implies the solidarity of his people in all generations (cf. cxxxii. 6, 7, Josh. v. 1, Hos. xii. 5; in the two last passages, however, the pronoun is uncertain). That the rendering adopted is grammatically possible, there is no reasonable doubt; see Delitzsch, and cf. Driver, *H. Tenses*, § 54. A.V. requires us to suppose that the speaker as it were ecstatically transports himself and his fellow-Israelites to the period of the Exodus, and speaks with the lips of the earlier generation. In such a context I fail to realise this as possible; xxxvi. 13, cited by Perowne, is a very questionable analogy.

7 **His eyes survey** (as Prov. xv. 3), as from a watch-tower; cf. on xliv. 24.——**The rebellious.** See on lxviii. 7.

11 **Into the dungeon.** A figure for the depressed consciousness of a conquered people. Cf. Isa. xlii. 23, 'hidden in houses of restraint.'

12 **Mortal men.** That the poet is, if not etymologising, yet playing upon the word *'enōsh*, can hardly be doubted (see on viii. 5). Elsewhere Israel is encouraged by the thought of the mortal nature of its tyrants (Isa. li. 12); here, however, it is the ignominy of servitude to be tyrannised over by the creatures of a day. Israel's true king is divine. Comp. 'Arise, Jehovah; let not mortal man be too strong' (ix. 20; see note).——**Fire** and **water** are images for the varieties of deadly peril (cf. Isa. xliii. 2).——**Into a**

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place of liberty (cf. xviii. 20). The text-reading is, 'into abundance' (same word in xxiii. 5).

14 **Such as escaped . . .** Extorted by the necessity of the moment, like the vow of Jephthah (Judg. xi. 35, 36, same word).

15 **Sweet savour.** Whether this rendering favours radical Pentateuch criticism or not, it is the only natural one. See my note on Isa. i. 13, and comp. Wellhausen, *Prolegomena*, p. 67, and Dillmann's obscure and, I fear, prejudiced note on Deut. xxxiii. 10.

16 Is this the address of an individual to the Jewish church at large? or that of a representative Israelite to those who fear God in all lands? If in any sense this part of the psalm has a national reference, *v.* 19 with its declaration of innocence suggests that it was written at the same time as Ps. xliv.

17 Such was the speaker's faith that a **lofty hymn** (cf. cxlix 6) to a prayer-hearing God had all but risen to his lips (see on x. 7). But the text may be in disorder. Would not such a striking idea have required a couplet for itself?

18 **If I have . . . . will not hear.** Not, 'If I had . . . . would not have heard.' It is a general proposition, 'My prayers will be ineffectual, unless my heart is pure.' Then in the next verse the speaker applies this theory to the case of his own recent prayer. God has heard me; therefore I am free from 'great transgression.' He is content with hinting this inference, which puzzled the quaint Fuller. Contrast Job's complaint, 'My prayer is pure; yet God treats me as an enemy' (Job xvi. 17; cf. 9).

20 The text has only, 'who has not withdrawn my prayer and his lovingkindness from me.' But see crit. note.

PSALM LXVII.

A HARVEST-HOME hymn in the widest sense. Looking upon the corn, now ready to be reaped, the poet thinks of the spiritual harvest, when Jehovah shall be king over all the earth. It is no compulsory empire which he has in his mind; the sight of Israel's blessedness will gently bring the other nations to the true religion. Will Israel's blessedness one day really attain such potency? Yes; each fruitful season is a guarantee of this. Comp. the lovely picture of the 'Messianic' period, when spiritual and material blessings shall be poured out in equal abundance, in lxxxv. 11–13. The psalm consists of three strophes, the second and third of which have an *initial* refrain (see on Pss. lix., lxii.) In *v.* 2 *a* and *b* there is an echo of the first two parts of the priestly blessing (Num. vi. 24, 25).

2 Elohim be gracious unto us and bless us,
  and cause his face to shine upon us,
3 That thy way may be known upon earth,
  even thy salvation among all nations.

4 Let the peoples give thanks unto thee, O God;
  let the peoples all of them give thanks unto thee.
5 Let the nations rejoice with ringing cries,
  for thou wilt judge the peoples in equity,
  and lead the nations upon earth.

6 Let the peoples give thanks unto thee, O God,
  let the peoples all of them give thanks unto thee.

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7 The earth has yielded her increase;
may Jehovah, our own God, bless us.
8 May God bless us;
and let all the ends of the earth fear him.

PSALM LXVIII.

A PATRIOTIC and religious ode of wondrous range and compass and in the grandest style. So full is it of reminiscences of other psalms (not to claim *allusions* to Habakkuk and II. Isaiah), that we cannot help referring it to the post-Exile period. But to which part of that period of periods? It were hopeless to justify a single view here; much less to examine the many theories which have been proposed, and which make Ps. lxviii., in Reuss' words, 'ein Denkmal exegetischer Noth und Kunst.' Elaborately artistic as the poem may be, how strong is the lyric emotion which pervades the whole, and makes it live! All the feelings, recollections, hopes, and anticipations of the age have found in it an adequate expression. Bishop Alexander has given a fine rendering of this psalm, in the variable measure of an English 'ode,' in his *Poems* (1886); which, however, I was unable to consult. Marot's version, beginning, 'Que Dieu se montre seulement,' was known among the Huguenots as the 'song of battles,' and the *Exsurgat Deus* was chanted by Savonarola and his brother-monks as they marched to the trial of fire in the Piazza of Florence.

2 Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered,
and let them that hate him flee before him.
3 Like a drift of smoke, so mayest thou drive them:
as wax melts before the fire,
so perish the ungodly at the presence of Elohim!
4 But let the righteous rejoice and triumph before Jehovah,
let them be merry and joyful.
5 Sing unto God, make melody unto his name,
cast up a way for him who rides through the deserts,
bless his name, and triumph before him—
6 Who is a father of the orphans, and an advocate of the widows,
even God in his holy mansion,—
7 God, who makes the desolate to return home,
who brings forth the prisoners into prosperity,
the rebellious notwithstanding dwell in a parched land.

8 O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people,
when thou marchedst through the wilderness,
9 The earth did quake, the heavens also dropped,
at God's presence yonder Sinai [shook],
at the presence of Jehovah, Israel's God.
10 A liberal rain didst thou shed, O God,
upon thine inheritance [so weary] and fainting,
thou didst restore [the dry land].

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11 Thine army dwelt therein :
in thy goodness, O God, thou preparedst for the poor.

12 The Lord gives the word :
the heraldesses of victory are a great host.
13 Kings of hosts flee—they flee,
and she that has tarried at home divides the spoil.
14 Will ye lie among the sheepfolds ?
The wings of a dove that is covered with silver,
and her feathers with green-shimmering gold.
15 [For full is our land of spoil,]
when Shaddai scatters kings therein,
[as the snow, when] it snows on Salmon.

16 A mountain of Elohim is the mountain of Bashan,
a mountain with peaks is the mountain of Bashan.
17 Why look ye askance, ye mountains with peaks,
on the mount which God has desired to dwell in ?
yea, Jehovah will abide there for ever.
18 The chariots of God are myriads twice-told, thousands upon thousands ;
the Lord hath come from Sinai into the sanctuary.
19 Thou hast gone up to the high mount to abide ;
O Jah, thou hast carried away captives, thou hast received gifts among men, yea, even among the rebellious.

20 Blessed be the Lord !
day by day he bears us—
even the God who is our salvation.
21 God is unto us divine in saving acts ;
yea, unto Jehovah belong escapes from Death.
22 Surely Elohim will shatter the head of his enemies,
the longhaired crown of the head of him who goes on in his sins.
23 The Lord said, I will bring (them) back from Bashan,
I will bring (them) back from the ocean-gulfs,
24 That thou mayest wash thy foot in blood,
that the tongue of thy dogs may have its portion from the enemies.

25 They have seen thy progress, O God,
the progress of my God, my King, into the sanctuary.
26 Singers went before, minstrels followed after,
in the midst of damsels playing on timbrels.
27 'In full choirs bless ye Elohim,
even the Lord from the fountain of Israel.'
28 Then went little Benjamin before,

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the chiefs of Judah in its bands,
the chiefs of Zebulun, the chiefs of Naphtali.

29 Command thy strength, O God;
show thyself strong, O God, thou who (before) hast wrought for us.
30 From thy temple above Jerusalem
kings shall (then) bring presents unto thee.
31 Rebuke thou the wild beast of the reeds,
the troop of bulls, of lords of peoples,
that rolls itself in mire for gain of money;
scatter thou the peoples that delight in wars.
32 (Then) shall they come in haste out of Egypt,
quickly shall Ethiopia stretch out her hands unto God.

33 O kingdoms of the earth, sing ye unto God,
make ye melody unto the Lord,
34 (Sing) unto him that rideth through the ancient heavens of heavens;
behold, he uttereth his voice, and that a mighty voice.
35 Ascribe unto Jehovah strength which sheltereth Israel,
(unto him) whose majesty and strength are in the skies.

36 Terrible is Jehovah ruling from his sanctuary,
—he is the God of Israel:
Strength and mightiness he giveth to his people,
—blessed be God.

2–7 A prayer for deliverance, which almost rises into prophecy, so fervent is its emotion. Then, in calmer tones, a summons to Israel to prepare joyously for the Deliverer.

2 **Let God arise,** &c. The chant with which the ark set forward in the wilderness (Num. x. 35).

3 They shall be scattered, when God arises, like smoke-wreaths; they shall melt like wax; nay more (for these figures might merely signify flight, 1 Sam. xi. 11, xiv. 16), they shall perish. The **ungodly** are opposed to the **righteous** (*v.* 4); i.e. foreigners to Israelites; see on ix. 5, lviii. 11, and cf. Hab. i. 13, ii. 4, iii. 13 (see above).

5 **Cast up a way,** as pioneers for a royal progress—an allusion to Isa. xl. 3. There, however, the 'desert' in the singular is mentioned; here it is 'deserts.' No single 'desert' is referred to; it is a characteristic of Jehovah to make royal progresses alike in the vast expanse above (*v.* 34), and in those great desert regions in which His people twice learned a lesson of faith in Him. When Israel is in affliction, it seems as if Jehovah had retired to the desert. He hears His people's cry, and then, as Habakkuk says, 'Eloah cometh from Teman, and the Holy One from mount Paran' (Hab. iii. 3).—**Bless his name.** The text has, 'In Jah is his name.'

6 But dare the Israelites rejoice? True, they are 'righteous' (*v.* 4); but as yet they share the fate of 'orphans' and 'widows' (x. 14; cf. xciv. 6). Still let them rejoice; for God is a righteous though long-suffering judge (Luke xviii. 7, R.V.),

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and, like the importunate widow in the parable, orphaned and widowed Israel shall come to her 'rights.' Jehovah 'prepared' for the 'poor' in former troubles; is he not already 'preparing' now? Is he not safe from attack himself in his **holy mansion,** and able as willing to fight for Israel (these ideas are suggested by the phrase; see on xxii. 4, xciii. 4, 5)? The heavenly and not the earthly temple is meant (Hitzig, Hupfeld, and Delitzsch); see Deut. xxvi. 15, Jer. xxv. 30, Zech. ii. 13. He looks down thence upon the children of men, and is about to speak; 'hush before him' (Hab. ii. 20, Zeph. i. 7).

7 Here type is exchanged for allegory. The psalmist looks back on the two great Returns, that from Egypt and that from Babylon. (I suppose there is no doubt that he would have regarded Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as the founders of the 'home' in Canaan; cf. Ps. cv.) —— **A parched land** is not the desert (?) of Sinai, where so many Israelites perished, but a figurative expression for a land without the spiritual and material blessings showered by Jehovah upon His faithful ones; cf. lxiii. 2*c*, Isa. lxv. 11–14. 'Imprisonment' (**prisoners**) is an allegory for the manifold afflictions of 'captivity' (cf. cii. 20, and see on lxvi. 11); hence its opposite is 'prosperity.' 'Isolation' (**desolate**) expresses the want of friendly sympathy and aid so painfully felt by the Jewish exiles and by the Maccabean patriots (see, for the expression, xxv. 16, and for the idea cii. 7, 8, xliv. 14, 17). The text-reading of line 1 is rendered, 'God setteth the solitary in families' (A.V. and R.V.; cf. cxiii. 9). This gives an excellent antithesis, but is not in perfect harmony with the context, which requires an allegorical description of the change which a divine deliverance produces in the circumstances of Israel. The 'family' of Israel did not cease to exist when expatriated; the sentence in A.V., however fine, is not in point here. We might of course take the participle in a pregnant sense, 'brings the solitary ones home and causes them to dwell there;' but this is arbitrary. Isa. lviii. 7 (compared by Hupfeld and others) gives no help. See crit. note. —— **The rebellious,** i.e. those Israelites who 'take another (god) in exchange' (xvi. 4), and shut themselves out from the 'covenant of promise' (Isa. lxv., lxvi.) For another use of the phrase, see *v.* 19*c*.

8–19 Is this confidence presumptuous? No; Jehovah has already given an example of his willingness and ability to save. The deliverance from Egypt is a foreshadowing of deliverances to come. The poet sketches successively the journey through the wilderness, the conquest of Canaan, and the occupation of Mount Zion by the great King.

8, 9 Amidst signs and wonders, Jehovah leads forth his people from Sinai, not (according to this picture) from Egypt, as Grill and Bertheau would have it. Comp. Deut. xxxiii. 2, Hab. iii. 3, and especially Judg. v. 4, 5, from which passage in fact these verses are freely quoted, and which also enables us to supply the indispensable word 'shook.' I have also ventured to emend 'Elohim' into **Jehovah** in *v.* 8*c*, as in xliii. 4, for the sake of sense (so Judg. v. 5).

10, 11 A poetic view of the origin of Canaan's extraordinary fertility. The storm which marked the appearance of Jehovah was not confined to Mount Sinai, and the heavy rain, endued with supernatural power,[1] transformed the parched land of Canaan into a 'garden of Jehovah.' It had not been so in the times of the patriarchs; such at least was the poet's fancy. Perhaps he even thought of Gen. xlvii. 13, where the land of

[1] Delitzsch, however, explains 'a liberal rain' of 'the abundance of gifts which God rained down upon Canaan after Israel's entrance.'

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Canaan (as well as that of Egypt) is said to have 'fainted' by reason of famine. Thus a gracious God 'prepared' (cf. lxv. 11) for His people. This seems to me the worthiest explanation, though the difficulties of the passage must be frankly confessed. **Thine army,** in particular, is a doubtful rendering; חַיָּה only occurs once[1] in this sense, 2 Sam. xxiii. 13, and the chronicler substitutes for it the better known word מחנה (1 Chr. xi. 15). Still it is a genuine old Hebrew word, and the Karaite Arabic translator Yepheth has set a good example by rendering *'askarka* 'thine army.' Rashi and Ibn Ezra give a slightly different version (Rashi, עדתך; Ibn Ezra, קהלתך), and from them comes A.V.'s rendering, 'thy congregation.' I should prefer 'thy family;' cf. חֵי, 1 Sam. xviii. 18; 'congregation' says too much. But 'family' is less supported than 'army,' and is less suitable as a designation of Israel. The alternative is to render 'thy living creatures' (taking the singular as a collective, or pointing as a plural). The Heb. *khayyah* (strictly, 'something alive') generally means 'a wild beast' (or 'wild beasts'), and Israel is only compared, from the point of view of its religious position, to tame animals (see on cxi. 5); in Lev. xi. 10, however, it is used in a wide sense of animals of all kinds except man, and why should it not once be used of man? To be Nature's 'dearest living creatures' is a title of honour according to Dante (*Purg.* xxix. 137, 138); why not according to the psalmist? The early Israelites looked to Jehovah for life and food and protection, and without Him the powers of the world would have crushed them. This course is at any rate not more violent than explaining *khayyah* of the quails referred to in lxxviii. 27, 28, Ex. xvi. 13. It commends itself to most of those commentators who take *v.* 11 to refer, not to Canaan, but to the wilderness, interpreting 'thine inheritance' of the people of Israel (as xxviii. 9, lxxviii. 71, and often), and 'a liberal rain' (or, 'a rain of gifts') of the manna (cf. lxxviii. 24, Ex. xvi. 4, but see the Hebrew). Of course the words supplied in. *v.* 10*c* will have to be dropped, with this result, that בָּהּ 'therein' is without a feminine noun to refer to ('therein' surely cannot mean 'in the midst of Israel, thine inheritance'—Hupfeld's view). As I have said, the first view set forth above, which is substantially that of the foremost commentators, commends itself most to me, on the supposition that the text is free from material corruption. That view is not dependent on the accuracy of the words supplied (after Bickell) in *v.* 10*b*, *c*. We may (if we think the construction a natural one) grammatically render, after 'thine inheritance,' 'and when it was fainting, thou hast restored it' (i.e. we may take *v.* 10*b* to refer to Canaan, and *v.* 10*c* to refer to Israel), and continue 'thine army (or, thy living creatures) dwelt in the desert' (taking בה to be the first and last letters of בציה—the middle letters having become obliterated; cf. Merx, *Hiob*, pp. liv.–lvi.)——**Didst restore.** Or, if this sense be confined to persons, 'didst set in order,' 'didst prepare.'

12 Here begins a scene, described in vivid historical presents, from the early wars of Israel with the kings of Canaan. But what is this **word?** Is it a creative 'fiat' issuing in victory (cf. lxxvii. 9, where אֹמֶר = the self-fulfilling word of divine promise, but not Hab. iii. 9, which is too corrupt)? Or is it the song of victory (cf. Gen. xlix. 10 in the pointed text)? Or is it either the summons to the fray—the battle-note—or (the view to which I lean myself) the watchword (cf. Judg. vii. 18, 20)?——**The**

[1] In 2 Sam. xxiii. 11 we should certainly read לֶחָיָה 'to Lehi;' see Variorum Bible.

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heraldesses proclaim the news of victory in all parts of the land; or (if 'word' = song) chant an ἐπινίκιον like Miriam (Ex. xv. 20, 21; cf. Judg. v., 1 Sam. xviii. 6, 7), of which *vv.* 14, 15 are, as Ewald thinks, a fragment (why not also *v.* 13?)

13 **Flee—they flee.** So Judg. v. 22, 'the pransings—the pransings.'——**Divides the spoil,** viz. such as had fallen to the husband as his portion (cf. Judg. v. 30).

14 The two images in this verse are clear enough; the difficulty lies in the connexion. 'Lying among the sheepfolds' is a current phrase for a quiet country life (Gen. xlix. 14, Judg. v. 16); the brilliant hues of the dove's wings are an emblem of the rich clothing of some undetermined person or persons. The latter image is noteworthy from the keen appreciation which it displays of the effects of light. Seen in the bright glow of the sun's slanting rays, the outspread wings of a dove might fitly be described as 'yellow gold;' then, when the bird has wheeled round, and is seen against the light, they might as fitly be called 'molten silver.'[1] But what can be made of the connexion of the images? Some regard the verse as an address of the women to the men, depicting the happiness which Israel will so soon enjoy again in pastoral life (taking the initial particle אִם in a temporal sense, 'when ye lie . . . (Israel shall be) as the wings of a dove,' &c.) The objection is twofold: 1, that this particle (properly 'put the case that') never quite loses a hypothetical tinge; and 2, that if *vv.* 8, 9 are a free quotation from Judg. v. 4, 5, it is probable that this verse contains more than an allusion to Judg. v. 16. (That there is at least an allusion, will be admitted; but if there is any connexion between the two passages it is probably a closer one than is implied in this slender admission.) Grant that it *is* more than allusion, and the initial particle becomes, not a conjunction, but an interrogative (corresponding to 'why' in Judg. v. 16), and the whole line is an exhortation to the men of those more distant parts to which the 'heraldesses' have gone (see above) to be up and doing, and join in the pursuit of the fugitives. But how, upon this view of line 1, shall we connect it with lines 2 and 3? Various answers have been given. Herder, for instance, takes lines 2 and 3 as an exclamation; one shepherd admiringly points out to another the lovely wings of the dove for want of anything better to do. How idyllic! But why did not the poet continue his quotation, adding from Judg. v. 'to hear the bleatings of the flocks'? Grill thinks that 'the wings of a dove,' &c. = 'see how they fly—the doves with gorgeous wings' (i.e. the richly clothed enemies), comparing for the construction Nah. i. 15 (Heb. ii. 1). But would this remark inspire the sluggish with zeal to join in the pursuit? Is not the dove elsewhere an emblem of swiftness in flight (lv. 7)? All such theories attempt too much. Why should there be so close a connexion between line 1 and lines 2 and 3? If line 1 is taken from one old poem why should not lines 2 and 3 (which are not a complete clause in themselves) be quoted from another, entirely unconnected with the first? For instance, they might be extracted from a song in praise of some Hebrew lady. In the Song of Songs, a bride's eyes are compared to doves' eyes (Cant. i. 15, iv. 1; comp. v. 12); why should not her dress be compared to a dove's wings transfigured by the eastern sun, according to Miss Whately's description? Of course it is possible that the song also explained how the bride got this rich dress, viz. from her heroic bridegroom (comp. Judg. v. 30, 2 Sam. i. 24). But what sense does the fragment

[1] I borrow from Miss Whately's *Ragged Life in Egypt.* Thomson's explanation (*The Land and the Book*, p. 271) shows no poetic feeling.

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bear in its new position? May not the dove, to the psalmist as well as to the later poets (פיטנים), symbolise the people of Israel[1] (see lvi. 1, title, in Heb.; lxxiv. 19, 'thy turtle-dove;' Hos. vii. 11, xi. 11; and cf. Dr. C. H. H. Wright, *Biblical Essays*, p. 45)? Through cloud and storm that 'dove' has passed, and now suns itself in the light of prosperity. There may also be an allusion to the rich garments and jewellery in the spoil, which of course were not coveted by women alone (cf. Josh. vii. 21, Judg. viii. 24, 26).

15 Still a heavy stress upon the interpreter. First of all, is **therein** correct? Is the view implied in the punctuation of בה to be endorsed? A mere glance at the second line shows that it is too short. Something must have dropped out, and of this 'something' בה may be a surviving fragment (see crit. note). To me, however, line 1 seems to read better if the received view be retained. Possibly this couplet too is more or less a quotation from an old song in which 'the land' (viz. Canaan) had just before been referred to (or else a line or two has dropped out of our psalm, just before *v.* 15). Next, what are we to make of the second line in the received text, which runs, 'it snowed on Salmon'? What is Salmon? There was a small mountain of this name near Shechem (Judg. ix. 48). In the Talmuds too the name occurs frequently, but, as Neubauer says,[2] without topographical data. May there not have been several mountains called Salmon ('dark'), either from their dark forest covering (cf. Schwarzwald) or the black rocks of their geological formation? The mountain-range of Haurân is called in Ptolemy's Geography Asalmanos (v.l. Alsalamos, and Alsadamos). It is at least possible that this has arisen out of the name *çalmân* = *çalmon*, and in this case *v.* 15 leads on naturally to the next verse. Hermon, at any rate, is not to be thought of; the name would be inappropriate, and Hermon was not really on Israelitish territory.[3] But why should it be said that 'it snowed on Salmon'? The usual reply is that it is a condensed phrase meaning 'it was like a snowfall on Mount Salmon,' alluding either to the bleached bones of the slain (cf. Virg. *Æn.* v. 865, xii. 36) or to the glistening armour which has been dropped by the fugitives (cf. Hom. *Il.* xix. 357–361). But (1) there is no parallel for such a condensed phrase in the psalm, and (2) we want some distinct reference to bones or to armour in the context. Olshausen would emend 'it snowed' into 'as the snow.' Bickell with good reason prefers to lengthen the line, so as to render 'as the snow when there is a snowfall on Salmon.' If we may follow him in supposing a line relative to booty to have dropped out before *v.* 15, or to have existed in the original from which our poet quotes (see above), no further objection can be raised. Certainty is unattainable, but the probability of an approximate restoration is great.—— **Shaddai.** A primitive name of God (see on xci. 1).

16 Perhaps another quotation from an old song, expressing the popular veneration for the Bashan-mountains. The original context may well have referred to Israel's victories over Og. The mountain-god was unable to protect his worshippers from Jehovah's army. **A mountain of Elohim** may mean (like 'mountains of El,' xxxvi. 7) one which seemed in a special de-

[1] See the old poem, founded on the Midrashic interpretation of the Song of Songs, in the Jewish Passover Service (De Sola's ed., p. 97, &c.), and cf. M. Sachs' lines, 'Du wirst, mein Volk, der Taube gleich genannt,' *Stimmen vom Jordan und Euphrat*, i. 91.

[2] Neubauer, *La géographie du Talmud*, p. 275.

[3] Hermon is called in Arabic 'the Old Man's Mountain,' and 'the Snow Mountain.' The suggestion of the Haurân is Wetzstein's in an *Anhang* to Delitzsch's *Psalmen*.

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gree to show forth creative power; or possibly one which possessed divine sanctuaries (so Baudissin, *Studien*, ii. 255), like Carmel and Hermon. Grill, in fact, finds a reference to Hermon, which has at any rate three summits, and is therefore called 'Hermonim' in xlii. 7. The objection is that Hermon was not a 'mountain of Bashan' (see Deut iii. 8, iv. 48). The only 'mountain of Bashan' to which the title 'many-peaked' can be applied, is the range of the Haurân. One of its highest summits is called Guwelîn, which by an ingenious linguistic argument Wetzstein brings into connexion with the *gabhnōn* ('peaked') of the psalm, and explains as meaning 'gabled;' *har gabhnunnīm* he renders, not 'das kuppenreiche,' but 'das giebelreiche Gebirge'—a picturesque description of the crater formations of this highly volcanic region (cf. Baedeker-Socin, *Palästina*, p. 431). Cf. Aquila, ὄρη ὠφρυωμένα (like ὀφρυόεις, Herod. v. 92); Duport, Βασάνοιο ὄρος πολυδειράδος.

17 Much might seem to plead for the selection of a site for the sanctuary in Bashan, whose grand mountain range had as it were been consecrated through having witnessed the early victories of Israel. But from the first Jehovah 'chose the weak things of the world to confound the mighty.'

18 By a poetic license the beginning and the end of Jehovah's 'march' (*v.* 8) are combined. Attended, we are told, by a vast army, He transfers his throne from Sinai to the true sanctuary. The **chariots** are those of the heavenly host (see 2 Kings ii. 11, vi. 17, and cf. Deut. xxxii. 2). Comp. Milton's

chariots wing'd
From th' armoury of God, where stand of old
Myriads, &c.

The latter part of both lines is uncertain; 'thousands of repetition' seems a forced expression, and 'into the sanctuary' makes the second line very bald. But if Ps. lxviii. is a late poem, a deviation from naturalness need not surprise us, and the baldness of line 2 is caused by the introduction of a quotation (from Deut. xxxiii. 2) which left but little space to fill up. The text, however, has, 'the Lord is among them, Sinai is in the sanctuary;' i.e. the presence of Jehovah and His angels makes Sion a second Sinai, or, as Merrick (1766) puts it—

And Israel views within her shrine
(Blest seat of majesty divine)
The scene that erst his tribes beheld
On Sinai's mystic top reveal'd.[1]

19 A fuller description of Jehovah's victory. The high mount, lit. the height, is, not heaven (against this, see on vii. 8), but Mount Zion (as vii. 8; cf. Jer. xxxi. 12, Ezek. xvii. 23, xx. 40). This favoured mount Jehovah ascends **to abide** (a word constantly used of Jehovah's earthly habitations), and carries with him the **captives** of his resistless arm, and the tribute which he received **among men**, i.e. on the field of battle. (Less probable is Ewald's view that 'captives' and 'gifts' both refer to persons, viz. to enemies who have surrendered of themselves; cf. Isa. xlv. 14. This view requires us to render 'of men,' i.e. consisting of men.) The **rebellious** are the neighbouring peoples who have heard of Jehovah's terrible prowess. The received text has one great difficulty; it places the words 'to abide, Jehovah' at the end of the verse (adding 'Elohim,' which is most probably due to the Elohistic reviser). The last line thus becomes either, 'and even the rebellious shall abide (see Gesenius, *Grammar*, § 132, n. 1) with Jah Elohim' (i.e. as his guests; see on v. 5), or, 'and even of the rebellious, that Jah Elohim may abide there.'

[1] Unimportant modifications of the exegesis will be caused if, with Hitzig, Ewald, and Kay, we render *bakkōdesh* 'in holiness.' Hitzig, rendering 'vom Sinai unnahbar,' compares lxxvii. 14.

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The first rendering is supported by tradition (see Targ. and Theodoret's comment on the Greek), but is against the line of thought; the second entirely breaks both rhythm and logical connexion.

20–24 Here, with a benediction, a fresh strain begins. Strengthened in his faith by the foregoing pictures of the past, the poet throws himself into the interests and prospects of the present. Jehovah is not poorer in resources than of old; he will again prove his might. Indeed, he has himself promised to bring the scattered Israelites home, and show them his awful revenge on their foes.

20 **Day by day,** i.e. now as of old.——**Bears us,** as a shepherd (cf. xxviii. 9, Isa. xl. 11). So Hupfeld, with Aq., Symm., and St. Jerome. Or, 'bears our burdens' (lit. for us), as Ewald, Delitzsch, and Grill.

21 **From Death.** Buchanan finely—

Irremeabilis Orci
Unus claustra tenes

(cf. 1 Sam. ii. 6, Rev. i. 18), implying (1) that Death = Sheól, (2) that 'of Death' is the right rendering. The position of the words in the Hebrew is against (2), but (1) certainly adds force to the passage (see on vi. 5).

22 A reminiscence of Num. xxiv. 17 in its original form (see Variorum Bible). Cf. Judg. v. 26, Hab. iii. 13, 14. Hair, the symbol of strength and pride (cf. Deut. xxxii. 42, R.V. marg.)

23 A divine oracle either freshly granted to the psalmist (see on lxii. 12), or, more probably, quoted from some earlier work. The mountains of Bashan, with their lofty peaks, and secluded woodland glens, shall not be too high, nor the ocean-gulfs too deep, for Jehovah to bring back from them—whom? The scattered Israelites, or the fugitive enemies? Either alternative will suit the context; but the former compels us to limit the oracle to *v.* 23. In favour of the latter, Am. ix. 3 has been quoted. It must be remembered, however, that the shepherd-prophet is not speaking of heathen enemies, but of Israelites who had fallen away, and might poetically be described as hiding themselves in the top of Carmel or the bottom of the sea. Looking at *v.* 23 by itself, one must incline to prefer the former view. 'I will bring (them) back,' if interpreted in the light of Hebrew usage, can only mean, 'I will bring my scattered people back.' (Possibly 'Bashan' may allude to some circumstances of the time of which we are ignorant.)

24 One of the grounds for the restoration of Israel announced in the foregoing oracle, according to the psalmist. Cf. lviii. 11, and see crit. note.

25-28 With an access of strong church feeling, the psalmist describes a recent religious procession, which was accompanied, as he believes, like the hosts of Israel under Moses, by Jehovah himself. There must have been something specially striking about this procession, but our ignorance of the circumstances of the psalmist's time prevents us from saying what it was. At any rate the psalmist has no doubt that it has been well-pleasing to Jehovah, and that it may rightly be called 'the progress of my God, my King, into the sanctuary.' Some think a triumphal procession is referred to; but seeing that the psalmist repeatedly supplicates a divine interposition, this can hardly be right. Nor can we evade this objection by interpreting the passage either of some ancient triumph, such as the conquest of Canaan, or of the great act of redemption for which the poet longs. Israel's part is exhaustively treated in the first part of the psalm; only four of the tribes take part in the procession; and nothing indicates that the poet has passed in prophetic ecstasy into future times.

25 **They have seen.** Who? The answer depends on what is meant by 'thy goings,' or 'pro-

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