

THE PSALMS AS LITERATURE

(presumably) and especially by seniority and sex, admirably fitted to sustain in song the fatherly admonition contained in the specified verses—all the more completely seeing that the proposed moving up of this musical line would bring maidens along with the old men! The steps by which this conclusion was reached may be more suitably indicated in our Chapter III.—The Psalms as a Liturgy.

CHAPTER TWO

THE PSALMS AS LYRICS

Inasmuch as Lyrics are a species of poetry, we may perhaps usefully tarry on the genus before we advance to the species. It will be rendering a service to young and inexperienced readers of the Psalms to emphasise the elementary fact that first of all the Psalms are poetry. We can then all the better consider them as lyrical poetry, fitted for song and for instrumental accompaniment.

1. That the Psalms are poetry, will be a familiar thought to all who have observed how much fervour and passion there is in them; and how, as a consequence, they abound in figures of speech. It would be enough to leave this element in their composition to be felt, without being formally recognised, were it not that the untrained reader is apt either to make no allowance for poetical license, or else to give up sober interpretation as hopeless. To save him from such uncertainty and helplessness, it may be serviceable to remind him that a statement may be substantially true even when not literally exact; that figures of speech have a natural meaning of their own, and are current coin in literature; that a poet may be a prophet and teacher with a burden to deliver and solemnly lay on the hearts of those to whom he is sent; and that we cannot with impunity close our ears to his message merely because it is enlivened with metaphors or even clothed in allegory.

At this point we may strike in with a few detailed exemplifications of figurative language to be found in the Psalms: on which, however, we cannot tarry—the young student may safely be left to multiply examples and amplify them for himself.

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As to *allegory*: it is perhaps well that this figure of speech is not much employed in the Psalms, as undoubtedly it may easily be abused by the too luxuriant imagination of the reader. But, if an allegory is "a description of one thing under the image of another," then it is obvious that we have an allegory in Ps. 80, in which Israel is represented under the image of a Vine. If *climax* is "a rising like the steps of a ladder or stair," then we discover a very striking example of this in 40:1-3. If *irony* is "a mode of speech conveying the opposite of what is meant," then instances of this may be seen in 115, 135. "I am like a flourishing olive-tree in the house of God" (52:8) being a formal comparison, "they who are planted in the house of Jehovah" is an implied comparison, or a *metaphor*; and metaphors abound, as where the throat is called a sepulchre (5:9), the tongue is termed a weaver's loom (50:19), or righteousness and peace are said to kiss each other (85:10). *Metonymy*, or a change of name, is very frequent; as where Jehovah is termed "a crag," "a stronghold," "a rock," "a shield" (18:2). The rather similar figure of *synecdoche*, by which a part is made to comprehend the whole, is every now and then employed; as where "tongue" stands for the man who wickedly uses it (52:4). Of course *personification* abounds; as where lute and lyre are summoned to awake (57:8), or earth is said to be afraid (76:8), prayer is described as a worshipper (88:13), or the plain is said to exult, the trees of the forest to ring out their joy (96:12), and the streams to clap their hands (98:8). Of course, also, *hyperbole* is not infrequent, literally going beyond the truth, exaggeration; as where the joyful psalmist declares that he will awaken the dawn (57:8).

Halfway between figures of speech and lyrical measure stands that largely looming method of speech called parallelism which so abounds in the Psalms as to be worthy of special attention. It may perhaps be most simply explained as the saying of the same thing twice over in parallel ways. This definition, however, must be extended by the further statement, that parallelism includes a similarity of manner in saying different things which distinctly carry forward the thought: perhaps the two phrases, "parallel statements," and "parallel methods of statement," cover the ground—at least with sufficient adequacy for the present. A curious thing about Hebrew parallelism is, that,

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while it is of the greatest service to the expositor—and therefore also to the ordinary reader who takes care to observe and comprehend it—it is the despair of English metrical-versionists, who with one mouth declare that this it is which baffles them in the endeavour to preserve Hebrew parallelism intact under the restraints of English metre and rhyme. Perhaps, however, in the future they may succeed where in the past they have failed.

While we would beware of mapping out more ground than we can usefully cover, we cannot resist the temptation to endeavour to present the whole scheme of the various forms of Hebrew Parallelism in one view; and though we may not have much further use for some of the details, yet this synopsis, it is believed, will serve to refresh the memories of such readers as may have forgotten the distinction *e.g.*, between synonymous and synthetic parallelism—with which technical terms, and others similar, they may meet in the course of the following Expositions.

It may be said at the outset that the key to parallelism is the resolving of the solid Hebrew text into *lines*. Let any student, who cares to begin here, first look at the closely massed Hebrew text of (say) Bagster's Polyglot, and then survey the same text (substantially) as set forth in lines in Ginsburg's Hebrew Bible. He will not only be struck with the difference as attractive to the eye, but will be delighted to perceive what a large contribution has thereby been made towards the perception of the sense of the text. He may not, as he advances in critical culture, always remain satisfied with the length of the lines as set before him,—he may sometimes desire that a word be taken back from one line and attached to the previous, or *vice-versa*; or he may occasionally prefer that two lines be run on into one, whereas at other times he may prefer that the opposite method of rearrangement be followed by the breaking up of one line into two: all the same, the predominant feeling will be—that a promising start has been made on a path of progress.

Now it is the *interrelation* of the lines, as thus explained, which reveals different kinds of parallelism. These are due to the operation of the following simple principles; namely—repetition, variation, advancement, adornment, return, contrast, and reply. We must not be tempted to do more than refer to an example of each of these. But first let us see how they work out.

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Mere repetition	yields	a. emphatic parallelism
Repetition with variation	"	b. synonymous "
Mere advance	"	c. synthetic "
Repetition with advance	"	d. stairlike "
Repetition with adornment	"	e. emblematic "
Advance with contrast	"	f. antithetic "
Advance with return	"	g. introverted "
Appeal with reply	"	h. responsory "

EXAMPLES

a. Emphatic—118:10-12	e. Emblematic—37:1, 2, 63:1
b. Synonymous—2:1, 2:3	f. Antithetic—1:6, 11:5
c. Synthetic—2:2	g. Introverted—80:10, 11
d. Stairlike—77:1, 11, 16	h. Responsory—115:9-11

2. That the Psalms are *lyric* poetry will appear as soon as the two features in them are observed—first, that they best appear in measured lines, and secondly that they are intrinsically fitted for song. “Lyric (from the Greek *lyra*, a lyre)” is “the name given to a certain species of poetry because it was originally accompanied by the music of that instrument. Lyric poetry concerns itself with the thoughts and emotions of the composer’s own mind, and outward things are regarded chiefly as they affect him in any way. Hence it is characterised as *subjective*, in contradistinction to epic poetry, which is *objective*. Purely lyrical pieces are, from their nature, shorter than epics. They fall into several divisions, the most typical of which is the *song*, which is again subdivided into *sacred* (hymns) and *secular* (love-songs, war-songs, etc.)” It will be seen from this, that, while most of the Psalms are strictly lyrical, some of them (such as 78, 105, 106), both by reason of their length and from the nature of their contents, approach the epic; though even these are sufficiently regular in their measure and devotional in their setting to cause them to differ but little, save in their length, from lyrical pieces; it being easy to conceive of them as chanted if not sung; whereas, on the other hand, the longest of all the psalms, the 119th, by reason of its intensely subjective character, is not at all an epic; rather is it a lyrical dirge—lyrical, because well measured off into lines and stanzas, and a dirge by reason of the lingering cadence of its lines and the pervading pensiveness of its strains. Call it what we may, it is a wonderful triumph of poetic art. Its very monotony becomes a devo-

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tional lullaby, subduing the troubled soul to rest; while at the same time, its microscopic and never-ending variations more and more please as the spirit of the worshipper becomes whetted to perceive their kaleidoscopic beauties.

I. THE CREATION OF THE PSALMS AS LYRICS

The musical measuring of the Psalms grows upon us as we investigate it: on the one hand throwing us back on the inquiry—How far we are indebted to the experimental sounds of the instrument for suggesting the appropriate words; and, on the other hand, urging us forward to discover, if we can—How far the *sounds* were fixed, and the *words* pliable in their adaptation thereto; or the words were fixed, and demanded of the sounds the pliability needful to bring the words well out in song.

A. The *Musical Origin* of the Psalms.—There is more evidence than has received adequate attention, that but for the LYRE we might never have had LYRICS; in other words, that but for the art of sweeping the strings which we call *psallein* ("psalming") we might never have had in our hands the poetic products which we call *psalmoi* ("psalms"). It is, at least, significant of some profound connection between melody and inspiration, that, when the prophet Elisha was requested to give guidance to the two Kings of Israel and Judah, he felt his need of the service of a minstrel before he could give the desired reply (2 K. 3:15); and equally suggestive, that when, in a given instance (Ps. 49), the psalmist was being moved to ponder and pronounce upon one of the profounder mysteries of Providence, he should plainly enough indicate that he had more hope of unfolding his "enigma" by the help of his lyre than without its genial aid. And it is not without suggestiveness of a like kind that when the psalmist desired in his joy to awaken the dawn he felt impelled first to summon lute and lyre to awaken that they might assist him in bringing to the birth his rousing songs.

B. The *Musical Measurement* of the Psalms in relation to *Criticism*.—The further question, as to the precise relation, in measurement, of sounds and sense, has a newly awakened interest in Biblical Criticism as concentrated on the Psalms. So little is known as to the ancient Temple music, that we have to proceed very cautiously. But the actual question before us assumes the following interesting and practical form: How far was harp-

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playing in the East elastic, in its readiness to adapt itself to lines and stanzas of varying lengths; or how far were stanza and metrical arrangements so rigid and imperative as to warrant our bringing under suspicion—as interpolations and corruptions—such irregularities as made lines and stanzas longer or shorter than usual? From the best information we have been able to procure—including the testimony of a friend who has travelled frequently and extensively in harp-playing countries,—we conclude that harp-playing shows ready elasticity, in accommodating itself to more or fewer words; and, on the whole, we feel ourselves to be justified in concluding that we are not warranted in freely and forcibly expanding or contracting lines and stanzas *merely* because rigid uniformity in the measures might appear to demand such modifications. In a word, without independent *confirmatory* evidence, we are not justified in pronouncing present words to be superfluous or absent words to be demanded. If a word or a line is found not only in the Hebrew but also in the ancient versions, we ought to be very sure of the imperious character of adverse internal evidence before we omit them; and *vice-versa*. Subject to these conditions, however, sober criticism need occasion no slavish fears.

C. The *Musical Measurement* of the Psalms in relation to *Metre*.—After the setting up of the foregoing land-marks, we need have no hesitation in affirming the existence in the Psalms of the kind of measurement which, notwithstanding any irregularities in it, may best be described by the familiar term *Metre*. By this is meant, not the rigid metre of English hymns, but the less exact measurement of lines which is based upon the beats of word-groups instead of mere syllables. An example will make the difference clear. The following is taken from Cassell's *Bible Educator*, Vol. II, p. 341: "Let us take the opening of the sublime Song of Moses at the end of the Book of Deuteronomy;—

Give-ear, O-ye-heavens, and-I-will-speak;
And-hear, O-earth, the-words-of-my-mouth.

"The hyphens are introduced to mark the phrases which represent one Hebrew term. The twofold symmetry of these lines must strike every ear. The second member is an echo of the first, both in thought and sound. And yet it is not a mere repetition of it. In the opposition of the earth to the sky, in the varied form of the prophet's appeal, where each term is different

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and yet makes a true balance to the corresponding term of the preceding line, we get all the charm of freshness and change. The dullest ear will perceive the rise and fall, the wave-like motion, which is essential to musical rhythm. Each sentence is contained in a line and ends with it. In other languages a fixed recurrence of feet or rhymed syllables would mark the conclusion of the verse. Here voice and sense pause together, and the ear is satisfied with this natural cadence, which is doubtless improved in the original by the equality of the words in the two parts of the verse."

In this example, two things will be observed: First, that the word-group beats are three to a line, rendering this a "trimeter" couplet; and second, that the equivalence of the sense in the two lines makes this a "synonymous" couplet—as to form, "trimeter"; as to sense, "synonymous." It may be seen in quotations from ancient Church writers in Julian's *Dictionary of Hymnology* that the "ancient trimeters" were still famous in sub-apostolic times. It is, in fact, the favorite measure employed in the Psalms; doubtless owing to the prevailing joyousness of the songs of Zion, and the ease with which this simple measure dances along in the expression of sacred gladness. From the "trimeters" as a starting-point, the reader can easily conceive how more stately tetrameters, and more pensive pentameters would be formed by the simple contrivance of running the word-groups into longer lines. It is, for example, partly by the lingering meditateness of Ps. 119 that any reader can easily see how the second half of Ps. 19 closely follows it.

II. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PSALMS AS LYRICS

(A) As our subsequent chapters will, in various ways, keep these characteristics well before us, we need not attempt more at present than to observe how far they are indicated by the descriptions which are found in superscribed lines. These may be arranged in the ascending order of their frequency.

- (1) *Tehillah*, "praise": title of 145—a psalm most worthy of the title, since it is purely and only "praise." From this, the whole book is named in Heb., *Tehillim*, "Praises."
- (2) *Shiggayon*, prob. "a discursive psalm" (title of Ps. 7), from *sh-g-h*, "to go astray." According to some: "a

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reel, a wild passionate song, with rapid changes of rhythm."—O.G.

- (3) *Tephillah*, "prayer," occurs 5 times, notably 90:1.
- (4) *Mikhtam*, possibly "tablet," 6 times.
- (5) *Maskil*, "instructive psalm," 13 times.
- (6) *Shir*, "song," 41 times.
- (7) *Mizmor*, "psalm," 57 times.

In 8 instances, the double description is prefixed—"a psalm, a song"; and, in 4 examples, the reverse—"a song, a psalm."

To these descriptive names we may add the catch-words, *bareki*, "bless thou," which commences 103, 104; and *hallelu*, "praise ye," which begins 18 psalms, namely:—105-107; 111-118; 135, 136; and 146-150. These are specified in full, as marking off the so-called "hallelujah" psalms, which we propose to call simply "hallels: selections from which are variously known as "the Egyptian Hallel" (113-118) and "the Great Hallel" (136).

It is obvious, therefore, that, for obtaining a general notion of the Psalms through this channel, the two chief names to consider are *shir*, "song," and *mizmor*, "psalm": to which can be added the "hallels," not as bearing a distinctive name, but by reason of their number and importance, and the facility with which they can be grouped. It should be remembered that a large number of psalms have no such descriptive headings.

SONG, Heb. *shir*, *shirah*, (Sep. *asma*): with which compare the verb *shir* (Sep. *aido*). The acceptable thing about "song" in this connection is, the clearness with which it connotes gladness; and thereby throws a bright gleam of joy across the entire Book of Psalms. If it were not enough to point to such examples as 28:7, 33:3, 40:3, 96:1, 2, 137:2, 3, 4 to shew that song-singing is at once a natural expression of joy and a signal for its renewed manifestation, we should still have the weighty testimony of the Proverbs (25:20) and the Prophets (Isa. 30:29, Amos 8:10) to set that simple matter at rest. Hence, because so many of the Psalms are strictly and properly "songs," we are warranted to expect a large element of thanksgiving, praise and expectation of blessing in the Psalter. It is observable that while we are frequently invited to "sing a new song," we are never called upon to sing a new psalm. Does this indicate that "songs" were

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more frequently *improvisations* than "psalms"; and, that after a song had been written and set to music it then became a psalm? We must not assume from this that a "song," as such, did not admit of musical accompaniment: the contrary is sufficiently shown by 21:13, 33:3, 68:4, 32, 105:2; 137:2, 3, cp. Isa. 23:16, Rev. 14:2, 3, 15:2, 3.

PSALM, Heb. *mizmor*, Sep. *psalmos*: cp. Heb. verb *zimmer* and Sep. *psallo*. "Psalm," unlike "song," does not necessarily carry with it the notion of joy, though it frequently does. It may be almost exclusively historical and hortatory: it may even be deeply penitential, and more or less mournful: yea, it may betray unbroken gloom, like 88, which, though a "psalm," is certainly no "song"; and we are glad by a readjustment of headlines to have been emboldened to remove the anomaly of so designating it. Another difference between "psalm" and "song" is, that whereas the latter does not in itself necessarily imply instrumental accompaniment, the former in "more exact usage" does. Thus Delitzsch says: "As Hupfeld has shown, *zimmer*, as being a direct onomatopoeic word, signifies, like *canere*, 'to make music' in the widest sense; the more exact usage of the language, however, distinguishes between *zimmer* and *shir* as 'to play' and 'to sing.' With *beth* (preposition) instrumental, *zimmer* signifies to sing with a musical accompaniment, and *zimrah* is occasionally, as in Amos 5:23, directly music, melody. Accordingly *mizmor* (= 'psalm) signifies technically, the piece of music, and *shir* . . . the words of the song" (Com. i 131, 132). Thus also Perowne (on Ps. 47:6, 7): "Make melody, or 'sing and play.' The word means both *to sing* and *to play*. The Sep., rightly, *psalate*." Kirkpatrick (Cambridge Bible) (same text): "The verb from which *mizmor* (= "psalm") is derived . . . appears originally to have meant *to make melody*, like the Lat. *canere*, but came to be applied specially to instrumental music, as distinguished from vocal music. *Mizmor* then means *a piece of music*, a song with instrumental accompaniment." The points of agreement which appear in these extracts should be noted. It is agreed that *zimmer* originally meant "to make melody," in the broadest sense; and it is then further agreed, that when *zimmer* was differentiated from *shir*, the former meant "to play" and the latter "to sing." Now it is the especial province of synonyms to differentiate; inasmuch as the broader meanings of words are thereby naturally shared with companion words set side by side with them for the purpose of bringing out the general sense.

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It is just at this point that a defect becomes observable in the Revised Version of the Psalms. The difference between *shir* and *zimmer* is not clearly and consistently maintained. The two words occur concurrently, as synonyms, in the following places:—21:13, 27:6, 57:7, 68:4, 68:30, 101:1, 104:33, 105:2, 108:1, 144:9. The attempt was made by the Revisers, in nine out of these ten instances, to mark the difference between *shir* and *zimmer* by translating the former "sing" and the latter "sing praises"; but the attempt must be pronounced feeble in the extreme, inasmuch as "singing" (alone, for *shir*) in all cases is nothing else than singing PRAISE. So that, just where it would appear that some addition or some advance ought to be made, no addition or advance is made; and the "yea" which the Revisers have thrown in only reveals how feeble the discrimination was felt to be. In one case, the first named above, (21:13), the Revisers' hearts failed them altogether, and as they could not say, "So will we sing and sing praise thy power," they dropped the word "sing" altogether out of their rendering of *zimmer*, and coined a special rendering, to which they have not adhered in any of the nine passages of the like kind which follow. This text should have been rendered: "So will we sing and harp thy power." And, though the urgency for a clearer distinction is not so keenly felt in all the examples given above, it may safely be affirmed, that in all of them the discrimination should have been maintained.

It is interesting to note the effect of this same discrimination when carried forward into the new Testament—as it clearly ought to be on the strength of the Septuagint, which is therein quoted and in which the Hebrew distinction between *shir* and *zimmer* faithfully reappears in their representatives *aido* and *psallo*. That effect will be, on the one hand, to make us content with the generic force of *psallo* in Rom. 15:9, 1 Cor. 14:15 and Jas. 5:13: whereas, on the other hand, it will compel the affirmation that, according to the established law governing the use of synonyms, the companion nouns—"psalms," "hymns," and "spiritual songs"—in Eph. 5:18 should be properly distinguished from each other; as in verse 19, also, the companion participles "singing" and "playing" should in like manner each receive its restricted or specific sense.

This brief study of *shir* and *zimmer*, "song" and "psalm," will further invest the whole problem of psalm-making and psalm-using with new interest. In particular, the reader will be prepared for the very large part which one "Exposition" has

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assigned to the voice just where musical accompaniments were most in evidence (150). As to psalm-creation, it is easily conceivable how the lone lyre may have helped some sorrowing penitent to pour out his lament before God, without thought at the time of the public employment of his penitential lay; and just as easily conceivable how, by himself in brighter days or by a sympathetic successor in the service of song, a fragment spotted with the tears of the originator may have been rescued from oblivion and fitted for Temple worship as a psalm. In such cases, the individual would be permitted to sing on throughout the history of his nation, and the nation for centuries be stirred to its depths by the perception, in its public songs, of those touches of nature which make the whole world kin.

3. Not only from the fitness of these lyrics to be sung to musical accompaniment, but also from the instructions conveyed by inscriptions to the Psalms, it may safely be inferred that the Psalms were ultimately intended to form a liturgy for Temple worship. Respecting this Liturgy a few things are of sufficient permanent interest to be worthy of note here: as—

(a) That David was, under Divine guidance, its originator (1 Ch. 28:11, 12, 19).

(b) That he appointed three leading singers, Asaph, Heman and Ethan (or Jeduthun): all Levites (1 Ch. 6).

(c) That under these leaders were ranged, in all probability, three choirs—a treble choir under Asaph, a mixed choir under Heman, and a bass choir (also called *sheminith* = “eighth” = “octave” = “bass”) under Ethan.

(d) That over these leaders and choirs was placed a “chief musician,” the first occupier of which important office was Chenaniah, who “used to give instructions, because skillful was he” (1 Ch. 15:22, 27).

(e) That “the sons of Korah” were certainly singers; probably forming the bass choir of Ethan, or as a senior class constituting an important part of the same, whose services were frequently in especial request, as the psalm-inscriptions abundantly show. The evidence of this arises partly from treating *korah* as an appellative (= “sons of baldness” = “patriarchs of song”) and partly from the fine results obtained by revising and slightly modifying Thirtle’s readjustment of the musical subscriptions as distinct from the literary superscriptions attached to the Psalms.

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(f) The revised readjustment above spoken of, when resolutely carried out, yields the following acceptable results:—it brings bass singers along with maidens to the foot of Ps. 45, where both classes are clearly needed; it rids Ps. 49 of any musical instruction, leaving it all the more probable that this sombre, philosophical psalm was intended rather for private use than for Temple-praise; and it brings “responsive dancings” to the foot of one of the few processional psalms (87) and the very one in the text of which “dancers” already appear. To exhibit here all the movements involved in working out these results would be too severe a tax to inflict on general readers; but the results themselves, in their own way, are of no small interest, and may provoke further useful research. (Cp. for “sons of korah” 42, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 84, 85, 87, 88).

(g) The highest and most permanent lesson obtained by resolving these sacred lyrics into a liturgy is seen as soon as we confront the practical question as to the part taken by the people in joining in this form of public worship. Considering the limited number of copies of the psalms to be read, chanted, or sung by the Levites obtainable by worshippers in general, it is natural to conclude that the chief part taken by the people was to say “Amen” (106:48) to the readings and songs of the priests and of the choirs. That they were sometimes called upon to take a more active part is sufficiently evident from their being actually called upon to join (115:9-11, 135:19, 20; and this leads up to the conclusion that the pre-eminent response of the people was that which is appended to every verse of 136, and the meaning of which is expanded in our exposition of 150. Here we catch a glimpse of the Hebrew Liturgy at the precise angle of vision which shows to advantage its fitness to exert its most potent spiritual influence over the Hebrew nation. There are here to be considered—the import of this refrain as singling out the kindness of Jehovah from among all his other perfections; the actual, individual and collective attestation that Jehovah their God was worthy of this pre-eminent praise; and the solemn and memorable circumstances under which they thus proclaimed their undying faith, amid all the solemnities of sacrifice and all the charm and impressiveness of musically accompanied praise. Disobedience and formality might of course invade and counteract even such holy influences, yet the intrinsic fitness of such a

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liturgy must have been to exert a mighty power over the religious life of the nation by bringing the people into fellowship with a God deemed worthy of such adoration.

CHAPTER THREE

THE PSALMS AS A SUMMARY OF SACRED LEARNING

That the Sacred Learning which is summarized in the Book of Psalms is sublimated into Song, detracts but little from its practical utility; for figures of speech have a recognized meaning of their own, and parallelism conduces to ultimate precision when couplets are quoted rather than clauses. A proof-text from the Psalms is generally as effective as one taken from the Law or the Prophets. The temporal and personal colouring may, indeed, in some measure fade from a psalm when held under the microscope of logical analysis, and yet may leave an abiding outline of permanent teaching. Prayers and praises rise on rapid wing to heaven, but their didactic presuppositions are generally clear enough to lead the listener forwards into the learning of theological and psychological lessons which will be found worthy to abide with him as a scholar, after they have by their spiritual influence moved him to become a worshipper. The only question is, how to collect and fix the rays of light radiated from struggling and adoring souls. The simplest method will be, to place in alphabetical order a few leading words which will occasion references to such psalms and verses of psalms as treat of the word or topic named.

If this course should impart to the present chapter something of the unattractive features of index and concordance, this will need no apology when it is remembered that the primary intention of this Introduction is, not to induce the curious to *read* the Psalms, but to give practical assistance to such as, having many times read them, are at length eager to devote to them patient study.

AGES.—Probably the time has not yet come when, unaided, the English reader can readily perceive and remember the latitude with which the Hebrew word *'olam* is used throughout the O.T. Primarily derived from a stem which simply means *what*